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Analysis example

Research question: How do PGCE students learn to teach?

Sub-question
What challenges do PGCE students face as they take on the teacher role in the PGCE year? **and**
How are those challenges constructed in key documents related to the PGCE?

Comparing **different types of document** often promotes clarity by raising anomalies and unexpected differences.

In looking at this question, the comparison of documents produced in practice with those produced at the level of national policy is likely to be fruitful. Hence in this case:

- observations by university tutors – several observations of a student at different points during the course. It should be noted that observations are structured according to the same framework
- teacher training agency key documents – 'the Standards' (in brief, the Teacher Training Agency controls the initial training of teachers through the imposition of a set of standards which all new teachers must be assessed against. They must show that they have met all of these by the end of the course.

Phase 1

The initial open coding process was done with one eye on the data and one on the research questions. As writers following Strauss and Corbin have said, open codes 'are the nouns and verbs of a conceptual world. Part of the analytic process is to identify the more general categories that these things are instances of, such as institutions, work activities, social relations, social outcomes, etc.' (adapted from http://www.analytictech.com/mb870/introtoGT.htm). By introducing memos into a network view of the initial concepts it was relatively straightforward to begin to see how some of these initial concepts were related – and which might become the more central concepts in addressing the research questions.

What challenges do PGCE students face as they take on the teacher role in the PGCE year?
and more specifically here: How are those challenges constructed in key PGCE documents?

understanding
A difference between TTA standards and observation. in the standards, it is the teacher's understanding which is stressed. in the observations, it is the pupils. Observations appear to be dominated by the discourse of pupil learning and outcomes, rather than teacher abilities. Teacher understanding is inferred from actions and decisions, but not much referred to, more assumed.

respect

use of voice

identity as scientist

aims of teaching

autonomous learning

challenge to learn
challenge includes: maintaining pupils' focus on the topic; pushing them to connect ideas for themselves

helping pupils construct links
an implied aim is that pupils should be helped to construct an integrated, well-connected knowledge of science - not a series of facts

leading learning
questionning is an important strategy - quality of questionning is key - linking to autonomy of learners

suggested alternatives

clarity of purpose

[4:20] They understand how pupils' le..

They understand how pupils' learning can be affected by their physical, intellectual, linguistic, social, cultural and emotional development.

Phase 2

'Selective coding is the process of choosing **one** category to be the core category, and relating all other categories to that category. The essential idea is to develop a single storyline around which all everything else is draped. There is a belief that such a core concept always exists'.

(adapted from http://www.analytictech.com/mb870/introtoGT.htm)

Inspection of the initial coding suggests that some can be combined to reduce the complexity and make it easier to compare between different documents – for example, 'autonomous learning' and 'challenging learning' covered much the same ideas.

**What challenges do PGCE students
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and observation. in the standards, it is
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dominated by the discourse of pupil
learning and outcomes, rather than
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is inferred from actions and decisions,
but not much referred to, more assumed.

aims of teaching

suggested alternatives

clarity of purpose

identity as scientist

challenge to learn
challenge includes: maintaining pupils'
focus on the topic; pushing them to
connect ideas for themselves - this
includes the idea of the autonomous
learner.

use of voice

helping pupils construct links
an implied aim is that pupils should be
helped to construct an integrated,
well-connected knowledge of science -
not a series of facts

respect

leading learning
questionning is an important strategy -
quality of questionning is key - linking to

[4:20] They understand how pupils' le..

They understand how pupils' learning can be affected by their physical,
intellectual, linguistic, social, cultural and emotional development.

This new map of concepts raises several questions.
1. There appears to be a core of ideas emerging around aims, clarity, challenge to learn,
   constructing links, leading learning – but the question about how these are seen differently
   in the different documents remains to be explored.
2. There are several relatively disconnected codes, such as use of voice and respect – which
   lack meaning in relation to others at this moment.

To begin to address these questions, 'clarity of purpose' can be analysed in terms of the parts of the
documents associated with it.

In some cases, the language used in the observation notes has a strong resemblance to that in the
TTA Standards.

```
P 2: gs 110405.txt - 2:6 (23:24)   (Super)
Codes:  [clarity of purpose]

You appeared organized, purposeful and professional; you
were clear with your expectations and questions.

P 4: tta standards.txt - 4:33 (260:263)   (Super)
Codes:  [clarity of purpose]

3.3.9 They set high expectations for pupils' behaviour and
establish a clear framework for classroom discipline to
anticipate and manage pupils' behaviour constructively, and
promote self-control and independence.
```

There is another instance of this later on:

```
P 3: gs 230205.txt - 3:12  (35:39)   (Super)
Codes:  [clarity of purpose]

3 TEACHING 3.1 Planning, Expectations and Targets Shortly
after the start of the lesson, you had the learning
objectives clear on the board, and focused pupils on the
task by moving around the room and getting individuals and
groups engaged.


P 4: tta standards.txt - 4:31  (239:240)   (Super)
Codes:  [clarity of purpose]

3.3.3 They teach clearly structured lessons or sequences of
work which interest and motivate pupils and which:


P 4: tta standards.txt - 4:32  (241:242)   (Super)
Codes:  [clarity of purpose]

make learning objectives clear to pupils ?
```

It will be useful to look at exactly how these extracts are similar. A cursory glance suggests that the main similarity is in the reporting of classroom activity at a relatively abstract level – at the level of outline effect on pupils (eg **focused, objectives, structured, interest, motivate**...). There is nothing to take exception to in such lists – they are coded messages to substantiate the idea – **you are doing OK**!

Interestingly, there are elements relating to clarity in the observations which appear quite different in tone and content. In both of the following examples, the observation is made with reference to specific ways in which clarity has been achieved. In the first, the trainee teacher is seen to have used names in a particular way, and in the second, to have used their voice.

```
P 1: gs 021204.txt - 1:14  (22:25)   (Super)
Codes:  [clarity of purpose] [understanding]

Your tone in class was purposeful and you led the pupils
through a clear sequence of learning about the process of
pollination, fitting in the names of parts of plants on the
way, and making opportunities to extend their understanding
by making links with other aspects of the syllabus as
appropriate.


P 1: gs 021204.txt - 1:16  (109:110)   (Super)
Codes:  [clarity of purpose]

You demonstrated clear expectations, using your voice very
effectively - QUiet please.
```

The first extract here is still relatively vague, but it does inform the trainee about the way a particular section of his lesson came across. It seems that whereas observations make specific reference to content and raise matters such as use of **voice**, this is nowhere apparent in the Standards. These similarities and differences suggest – at the very least – that the observations are **partly influenced** by the discourse which underlies the TTA standards – but that there are **other** discourses at work as well. The focus on specific examples and illustrations suggest two – a

practical discourse (how to teach effectively) and an evidential discourse (using direct and specific examples in order to substantiate claims. These possibilities will need to be explored and pursued further, and most obviously with reference to related coding. Word choice in each case is likely to prove a fruitful line of enquiry.

The same pattern of similarity and difference applies around the notion of **respect**. Again, TTA standards use an abstract and globalising discourse. Respect for pupils' backgrounds is associated here with universally high expectations of pupil achievement, across a diverse range of categories:

```
P 4: tta standards.txt - 4:15 (6:8)   (Super)
Codes:  [respect]

They have high expectations of all pupils; respect their
social, cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic
backgrounds; and are committed to raising their educational
achievement.
```

Consistency, consideration and concern are the only features of actual **practice** associated with this notion of respect.

```
P 4: tta standards.txt - 4:16 (10:11)   (Super)
Codes:  [respect]

They treat pupils consistently, with respect and
consideration, and are concerned for their development as
learners.
```

Interestingly, the TTA standards make no reference to the respect expected from pupils to teachers. Observations use the same type of discourse but respect is seen to operate in both directions – the respect of pupils towards the teacher is observed and noted.

```
P 2: gs 110405.txt - 2:5 (83:84)   (Super)
Codes:  [respect]

You have a teacherly presence in the class, with the pupils
respecting you as a teacher and looking to you for each
stage of the lesson.
```

As with the notion of clarity, observations include concrete examples; the following example implies reciprocity of respect.

```
P 3: gs 230205.txt - 3:6 (85:88)   (Super)
Codes:  [respect]

When you came to the set up of the main activity, p.80 of
the book, you established quiet very well, calmly and with
authority, using your voice well to drop in the word 'lads'
at the group that was talking. So far so good. I have no
doubts about the basic respect the pupils have for you in
the class.
```

However, there is something else going on here. Words jump out of this section: there is an 'I' who has 'no' doubts about 'basic' respect.. It seems possible that the observer is avoiding commenting directly on a problem which is being alluded to here – **nb. worth looking more deeply at this**.

[4:16] They treat pupils consistently..

They treat pupils consistently, with respect and consideration, and are concerned for their development as learners.

[4:15] They have high expectations of..

They have high expectations of all pupils; respect their social, cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic backgrounds; and are committed to raising their educational achievement.

respect

basic respect
There is an 'I' who has 'no' doubts about 'basic' respect.. It seems possible that the observer is avoiding commenting directly on a problem which is being alluded to here

[3:6] When you came to the set up of..

When you came to the set up of the main activity, p.80 of the book, you established quiet very well, calmly and with authority, using your voice well to drop in the word 'lads' at the group that was talking. So far so good. I have no doubts about the basic respect the pupils have for you in the class.

[2:5] You have a teacherly presence ..

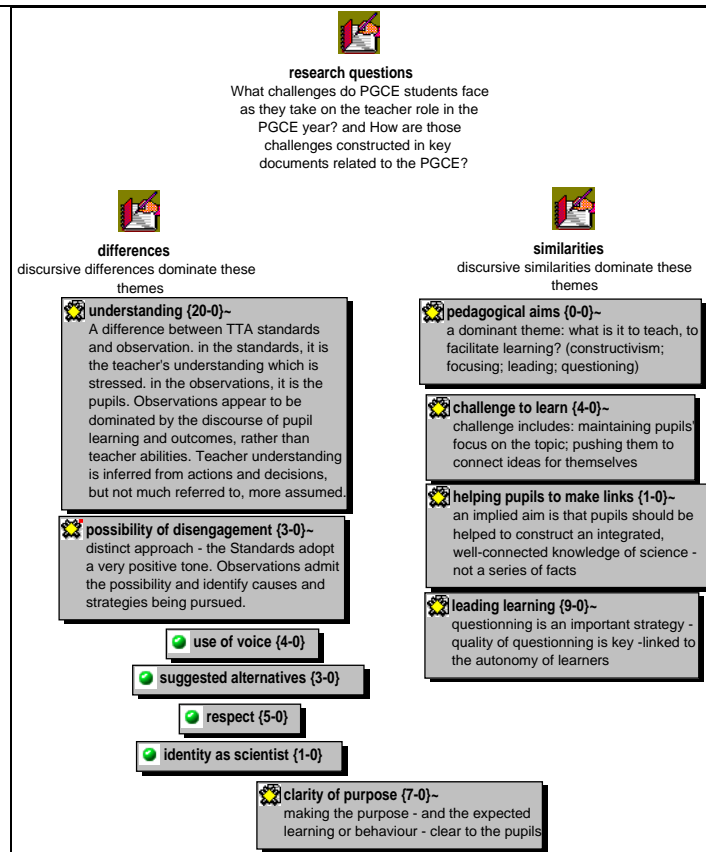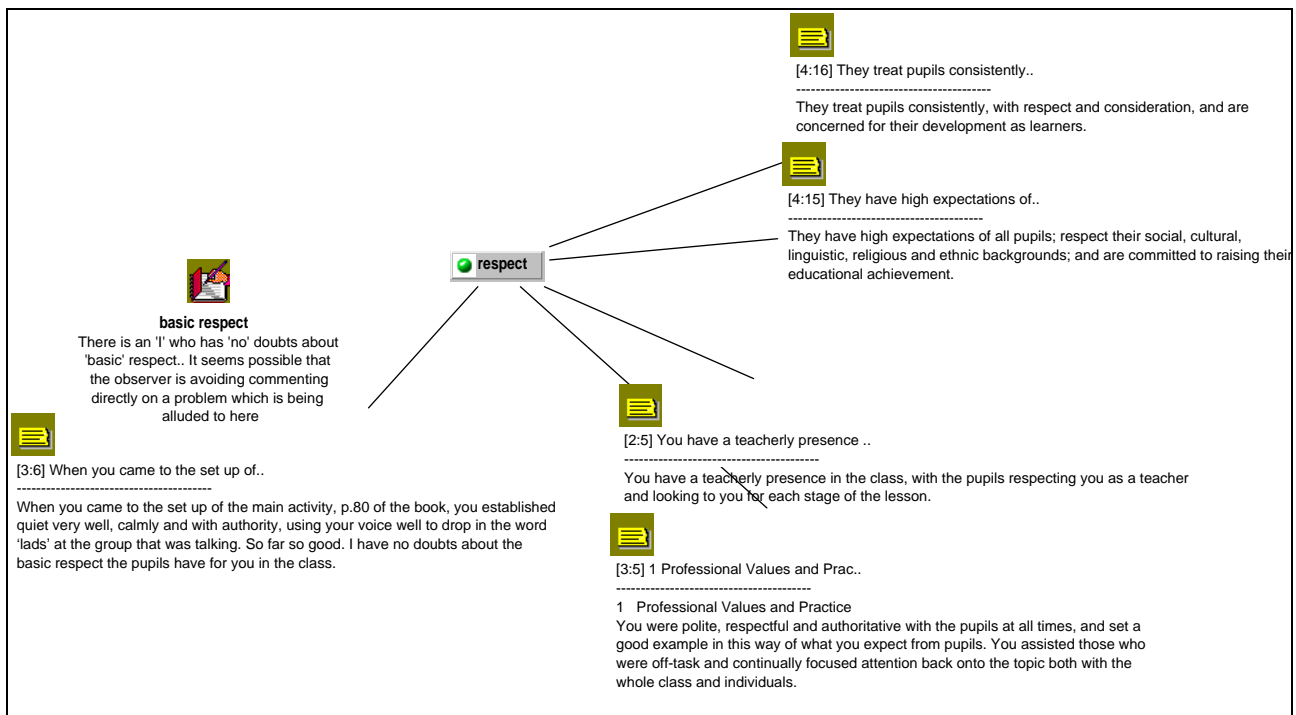You have a teacherly presence in the class, with the pupils respecting you as a teacher and looking to you for each stage of the lesson.

[3:5] 1 Professional Values and Prac..
----
1   Professional Values and Practice
You were polite, respectful and authoritative with the pupils at all times, and set a good example in this way of what you expect from pupils. You assisted those who were off-task and continually focused attention back onto the topic both with the whole class and individuals.

research questions
What challenges do PGCE students face as they take on the teacher role in the PGCE year? and How are those challenges constructed in key documents related to the PGCE?

differences
discursive differences dominate these themes

understanding {20-0}~
A difference between TTA standards and observation. in the standards, it is the teacher's understanding which is stressed. in the observations, it is the pupils. Observations appear to be dominated by the discourse of pupil learning and outcomes, rather than teacher abilities. Teacher understanding is inferred from actions and decisions, but not much referred to, more assumed.

possibility of disengagement {3-0}~
distinct approach - the Standards adopt a very positive tone. Observations admit the possibility and identify causes and strategies being pursued.

use of voice {4-0}

suggested alternatives {3-0}

respect {5-0}

identity as scientist {1-0}

clarity of purpose {7-0}~
making the purpose - and the expected learning or behaviour - clear to the pupils

similarities
discursive similarities dominate these themes

pedagogical aims {0-0}~
a dominant theme: what is it to teach, to facilitate learning? (constructivism; focusing; leading; questioning)

challenge to learn {4-0}~
challenge includes: maintaining pupils' focus on the topic; pushing them to connect ideas for themselves

helping pupils to make links {1-0}~
an implied aim is that pupils should be helped to construct an integrated, well-connected knowledge of science - not a series of facts

leading learning {9-0}~
questionning is an important strategy - quality of questionning is key -linked to the autonomy of learners

Additional coding for the 'possibility of disengagement' raises further **related** points. There initially appeared to be a complete lack of admission of the possibility of pupil disengagement in the TTA standards. The positive tone of the Standards is demonstrated in the one section which does refer to pupils' behaviour.

```
P 4: tta standards.txt - 4:28  (256:263)  (Super)
Codes:  [possibility of disengagement]

They organise and manage teaching and learning time
effectively. 3.3.8 They organise and manage the physical
teaching space, tools, materials, texts and other resources
```

```
            safely and effectively with the help of support staff where
            appropriate. 3.3.9 They set high expectations for pupils'
            behaviour and establish a clear framework for classroom
            discipline to anticipate and manage pupils' behaviour
            constructively, and promote self-control and independence.
```

In the observations, disengagement is treated (at first glance) as something expected and to be discussed, worked around, seen as problematic for specific reasons, explained. It is seen as manageable through specific strategies (focusing on the topic, ensuring attention at key points in the lesson) that can be pursued.

```
            P 3: gs 230205.txt - 3:7  (22:24)   (Super)
            Codes:  [possibility of disengagement]

            You assisted those who were off-task and continually
            focused attention back onto the topic both with the whole
            class and individuals.

            P 3: gs 230205.txt - 3:11  (49:52)   (Super)
            Codes:  [possibility of disengagement]

            Some of the detail of the questioning was lost on many of
            the pupils because the level of noise was too high for them
            to follow the whole series. This had a major effect because
            it meant that some of the pupils didn't get an effective
            introduction to the lesson.
```
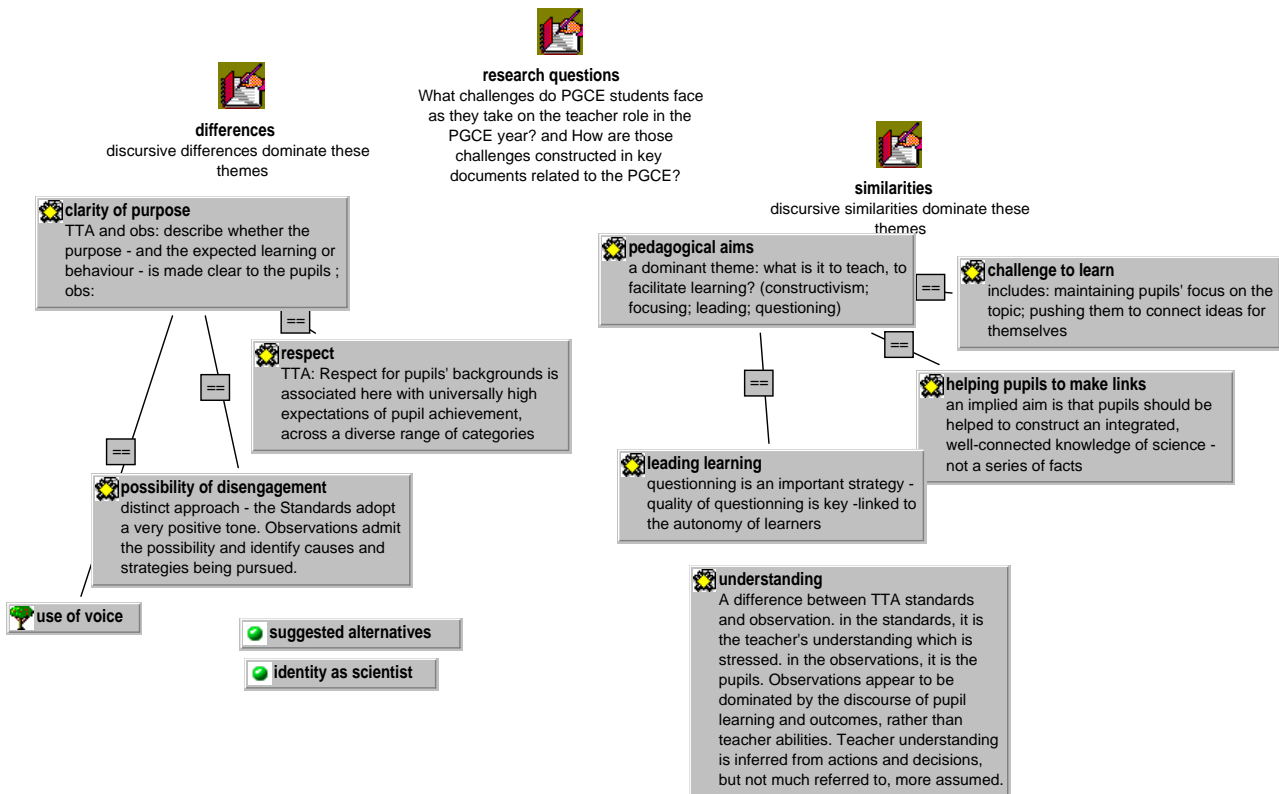

Phase 3

Focus back onto the research question(s), about learning to teach in schools.
a) What challenges do PGCE students face as they take on the teacher role in the PGCE year? **and**
b) *How are those challenges constructed in key documents related to the PGCE?*

Constructed some focus questions (Strauss and Corbin): What is challenge associated with? How is challenge discussed? When does challenge occur? Why are some challenges difficult to see?

The issue coming to the surface in relation to sub-question b) is that some challenges which are significant in observations are hardly spoken about in the TTA document – and vice versa. For example, planning and resourcing of lessons is covered in detail in the TTA document – but receives much less attention as such in the observations. This is clear even at the level of number of references to planning: it receives eight references in the TTA documents, and just *three* in the observation documents all together.

Why should there be a mismatch between the type of challenges which are given attention in these two sorts of documents? I suspect (without evidence, at this point) that this is something to do with the assumed availability of written evidence for planning (in the form of lesson plans, resources, etc). Behind that lies one of the uses of the TTA Standards document, as a framework for documentary evidence of **competences**. In answering the question of mismatch further, I will step back to look at the form of the various documents, as well as close in on the use of words and phrases in particular cases.

Form

The phases – they are, they know, they have, they can – occur at the start of most paragraphs in the TTA standards document.

```
1:8  Initial questions such as 'Wha.. (48:50)
2:7  Can you increasingly focus on .. (68:69)
2:8  Develop assessment techniques .. (103:105)
4:3  2.1 They have a secure knowled.. (37:39)
4:5  For the Foundation Stage, they.. (44:48)
4:6  For Key Stage 1 and/or 2, they.. (50:53)
4:7  They have sufficient understan.. (53:54)
4:8  For Key Stage 3, they know and.. (64:67)
4:11 2.2 They know and understand t.. (80:82)
4:14 They can teach the required or.. (205:206)
4:28 3.1.5 As relevant to the age r.. (136:140)
4:29 3.2.1 They make appropriate us.. (153:157)
4:32 1.1 They have high expectation.. (5:8)
4:33 1.7 They are able to improve t.. (24:26)
4:34 They are motivated and able to.. (26:27)
4:35 1.8 They are aware of, and wor.. (28:30)
4:36 * History or Geography * Physi.. (55:62)
4:37 For Key Stage 4 and post 16, t.. (72:74)
4:38 They are familiar with the Key.. (74:77)
4:39 As relevant to the age range t.. (82:85)
4:40 2.3 They are aware of expectat.. (86:88)
4:41 2.5 They know how to use ICT e.. (92:94)
4:42 2.7 They know a range of strat.. (99:101)
4:43 2.8 They have passed the Quali.. (102:104)
4:44 3.2.3 They are able to assess .. (163:168)
4:45 3.2.7 They are able to use rec.. (187:190)
4:46 3.3.1 They have high expectati.. (199:201)
4:47 3.3.5 They are able to support.. (249:251)
4:48 They are able to teach across .. (268:269)
```

This is a graphic representation of the categorical nature of this document. It purports to lay out what is be expected of trainee teachers, and it does it by a numbered list of (grouped, but not coherently linked) statements about the trainee's individual abilities, capacities, capabilities, characteristics – but not their experiences; nothing about the context of their work; no reference to the challenges they have met, or how they have dealt with them. This is a present-tense list, a summative statement, embodying the necessary features of a teacher – trainees in this document have no past, and therefore have gone through no learning process – with a couple of (powerful) exceptions:

> 4.43: They have passed the Qualified Teacher Status skills tests in numeracy, literacy and ICT.

And at the very end:
> They recognise and respond effectively to equal opportunities issues as they arise in the classroom, including by challenging stereotyped views, and by challenging bullying or harassment, following relevant policies and procedures.

Here the statement demonstrates very clearly the limits of the form used in the Standards, trying to present patterns of practice in the present tense only modified by the phrase 'as they arise', and to represent context by 'in the classroom'. By comparison, the observation document (which addresses the trainee) uses similar phrases much more rarely:

```
7 quotation(s) for code: YOU HAVE, YOU KNOW, YOU MAKE, YOU ARE
Quotation-Filter: All
--------------------------------------
1:20 You have a good habit of intro.. (66:68)
1:21 You have a very supportive sty.. (29:30)
1:22 'It's still not quite there ye.. (31:32)
1:23 As did some well-chosen, posit.. (111:113)
2:9 Questions which turn into gues.. (56:58)
2:10 What can you make with bacteri.. (65:65)
2:11 You have a teacherly presence .. (83:84)
```

In three of these cases, the mode of the sentence is a quoted question (eg. 2:10), and in all the other cases, the sentence is related to a matter of context: eg,

```
1.22: 'It's still not quite there yet…' - you have a measured pace with
them, working just a little faster than their thinking, on average, which
is ideal.
```

The observation documents, which (as already stated) borrow the seven main headings from the TTA Standards, largely turn these headings into something like the structure of a narrative, with the crisis at the heart of the narrative being – '…. **but did the pupils learn?'**

Phase 4
- Narrative analysis of observations
- Word level analysis focusing in more detail on the issues of pupil disengagement.