An exploration of the use of projective techniques by educational psychologists in the UK

A thesis submitted to The University of Manchester for the degree of Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology in the Faculty of Humanities

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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAHMS</td>
<td>Children and Adolescent Mental Health Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAT</td>
<td>Children’s Apperception Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBT</td>
<td>Cognitive Behavioural Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBP</td>
<td>Evidence Based Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP</td>
<td>Educational Psychologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPS</td>
<td>Educational Psychology Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBE</td>
<td>Practice Based Evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEP</td>
<td>Principal Educational Psychologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Projective Technique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCTs</td>
<td>Randomised Controlled Trials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEND</td>
<td>Special Educational Needs and Disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>School Psychologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Thematic Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAT</td>
<td>Thematic Apperception Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEP</td>
<td>Trainee Educational Psychologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WISC</td>
<td>Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children</td>
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</table>
Abstract

As applied psychologists, educational psychologists are often involved when situations surrounding a child are complex (Lane and Corrie, 2006) and much of an EP’s work is problem-centred (BPS, 2002). To make EPs effective in their role they need to be able to apply a range of theories and frameworks, specific to the clients involved, with projective techniques being part of a ‘professional tool kit’, which EPs can use when they feel appropriate in an open minded and child focused way. PTs have their roots in psychodynamic theory, with a belief that ambiguous stimuli will allow meaning to be given from the internal processes of the unconscious and enable these unconscious processes to be observed (Levin-Rozalis, 2006).

The current research aims to address the use of PTs in relation to educational psychology practice in the UK, and looks at the challenges to EPs who are using PTs, the reported benefits and an exploration of why some EPs may not be open to the use of such techniques.

Eight practising EPs participated in semi-structured interviews, two from a specialist sample who used PTs and six from a broader sample. Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used to identify key themes pertaining to the potential contribution, and the facilitators and barriers of using PTs and a psychodynamic framework for EPs based in the UK, aiming to add to the minimal academic research base and to encourage acceptance, usage and future training.

Keywords: projective, psychodynamic, psychoanalytic, educational psychology, assessment
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Rationale for the Research

The researcher is a Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP) at the University of Manchester. Her academic and career pathways have shown a loyalty to psychology and education with a broad scope of experience and employment roles with children, young people and families, both academic and applied. A number of factors influenced the researcher’s choice of topic including her underlying belief system, previous professional, educational and personal experience. The experience of the individual is valued by the researcher as well as the impact of the unconscious, dynamics within groups, relationships and emotions. These areas fall under one of the main paradigms within psychology, that of psychodynamic psychology, which appears to be neglected in research and possibly in practice.

From teaching and working directly with children in schools, the complexities of a child’s emotional world and the impact this could have on their wellbeing and learning was clear to the researcher, however the ability of a child to understand and communicate their own emotions was often compromised.

Whilst on placement as a TEP, it was evident that not all children and young people responded to assessment and EP involvement in the same way, and it was of paramount importance to feel confident and competent with a broad range of ‘tools’ to optimise the opportunities to communicate and understand the situation for a child, enabling a move towards positive change. Some children and young people were more engaged with creative, idiographic approaches (such as PTs) than when using other assessment techniques, such as psychometric assessment or verbally based approaches.

During training there was a recognition that fellow TEPs were interested in the use of PTs and even used them within their placements, however there was minimal input on the curriculum directly on the use of a PTs or psychodynamic thinking within the role. As expectations of the role of the EP developed, it seemed that the use of psychodynamic psychology within the EP community was limited and the research addressing the use of PTs by EPs in the UK was virtually non-existent.

The impetus for the initial idea for the present research came from a thesis research topic presented during the second year of training as a TEP. The suggested focus was on the potential contribution of psychodynamic psychology and PTs within an EP’s assessment repertoire and the utility of standardised frameworks for PTs such as the
Rorschach Performance Assessment System (RPAS) (Meyer, Viglione, Mihura, Erard & Erdberg, 2010). Other possible research ideas were to explore the similarities and differences between UK based EPs and UK clinical psychologists (CPs), or UK based EPs and US based school psychologists in their use of PTs.

From an exploration of literature, the level of use and acceptance of PTs by EPs in the UK was unclear, and it was decided that an in-depth, exploratory survey (Cohen & Morrison, 2007) using a qualitative methods approach would be an appropriate foundation to address this issue, in the form of semi-structured interviews. This would allow a detailed, preliminary insight into the barriers and facilitators, and the potential contribution of psychodynamic psychology to EP practice. It is hoped that the other aspects of the initial thesis research topic will be the subject of subsequent projects and that the present study will be a useful base for related research.

The researcher felt that for the EP community to have a greater consideration and acceptance of this potentially beneficial and underutilised area, there needs to be a greater understanding of the use and non-use of PTs which may otherwise go unexamined.

An outline of the structure and content of each chapter is given below.

**Background to the enquiry**

EPs use a range of theoretical approaches in their work including behavioural, cognitive behavioural, psychoanalytic, developmental, systemic and organisational (Fox, 2011), however, psychodynamic perspectives are not dominant (Pellegrini, 2010) despite their potential when working with children and their families.

The range and complexities of the work required of EPs calls for a creative and flexible approach and often there are times as a practitioner, where the children, young people and stakeholders find it difficult to communicate or are unclear about the nature of the current situation. Psychodynamic approaches are well suited to address the complex nature of the problems that EPs are faced with, particularly with the focus on relationships (Billington, 2006) and link between learning and emotion (Efklides & Volet, 2005). Psychodynamic psychology also has a lot to offer the multiagency nature of the EP role through looking at effective teamwork (Dennison, McBay & Shaldon, 2006), group consultation (Hanko, 1999) and the use of interactional systemic thinking to emotionally support groups of teachers (Farouk, 2004). Within the EP role, Eloquin (2016) illustrated how psychoanalytic concepts can be applied within a systems-psychodynamic perspective.
Psychodynamic theory has the belief that each person has conscious and unconscious thoughts, wishes and feelings, and that each person interprets the world in terms of their unique experience. The projective hypothesis refers to the notion that the interpretation of experiences is influenced by unconscious, repressed mental content (Gittelman Klein, 1986) and is the basis for the use of Projective Techniques (PTs) where an ambiguous stimulus is presented and unconscious processes can be observed (Levin-Rozalis, 2006).

PTs have a number of advantages when working with children - they do not require any level of reading ability or high articulation abilities, they can give a broad, comprehensive view of the subject (Levin-Rozalis, 2006) and greater depth than a direct conversation (Binney & Wright, 1997). Children can respond well to PTs due to their developmental characteristics of externalising and egocentric qualities (Piaget, 1929) and they can also be more motivating and engaging for them (Binney & Wright, 1997).

Ideographic measures, such as PTs, have a long history of unpopularity within the therapeutic and academic communities in favour of more standardised tools (Chandler, 1994), however there has been a resurgence of interest with a need for theoretically well-grounded assessment tools which allow the unique representation of the self (Binney & Wright, 1997).

Despite the paucity of published literature addressing the use of PTs by UK based EPs, they seem to be particularly suitable for children, who have rarely self-referred to the Educational Psychology Service (EPS). To understand a child's emotional status, a method of assessment is needed which allows access to the inner world of childhood – PTs hold the promise of being such a method (Chandler, 2003).

Potential challenges to a wider acceptance of PTs include professional issues such as supervision and the inclusion of psychodynamic input on training programmes. The idiosyncratic nature of PTs attracts criticism in light of EP’s scientist-practitioner status and the need for Evidence Based Practice (EBP), which some believe can be limiting to practice (Fox, 2003). However, this highlights a possible need for a broader view of what evidence is, to include not only academically generated evidence, but also a need to also consider practice and casework generated evidence. The Daubert Criteria makes a useful distinction between scientific and specialist knowledge, and the admissibility of psychological evidence in legal proceedings (Goodman-Delahunty, 1997).

It seems that PTs and psychodynamic thinking have a lot to offer EPs with the ‘muddy and murky realities’ of the problems they encounter in the real world (Lane & Corrie, 2006), and highlights the need for in depth case studies and an increase in Practice
Based Evidence (PBE) (Barkham, Hardy & Mellor-Clark, 2010) to expand the evidence base, raise the profile and further understanding of the potential of psychodynamic psychology and PTs to an EP’s professional toolbox.

The present research

An in-depth, exploratory survey using a qualitative methods approach was taken. Data was gathered in two phases by semi-structured interviews, the first phase consisted of a sample of specialist EPs who use PTs and the second phase was a broader sample of EPs. The data was analysed using Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to examine emerging themes and to acquire a rich, experiential insight into EP’s views of PTs and to consider the current and potential position of projective techniques (PTs) within the repertoire of UK EPs.

To do this the following research questions were addressed:

Research Question 1: What do EPs consider to be the potential contributions of psychodynamic psychology and PTs in their professional practice?

Research Question 2: What do EPs consider to be the potential facilitators and barriers to using a psychodynamic framework and PTs in their professional practice?

The data is explored by the use of the 6 stages of TA (Braun & Clark, 2006). An overall thematic map is provided which guides the structure of the chapter with an explanation of the coding system. Individual thematic maps are presented for each of the organising themes with a detailed narrative and embedded, relevant quotations to present a full and rich exploration of the data.

The findings are outlined and discussed in relation to the research questions. The key findings relating to the basic and subthemes are summarised and then reflected upon in light of relevant identified literature and theory. An exploration of possible implications for theory and practice are presented, followed by limitations of the research. Finally, some implications for future research are suggested.
Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Chapter outline

This chapter reviews the literature related to the use of PTs by EPs in the UK, beginning with an outline of the literature search undertaken, an examination of the terminology used, followed by a review of the literature. The evaluation of the literature includes an overview of psychodynamic theory and EP approaches to assessment, PTs are then introduced and explored, followed by an examination of potential factors in the use of PTs by EPs in the UK. There is a consideration of the flexible and complex requirements of the role of the EP, and the need for breadth and creativity in the choice of assessment techniques. The research gap is highlighted to provide a clear justification for the present project, the aims and research questions conclude the chapter.

2.2 Literature search

The literature review was constructed from a number of sources. Initially, a traditional database search was carried out using the questions in Table 2.1, with combinations of the key words listed. These three questions summarised the different levels of my research, and the keywords allowed a systematic approach to exploring the current literature. The research area has an extremely limited literature base with no papers directly addressing EP use of PTs in the UK, so more creative methods were also necessary, including reference harvesting, citation searching, networking with key figures in the field and being directly recommended papers to read. One of the limitations of the present search was that the full PRISMA process (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, & Altman, 2009) was not adhered to – this would have provided information about the full range of literature identified before filtering.

The following academic databases were used to search for relevant literature:

- PSYCInfo
- Google Scholar
- University of Manchester library search - http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/search-resources/
Table 2.1: Literature review questions and keywords

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<tr>
<td>How is psychodynamic theory evident in EP practice?</td>
<td>psychodynamic</td>
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<td></td>
<td>psychoanalytic</td>
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<td>educational psychology</td>
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<td></td>
<td>school psychology</td>
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<td>What psychological assessment techniques are common within Educational Psychology?</td>
<td>educational psychology</td>
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<td></td>
<td>assessment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>techniques</td>
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<td></td>
<td>approaches</td>
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<tr>
<td>How could PTs be useful for educational psychologists?</td>
<td>projective techniques</td>
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<td></td>
<td>projective assessments</td>
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<td></td>
<td>projective tests</td>
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<td></td>
<td>educational psychology</td>
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</table>

The studies included in the literature review came from an exploratory process driven by the literature review questions. However, it was important to have clear inclusion criteria to provide a strong rational for the papers which are included. No strict exclusion criteria were applied, however literature were prioritised for inclusion if they met the following criteria:

- English language
- UK based
- Carried out within the EP community
- Focused on children and young people
- Based in an educational setting

Pellegrini (2010) carried out a literature search and perused recent publications of British publications aimed at EPs and summarised that there was limited interest in psychodynamic psychology in the profession.
Due to the paucity of relevant literature in the UK, there are a number of papers included in the literature review which are USA based, where there are more published papers looking at the psychodynamic approach and PTs, although where possible the focus has been on literature from the UK. Hojnoski, Morrison, Brown & Matthews (2006) highlight that the use of PTs by school psychologists in the USA has been a point of interest with a number of surveys exploring and debating their usage. An unpublished thesis by Fisher (2005) titled ‘The Prevalence of Projective Assessment Usage Among School Psychologists and School-Aged Children in the State of Kansas’ is the nearest hit, however there are limitations to this paper as it was based on a very specific geographical area in the USA and was not published. As there are a number of other papers used which are USA based, it is important to note some of the differences in terminology.

2.3 Terminology

In the USA, SP is the most utilised professional title. Burden (1994) highlights the issue of terminology in his overview of trends and developments in educational psychology, with possible confusion over interchanging use of the term school psychology and educational psychology which often refer to different but related schools of applied psychology. From an international perspective, EPs are often based in universities and are concerned with the academic study of the psychology of education and SPs apply psychological knowledge and expertise in schools and classrooms to advise how best to meet the needs of the child (Burden, 1994). The term SP is recognised internationally, however in the UK they are also called EPs (Oakland & Saigh, 1987). The terminology referred to in the source has been used throughout the review of literature, which is generally EP for UK based practitioners and SP for those based in the USA.

There is often confusion over the use of the terms psychodynamic and psychoanalytic (McLeod, 2007) and therefore useful to clarify at this point. Psychodynamic can be defined as: ‘Describing all the theories of human functioning which are based on the interplay of unconscious drives and other forces within the person’ (Hayes & Stratton, 2013), whereas psychoanalysis can be defined as ‘The method of psychological treatment originated by Freud and developed by various of his followers’ (Hayes & Stratton, 2013). It is worth noting that ‘Psychoanalytic theory is the clearest example [of psychodynamic theory], and the term ‘psychodynamic’ is often used to refer to this class of theories’ (Hayes & Stratton, 2013). Therefore, psychodynamic is a broader term including, but not restricted to the theories of Freud and his followers and for the purposes of exploration of the data in the present research, a distinction is not made.
between the two – both referring to the exploration of the inner self to help understand relationships, experiences and view of the world.

2.4 Evaluation of the literature

The nature of psychology, and its study of humans, has resulted in a discipline with a number of paradigms, or schools of thought, reflecting the complexity of the humans it studies. There is not one widely accepted paradigm, but various camps with labels such as behaviourist, cognitive, evolutionary, humanistic and psychodynamic approaches (Hergenhahn, 2009), reflecting the underlying belief system embraced.

2.4.1 Psychodynamic theory

Psychodynamic theory has the belief that each person has conscious and unconscious thoughts, wishes and feelings, and that each person interprets the world in terms of their unique experience. The projective hypothesis refers to the notion that the interpretation of experiences is influenced by unconscious, repressed mental content (Gittelman Klein, 1986). However, the over emphasis of the outlandish aspects of Freudian theory has contributed to its widespread misunderstanding, and emphasis away from mainstream psychodynamic concepts understood and practised today (Shedler, 2010). There is a prejudice identified by O'Loughlin (2012) that psychoanalysis is neither social nor practical. However, he emphasises that a psychoanalytical approach has powerful things to say about a child's social world.

Other criticisms include ironic doubt of the approaches scientific support (Crews, 1996), which oppose the empirical findings using experimental methodology (Westen, 1998). Shedler (2010) points out that there is considerable research supporting the efficacy and effectiveness of psychodynamic therapy, however, there is a bias in the way the research findings are disseminated. This highlights the distinction in psychology between ‘scientists’ and ‘practitioners’, making it hard at times to apply psychological findings to practice (Lunt, 1998).

2.4.1.1 Psychodynamic theory in the EP role

EPs espouse a range of theoretical perspectives including behavioural, cognitive behavioural, psychoanalytic, developmental, systemic and organisational (Fox, 2011). However, psychodynamic psychology is not dominant in the field of educational psychology, despite acknowledgement that its reflective stance can be useful to analyse and to remove any emotional obstacles in practice (Pellegrini, 2010). Some psychodynamic concepts can be particularly useful, such as splitting and projection (Pellegrini, 2010), transference and countertransference (Billington, 2006).
Psychodynamic approaches have long made links between children’s emotional and cognitive worlds, both key areas of EP practice, Bion (1962) provided a theoretical template to understand these links. More recently Billington (2006) summarised that ‘learning and feeling are umbilically connected’ (p.77).

Although the psychodynamic approach is not a dominant aspect of the EP role (Pelligrini, 2011), Lunt (1998) reports that psychologists have been more receptive to different methodologies over the last few decades, and their role is diversifying. There is also a growing need for professionals to work together in the best interests of the child with recent legislative changes such as the update of Children and Education Acts in 2004 (Billington, 2006), and the new Children and Families Act (HMG, 2014), along with the introduction of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) (DfES, 2005) and the introduction of the new Code of Practice (DfE, 2014) where the focus is on joint planning and commissioning of services across education, health and social care. The Code of Practice (2014) covers the 0-25 age range, emphasising the need to be open to approaches for children and young people that cover this broad spectrum.

Although, the range of paradigms taken by Educational Psychologists (EPs) is varied, research has been very limited in the realm of psychodynamic theory (Pellegrini, 2010). Psychodynamic concepts could be well suited to address the complex nature of relationships when working with young people. Chauhan (2009) listed nine key ways in which psychoanalysis has contributed to education, including the contribution to early education, the place of extracurricular activities to release pent up feelings and the importance of Freud’s theory of unconscious motivation playing a key role in the process of learning. Pellegrini (2010) considered how psychodynamic mechanisms could be incorporated into current EP practice to be useful. A recent paper by Eloquin (2016) examined case studies to illustrate how psychoanalytic concepts can be applied by EPs work within a systems-psychodynamic perspective.

The EP’s work has a strong focus on relationships, Billington (2006) sees it as a professional responsibility of EP’s to attend to the relationship aspect of their work. Bion (1970) highlighted that the ‘science of relationships’ (p.53) was yet to be discovered, and psychodynamic concepts support this idea. As well as relationships, there are important links between learning and emotion which are under researched by EPs (Efklides & Volet, 2005).

Psychodynamic psychology can be a useful approach to help explore relationships and emotions and as these are key aspects of a child’s life, it seems that EPs should be aware of and consider this approach. In the British Psychological Society (BPS) Professional Practice Guidelines it emphasises that current models of assessment need
to address the interactive nature of how children learn and the social behaviours of their environment, the focus of assessment is to understand the child’s cognitive, social and emotional development and the impact of the context (BPS, 2002).

Billington (2006) highlighted two key ways in which psychodynamic theory can be used within Educational Psychology—working directly with children and young people and by the professionals that work with them.

2.4.1.2 Using psychodynamic approaches when working with professionals

There are underlying aims for all professionals working with children and young people with a multiagency approach to: 'be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve through learning, make a positive contribution to society, achieve economic well-being' (DfES, 2006). Governmental pressures for professionals to work together means that a ‘common language’ is needed — psychodynamic theories could offer a potential way for a professional cohesiveness (Billington, 2006).

There is a small but growing body of literature looking at how psychodynamic psychology can be used effectively in schools. Dennison, McBay & Shaldon (2006) have positively highlighted the use of psychodynamic thinking for effective teamwork. Farouk (2004) highlighted the use of psychodynamic psychology for group consultation (Hanko, 1999) within the EP role, combining it with interactional systemic thinking and solution-focused questioning, to focus on the teacher who presents the problem and the 'restoration of objectivity'. This approach was found to be constructive and effective when working with groups of teachers, giving them the time and space to reflect upon their relationships with pupils and the, often strong, emotions they can feel, in an environment which is mutually supportive. Nias, Southworth, and Yeoman (1989) found that primary schools which have the most emotionally supportive staff are more successful in supporting their pupils, which they highlight is particularly important with the recent decline in opportunities for teachers to collaborate, the increase in their work being prescribed and with the need to be technically accountable. Eloquin (2016) recently presented case studies from practice to illustrate how psychoanalytic concepts can be applied by EPs within a systems-psychodynamic perspective. These examples of how psychodynamic psychology can be used within the realm of the EP role can potentially start an image overhaul for its usefulness in schools, which would include the use of PTs.

2.4.1.3 Psychodynamic approach when working with children

The psychodynamic paradigm has a history of providing a conceptual basis for working with children, especially when analysing the inter- and intra- personal interactions.
Psychodynamic concepts were originally used in specific clinical settings, but these ideas have now entered the public domain (Billington, 2006). These concepts such as transference, countertransference and projection can add to the understanding of relationships and their effect on the individual (Billington, 2006). Chauhan (2009) highlighted the significance of the pupil-teacher relationship in the life of students, with a potential impact on behaviour, interpersonal relationships and influence on positive attitudes in life.

An important focus of psychodynamic psychology is the link between a child’s cognition and emotional worlds. Linnenbrink-Garcia & Pekrun (2011) emphasise how emotions permeate a student’s educational experiences, and there being a specific link between emotions and academic achievement, again highlighting the importance of EPs considering approaches involving the emotional life of children and young people, despite there being a lack of research addressing emotions in EP practice (Efklides & Volet, 2005). Chauhan (2007) highlighted the importance psychoanalysis gives to the process of catharsis and ensuring children get opportunities to express their emotions and motives freely in and outside the classroom, however how much of this is implemented in the UK education is not known.

The impact of relationships on learning are broad, Greig, Minnis, Millward, Sinclair, Kennedy, Towlson, Reid & Hill (2008) looked at attachment in Looked after Children (LAC) and explained how the learning situation in school can often trigger insecure behaviour patterns, the child is uncertain if they will make a mistake or fail in an unfamiliar situation and each day there are new tasks required of the child for which there is no guarantee of success. The teachers or other adults around the child need to be attuned to the child’s needs and anxieties, and an EP can help guide this process and talk through the insecure behaviours that are exhibited. The links between relationships and literacy are highlighted by Grieg et al. (2008) who found that children who had a history of poor relationships were more likely to have insecure attachments and when looking at their exposure to books and reading, they were more likely to have had unhappy experiences with reading, with their needs and abilities not being addressed and little exposure to books. Cullen & Shaldon (2003) found emotional factors to be strongly connected with reading, highlighting the importance of emotion when compared with more commonly discussed cognitive elements of reading difficulty. Although other approaches – such as a cognitive-behavioural approach would also consider the emotions of the reader, an appreciation of psychodynamic concepts with a focus on relationships and emotions can be a way to help understand a pupil’s behaviour and needs.
Billington (2006) highlighted the importance of psychodynamic concepts in understanding a child’s relationships, including their relationship with the EP. He outlined this potential by suggesting some key questions for professionals that work with children and young people:

- How do we speak of children?
- How do we speak with children?
- How do we write of children?
- How do we listen to children?
- How do we listen to ourselves?

This set of questions are important to bear in mind as an EP, with the focus on reflective practice and the young person’s learning, cognitive, social and emotional development (BPS, 2002), as well as a new focus on the pupil and parents in the decision making process (DfE, 2014). However, it needs to be addressed how these questions can be explored - PTs may be one way which could be considered.

### 2.4.1.4 Training

Some EPs feel they do not have the necessary skills or training to adopt a wider role or to undertake specialist work (DfEE, 2000) which could include the use of new assessment techniques such as PTs. This raises the issue of whether input on PTs should be included on all initial Educational and Child Psychology training programmes in the UK, such as at the Tavistock with their emphasis on a psychodynamic approach for EPs to feel competent and prepared to use PTs when they enter the workplace. Pellegrini (2010) highlights how his training in educational psychology resulted in him taking a firm evidence based approach, when combined with an unquestioning response to professional discourse. His interest in other approaches including psychodynamic psychology concepts came from conversations with colleagues from other training backgrounds. Piotrowski & Keller (1984) point out that many of the criticism of the validity of PTs are due to inadequate training at college and university level resulting in them being used in a way that compromises their validity.

Although not EPs, clinical psychologists are also 'applied psychologists' and it is useful to consider some findings in this field. When looking at clinical psychology training programmes in the USA, there was a de-emphasis on PTs, with over half of the training directors predicting a decrease in PT use in academic settings (Piotrowski & Zalewski, 1993). Watkins (1994) explored reasons for this, and he found this to be inconsistent with published research suggesting training directors and practitioners valuing PTs and that they come in top ten of assessments used. He concluded that an alternative
conclusion could be drawn that PT usage should increase in future years and should have a stronger emphasis in schools.

Freeman & Miller (2001) emphasise the impact training can have on the choice of assessment methods used by EPs in their future practice. This raises the question of including input on PTs in initial Educational and Child Psychology training programmes — which seems to be lacking in the UK, apart from at the Tavistock with their emphasis on the use of a psychodynamic framework, and a broader question of having more consistency in the range of techniques and theoretical frameworks that are introduced during training.

The DfEE report of 2000 identified the major ongoing changes that educational psychologists have to face and suggested this is why their training should be reviewed and required skills and knowledge identified to meet these changes.

In 2016, the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) published a ‘Review of clinical and educational psychology training arrangements’, this report aimed “to consider the scope for a more flexible clinical and educational psychology workforce, through greater integration of training, to drive efficiencies and better psychology service delivery for children and young people”(NCTL, 2016, p.5). It outlined the course content of both training programmes being based on the HCPC standards of proficiency and the BPS clinical and educational standards – all training institutions in the UK meet both sets of standards although the HCPC are required and the BPS are viewed as best practice. The HCPC standards are reviewed regularly to reflect current practice – suggesting a need to fully understand the current approaches and tools used by psychologists, even in areas which are not supported with empirical evidence, such as the use of projective techniques to evaluate the possible need to include in the standards.

A small sample of course information was collected to compare and contrast between programmes, there was a degree of variability in how the course content was referred to and described which made any comparisons challenging. Clinical programmes tended to have a more thorough description than the educational programmes, but the level of difference in detail was considerable across both. The clinical programmes made reference to modules not included in educational content including psychodynamic approaches. There are many ways to meet the standards through the core curriculum of teaching and placement, it is down to each institution to interpret the standards and this will vary in relation to many factors such as staff specialism and placement opportunity. This may in part explain the variability in the inclusion of psychodynamic knowledge between institutions.
A report by the Department of Education (2011) titled ‘Developing sustainable arrangements for the initial training of educational psychologists’ questioned issues around training, suggesting there were inconsistencies in the quality of training, particularly in terms of placement and research. The report suggested the academic curriculum for educational psychologists needs widening to align with new psychological research, such as including new therapeutic approaches – an evidence base for projective techniques could facilitate an acknowledgement of their use for possible inclusion in the core curriculum through the HCPC standards.

2.4.2 EP approaches to assessment

2.4.2.1 Approach taken by UK educational psychologists

Educational psychology developed as a discipline in the UK in the early decades of the 20th century. Two very different and important influences shaped the development of the profession. The first is the mental testing movement, with a focus on testing the individual differences in children. The second is the child guidance movement, with its focus on treatment of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties (Mackay, 2007). An early focus on the therapeutic involvement of psychologists shifted and the emphasis was no longer on the ‘psychological therapist’, this shift was due to a number of factors including, the reconstruction of educational psychology, the increase in demarcated professional boundaries, a focus on education and the impact of legislation (MacKay, 2007). The 1980s saw an important time of change with a move away from individual casework and towards more systemic work. This led to a paradigm shift (Kirkaldy, 1997) away from a more medicalised approach to an interactionist and ecological approach, where psychologists are seen as agents of change, working alongside parents, teachers and other key adults (MacKay, 2007). However, individual assessment of pupils has continued to make up a large part of an EP’s work leading to continued controversy (Freeman & Miller, 2001).

Research has found the approach taken by EPs in the UK is very diverse (DfES, 2001; Lokke, Gersch, M’Gadzah, & Frederickson, 1997). Often it is not a single approach that is taken, and there can be pressure from the Local Authority to take a particular approach as they often have protocol to follow which is linked to a theoretical orientation (Woods & Farrell, 2006), such as specific standardised tests required by the Local Authority for issuing a statement of special needs. Atkinson, Bragg, Squires, Muscatt & Wasilewski (2011) carried out a UK wide survey of EPs and found that they were actively involved in a wide range of provision. Billington (2006) acknowledged that there is often not one approach which is better than others, but can be an approach which will suit the sensitive needs of a young person more than another. There is no consensus to which
assessment methods or styles an EP should take in particular circumstances (Freeman & Miller, 2001).

Freeman & Miller (2001) highlight the growing interest in assessment methods that are used, particularly their purposes and relative merits. Recent literature highlights an awareness of alternative techniques and methods, and increasing uncertainty around traditional testing methods and instruments.

In response to the changing societal and governmental pressures, the EP role is in a continual state of change. Kennedy (2006) carried out a survey of the change in approaches taken by EPs in Scotland and highlighted the shift from a cognitive/developmental and social learning theoretical basis, to a stronger social interactionist and ecological/systemic base. The changes show in practice as an emphasis on solution-focused, systemic, naturalistic and collaborative assessments, and the use of these methods has been greater than originally predicted (Kennedy, 2006).

EPs, like most other psychologists, view themselves as applied scientists (Moore, 2005). In research, this is portrayed as an emphasis on the dominant empiricist paradigm. The last few decades have seen a trend in questioning the over-emphasis of traditional psychology to a positivist epistemology and methodology. This is highlighted in the use of quantitative (positivist) or qualitative (anti-positivist) analysis, and the often strong tension between the two (Lunt, 1998). The positivist view has a focus on natural science being the basis of human knowledge, whereas anti-positivist views, such as the psychodynamic approach, embrace more subjective aspects (Lunt, 1998). However, criticisms of a purely positivist approach include the argument that determinism and reductionism of science should not be applied to human behaviour (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Highlighting the need for an openness to an approach which emphasises the uniqueness of the individual. Chandler (1994) identifies the longstanding unpopularity of using idiographic approaches in academic settings, however in the 1990s there seemed to be a trend towards research into tools which look at an appreciation of the uniqueness of individuals and their experiences with a theoretical basis (Binney & Wright, 1997).

2.4.2.2 EPs as scientist-practitioners

EPs aim to use psychological theory within a theoretical framework in an educational context (BPS DECP, 2002) and have a key role with children and young people. The current model of practice for EPs in the UK has a focus on the scientific practitioner model (Frederickson, Miller & Cline, 2008) and evidence-based practice (EBP) (Fox, 2003). Lilienfeld, Ammirati & Davis (2012) highlight the importance of SPs to embrace scientific thinking tools to avoid making cognitive errors which can encourage the use of pseudoscientific practice potentially with ineffective or harmful outcomes, this can also
lead to suboptimal use of assessments and interventions. With a shift towards a more constructivist approach, Fox (2003) highlights the potential difficulties that could arise for EPs employed with services that have a strong focus on EBP from academically generated evidence, particularly to justify the use of tests and approaches that do not have a strong empirical base. The ‘scientist-practitioner gap’ (Cautin, 2003) refers to the disjunction between the best available assessments and interventions and the actual practice that is carried out.

Lilienfeld, Ammirati & Davis (2012) highlight surveys which suggest many SPs under use science in their practice — and often use questionable practice routinely which is not evidence-based. Bramlett, Murphy, Johnson, Wallingsford & Hall (2002) found that only half of SPs in the USA reported using journal articles to inform their clinical interventions, which although USA based research is worrying as it suggests that psychologists are not basing their practices on well validated techniques. Lilienfeld et al. (2012) highlight this could be especially worrying when considering the choice of assessment, but emphasis that the research base is limited and more research in the area is needed. Some SPs have reported wanting an increase in the reliance on EBP to help close the scientist-practitioner gap (Miller & Nickerson 2006, Kratochwill & Shernoff, 2003).

However, it should also be acknowledged that when working with human lives some believe scientific approaches may not be the complete picture — ‘there is an abyss between knowledge and experience that cannot be bridged scientifically’ (Damasio, 2000, p.307-308). Moore (2005) suggests the rise in EBP could demean the nature of practice itself if it focuses mainly on rule-following and a modernist idea of what legitimate evidence is. Pellegrini (2010) in his reflection on his own practice as an EP acknowledges that his scientist practitioner model was too rigid to allow him to consider other possible positions. From a scientific standpoint, the use of PTs is highly controversial, with doubt cast over the validity of scoring systems such as the Comprehensive System (CS) (Exner, 2003) for the Rorschach (Garb, Wood, Lilienfeld & Nezworski, 2002). However, within a strict scientific view there is still the recommendation to keep PTs as a subject of research, and that they can be useful when used appropriately as part of a battery of tests, alongside the gathering of information by looking at history and interview (Garb et al., 2002). The idea of what constitutes evidence is also relevant, with EBP referring mostly to academically generated evidence but a possible oversight is the evidence generated from practice and casework.

Although there is a place for EBP within educational psychology, it seems that there is a definite need to consider and be open to other approaches, such as the use of psychodynamic psychology where appropriate. This will enable a flexible and creative
use of assessment to ensure the needs of the child and the situation are being addressed in a child-centred, holistic approach to optimise the potential for positive change.

2.4.2.3 The changing role of educational psychologists

The recent release of the new Children and Families Act (HMG, 2014) and the Code of Practice (DfE, 2014) which now covers the 0-25 age range, has brought with them a range of new challenges to EP practice and professional identity – but also the opportunity to broaden the range of assessment methods (Stringer, Elliott & Lauchlan, 1997). Farrell (2010) highlights that the EP profession is experiencing a period of growth, but there is a continued uncertainty. Lunt and Majors (2000) acknowledged a need for new paradigm ways of thinking and writing to allow more complex ways of understanding, in response to the challenges that the UK EP profession is experiencing and practitioner’s often traditional overreliance on a technical-rationality.

The role of the EP has come into question in research in terms of broadening its scope, one way is the utilisation of EPs for therapeutic services. Mackay (2007) argued for a renewed interest in EPs providing therapeutic services and argued that EPs could make a significant contribution in this area by including this type of work as part of their range of services. Atkinson et al. (2011) found in their UK wide survey of EPs, that despite suggested limitations on the capacity to deliver therapeutic interventions, 92% reported to use them as part of their practice. The popularity of using therapeutic interventions by EPs highlights this broadening of the role, and may in part be a result of changes in Local Authority pressures, such as the movement towards fully or partially traded models to generate income since governmental changes to funding.

As the role of the EP continues to develop with current changes and pressures, there is the scope to broaden the approaches taken not only with increased use of therapeutic approaches, but also in the use of dynamic assessment (Elliott, Lauchlan & Stringer, 2007), personal construct psychology (Higgins, Leahy, Mlewa, Pike, Sharkey and Webster, 2009) and the use of psychodynamic concepts (Pellegrini, 2010). The nature of the EP role is peripatetic and this can be a useful set up to have school access as well as being able to maintain neutrality as external professionals (Atkinson et al. 2011).

2.4.3 Projective techniques (PTs)

PTs are rooted in psychodynamic theory, and have been used for over 50 years surrounded by controversy (Chandler, 2003). The underlying theory is that humans have a tendency to interpret the world in terms of their own experience, and to extend their inner attributions to the outer world (Chandler, 2003). During a projective assessment,
vague, ambiguous responses can be a person projecting their unconscious problems, motives and wishes onto the stimuli presented (Miller & Nickerson, 2006). When a stimuli is ambiguous a child is more likely to draw on internal material and expose this in a way which is otherwise not seen, this can give a glimpse of a child's unconscious drives and wishes and the defences they may have against these drives (Gittelman Klein, 1986), the external stimuli instigates the projection of inner content due to its ambiguity (Levin-Rozalis, 2006).

PTs have a number of advantages – they do not require any level of reading ability or a particularly high level of articulation, their results are very difficult to falsify and they can give a broad and comprehensive view of the subject (Levin-Rozalis, 2006). They have long been recognised as important tools in clinical interview and research with children (Rabin, 1986).

Traditionally, the techniques can be categorised into three broad categories: creative drawing techniques such as, House-Tree-Person (H-T-P, Buck, 1948) and Kinetic Family Drawing (K-T-P, Burns and Kaufman, 1970); thematic apperception techniques — such as the Thematic Apperception Task (TAT) (Murray, 1951); and Rorschach techniques (Goh & Fuller, 1983). The often free form response, can then be analysed in terms of the individual, rather than a right or wrong answer (Chandler, 2003), as is the case with some other objective psychometric tests. However, since a renewed interest in these techniques since the 1980s (Cohen de Lara-Kroon, 1999), there has been the appearance of number of second generation techniques such as ‘The Bear Cards’ (Veeken, 2012), ‘The Blob Tree’ (Wilson, 2009) and ‘The Bag of Feelings’ (Binney & Wright, 1997), which although do not fit neatly into these categories can be used projectively as they provide a somewhat ambiguous stimuli for a child to project their unconscious processes with no clear right or wrong responses.

It has been suggested that PTs should be used as part of a battery of tests, integrating the outcome of these techniques with history and interview information, to safeguard against some of the criticisms of over pathologising (Garb et al. 2002). In addition, results should only be reported when aligned with other assessments and information, in this way they can increase a psychologist’s confidence in judgements. However, caution should be taken in using PTs for assessing psychopathology, or identifying abuse, with concerns around identifying concerns and problems when they do not exist (Garb et al., 2002). It should be noted that in the role of the EP the focus is on the child’s needs rather than diagnostic.

Binney & Wright (2007) suggest a more ideographic approach, that PTs offer, is advantageous over more formal, standardised tests when working with children and
young people, as it can help build rapport and allow unique communications that can elicit useful information surrounding preoccupations and affective states. In terms of their development children often have predominately externalised thinking as well as having an egocentric quality (Piaget, 1929) which can respond very well to PTs.

2.4.3.1 History of PTs

At this point it is useful to briefly address the history and origins of PTs to help understand their place within psychology. At the turn of the century the foundations were laid for psychology as a scientific discipline with the laboratory period from 1890 to 1905 (Sattler, 1982). These experimental methods resulted in tests to measure an individual’s responses, and found their way into the emerging practice of psychology (Chandler, 2003). Some early work was already being carried out in the direction of PTs. Wundt & Galton’s experiments with people looking at associations between ideas were the precursor to the common psychodynamic method of word association (Cohen de Lara-Kroon, 1999). Galton (1879) recognized the projective nature of responses which ‘lay bare the foundations of a man’s thoughts with a curious distinctiveness and exhibit his mental anatomy with more vividness and truth than he would probably care to publish to the world’ (Galton, 1879, cited in Semeonoff, 1976, p.10). This quote captures the essence of the projective hypothesis, revealing significant mental content without being aware it is being done (Cohen de Lara-Kroon, 1999) and this is the basis of PTs.

The exploration of PTs being used for personality assessment was spurred by the development of psychoanalysis. Sigmund Freud set out ideas about the unconscious in his book ‘Interpretation of Dreams’ in 1900, and went on to develop methods such as free association and hypnosis. Many of the initial thoughts and techniques have developed greatly into the realm of psychoanalytic psychotherapy. Shedler (2010) highlights that psychodynamic therapy may be more effective than other therapies which are seen as evidence based, looking at the effect size comparison with CBT (0.68) and antidepressant medication (0.31), psychodynamic therapies had a substantially higher effect size of 0.97. Shedler also points out that more randomised control trials and meta-analysis are reflecting this finding.

A landmark in PTs came in 1921 with the Rorschach, a psychoanalytical method using a series of cards with symmetrical inkblots. The responses to the stimuli are spontaneous associations and there is no limit or structure to how responses are given. There is then an interpretation, where the examinee is encouraged to generate their own unique responses. Rorschach’s premature death at the age of 37 led to a degree of mystery and controversy around the technique. In response to this the Exner Comprehensive System
(CS) (Exner, 2003) was created to attempt to formulate a framework for the responses and address some of the criticisms around validity.

McCarthy Woods (2008) wrote an interesting history of the Rorschach in the UK which highlights the trends in the use of PTs. The decline in its use came in the 1970s when psychometric tests in general fell out of popularity and usage after strong criticism of their unscientificness. This coincided with the development of behaviour therapy, and then cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) and pressures to increase the number of clients to work with, which resulted in these often time-consuming techniques becoming less popular. Since then there has been a focus on EBP, however the historical prejudice surrounding the Rorschach and similar PTs still pervades (McCarthy Woods, 2008).

Despite the criticisms, the Rorschach Inkblot Method (RIM) can provide important information about a child’s emotional, cognitive and social functioning (Exner, 2003), and give a unique interpretation which follows ethical and professional standards when used within Exner’s Comprehensive System (Hughes, Gacono & Owen, 2007). However, Exner (2003) highlights that the Rorschach is primarily a problem solving tool, with little projection, suggesting the different ways PTs can be utilised, such as for rapport building, information gathering and hypothesis creation, to increase assessment comprehensiveness and triangulation with other assessment methods (Fisher, 2005, Kennedy, Faust, Willis, and Piotrowski, 1994). Binney & Wright (1997) highlight that they are particularly useful for assessing children. The 1980s saw a resurgence of interest in some PTs such as the TAT, with a new second-generation of assessments for children (Cohen de Lara-Kroon, 1999).

2.4.3.2 Prevalence of PTs usage

In the USA, PTs are used by SPs despite the criticism they have received in the literature (Miller & Nickerson, 2006). A national survey of SPs found that they reported the use of PTs as useful, and they are used for a variety of purposes across ages (Hojnoski, Morrison, Brown & Matthews, 2006). An example is the Rorschach, which is frequently used by clinical psychologists (43%) and less so by SPs (23%) (Stinnett, Havey, & Oehler-Stinnett, 1994). However, the criticism is wide (Lilienfield, Wood & Garb, 2000) particularly in terms of the validity of interpretation.

Levin-Rozalis (2006) used a new PT for working with children of drug addicts, which was successful when more conventional tools were not possible. They chose PTs as they were viewed to be less direct and less threatening, however their application of these was different from their conventional use – instead of focusing on the individual they looked at a phenomenon as it manifested in a group. Levin-Rozalis did not use a structured method of scoring and analysis, instead the process of interpretation was a
hermeneutic interpretive one. Levin-Rozalis concluded that PTs can be useful as a hermeneutic tool – to allow exploration and to discover processes and structures which had not been previously considered, however it also raised important questions of methodology and ethics when using PTs.

In the USA, PTs are used by SPs nearly as often as behaviour ratings scales — which are the most popular type of assessment (Hosp & Reschly, 2002). Wilson & Reschly (1996) found the Draw-A-Person (DAP) test is one of the three most widely used assessment measures in the USA. However, Lilienfeld, Wood & Garb (2000) and Wood, Nezworski, Lilienfeld & Garb (2003) describe these trends as worrying as few PTs indices are empirically supported, especially the DAP and other human figure drawings which have doubtful validity for detecting personality traits and psychopathological symptoms. Hibbard (2003) suggested that these criticisms of the scientific nature of PTs made by Lilienfeld et al. (2000) are based on outmoded ideas of what the role of projection is, Hibbard suggests that the projective hypothesis as outlined by Lilienfeld et al. (2000) seems to have no application to the coding systems that they are providing a negative critique of (Comprehensive System for the Rorschach (Exner, 1993), 3 systems for coding the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT; Murray, 1943), and human figure drawings). A large number of errors of omission and commission in Lilienfeld et al. paper have also been highlighted by Hibbard. He concluded that the validity and clinical usefulness of these PTs is far more robust than suggested by Lilienfeld et al. (2000).

2.4.3.3 Uses of PTs

Despite their popularity in the USA and other countries, Hojnoski et al. (2006) highlight that PTs are often used for purposes they have not specifically been validated for. Although primarily they are used for the assessment of personality, they are used for inquiry and diagnosis (Levin-Rozalis, 2006). Fisher (2005) looked at the use of a range of PTs by SPs in Kansas over time, and found that PTs are used to build rapport, gain useful information and increase assessment comprehensiveness. Interestingly, they also looked at reasons SPs gave for not using PTs, including lack of training, not being valid and findings not being useful or relevant. However, this unpublished research was focused on SPs in the state of Kansas in the USA (sample size of 97) with a variety of qualifications, and data was gathered via anonymous questionnaire at a local conference for SPs. The differences of this and the current research are substantial with a personal semi-structured interview looking at a cross section of the EP population in the UK which is hoped will elicit detailed themes for PTs being used or not being used in practice to help provide a baseline for the current usage of these techniques which has to date not been explored.
Kennedy, Faust, Willis, and Piotrowski (1994) found that the primary rationale for using PTs was hypothesis generation, and although practitioners report using them mainly for ice-breaking, Hojnoski et al. (2006) found they were actually being used for determining eligibility and intervention planning. Gittelman Klein (1986) highlights the different ways PTs can be used to provide an analytical interpretation or a more inferential, or descriptive approach. Specifically in education they are often used in conjunction with other research methods such as part of a questionnaire, in the form of sentence completion (Oppenheim, 1992). The way PTs are used, and their intended purpose are of paramount importance when considering the future of the techniques within the realm of educational psychology practice.

Parkin (2001) assessed the use of the PT, ‘Bene-Anthony Family Relations Test’ which explores a child’s perceptions of their family relation’s, he found that there was an enthusiasm by those who used it, although 86% regularly rephrased certain items and questions surrounding its validity. Despite it being used less frequently in research due to its questionable robustness as a psychometric instrument, it is still used in practice, although the frequency of this is unclear. Parkin summarised by recommending that research and developments need to be made to reliably assess a child’s perception of their emotional content of their relations. However, it depends on the type of usage of the technique as to whether it needs to fulfil the requirements of more robust psychometric tests, it could be questioned if this was necessary when used for rapport building or triangulation of information gathering. Miller & Nickerson (2006) point out that PTs may be useful when working with children to develop rapport and generate hypotheses, although they have limitations and professionals need to be cogniscent of their strengths and limitations.

PTs are classified by their degree of openness and are therefore difficult to compare and retest, which has resulted in the construction of strict coding and scoring systems and heated debate over their statistical dependency (Levin-Rozalis, 2006). There is an argument that to provide an interpretive framework in the way the Exner Comprehensive System (Exner, 2003) does for the Rorschach, is to take away from the freedom of the test. Exner (2003) points out that there is little projection in the Rorschach, it is more of a problem solving, perceptual association task to provide information about a person through description and understanding of what makes that individual.

These debates have continued, but PTs are still used extensively in and beyond the fields of psychology and psychiatry, suggesting that there may be useful ways to use these techniques which are different to their conventional intention of diagnosis from which the majority of criticisms stem (Levin-Rozalis, 2006).
2.4.4 Potential factors in the use of PTs in the EP role in the UK

In UK based research there is limited academic research looking at the use of PTs by EPs. Woods & Farrell (2006) carried out an overview of assessment practice by EPs in the UK, highlighting the absence of information about the process, range of methods and distinctive contribution of UK EPs. They found that 71% commonly used psychometric cognitive assessments, 97% carried out interviews with a child and 86% carried out observations and only 11% used dynamic assessment. There was no data gathered on the use of PTs, perhaps reflecting the perceived usage of these methods, although some respondents had included in the free response section that they used children's drawing and projective methods, indicating that there is some level of usage and interest by UK EPs. This suggests a need to develop this area of research and investigate further the specific use of PTs by UK EPs alongside an overall openness to broadening the assessment methods used by EPs (Stringer et al. 1997).

Although there is no UK based research looking at the use of PTs by EPs it seems that a small number of the EP community value the use of taking a psychodynamic approach, and this may help promote the use of PTs in schools (see Eloquin, 2016).

There are some areas where there are clear associations with the use of PTs by EPs whether embedded in a psychodynamic approach or not.

PTs require minimal cooperation, do not rely on higher levels of language development and conceptual understanding, as opposed to psychometric tests (Chandler, 2003), making them particularly suitable for children who have rarely self-referred to the EP service. To understand a child's emotional status, a method of assessment is needed which allows access to this inner world of childhood. PTs hold the promise of being such a method (Chandler, 2003).

2.4.4.1 Supervision
A potential factor in the use of PTs could mirror that of therapeutic services - that of supervision. The availability of supervision was reported by EPs to be both a facilitator and a barrier to therapeutic practice (Atkinson et al., 2011). The common ground between therapeutic work and PT use could be the underlying psychodynamic framework, and although this is not necessary for all therapy, there is still an appreciation for the importance of emotions and relationships.

2.4.4.2 Voice of the child
With the new Code of Practice (2014) emphasising the inclusion of children, young people and parents in the decision-making processes at the individual and systemic
levels (DFEE, 2014), there has never been a time when to listen has been more pertinent. A potential use of PTs is in gaining the view of the child or young person. There is a realisation that gaining their view is becoming more and more important (DIES, 2005), part of the EP role is to advocate and promote the voice of the child (Higgins et al., 2009). Todd, Hobbs & Taylor (2000) highlight that a concern of every EP should be how they are going to develop their practice to enable the voice of the child or young person they are working with to be heard. This view is often sought through conversation, or completion of statements such as 'I like...' or 'I dislike...' which Todd (2003) views as inadequate and can often result in children confused about how decisions about them have been made. This may be particularly relevant for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) that struggle to express their thoughts and opinions verbally or in written form, indeed the SEND pupil community in schools have largely had their thoughts and opinions silenced by professional discourse, leading to these children and young people being passive recipients of a range of services (Macconville, 2006). Even for children and young people who do not have difficulties with communication, PTs with their ideographic approach, can give more depth to the information shared about their problems and worries than a direct conversation (Binney & Wright, 1997).

Freud (1900) highlighted that there were aspects of communication that are beyond language and Lacan (1977) suggested that communication via language is often less than exact. Chomsky (1986) also addressed the questionable reliability of word meaning, and so there is a question of whether verbalised opinion is always the best. Language develops as part of a web of feelings and thinking, all of which cannot be captured by words themselves (Billington, 2000), and this raises the question of alternative ways to obtain that view. Gersch (1996) points out that there is a need for appropriate vehicles to enable the child or young person to share their thoughts and beliefs. The way the child's view is obtained has growing debate in legislation and research, to ensure it is represented accurately (Harding & Atkinson, 2009). PTs can be a useful way to allow a child or young person to share their view without the pressure of a verbal conversation with an adult they are not familiar with, to ensure this view is as close as possible to the child's true feelings and emotions.

2.4.5 The toolbox
As applied psychologists, EPs are often involved when situations surrounding a child are messy and complex (Lane and Corrie, 2006). To make EPs effective in their role they need to be able to apply a range of theories and frameworks, specific to the clients involved, with PTs being part of a professional tool kit, which EPs can use when they feel...
appropriate in an open minded and child focused way. Each child is unique, and affected by their relationships and interpretation of the world (Chandler, 2003), in all aspects of their life. PTs can provide a way to work with children without an emphasis on scientific testing, to help give the EP an insight into their emotions with minimal cooperation and language, which often have a key role in the creation and maintenance of circumstances.

The current research aims to address the compromised use of PTs in relation to educational psychology in the UK, and looks at the challenges to EPs who are using PTs, and the reported benefits, and an exploration of why some EPs may not be open to the use of such tests. Hibbard (2003) highlighted that more research needs to be carried out on the use of PTs, particularly with regard to their criticisms and uses. He summarises that ‘constructive scientific inquiry’ into this field will develop the interest of research. Stringer et al. (1997) suggest the EP profession are well placed to broaden their current assessment method repertoire.

The hope is that the current research will provide a baseline understanding of how PTs are used by EPs in the UK and act as a springboard for future research into this potentially underutilised approach that can give practical ways to understand the building blocks of a child’s life – their relationships, their emotions and their cognitions, whilst adhering to the BPS Professional Practice guidelines.

'We believe that psychological assessments should involve a creative investigation of a broad range of hypotheses that builds on research from all areas of psychology.' (Frederickson et al. 1991, in BPS, 2002, p.24)

2.5 Summary
A psychodynamic approach focuses on a person interpreting the world in terms of their unique experiences and is influenced by unconscious, repressed mental content (Gittelman Klein, 1986). There is limited interest in psychodynamic psychology by the EP profession in the UK (Pellegrini, 2010), however, there is a growing need to be open to all approaches to address the needs of the child (Billington, 2006) and growing interest in psychodynamic approaches in schools (eg. Dennison, McBay & Shaldon, 2006, Farouk, 2004, Hanko, 1999, Nias, Southworth, and Yeoman, 1989, Eloquin, 2016) and a trend towards more research in tools which look at an appreciation of the uniqueness of individuals and their experiences (Binney & Wright, 1997). PTs have been recognised as important tools in clinical practice with children (Rabin, 1986) and although surrounded by controversy (Chandler, 2003), they continue to be used. They consist of an external
stimuli instigating the projection of inner content due to its ambiguity (Levin-Rozalis, 2006) and can give us an insight into a child’s inner world which would not be accessed otherwise. Although the use of PTs by SPs in the USA have been a subject of minimal research (Fisher, 2005), there has been no similar studies in the UK. It is not clear if the UK EP community are using PTs and the reasons for using or not using them. With continual changes to the EP role and the broad demands placed on EPs, particularly around the social and emotional development and the importance of the context the child is in (BPS, 2002), there is a need to ensure an openness to a range of approaches and a useful step is to address the research gap around the use of PTs by EPs in the UK.

2.6 Research Questions
In order to address this, the following research questions will be considered:

**Research Question 1:** What do EPs consider to be the potential contributions of psychodynamic psychology and PTs in their professional practice?

**Research Question 2:** What do EPs consider to be the potential facilitators and barriers to using a psychodynamic framework and PTs in their professional practice?
Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Chapter Overview
This chapter will recap the aims and rationale of the research and explore the epistemological position which was taken in guiding the design of the research. A detailed discussion of the design, participant recruitment and sampling, data collection methods and approach to data analysis follows. A critique of the chosen data collection method is included. Finally, there is a consideration of ethical issues raised by the research and details of university approval for the project with a timeline and details of the risk analysis undertaken.

This thesis aims to explore the current and potential position of PTs within the repertoire of UK EPs. The specific aims of the research are to:

- Understand the potential contribution of a psychodynamic framework and the use of PTs within the EP role in the UK.
- Explore the facilitators and barriers of EPs using a psychodynamic framework and PTs.
- To add to the minimal research base on the use of PTs to encourage acceptance, usage, and future training.

The key themes are the potential contribution and the facilitators and barriers of using PTs and a psychodynamic framework for EPs based in the UK.

To address these aims the following research questions will be considered:

**Research Question 1:** What do EPs consider to be the potential contributions of psychodynamic psychology and PTs in their professional practice?

**Research Question 2:** What do EPs consider to be the potential facilitators and barriers to using a psychodynamic framework and PTs in their professional practice?

3.2 Research design
The design is an in-depth, exploratory survey (Cohen & Morrison, 2007) using a qualitative methods approach. There are 2 phases, both consisting of semi-structured interviews in person or via online mediums. Both research questions were addressed at each phase (see Table 3.1). The first phase will consist of a specialist sample of EPs, the data collected from this phase will create the interview schedule for the second
phase consisting of a broader sample of EPs based in the UK, including practitioners and non-practitioners of PTs.

Table 3.1: *Methodology summary*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research question</th>
<th>Data gathering method</th>
<th>Data analysis method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do EPs consider to be the potential contributions of psychodynamic psychology and PTs in their professional practice?</td>
<td>Phase 1 – Semi-structured interviews with a specialist sample of EPs who currently use PTs as part of their practice, to inform phase 2 interview schedules.</td>
<td>Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun and Clarke, 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do EPs consider to be the potential facilitators and barriers to using a psychodynamic framework and PTs in their professional practice?</td>
<td>Phase 2 – Semi-structured interviews with a broader sample of EPs including practitioners and non-practitioners of PTs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.1 Epistimio logical position

The epistemological stance taken by the researcher is that of critical realist, with the understanding that each EP involved in the research will have their own view of using PTs and a psychodynamic framework, based on their worldview and perspective (Maxwell, 2012). However, the belief is held in an ontological realism that ‘there is a real world that exists independently of our perceptions, theories, and constructions’ (Maxwell, 2012 p.5) – so the use of PTs by practitioner EPs in the UK is an actual prevalence with an underlying rationale that can be explored. The researcher is interested in finding out from EPs their views and use of PTs and the reasons underpinning this which will be explored through the perspectives of the interviewees. The use of a homogenous
sample of EPs (in terms of their use of PTs) at Phase 1 and a heterogenous sample at Phase 2 increases the external validity and increases the likelihood of uncovering a pre-existing reality (‘what people really think’) between the members (Krueger, 1993).

My methodological approach was directed by my stance, the critical realist view brings the outside world to challenge, with the researcher’s role being to gain meaning from the interview content which represents the view of the participant mixed with factual information. As a critical realist, my role is to check the views expressed with other consensuses, this was shown through the interview schedule and the analysis of the data. The interview questions demonstrated the critical realist standpoint by a focus on how and why, which allowed the checking of participant’s views with the researcher’s own view of reality. The two phase approach to the methodology allowed the emphasis in phase one (with EPs who used PTs) on gaining an understanding of the situation and allowing this data to guide the creation of the phase two interviews. The semi-structured nature of the interview schedules allowed the freedom to explore and check comments made with reality and question them further by asking why and how. My epistemological stance led to my interpretation of the data through analysis by considering how the views expressed by participants and the reality of the situation impacts on aspects of an EP’s day to day working life - how it works in practice.

3.3 Participant selection

Potential participants for both phases were obtained through specialist snowballing, a type of purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a form of non-probability sampling where the researcher seeks participants with characteristics relevant to the topic under study (Given, 2008). Snowball sampling techniques offer a way to identify and contact ‘hidden populations’, allowing participants who are relevant to the research to be sought when they are few in number (Atkinson & Flint, 2001). It offers practical advantages when the aims of the study are primarily exploratory, qualitative and descriptive (Hendricks, Blanken and Adriaans, 1992) as is the case with the present research. The name refers to the analogy of a snowball increasing in size as it rolls down a hill, starting with a small pool of initial informants who suggest and nominate other potential participants who meet the criteria for the research (Givens, 2008). The process began with discussions with staff and affiliates at the regional educational psychology training university, and contacting EP services in the UK where EPs embrace a psychodynamic framework and the use of PTs, as well as services which focus on other approaches.

The inclusion criteria were:

- EPs or Principal Educational Psychologists (PEPs) working for in local authority or in independent practice in the UK
• They will have been trained and currently practicing in the UK
• They had capacity in their current situation to take part
• For phase 1 participants were EPs who were specialists in the use of PTs
• For phase 2 participants would be giving views and opinions on the use of PTs and included practitioners and non-practitioners

The exclusion criteria were:
• If a signed consent form was not returned
• If there was a request from the participant not to be included in the study at any point
• If they were known to be involved in competence procedures
• If being involved in the research would be a professional stressor - in terms of questioning their current practice and sensitivity to their professional identity

If there were more respondents than would be participants, selection criteria would ensure consideration would be given to the geographical location (assuming geographical spread being a proxy for the training institution), experience in role and employment within Local Authority or independent practice to ensure a variety of EP views were represented.

Trainee Educational Psychologists (TEPs) were not selected as participants as it was important that participants could reflect on time in employment as well as their time in training. Gender, location of employment and age were not controlled, although location of training and length of time since qualification were incorporated in the interview schedule.

Potential participants were approached and recruited from initial discussions leading to a more formalised email invitation to participate in an interview. For Phase 1 (see Appendix 1) this asked for EPs who used PTs in their professional practice and for Phase 2 (see Appendix 2) for EPs to explore their thoughts and opinions on the use of PTs, highlighting that it did not matter if these techniques were currently used or not. The email invitation had an attached information sheet (see Appendix 3) and was distributed for both phases, with contact details to allow questions and discussion. The information sheet was left with the potential participant for two weeks before consent was gained (see Appendix 5) to give the opportunity to fully digest and understand the research and its requirements, and to contact the researcher with any specific questions if needed.

The participants in Phase 1 were also given a ‘Pre-interview questionnaire’ (see Appendix 4) to be returned at least a week before the interview which informed the
interview schedule. This questionnaire allowed an initial exploration of the use of PTs to inform the Phase 1 interview schedule.

The interviewees were given a choice of an interview in person or via an online medium, such as Skype (voice or video), this ensured geographical location was not a factor in their ability to participate, and is an efficient and economical way to capture the views and opinions of nonlocal participants (Knox & Burkard, 2009) which was particularly pertinent with the specific nature of the research where the population of EPs using these techniques is small and largely populated in the south of England.

No payment or other incentive was offered for participation apart from the possibility of counting towards Professional Development requirements for their employer.

The selected participants of both phases are briefly described to give a 'pen portrait' of each and illustrate differences and similarities (see table below).

**Table 3.2: Pen portraits of participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1 participants</th>
<th>Code, years since qualifying</th>
<th>Pen portrait</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EP1</td>
<td>25 years</td>
<td>EP1 was trained at location C in central England. She is familiar with some aspects of psychodynamic theory which started from initial training. EP1 works as a tutor on the training programme at location D and as an EP in a local authority service. She uses a few limited PTs and has not been able to find any further training and so has self trained on some techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP2</td>
<td>35 years</td>
<td>EP2 was trained on a now defunct course close to location A. Her initial training programme had a significant input on psychodynamic approaches and PTs. As well as being an EP is also a qualified psychoanalytic adult psychotherapist. She has accessed training in PTs throughout her career, possibly due to being located in the hub of the psychoanalytic community in the UK. EP2 was a lecturer at location A which has a psychodynamic focus. She uses a psychodynamic approach with every young person she works with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>Training Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
with psychodynamic theory or PTs, as it wasn’t covered in initial training she hasn’t felt very encouraged to use them. She is aware of drawing techniques, word association and the blob tree, but has only used drawing techniques at a superficial level, she feels more comfortable with non-PTs. EP6 does not know anyone who uses PTs but is interested in finding out more about them.

**EP7**

EP7 was trained at location A and would describe herself as being very familiar with psychodynamic approaches and PTs. In general EP7 uses a consultation approach to casework, aligning herself with systemic and psychoanalytic models. She uses a range of PTs and brings in psychoanalytic thinking to her practice. EP7 became increasingly interested in PTs during her initial training where they were a key part of the programme.

**Note:**

*Location A* – South of England training programme with a key focus on psychoanalytic thinking

*Location B* – South of England training programme with a focus on problem analysis

*Location C* – Central England located training programme

*Location D* – North England located training programme

### 3.4 Data gathering methods

#### 3.4.1 Qualitative methods

Qualitative research is concerned with the quality of experience rather than discovering a cause-effect relationship, including a consideration of factors such as the detail, context and dynamics of data (Willig, 2013). It allows for unanticipated responses from participants by enabling a sense of freedom rather than confining individuals to items on a survey, and provides an opportunity to present their views and descriptions of their experiences in everyday language (Sandelowski, 2000).

The present research is interested in acquiring a rich, experiential insight into EP’s views of PTs. The lack of research in this area and diversity in opinion and professional practice provided the rationale for an exploratory survey aimed to facilitate the researcher in examining emerging themes and gain a deep and rich understanding which may otherwise go unexamined - a qualitative method was suited to this focus.
3.4.2 Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are one of the main methods of collecting qualitative data and are particularly useful when there is little known about the area of interest. They are used to explore the in depth experience of the interviewee, and their explanations of this experience, in a structured, purposeful way (Adams, 2010).

Semi-structured interviews often consist of a schedule of pre-determined, open ended questions and include other questions that emerge from the dialogue of the interview to obtain specific information and enable comparison across cases (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006).

The interview schedule for Phase 1 (see Appendix 6) was driven by the research questions and by the pre-interview questionnaire completed by each participant before the interview, this enabled a consistent approach which would allow comparison between participants whilst remaining open and flexible so each individual’s experiences and opinions could be explored in more detail (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006).

3.4.3 Phase 1 procedure

The first phase consisted of semi-structured interviews with two key specialist EPs who use PTs as part of their professional practice. The interviewees were selected by specialist snowballing, via professional networking and discussions with affiliates of the University of Manchester and wider communications with other training providers, and were contacted in the first instance via an email invitation and were requested to complete a ‘pre-interview questionnaire’ (see Appendix 4) to gather information about their use of PTs. The interviews were semi-structured lasting 30-45 minutes, and informed the creation of the schedule for the second phase of interviews. At the start of the interview participants were reminded that they could have a break if they wanted, that the interview would be recorded, that they could choose to not respond to any of the questions and that they were to answer based on their own experience as an EP (see Appendix 6).

3.4.4 Phase 2 procedure

The second phase consisted of semi-structured interviews with five EPs in the UK with varying levels of PT use. There was no pre-interview questionnaire at this phase as the phase 1 data had guided the creation of the interview structure which was tailored to be relevant to all EPs whether or not they were practitioners of PTs. The interviews also lasted 30-45 minutes and the same instructions were given at the start of the interview (see Appendix 7).
3.5 Data analysis

Qualitative data obtained from the interviews of phases 1 and 2 was analysed using TA (Braun and Clarke, 2006) to identify key themes in the data. An inductive or bottom up analysis was used to ensure the findings were data driven (Boyatzis, 1998), although it is acknowledged that the researcher had an active role in the identification of themes which was informed by prior knowledge (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3.5.1 Partial transcription

There is no set way to produce a transcript for TA and the format and level of detail in the transcription is not prescribed as for other types of analysis such as content or narrative analysis (Lyons, 2011). Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (2001) highlight that it may not be necessary to transcribe an entire interview, it may be that particular sections relevant to the research questions are all that is needed. Braun & Clarke (2006) argue the important factor is that the transcript maintains the information that is needed. The aim of the transcription process was to systematically organise and analyse textual data, regardless of the analytic technique and tools used, it is a tool to help make sense of and understand interviewees' experiences and perceptions (McLellan, MacQueen & Neidig, 2003).

Partial transcription was used in the present study to make the data more manageable with the appropriate level of detail to identify patterns and key themes. It was important that the researcher carried out the transcription to be familiar with the data and make informed judgements related to retaining the validity of the transcript (McLellan et al. 2003). The partial transcription was carried out with consideration to the premise that what was transcribed, what wasn't transcribed and how the transcript was structured had a strong influence on the analytic process and outcomes (McLellan et al. 2003)

3.5.2 Thematic Analysis

TA is a flexible approach to qualitative analysis which allows researchers to analyse themes in a way that matches their intentions of the current research. Its flexibility is a key advantage of using TA and it has been described as being independent of a specific theory or epistemology (Braun & Clark, 2006) which can provide a useful research tool to help provide a rich, detailed yet complex account of data - it is a way to become familiar with data and develop a deeper appreciation of the content (Boyatzis, 1998). It is a generic process that can be used with most qualitative methods. This complements the approach taken with the current research to formalise the identification and development of themes to begin to understand more about a relatively unknown yet complex area.
The 6 stages of analysis suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) were followed to carry out the analysis (see Appendix 8):

1. **Becoming familiar with the data** - The audio recordings of each interview were listened to a number of times without making any written notes to immerse the researcher in the data. The recordings were then partially transcribed and the transcripts read and re-read. Each participant’s interview was analysed consecutively. Initial ideas and thoughts were noted.

2. **Generating initial code** - After familiarising myself with the data, sections were labelled to form ‘codes’ (Boyatzis, 1998) which came through as repeated patterns of meaning in the data related to the research questions. As each interview was analysed codes were added to a ‘bank’ of codes (see Appendix 10) and new ones were developed as necessary. In this way codes which came up in more than one interview would have the same name to aid the analysis. This process was carried out in a systematic manner using hard copies of each transcription and colour coding with highlighters (see Appendix 9 for a sample of the transcript with initial codes).

3. **Searching for themes** - Similarities and differences between the codes were examined to group the codes into themes and create a hierarchy of themes. This process was carried out using different colour post-it notes representing the initial codes which were arranged into groups to form themes (see Appendix 11).

4. **Reviewing themes** - The data set was revisited to ensure the themes represented the salient points made and all the data which was relevant had been included in the thematic hierarchy. Themes were refined to ensure they encompassed all the intended codes. A thematic map was created to summarise the theme hierarchy (see Figure 4.1).

5. **Defining and naming themes** - The process of defining and naming the themes began at stage 3 and continued throughout the writing up of the research. The ongoing analysis of thematic names aimed to ensure each theme name was distinct and encompassing and that it fitted with the ‘story’ of the codes that made up the theme and the themes formed a coherent ‘story’ addressing the research questions. Member checking took place with participants via email to share the key themes, there was some renaming of themes as a result of this.
6. **Producing the report** - Once theme names were finalized the findings were ‘written, aiming to produce a compelling story to represent the complexity of the data in a way in which the reader will be convinced of the validity of the analysis. A part of this process was the selection of data extracts to represent capture the essence of the theme in a vivid and concise way. These extracts were embedded in a narrative to further explain the complexities of the data set in relation to the research questions.

Member checking was carried out via email at the analysis stage (see Appendix 13) - a summary of the findings was disseminated to participants via email with the opportunity for further discussion if desired.

**3.6 Critique of method**

Many of the justifications and considerations of the methodology chosen for each stage of the research address have been done to maximise validity and reliability within the chosen research design. However, the methods of data collection used have inherent limitations that need to be warranted a level of awareness and reflectivity to reduce potential bias (Stake, 1994).

Semi-structured interviews are an important tool for gathering qualitative data but not without criticism. Threats to the validity of this type of interview include using leading questions and the preconceived ideas of the researcher influencing what is or isn’t worth discussing. However, the ‘live’ nature of an interview and the complexity of language mean that it is not easy to avoid these and other challenges (Newton, 2010). Vulnerability and complexity is what creates a rich data set worth the associated risks (Newton, 2010).

Successful interviewing requires key skills and professional integrity (Adam, 2010), these skills had been developed by the researcher in previous research roles and used explicitly for other research requirements on the present training. It was important to ensure reflective practice and empathy were utilised, for the interviewee to feel comfortable and enable them to talk freely about the subject area within the structure of the questions. As the subject area is not freely discussed within the EP profession, it may be that interviewees did not feel ready to talk about some of the aspects of the interview. Therefore, the interview pace was guided by the interviewee, if they needed time to think and reflect that was given. A brief questionnaire was sent out in phase 1 before the interview to focus interviewees’ thoughts and reflections in preparation for the interview and at phase 2 the general areas to be discussed were emailed in advance for the same reason.
There is also the risk of potential bias of the questions and analysis – supervision was used to check the questions for both stages, and member checking with interviewees from phase 1 of the interview schedule for phase 2 was carried out. Member checking was also carried out at the analysis stage to ensure the key points they wanted to make had been picked up on and were represented in the identified themes.

There should also be a consideration of the influence of the expectations of interviewees’ or ‘demand characteristics’ (Gomm, 2004). It was important to make it clear from the initial email what the intended outcome of the research was and the topics which would be discussed. There were opportunities to discuss the research before the interview and efforts to make the interviewee feel at ease before, during and after the actual interview.

Overall, it is the power of the semi structured interview which allows each interviewee to share a rich and original voice to be constructed into a narrative for analysis that makes it an invaluable methodology (Newton, 2010).

EPs that responded to the interview tended to have an interest in PTs whether they were using them in their practice or not. Although this does not mean key facilitators and barriers would be explored it needs to be a consideration in terms of the sample and its representativeness of the UK EP community.

Although TA is a relatively straightforward qualitative analysis there are some potential areas which need to be acknowledged to ensure the analysis is valid and of good quality (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher has used this process successfully on a number of other research projects and so has developed some of the associated skills that enable this to be the case. The selected data extracts were chosen to illustrate key points and were embedded in a narrative to elaborate and explain the identified theme to enable the reader to understand the data and what it might mean (Braun & Clarke, 2006). There were a number of ways the researcher addressed possible criticism of the methodology, such as, there was a continual analysis of theme names and attention to the degree of overlap and the ‘story’ of the themes. The data extracts were analysed for their consistency with any analytic and interpretive points made. The research followed Braun & Clarke (2006) six phases of TA and gave details of this above, in this paper they also gave a ‘15-point checklist of criteria for good thematic analysis’ which was considered throughout the process.

To ensure participants were referring to the same techniques when discussing PTs the pre-interview questionnaire was given out at phase 1 and the information sheet listed a range of the types of techniques being referred to. Participants were assured this was
not an exhaustive list and there was opportunity for questions and discussion around this.

It would have been ideal to carry out the interviews in person, this would increase the comparability. Unfortunately, a compromise had to be made with financial, time and locality restrictions to offer in person or phone/video interviews to ensure no EPs in the UK who were interested in participating were restricted from doing so. However, ideally the same modality would have been used for all interviews to prevent any possible bias.

Due to time constraints NVivo was not used to carry out the TA, however with more time to master and explore the programme, this could have been a useful package to aid the analysis process.

3.7 Ethics

Ethical considerations were put in place in accordance with the HCPC Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics (HCPC, 2016) and British Psychological Society’s Code of Human Research Ethics (BPS, 2014). Appropriate ethical approval was sought through the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Manchester before embarking on any stage of data collection.

Informed consent was sought from all professionals involved. A participant information sheet (see Appendix 3) was distributed to outline the aims of the research, and after a minimum of two weeks, consent forms (see Appendix 5) were distributed and signed copies returned. The data gathered was stored anonymously, to ensure confidentiality.

Member checking of the TA process was carried out and an opportunity for feedback was offered to all participants at an arranged meeting or via email.

The research has been granted ethical approval by the School Research Integrity Committee (RIC) against a pre-approved UREC template (Ref: PGR-5494891-A1) on 1st October 2013, approval was issued via email (see Appendix 14).
### 3.8 Timeline and risk analysis

#### 3.8.1 Timeline

**Table 3.3: Timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 June 2013</td>
<td>Thesis proposal draft to supervisor and co-supervisor (second supervisor) [feedback Jun 26th]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 July 2013</td>
<td>Thesis proposal submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 July 2013</td>
<td>Thesis panel presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 July 2013</td>
<td>Thesis panel feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2013</td>
<td>Ethical approval confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2013 - May 2014</td>
<td>Maternity leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2014 - January 2015</td>
<td>Phase 1 data gathering (interviews)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2015 - May 2015</td>
<td>Phase 2 data gathering (interviews)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2015</td>
<td>Thesis proposal corrections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2015 - January 2016</td>
<td>Transcription of Phase 1 and 2 data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2016 - April 2016</td>
<td>Analysis of data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2016 - September 2016</td>
<td>Complete write-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2016</td>
<td>Refinements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2016</td>
<td>Give notice of submission of thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2016</td>
<td>Submit thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2016</td>
<td>Mock oral examinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2016</td>
<td>Oral examinations (viva voce) with internal and external examiner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2016</td>
<td>Thesis amendments, if required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3.8.2 Risk analysis

**Table 3.4: Ethical Risk Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Level of risk</th>
<th>Contingency plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the potential for participants feeling coerced into being involved in the research?</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Every participant is given an information sheet so they know exactly what is required of them, the time commitment, that they can withdraw at any time and how to ask questions. The information sheet is distributed at least 2 weeks before consent is requested. Contact is only made via professional networks. No financial gain or gifts are offered for being involved in the research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the potential for adverse effects of a physical nature; risks or hazards, pain, discomfort, distress, or inconvenience, to participants?</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>There is no risk that there will be any adverse effects of a physical nature. Fire regulations for the University buildings will be familiarised, and measures to visit the EPs place of work for phases 1 and 2 will be considered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will any topics discussed (questionnaire, group discussion or individual interview) be sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting, or is it possible that criminal or other disclosures requiring action could take place during the project?</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>The topics are of a professional nature and should not cause distress. A thorough information sheet will be distributed 2 weeks before consent is obtained with contact details to ask questions or discuss any concerns before the data gathering stage. There will be an opportunity for debrief after the interview, and clear structured feedback arranged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What happens if a participant becomes distressed or wants to withdraw?</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>All participants of phase 1 and 2 will be given the opportunity to withdraw from the research at any time, and will have the information sheet for two weeks before consenting to be a part of the research. Regular breaks will be given and refreshments provided if the interview takes place in person. No distress is expected as the questioning is regarding an issue related to professional issues, however, if there is any signs</td>
</tr>
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</table>
of distress or upset the interview will be stopped immediately. Opportunities for questions or discussion will be offered when the information sheets are distributed, after the interview and at the feedback stage.

What is the potential for adverse effects, risks or hazards, pain, discomfort, distress, or inconvenience, of a physical or psychological nature to you as the researcher?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Level of risk</th>
<th>Contingency plan</th>
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<tr>
<td>What is the potential for qualitative analysis not eliciting all key points made during the interview/focus group?</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Member checking with participants of both phases 1 and 2. Feedback will be given on the outcomes of analysis of phases 1 and 2.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How will the data collection methods and storage ensure confidentiality?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk</th>
<th>Level of risk</th>
<th>Contingency plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| How will the data collection methods and storage ensure confidentiality? | Low           | Data for phases 1 and 2 will be anonymised and stored on an encrypted pen drive. The electronic and hard files will be destroyed in 5 years time, and in that 5 year period be stored in a secure location with no names or personal details. Audio files will be deleted once transcribed.  

The researcher will carry out all transcribing and analysis in a private and confidential location, it will not come into contact with unauthorized persons in any way, and will be stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act, anonymised and electronic files encrypted. |
Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Introduction and outline of findings

This section will outline the thematic analysis of the data using Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six stage model (see Appendix 8), presenting the identified themes and providing direct quotations to encapsulate each theme embedded in a narrative to demonstrate the richness and fully explore the data. Data extract (direct quotation) refers to an individual coded chunk of data which is identified and extracted from a data item (transcript of a participant’s interview). A selection of these extracts will be interwoven into the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The systematic framework that was followed is outlined in section 3.5.2 to enable the reader to clearly see the process.

There were 91 initial codes identified in the data which formed 12 basic themes. These were organised into clusters which represented related ideas and four organising themes.

Each organising theme will be addressed in turn by exploring the data that makes up each of the basic themes within the organising theme. For the purposes of clarity, the organising themes referred to in this chapter will be underlined, the basic themes will be emboldened and the codes will be italicised. The representative data extracts are embedded in the narrative to further highlight and encapsulate the theme being discussed. The interviewees are referred to in anonymised code (EP1, EP2 ….).

An overall thematic map (see Figure 4.1) was created to illustrate this process and help shape the narrative of the findings, this section is structured around this thematic map. The organising theme is shown in red, the basic themes in green and one of the basic themes has two organising subthemes which are shown in blue.
Figure 4.1: Overall thematic map
A full breakdown of these basic themes into their subthemes, with quotations to back up the explanation from the interview transcripts can be found in Appendix 12.

The thematic map for each organising theme will be presented before the supporting narrative. Each basic theme will be diagrammatically presented to show the breakdown into subthemes, and systematically analysed with exemplar quotes and narratives to illustrate the codes that lie within each subtheme. In these diagrams, the basic themes will be red and the subthemes will be green. On some of the diagrams there are subthemes which are purple, these are subthemes which are represented in other thematic diagrams but are mentioned and included as there is a degree of overlap. These subthemes will be described in full in their primary basic theme section, but will be clearly linked to themes which overlap. In terms of the individual thematic maps, the green basic themes will be explored in detail and the purple subthemes referred to where appropriate.

This structured approach will ensure a full and rich exploration of the complete data set.
4.2 Organising theme: Psychodynamic framework

Comments were made by all seven participants related to a psychodynamic framework during the interviews. Within the data there was reference to ‘psychodynamic’ and ‘psychoanalytic’ which tended to be interchanged, with EPs who trained on the programme with a key focus on psychoanalytic thinking using the term ‘psychoanalytic’: ‘I would call it psychoanalytic not psychodynamic … I haven’t got a very clear … um … a clear reason as to why, that’s how I’ve always thought about it …’ (EP5), and EPs trained elsewhere using ‘psychodynamic’, perhaps because the researcher used the term psychodynamic in the interview questions and these EPs not having directly considered the terminology they would use. There is often confusion over the use of the terms (McLoed, 2007) and therefore it is useful to reiterate this clarification before exploring the data. Psychodynamic can be defined as: ‘Describing all the theories of human functioning which are based on the interplay of unconscious drives and other forces within the person’ (Hayes & Stratton, 2013), whereas psychoanalysis can be defined as ‘The method of psychological treatment originated by Freud and developed by various of his followers’ (Hayes & Stratton, 2013). It is worth noting that ‘Psychoanalytic theory is the clearest example [of psychodynamic theory], and the term ‘psychodynamic’ is often used to refer to this class of theories’ (Hayes & Stratton, 2013). Therefore, psychodynamic is a broader term including, but not restricted to the theories of Freud and his followers, and for the purposes of exploration of the data in the present research, a distinction is not made between the two – both referring to the exploration of the inner self to help understand relationships, experiences and view of the world. The relevant data extracts use the participant’s own language and the researchers default will be ‘psychodynamic’ unless specified.
4.2.1 Basic theme: Reputation

There was a general view that there is a negative attitude to psychodynamic thinking in the UK. When making a comparison to the USA, EP2 commented that: ‘… psychoanalysis doesn’t have quite the bad press that it does here’. This was reflected in the attitudes of the EP community as well as the general public: ‘It seems to have been accepted that you know … everything to do with Freud is ridiculous and we should all start doing CBT’ (EP4), and described in terms of the general framework and the threat to the profession: ‘I do think it is partly an attitudinal issue to … towards, as I said earlier, psychodynamic or psychoanalytic ideas more generally, and the idea that … um, we might not be quite as rational and, you know … quite as adult all the time as we would like to be, is quite radical if you are a professional practitioner’ (EP2).

There was an aspect of not being able to explain this, even by the EPs who were experienced practitioners, despite the heritage of psychoanalysis in the UK: ‘I feel like there is a lot of resistance to the ideas, um … yeah, it’s hard to say really because the UK really was a big centre of psychoanalysis like Freud was here, Anna Freud was here and yet somehow it is just not in … in our professions in a big way. Yeah, it’s a bit mystifying’ (EP7). Some EPs responded with comments which illustrated aspects of the professions attitudes which may contribute to a psychodynamic framework not being utilised: ‘EPs can be quite cutting … and … and hurtful towards each other sometimes and very judgemental about each others practice’ (EP4), and how these attitudinal aspects can greatly impact on reputation and popularity: ‘So you’re not going to get people offering training, support and development about something that there’s kind of a … poo-poo attitude… why would you ever bother … ’(EP4). This may be in part due to a lack of experience and understanding of psychodynamic thinking and subsequently the use of PTs, highlighted by the remark that: ‘… if you’re not very psychoanalytically minded it’s … it’s kind of hard to get why you think showing kids a bunch of cards and asking them to tell a story is … a suitable activity to be doing’ (EP7).

The growing need for evidence based therapies and approaches also emerged from the data, although this is explored in more detail in subsequent sections it is important in shaping attitudes to psychodynamic thinking in particular: ‘… unfortunately, I think it can be seen as wishy washy, that there is no evidence, that it is your own interpretation. I think there is a lot of evidence in psychoanalytic literature, but it is not widely popular’ (EP3). This was echoed by other participants referring to PTs particularly as ‘not proper tests’ (EP4) and raises some important questions about
standardisation which are explored in more detail later in this section and the dissemination of research which has been published.

*Popularity* was mentioned a number of times by different participants and emerged as a code related to the EP community specifically. The approach was described as ‘*inherently unpopular*’ (EP2) and a number of participants acknowledged that it has been neglected by the profession: ‘*I think it’s a really important approach that has been a bit ignored for the last thirty, forty years*’ (EP1). This was highlighted by comments related to the dearth of published literature on psychodynamic approaches in the field and inclusion at events such as conferences, particularly for trainees: ‘*… not a lot of trainees are talking about – oh, projectives and psychodynamic … it just doesn’t seem to be something that gets discussed very much*’ (EP4).

The data also represented views on the *popularity* of psychodynamic thinking related to a lack of opportunity to find out about and use approaches such as PTs, coupled with a lack of EPs skilled in these techniques and having input on training programmes, there were concerns about it being forgotten altogether: ‘*… it would worry me that’s something that’s going to die out*’ (EP7).

Subsequent comments led to the emergence of a *raising profile* code, which actually came through as the strongest code within the *reputation* theme. There was an obvious enthusiasm in these responses and they encompassed a range of ways the profile could be raised and illustrated a curiosity and passion for psychodynamic thinking from all participants, regardless if they used related techniques or not.

Research was mentioned by a number of participants in relation to *reputation* and given as a reason for wanting to take part in the present research: ‘*I think if people like you are researching it, you’ve probably seen that you’re drawing attention to it, um … and it begins to become a kind of a lively discussion and debate …*’ (EP4) and ‘*I mean, that’s partly why I wanted to do this study because I think … um … that it is really important that we keep talking about it …*’ (EP5).

It was important to a number of the participants to encourage EPs to talk about PTs and a psychodynamic framework, to encourage its acceptance and use in the field: ‘*… if there was more of a discussion and a debate and a real kind of engagement with them then it could revitalise your practice and make you think, oh yeah, actually I could use that I could try that*’ (EP4). EP4 highlighted a way to acknowledge this starting to happen would be: ‘*…going to something like a DECP conference and seeing workshops and symposiums, seeing papers being published and seeing … you know, more important than the day to day practice of EPs, that EPs are talking about it together…*’ (EP4). The starting point for this may be in the training programmes
(covered in more detail later in this section) and the possibility for structured collaboration of EPs who do use or are interested in using a psychodynamic framework and PTs: ‘I would like a group network of projective testees to maybe … to have a space to, um … talk basically and bring material and think about how it can be used helpfully, basically’ (EP5).

A barrier to an increase in the popularity of EPs using psychodynamic thinking in their practice emerged as a code named fear in EP community. EP7 talked about the ‘… fear of psychoanalytic theory, fear that it’s ‘quackery’, that it’s too interpretative, that it’s too, um … er, subjective … ‘(EP7). This fear may be about using techniques which are not widely used, and the reaction of colleagues: ‘I do wonder if there isn’t a bit of a fear about kind of um … you know you look at some of the debates on EPNET and there was one there recently about people saying I wouldn’t post on here because you just get cut down and shot down for … for expressing a view … ‘ (EP4).

There was also comments regarding individual EP’s fears about delving into areas where there is a degree of self exploration, in terms of their own unconscious world and desires: ‘I think that maybe one of the things that comes out, is that people don’t want to lift the stones in case they have to manage whatever crawls out from underneath them … that is one of the problems’ (EP2), particularly in relation to their professionalism: ‘My own hypothesis about that is that is scares the life out of people … to think that they’re … you know, underneath this veneer of rationale, professionalism … perhaps the positivists are particularly prone to this … there is this seething … you know, unconscious for which we have very little control or knowledge .. and so people back away from analytic ideas … very, very rapidly…’ (EP2).

A possible explanation is related to the culture of the UK having an effect on the reputation of psychodynamic psychology and PTs. Comments were made by over half of the participants relating to culture, particularly in comparison to the USA: ‘America are so much more open about their feelings aren’t they, and most people have a therapist in everyday life to talk about how they are feeling, to project, it’s more the culture I suppose, it’s not part of our culture. We’re stiff upper lip aren’t we …’ (EP6), adding ‘… I think we need a cultural change’ (EP6). Some concerns were raised about PTs becoming more popular in terms of their acceptability in popular culture, such as with the Rorschach: ‘I have got a set of table mats on my desk which are Rorschach, so I know it has seeped into popular, um … culture in a sense, and that might contaminate the testing in some ways …’ (EP1).
4.2.2 Basic theme: Barriers

Within the organising theme of psychodynamic framework emerged a basic theme related to the barriers of using it in practice. There is a degree of overlap with other identified themes, however it was felt that the codes within this theme naturally clustered together and allowed further exploration.

The most pertinent barrier which emerged was caution in use and was mentioned by the majority of the participants, the most frequent reference was made by EPs who worked for local authorities and didn’t use PTs. The caution was often related to professional responsibility and the high level of scrutiny of their work and how this could impact on their decision to use a psychodynamic framework and PTs: ‘...it might put us off potentially using something, just because of, you know ... everything gets scrutinised now...’ (EP6).

The EPs who did use PTs still acknowledged the caution in using them highlighted by the lack of EPs who use them, even after focused training. This caution was explained in terms of when to choose to use a PT: ‘I am very careful about when I choose to use them. If there is already an understanding of what is going on, I wouldn't then decide to use the CAT as another add on’ (EP3), and in the interpretation: ‘I think you have to be very careful how you interpret things. I see it very much as a clinical ... clinical techniques... um... and obviously you can make assumptions which might be incorrect, I think you have to be careful’ (EP6). EP4 commented on the need for the EP community to not use their caution as a reason not to utilise a psychodynamic framework and PTs: ‘...they are not the be all and end all and they need to be kind of um ... administered safely and within the guidelines of professional competence. However, they can have something to offer...’ (EP4).

The EPs who work within a psychodynamic framework were generally more positive about any potential barriers that may exist and had obviously thought about their personal rationale in terms of use and interpretation of related techniques: ‘Overall, if I am really honest, I have never really felt a barrier to using it because I think I explain it in terms of what themes may emerge that may be useful if I child cannot express it verbally’ (EP3), acknowledging that ‘... it could be dangerous if used thoughtlessly ...’ (EP7).

As well as more general barriers, there were some specific, and more practical barriers mentioned by the EPs who used PTs:

‘The CAT and the ORT require a certain level of verbal ability, so, um ... if the child doesn’t have many words, um ... I probably wouldn’t use one of those. Similarly if they
are not good at drawing, um … I wouldn’t necessarily use any drawing. Quite often with very young children I won’t use PTs. I think there are question marks over autism, whether to use them there, um … so that’s one where I just kind of play it by ear and use my judgement as to whether I think it would add anything’ (EP7).

The level of verbal ability was mentioned by a number of participants, as a barrier but also as a way to triangulate across assessments to explore language capabilities: ‘I think that even though language is a potential barrier, it’s … it sort of isn’t as well because it tells you a lot about how they use language, how they can form a narrative, the kind of vocabulary they are using’ (EP5).

When talking about barriers and being cautious, child protection and legal issues were mentioned as situations when it may not be appropriate to use PTs. It also emerged that reporting on using PTs needs to be approached sensitively and individualised to each set of circumstances, including the use of terminology and reference to tests:

‘I would sort of write about it, not in lay terms as such, but I would be very careful, I wouldn’t refer to it as a projective test as such, I would name the test and I would say it contains a set of cards where the child tells a story about each card and that we looked to see if there were any common themes emerging that might support our understanding of what the child is experiencing. So I sort of frame it in a way that, you know, is understandable to who is going to be reading the report’ (EP3).

EP5 talked about the consideration for how she: ‘…could feed that back into the system in a useful way’ (EP5). This caution in reporting can result in not reporting directly: ‘…I might test out the hypotheses I have in the feedback meeting, rather than reporting them directly’ (EP7). However, there is a need for transparency and comprehensiveness in reporting, for the service user and in case of challenge.

Parents were mentioned regarding exercising caution and possible resistance to a psychodynamic perspective and PTs: ‘If you say you are looking at what a child projects onto a picture … you get insight into a child’s internal world, you get parents with a very… you know, are concerned by that. If it sounds like you are delving into, you know…. they become quite resistant to you’ (EP3). However, the views between participants differed greatly, EP3 commented: ‘I haven’t found school to be resistant to the idea, or parents.’ (EP3) and EP6 said ‘Parents might question them. You know, they might say ‘what’s that going to tell you? They could have said anything’ (EP6).

Similarly, comments about barriers within school were varied, EP3 commented: ‘I haven’t found school to be resistant to the idea, or parents (EP3) and ‘… you can have school think, well that sounds a bit wishy washy, you know, and we want some kind of
hard data’ (EP3). This may reflect a variability within schools and also an element of not knowing what schools opinion is and trusting the professional opinion of the EP: ‘I would say in schools the staff are generally quite open … I haven’t really come across much resistance in schools if I have said things that even I would regard as quite weird …’ (EP7). A psychodynamic perspective may be accepted by school or indeed what they value from EP involvement, as it is distinct from the input other professionals offer in a school environment. The EP is often involved at the point where there is a degree of ‘stuckness’ and to give an alternative opinion on a situation using the techniques and frameworks they judge to be appropriate.

4.2.3 Basic theme: Psychodynamic factors

Throughout the interviews there was reference to particular theories and concepts of psychodynamic psychology. The roots of psychodynamic psychology were mentioned in relation to not being a substantial part of psychology training at undergraduate or postgraduate level, with obvious links to earlier codes within the reputation theme and an impact on codes within the training theme. There was no clear reasons given for this, but an acknowledgement that psychodynamic psychology is not represented equally within the domains of psychology, mystifying, considering the contribution Freud and other key figures within this field have made to modern psychology which is often overlooked. A possible exception being attachment theory which EP7 talked about: ‘…attachment theory came out of psychoanalytic theory but that’s … in my view it’s more of a kind of an accepted thing, it’s less scary than psychoanalysis … and easier for people to understand and use those ideas …’ (EP7). The acceptability of attachment theory by the EP community may not necessarily acknowledge the influence that concepts from psychodynamic psychology had to the original tenets of Bowlby’s attachment theory and as a contemporary psychodynamic approach (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2005), possibly as a result of a lack of understanding and experience with this type of framework and a focus on attachment theory as a multi-level theory at the behavioural, cognitive and physiological levels (BPS, 2007).

EP4 described the EP profession’s reluctance to engage with a psychodynamic framework using key aspects of the theory: ‘If you think about kind of the … well, in terms of defences … and denial and … a very critical one … it’s … it’s almost like a system of denial of a … of a really rich tradition …’ (EP4). The mention of defensiveness was also made by other participants: ‘… to have something which is prescribed, you know … seems to me as an … as an analytically …. psychoanalytically orientated person, seems to me to be defensive, in the widest sense of the word’ (EP2). EPs who used PTs in their practice acknowledged how defense mechanisms
can play an important part in their role: ‘What I am noticing in their non-verbal behaviour, any kind of transference that I am picking up on, any strong emotion’ (EP3) and ‘… it’s a way of kind of getting … getting past some … some people’s defences’ (EP7) and how PTs can be a way to do this: ‘… people do avoid addressing sometimes depressing thoughts and feelings and again projectives can be a really helpful insight …’ (EP4).

The ability of PTs to access the *internal world of a child* was talked about in the interviews by EPs who use a psychodynamic framework as a clear difference from other methods and reason why it can be very useful for the role of the EP: ‘… it gives the child an opportunity to give expression to what is going internally, that perhaps they are not aware of, that can’t be communicated through other means…’ (EP3) and in direct relation to the use of PTs: ‘… they are a platform for the exploration of somebody’s … internal world, for want of a, um … sort of a better term’ (EP2) and ‘… it gives you a structure within to maybe look for themes that might tell us a little bit about what is going on internally for a child’ (EP3). This provides the opportunity to explore a situation from a child’s perspective not only from what they can report verbally, but allowing access to their internal world which they may not be able to communicate through other means and allow a deeper understanding of that individual child and their current situation: ‘Yet when they are given the opportunity to do something in a more projective fashion … um, I think it is allowing me access into something that maybe … yeah like I say it is an avoidance for something which hasn’t really been coming … been out’ (EP4). The acknowledgement of a need for a deeper understanding of the individual and the existence of an unconscious mind – key concepts in Freudian theory – emerged from the data by EPs who did and did not use PTs in their practice: ‘I am more interested in the stuff in which they are not necessarily, directly aware, but can be pretty obvious to somebody else’ (EP2) and ‘… the subconscious is fascinating and I do think it has a place’ (EP6).

They can also be a vehicle to aid a greater understanding of the importance of relationships in a child’s life, acknowledged by responses such as referring to PTs as: ‘… a mechanism to understand how a child saw themselves in relation to their family, how they saw the people within the family’ (EP4) and also in the potential benefits of using a psychodynamic framework for EPs to understand the impact of relationships: ‘… I would have thought that there is probably a much broader range of opportunities to use psychodynamic thinking … any kind of family work, um … working on parenting and supporting parents and thinking together about relationships and relationships within the school, um … the relationships between teachers and TA’s (EP4).
4.3 Organising theme: Employment

Figure 4.3: Employment thematic map

4.3.1 Basic theme: Employment

The second most prevalent basic theme emerged as employment, relating to the job or role that EPs work in. Over half of the EPs interviewed talked about restricted opportunity in their practice to use PTs, this was particularly strong for EPs employed by the local authority: ‘Unfortunately coming straight into a local authority the opportunity for systemic work was very limited even 12 years ago, now the way our practice has moved it’s just impossible. I mean we haven’t been doing that sort of work for several years and it’s certainly not going to happen now’ (EP6), and this narrowing of the breadth of work carried out seems to be at a peak in some authorities with the pressures of the Children and Families Act (HMG, 2014) and the transition of Statements of Need to Education, Health and Care plans: ‘A lot of us currently are concerned how much we are losing by the nature of our work it’s become very narrowed…’ (EP6). The influence of the service on practice was further explained: ‘… at the moment we are under immense pressure because of the new code of practice, and we are local authority EPs and local authority have … has an agenda and we have to support them because they employ us’ (EP6), highlighting the difficulties some local authority EPs experience related to the breadth and choice within their work.

The broader influence of the government came up a number of times during the interviews: ‘… now a lot of what we are doing is much more political I think, and much more about … you know, meeting agendas and … but there are obviously financial situations, there is nothing we can do about that, the authority is under pressure …’ (EP6). These pressures were talked about particularly in light of recent political changes, but also in a more deep seated way about how the UK approaches education in general: ‘I think we are much more black and white and there’s a right and a wrong and we like our standardised assessments … like with the SATS, these poor children in primary schools and … it’s the way our country is run, we are target set’ (EP6). These comments had a sense of a lack of control and possibly misalignment with
governmental pressures and influences, but that the focus for EPs is to remain child-centred.

The pressures within the role can also impact other areas of employment such as supervision: ‘...you may need the supervisory space to think about the assessment work that you have been doing, but the supervisor is under pressure to talk about how many cases I have done, how many are closing, how many more I can take … and the … the time is a little bit eroded’ (EP4), this area is explored in more detail in the Professional issues theme but there is a clear overlap with the availability of psychodynamic supervision and the opportunity to use PTs.

The lack of opportunity was talked about as reducing the chance to develop confidence and competence in using techniques: ‘You forget really what the tools are. If you don’t use it you loose it - that is so true’ (EP6). This also seems to have an impact on the ability to incorporate new approaches into an EP’s practice: ‘I think people are often not in a position to think, oh shall I add something new to my practice, they just kind of … on a bit of a treadmill of writing reports and things like that’ (EP7). Even those EPs who worked independently or had more scope in their role acknowledged the possible restriction of practice: ‘...are we given opportunities to work in that way where we can see people over periods of time or is it kind of, a go in teacher interview, parent interview, assess the child, write a report, off you go to the next one. And if some parts of people’s practice are like that I can understand why it would be … possibly harder to integrate some aspects of psychodynamic ways of working’ (EP4). An EP employed by the local authority talked about the restrictions on their work compared to other applied psychologists: ‘I just think we’re frustrated sometimes as EPs … you know, we see clinical psychologists and they have these sessions … not that … even that’s getting reduced obviously, but you know, they see the families, they see the children on a regular basis and … you know, they can really get involved. Whereas we’re just … at the moment it’s just, hit and … you know… not hit and run, it’s not that bad but it feels a bit like that’ (EP6).

Time restrictions were an obvious factor in the dichotomy of how an EP would ideally carry out their role and their ability to do this within the boundaries of employment: ‘EPs, you know … have enormous time constraints around the type of assessments that they do …’ (EP2). In terms of using PTs, which often require more time than other assessments - to meet with a child more than once, supervision and to interpret responses, there may well be a lack of understanding or support for the value of this under time allocation type models, one EP summarised this point with a hypothetical thought: ‘…why does it take 3 hours for you to see a child when another EP can do it in
an hour and a half, so …um …’ (EP7). To restrict time seems, in some way, to go against the aims of using PTs: ‘… I used to say to our trainees, never see a child once … ever. You must see them twice, otherwise you can’t use some of these things [PTs]’’ (EP2). One EP expressed their view at a fundamental questioning of approach to practice: ‘I feel like, kind of, time allocation models and things like that are the antithesis of very thoughtful psychological practice’ (EP7). However, to have a reliable understanding of a situation it is necessary to carry have a comprehensive approach, triangulating information obtained from all sources including meeting with a child which often requires more than a single meeting.

This restriction in time extends not only to the use of PTs but also to the possibility of training: ‘… I guess a barrier is having the time to really learn these techniques and be able to use them enough … with enough frequency to become confident with them’ (EP6), which was echoed by EPs that did and did not currently use the techniques in their practice. To be proficient and competent as an EP the assessments and approaches which are available to use need to be familiar: ‘… when we’re under the pressure we are now the aim is to get the job done and we use what we know because we are time limited’ (EP6). Suggesting it is not that EPs want to narrow their repertoire of techniques, but sometimes they are forced to do this to enable them to be confident in their role, especially when there is limited scope to learn new techniques and consider new approaches.

Of course there is great diversity in employment environments for EPs, in work contexts which do not have this level of time restriction there is more opportunity for other approaches: ‘I’m wondering about whether the kind of organisation you’re in and the kind of work context that you have … is that … you’re more or less likely to use psychoanalytic and systemic ways of working’ (EP4).

Also, the people you work with can have an influence: ‘I think some of that influence is very much from where EPs in management positions have trained and their lens of the world, and then colleagues within the service’ (EP3) and ‘If the kinds of cases that you’re getting and the team that you’re in and the people that you are around are familiar and interested and recognise that that way of working has something to offer … and maybe other people don’t have that chance as much?’ (EP4). Colleagues can also act as a barometer of what is acceptable within practice: ‘I’d say from talking to colleagues … I don’t … I’m not aware of anyone that really uses them’ (EP6), and this is possibly a reason why some EPs that use PTs and a psychodynamic framework do not share this: ’I wonder why I haven’t openly shared them with colleagues. That is quite an interesting thought for me’ (EP3). This influence can also be positive and a key
instigator for adopting new techniques and being open to learning about other frameworks: ‘I used to work with someone who used it [PTs] quite a lot … all the time actually, and she’d had the proper training … yeah she was really inspiring and … she was really a super experienced psychologist’ (EP5) and ‘… he had a very good rationale for it which I’ve taken onboard … and its served me over the years with certain … um, youngsters who find it hard to talk about what the issues are’ (EP1).

When asked about what would need to change to use PTs more in their practice, the move to traded services was mentioned several times as enabling more diverse approaches: ‘I would say more traded type work and to have more freedom with the nature of the work we are doing. If someone is buying me in to work with a child, um … perhaps who was school refusing or other issues … social emotional issues, um … and they were buying a package of time, you know, there might be more opportunity…’ (EP6). With the government financial cuts affecting EP services across the country the move to traded services and more independent and creative ways of working – such as school based roles and social enterprise set ups – there could be more scope in the future to lower the restrictions which local authority EPs in particular have been feeling, allowing for a broadening of the techniques and frameworks which are used.

4.3.2 Basic theme: Use of PTs

A prevalent code within the use of PTs theme was the isolation felt in using them: ‘I have very much practised it in isolation within my service, I am the only psychodynamically inclined EP within my current service’ (EP3) and a sense of not knowing the level of their use by other EPs: ‘I don’t know whether there are similar services that have the same … you know, the same orientation towards psychodynamic … not just about projectives but the use of psychodynamic thinking generally’ (EP4). There was an acknowledgement of the independence of the role: ‘I would say that everyone works in their own way, and it’s more that people don’t really know what other people are doing rather than being open to it, necessarily’ (EP7).

An underlying desire for more collaboration alongside the mystery of the frameworks other EPs followed emerged from the interviews: ‘I think the other thing is about recognising that there are those pockets and people not really being able to come together’ (EP4) with a potential that actually there are very few EPs who use a psychodynamic framework and PTs: ‘… to my knowledge no one else in [my current service] uses PTs apart from me … in my last service I don’t think anyone else did either, so it’s quite … you have to develop your own support network’ (EP7) and ‘I’m not really aware of any people who are particularly trained in the use of these techniques with children’ (EP1).
The sense of *isolation* within the wider EP community was felt by EPs trained and working where the psychodynamic framework was the key emphasis: ‘I think, funnily enough, when you’re here an being in this building, you know, it’s not … it’s not questioned, in fact it’s just like – yeah, so normal and so much part of practice. It’s only when you step outside that you realise … it’s almost like … hugely like the right hand doesn’t know what the left hand is doing … in a very sort of … wow, that’s … that’s … you’d be quite taken aback by it’ (EP4), suggesting a need for a more open dialogue about the use of PTs and opportunities for networking and collaboration for a more joined up and transparent communication within the UK EP community.

The sense of the use of PTs being *hidden* was apparent, in terms of individual EPs not being open about their use: ‘I think projectives are a bit of a dirty secret, you might have a photocopied CAT that you keep in your drawer and you get the cards out but then you don’t know whether it’s ok to write on the report that you used it …’ (EP7) and also that the people that do use these techniques are somehow in a network which is *hidden* from the wider EP community: ‘… maybe there is a lot going on that is a bit beneath the surface and isn’t as apparent and it could be that there are some quite um … leading, engaged and very well developed networks of … of people working in this way’ (EP4). There is a question regarding the ethical responsibility of reporting all assessment techniques used and if a choice is made not to do so.

In the interviews this ‘hidden’ factor is referred to in terms of having to *defend or justify the use of PTs* within an EP’s practice: ‘I think there is something at the back of my mind, thinking, how would I …I would feel under pressure I think, if I had colleagues from, there are lots and lots of colleagues that have trained [where the psychodynamic framework is not the focus] or somewhere like that, or I think I would feel I would probably need, in my stereotyped view, I’d have to find some research, some kind of rigour to say this has a sound evidence base – to try it’ (EP3) the need for more research in the area was further explained by EP3: ‘…so that it feels a little more robust, so that EPs feel, maybe more comfortable with using it, so that they can justify it …’ (EP3). This suggests EPs may need a broader view of what evidence is, including specialist knowledge not just scientific knowledge as per the Daubert Criteria.

This ‘unknown’ dimension indicates a need to explore the current use of PTs and a psychodynamic framework by the entire UK based EP community to have a transparent baseline to build a greater understanding of the potential use of this area of psychology. *Transparency* was also mentioned in terms of how the PT is introduced: ‘I think there is an issue about am I being fully honest and open about what this test entails’ (EP3) and sensitivity in communicating the nature of a technique: ‘It is that
dilemma about being authentic and truthful about what a test is, without making it sound … I think it can sound like something quite frightening, if it is framed in a certain way’ (EP3).

It is useful to address the use of PTs in terms of the positive aspects of what the psychodynamic framework and specifically PTs have to offer EPs that were mentioned in the interviews. The majority of the participants mentioned the value added nature of the techniques, in terms of the richness and depth of the material gathered: ‘… you get a … a much more … a much deeper, a much more complex view of their child and their view of the world, and their family and their view of the world … and that can’t be anything but helpful’ (EP2) and ‘I think … it’s going beyond surface explanations for why people are doing the things they are doing really …’ (EP7) and also in terms of the accessibility: ‘There wouldn’t have been any other way of accessing that I don’t think, given the types of assessment she was doing …’ (EP2) and ‘I have just found it has often been the value added when there has been a kind of, a bit of stickiness around what is going on for a child emotionally. It can be very, very useful (EP3). The focus on emotion and relationships also seemed to be a unique contribution of the techniques: ‘I find that they do add a huge amount of … things like the focus on affect and on expression of feeling’ (EP4) and ‘I think psychodynamic thinking and assessing, um … so that our problem solving is as good as it could be, I think it adds to our profession, because it makes us more effective, it makes us more … more capable in the work that we do, um … because we are really putting emotions and feelings and relationships at the very centre of how we work’ (EP4). An important acknowledgment was made by EP1 regarding the value added of a psychodynamic framework does not mean other approaches and techniques are dismissed: ‘It doesn’t mean that I’m not also … when I need to be … quite behavioural, um … you know, even prescriptive … um, it doesn’t mean that I’m not interested in observation schedules or … you know, psychometric assessment or anything like that … or standardised assessment … not at all. It just totally enriches that aspect of a psychological assessment … um, and you know, I … my sense is that is what we should be doing (EP2). EP4 highlighted the positive and proactive way that such a framework and techniques can be used by EPs: ‘I think there is a real push within psychodynamic thinking, it isn’t just about the absence of symptoms it’s about the idea of, you know, the … the good life, the kind of um … well, healthy and open to new experiences and able to … that to me is the … that … that adds to our profession because they’re … if we are using these techniques and using them well and they were making a difference we wouldn’t just be about trying to reduce symptoms of difficulties in children and families we would be about promoting
something about … you know, wellbeing … a real genuine sense of, um … yeah, a … a life that’s worth living …’ (EP4).

An important consideration which emerged as a code within the use of PTs theme was whether PTs were used as part of a psychodynamic framework, with some EPs saying you can’t do one without the other: ‘… if you think psychodynamically or you accept that there is some value to psychodynamic thinking, I think projectives then almost become a … kind of a … um … a really important part of your practice’ (EP4) and the importance of having a psychodynamic framework underpinning the use of PTs: ‘I think you need to link the two together really for it to really … your, kind of, theoretical orientation and your, kind of, epistemology. You know … you have to have a view about the nature and origin and where it comes from … your theoretical orientation drives from that and that moves into what kind of tools and techniques do I feel most comfortable using’ (EP4). EP7 acknowledged that to work in this way may not be suited to all EPs ‘… I think if … if psychoanalysis is not an approach for you, if it doesn’t fit with the way you see the world then there’s no point in … in using them …’ (EP7)

These comments led to points being made regarding the different levels of use of PTs and whether they are used by some EPs in a more superficial way: ‘I have asked children to draw their family before but in a very superficial level. I wasn’t drawing any, you know, I wasn’t analysing that data’ (EP6) and ‘… in some ways it is just a chance for a child to tell the story and see what kind of themes emerge about the main figures in it’ (EP3) or as a rapport building technique: ‘[Kinetic Family Drawing]… that was a really good … um … technique to work with children … um … who may find the initial meeting with the very unfamiliar adult to be quite daunting, with the idea that you could come and you could draw, and it … sort of as an icebreaker’ (EP4). EP3 acknowledged that it was the specific technique which tended to determine if they were used within a psychodynamic framework or not: ‘It’s very different to the bear cards or blob tree, when I use those it’s not actively there, but with the CAT I am very much thinking about it from a psychodynamic perspective in terms of interpretations and what is framing my thinking, while the assessment is going on’ (EP3). EPs who used the techniques more tended to not make this distinction, but use their chosen technique within the psychodynamic framework, as that was their philosophy underpinning their practice: ‘… sentence completion which you can use projectively … um, I mean that is not what it was designed for originally, but you can use a lot of things projectively that are not designed for that’ (EP2) and ‘… if I do the um, the Ideal Self I’ll probably use some psychoanalytic ideas when I’m, kind of, interpreting what … what the child’s bringing to that’ (EP7).
Within the use of PTs theme a code emerged related to their suitability in terms of the restrictions of employment: ‘I don’t think psychodynamic and projectives necessarily lend themselves to that very manualised approach that some parts of practice are going down where you can take a book and say session one I need to do X and session two I need to do Y’ (EP4) or the nature of the referral. However, EP4 highlighted a broader acceptance of a psychodynamic framework: ‘I think in team meetings, in team functioning, in thinking about the group processes – conscious and unconscious, casework, working with families, working with school staff, working with other disciplines, team around the family, team around the child. I… I really struggle to find a time when having an awareness around relationships, affect, the unconscious, avoidance isn’t appropriate …’ (EP4).

Potential uses was the most prevalent code within the use of PTs theme, commented on by nearly all EPs whether they used them or not. The potential uses were seen in a very broad way: ‘I think psychodynamics have as much to offer at the group and organisational level as they do at individual and casework level’ (EP4) and ‘I would have thought that there is probably a much broader range of opportunities to use psychodynamic thinking … any kind of family work, um … working on parenting and supporting parents and thinking together about relationships and relationships within the school, um … the relationships between teachers and TAs’ (EP4) and ‘… how our teams work, how we engage in supervision … I think it would add to our profession in that way as well’ (EP4). There was also caution in how a broader use of psychodynamic techniques would play out: ‘I think it has a lot to offer but it is how you would market it, and make it … so that people could hear it really and see it’s benefits and values’ (EP3).

Some EPs talked about the possibility and usefulness of assessing other aspects of a child’s development during PTs, such as their verbal ability, literacy and language skills or fine motor skills, depending on the nature of the technique being used. EP6 talked about PTs being ‘less threatening’ especially for children and young people with learning difficulties and ‘…we are seeing more complex children … and these type of techniques could be … could be really useful actually’ (EP6). EP4 uses PTs as part of her practice and explained how: ‘Psychodynamic and systemic ways of working are really huge part of that work that we do with people with autism and learning disability’ (EP4). This potential use within the realm of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) also came with caution for certain populations: ‘I think there are question marks over autism, whether to use them there, um … so that’s one where I just kind of play it by ear and use my judgement as to whether I think it would add anything’ (EP7). Mental health was specifically mentioned as an area where PTs are useful, which is
particularly pertinent with the increased interest in EPs addressing social and emotional aspects of the lives of children and young people. A possible reason for this is that these vulnerable groups can find it harder to communicate verbally and PTs do not rely solely on verbal interaction. EP1 acknowledged this: ‘I would use it with youngsters who find it hard to do any face to face discussion …’ (EP1). In enabling and encouraging communication the child’s voice can be heard: ‘I would feel like it is a way of giving the child a voice, in a way. You know a child might be reluctant to explore it in other ways’ (EP3), possibly because the nature of the technique is more accessible: ‘…it is done through storytelling, I just think that it is very appealing to children …’ (EP3) and open ended and therefore more likely ‘… to elicit the child’s views…’ (EP4).

The way PTs can do this is through enabling expression: ‘I have just found that things that can’t be expressed readily by a child, maybe you could try and do that through play or drawing’ (EP3) and that the task set is enjoyable and non-threatening and more likely to enable expression: ‘You’ll be doing a nice drawing but you will be revealing things through the drawing that you might not … you either might not want to express or you might not be able to express. Um .. so yeah it’s kind of a different way of … of learning about someone I suppose’ (EP7). The material that is expressed can then aid understanding: ‘Will this help me to understand further, and help people in the child’s life, to understand further what the world looks like from his perspective, how he sees relationships, what it looks like in his internal world’ (EP3) and ‘…to help explain some things that other people find puzzling’ (EP1). EP7 relates this to her aims in practice: ‘… something I sort of hope from my practice, is understanding, so it’s kind of about … developing a deep understanding of … of a situation … what’s gone on and the history of a person, how that contributes to … to whatever problem it is they have been referred for’ (EP7) and went onto say ‘… what the projectives brought out really was, why is this … why is this going on’ (EP7).

EP6 who doesn’t use PTs provided a summary of their potential use: ‘I think they would offer a perspective, another perspective and another perspective is always useful in our role because we are drawing in all of the perspectives, and putting up … painting the picture. Um, so the more information you can gather, the better you can be when obviously trying to reduce barriers and improve opportunities’ (EP6).
4.3.3 Basic theme: Broad approach

A clear theme that came from the data was that of a **broad approach** to practice. This was particularly pertinent in relation to EPs having a **broad toolkit** from which to draw, within which PTs and psychodynamic thinking had a place: ‘*So I would see psychodynamics as part of a broad, holistic assessment of youngsters … a broad and thorough assessment*’ (EP1), with EPs generally wanting ‘*…a wider spectrum to draw on*’ (EP6). However, this was not seen to be the case: ‘*I think it’s sad that … that the profession doesn’t embrace a sort of wider psychological framework to include these*’ (EP2) and the fact that potentially PTs are not seen as an accepted part of an EP’s ‘toolkit’ was a theme for the majority of EPs interviewed. Which raises the question of how this could be encouraged – EP5 suggested this needs to start with an acceptance at the research level: ‘*so we can discuss it and think about it, so that we are able to use it in a helpful and constructive way … and as another test … and as another part of our test battery basically … an assessment tool…*’ (EP5). Psychodynamic approaches need to be viewed as part of a broader, comprehensive psychological assessment – psychology is a broad area and straddles creativity and science, but there is a disconnect between the two and the profession would benefit from an epistemological realisation (Fox, 2003).

The degree to which EPs feel they can be **creative in their practice** was mentioned by the majority of EPs interviewed, for the most part that they wanted to be more creative in their approach: ‘*You know we all love opportunities to improve out practice, to do something different, to think a bit more creatively*’ (EP6), with some EPs who currently did not use PTs viewing the validity and evidence-base of the techniques used as a key to having more freedom and choice in approach: ‘*… our opinion is so valued and it does make big differences, so if we can, um … validate what we are doing that’s really important, um … and it will give us more freedom … to use things*’ (EP6). This freedom that PTs allows in comparison to, for example, a cognitive assessment was mentioned: ‘*…to see them as, kind of, quite ‘freeing’ tools, they weren’t as constraining maybe as … say maybe the way a psychometric would be very rigid to follow in a particular way … a particular way of working*’ (EP4).

EP’s **openness to PTs** was a pertinent code, in terms of being informed to enable choice: ‘*I think it would be good if people knew about them but … but had the choice to take or leave them really, like with all other techniques*’ (EP7) and the fact that being open to these techniques will allow competence to develop in EPs that do choose to use them: ‘*I am very open minded and I think that with experience I would be more confident now to use some of those approaches*’ (EP6). In comparison, EP2 talked
about the limiting nature of some EPs in terms of the assessments they use: ‘I’ve always felt that … that EPs, you know … limit the types of assessments that they do … and … and it’s self-limiting and I think that some assessments that people do are poor because of those’ (EP2) and this possibly being due to a lack of understanding ‘… why it is that you want to use them’ (EP7) resulting from a lack of knowledge from a perceived need for a scientific evidence base, ignoring the possibility of a broader sense of where evidence could be derived. If colleagues are following Daubert Criteria for their choice of assessments this would enable them to consider whether the test would stand up to scientific scrutiny, it could leave other practitioners using more idiographic methods in a vulnerable position unless a broader view encompassing specialist knowledge and evidence generated from case work is considered.

Openness to PTs can be affected by those you work with and as has been discussed, there appears to be a degree of hidden use of these techniques in the EP community, making the decision of which assessments an EP will use very individualistic: ‘I would say that everyone works in their own way, and it’s more that people don’t really know what other people are doing rather than being open to it, necessarily’ (EP7). There appears to be an ‘exponential neglect’ so the more PTs aren’t used this can lead to them being used less and so on.

Some EPs talked about the desire to broaden the range of PTs they currently used, and how this isn’t always a key focus in their practice. For EP3 the process of being involved in the current research had encouraged her to think about this possibility: ‘… it is funny actually when you first contacted me after we talked I thought ‘gosh, I’d really love to revisit this’ and I haven’t really explored other techniques that might be possible’ (EP3). This could be in part explained by the lack of popularity and discussion around these techniques.

Triangulation was the most pertinent code within the broad approach theme with all EPs interviewed mentioning this. Most of the comments involved the need for PTs to be used as part of a broad approach which triangulated the material obtained with other information: ‘… using it as a source of … kind of … data. And then trying to test out in terms of what other evidence did I have, in terms of triangulation’ (EP4) and ‘I think they add triangulation information to reports from other people from discussions that you’ve had with staff’ (EP1). The importance of using PTs alongside other assessments was a definite consideration: ‘I think probably the answer is triangulation, so it’s never just on it’s own … but done in the context of good quality consultation and, um … or, other ways of obtaining information – observation, discussion all sorts of things’ (EP5) and ‘I would never use it on its own. It’s always part of a triangulated
approach so I would always have observed the child, spoken to staff, spoken to parents, found out what I could about the history, so it’s never … it’s never taken without context …’ (EP7). If PTs and a psychodynamic approach are used in isolation many of the criticisms are possibly more relevant: ‘… it could be dangerous if used thoughtlessly …’ (EP7).

It is worth acknowledging that within the organising theme of employment there are very clear overlaps with supervision and professional practice which are further explored in more detail under those theme names.

**4.4 Organising theme: Professional issues**

![Thematic map](image)

**Figure 4.4: Professional issues thematic map**

**Professional issues** refers to issues around being an EP regardless of the employment situation and setting. It includes data around EPs professional practice, the broader role of an EP and more specific issues of supervision, training and research. Although the work place will impact on these and there is a degree of overlap, this organising theme brings together content regarding the broader sense of being an EP.

**4.4.1 Basic theme: Professional practice**

The most prevalent code within this theme is named self-awareness/reflection and was mentioned by over half of the EPs interviewed. It refers to the greater need for self-awareness and reflection within a psychodynamic framework than other psychological frameworks: ‘So that debriefing and looking at your own issues has got to be part and parcel of the wider therapeutic process.’ (EP1) and the demands of this: ‘I think it’s very challenging personally …’ (EP7).

Possibly the lack of discourse regarding PTs and a psychodynamic framework within the EP community makes for sparse opportunities to reflect on its use. The process of being interviewed on this subject seemed to provide a space to do this: … which is quite interesting, as we talk, that I haven’t chosen to share that with my colleagues. Something I find very valuable in my practice, I haven’t kind of, passed that on’ (EP3).
This is also a possible reason for its unpopularity: ‘I feel like there are quite deep reasons for people being resistant to psychoanalytic theory, um, because it … it requires so much looking into the self, which I think a lot of people are anxious about, like not … not wanting to find out what they might discover…’ (EP7). For some EPs this level of self-awareness and reflection was possibly not what they see as part of the role and raises questions about the variation in roles. However, to use PTs does not necessarily require self-reflection and raises questions about the way PTs are used.

The resistance as a professional to PTs and a psychodynamic framework was mentioned by the majority of the interviewees: ‘I think there is a lot of resistance within the profession at the moment … to … to working in that way.’ (EP2) and specifically in relation to uncovering issues which are not currently a focus in terms of self-reflection or otherwise: ‘I think there is a lot of resistance to … as I said, to opening the can of worms really’ (EP2). It is a natural response to be resistant to ideas which make you feel uncomfortable as a professional: ‘I think that some things are there and we choose to ignore them.’ (EP4), especially when there is not an evidence base to substantiate its use: ‘There is some resistance to it – if you can’t see it, or quantify it, then it is all a bit dodgy – I think there is a very strong perspective of that’ (EP3). There was also a sense of mystery around the resistance by some: ‘I feel like there is a lot of resistance to the ideas, um … yeah, it’s hard to say really because the UK really was a big centre of psychoanalysis like Freud was here, Anna Freud was here and yet somehow it is just not in … in our professions in a big way. Yeah, it’s a bit mystifying maybe – I don’t know.’ (EP7).

As a professional you need to feel competent to feel confident with the techniques and approaches that are used. With the lack of rhetoric around PTs and psychodynamic thinking EP5 talked about ways this could be changed: ‘… that is the key for me … how to upskill people to feel that they understand what they are doing and why … and then how to make the … and what an interpretation could be, um … because it’s all hypothetical anyway … and, um … and there will be confidence whether that’s um, through networks or … you know … having a barometer, like a personal professional barometer …’ (EP5). Confidence with PTs and a psychodynamic framework was gained through training for the EPs on the programme this focus, particularly influenced by key, experienced EPs: ‘… she had psychoanalytic training as a psychotherapist as well so she was really passionate and was able to help our … confidence I think, so I suppose that is the key for me …’ (EP5). EPs who had this training felt confident with psychodynamic thinking, the confidence to use PTs was expected to come through experience: ‘I feel more confident using psychoanalytic ideas in practical … applied psychology, than I do with projective tests, I think. That still, to me, is a work in
progress. It is so much less commonly used around, the projective tests ... um ... that I'm still like ... I'm still developing my confidence in using them.' (EP5). A clear potential barrier to developing competence leading to confidence was identified by EP6: ‘... I guess a barrier is having the time to really learn these techniques and be able to use them enough ... with enough frequency to become confident with the.' (EP6). For those EPs who weren’t trained with a focus on psychodynamic thinking, it was hard to feel they had the competence to train themselves when training wasn’t available: ‘I didn’t feel I could self-teach on it’ (EP1) and this being a possible reason for not using PTs: ‘I wonder if that is what holds people back ... because they don’t feel like they’ve had that in their training and they might feel more reluctant to use them.’ (EP5) and ‘... people quite rightly don’t want to enter into areas where they don’t feel competent or confident – and they shouldn’t’ (EP2).

Experience is intrinsically linked to competence and confidence, you will use the techniques more if you feel you can and you will feel that you can use them better the more opportunities you have to use them: ‘... to be trained to use projectives like that, it is really about experience ... so, experience interpreting them, experience administering them, um ...experience drawing out important themes ...’ (EP7). Without experience it is important that there is a passion and determination to persevere and keep using PTs. This often came from the specific training and was talked about in terms of building: ‘... your own internal baselines and evidence base about these things.’ (EP2). EP2 is a specialist practitioner in the use of PTs: ‘I think you just build up a ... you know, an experience of using one test in depth – I have done thousands of them – literally. So, you know I have real familiarity with what’s unusual or different or unexpected or whatever’ (EP2) which allows her to be confident in using the techniques and in their interpretation. For an EP with less experience but the same focus of training the confidence had not yet developed: ‘I love using projective tests, um ... I think, because I’m quite new and inexperienced ... I’m still ... working out, um ... a sort of a ... a personal and a professional, um, framework for using them in terms of what they show me ... how a different child responds.’ (EP5). There are a number of barriers that may impact on sustaining the use and interest in PTs, to enable the development of confidence and competence in their use and interpretation, such as restrictions of the workplace and access to supervision.

A professional issue which emerged from the data was that of legal issues. This was mentioned in term of being cautious with using PTs: ‘... if I was doing court work I would be a bit careful about what type of technique I was going to use if any’ (EP2) and how they are reported: ‘I might feel more ... nervous maybe ... about what I’d written ... and to be sure that I am working in a of tentative kind of hypothetical ... um, a way that
is not a conclusion about a child it is just an alternative way of maybe bringing something different, a way of thinking about them’ (EP5). This raised the question of being accountable for the information shared and the techniques used which can be dependent on the specific role an EP has and their use of the Daubert Criteria in their choice and justification of assessment, allowing for specialist and scientific knowledge.

4.4.2 Basic theme: Role of the EP

There is a question of how PTs and a psychodynamic frame work are seen within the role of the EP, from a psychodynamically trained EP: ‘It’s almost … that’s the kind of work that psychotherapists do and not part of our remit as psychologists to be doing that’ (EP3) and a local authority EP’s view that: ‘… some people misunderstand our role, and think we’re therapists anyway, and we’re not therapists, we’re not trained in that way and if you’re trained in that way that’s fine’ (EP6). This is relevant not only to how EPs view each other’s practice but also the expectation from key stakeholders: ‘I do wonder whether there is a … you know … still, a degree of association between EPs and assessing around learning’ (EP4) and whether this is changing: ‘… I think people are getting aware … you know, more aware that we are not just there to do a cognitive assessment …’ (EP6). Raising the issue of variation within the role: ‘… I think what’s good about EPs is diversity and that we can be, you know … we draw on a wide, you know … as a professional body we draw on a wide range of, um, sort of, ways of thinking’ (EP5) but also how this can mean: ‘… it’s hard to know how your practice really compares to the work of another EP…’ (EP4).

Views on the changing role and how this can enable EPs to broaden their repertoire of techniques and approaches were varied: ‘… I really hope that there’s a future that includes … embraces a wide range … and that we don’t all end up doing CBT and solution focused work, which … I get really frustrated with … often … although I can see the value in it, but I don’t know how we can, kind of, keep all of that … all of that breadth really’ (EP5) with local authority EPs being less hopeful about recent changes: ‘Basically we were going back to statutory only work, assessing children for outcomes such as placement, funding… and that has a big impact on the way we want to work, the way we trained to work it really narrows and restricts us I feel’ (EP6) but more positive about the future: ‘But maybe in the future … because things will change, it’s cyclical isn’t it and we will get back … there is boom and bust and I think when we are back in bust and there is more money about … then there will be more opportunity I think, to work … um, in a more flexible way which may allow for more PTs (EP6). The role of the EP could enable this ‘… it’s so neglected potentially, and we have such a unique position in being able to access some of that stuff in what is happening for
children’ (EP4) and ‘I think as EPs we are very independent so … we are … we’re in a wonderful position, no-one questions what we do, unless we are in a tribunal. So we are in a unique position that we could change that culture…’ (EP6).

Despite this, there is a concern over whether the profession as a whole are ready for these changes and to embrace the potential use of PTs and a psychodynamic framework: ‘As a profession, I don’t think EPs are ready for that yet, we’re not that mature in our understanding of how we can use therapeutic processes with children’ (EP1) and ‘I’m not sure whether we … know enough about the techniques and whether we can use them in a competent and professionally defensible manner’ (EP4). It is not clear if the profession understands the implications of embracing psychodynamic thinking: ‘… it’s not about having a book or a … or a toolkit … or an assessment kit you can pull out and just very easily … you really have to use yourself and use the relationship when you’re … when you’re working in that way. I think it’s really tiring, I think it’s very draining, I think it requires a huge amount of supervision … um … I don’t know whether people feel like they can really feel able to do that’ (EP4) and whether all the training programmes in the UK prepare trainees to be able to do this: ‘… it’s quite tough … you do need to be able to have a sufficient depth of knowledge and understanding but also quite a lot of the capacity to cope with the idea … particularly with those that are really struggling and quite vulnerable … that some of how they’re feeling is going to transfer over into the relationship they have with you … as the practitioner working with them’ (EP4).

There is also the question of whether an EP is able to use PTs in their role regardless of their training orientation: ‘I mean, when I look at my friends who are EPs who trained here, they … they don’t … I don’t feel get the chance to maximise what they can offer that is unique and different potentially to … other … other, what other people have’ (EP4) and described as: ‘…quite hard to keep that thing alive’ (EP3). The barriers within a role, such as time and supervision, also restrict the ability to use PTs. Some EPs were not sure if PTs would fit in their role: ‘… the nature of how we’re working, the questions we are being asked to answer … don’t necessarily need PTs’ (EP6), even EPs trained with a psychodynamic focus expressing questions around their specific use: ‘I’m quite interested in the Rorschach, but I don’t know how relevant it would be to my work, so …’ (EP7).

However, a prevalent code that emerged was the importance of a psychodynamic framework to EPs discussed by the two most experienced EPs with PTs ‘… things like PTs and a psychoanalytically orientated way of understanding things … would be to my mind absolutely invaluable’ (EP2) and ‘I feel very strongly about it. I would even say
that it’s poor practice not to use something like this. But that is a controversial view’ (EP2), and consideration would be needed in terms of training and theoretical underpinning of an individual EP, the use of PTs would not provide immunity for poor practice. Although EP4 highlights ‘… there is a bit about buying into the idea that psychodynamic ways of thinking have something to offer me as an EP. And if I don’t accept that principle then I don’t know that I would feel projectives have as much of a use to me’ (EP4) and making a useful link to classroom based learning: ‘I think if there isn’t that level of emotional stability and kind of … security in the adults around the children, I think it’s very hard for anyone really to feel free to learn. So I’d actually see it as being potentially applicable to most if not all of our practice’ (EP4). EP4 summarised what the potential contribution of psychodynamic thinking to the EP profession is:

‘… we will begin to recognise within each other and within ourselves again, the significance around relationships, the significance of feeling and how past events influence the present and how we can look for themes about how certain relationships seem to have patterns and why is that. And that would … benefit our profession as well because it’s making us more effective and more reflective … you know, more thinking more holistically about a range of different things that may be happening for ourselves and for the people that we work with’ (EP4).

However, psychodynamic approaches are marginalised and stereotyped within the profession which could lead to added pressure for EPs using these techniques.

4.4.3 Basic theme: Supervision

All of the EPs interviewed identified supervision as being a relevant factor in the use of PTs. There was an obvious need for access to psychodynamically orientated supervisors for PTs and a psychodynamic framework to be considered as part of practice: ‘I think supervision is very necessary … with psychodynamic approaches, partly because you can’t help as a practitioner being affected on a personal level … when you are working with projection and other defense mechanisms. So that debriefing and looking at your own issues has got to be part and parcel of the wider therapeutic process’ (EP1) and ‘I wouldn’t want to … to make more than quite basic interpretations without, um … some support or supervision, so … so yeah, there is the issue of just kind of having the support of doing it …’ (EP7). There was an acknowledgement of the challenges of providing this specialist supervision: ‘…but I think the biggest practical difficulty is supervision, the beginning of, you know … learning about these things, you need to be able to talk to somebody who has used them a lot’ (EP2) and the lack of EPs that do have this experience and focus: ‘….any colleague I’ve had that has supervised me, you know, it’s just not part of their practice
at all, any element of psychodynamic thinking or projective … it just would not enter into their practice’ (EP3). This was given as a reason why trainees who had psychodynamic focused training may not continue with their use of PTs in the workplace: ‘I always get a bit, sort of … what do I get … disappointed I suppose, when I talk to people who I have trained and they are, you know … they don’t use them … routinely in their practice and then when we talk about it … why not, um … it is usually that there isn’t anybody in the service that they can talk to about material. That is the single biggest obstacle in my experience’ (EP2).

Collaboration was discussed as a way to increase access to psychodynamically orientated supervisors. A possible useful progression would be to encourage group supervision: ‘I think the thing I would like is just um … group opportunities for supervision more regularly …‘ (EP5) and that this is unlikely to be set up through the workplace, especially if there are no other EPs who use PTs: ‘… you have to develop your own support network’ (EP7). Technology may be a way to develop these opportunities for supervision without the reliance of face to face support from within the workplace: ‘I am wondering about the use of more kind of … um, virtual environments to bring people across the UK together. Like particular, you know … posting of websites or … or say online discussion forums with people being able to, you know … share and ask questions. And I’m wondering about whether that … that … currently that doesn’t exist and is that an obstacle, because it’s not really networking or connecting us in a particular way’ (EP4).

4.4.4 Basic theme: Training

Training was a pertinent code within professional issues. This emerged as a strongly prevalent theme for initial training and less but still distinct theme of postgraduate training. The influence of initial training was key in instigating interest in a psychodynamic framework: ‘Oh, it all came from the training. I would say my interest only came from the training’ (EP7) and in some cases before starting on the programme: ‘… on the pre-course reading, a lot of that was about some psychoanalytic ideas, some systemic ideas and it really interested me … and then as we learnt more and more about it on the training it just really resonated with me. Um … and I knew it was something I wanted to try and include in my practice’ (EP4). This influence was strongest on the psychodynamically focused programme: ‘I’m hugely influenced by the fact that I was trained within a CAMHS context as an EP …’ (EP2) and given as a reason why PTs may not be as accessible to EPs trained elsewhere: ‘Perhaps from my training at [location anonymised] being very much evidence based …‘ (EP6). There was an awareness about most training programmes in the UK not including PTs and a
psychodynamic framework and this having a perpetuating effect: ‘I do wonder whether all of the trainees are not really getting a huge amount of input on it and then the whole thing becomes a really vicious circle. There is nobody being trained, therefore there is not that much …’ (EP4).

Aside from the content of programmes, the reputation of the training establishment emerged as a prevalent code. This was particularly the case for the psychodynamically orientated training programme: ‘There is, you know … people, still tell jokes about, you know … that, for example, about the [psychodynamically orientated] course, everyone sits around navel gazing, that’s one of the sort of, you know … long standing myths and jokes’ (EP2) and ‘In a way I was kind of put off the [location] at first because I heard it was very different …’ (EP7) and even about the appearance of trainees: ‘Although, they had to wear suits to go to college… yeah, they had to dress professional … every session’ (EP6). In terms of preparing to use PTs there was also a perceived difference in the amount of input: ‘I would say, that because of where we trained, I don’t want to sound arrogant but, I think it would be significantly more. My perception would be that it has something to do with the orientation of where I trained’ (EP3) and an acknowledged emphasis on preparation for practice in these techniques: ‘… we had a lot of input in how you use it and being careful around interpretation and how its use in reporting after you have assessed a child’ (EP3) and ‘…all of the learning tasks who are asked to draw on psychoanalytic ideas … you analyse your casework and things like that. So it is very heavy fronted …’ (EP5).

There was a sense of wanting other training programmes to consider PTs: ‘It would be wonderful if you could convince, you know, um … colleagues and trainers at [location] that, you know, they can be useful.’ (EP2) and a degree of curiosity about any interest in PTs outside of the psychodynamically orientated programmes: ‘I mean I’m not aware of other institutions that even cover much about projectives or, um … um … psychoanalytic ideas in their training. I was interested in your research and that you’re from xxx and I was curious what they are teaching on the xxx course’ (EP5).

There was a desire to broaden the range of approaches and techniques covered by training programmes: ‘… it’s not just psychoanalysis, I think sometimes maybe courses get too … I don’t know … one way of doing things, and not open minded enough. [location] wouldn’t touch psychoanalytic ideas with a barge pole. There’s no way they would’ (EP5) and ‘I would have loved more of a balance though, in my training, I would have loved a bit of [psychodynamic orientated location], they did all sorts of things’ (EP6). A concern was expressed about the future of PTs being included in any training programme: ‘… there isn’t really, to my knowledge very many people involved in the
EP training who are skilled in those techniques, so it would … it would worry me that’s something that’s going to die out’ (EP7).

The fairly recent change to a three year doctorate qualification from a one year masters has possibly increased the scope for including a broader range of techniques and approaches including PTs. EPs who had been trained when it was a masters were aware of this opportunity: ‘To be fair the masters course was so… not hit and run, that’s not fair, but it was very… you know …you could only do so much. I imagine in the three years there is more opportunity now’ (EP6) and ‘I was one … kind of, the one year masters people. I didn’t do the three year doctoral training and I am wondering about, maybe, was that part of why I didn’t get maybe as much initial training in relation to using PTs’ (EP2). However, the restriction on breadth of content was acknowledged even in the three year doctorate: ‘The difficulty there though is that there is a lot to cover, um … even in the three years let alone when we were doing the masters’ (EP2).

The potential to include PTs and a psychodynamic framework within the current training for EPs is an obvious challenge: ‘But because the day is so short and the amount of input you were getting was so much, I’m not too sure whether there was a really kind of, in depth exploration of the issue … of the unconscious…’ (EP4).

Especially with the need to prepare EPs to use them which takes more than a single session: ‘Nobody is going to use them if you have two lectures on projective assessments’ (EP2) and ideally ‘… two sessions as an introduction to how useful they are followed up by regular supervision is the only way forward. That’s what we used to do at the [location]. Trainee’s had to use them as part of their clinical placements. So we had a, you know … a weekly supervision … so by the end of the first year they began to feel – oh, actually these things might be helpful’ (EP2). Without this it is unlikely that PTs will be used more widely: ‘It hasn’t encouraged me to use it because I didn’t have that basic use really’ (EP6).

There is an obvious need to explore this issue from a broad level of why psychodynamic thinking is not covered in psychology academia with the same weighting as other psychological paradigms from undergraduate level and beyond: ‘People need to start asking the question exactly as you said, if it’s such a bit part of psychology why does it play such a little role in how we are training the next generation of EPs?’ (EP4) and also more specifically on Educational Psychology training in the UK: ‘… as far as I know we are the only course that teaches it … and it was pretty intensive, um … it was an afternoon a week in the first year’ (EP2). There cannot be an expectation for EPs to use a framework and techniques which they have not been fully prepared to use: ‘I do have some sympathy, because I don’t think EPs have
necessarily been trained to do that kind of work in … in a lot of circumstances.’ (EP2) and ‘I think it is so far removed from what some people have received in their training …’ (EP3).

A component of the only psychodynamically orientated course in the UK was collaboration, particularly with CAMHS and clinical psychologists where PTs are more widely used: ‘… with the clinical psychologist we would look through it, look for themes. She was modelling really how you would interpret it’ (EP3). But also with each other as a cohort: ‘… I would say as well like, it was something that, um … some people in my cohort really sought out. So, we um … we would have optional projective workshops that we would always attend, um … and we have um, a group on … online actually where we sometimes share projectives we used and bounce ideas off each other, so … we started that out during the training and it’s something we continue to do now’ (EP7) creating their own group supervision to enable the use of PTs in a supportive, like-minded way. This has clear links to the potential contribution of online networking to provide the required supervision and support. This collaboration did not exist with training programmes in the UK, even if they were geographically very close: ‘I think we did one joint session with them [location] which was something else and I was at an interview so I missed it’ (EP6), this lack of communication and ‘joining up’ of training programmes is a possible future consideration when thinking about the capacity to provide expert training in PTs and the use of psychodynamic thinking.

When an EP qualifies the opportunity for post graduate training in the use of PTs, especially if they hadn’t been part of your training programme is limited: ‘I’ve looked … er … periodically for training sessions and found virtually nothing’ (EP1) and ‘Unfortunately there is no opportunity for any training …’ (EP6). This was not an issue for EPs based in the capital with links to location A: ‘Most of the trainings would have had a link to where I ended up working or having been an EP in London authorities … you know, very easy to access’ (EP2) but this training would not be easily accessible to EPs not located near the capital or with these links: ‘… but that is very difficult for people with busy lives, it’s a cost element and more of a time element really’ (EP6). To make a case for more EPs considering the use of PTs there is a need ‘to invest in the training so that we … obviously are confident … challenging any … you know … opinions …’ (EP6) and also a need for local authority EPs for this ‘…to meet the general agenda … local authority agenda’ (EP6).

There was some uncertainty about the nature of the training and whether you needed formal training, or indeed if there was such a thing: ‘I don’t know about formal training as I don’t actually know if you are meant to have any formal training to use any of the
techniques’ (EP7) and ‘I mean, we did … we covered those things but I don’t know if it’s … if it’s kind of, formal training’ (EP7). An EP who trained on the psychodynamically focused programme attributed the expertise of the staff as the key in training: ‘… there’s no formal training in them … as far as I’m aware, so we just had, um … a really passionate teacher who had been using them for years as an EP...’ (EP5).

4.4.5 Basic theme: Research

Research emerged as a prevalent theme, mentioned by nearly all the EPs interviewed. The majority of comments were around the lack of research: ‘… there is very little published research recently in like, you know, your key … like EP Practice or Educational and Child Psychology … you know, ones we’d be referring to you know … as a practitioner, there is not that much written about, you know … using them, you know … effectiveness, how to use them reliably and … and validly in a safe way. Um … or … or … or even talking about them critically’ (EP4). Comments were made about the present research: ‘… yours is the first project I’ve heard of in a long time about, well apart from some of the stuff at [location] and here, looking at, you know … kind of, working in a more psychodynamic way’ (EP4) and ‘… you’ve got an interesting piece of research that you’re doing that is so timely and so needed’ (EP4). It was acknowledged that the opportunity to research the use of PTs by EPs was limited ‘… maybe that’s because there are not many opportunities to look at psychoanalytic ideas in … actually in research …’ (EP5). A possible reason was expressed about training programmes commissioning research and this influencing the scope of research within the profession: ‘I do wonder about kind of … um … you know, to a degree the history and legacy of the profession is to an extent … some of the … the … training courses tend to be … be … I mean they train … everybody. But also they … they do a lot of the research … and research lines of enquiry … so … may … maybe part of it is you know, particularly now when everything is very kind of, neo liberal, economic, money, funding, value added etc. etc. Is there funding and research … um, for these that … that are people interested in commissioning that relate to using a psychodynamic approach in EP practice’ (EP4) with a possible solution being to consider other ways that research is funded: ‘Maybe if other sources of funding are more readily available … people are following where … not following money in a bad way but actually if you’re going to get funded to do certain types of projects, well then … that’s where you’re at’ (EP4).

An escalation in research was seen as being crucial for any interest in PTs to increase ‘… you go to a conference and people aren’t talking about this on your course and saying oh, what are you doing and you’re bringing it to research supervision … yeah, so if people don’t research it, the whole … it dies a death because it because the
profession is about being an applied researcher um … so yeah, that researching isn’t there then the rest of it isn’t going to happen’ (EP4) and ‘… without the research happening there is no … the debates not there, the discussions not there, people’s interest isn’t … ’ (EP4). The use of PTs could also be validated through detailed case studies and the exploration across a number of case studies.

There were differing views on the focus of the research needed, for some it was about what is currently happening: ‘I think research has got to be the starting point. Even if it is at the stages of finding out what people are doing now, where people would like to be, and what kinds of tools and devices they would like developed in this field’ (EP1). For some EPs it was important that this research was not only from a need to standardise PTs: ‘I would love somebody to … to do some research, you know … which shows how helpful they are. Not research that actually attempts to, you know … put them into some sort of normative bracket … because that’s not … that’s not what they are about’ (EP2) and an acknowledgement of the challenges: ‘… what I think is hard about researching it is that it wouldn’t be as straight forwards as saying … um, this child’s levels improved after the use of the ORT, maybe you could use it … maybe you could use like … like evaluation of consultations or feedback meetings when an ORT is used, but … you … for me it would be partly the difficulty in how would you demonstrate the value that’s added’ (EP7). Some EPs were more accepting of research to make PTs more standardised, possibly being key for the wider EP community to be on board: ‘I think actual research that, really does, maybe, work towards devising a framework, and, you know, something a little bit more, that feels a little more robust, so that EPs feel, maybe more comfortable with using it, so that they can justify it, then I think it would be … yeah, I think it would be really great to have more research. You know, for people to start developing that, definitely’ (EP3).

However, there was a clear theme that research needed to be increased for PTs and a psychodynamic framework to be considered by a broader range of EPs: ‘I definitely do … I mean, that’s partly why I wanted to do this study because I think … um … that it is really important that we keep talking about it and we can have a debate that doesn’t close it down or close the door on it … um, but we can discuss it and think about it, so that we are able to use it in a helpful and constructive way … and as another test … and as another part of our test battery basically … an assessment tool … um … yeah’ (EP5). There needs to be a greater understanding of what type of evidence can support practice and how to systematise evidence in to a scientifically acceptable format.
4.5 Organising theme: Standardisation

The final organising theme is standardisation, it was least prevalent of the four organising themes, however there were some very strong opinions expressed within the data that emerged as codes.

The evidence base of PTs was a clear code and one which was most prevalent within the standardisation theme. There were differing views on this, from the lack of evidence base being a barrier to using PTs and that the profession is favouring this approach: ‘My feeling is that we are moving more towards a scientist-practitioner approach and we want to use evidenced-based assessment tools’ (EP1). However, there was also a sense that maybe this is not relevant to the broad scope of the EP role ‘… there is a massive drive in my service about evidence base and whether there is really good, robust research to support, research to say why we are using certain measures. And whilst I do honour that, I am quite resistant to applying that across all areas of my practice, there are flaws in that’ (EP3). EP2 talked about the potential restriction of a purely evidence based profession ‘… it’s good that we have a sort of, robust evidence base, we would be pretty crazy as practitioners to just, you know, go off and do what the hell we liked … um, so I don’t have a problem with that, but I think it can constrain, um something about the sort of, relationally based psychology that we have to practice’ (EP2) and ‘… evidence based practice, you know, science and RCTs and the gold standard of research and if a particular methodology isn’t considered to have any … you know … thing that we shouldn’t be using things that aren’t informed by evidence’ (EP4), perhaps there is a need to be more clear about the type of evidence that provides the evidence base ‘… over time you develop obviously, you know … much greater familiarity and as I say, this sort of internal evidence base of your own’ (EP2).

There was an acknowledgment from some EPs that there was not a scientific evidence base for PTs: ‘But in my professional practice it is very much, with the evidence driven and there isn’t a lot, I would say, of research that supports that’ (EP6) and concern from others about this: ‘… because that’s what really bothers me actually … it’s holding it up like it’s not evidenced and its not scientific …’ (EP4). EP3 talked about the existence of an evidence base, particularly of psychodynamic theory in a broader sense, but that this is not always promoted: ‘I think what is interesting is you’re recognising that is very poorly recognised by us as EP’s sometimes, is that there is a lot of evidence, you know … kind of, Cochran collaboration type evidence and
psychodynamic psychotherapy is incredibly effective, and in some cases can be demonstrated to be more effective than other forms of therapeutic work’ (EP4) questioning the accessibility and distribution of psychodynamic literature to the wider EP community and a possible misunderstanding of the term ‘evidence’ and what that means in terms of idiographic and generalizable viewpoints.

The acknowledgment of what scientific research values and whether this fits with a psychodynamic approach where the benefits may not always be immediate but maybe more enduring was mentioned:

‘the casework is thorough and lasts over time, and also I think some of the evidence is that you don’t get an immediate effect size with … um, psychodynamic approaches … that children … or adults even learn a new heuristic through these approaches … but apply them over time … and not immediately. Whereas solution focused and CBT is very much about the problem that you are coming in, so you get a solution to that … particular problem … and it looks good. So I don’t think the research evidence is there …on any of these, but that’s more a … um … an aberration of research methods than it is about this approach being effective or not’ (EP1).

EPs that trained or worked at location A had a very different idea of the prevalence of relevant literature:

‘… there is evidence out there that very clearly show on that very level that psychoanalytic ways of working are actually really, really helpful … and effect sizes – some of them are unbelievably high and also show an increase over time in terms of positive impact on emotional well-being after a period of psychodynamic psychotherapy, which EPs choose to either be … or not be engaging with it, or genuinely don’t know that it’s out there …’ (EP4)

This suggests that perhaps this research is disseminated more effectively within this location but perhaps not so much to a wider community.

One of the issues about the evidence base for PTs is the questionable validity and reliability of the techniques. When asked, some EPs saw this as very important for the EP community to embrace the use of PTs, when asked if more PTs had valid and reliable interpretative frameworks would increase usage by EPs one response was: ‘Definitely … definitely, because that’s … that’s fundamental to us as EPs’ (EP6), not all EPs interviewed were so sure: ‘Maybe, but I wouldn’t want to be reductionist about it, so I think you need to devote the time to it, um … and it wouldn’t be as straightforward as … yeah, I don’t know what it would look like really, for it to have a more … valid and reliable evidence base’ (EP7). EP4 suggested this was a reason for EPs not
widely using PTs in their practice: ‘I think the attitude of the EP profession possibly generally that they are not really proper tests … you know, they are not standardised, are they valid. Um, you know … is good judgement enough? Um … are they really scientific?’ (EP4). There was no consensus in whether a valid and reliable framework was what was needed, but for those that did not currently use PTs in their practice it was seen as a possible enabling factor: ‘… our opinion is so valued and it does make big differences, so if we can, um … validate what we are doing that’s really important, um … and it will give us more freedom … to use things’ (EP6).

There was also a suggestion that sometimes there is a desire from stakeholders to use standardised assessments and to produce numerical data: ‘… you can have school think, well that sounds a bit wishy washy, you know, and we want some kind of hard data’ (EP3) and that it can be hard to justify the time spent on PTs when they don’t produce this type of output: ‘… I don’t know if it’s always been this way, but I think there is an emphasis on kind of … providing numbers and, you know, this person’s in the first centile and therefore they’re like this … blah, blah, blah. Um, and … projectives are kind of the opposite to that’ (EP7). EPs who were not trained with a specific focus on psychodynamic thinking expressed: ‘I am more comfortable with my quantitative type information’ (EP6). This was discussed in relation to the use of cognitive assessments, and that: ‘… maybe there is a feeling that actually if the child is presenting with difficulties in literacy or in learning or … you know, the kinds of assessments that are chosen … more relate to cognitive processing … and that’s kind of driving how … how people practice’ (EP4) which impacts on what is expected of an EP and the nature of the role. EPs who had been trained with a psychodynamic emphasis tended to have a more open outlook on the breadth of their role: ‘I’m not terribly interested, I think in administering a cognitive assessment, um … around a young person, only, because I also want to know what they think and what they feel and how they’ve experienced things and how they think things might change for them, what would be helpful and what wouldn’t … and so on. So you have to have a broad base’ (EP2). The use of PTs to triangulate information has been discussed, however it is relevant to standardisation in terms of this being a way that the information gathered by PTs is validated and a way to develop and test out hypotheses, and a psychodynamic framework: ‘… allows for a more broadening of hypotheses rather than reductionist’ (EP5). EP3 talked about the usefulness of PTs and a psychodynamic framework to enable the understanding of a situation: ‘I have a set of hypotheses that I have generated with staff and families and there is a sense of stuckness, something that we don’t yet know, that hasn’t been given expression to …’ (EP3).
A major concern voiced by all of the EPs who had been trained in psychodynamic thinking was that PTs were misunderstood in terms of their *idiographic* nature: ‘...it’s a completely sort of, idiographic ... er, technique, it is not normative in any way’ (EP2). In terms of considering standardising PTs: ‘The difficulty I think, is that’s really not what most PTs are designed to do. One is not wanting to compare, you know, um ... across a ... a group, one is wanting to explore an individual’s experience ...’ (EP2) and ‘The whole idea about them being as ... as free as possible, and as kind of ... you know, unconstrained as possible, the more likely you are to be genuinely be accessing the unconscious ... that’s a really interesting point about kind of ... you ... why would you try to standardise something that ... what would be the purpose of that. That is quite interesting’ (EP4). When discussing a colleague who had attempted to create a standardised framework for a PT: ‘... her sort of conclusions were she was trying to, you know ... trying to fit a square peg in a round hole’ (EP2). The way material obtained from PTs is used within a psychodynamic framework was recognised as fundamentally different from that of standardised tests: ‘I’m not going to be treating the material that I get from a projective assessment in the same way as I would, answers to you know, questions on a WISC’ (EP2).

Concern was expressed about how a more idiographic approach could fit into the current role of an EP, talking about the use of PTs: ‘... actually when they are used as part of, you know ... an ordinary, a psychological approach to, you know ... getting to know a young person and their situation and their family. Um... you don't have to worry so much about, you know ... a standardised scoring system ... but, in the current research driven, evidence ... positive evidence ... positivist evidence base climate, that doesn’t go down well, and I think that’s tragic’ (EP2). The potential consequence of ignoring PTs and a psychodynamic framework was described: ‘I think what gets lost is individual experience, um ... relationships ... stuff that you can’t explain in a reductionist, scientific, um ... epistemological framework basically ...’ (EP5).

The *interpretation* of PTs was a prevalent code related to *standardisation*. Even EPs trained with a psychodynamic focus expressed: ‘... I think the thing I struggle with more is, um ... the interpretation, and how to feed back the interpretation ...’ (EP5) and given as a possible reason for some EPs not using PTs: ‘... my betting would be that people wouldn't use them because they wouldn't feel confident to be able to analyse them themselves’ (EP2). Instead of following pre-determined frameworks the interpretation of PTs is: ‘... based on clinical experience and judgement’ (EP2) which was a cause of concern for some EPs: ‘I think you have to be very careful how you interpret things. I see it very much as a clinical ... clinical techniques... um... and obviously you can make assumptions which might be incorrect, I think you have to be careful’ (EP6). The
caution was seen as particularly important with techniques that are in the public domain, such as the Rorschach:

‘I do worry about how it gets interpreted, for example the Rorschach, you can buy inkblots… you can do inkblot tests online, you can buy inkblot cards and it says, like, if you use it this way it means this about you, and I just think that’s … to me that’s a little bit into the kind of, the dangerous realm really … and everyone’s a psychologist and actually you don’t need any training whatsoever … it’s almost like dream analysis as well … if you dream about, I dunno, if you dream about a rabbit then it means this about you, you’re hopeful and you’re this, kind of like horoscope psychology …’ (EP5).

Interpretation clearly is a challenge when using PTs and linked to the need for supervision and the development of supportive networks.

This also raises the broader question of psychology as a science and whether, as a science we can answer all the questions about the human experience that psychology raises, that perhaps ‘… science is within psychology …’ (EP5) rather than psychology being a science. But there are questions ‘… about the way that we view science here as the sort of the dominant paradigm…’ (EP5) and ‘… how the profession or the organisation of psychology is to, um … psychoanalysis’ (EP5). What is important is that the questions keep being raised and the narrowing of techniques and approaches is challenged and that all the networks and groups within the EP community are given a chance to share their ideas so the profession does not become stagnant, empowering EPs as individual practitioners as part of a wider unified profession: ‘… it’s just important that these organisations exist to keep ideas coming on and, um … sort of … yeah, floating new ideas and keeping questioning the more traditional paradigms of thought … rather than science’ (EP5) and ‘I think we should be encouraging the richness and breadth of our expertise really as individual professionals within that group’ (EP5). This needs to be embedded in an acknowledgment of what evidence is and the distinction between academically generated evidence, practice generated evidence and case generated evidence, and the merits of all of these to professional practice.
Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the findings will be outlined and discussed in relation to each of the research questions. The potential contribution of PTs (RQ1) and the facilitators and barriers to EPs using PTs and a psychodynamic framework (RQ2) are explored. The key findings relating to the basic and subthemes are summarised and then reflected upon in light of relevant identified literature and theory. An exploration of possible implications for theory and practice are presented, followed by limitations of the research. Finally, some implications for future research are suggested.

5.2 Summary of findings in relation to RQ1

What do EPs consider to be the potential contributions of psychodynamic psychology and PTs in their professional practice?

Psychodynamic psychology is not a dominant perspective (Pellegrini, 2010) for EPs who use a range of theoretical approaches in their work including behavioural, cognitive behavioural, psychoanalytic, developmental, systemic and organisational (Fox, 2011). The data exposed a range of potential contributions that EPs feel PTs and psychodynamic psychology have to offer their professional practice. They can help to understand a child’s situation through allowing access to their internal world. It is a distinctly different approach to other more standardised assessment methods which enables access to deeper, richer information – it provides a value added component which may not be gained through other methods. PTs can enable a child to express themselves without a focus on language or direct communication in a less threatening, more enjoyable way which can give an insight into their view – it can provide an alternative to working with children and young people who are ‘hard to reach’, have mental health needs or SEND. EPs valued the potential focus on relationships and emotions which is often overlooked, but are at the centre of the work they do, to contribute to the understanding of a child’s situation not only at an individual level but also at the group and organisational levels – such as home-school relations, staff dynamics and family work (parenting, attachment awareness).

Considering the use of PTs and psychodynamic thinking does not mean sacrificing other approaches, in fact it can enrich other techniques and provide another perspective in the information gathering which can only be useful in terms of triangulation and developing hypotheses. PTs can also provide further opportunities to assess other aspects such as language, literacy and fine motor skills.
PTs were described as ‘freeing tools’ and a way to allow EPs to be more creative in their practice which is particularly important when considering the broadness and fluidity of the role in the current climate of change and having a toolkit that reflects this. The approach can also be proactive and positive, to enrich life in a holistic way rather than just reduce negative symptoms.

With increased opportunities to train in the use of PTs, greater collaboration and opportunities for psychodynamic supervision, the EP profession could benefit from embracing PTs and psychodynamic thinking into their professional repertoire on a more national level – instead of a specialism. The development of standardisation systems for some PTs was suggested as a possible route to a wider spread acceptance, however the value of the idiographic nature of these techniques cannot be dismissed and is possibly integral to their potential contribution - an increase in research is a necessary starting point for EPs to be open to new ways of practice and substantiating the psychodynamic work that a minority of EPs already do, to encourage future use.

5.3 Summary of findings in relation to RQ2

What do EPs consider to be the potential facilitators and barriers to using a psychodynamic framework and PTs in their professional practice?

The potential facilitators and barriers to using a psychodynamic framework and PTs were wide ranging, and often factors could be both. Overall, there were more potential barriers which would help explain why PTs are not a popular assessment method for EPs.

There is an acknowledgement of a predominately negative attitude or ‘fear’ of psychodynamic thinking by the general public and the EP community despite the heritage of the approach in the UK and a move to broaden the range of techniques and approaches used in response to governmental changes which has seen a move to more traded services and creative ways of working. The change in the EP role could be seen as an ideal opportunity to evaluate the core approaches and tools used to ensure the ‘toolkit’ each practitioner develops is as broad as possible and that training is preparing EPs to feel confident and competent to continue to have a flexible approach to enable them to address the needs of each unique situation and child they encounter. An acknowledged barrier to this is the openness of some stakeholders to psychodynamic thinking and their possible expectation for numerical data – raising questions about the expected role of the EP and the perceived freedom to use techniques. However, as is represented in the findings, a psychodynamic perspective
may be accepted by school or indeed what they value from EP involvement, as it is distinct from the input other professionals offer in a school environment (see Eloquin, 2016).

A facilitator is the ‘value added’ nature of PTs and the fact that they are quite different to other assessment methods – psychodynamic thinking offers a different perspective and a focus on relationships, emotion and the internal world of a child which is often overlooked. The techniques can enable children who struggle verbally or with other assessments a different channel in which to communicate.

There is little published research on psychodynamic thinking or the use of PTs by EPs in the UK and this lack of an evidence base is potentially a barrier for EPs to use these techniques, especially with the growing need for EBP and EPs working within a scientist-practitioner model. An increase in research could aid the popularisation and discourse around psychodynamic thinking which would enable EPs to consider incorporating them into their practice and being able to defend and justify their use. However, there needs to be the opportunity to carry out relevant research within training programmes and the workplace, which is currently limited, possibly through improved collaboration. Perhaps the view of what EPs class as ‘evidence’ is where a broader view needs to be taken for PTs to be embraced, as opposed to aligning with health professions and following a medicalised model of RCTs being the gold standard of evidence. The move towards EPs practising as scientist-practitioners could be seen as a threat and a barrier to more idiographic ways of working raising long standing debates about psychology and its position with science and creativity (Fox, 2003). This also highlights a broader question about the psychodynamic paradigm being equally represented in academic psychology from undergraduate degree level through to doctoral level, and why this may be. The creation of core curriculums across institutions through the interpretation of the HCPC and BPS standards is a key factor (NCTL, 2016) – and the question of the review of current practice being incorporated into these standards to ensure the inclusion of techniques and approaches which are being used by EPs but may not have a traditional evidence base. Again, a wider consideration of what constitutes evidence is crucial to ensure the representation of under used, yet potentially beneficial tools and techniques, to include PBE and in depth case studies.

Other possible barriers include the restrictions of the place of work, particularly if this is the Local Authority, in terms of time, supervision, training, availability of PTs at the service and restrictions on the breadth of work carried out due to restrictions resulting from governmental pressures. Access to psychodynamic supervision is a major factor
in EPs continuing to use PTs after training and a longer term barrier for the wider EP community embracing their use.

There is an issue about whether the EP profession are ready to include psychodynamic thinking into their practice on a wider scale, not only in terms of providing relevant supervision but also in terms of training. The implications of training availability is pertinent, if EPs are not being trained in PTs it seems unreasonable to expect them to be used or to supervise others in their use. There is a question around whether all training programmes in the UK are preparing TEPs to use a psychodynamic framework and PTs, and if not a possible need for more consistency and transparency in the content of training programmes as well as opportunities for post qualification training.

Training was an obvious barrier, EPs who had not been trained to use PTs were far less likely to use them, and were definitely less confident in their use and interpretation, although keen for opportunities to be trained. EPs who had been trained acknowledged that formal training was not necessary but highlighted the need and value of psychodynamic supervision to develop their confidence and competence. A parallel can be drawn with other assessments/approaches which EPs are not formally trained in but still use, such as play therapy.

Colleagues could be a facilitator through collaboration and inspiration, but also a barrier by a lack of encouragement for openness and discussion and being a barometer for acceptable practice leading to EPs that are using PTs being isolated. Collaboration could also be key to sustaining the use of PTs and developing innovative ways to access supervision, two major barriers. The use of technology to support this is an interesting possibility to allow the minority of EPs who do use PTs to network online and enable supervision in a virtual environment. To link EPs together in this way is likely to raise the profile and research opportunities related to the psychodynamic paradigm, particularly if encouraged and supported during training through collaboration between training programmes to spark a passion for the paradigm and offer the tools to continue using them in the workplace.

5.4 Implications for theory

This research has reflected some complex, long standing, fundamental questions about EP practice and psychology in general which are beyond the scope of this research, however reflecting on the findings in light of some of the relevant theory can help understand why EPs do and do not use PTs in their practice. Some of these debates are deeply embedded in the nature of the EP profession and personal to each
practitioner, highlighting the diversity of practitioners and their fundamental positioning (Lane & Corrie, 2006).

The current model of practice for EPs in the UK is focused on the scientific practitioner model (Frederickson, Miller & Cline, 2008) and EBP (Fox, 2003) reflecting the need for applied psychologists such as EPs to be accountable for their work with children and their families. However, there are tensions for EPs in the scientist-practitioner role (Clarke, 2004) and psychodynamic thinking takes an idiographic standpoint which is diametrically opposed to scientific thinking which makes it not amenable to challenge and its accountability questionable.

The rationale for using EBP is that professional practice must be based on evidence of what works rather than opinion or belief (Fox, 2011) to help professionals to base their practice on the best current evidence (DoH, 1998a). The aim is for consistency in the quality of services, to avoid what the Department of Health referred to as the unacceptable variation in services across the country (DoH, 1998). However, in education there is ambiguity about what quality evidence is (Hillage, Pearson, Anderson & Tamkin, 1998) and EPs are socialized into teaching with little focus on a scientific mindset (Miller & Frederickson, 2006). The question of where the EP profession aligns itself, with health or education, is crucial in the future of embracing EBP (Fox, 2003).

The reality is that because of a lack of a scientific research evidence base, EPs continue to use psychological theories and interventions that have little or no academic evidence to support their use (Fox, 2011) and rely on experience and professional expertise, which could be seen as evidence if a broader view is taken of what ‘evidence’ is. Frederickson (2002) highlights it is this professional expertise that is needed to decide whether ‘evidence’ applies to particular individuals and how it should be integrated into decision making. Fox (2003) suggests that some EPs would be ‘appalled’ at the idea of EBP and suggests five key objections the profession may have to EBP. Walker (2003) highlight how aspects of EBP, such as the focus on RCTs, can destroy key aspects of effectiveness – such as the importance of the relationship between the child and EP. Wolpert et al. (2006) suggest that RCTs are based on a ‘one size fits all’ assumption, which is of radical importance to the EP profession as it distinguishes the basis for practice as different from a medical model. Others have suggested that experimental research is not applicable to the complexities of real life situations EPs are likely to face (Lane & Corrie, 2006). When thinking about how to reconcile these differing views, it is useful to consider the American Psychological Association’s (APA) definition of EBP as: ‘the integration of the best available research
with clinical expertise in the context of patient characteristics, culture, and preferences’ (APA, 2006). Also, Frederickson & Miller (2008) described the use of Clarke’s model as a unifying structure to allow the discussion of EPs attempting to practice as scientist-practitioners in spite of the challenges and dilemmas they face, and frameworks such as the BPS Division of Educational and Child Psychology’s (1999) framework for psychological assessment can help to feedback from tentative hypotheses and inform individual and general problem explanations.

Lane & Corrie (2006) described creativity as probably the most neglected topic in the scientist-practitioner debate. Argyris (1989) and Schon (1987) highlight the importance of creativity for a psychologist, as they are scientists working in ‘indeterminate zones of practice’, acknowledging the complexities of the role. The tension is how to marry up the demand for rigour and accuracy with the need to be creative and expansive (Lane & Corrie, 2006). This is not a new concept, in 1899 William James stated: ‘Psychology is a science and teaching is an art: and sciences never generate arts directly out of themselves. An intermediary, inventive mind must make the application, by using its originality’ (23-24), highlighting the importance of creativity in the role of the EP. Fox (2015) highlighted psychologists need for creativity as distinguishing practice-based evidence (PBE) from EBP, gaining evidence from using techniques in practice.

Psychodynamic psychology has a limited research base (Pellegrini, 2010) and the use of PTs aims to give insight into a child’s emotional world (Chandler, 2003) with a focus on the individual experience. There is currently a failure to link idiographic and generalizable approaches – a need to resolve how to ‘fit a round peg and square hole’ (Frederickson & Miller, 2008). Clarke (2004) suggests that EPs can and do operate as scientist practitioners in an idiographic fashion, from the presentation of the individual problem through a formulated understanding and on to individually targeted intervention.

When thinking about idiographic approaches such as the use of PTs, there needs to be a consideration of the specialist vs. scientist debate when thinking about the role of the EP and how the diversity of practice can be accountable and could theoretically stand up in court (Woods, 2008). The Daubert Criteria provides guidelines of what is admissible scientific evidence, EPs need to think about how aspects of the assessments they carry out would stand up to scientific scrutiny (Goodman-Delahunty, 1997) – this is challenging for more idiographic methods such as PTs, and emphasises the importance of specialist knowledge and a comprehensive assessment – to corroborate test data with information gathered from other sources – triangulation.
There is an obvious need to raise the profile of PTs and psychodynamic thinking within the EP profession. How can the EP profession embrace the use of PTs in a way that is compatible with a scientist-practitioner model? One way is through the development of valid and reliable frameworks, such as the evolution of the scoring system for the Rorschach Inkblot Test (Storey, Gappen & Stacco, 2014). The challenge is to find a way that an interpretive and individualistic approach can include a framework which is reliable. There has been an attempt to create standardisation systems for some PTs which are valid and reliable but are still idiographic in nature, such as the Rorschach Performance Assessment System (RPAS) (Meyer, Viglione, Mihura, Erard & Erdberg, 2010) which has been referred to as an evidence-based method and is subject to ongoing peer-review and to fulfill the Daubert Criteria (Erard, 2010).

Perhaps there is a need to be more accepting of what constitutes ‘evidence’ to include not only academically generated evidence, but also practice and casework generated evidence, and a change to a broad and creative view of how research is carried out and disseminated within the profession (Dunsmuir & Kratochwill, 2013) to reduce any barriers to using idiosyncratic approaches such as PTs as part of a comprehensive, broad psychological assessment which includes acknowledgement of the individual experience.

With the profession’s consistent theme of ‘reconstruction, reformulation and refocusing’ (Fallon, Woods, Rooney, 2010) and the acknowledged diversity in practice, Lane & Corrie (2006) highlight the need for a focus on what connects all psychologists, a fabric of ideas, values and traditions which binds psychologists to their discipline despite of the sometimes apparent extreme differences between practitioners.

5.5 Implications for practice

When considering the implications of the findings on EPs using PTs within professional practice key issues have been highlighted, particularly regarding supervision and training.

The findings suggest there is a dearth of inclusion of PTs and psychodynamic psychology in EP training programmes. The one programme to base their theoretical underpinning on psychodynamic thinking is viewed as ‘different’ by other EPs which highlights the isolation of this approach in the EP profession and the need for a movement towards more open collaboration and communication. The DfEE report on Educational Psychology services highlighted that some EPs did not feel like they had received the necessary training to broaden their role or take on more specialist work (DfEE, 2000) which goes some way to explain the reluctance and ‘fear’ of EPs to
embrace other ‘fringe’ techniques including PTs – there is a negativity surrounding this isolation.

To increase the inclusion of PTs in training programmes there are a number of issues, practically there is a lot to fit into the three year doctorate programme and although this allows for more breadth of coverage than the previous one year initial training masters route, it may not be possible to devote enough time to introduce and use a range of PTs for TEPs to feel confident and competent when entering the workplace. Also, there may not be enough trained staff to deliver this specialist training at each location. With the ‘reconstruction, reformulation and refocusing’ of the profession (Fallon, Woods, Rooney (2010) it is not clear how decisions are made on what is and is not included on training programmes and how changes are communicated in a transparent fashion between programmes. This raises questions around how to link with other paradigms and how to communicate and document the fundamentals of each programme. To include psychodynamics within the core curriculum there would need to be a link to the parent discipline, and unfortunately undergraduate psychology degrees tend not to include this key area, Woods (2016) provided a summary table of the curriculum for undergraduate and postgraduate training for educational psychology and there was no mention of any psychodynamic related areas being included – which is a concerning mystery, perhaps not within the realms of the current research.

Miller and Frederickson (2006) highlight that initial training has an emphasis on scientific experimentation with an appreciation for validity and reliability, and with a greater demand for systematic evaluation of local programmes and national initiatives and an increase on accountability and EBP in education (Sebba, 2004) the professional environment has limited conduciveness for more idiographic approaches. Sebba (1999) described the possibility of an extension of initial professional training providing exciting opportunities for collaboration across courses and services particularly related to key research agendas, and it seems there is the potential to further these collaboration aims.

The impact of training on the choice of assessment methods used by EPs in their future practice is crucial (Freeman & Miller, 2001). Pellegrini (2010) provides a useful personal reflection on his training and how the evidence based emphasis had a strong influence on his approach in the workplace. His interest in other approaches including psychodynamic psychology came from conversations with colleagues who had been trained elsewhere. Lane & Corrie (2006) raised the question about training psychologists to operate as both scientists and practitioners. Lilienfeld et al. (2012) highlight the need for psychologists to develop a skillset to distinguish between
evidence based and non-evidence-based practices. However, this is a very restricted use of the term ‘evidence based practice’ referring to the academic evidence base without an acknowledgment of other types of evidence from practice and casework, again highlighting the need for a broader view and acceptance of what is viewed as evidence for EPs.

Another key implication for practice which emerged involved supervision and the availability of psychodynamically orientated supervisors. When looking at the use of therapeutic approaches by EPs in the UK, which has a common appreciation of emotions and relationships as psychodynamic thinking, they found the availability of supervision was reported to be both a facilitator and a barrier (Atkinson et al., 2011).

Again, a parallel could be drawn with EP’s use of therapeutic approaches, where the perception of the EP role by schools and other stakeholders could be viewed as a facilitator and a barrier to using therapeutic intervention (Atkinson, Corban & Templeton, 2011) where school psychology services often have a focus on curricular support rather than having a wider brief inclusive of mental health (Mackay, 2007). For an increase in therapeutic work, and possibly the use of psychodynamic thinking, there needs to be a greater promotion of the services, such as through marketing or advertising (Atkinson et al. 2011).

5.6 Limitations of the present research

A review of the previous literature revealed a lack of research addressing EPs use of PTs in the UK (Pellegrini, 2010). The present research was a small scale qualitative study and therefore has inherent limitations. There needs to be a consideration of the sample, both in size and bias which means caution must be exercised in relation to generalising to a broader population. However, the aim of the research was an initial detailed exploration of views rather than to generalise.

Participants were self-referring and chose to take part because they used or were interested in PTs, none of the respondents were overly negative about PTs – which is unlikely to be representative of the wider EP community considering the responses that were given. One of the aims of selection was to have participants from a range of geographical locations and employment set ups. However, due to the nature of the specialist snowballing selection process, there were no responses from independent psychologists and geographically they were based around the north-west or south-east. This was not due to financial or time limitations and the offer of Skype as an alternative to an in person interview was a key factor in not limiting the sample if there had been more respondents than required as participants. The aim of the research was
to explore some perceived barriers and facilitators of EPs in the UK using PTs and the potential contribution of their use, and regardless of the sample size and delineation, it is felt that this has been achieved and has laid a foundation for future research with the lack of literature in this area strengthening its justification.

The dynamic between the researcher and the participant is an inherent factor in interview research, this is a particular consideration when the researcher is a TEP and the participants are fully qualified and working in role. There could be a possible impact on interview responses when there is a difference in the perceived identification with the profession.

The use of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was chosen to allow the themes from the interview data to emerge rather than be imposed, which minimised personal bias and provided a rich analysis of the interviews through the use of quotations and a detailed narrative. Member checking was used to develop the interview questions and to validate key themes and ensure the validity of responses. However, interviews were carried out on a single day and whilst providing a snapshot of each respondent’s views this may fluctuate. In hindsight, it may have been useful to distribute the interview questions prior to the interview date to allow time for personal exploration of the issues – there were a number of occasions when comments were made related to needing time to reflect on their own position related to the question. A two-part interview or advance questions may have allowed for richer data, however there is merit in gaining data from the ‘live’ thought process rather than responses being pre-scripted or rationalised.

Regarding the member checking, it is felt that this could have been more detailed – a thematic map was provided electronically to participants due to time constraints (which was agreed to on the consent form), however to meet with participants (in person or via Skype) a second time to talk through the findings and provide a narrative to the theme names/map is likely to have been more informative and have improved the member checking process. Unfortunately, researcher triangulation was not an option within the scope of work and training commitments.

An alternative to the in-person semi structured interviews could have been a focus group, which can be a useful technique to understand what a group of EPs think about a particular focus of interest with a process that is open and emergent (Millward, 1995). This would have allowed the research questions to be answered and new angles and perspectives generated through a collective rather than an individualistic view. The use of a focus group rather than interviews, particularly at the phase 2 stage may have promoted self-disclosure by capitalising on the group dynamics in the discussion.
(Freeman, 2006). By having a homogenous group of practising EPs in the UK but with heterogeneity in their use of projective assessments could have balanced any tension there may be by encouraging the sharing of information and ensuring the discussion allowed diverse opinion (Krueger 1988, p. 47). Although Krueger (1993) acknowledges the difficulties in bringing together groups of participants in an organisational context and Barbour (2007) criticised focus groups suggesting the data obtained through this technique may not be truly reflective of a wider communities views.

Another consideration would be to have two people involved in the data gathering and analysis process, this would enable the researcher to take fuller notes whilst the other could focus on the practical elements of carrying out the interview or focus group. This would also be another opportunity for member checking.

A limitation of the literature search was that the full PRISMA process (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, & Altman, 2009) was not adhered to – which would have provided information about the full range of literature identified before filtering.

5.7 Implications for future research

The research base including research and professional expertise (APA, 2006) needs to be developed for EPs use of PTs and psychodynamic thinking. This could be addressed through Practice Based Evidence (PBE), to support the safe trialling of these under used techniques by practitioners, with the aim of building an inclusive practitioner-led research evidence base (Barkham, Hardy & Mellor-Clark, 2010). To aid this process EPs need to be seen as users of research and doing research (Sebba, 1999) which can be hard once entering the workplace. However, not impossible, as shown by Eloquin’s (2016) recent paper looking at how psychoanalytic concepts can be applied by EPs within a systems-psychodynamic perspective. There is great value in PBE and providing evidence that is developed, refined and implemented in a real life setting for areas which do not have a robust academic evidence base, to raise their profile and make them more accepted and accessible to the wider EP community (Fox, 2011).

To raise the profile of PTs and psychodynamic psychology, it would be useful to share practice between practitioners using PTs and the wider EP community. One effective way of addressing this would be through the use of detailed case studies (see Eloquin, 2016). The APA (2006) described the benefits of using individual case studies as a valuable source of innovation and hypotheses in the context of the individual. Salkovskis (1995) highlighted the need for small scale case studies for innovation and initial ideas about techniques. Then the case studies could be explored across cases to
develop external validity, an analysis of a number of cases in a less detailed way could also provide predictive validity (Cohen & Morrison, 2007). There is a concern about how research findings related to psychodynamic theory are disseminated (Shedler, 2010), highlighting again the distinction in psychology between ‘scientists’ and ‘practitioners’ and how this can make applying psychological findings to practice challenging (Lunt, 1998). The question of promotion, marketing and dissemination of this research would need to be attended to, to prevent any bias (Shedler, 2010).

Previously local authority statutory assessment requirements have constrained the range and development of EP’s other functions, including research (Farrell et al. 2006), however changes brought about by the Children and Families Act 2014 (HMG, 2014) and subsequent SEND code of practice 0-25 years have given EPs the opportunity to reposition themselves and make improvements to the services they provide. This may lead to more EPs exploring PTs and having the opportunity to carry out further research to raise the profile and see them as a part of their flexible and child centred toolkit to allow each practitioner to respond to the needs of the individual situation they encounter.

There are many issues raised by the present research not only about the use of PTs by EPs, but broader questions related to professional practice, the role of the EP and how evidence is viewed by the EP community. It is hoped that the findings give impetus for future research to explore psychodynamic theory within the EP role and raise the profile of related techniques to increase the acceptance and celebrate the diversity and creativity of EP practice and the value of casework as a form of evidence to support this.
It is suggested that anyone interested in carrying out research in this area considers the following suggestions.

Table 5.1: *Possibilities for future research*

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<tr>
<th>Need for research</th>
<th>Possible approach</th>
<th>Utility</th>
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<td>Exploration of current practice on a wider scale</td>
<td>Online survey</td>
<td>Discover the prevalence of PT usage in the wider EP community in the UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater understanding of the commonalities and distinctive features of initial educational psychology training programmes in the UK, particularly related to the paradigms that underpin the content.</td>
<td>Exploration of programme material. Interviews with programme directors.</td>
<td>To aid collaboration across programmes to increase opportunities for sharing specialist knowledge and instruction. Creation of cross programme networks or interest groups of which psychodynamic techniques could be one. Consideration of how programme content and focus is disseminate to potential TEPs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can the use of PTs be taken forwards within EP professional practice – capacity to provide psychodynamic supervision, evaluation of PT usage, how can an EPS support and promote their use?</td>
<td>Questionnaire and in depth interviews with Principal Educational Psychologists (PEPs). Case study of a service who use PTs.</td>
<td>An understanding of potential barriers and facilitators from an organisational perspective of the use of PTs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The capacity of the EP profession to provide psychodynamic supervision to support PT use.</td>
<td>Analysis of service delivery models alongside in depth interview. Case study of psychodynamic supervision being used effectively.</td>
<td>A greater understanding of supervision generally (frequency, nature). A consideration of more creative options for supervision through collaboration with other applied psychologists or online sessions to provide specialist psychodynamic supervision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.8 Reflexive account

In the writing of this thesis, I feel I have gone on a journey which began with a need to explore the scope and potential of the role, and has helped to clarify my personal choices about choosing Educational Psychology as a profession and the contribution I can make through research. I came to the training with minimal insight into the EP profession, my experience in employment and voluntary sectors had been varied and focused on children, young people and their families in multi-disciplinary organisations. My expectation of the course and of the profession was perhaps naïve, with an anticipated focus on therapeutic approaches and assessment, which was not as embedded in the curriculum as I had hoped. This began my thinking about why this may be and how being an EP could fulfil my aspiration for a career with children, young people and families.

Looking back at my initial selection of the present research topic, I feel I was searching for an area I valued and felt worthwhile to maintain my motivation to produce a piece of work with the time and effort it deserved. Discussions with fellow TEPs seemed to indicate them valuing idiographic techniques, such as projectives, and that they were in fact using them on placement. However, this was not a popular area with my cohort, which in itself led me to question my stance and possible difference with my colleagues. This also reflected thoughts I have had throughout my studies of Psychology from undergraduate level – where the emphasis was on paradigms such as cognitive, behavioural, social etc. but the inclusion of psychodynamic perspective was largely ignored. I found it hard to make sense of this when much of the pioneering work of Freud and colleagues seemed to be crucial to key aspects of current psychological thinking, and definitely applicable to ‘applying psychology’ with children and young people – such as the importance of childhood, the subconscious and the impact of drives and defense mechanisms.

When a project was offered looking at projective techniques and psychodynamic perspectives, I felt that this would be a project I would value and would enable me to explore some of the unanswered questions and thoughts I had been having throughout my education, employment and voluntary experiences. It had the potential to allow me to develop and justify my approach as a practitioner, and to feel grounded and secure in my role and the aims of my work. I felt that asking EPs questions of a largely ignored, yet important area of psychology would allow me to begin to understand from the perspective of others with more experience, to enable a greater understanding for the profession and also for my personal journey of self-discovery to make sense of a role which I would be dedicated to in my daily working life.
I am grateful that the writing of this thesis has given me the opportunity to explore the role of the EP and my personal stance within it. There is a large degree of variability within the role and I hope the process of carrying out this research contributes in some way to ensuring that approaches and tools which are potentially useful and relevant are not forgotten or ignored, regardless of what paradigm they are rooted in. The research process has helped me develop an understanding of the role of the EP and some of the key issues that the profession face. It has reinforced my belief in being open and creative in my approach and highlighted some of the challenges to this within the realm of projective techniques, and the wider picture of pertinent issues for being an EP in the UK and working with children, young people and their families.

I believe that, as a professional community, we should not ‘shut the door’ on applying this important contribution to psychology in daily practice to creatively address the needs of the child and their situation, to promote positive change. Even if a practitioner chooses not to use a particular approach or technique there should be the awareness and evaluation of its potential use before this decision is made. I believe an ‘openness’ can help prevent practitioners becoming stagnant and conservative in their approach which can narrow their responsiveness to the situation and being child-centred.

I hope that in choosing this area of research and in the process of writing the thesis, I can play a part in continuing the development of a progressive profession that is responsive to change and is open to a broad range of tools and approaches, without restricting potential opportunities to include useful, new or ignored techniques through boundaries created through reputation, false belief or lack of research. In this way the differing needs of children, young people and their families can be responded to creatively through a range of perspectives.
Chapter 6: References


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Chapter 7: Appendices

Appendix 1: Initial interest email - Phase 1

Dear .............,

I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist at the University of Manchester, and am carrying out my thesis research on the use of Projective assessments by Educational Psychologists in the UK.

These are tests such as:

- Sentence Completion
- House-Person-Tree task (HPT)
- Blob tree
- Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)
- Kinetic Family Drawing
- Draw-a-person test
- Rorschach Inkblot test

There are many others which you may use.

The research has two phases and I would like to invite you to participate in the first phase, as an EP who uses projective techniques in their professional practice. This will consist of a semi-structured interview about your use of, and views of, these techniques. This interview can be carried out at a time convenient to you, in person, by phone or via Skype if you are not located in the Manchester area.

If you are interested in participating or finding out more about the research, please respond to this email. I have attached an information sheet with more details, and am more than happy to answer any questions you have before deciding.

Look forward to hearing from you.

Rachael King

Trainee Educational Psychologist
Appendix 2: Initial interest email - Phase 2

Dear ..........., 

I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist at the University of Manchester, and am carrying out my thesis research on the use of projective techniques by Educational Psychologists in the UK.

There are a wide range of projective techniques, however they all require a response to an open-ended or ambiguous prompt, cue or stimulus. Some are more formal assessments, such as the Rorschach Inkblot Test, Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) and Draw-a-Person (DAP). Others are less formal, such as the Blob Tree, Bear Emotion Cards and Sentence Completion.

I am looking for UK based practising Educational Psychologists to take part in a semi-structured interview to explore your thoughts and opinions on the use of projective techniques. It doesn’t matter if you currently use these types of techniques or not. Unfortunately, trainee EPs will not be included in the sample due to the need to reflect on employment.

The interview will last approximately 30 minutes and can be carried out at a time convenient to you, in person, or via Skype if you are not located in the Manchester area. Feedback from the research, which also includes projective assessment expert interview and a questionnaire survey of EPs, will be provided to all participants and I will hope provide a valuable CPD resource.

If you are interested in participating or finding out more about the research, please respond to this email and I will send you a full participant information sheet. I am more than happy to answer any questions you have before deciding.

Look forward to hearing from you.

Rachael King

Trainee Educational Psychologist
Appendix 3: Participant information sheet

An exploration of the use of projective techniques by Educational Psychologists in the UK

Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research study that will be assessed as the thesis project for the researcher’s Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Who will conduct the research?

Rachael King: Educational Support and Inclusion (ESI), School of Education, Ellen Wilkinson Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL

What is the aim of the research?

Projective techniques are rooted in psychodynamic theory, with the belief that each person has conscious and unconscious thoughts, wishes and feelings, which are not in conscious awareness, and that each person interprets the world in terms of their unique experience. The presentation of an ambiguous stimuli can produce a free form response which can then be analysed in terms of the individuals response, rather than a right or wrong answer (Chandler, 2003), as is the case with some other objective psychometric tests. The underlying assumption being that vague, ambiguous responses can be a person ‘projecting’ their unconscious problems, motives and wishes onto the stimuli presented (Miller & Nicherson, 2006). The aims of the research are to:

- Understand the potential contribution of a psychodynamic framework and the use of PTs within the EP role in the UK.
- Explore the facilitators and barriers of EPs using a psychodynamic framework and PTs.
- To add to the minimal research base on the use of PTs to encourage acceptance, usage, and future training.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen as you are currently working as an EP in the UK, and the researcher is interested in your personal use and views on projective techniques as part of your professional practice.
What would I be asked to do if I took part?

There are 2 phases to the research.

Phase 1 will be using semi-structured interviews surrounding the use and views of EPs with a specialist interest in the psychodynamic approach and projective techniques. The interviews will last 30-45 minutes and will be audio recorded. You can have a break whenever you need to. The interview will be carried out on the University of Manchester premises, or at a mutually arranged location or via Skype.

Phase 2 will consist of semi-structured interviews which will be based on the analysis of data from phase 1. Interviewees will be practising EPs from a variety of employment locations in the UK who may or may not use projective techniques. The interviews will last 30-45 minutes and will be audio recorded. You can have a break whenever you need to. The interview will be carried out on the University of Manchester premises, or at a mutually arranged location or via Skype.

What happens to the data collected?

The data collected from phases 1 and 2 will be transcribed, there will be no names kept with the files. I will be the only one to transcribe what you say, and it will only be shared with my supervisor if necessary – but will not have any names on at this time.

How is confidentiality maintained?

All information that is collected during this study is strictly confidential. No-one other than the researcher will listen to the audio recordings of your interviews without your explicit permission. All recordings and transcriptions will be kept securely in a locked filing cabinet or on an encrypted data stick. The audio recordings and transcripts of your interviews will be stored securely for five years after being collected. The online survey is confidential and you will not be asked for your name.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you are considering taking part you will be given this information sheet to keep, and will have it for a minimum of two weeks before you have to decide. If you decide to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form. You are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to yourself or your place of work.

Will I be paid for participating in the research?

There will be no payment for participating in this research.

What is the duration of the research?

1 x 30-45 minute interview

Feedback session approximately 30 minutes (optional), or feedback can be given via email.

Where will the research be conducted?

On the University of Manchester premises, or a mutually agreed location or via Skype.
Will the outcomes of the research be published?

The research will be written up into a thesis that will be assessed as part of the researcher’s Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology. The research may also be published in a scientific journal and your permission will be sought via a consent form to use the data from your interview for this purpose.

Criminal Records Check

The researcher has undergone a satisfactory criminal records check and can therefore conduct research on school premises.

Contact for further information

If you have any questions about this research the researcher and supervisor of the project can be contacted for further discussion on any aspect of this study.

Rachael King (researcher):
Email: rachococo@yahoo.com
Telephone: 0161 275 3511 or 3460 (Please leave a message with Jackie Chisnall)

Kevin Woods (supervisor):
Email: kevin.a.woods@manchester.ac.uk
Telephone: 0161 275 3511 or 3460 (Please leave a message with Jackie Chisnall)

What if something goes wrong?

You can contact the researcher or supervisor at any point during or after the research if you require assistance with anything related to the research conducted.

In the event that you find any aspects of this research unsatisfactory, please contact the research on the details above. If you have further concerns you can contact:

The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL', by emailing: Research-Governance@manchester.ac.uk, or by telephoning 0161 275 7583 or 275 8093

I really appreciate your consideration of this project.

Many thanks

Rachael
Appendix 4: Pre-interview information - Phase 1

Pre-interview information

Here is a list of some projective assessments. There are many others, feel free to add any to the bottom of the list.

Please complete the table below to indicate which of these you have heard of, used, included in a report or received training for. Your responses will guide some of the questions during the interview.

If you are happy to have the interview audio recorded please sign below

.............................................................................

Please return as soon as possible via email, if you have any questions please get in touch.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Am aware of this assessment</th>
<th>Have used this assessment</th>
<th>Have included this assessment in a report</th>
<th>Have received training for this assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rorschach Inkblot Method</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic Apperception Test - TAT</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Object Relation Technique - ORT</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sentence Completion Test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Person Tree - HPT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Memories Protocol</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bene Anthony Test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kinetic Family Drawing</td>
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</table>
Appendix 5: Consent form

An exploration of the use of projective techniques by Educational Psychologists in the UK

CONSENT FORM

If you are happy to participate please complete and sign the consent form below

Please initial

1. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.  ........

2. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.  ........

3. I understand that the interviews will be audio recorded.  ........

4. I agree the use of anonymous quotes from the interview.  ........

5. I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books or journals.  ........

I agree to take part in the above project.

.................................................  ......................  .................................................
Name (participant)                     Date                         Signed

.................................................  ......................  .................................................
Name (researcher)                      Date                         Signed
Appendix 6: Semi-structured interview schedule – Phase 1

Semi-structured individual interview schedule

- Welcome – reminder of consent.
- If you need a break at any time just let me know.
- You can choose to not answer any questions I ask.
- I will be recording the audio and making notes.
- Do you have any questions before we start?
- I would like you to answer the questions based on your own experience and approach to being an EP.

1. How many years have you practiced and/or conducted research in the field of educational psychology?

   - How familiar are you with psychodynamic theory and projective tests?
   - How much training in psychodynamic theory and projective techniques did you receive during your initial training?
   - How much training in projective assessment techniques have you received since being employed as part of your Professional Development?

2. In what situation would you be likely to use a psychodynamic approach?

   - Why would you use a psychodynamic approach in addition to another approach, such as contextual observation, emotional checklist?
   - What do you feel are the benefits of the projective techniques you use?
   - Are there any factors which would make you not use a projective technique?
   - What are the benefits of doing this?
   - Refer to grid which has been completed by respondent before the interview.
   - Are there any of these tests you would not use? Why?
   - Are there any other projective tests you have heard of, used or had training in?
   - What are the benefits of referring to projective assessments in reports?
3. How do you see the future for the EP professions use of psychodynamic theory and projective tests?

- What reasons do you think that projective tests are not used as frequently as other approaches?

- Projective assessments are used much more frequently in other countries, such as the USA and Italy, than in the UK - ref. What reasons do you think there are that other countries use more projective assessments than here in the UK?

- Could a wider acceptance of the psychodynamic approach and projective techniques benefit the EP community? How?

- Are there any potential obstacles for EPs using projective techniques more in the future?

- If more projective tests had a valid and reliable interpretation framework, would this affect the frequency with which you use projective assessments?

- Do you see value in furthering research in the use of projective assessments as part of an EP’s role?

Thank you and feedback procedure outlined.

Member checking and feedback meeting.
Appendix 7: Semi-structured interview schedule – Phase 2

**Semi-structured individual interview schedule**

- Welcome – reminder of consent.
- If you need a break at any time just let me know.
- You can choose to not answer any questions I ask.
- I will be recording the audio and making notes.
- Do you have any questions before we start?
- I would like you to answer the questions based on your own experience and approach to being an EP.

- How many years have you practiced and/or conducted research in the field of educational psychology?
- How familiar are you with psychodynamic theory and projective tests?
- How much training in psychodynamic theory and projective techniques did you receive during your initial training?
- How much training in projective assessment techniques have you received since being employed as part of your Professional Development?
- Which projective tests do you know of? Rorschach Inkblot Method, Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), Sentence Completion Test, House Tree Person (HTP) technique, Early Memories Protocol, Kinetic Family Drawing, Bene Anthony test
- Which projective tests do you currently, or in the past, use as part of your professional practice?
- In what situation would you be likely to use a psychodynamic approach?
- Why would you use a psychodynamic approach rather than another approach?
- What do you feel are the benefits of using projective techniques?
- Are there any factors which would make you not use a projective technique?
- How often do you include findings from projective tests in reports?
- What are the benefits of doing this?
- How do you see the future for the EP professions use of psychodynamic theory and projective tests?
• What reasons do you think that projective tests are not used as frequently as other approaches?

• What reasons do you think there are that other countries use more projective assessments than here in the UK?

• Are there any potential obstacles for EPs using projective techniques more in the future?

• Could a wider acceptance of the psychodynamic approach and projective techniques benefit the EP community? How?

• If more projective tests had a valid and reliable interpretation framework, would this affect the frequency with which you use projective assessments?

• Do you see value in furthering research in the use of projective assessments as part of an EP’s role?

Thank you and feedback procedure outlined.

Member checking and feedback meeting.
Appendix 8: 6 Phases of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

1. **Familiarising myself with my data**
   Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.

2. **Generating initial codes**
   Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.

3. **Searching for themes**
   Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.

4. **Reviewing themes**
   Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic „map“ of the analysis.

5. **Defining and naming themes**
   Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.

6. **Producing the report**
   The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.
Appendix 9: Thematic Analysis process – Sample transcript with initial codes
Appendix 10: Thematic Analysis process – Photo of codes
Appendix 11: Thematic Analysis process - Photo of codes organised into themes
### Appendix 12: Theme summary table with quotes and frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Initial codes</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>Example quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychodynamic framework (148)</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation (58)</td>
<td>(12)6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude to psychodynamic thinking</td>
<td>(14)9</td>
<td></td>
<td>… that’s quite a general attitude to mental health and to therapy, that … if you like, the sort of … all the IAPT stuff, which is CBT based, is part of, I think, a general … resistance to a more analytically orientated therapy. EP2: Attitude to psychodynamic thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputational (58)</td>
<td>(16)9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not popular with EPs</td>
<td>(14)5</td>
<td></td>
<td>… in the States as I understand it, but I don’t know enough about it … again, I think, you know … psychoanalysis doesn’t have quite the bad press that it does here. EP2: Attitude to psychodynamic thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raising profile (7)</td>
<td>(7)5</td>
<td></td>
<td>… unfortunately I think it can be seen as wishy washy, that there is no evidence, that it is your own interpretation. I think there is a lot of evidence in psychoanalytic literature, but it is not widely popular. EP3: Attitude to psychodynamic thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude of EP profession (5)</td>
<td>(7)5</td>
<td></td>
<td>As regards to psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic ideas and um, projectives, I dunno, I just wish … in some ways I wish that more … that we could train schools up to think a little more analytically … EP5: Attitude to psychodynamic thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear in EP community (4)</td>
<td>(4)1</td>
<td></td>
<td>… and people understanding why it is that you want to use them, like I think if you’re not very psychoanalytically minded it’s … it’s kind of hard to get why you think showing kids a bunch of cards and asking them to tell a story is … a suitable activity to be doing. EP7: Attitude to psychodynamic thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture (4)</td>
<td>(4)1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration (6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I feel like there is a lot of resistance to the ideas, um … yeah, it’s hard to say really because the UK really was a big centre of psychoanalysis like Freud was here, Anna Freud was here and yet somehow it is just not in … in our professions in a big way. Yeah, it’s a bit mystifying maybe – I don’t know. EP7: Attitude to psychodynamic thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>… I think it’s a really important approach that has been a bit ignored for the last thirty, forty years. EP1: Not popular with EPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>… projectives are sort of an extension of an analytic … psychoanalytic way of thinking … which is inherently unpopular.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP2: Not popular with EPs</td>
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<td>--------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>... was it also to do with the fact that maybe sometimes with an EP in practice ... I mean you don’t see them talked about in journals or ... you know ... I wonder if they weren’t considered to have a high enough eye for them to ... you know ... make it into the curriculum.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EP4: Not popular with EPs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>... that real emphasis on affect, the emphasis on relationships, the emphasis on thinking about the unconscious and trying to think about fantasy life. It’s so ... I think it’s really ... that’s why I was interested in what you are doing, it’s so neglected potentially...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EP4: Not popular with EPs</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I haven’t heard much discussion and kind of, interest in psychodynamics and projectives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EP4: Not popular with EPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I don’t get the impression that necessarily, you know, when you go to trainee conferences or looking up papers that are presented at conference that you ... not a lot of trainees are talking about – oh, projectives and psychodymanic ... it just doesn’t seem to be something that gets discussed very much.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EP4: Not popular with EPs</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>... recently I went to the um ... DECP conference and um ... I presented my research which used a psychoanalytic methodology and I was the only mention of anything psychoanalytic across the whole event.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EP5: Not popular with EPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>... there isn’t really, to my knowledge very many people involved in the EP training who are skilled in those techniques, so it would ... it would worry me that’s something that’s going to die out.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EP7: Not popular with EPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>... if you don’t have the exposure to, ... finding out about them, and to ... to trying them out, having the experiences, like I said, of interpreting them, you’re not really going to have the opportunity to learn about it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EP7: Not popular with EPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>... if there was more of a discussion and a debate and a real kind of engagement with them then it could revitalise your practice and make you think, oh yeah, actually I could use that I could try that.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I think if people like you are researching it, you’ve probably seen that you’re drawing attention to it, um ... and it begins to become a kind of a lively discussion and debate ...

I think kind of, going to something like a DECP conference and seeing workshops and symposiums, seeing papers being published and seeing ... you know, more important than the day to day practice of EPs, that EPs are talking about it together and ... and come back and lets go visit and you’re discussing a case and you’re being debriefed and you’re thinking together about, kind of, what might that have meant and lets try and look at some of what the child said and ... and have some kind of analytic viewpoint being drawn there, um ... so, maybe it’s not about it needing to change in a kind of ... something out there needs to change, maybe it is about those of us who are ... who are interested in this ... I dunno, becoming more publicly, activist ... or ... or more ... more noticeable maybe ...

... maybe that is part of the conversation that we need to have, is that as part of training people need to be be able to be familiar and competent and have the opportunity to practise in a very closely supervised way, in a trainee type way ... apprenticeship type way, um ... and maybe that would start to bring some of the stuff more ... more into people’s minds and more into people’s practice and more into people thinking, you know that is something I could do, that would be a really useful technique I would like to learn more about.

... if there were ways of being able to support people understanding how they can be ... um, reliable and valid and used safely and used competently and that they do make a difference to how you ... how you think about the case that you are working on.

... maybe if they were better promoted, or the people were more confident in them so that they were developed and kind of ... adapted and people thought they were more robust then yeah, definitely, I think there would be a much bigger take up.

... it’s just important that these organisations exist to keep ideas coming on and, um ... sort of ... yeah, floating new
<table>
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<tr>
<th>EP5: Raising profile</th>
<th>I definitely do ... I mean, that’s partly why I wanted to do this study because I think ... um ... that it is really important that we keep talking about it ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EP7: Raising profile</td>
<td>I feel that it would be good if people were more informed about them and had the choice of whether to use them or not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP2: Attitude of EP profession</td>
<td>I think the attitude of the EP profession possibly generally that they are not really proper tests ... you know, they are not standardised, are they valid. Um, you know ... is good judgement enough? Um ... are they really scientific?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP4: Attitude of EP profession</td>
<td>So you’re not going to get people offering training, support and development about something that there’s kind of a ... poo-poo ... why would you ever bother ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>EP4: Attitude of EP profession</td>
<td>EP’s can be quite cutting ... and ... and hurtful towards each other sometimes and very judgemental about each others practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>EP4: Attitude of EP profession</td>
<td>It seems to have been accepted that you know ... everything to do with Freud is ridiculous and we should all start doing CBT. That is such a gross generalisation and is very, very unfair and CBT is definitely very useful – I’m being a bit facetious. Apologies.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| EP4: Attitude of EP profession | I think that maybe one of the things that comes out, is that people don’t want to lift the stones in case they have to
manage whatever crawls out from underneath them ... that is one of the problems.

EP2: Fear in EP community

My own hypothesis about that is that is scares the life out of people ... to think that they’re ... you know, underneath this veneer of rationale, professionalism ... perhaps the positivists are particularly prone to this ... there is this seething ... you know, unconscious for which we have very little control or knowledge .. and so people back away from analytic ideas ... very, very rapidly...
EP2: Fear in EP community

there is a sort of, you know, a mixture of contempt in there and anxiety I think about the sorts of things that we used to do.
EP2: Fear in EP community

I do wonder if there isn’t a bit of a fear about kind of um ... you know you look at some of the debates on EPNET and there was one there recently about people saying I wouldn’t post on here because you just get cut down and shot down for ... for expressing a view ...

[barriers]... lack of understanding of psychoanalytic theory, fear of psychoanalytic theory, fear that it’s ‘quackery’, that it’s too interpretative, that it’s too, um ... er, subjective ... yeah there’s a lot ...

The only one I am a bit concerned about is the Rorschach ... and that’s because I think it is in the popular imagination ... um, you can go into art shops and get ... um ... versions of the Rorschach test, in fact I have got a set of table mats on my desk which are Rorschach, so I know it has seeped into popular, um ... culture in a sense, and that might contaminate the testing in some ways ... so, I do have a little bit if concern about it. But I’d love to be trained on it.
EP1: Culture

I wonder if it is cultural ... there seems to me more acceptance of psychodynamic approaches ... certainly in the USA ... I’m not so sure about Italy, I don’t it very well.
EP1: Culture

America are so much more open about their feelings aren’t they, and most people have a therapist in everyday life
to talk about how they are feeling, to project, it’s more the culture I suppose, it’s not part of our culture. We’re stiff upper lip aren’t we …
EP6: Culture

… in the States … very much … you know, they like their therapeutic techniques and their therapy and they are more comfortable to talk about their feelings. Um … it’s just … it’s just part of everyday life. Whereas here it’s … we’re very much black … I think we are much more black and white and there’s a right and a wrong and we like our standardised assessments … like with the SATS, these poor children in primary schools and … it’s the way our country is run, we are target set. So, it’s just the culture, I think we need a cultural change …
EP6: Culture

And I would like a group network of projective testees to maybe … to have a space to, um … talk basically and bring material and think about how it can be used helpfully, basically.
EP5: Collaboration

... sometimes it’s hard to do it with children that have language difficulties, um … even then it can say more about their language capabilities.
EP5: Verbal ability

I think that even though language is a potential barrier, it’s … it sort of isn’t as well because it tells you a lot about how they use language, how they can form a narrative, the kind of vocabulary they are using.
EP5: Verbal ability

The CAT and the ORT require a certain level of verbal ability, so, um … if the child doesn’t have many words, um … I probably wouldn’t use one of those.
EP7: Verbal ability

I would sort of write about it, not in lay terms as such, but I would be very careful, I wouldn’t refer to it as a projective test as such, I would name the test and I would say it contains a set of cards where the child tells a story about each card and that we looked to see if there were any common themes emerging that might support our understanding of what the child is experiencing. So I sort of frame it in a way that, you know, is understandable to who is going to be reading the report.
EP3: Caution in reporting
... the thing that I find difficult sometimes is having confidence to, um ... report, um ... some of my hypothe ... my maybe more, um ... sensitive hypothesis, and sort of how you could feed that back into the system in a useful way.

EP5: Caution in reporting

I might test out the hypotheses I have in the feedback meeting, rather than reporting them directly, and so then what I might do is report it indirectly, so I might say something like 'in the assessment I got a sense that ... blah' and then I might use evidence from like a sentence completion task rather than the ORT ... say ... and then I would say 'Mrs.so and so agrees that so is preoccupied by ... whatever' first, so I might report it in an indirect way. But there have been times when I’ve reported it in a direct way as well, so ... it really varies.

EP7: Caution in reporting

... our reports are far more likely to be scrutinised at that level and so that does have implications to what we are doing, we have to be really careful ...

EP6: Caution in use

I think you have to be very careful how you interpret things. I see it very much as a clinical ... clinical techniques... um... and obviously you can make assumptions which might be incorrect, I think you have to be careful.

EP6: Caution in use

... actually there aren’t that many EPs ... even people that we trained to use these things at the xxx, who necessarily use them ... um, you know ... as ... well ordinarily in all of their practice.

EP2: Caution in use

I am very careful about when I choose to use them. If there is already an understanding of what is going on, I wouldn’t then decide to use the CAT as another add on.

EP3: Caution in use

Overall, if I am really honest, I have never really felt a barrier to using it because I think I explain it in terms of what themes may emerge that may be useful if I child cannot express it verbally.

EP3: Caution in use

... a recognition within our community that, you know ... that they ... they are not the be all and end all and they need to be kind of um ... administered safely and within the guidelines of professional competence. However, they
can have something to offer …
EP4: Caution in use

So it might put us off potentially using something, just because of, you know … everything gets scrutinised now…
EP6: Caution in use

… we are in tribunal a lot more, yeah … so perhaps more cautious about what we are doing. Um … I wouldn’t say it has changed anyone’s practice but I think it might… you know … prevent you from doing something you’d want to do just … but maybe not, maybe I’m being … but I am a bit of a cautious person, so …
EP6: Caution in use

I agree with a lot of the criticisms I just mentioned but I think they are … it could be dangerous if used thoughtlessly..
EP7: Caution in use

The CAT and the ORT require a certain level of verbal ability, so, um … if the child doesn’t have many words, um … I probably wouldn’t use one of those. Similarly if they are not good at drawing, um … I wouldn’t necessarily use any drawing. Quite often with very young children I won’t use projective techniques. I think there are question marks over autism, whether to use them there, um … so that’s one where I just kind of play it by ear and use my judgement as to whether I think it would add anything.
EP7: Caution in use

… it depends, with the kinetic family drawing for example, I’d be reluctant to use that if I knew there were CP issues
EP7: Safeguarding

If you say you are looking at what a child projects onto a picture … you get insight into a child’s internal world, you get parents with a very… you know, are concerned by that. If it sounds like you are delving into, you know… they become quite resistant to you.
EP3: Parental concern

I haven’t found school to be resistant to the idea, or parents.
EP3: Parental concern

Parents might question them. You know, they might say ‘what’s that going to tell you? They could have said anything’ — so parental opinion …
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Psychodynamic factors (52)</th>
<th>EP6: Parental concern</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I used to despair sometimes at my colleagues who had just gone along with how the school had constructed what was going on for the child ... tested what the school said thought needed testing and got no sense of the child whatsoever.</td>
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<tr>
<td>EP2: School view</td>
<td>... you can have school think, well that sounds a bit wishy washy, you know, and we want some kind of hard data.</td>
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<td>EP3: School view</td>
<td>I haven’t found school to be resistant to the idea, or parents.</td>
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<td>EP3: School view</td>
<td>... I would say in schools the staff are generally quite open ... I haven’t really come across much resistance in schools if I have said things that even I would regard as quite weird ...</td>
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<th>Effectiveness of psychotherapy (5)</th>
<th>Unconscious (10)</th>
<th>Internal world of the child (3)</th>
<th>Metaphor (8)</th>
<th>Defense mechanisms (9)</th>
<th>Affect (6)</th>
<th>Relationships</th>
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... there is evidence out there that very clearly show on that very level that psychoanalytic ways of working are actually really, really helpful ... and effect sizes – some of them are unbelievably high and also show an increase over time in terms of positive impact on emotional well being after a period of psychodynamic psychotherapy, which EPs choose to either be ... or not be engaging with it, or genuinely don’t know that it’s out there ...

EP4: Effectiveness of psychotherapy

I am more interested in the stuff in which they are not necessarily, directly aware, but can be pretty obvious to somebody else.

EP2: Unconscious

... is there really an unconscious ... and you’re kind of thinking, why are we having this conversation ... there clearly is one, it’s huge, we accepted that there is one. It’s almost like, if we can’t measure it and we can’t you know, weigh it, that it doesn’t exist.

EP4: Unconscious

... the subconscious is fascinating and I do think it has a place.

EP6: Unconscious

... they are a platform for the exploration of somebody’s ... internal world, for want of a, um ... sort of a better term.

EP2: Internal world of the child

... it gives you a structure within to maybe look for themes that might tell us a little bit about what is going on internally for a child.

EP3: Internal world of the child

... it gives the child an opportunity to give expression to what is going internally, that perhaps they are not aware of, that can’t be communicated through other means...

EP3: Internal world of the child

Yet when they are given the opportunity to do something in a more projective fashion ... um, I think it is allowing me access into something that maybe ... yeah like I say it is an avoidance for something which hasn’t really been coming ... been out.

EP4: Internal world of a child
<table>
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<tr>
<th>EP7: Internal world of a child</th>
<th>... it’s one thing to kind of to say to people just tell it as it is, tell me what you think. Um ... but quite often you won’t get the full story that way, so ... yeah it’s kind of about, thinking about why someone is doing what they’re doing on ... on kind of a deeper level ...</th>
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<tr>
<td>I think sometimes children can, um ... express more through story, either through, um, maybe their resistance, if you know or through, um ... actually opening up to the story.</td>
<td>EP5: Metaphor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... to have something which is prescribed, you know ... seems to me as an ... as an analytically .... psychoanalytically orientated person, seems to me to be defensive, in the widest sense of the word.</td>
<td>EP2: Defense mechanisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What I am noticing in their non-verbal behaviour, any kind of transference that I am picking up on, any strong emotion.</td>
<td>EP3: Defense mechanisms</td>
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<tr>
<td>I think as well, kind of accepting that people do ... whether you want to call them defense mechanisms or ... the jargon ... is that people do avoid addressing sometimes depressing thoughts and feelings and again projectives can be a really helpful insight ...</td>
<td>EP4: Defense mechanisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you think about kind of the ... well, in terms of defences ... and denial and ... a very critical one ... it’s ... it’s almost like a system of denial of a ... of a really rich tradition ...</td>
<td>EP4: Defense mechanisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would wonder if they um ... yeah it’s a little bit of a defense, it’s a defense against ... and it’s at the systems level rather than at individual people.</td>
<td>EP4: Defense mechanisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... it’s a way of kind of getting ... getting past some ... some people’s defences, like they’ll know there are certain things they might or might not want to say to a psychologist, but um, projective techniques have very low face validity, especially the CAT and the ORT, and a drawing as well.</td>
<td>EP&amp;: Defense mechanisms</td>
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And that was introduced to us as a mechanism to understand how a child saw themselves in relation to their family, how they saw the people within the family.

EP4: Relationships

... I would have thought that there is probably a much broader range of opportunities to use psychodynamic thinking ... any kind of family work, um ... working on parenting and supporting parents and thinking together about relationships and relationships within the school, um ... the relationships between teachers and TA’s

EP4: Relationships

... quite often you are looking kind of at attachment and relationship kind of things and attachment ... so attachment theory came out of psychoanalytic theory but that’s ... in my view it’s more of a kind of an accepted thing, it’s less scary than psychoanalysis ... and easier for people to understand and use those ideas ...

EP7: Attachment

Use of projective techniques (108)

(16)Value added
(16)7Using projective techniques as part of a psychodynamic framework
(8)Levels of use (superficial)
(9)Isolation
(2)Hidden use
(5)Defending /justifying use
(4)Suitability

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I think they give you a lot of very rich, deep ... um, material.

EP1: Value added

It doesn’t mean that I’m not also ... when I need to be ... quite behavioural, um ... you know, even prescriptive ... um, it doesn’t mean that I’m not interested in observation schedules or ... you know, psychometric assessment or anything like that ... or standardised assessment ... not at all. It just totally enriches that aspect of a psychological assessment ... um, and you know, I ... my sense is that is what we should be doing.

EP2: Value added

... think you get a ... a much more ... a much deeper, a much more complex view of their child and their view of the world, and their family and their view of the world ... and that can’t be anything but helpful.

EP2: Value added

There wouldn’t have been any other way of accessing that I don’t think, given the types of assessment she was doing ...

EP2: Value added

I have just found it has often been the value added when there has been a kind of, a bit of stuckness around what is going on for a child emotionally. It can be very, very useful.
EP3: Value added
I find that they do add a huge amount of things like the focus on affect and on expression of feeling.

EP4: Value added
I think psychodynamic thinking and assessing, um ... so that our problem solving is as good as it could be, I think it adds to our profession, because it makes us more effective, it makes us more ... more capable in the work that we do, um ... because we are really putting emotions and feelings and relationships at the very centre of how we work.

EP4: Value added
I think there is a real push within psychodynamic thinking, it isn’t just about the absence of symptoms it’s about the idea of, you know, the ... the good life, the kind of um ... well, healthy and open to new experiences and able to ... that to me is the ... that ... that adds to our profession because they’re ... if we are using these techniques and using them well and they were making a difference we wouldn’t just be about trying to reduce symptoms of difficulties in children and families we would be about promoting something about ... you know, well being ... a real genuine sense of, um ... yeah, a ... a life that’s worth living ...

EP4: Value added
I think ... it’s going beyond surface explanations for why people are doing the things they are doing really ...

EP7: Value added
... what I think is hard about researching it is that it wouldn’t be as straightforward as saying ... um, this child’s levels improved after the use of the ORT, maybe you could use it ... maybe you could use like ... like evaluation of consultations or feedback meetings when an ORT is used, but ... you ... for me it would be partly the difficulty in how would you demonstrate the value that’s added.

EP7: Value added
I think there is kind of some really key things about thinking psychodynamically that projectives give you ... um ... that maybe other ways or working aren’t ... aren’t ... you know ...

EP4: Using projective techniques as part of a psychodynamic framework
... if you think psychodynamically or you accept that there is some value to psychodynamic thinking, I think projectives then almost become a ... kind of a ... um ... a really important part of your practice.

EP4: Using projective techniques as part of a psychodynamic framework
I think you need to link the two together really for it to really ... your, kind of, theoretical orientation and your, kind of, epistemology. You know ... you have to have a view about the nature and origin and where it comes from ... your theoretical orientation drives from that and that moves into what kind of tools and techniques do I feel most comfortable using.

EP4: Using projective techniques as part of a psychodynamic framework

... there is something fundamental about whether we’re ... we are able to acknowledge and accept this in the beginning and the idea that actually there ... there are ... there is an unconscious ... and that it is something that we can think about ...

EP4: Using projective techniques as part of a psychodynamic framework

... there is something about having an understanding of ... the kind of orientation of these tests which comes from having a psychoanalytic ... a basic ... a decent, basic understanding of psychoanalytic ideas ...

EP5: Using projective techniques as part of a psychodynamic framework

... it is a psychoanalytic technique I suppose so would normally be ... looking for themes, um ... and normally they are quite psychoanalytic in nature I guess.

EP7: Using projective techniques as part of a psychodynamic framework

... I think if ... if psychoanalysis is not an approach for you, if it doesn’t fit with the way you see the world then there’s no point in ... in using them ...

EP7: Using projective techniques as part of a psychodynamic framework

... sentence completion which you can use projectively ... um, I mean that is not what it was designed for originally, but you can use a lot of things projectively that are not designed for that.

EP2: Level of use

... in some ways it is just a chance for a child to tell the story and see what kind of themes emerge about the main figures in it.

EP3: Level of use

It’s very different to the bear cards or blob tree, when I use those it’s not actively there, but with the CAT I am very much thinking about it from a psychodynamic perspective in terms of interpretations and what is framing my
thinking, while the assessment is going on.
EP3: Levels of use

[KFD]... that was a really good ... um ... technique to work with children ... um ... who may find the initial meeting with the very unfamiliar adult to be quite daunting, with the idea that you could come and you could draw, and it ... sort of as an icebreaker.
EP4: Levels of use

I have asked children to draw their family before but in a very superficial level. I wasn’t drawing any, you know, I wasn’t analysing that data.
EP6: Levels of use

... if I do the um, the Ideal Self I’ll probably use some psychoanalytic ideas when I’m, kind of, interpreting what ... what the child’s bringing to that.
EP7: Levels of use

I’m not really aware of any people who are particularly trained in the use of these techniques with children.
EP1: Isolation

I haven’t had any at all. I have very much practised it in isolation within my service, I am the only psychodynamically inclined EP within my current service.
EP3: Isolation

I don’t know whether there are similar services that have the same ... you know, the same orientation towards psychodynamic ... not just about projectives but the use of psychodynamic thinking generally.
EP4: Isolation

I think the other thing is about recognising that there are those pockets and people not really being able to come together.
EP4: Isolation

I think, funnily enough, when you’re here an being in this building, you know, it’s not ... it’s not questioned, in fact it’s just like – yeah, so normal and so much part of practice. It’s only when you step outside that you realise ... it’s almost like ... hugely like the right hand doesn’t know what the left hand is doing ... in a very sort of ... wow, that’s ...
that’s … you’d be quite taken aback by it.

EP4: Isolation

I would say that everyone works in their own way, and it’s more that people don’t really know what other people are doing rather than being open to it, necessarily.

EP7: Isolation

… to my knowledge no one else in the Triborough uses projective techniques apart from me … in my last service I don’t think anyone else did either, so it’s quite … you have to develop your own support network.

EP7: Isolation

… maybe there is a lot going on that is a bit beneath the surface and isn’t as apparent and it could be that there are some quite um … leading, engaged and very well developed networks of … of people working in this way.

EP4: Hidden use

I think projectives are a bit of a dirty secret, you might have a photocopied CAT that you keep in your draw and you get the cards out but then you don’t know whether it’s ok to write on the report that you used it ...

EP7: Hidden use

Being it’s about generating further hypotheses, and there … and then what I would do with that, you know, having looked at and talked to the young person about their projective material … I would be, you know … if you like, testing out those hypotheses with them. Um … and I think that that’s quite a … a robust form of practice.

EP2: Defending/justifying use

I think there is something at the back of my mind, thinking, how would I …I would feel under pressure I think, if I had colleagues from, there are lots and lots of colleagues that have trained at UCL or somewhere like that, or I think I would feel I would probably need, in my stereotyped view, I’d have to find some research, some kind of rigour to say this has a sound evidence base – try it.

EP3: Defending/justifying use

... that feels a little more robust, so that EPs feel, maybe more comfortable with using it, so that they can justify it ...

EP3: Defending/justifying use
I’d worry about maybe not about the situation but about the person …

EP4: Suitability

I don’t think psychodynamic and projectives necessarily lend themselves to that very manualised approach that some parts of practice are going down where you can take a book and say session one I need to do X and session two I need to do Y.

EP4: Suitability

I think in team meetings, in team functioning, in thinking about the group processes – conscious and unconscious, casework, working with families, working with school staff, working with other disciplines, team around the family, team around the child. I... I really struggle to find a time when having an awareness around relationships, affect, the unconscious, avoidance isn’t appropriate …

EP4: Suitability

... I think if ... if psychoanalysis is not an approach for you, if it doesn’t fit with the way you see the world then there’s no point in ... in using them ...

EP7: Suitability

I think there is an issue about am I being fully honest and open about what this test entails.

EP3: Transparency

It is that dilemma about being authentic and truthful about what a test is, without making it sound ... I think it can sound like something quite frightening, if it is framed in a certain way.

EP3: Transparency

I think it has a lot to offer but it is how you would market it, and make it ... so that people could hear it really and see it’s benefits and values.

EP3: Potential use

... I would have thought that there is probably a much broader range of opportunities to use psychodynamic thinking ... any kind of family work, um ... working on parenting and supporting parents and thinking together about relationships and relationships within the school, um ... the relationships between teachers and TA’s

EP4: Potential use
I think psychodynamics have as much to offer at the group and organisational level as they do at individual and casework level.

EP4: Potential use

... it has both explanatory and predictive power if used sensibly and ... and in a competent way.

EP4: Potential use

... actually I think the application of psychodynamic principles then to how we work in terms of our ... our ... how our teams work, how we engage in supervision ... I think it would add to our profession in that way as well.

EP4: Potential use

I suppose you could say fine motor skills, but likewise with language you have got the opportunity to assess their fine motor skills as well as looking at what their ... what projective type material they might be bringing to any sort of drawing. Whilst it could be a barrier it shouldn’t necessarily be and it can allow you other opportunities to make different, um ... assessments.

EP5: Potential use

I think that would be really helpful when thinking about behaviour in the classroom and group dynamics and things that other models don’t have anything to offer ...

EP5: Potential use

But there might be then, more opportunity to use more projective techniques to ascertain other aspects of their, sort of, profile that might be useful, given that I can’t perhaps do some of the standardised work because it’s not as attainable to the young people. It’s less ... I imagine projective techniques are much less threatening than ... especially to children with learning difficulties ...

EP6: Potential use

I think they would offer a perspective, another perspective and another perspective is always useful in our role because we are drawing in all of the perspectives, and putting up ... painting the picture. Um, so the more information you can gather, the better you can be when obviously trying to reduce barriers and improve opportunities.

EP6: Potential use

Particularly given the complexity of the young people that we’re seeing, you know, we are seeing more complex
| EP6: Potential use | I have just found that things that can’t be expressed readily by a child, if you don’t have several sessions, maybe you could try and do that through play or drawing. |
| EP3: Enable expression | I’ve found it very informative to be able to look at their responses to figures in the pictures, and whether there is a thread weaving through that that perhaps explains something the child hasn’t been able to express. |
| EP3: Enable expression | You’ll be doing a nice drawing but you will be revealing things through the drawing that you might not ... you either might not want to express or you might not be able to express. Um ... so yeah it’s kind of a different way of ... of learning about someone I suppose. |
| EP7: Enable expression | I would use it with youngsters who find it hard to do any face to face discussion ... |
| EP1: Communicate non-verbally | ... it is not just what they say it’s also any kind of communication I am getting in a room with a child. If I get a sense that they are having a very strong emotional response to one of the cards. What I am noticing in their non-verbal behaviour ... |
| EP3: Communicate non-verbally | I think also they help explain some things that other people find puzzling. |
| EP1: Aid understanding | Will this help me to understand further, and help people in the child’s life, to understand further what the world looks like from his perspective, how he sees relationships, what it looks like in his internal world. |
| EP3: Aid understanding | I think it can give a different dimension, sometimes there is more ... more ... other areas of concern that need thinking about. |
| EP5: Aid understanding |
... something I sort of hope from my practice, is understanding, so it’s kind of about ... developing a deep understanding of ... of a situation ... what’s gone on and the history of a person, how that contributes to ... to whatever problem it is they have been referred for.
EP7: Aid understanding

... what the projectives brought out really was, why is this ... why is this going on.
EP7: Aid understanding

Children can represent their views and expectations up to a point, but a sort of, professional view of those can be very helpful ... you know, in addition.
EP2: Childs voice

I just find that because of the means, certainly with the children’s one, it is done through storytelling, I just think that it is very appealing to children ...
EP3: Childs voice

I would feel like it is a way of giving the child a voice, in a way. You know a child might be reluctant to explore it in other ways. To summarise, it would be giving the child a voice and being able to understand something which isn’t yet clear.
EP3: Childs voice

They seemed to be more open ended and more ... particularly on that dimension to elicit the child’s views ...
EP4: Childs voice

I think that would be the most explicitly ... is probably ... er ... social, emotional and mental health difficulties, when children are really struggling maybe ... um ... on those dimensions.
EP4: Mental health

... particularly from a ... you know, the social-emotional side of what we do. Um, and that’s more and more of the work that we do because we are working with the more complex children who tend to have those issues, you know ... relating to their other difficulties, not always. I mean, we are doing less work with just ... we have just been asked to stop working with the permanently excluded children. Which is a .... it’s a .... it’s an issue to do with the fund ... the budgets of the PRU’s. But, from an ethical point of view ... it’s nothing to do with those children, some budget issue that’s being questioned. Um, but psycho ... these kind of techniques ... um, projective techniques would be much, you
**EP6: Mental health**

*Psychodynamic and systemic ways of working are really huge part of that work that we do with people with autism and learning disability.*

**EP4: SEN**

*I think there are question marks over autism, whether to use them there, um ... so that’s one where I just kind of play it by ear and use my judgement as to whether I think it would add anything.*

**EP7: SEN**

Influence of government

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<td>in practice</td>
<td>EP7 5</td>
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*I think it’s because of ... professional governance and also the NICE guidelines which definitely favour cognitive-behavioural approaches.*

**EP1: Influence of government**

*Basically we were going back to statutory only work, assessing children for outcomes such as placement, funding... and that has a big impact on the way we want to work, the way we trained to work it really narrows and restricts us I feel.*

**EP6: Influence of government**

*... now a lot of what we are doing is much more political I think, and much more about ... you know, meeting agendas and ... but there are obviously financial situations, there is nothing we can do about that, the authority is under pressure ...*  

**EP6: Influence of government**

*... at the moment we are under immense pressure because of the new code of practice, and we are local authority EPs and local authority have ... has an agenda and we have to support them because they employ us.*

**EP6: Influence of government**

*I think we are much more black and white and there’s a right and a wrong and we like our standardised assessments ... like with the SATS, these poor children in primary schools and ... it’s the way our country is run, we are target set. So, it’s just the culture, I think we need a cultural change ...*
EP’s, you know ... have enormous time constraints around the type of assessments that they do, you know ... I used to say to our trainees, never see a child once ... ever. You must see them twice, otherwise you can’t use some of these things ...

EP2: Time constraints

... you know ... these things take time to feel comfortable and confident.

EP2: Time constraints

... there are a few I haven’t this year and quite often it’s about time ... people expect standard scores, so I try and give a balance really.

EP5: Time constraints

... I guess a barrier is having the time to really learn these techniques and be able to use them enough ... with enough frequency to become confident with them.

EP6: Time constraints

... when we’re under the pressure we are now is to get the job done and we use what we know because we are time limited.

EP6: Time constraints

I feel like, kind of, time allocation models and things like that are the antithesis of very thoughtful psychological practice.

EP7: Time constraints

... when I decide to use an ORT or a CAT I either have to, er, I take, you know, I take quite a lot of time when I agree to assess a child to do a comprehensive psychological assessment but ... I mean most of my schools are ok with that, but I might come up against a school that might be like, why does it take 3 hours for you to see a child when another EP can do it in an hour and a half, so ...um ...

EP7: Time constraints

I would say it’s kind of not ... not having sufficient time to devote to ... to the techniques, and even practically like ... you do the ORT which takes maybe an hour ... sorry, to administer about 20 minutes, but then you have to write ... you have to scribe what the child saying which is hard, or record t which I don’t like to do. Then you have to type it up which takes time, then you have to interpret it ... and you may feel that you need some support in making that
interpretation, so, um ... so yeah, it’s time consuming.
EP7: Time constraints

I’m wondering about whether the kind of organisation you’re in and the kind of work context that you have ... is that ... you’re more or less likely to use psychoanalytic and systemic ways of working.
EP4: Work context

... part of it is the nature of the casework that I’m kind of am contracted to do.
EP4: Work context

And he had a very good rationale for it which I’ve taken onboard ... and its served me over the years with certain ...
EP1: Colleagues (influence of others)

... um, youngsters who find it hard to talk about what the issues are.
EP4: Work context

I wonder why I haven’t openly shared them with colleagues. That is quite an interesting thought for me.
EP3: Colleagues (influence of others)

I think some of that influence is very much from where EP’s in management positions have trained and their lens of the world, and then colleagues within the service.
EP3: Colleagues (influence of others)

If the kinds of cases that you’re getting and the team that you’re in and the people that you are around are familiar and interested and recognise that that way of working has something to offer ... and maybe other people don’t have that chance as much?
EP4: Colleagues (influence of others)

I used to work with someone who used it quite a lot ... all the time actually, and she’d had the proper training ... yeah she was really inspiring and used the um ... and CAT all the time as well, she was really a super experienced psychologist. She was the PEP of where I trained.
EP5: Colleagues (influence of others)

... she had psychoanalytic training as a psychotherapist as well so she was really passionate and was able to help our ... confidence I think, so I suppose that is the key for me ...
I’d say from talking to colleagues … I don’t … I’m not aware of anyone that really uses them.

**EP6: Colleagues (influence of others)**

... and are we given opportunities to work in that way where we can see people over periods of time or is it kind of, a go in teacher interview, parent interview, assess the child, write a report, off you go to the next one. And if some parts of people’s practice are like that I can understand why it would be ... possibly harder to integrate some aspects of psychodynamic ways of working.

**EP4: Restricted opportunity in practice**

Unfortunately coming straight into a local authority the opportunity for systemic work was very limited even 12 years ago, now the way our practice has moved it’s just impossible. I mean we haven’t been doing that sort of work for several years and it’s certainly not going to happen now.

**EP6: Restricted opportunity in practice**

You forget really what the tools are. If you don’t use it you loose it- that is so true. A lot of us currently are concerned how much we are losing by the nature of our work it’s become very narrowed, so some of the approaches we love and want to be using are just ...

**EP6: Restricted opportunity in practice**

I mean those kind of conversations I would have with a child I perhaps would have used those techniques with a child I was seeing more than once. So on, sort of, the second or third visit, now I don’t get that opportunity.

**EP6: Restricted opportunity in practice**

... yeah probably just the way we work in generally would have to change.

**EP6: Restricted opportunity in practice**

I just think we’re frustrated sometimes as EPs ... you know, we see clinical psychologists and they have these sessions ... not that ... even that’s getting reduced obviously, but you know, they see the families, they see the children on a regular basis and ... you know, they can really get involved. Whereas we’re just ... at the moment it’s just, hit and ... you know... not hit and run, it’s not that bad but it feels a bit like that.

**EP6: Restricted opportunity in practice**

I think people are often not in a position to think, oh shall I add something new to my practice, they just kind of ... on a bit of a treadmill of writing reports and things like that.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>EP7: Restricted opportunity in practice</th>
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<tr>
<td>There is a massive thing since moving to traded services about being accountable for how you are practising, there is a big focus on outcomes.</td>
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**EP3: Traded services**

[What would have to change to use Projective Techniques more within your role] I would say more traded type work and have more freedom with the nature of the work we are doing. If someone is buying me in to work with a child, um ... perhaps who was school refusing or other issues ... social emotional issues, um ... and they were buying a package of time, you know, there might be more opportunity and we are looking ... we might be going more traded in the future ... as a proposed model. |

**EP6: Traded services**

... it is really quite interesting what influences your practise and CPD and how it is really quite heavily influenced by the service you are in and their requirements |

**EP3: Influence of service on practice**

...you may need the supervisory space to think about the assessment work that you have been doing, but the supervisor is under pressure to talk about how many cases I have done, how many are closing, how many more I can take ... and the ... the time is a little bit eroded. |

**EP4: Influence of service on practice**

... at the moment we are under immense pressure because of the new code of practice, and we are local authority EPs and local authority have ... has an agenda and we have to support them because they employ us. |

**EP6: Influence of service on practice**

... local authorities are increasingly pressured in terms of time, with all the cuts to the local authority budgets. I think people are often not in a position to think, oh shall I add something new to my practice, they just kind of ... on a bit of a treadmill of writing reports and things like that. So .... |

**EP7: Influence of service on practice**
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I sometimes use techniques from the dynamic assessment battery projectively ... and why not, you can if you think that it’s communicating something above and beyond what it’s designed to ... to look at ... you can just explore that with the kid, with the family.

EP2: Creativity in practice

... and started to think a little bit more about the CAT and the TAT and started to see them as, kind of, quite ‘freeing’ tools, they weren’t as constraining maybe as ... say maybe the way a psychometric would be very rigid to follow in a particular way ... a particular way of working.

EP4: Creativity in practice

You know we all love opportunities to improve out practice, to do something different, to think a bit more creatively.

EP6: Creativity in practice

... our opinion is so valued and it does make big differences, so if we can, um ... validate what we are doing that’s really important, um ... and it will give us more freedom ... to use things.

EP6: Creativity in practice

So I would see psychodynamics as part of a broad, holistic assessment of youngsters ... a broad and thorough assessment.

EP1: Broad toolkit

I think it’s sad that ... that the profession doesn’t embrace a sort of wider psychological framework to include these.

EP2: Broad toolkit

I always remember someone saying to me when I was training that your ... eclectic is really irritating, could you not have some sort of model and then your practise should align with that, um, and I don’t think I’m there yet to say all my practice is kind of, coming from a single theoretical orientation but I think ... for the stuff I do here it would be systemic and psychoanalytic.

EP4: Broad toolkit

... [importance of research] so we can discuss it and think about it, so that we are able to use it in a helpful and constructive way ... and as another test ... and as another part of our test battery basically ... an assessment tool...

EP5: Broad toolkit
I think most psychologists would like a tool ... you know, a wider spectrum to draw on.

EP6: Broad toolkit

I think they add triangulation information to reports from other people from discussions that you’ve had with staff.

EP1: Triangulation

Psychological assessment needs to be psychological ... you know, and you don’t ... when you embark on an assessment ... you know, you have various hypotheses on the basis of the information you’ve got, but you need to ... you know, test those out, drop the ones that ... you know, are confirmed ... explore the ones that aren’t, you know ... in a very open ended way.

EP2: Triangulation

... but I found the sentence completion very helpful, because you got information on handwriting, sentence construction, spelling ... um, as well as projective information.

EP2: Triangulation

... using it as a source of ... kind of ... data. And then trying to test out in terms of what other evidence did I have, in terms of triangulation.

EP4: Triangulation

... I always do it alongside other stuff, I always do a bit of cognitive and a bit of just general chat, rapport building and um ... always consultation, so that’s always a starting point.

EP5: Triangulation

I think probably the answer is triangulation, so it’s never just on it’s own ... but done in the context of good quality consultation and, um ... er, other ways of obtaining information – observation, discussion all sorts of things.

EP5: Triangulation

I would never use it on it’s own. It’s always part of a triangulated approach so I would always have observed the child, spoken to staff, spoken to parents, found out what I could about the history, so it’s never ... it’s never taken without context, because I agree with a lot of the criticisms I just mentioned but I think they are ... it could be dangerous if used thoughtlessly ...

EP7: Triangulation
I’ve always felt that … that EPs, you know … limit the types of assessments that they do … and … and it’s self-limiting and I think that some assessments that people do are poor because of those.

EP2: Openness to PTs

I haven’t found school to be resistant to the idea, or parents. I have found that they found the themes to be quite … they have been very open to what they may bring.

EP3: Openness to PTs

... [importance of research] so we can discuss it and think about it, so that we are able to use it in a helpful and constructive way ... and as another test ... and as another part of our test battery basically ... an assessment tool...

EP5: Openness to PTs

I am very open minded and I think that with experience I would be more confident now to use some of those approaches.

EP6: Openness to PTs

But that doesn’t mean they don’t have a use, in a qualitative way, so yeah I would definitely be interested.

EP6: Openness to PTs

I would say that everyone works in their own way, and it’s more that people don’t really know what other people are doing rather than being open to it, necessarily.

EP7: Openness to PTs

... and people understanding why it is that you want to use them, like I think if you’re not very psychoanalytically minded it’s ... it’s kind of hard to get why you think showing kids a bunch of cards and asking them to tell a story is ... a suitable activity to be doing.

EP7: Openness to PTs

I think it would be good if people knew about them but ... but had the choice to take or leave them really, like with all other techniques.

EP7: Openness to PTs

... it is funny actually when you first contacted me after we talked I thought ‘gosh, I’d really love to revisit this’ and I haven’t really explored other techniques that might be possible.
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**EP3: Desire to broaden range of PTs used**

*But actually when I think about it I haven’t really actually considered exploring finding out about other projective techniques or how I might use them in my practise, yeah, it has got me thinking about that actually.*

**EP3: Desire to broaden range of PTs used**

*I think supervision is very necessary ... with psychodynamic approaches, partly because you can’t help as a practitioner being affected on a personal level ... when you are working with projection and other defense mechanisms. So that debriefing and looking at your own issues has got to be part and parcel of the wider therapeutic process.*

**EP1: Access to psychodynamically orientated supervision**

*...but I think the biggest practical difficulty Rachael, is supervision, the beginning of, you know ... learning about these things, you need to be able to talk to somebody who has used them a lot.*

**EP2: Access to psychodynamically orientated supervision**

*I always get a bit, sort of ... what do I get ... disappointed I suppose, when I talk to people who I have trained and they’re, you know ... they don’t use them ... routinely in their practice and then when we talk about it ... why not, um ... it is usually that there isn’t anybody in the service that they can talk to about material. That is the single biggest obstacle in my experience.*

**EP2: Access to psychodynamically orientated supervision**

*No absolutely not, I’d have to say absolutely not, because, um, any colleague I’ve had that has supervised me, you know, it’s just not part of their practise at all, any element of psychodynamic thinking or projective ... it just would not enter into their practice.*

**EP3: Access to psychodynamically orientated supervision**

*Supervision, and what’s on offer in relation to supervision would be to change in terms of supervisors having some degree of competence in being able to support a member of staff in being able to use projectives well.*

**EP4: Access to psychodynamically orientated supervision**

*I think the thing I would like is just um ... group opportunities for supervision more regularly ...*
I wouldn’t want to ... to make more than quite basic interpretations without, um ... some support or supervision, so ... so yeah, there is the issue of just kind of having the support of doing it ...

EP7: Access to psychodynamically orientated supervision

I am wondering about the use of more kind of ... um, virtual environments to bring people across the UK together. Like particular, you know ... posting of websites or ... or say online discussion forums with people being able to, you know ... share and ask questions. And I’m wondering about whether that ... that ... currently that doesn’t exist and is that an obstacle, because it’s not really networking or connecting us in a particular way.

EP4: Collaboration

... to my knowledge no one else in the Triborough uses projective techniques apart from me ... in my last service I don’t think anyone else did either, so it’s quite ... you have to develop your own support network.

EP7: Collaboration

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So that debriefing and looking at your own issues has got to be part and parcel of the wider therapeutic process.

EP1: Self awareness/reflection

... people try to ... to convince themselves that the practitioner is problem free and that the client is the person with the problems and is the problem holder – I don’t agree with that, I think we’re, you know ... I think ... you know, I think Hawkins and Shohet described us as wounded helpers.

EP2: Self awareness/reflection

It is very much a personal thing for me in how I practice.

EP3: Self awareness/reflection

But as we talk it makes me think, maybe that is a reason to step back and think about. I think it has just evolved with me, from my days of training.

EP3: Self awareness/reflection

... which is quite interesting, as we talk, that I haven’t chosen to share that with my colleagues. Something I find very valuable in my practise, I haven’t kind of, passed that on.

EP3: Self awareness/reflection

I feel like there are quite deep reasons for people being resistant to psychoanalytic theory, um, because it ...
| (6) Legal issues | requires so much looking into the self, which I think a lot of people are anxious about, like not ... not wanting to find out what they might discover... EP7: Self awareness/reflection  
I think it’s very challenging personally ... EP7: Self awareness/reflection  
I think you are reporting ... if you have done them correctly ... um, on, you know, your views and understanding of how the young person sees themselves in the world, and that’s a really important aspect, I think, of a psychological report. EP2: Reporting  
If I do a drawing I always scan it in and put it in the report ... EP5: Reporting  
... when I was first working in schools was negotiating ... they would have so much time and I would give advice on childhood dyslexia, strategies, dyspraxia ... you know, all sorts of things and you knew that report would never go anywhere other than home and school ... EP6: Reporting  
I think there is a lot of resistance to ... as I said, to opening the can of worms really. EP2: Resistance  
I think there is a lot of resistance within the profession at the moment ... to ... to working in that way. EP2: Resistance  
There is some resistance to it – if you can’t see it, or quantify it, then it is all a bit dodgy – I think there is a very strong perspective of that. EP3: Resistance  
I think that some things are there and we choose to ignore them. EP4: Resistance  
I feel like there are quite deep reasons for people being resistant to psychoanalytic theory, um, because it ... it requires so much looking into the self, which I think a lot of people are anxious about, like not ... not wanting to find... |
out what they might discover...
EP7: Resistance

I feel like there is a lot of resistance to the ideas, um ... yeah, it’s hard to say really because the UK really was a big centre of psychoanalysis like Freud was here, Anna Freud was here and yet somehow it is just not in ... in our professions in a big way. Yeah, it’s a bit mystifying maybe – I don’t know.
EP7: Resistance

I feel more confident using psychoanalytic ideas in practical ... applied psychology, than I do with projective tests, I think. That still, to me, is a work in progress. It is so much less commonly used around, the projective tests ... um ... that I’m still like ... I’m still developing my confidence in using them.
EPS: Confidence

... she had psychoanalytic training as a psychotherapist as well so she was really passionate and was able to help our ... confidence I think, so I suppose that is the key for me ...
EPS: Confidence

... that is the key for me ... how to upskill people to feel that they understand what they are doing and why ... and then how to make the ... and what an interpretation could be, um ... because it’s all hypothetical anyway ... and, um ... and there will be confidence whether that’s um, through networks or ... you know ... having a barometer, like a personal professional barometer ...
EPS: Confidence

I guess it’s about being confident with the techniques, and being assured of what you are saying and the parameters of that and not getting too carried away.
EP6: Confidence

... I guess a barrier is having the time to really learn these techniques and be able to use them enough ... with enough frequency to become confident with them.
EP6: Confidence

I didn’t feel I could self-teach on it.
EP1: Competence
... people quite rightly don’t want to enter into areas where they don’t feel competent or confident – and they shouldn’t.

EP2: Competence

I wonder if that is what holds people back ... because they don’t feel like they’ve had that in their training and they might feel more reluctant to use them.

EP5: Competence

I think you just build up a ... you know, an experience of using one test in depth – I have done thousands of them – literally. So, you know I have real familiarity with what’s unusual or different or unexpected or whatever.

EP2: Experience

... there are some that, just because I have done thousands I favour more than others, because what I think you do is you build up sort of an internal ... your own internal baselines and evidence base about these things.

EP2: Experience

I love using projective tests, um ... I think, because I’m quite new and inexperienced ... I’m still ... working out, um ... a sort of a ... a personal and a professional, um, framework for using them in terms of what they show me ... how a different child responds.

EP5: Experience

...well as EP’s we have to be, but I think that has perhaps made me more perhaps more wary initially whereas now I’m a bit more, well I’m more experienced, so I am more assured in the things I say ...

EP6: Experience

I’m getting a bit more like that as I get older as an EP as I get more experienced and kind of like ... no that is my opinion, and I will stand by my opinion, and I don’t care actually if someone questions my opinion, as long as I feel comfortable with what I’ve done.

EP6: Experience

... to be trained to use projectives like that, it is really about experience ... so, experience interpreting them, experience administering them, um ...experience drawing out important themes ...

EP7: Experience
... if I was doing court work I would be a bit careful about what type of technique I was going to use if any.

EP2: Legal issues

... I think sometimes when we’re having to do statutory assessments and um ... you know ... and our documentation can get hauled up and, you know ... heavily looked at by barristers and other psychologists ... potentially, then I might feel more ... nervous maybe ... about what I’d written ... and to be sure that I am working in a of tentative kind of hypothetical ... um, a way that is not a conclusion about a child it is just an alternative way of maybe bringing something different, a way of thinking about them.

EP5: Legal issues

I am still very conscious that we are going to a lot of tribunals which puts us in a different position professionally because with that legal element ...

EP6: Legal issues

I do wonder sometimes if some of that stuff goes through to CAMHS a little bit more depending on the orientation of the EP service.

EP4: Variation in role

... it’s hard to know how your practice really compares to the work of another EP...

EP4: Variation in role

I think, funny enough, when you’re here an being in this building, you know, it’s not ... it’s not questioned, in fact it’s just like – yeah, so normal and so much part of practice. It’s only when you step outside that you realise ... it’s almost like ... hugely like the right hand doesn’t know what the left hand is doing ... in a very sort of ... wow, that’s ... that’s ... you’d be quite taken aback by it.

EP4: Variation in role

... I think what’s good about EPs is diversity and that we can be, you know ... we draw on a wide, you know ... as a professional body we draw on a wide range of, um, sort of, ways of thinking.

EP5: Variation in role

I think that’s good, I think we should be encouraging the richness and breadth of our expertise really as individual professionals within that group.

EP5: Variation in role
PT’s not needed in work

Changing role

... it’s so neglected potentially, and we have such a unique position in being able to access some of that stuff in what is happening for children.

EP4: EPs in a unique position

I think as EPs we are very independent so ... we are ... we’re in a wonderful position, no-one questions what we do, unless we are in a tribunal. So we are in a unique position that we could change that culture, I think, but we would have to be very self-assured on what we are saying and what we are doing.

EP6: EPs in unique position

... people try to ... to convince themselves that the practitioner is problem free and that the client is the person with the problems and is the problem holder – I don’t agree with that, I think we’re, you know ... I think ... you know, I think Hawkins and Shohet described us as wounded helpers.

EP2: Role definition

It’s almost ... that’s the kind of work that psychotherapists do and not part of our remit as psychologists to be doing that.

EP3: Role definition

I do wonder whether there is a ... you know ... still, a degree of association between EPs and assessing around learning.

EP4: Role definition

Another interesting area is educational psychotherapists, which is like the Caspari Foundation and they really ... they use projectives all the time.

EP5: Role definition

... I think people are getting aware ... you know, more aware that we are not just there to do a cognitive assessment.

EP6: Role definition

... some people misunderstand our role, and think their therapists anyway, and we’re not therapists, we’re not trained in that way and if you’re trained in that way that’s fine.

EP6: Role definition
things like projective techniques and a psychoanalytically orientated way of understanding things ... would be to my mind absolutely invaluable.

EP2: Importance of psychodynamic framework to EPs

I feel very strongly about it. I would even say that it’s poor practice not to use something like this. But that is a controversial view.

EP2: Importance of psychodynamic framework to EPs

... there is a bit about buying into the idea that psychodynamic ways of thinking have something to offer me as an EP. And if I don’t accept that principal then I don’t know that I would feel projectives have as much of a use to me.

EP4: Importance of psychodynamic framework to EPs

I think if there isn’t that level of emotional stability and kind of ... security in the adults around the children, I think it’s very hard for anyone really to feel free to learn. So I’d actually see it as being potentially applicable to most if not all of our practice.

EP4: Importance of psychodynamic framework to EPs

... we will begin to recognise within each other and within ourselves again, the significance around relationships, the significance of feeling and how past events influence the present and how we can look for themes about how certain relationships seem to have patterns and why is that. And that would ... benefit our profession as well because it’s making us more effective and more reflective ... you know, more thinking more holistically about a range of different things that may be happening for ourselves and for the people that we work with.

EP4: Importance of psychodynamic framework to EPs

As a profession, I don’t think EPs are ready for that yet, we’re not that mature in our understanding of how we can use therapeutic processes with children.

EP1: Readiness of EPs

I’m not sure whether we really use the techniques ... whether we know enough about the techniques and whether we can use them in a competent and professionally defensible manner.

EP4: Readiness of EPs

... it’s not about having a book or a ... or a toolkit ... or an assessment kit you can pull out and just very easily ... you really have to use yourself and use the relationship when you’re ... when you’re working in that way. I think it’s really
tiring, I think it’s very draining, I think it requires a huge amount of supervision ... um ... I don’t know whether people feel like they can really feel able to do that.

EP4: Readiness of EPs

... it’s quite tough ... you do need to be able to have a sufficient depth of knowledge and understanding but also quite a lot of the capacity to cope with the idea ... particularly with those that are really struggling and quite vulnerable ... that some of how they’re feeling is going to transfer over into the relationship they have with you ... as the practitioner working with them.

EP4: Readiness of EPs

... so it has been quite hard to keep that thing alive.

EP3: Ability to use PTs in role

I mean, when I look at my friends who are EPs who trained here, they ... they don’t ... I don’t feel get the chance to maximise what they can offer that is unique and different potentially to ... other ... other, what other people have.

EP4: Ability to use PT's in role

The assumptions that can be drawn ... um ... to me they do feel a bit clinical in nature. Where, sort of, a clinical psychologist can have that therapeutic relationship which I can’t have.

EP6: Ability to use PT's in role

I mean those kind of conversations I would have with a child I perhaps would have used those techniques with a child I was seeing more than once. So on, sort of, the second or third visit, now I don’t get that opportunity.

EP6: Ability to use PT's in role

... the nature of how we’re working, the questions we are being asked to answer ... don’t necessarily need projective techniques.

EP6: PTs not needed in role

I’m quite interested in the Rorschach, but I don’t know how relevant it would be to my work, so ...

EP7: PTs not needed in role

My perception is that for the past few years we’ve had practice which has not involved seeing children ... and it’s involved consultation at one removed from the client. Whereas I feel that ... certainly in the last year or so, in the
service that I’m working, there has been much more demand for hands on work with clients rather than consultation approaches. And I think that will open up a whole new field of techniques and the use of more in depth approaches.

EP1: Changing role

She has been completely blown away and is now saying that she is never going to do an assessment without including it … adolescent anyway.

EP2: Changing role

... I really hope that there’s a future that includes … embraces a wide range … and that we don’t all end up doing CBT and solution focused work, which … I get really frustrated with … often … although I can see the value in it, but I don’t know how we can, kind of, keep all of that … all of that breadth really.

EP5: Changing role

I’ve just been told we can’t do ADOS we have to run the ASD pathways. I have a skill in ADOS and they will all go, its just being narrowed all the time.

EP6: Changing role

[The future] I think we are safe in terms of jobs but whether that jobs what we trained to do… I do get a sense …I mean even myself, I came out of training from UCL when it was all obviously using um … consultation and all these techniques and about intervention and actually making a difference directly with kids. The first five years was ok and then I had a baby and when I came back I couldn’t believe … I had a year out 2009-2010 and when I came back I couldn’t believe what I came back to. Basically we were going back to statutory only work, assessing children for outcomes such as placement, funding… and that has a big impact on the way we want to work, the way we trained to work it really narrows and restricts us I feel.

EP6: Changing role

... the nature of our work is so narrowed and we are just seeing the severe and complex children where there are a lot of issues around placement and parental preferences.

EP6: Changing role

But maybe in the future … because things will change, it’s cyclical isn’t it and we will get back … there is boom and bust and I think when we are back in bust and there is more money about … then there will be more opportunity I think, to work … um, in a more flexible way which may allow for more projective techniques.
EP6: Changing role

*Particularly given the complexity of the young people that we’re seeing, you know, we are seeing more complex children … and these type of techniques could be ... could be really useful actually.*

**EP6: Changing role**

**Research**

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EP2 1  
EP3 2  
EP4 8  
EP5 2  
EP6 0  
EP7 2

I think research has got to be the starting point. Even if it is at the stages of finding out what people are doing now, where people would like to be, and what kinds of tools and devices they would like developed in this field.

**EP1: Research**

I would love somebody to ... to do some research, you know ... which shows how helpful they are. Not research that actually attempts to, you know ... put them into some sort of normative bracket ... because that’s not ... that’s not what they are about.

**EP2: Research**

I think actual research that, really does, maybe, work towards devising a framework, and, you know, something a little bit more, that feels a little more robust, so that EPs feel, maybe more comfortable with using it, so that they can justify it, then I think it would be ... yeah, I think it would be really great to have more research. You know, for people to start developing that, definitely.

**EP3: Research**

I definitely do ... I mean, that’s partly why I wanted to do this study because I think ... um ... that it is really important that we keep talking about it and we can have a debate that doesn’t close it down or close the door on it ... um, but we can discuss it and think about it, so that we are able to use it in a helpful and constructive way ... and as another test ... and as another part of our test battery basically ... an assessment tool ... um ... yeah.

**EP5: Research**

... what I think is hard about researching it is that it wouldn’t be as straightforward as saying ... um, this child’s levels improved after the use of the ORT, maybe you could use it ... maybe you could use like ... like evaluation of consultations or feedback meetings when an ORT is used, but ... you ... for me it would be partly the difficulty in how would you demonstrate the value that’s added.

**EP7: Research**

... there is very little published research recently in like, you know, your key ... like EP Practice or Educational and
Child Psychology ... you know, ones we’d be referring to you know ... as a practitioner, there is not that much written about, you know ... using them, you know ... effectiveness, how to use them reliably and ... and validly in a safe way. Um ... or ... or ... or even talking about them critically.

EP4: Lack of research

... yours is the first project I’ve heard of in a long time about, well apart from some of the stuff at Tavi and here, looking at, you know ... kind of, working in a more psychodynamic way.

EP4: Lack of research

... you’ve got an interesting piece of research that you’re doing that is so timely and so needed.

EP4: Lack of research

... without the research happening there is no ... the debates not there, the discussions not there, people’s interest isn’t ... EP4: Lack of research

... you go to a conference and people aren’t talking about this on your course and saying oh, what are you doing and you’re bringing it to research supervision ... yeah, so if people don’t research it, the whole ... it dies a death because it because the profession is about being an applied researcher um ... so yeah, that researching isn’t there then the rest of it isn’t going to happen.

EP4: Lack of research

... maybe that’s because there are not many opportunities to look at psychodynamic ideas in ... actually in research ...

EP5: Lack of research

I do wonder about kind of ... um ... you know, to a degree the history and legacy of the profession is to an extent ... some of the ... the ... training courses tend to be ... be ... I mean they train ... everybody. But also they ... they do a lot of the research ... and research lines of enquiry ... so ... may ... maybe part of it is you know, particularly now when everything is very kind of, neo liberal, economic, money, funding, value added etc. etc. is there funding and research ... um, for these that ... that are people interested in commissioning that relate to using a psychodynamic in EP practice.

EP4: Training programme commissioning research

Maybe other sources of funding are more readily available ... people are following where ... not following money in a
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Training (75)</th>
<th>Initial training (58)</th>
<th>Influence of initial training (16)</th>
<th>Reputation of training programme (2)</th>
<th>Masters vs. doctorate (3)</th>
<th>Collaboration (28)</th>
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bad way but actually if you’re going to get funded to do certain types of projects, well then ... that’s where you’re at.

EP4: Training programme commissioning research

I’m hugely influenced by the fact that I was trained within a CAMHS context as an EP and have worked for 24 and a half years at the Tavi as a CAMHS practitioner as a consultant and clinical psychologist in a CAMHS team.

EP2: Influence of initial training

I do wonder whether all of the trainees are not really getting a huge amount of input on it and then the whole thing becomes a really vicious circle. There is nobody being trained, therefore there is not that much ...

EP4: Influence of initial training

Perhaps from my training at UCL being very much evidence based ...

EP6: Influence of initial training

Oh, it all came from the training. I would say my interest only came from the training.

EP7: Influence of initial training

... on the pre-course reading, a lot of that was about some psychoanalytic ideas, some systemic ideas and it really interested me ... and then as we learnt more and more about it on the training it just really resonated with me. Um ... and I knew it was something I wanted to try and include in my practice.

EP7: Influence of initial training

There is, you know ... there is ... people, still tell jokes about, you know ... that, for example, about the Tavi course, everyone sits around navel gazing, that’s one of the sort of, you know ... long standing myths and jokes.

EP2: Reputation of training programme

It would be wonderful if you could convince, you know, um ... colleagues and trainers at xxx that, you know, they can be useful.

EP2: Reputation of training programme

I would say, that because of where we trained, I don’t want to sound arrogant but, I think it would be significantly more. My perception would be that it has something to do with the orientation of where I trained.

EP3: Reputation of training programme

I mean I’m not aware of other institutions that even cover much about projectives or, um ... um ... psychoanalytic
ideas in their training. I was interested in your research and that you’re from Manchester and I was curious what they are teaching on the Manchester course.

EP5: Reputation of training programme

... it’s not just psychoanalysis, I think sometimes maybe courses get too ... I don’t know ... one way of doing things, and not open minded enough. UCL wouldn’t touch psychoanalytic ideas with a barge pole. There’s no way they would.

EP5: Reputation of training programme

I would have loved more of a balance though, in my training, I would have loved a bit of Tavistock, they did all sorts of things. Although, they had to wear suits to go to college... yeah, they had to dress professional ... every session.

EP6: Reputation of training programme

... when I was applying for initial EP training, I didn’t apply to Tavi the first year ... I applied because I heard it was weird...

EP7: Reputation of training programme

In a way I was kind of put off the Tavi at first because I heard it was very different ...

EP7: Reputation of training programme

... there isn’t really, to my knowledge very many people involved in the EP training who are skilled in those techniques, so it would ... it would worry me that’s something that’s going to die out.

EP7: Reputation of training programme

The difficulty there though is that there is a lot to cover, um ... even in the three years let alone when we were doing the masters.

EP2: Masters vs. Doctorate

I was one ... kind of, the one year masters people. I didn’t do the three year doctoral training and I am wondering about, maybe, was that part of why I didn’t get maybe as much initial training in relation to using projective techniques.

EP2: Masters vs. Doctorate

To be fair the masters course was so... not hit and run, that’s not fair, but it was very... you know ...you could only do
so much. I imagine in the three years there is more opportunity now.

EP6: Masters vs. Doctorate

... with the clinical psychologist we would look through it, look for themes. She was modelling really how you would interpret it.

EP3: Collaboration

I think we did one joint session with them [Tavistock] which was something else and I was at an interview so I missed it.

EP6: Collaboration

... I would say as well like, it was something that, um ... some people in my cohort really sought out. So, we um ... we would have optional projective workshops that we would always attend, um ... and we have um, a group on ... online actually where we sometimes share projectives we used and bounce ideas off each other, so ... we started that out during the training and it’s something we continue to do now.

EP7: Collaboration

I do have some sympathy, because I don’t think EPs have necessarily been trained to do that kind of work in ... in a lot of circumstances.

EP2: Preparing to use projective techniques

... as far as I know we are the only course that teaches it ... and it was pretty intensive, um ... it was an afternoon a week in the first year.

EP2: Preparing to use projective techniques

Nobody I going to use them if you have two lectures on projective assessments.

EP2: Preparing to use projective techniques

... two sessions as an introduction to how useful they are followed up by regular supervision is the only way forward. That’s what we used to do at the xxx. Trainee’s had to use them as part of their clinical placements. So we had a, you know ... a weekly supervision ... so by the end of the first year they began to feel – oh, actually these things might be helpful.

EP2: Preparing to use projective techniques
... we had a lot of input in how you use it and being careful around interpretation and how its use in reporting after you have assessed a child.

EP3: Preparing to use projective techniques

First of all it is not a big part of your initial training, I think that is one major factor – where you trained and the influences of that.

EP3: Preparing to use projective techniques

I think it is so far removed from what some people have received in their training ...

EP3: Preparing to use projective techniques

But because the day is so short and the amount of input you were getting was so much, I’m not too sure whether there was a really kind of, in depth exploration of the issue ... of the unconscious...

EP4: Preparing to use projective techniques

People need to start asking the question exactly as you said, if it’s such a bit part of psychology why does it play such a little role in how we are training the next generation of EPs?

EP4: Preparing to use projective techniques

... the main psychological framework ... well, arguably the main psychological framework on the Tavi course is psychoanalytic and systemic. We got quite a bit ... chunk of input, which is ... and in the first year especially, and then all of the learning tasks who are asked to draw on psychoanalytic ideas ... you analyse your casework and things like that. So it is very heavy fronted ... at the Tavi.

EP5: Preparing to use projective techniques

It hasn’t encouraged me to use it because I didn’t have that basic use really.

EP6: Preparing to use projective techniques

... I think not every training providers covers projectives.

EP7: Preparing to use projective techniques

I think we were ... we were definitely taught about the ORT and the CAT. Um ... we were kind of encouraged to try them out if we wanted to and we were given an opportunity for supervision ...
I think in interpreting themes as they arise, from say ... the CAT, I do think in terms of having supervision, the capacity to think about some of those themes together with the supervisor, is also, for me ... I think ... an important part of the continued training work and continued development...

I think that's interesting that they're doing that [valid and reliable interpretative frameworks] and I'd be really interested to see how that looks and get to trained on that ...

... things like that would also have to meet the general agenda ... local authority agenda. I'm not sure it would ....

I'm quite interested in the Rorschach, but I don't know how relevant it would be to my work, so ...

I've looked ... er ... periodically for training sessions and found virtually nothing.

I've looked at some of the psychodynamic and psychoanalytic websites and there hasn't been any easily accessible training.

Most of the trainings would have had a link to where I ended up working or having been an EP in London authorities ... you know, are very easy to access.

Unfortunately there is no opportunity for any training ...

So training is... unless you do it off your own back ... but that is very difficult for people with busy lives, it's a cost element and more of a time element really.

... we'd have to invest in the training so that we ... obviously are confident ... challenging any ... you know ... opinions.
... there’s no formal training in them ... well, in the Rorschach there is, but not any of the others ... as far as I’m aware so we just had, um ... a really passionate teacher who had been using them for years as an EP...

EP5: Formal training

I don’t know about formal training as I don’t actually know if you are meant to have any formal training to use any of the techniques.

EP7: Formal training

I mean, we did ... we covered those things but I don’t know if it’s ... if it’s kind of, formal training.

EP7: Formal training
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standarisation</th>
<th>(75)</th>
<th>(13) Idiographic</th>
<th>(30) Evidential base</th>
<th>(5) Hypothesising</th>
<th>(7) Validity and reliability</th>
<th>(5) Quantifiable comparison</th>
<th>(3) Psychology as a science</th>
<th>(14) Interpretation</th>
<th>(4) Cognitive assessment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>… that is not really what their intention is to explore the individual experience. You know, it’s a completely sort of, idiographic … er, technique, it is not normative in any way.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>EP2: Idiographic</td>
<td>I’m not going to be treating the material that I get from a projective assessment in the same way as I would, answers to you know, questions on a WISC.</td>
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<td>EP2: Idiographic</td>
<td>The difficulty I think, is that’s really not what most projective techniques are designed to do. One is not wanting to compare, you know, um … across a … a group, one is wanting to explore an individual’s experience …</td>
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<td></td>
<td>EP2: Idiographic</td>
<td>… her sort of conclusions were she was trying to, you know … trying to fit a square peg in a round hole.</td>
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<td>EP4: Idiographic</td>
<td>The whole idea about them being as … as free as possible, and as kind of … you know, unconstrained as possible, the more likely you are to be genuinely be accessing the unconscious … that’s a really interesting point about kind of … you … why would you try to standardise something that … what would be the purpose of that. That is quite interesting.</td>
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<td>EP5: Idiographic</td>
<td>… unless you have got this kind of, gold standard research … and then I think what gets lost is individual experience, um … relationships … stuff that you can’t explain in a reductionist, scientific, um … epistemological framework basically …</td>
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<td>EP7: Idiographic</td>
<td>… I don’t know if it’s always been this way, but I think there is an emphasis on kind of … providing numbers and, you know, this person’s in the first centile and therefore they’re like this … blah, blah, blah. Um, and … projectives are kind of the opposite to that.</td>
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<td>EP7: Idiographic</td>
<td>Maybe, but I wouldn’t want to be reductionist about it, so I think you need to devote the time to it, um … and it wouldn’t be as straightforward as … yeah, I don’t know what it would look like really, for it to have a more … valid and reliable evidence base.</td>
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I tend to think one of the reasons why those are favoured over others is that they are amenable to RCTs ... and you are not really going to get many randomised controlled trials on any of these approaches because we haven’t got the number of practitioners around, the casework is thorough and lasts over time, and also I think some of the evidence is that you don’t get an immediate effect size with ... um, psychodynamic approaches ... that children ... or adults even learn a new heuristic through these approaches ... but apply them over time ... and not immediately. Whereas solution focused and CBT is very much about the problem that you are coming in, so you get a solution to that ... particular problem ... and it looks good. So I don’t think the research evidence is there ...on any of these, but that’s more a ... um ... an aberration of research methods than it is about this approach being effective or not.

My feeling is that we are moving more towards a scientist-practitioner approach and we want to use evidenced-based assessment tools.

... it’s good that we have a sort of, robust evidence base, we would be pretty crazy as practitioners to just, you know, go off and do what the hell we liked ... um, so I don’t have a problem with that, but I think it can constrain, um something about the sort of, relationly based psychology that we have to practice.

... over time you develop obviously, you know ... much greater familiarity and as I say, this sort of internal evidence base of your own.

... actually they are used as part of, you know ... an ordinary, a psychological approach to, you know ... getting to know a young person and their situation and their family. Um, you know ... you don’t have to worry so much about, you know ... a standardised scoring system ... but, you know ... but, in the current research driven, evidence ... positive evidence ... positivist evidence base climate, that doesn’t go down well, and I think that’s tragic.

... there is a massive drive in my service about evidence base and whether there is really good, robust research to support, research to say why we are using certain measures. And whilst I do honour that, I am quite resistant to
applying that across all areas of my practice, there are flaws in that.

EP3: Evidence base

I think it can be seen as wishy washy, that there is no evidence, that it is your own interpretation. I think there is a lot of evidence in psychoanalytic literature, but it is not widely popular.

EP3: Evidence base

... evidence based practice, you know, science and RCT's and the gold standard of research and if a particular methodology isn’t considered to have any ... you know ... thing that we shouldn’t be using things that aren’t informed by evidence.

EP4: Evidence base

... because that’s what really bothers me actually ... it’s holding it up like it’s not evidenced and its not scientific ...

EP4: Evidence base

But in my professional practice it is very much, with the evidence driven and there isn’t a lot, I would say, of research that supports that.

EP6: Evidence base

... barriers are the evidence base – or lack of.

EP6: Evidence base

... not just do the assessment, but go back and test the hypotheses out that you have generated on the back of that assessment with the young person.

EP2: Hypothesising

I have a set of hypotheses that I have generated with staff and families and there is a sense of stuckness, something that we don’t yet know, that hasn’t been given expression to ...

EP3: Hypothesising

I think, what comes from psychoanalysis and relationships that form in a clinical setting is something a lot more ... in depth, nuanced ... it allows for a more broadening hypotheses rather than reductionist.

EP5: Hypothesising

... it’s always about staying with hypotheses and again it’s like ... none of it comes from nothing. The hypotheses
| EP5: Hypothesising | 
|------------------|---|
| *I might test out the hypotheses I have in the feedback meeting, rather than reporting them directly, and so then what I might do is report it indirectly, so I might say something like 'in the assessment I got a sense that ... blah' and then I might use evidence from like a sentence completion task rather than the ORT ...* |

| EP7: Hypothesising | 
|------------------|---|
| *I think the attitude of the EP profession possibly generally that they are not really proper tests ... you know, they are not standardised, are they valid. Um, you know ... is good judgement enough? Um ... are they really scientific?* |

| EP4: Validity and reliability | 
|------------------|---|
| [more projective techniques with valid and reliable interpretative frameworks increasing usage by EPs] **Definitely ... definitely, because that’s ... that’s fundamental to us as EPs.** |

| EP6: Validity and reliability | 
|------------------|---|
| *our opinion is so valued and it does make big differences, so if we can, um ... validate what we are doing that’s really important, um ... and it will give us more freedom ... to use things.* |

| EP6: Validity and reliability | 
|------------------|---|
| *um, projective techniques have very low face validity, especially the CAT and the ORT, and a drawing as well.* |

| EP7: Validity and reliability | 
|------------------|---|
| *Maybe, but I wouldn’t want to be reductionist about it, so I think you need to devote the time to it, um ... and it wouldn’t be as straight forward as ... yeah, I don’t know what it would look like really, for it to have a more ... valid and reliable evidence base.* |

| EP7: Validity and reliability | 
|------------------|---|
| *... you can have school think, well that sounds a bit wishy washy, you know, and we want some kind of hard data.* |

| EP3: Quantifiable comparison | 
|------------------|---|
| *... quite often it’s about time ... people expect standard scores, so I try and give a balance really.* |
I am more comfortable with my quantitative type information.

EP6: Quantifiable comparison

... I don’t know if it’s always been this way, but I think there is an emphasis on kind of... providing numbers and, you know, this person’s in the first centile and therefore they’re like this... blah, blah, blah. Um, and... projectives are kind of the opposite to that.

E7: Quantifiable comparison

... I do think that comes from the way science is constructed though in university... there is an air of purest science and research... everything has to be done in a certain... with data...

EPS: Psychology as a science

I think it probably comes down to sure... about the way that we view science here as the sort of the dominant paradigm... science is within psychology... how the profession, or the organisation of psychology is to, um...

EPS: Psychology as a science

... it’s just important that these organisations exist to keep ideas coming on and, um... sort of... yeah, floating new ideas and keeping questioning the more traditional paradigms of thought... rather than science.

EPS: Psychology as a science

... a lot of... projective assessment is... you know, it’s based on clinical experience and judgement – the interpretation of projective assessment.

EP2: Interpretation

... my betting would be that people wouldn’t use them because they wouldn’t feel confident to be able to analyse them themselves.

EP2: Interpretation

I think psychoanalytic practice... again, you know, how do you know it works, you know, what about these interpretations, what basis are you making them on?

EP3: Interpretation

... I think the thing I struggle with more is, um... the interpretation, and how to feed back the interpretation..
I do worry about how I get interpreted, for example the Rorschach, you can buy inkblot tests online, you can buy inkblot cards and it says, like, if you use it this way it means this about you, and I just think that’s to me that’s a little bit into the kind of, the dangerous realm really and everyone’s a psychologist and actually you don’t need any training whatsoever it’s almost like dream analysis as well if you dream about, I dunno, if you dream about a rabbit then it means this about you, you’re hopeful and you’re this, kind of like horoscope psychology ... I think you have to be very careful how you interpret things. I see it very much as a clinical clinical techniques... um... and obviously you can make assumptions which might be incorrect, I think you have to be careful.

I’m not terribly interested, I think in administering a cognitive assessment, um around a young person, only, because I also want to know what they think and what they feel and how they’ve experienced things and how they think things might change for them, what would be helpful and what wouldn’t and so on. So you have to have a broad base.

... maybe there is a feeling that actually if the child is presenting with difficulties in literacy or in learning or you know, the kinds of assessments that are chosen more relate to cognitive processing and that’s kind of driving how how people practice.

... cognitive assessment has its place, and you know, has its strengths and its difficulties. But a lot of these children I am finding I’ve had more refusal for cognitive assessment than I ever had in the last two years. The younger ones aren’t ready or their attention levels are so low we can’t do them. The older ones are either anxious or have seen so many people that they really don’t want to engage, so um it’s much more difficult to use those techniques.
| Clinical Psychology (5) | EP1 0  
EP2 1  
EP3 2  
EP4 0  
EP5 0  
EP6 2  
EP7 0 | I do remember a Clinical Psychologist from the clinic who was also a trained psychotherapist coming to train us in the use of the Rorschach and the CAT.  
EP3: Clinical Psychology  
The assumptions that can be drawn ... um ... to me they do feel a bit clinical in nature. Where, sort of, a clinical psychologist can have that therapeutic relationship which I can't have.  
EP6: Clinical Psychology  
I just think we're frustrated sometimes as EPs ... you know, we see clinical psychologists and they have these sessions ... not that ... even that's getting reduced obviously, but you know, they see the families, they see the children on a regular basis and ... you know, they can really get involved. Whereas we're just ... at the moment it's just, hit and ... you know... not hit and run, it's not that bad but it feels a bit like that.  
EP6: Clinical Psychology |
|---|---|
| Terminology (2) | EP1 0  
EP2 1  
EP3 0  
EP4 0  
EP5 1  
EP6 0  
EP7 0 | I think they are mislabelled as tests, to be honest. because of the sort of testing framework ... which we all know about, you know ... they ... they do suffer in comparison, um ... for obvious reasons.  
EP2: Terminology  
I would call it psychoanalytic not psychodynamic ... I haven't got a very clear ... um ... a clear reason as to why, that's how I've always thought about it ... the body of knowledge that is psycho ... psychoanalysis.  
EP5: Terminology |
Appendix 13: Member checking email

16/03/2016

Hello, I hope you are well. I do apologise for the delay in contacting you. I am finally at the member checking stage of my research and as I mentioned during the interview, I would really appreciate your input at this stage.

I have attached a thematic map of the main and sub themes which have emerged from analysis of all the interviews at both phases. This is a collective theme set, so your views will be represented by some of the themes but there will be themes which you didn’t touch on which other interviewees did.

In addition to summarising my preliminary findings, I wanted to give you the opportunity to ensure your views on the use of projective techniques, as shared in the interview, are represented within the theme set.

Any feedback or comments you have at this stage are most welcome.

Many thanks

Rachael King
Appendix 14: Ethics approval email

Dear Rachael

Ref: PGR-5494891-A1

I am pleased to confirm that your ethics application has now been approved by the School Research Integrity Committee (RIC) against a pre-approved UREC template. If anything untoward happens during your research then please ensure you make your supervisor aware who can then raise it with the RIC on your behalf.

This approval is only for the Ethical Approval Application, you are still required to have received approval from your Panel before carrying out any research.

Regards

Gail

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Tel: +44(0)161 275 3390 |