Mapping the emotional journey of teaching

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Abstract: This paper will explore the use of Novakian concept mapping as a means of visualising and tracing the range of emotions inherent within any teaching experience. It will focus in particular on its use within higher education, where the presence of emotion has traditionally been disregarded or seemingly suppressed. The example of undergraduate teaching of the law degree will be used as an area where the role of emotion is particularly under-theorised. This paper will assess the effectiveness of concept mapping as a tool to enable academics to explicitly acknowledge, and reflect upon, the existence of emotion, both in terms of their individual teaching experiences, their collective teaching journey through a course or qualification and their students' learning journey. It will also consider how use of this technique at a collective level could identify areas of pedagogic frailty, which may arise due to the misinterpreting, mishandling or suppression of emotion. The various opportunities and challenges arising from this application of concept mapping techniques will be discussed, drawing on a small, empirical pilot study, and leading to the conclusion that it has a useful and significant role to play within an emerging field of enquiry.

Keywords: Concept mapping; Emotional journey; Teaching; Higher education; Law School; Pedagogic frailty

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1. Introduction

The overall consensus amongst commentators is that the role of emotion in teaching has traditionally been under-acknowledged and under-theorised (Hyland, 2014; Edgington, 2013) and that this is particularly the case in relation to higher education, most certainly in relation to legal education (Bromberger, 2010; Woods, 2010). The origins of this lack of regard can be traced back to the form of Cartesian dualism which has permeated Western society, dichotomising reason and emotion (Descartes, 1989). Reason and cognition have become associated with the mind and rationality whereas emotion has become equated with the body and thus characterised as a set of irrational and potentially dangerous impulses (Damasio, 2006; Williams, 1993). Whilst this dichotomised view still arguably holds sway in some educational circles, it no longer reflects scientific and philosophical insights into the role of emotion. There is a significant body of work in these fields which demonstrates that emotion is inextricably inter-twined with cognition (Koole, 2009). It influences the way we process and prioritise information, our

motivation, our reasoning, our decision-making and our perceptions of, and interactions with, others (see, for example, Ellsworth, 2013; Bandes & Blumenthal, 2012; Damasio, 2006; Nussbaum, 2001). This vital role necessitates a consideration of the relevance and potential influence of emotion within a wide range of spheres, including education.

There are signs that this process has begun to occur within education generally, for example, in the USA a wide range of programmes have been introduced into schools which focus on social and emotional competencies (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). In the UK the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning Programme that was introduced into the majority of primary and secondary schools from 2003 onwards also demonstrates an increasing awareness of links between emotion and learning (Weare & Gray, 2003), although in recent years it has not received central government support (Casey, 2011). Within higher education, Leathwood and Hey (2009) argue that the academy has "traditionally been constructed as the paradigmatic site of pure rationality devoted to the dispassionate and objective search for truth - an emotion-free zone" (p. 429). However, they do suggest (in a different paper) that more recently there has been an "affective turn" in higher education (Hey & Leathwood, 2009, p. 22). They indicate that this is partly as a result of the widening participation policy agenda leading to an influx of non-traditional students requiring support, together with an increasing focus on the need for graduates to develop employability and so-called "soft skills" which often involve social and emotional competencies (Hey & Leathwood, 2009). There are concerns that the focus and manifestations of this increasing acknowledgment of emotion are somewhat shallow or misguided, eschewing richer humanist and feminist interpretations (see, for example, Ecclestone, 2011; Clegg & David, 2006). However, the weight of evidence supports the suggestion of Beard, Clegg, and Smith (2007) that:

> *The question is not whether emotion should be introduced into the curriculum; our argument is that the affective and embodied are already aspects of all pedagogical encounters but that in higher education, in particular, emotion is rarely acknowledged and is under- or mis-theorised.* (Beard et al., 2007, p. 235)

This quotation appears particularly relevant in relation to the Law School, as law has strongly mirrored notions of Cartesian dualism in viewing emotion as, at best, irrational and, at worst, a danger in need of suppression (Grossi, 2015; Abrams & Keren, 2010; Maroney, 2006). This has led to the topic of emotion being "relatively invisible" within legal education (Maharg & Maughan, 2011, p. 1). Indeed, there is some evidence that the way law is taught actively discourages engagement with emotion, with traditional notions of "thinking like a lawyer" being focused on a seemingly objective, rational and impassive intellectual analysis of the legal rule or situation in question (for a classic statement of this argument, in the USA context, see Kennedy, 1982). This has been suggested as one reason that law students in a number of jurisdictions have been identified as having significantly higher levels of stress, anxiety and depression than both the general population and students in other disciplines (see, for example, Strevens & Wilson, 2016; Sheldon & Krieger, 2007; Sheldon & Krieger, 2004). Such issues with wellbeing also appear to persist into legal practice itself (see, for example, Westaby, 2010, in the UK context).

The emerging nature of the discussion of the role of emotion in education offers both great opportunities, but also great challenges. In terms of higher education, perhaps the most fundamental of these is the question of how to facilitate the engagement of academy with emotion? This is especially relevant at a time when the neo-liberal marketization of Universities is placing academics under increasing pressure with an

emphasis on managerialism, accountability and performativity in their working environment (Grummell, Devine, & Lynch, 2009; Lynch, 2006). In such a climate, it can be easy for the role of emotion to be ignored or devalued because of its intangibility and the lack of easy measures or assessments to ascertain its influence and value.

This paper will consider the potential for Novakian concept mapping (Novak, 2010) to assist in engaging academics in acknowledging and reflecting on the role of emotion within their work. Such concept mapping is a "powerful graphical technique" which involves creating visual representations of theories and experiences in a way which tangibly and explicitly sets out key concepts and ideas whilst exploring the relationship between them (Kinchin, 2015b, p. 1). The next section of this paper will consider the role of emotion within teaching in more detail, this will be followed by a consideration of the way this role can be visualised and explicitly explored and utilised by individual academics using Novakian concept mapping. The paper will then move on to consider its use as a collective tool, including its potential ability to identify areas of pedagogic frailty (Kinchin, 2015a; Kinchin, 2015b) and considering the emotion involved in forms of e-learning. The final section will consider some of the specific challenges and opportunities involved in mapping the emotional journey of teaching, using the example of a pilot study conducted with a small group of legal academics, before the paper concludes with an overall evaluation of the efficacy of this potential use of concept mapping.

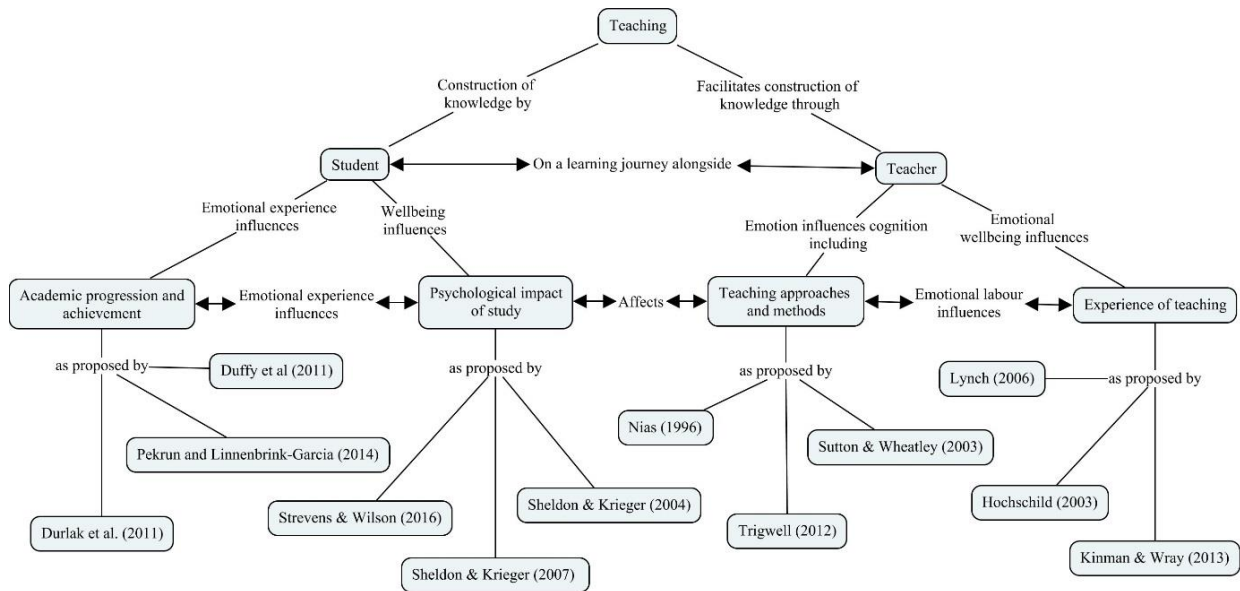## 2.   The role of emotion within teaching

Fig. 1. A concept map indicating key aspects of the role of emotion within teaching

Emotion plays a role within teaching in two, interlinked ways (see Fig. 1). Firstly, because of its role in student learning and, secondly (but no less importantly) because of the importance of the teacher's emotions in their work. In relation to student learning, Novak sums up the importance of emotion well when he states that:

*While learning is an activity which cannot be shared, but is rather a responsibility
of the learner, it is the teacher's responsibility to seek the best possible negotiation
of meanings and an emotional climate which is conducive to learn meaningfully.
Teachers must also recognise their role in negotiating meaning and for creating a
favourable emotional climate to encourage such negotiation.* (Novak, 2010, p.133)

In acknowledging the importance of emotion within learning, Novak was providing a humanist input into the constructivist approach proposed by Ausubel (2000) whose focus was on the cognitive learning journey. As the dominant learning theory within higher education (Ertl & Wright, 2008; Cullen, Hadjivassiliou, Hamilton, Kelleher, Somerlad, & Stern, 2002), constructivism is well-placed to acknowledge and utilise emotion within learning. Its perception of knowledge as constructed out of experience is one which implies that not only intellectual, but also emotional, experience has a role to play within meaningful learning (Novak, 2010, p. 14). This is also a key tenet of humanist theories (see, for example, Rogers, 1983), suggesting that the relevance of emotion is becoming increasingly identified within learning theories. As an illustration, Meyer and Turner (2011, p. 244) talk about the idea of "emotional scaffolding" within the classroom– drawing on the constructivist concept of "scaffolding learning". They argue that providing positive emotional support can be used to encourage the students to attain a number of goals, including increased autonomy and wellbeing (Meyer & Turner, 2011, p. 244; Rosiek, 2003). Novak (2010) also refers to the need for teachers to demonstrate "emotional sensitivity, commitment, honesty and caring" (p. 6).

Outside the literature on learning theories, the role of emotion within student learning has been highlighted in a broad range of areas, from the impact of programmes developing social and emotional competencies on academic attainment (Durlak et al., 2011) to the impact of a wide range of individual emotions such as shame, pride, curiosity and boredom (see, for example, Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2014). The literature relating to higher education is sparser, but certainly appears to acknowledge a role for emotion within learning, as discussed above. Within the Law School, it is the literature on law student wellbeing which comes closest to linking emotion and learning. In the USA context, Glesner (1991) has argued that it is incumbent upon Law Schools to ensure that their psychological climate fosters and promotes learning, which presumably includes ensuring the emotional setting is conducive to this. A number of commentators in the USA and Australia have examined the links between stress and anxiety and legal learning (see, for example, Bromberger, 2010; Dresser, 2005; Iijima, 1998). It has also been noted that initiatives to promote law student wellbeing are most effective when integrated into the curriculum as a whole (Duffy, Field, & Shirley, 2011; Glesner, 1991).

As well as examining the role teaching and the learning environment play in generating, influencing and managing students' emotions, the general educational literature now also includes increasing discussion of the role of teachers' own emotions within their work and wellbeing. The importance of the interaction between emotion and cognition (drawing on the scientific evidence discussed above) has been highlighted. Accepting the weight of scientific evidence which demonstrates emotion and cognition is intertwined means that teachers must have a recognition and understanding of their emotional responses and needs (as well as underlying values and beliefs) to work effectively (Nias, 1996). It also means that inappropriate or unmanaged emotional responses can impair cognitive functioning, for example, negative emotions could be distracting and impair memory (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). More generally, emotion is engaged within all aspects of teaching with Hargreaves (1998) suggesting that it an "emotional practice" which "activates, colors, and expresses teachers own feelings, and the actions in which those feelings are embedded" (p. 839). The way in which emotion

imbues teaching makes it an important component when considering the teacher's role in fostering student learning. Such a role requires an emotional understanding of students (and the ability to avoid emotional misunderstandings) together with the ability to model appropriate behaviour and create a calm and conducive environment (Jones, Bouffard, & Weissbourd, 2013; Titsworth, McKenna, Mazer, & Quinlan, 2013).

The limited international literature on emotion and teaching in relation specifically to higher education suggests that both teachers and students value emotion. For example, in their study of 97 higher education teachers in Finland, Postareff and Lindblom-Ylänne (2011) found that, in interviews regarding teaching issues, where emotion was not explicitly raised as an issue, 92 of the teachers "described emotions in some way" during their interviews (p. 803). Several studies of students in US higher education have also highlighted the ways in which nonverbal signals, competency in verbal communication and clarity displayed by teachers can all influence the levels of emotional support that students perceive as present (Titsworth et al., 2013; Titsworth, Quinlan, & Mazer, 2010). There are also some indications that teachers' emotional experience of teaching may in turn influence the methods they use – constructivist or otherwise (Trigwell, 2012). Each of these factors is inextricably linked to the students' learning experience, highlighting the importance of teachers' being aware of such inter-connections.

In addition to the transactions involved in teaching and learning, beyond the classroom (or lecture theatre), teachers' emotions will also be engaged within the wider social, cultural and political contexts in which they work (Hargreaves, 1998; Nias, 1996). This is very pertinent in relation to higher education where its marketization has placed increased pressures on academics in relation to administration and research, with a significant focus on academic performance and outputs (Collier, 2002, p. 15). Lynch (2006) argues that the neo-liberal focus on performance has led to "a type of Orwellian surveillance of one's everyday work by the university institution that is paralleled in one's personal life with a reflexive surveillance of the self" (p. 11). In other words, people internalize the external focus on measurable, market driven outputs and judge themselves against that criterion in a way which may lead to them feeling forced to perform in a personally inauthentic manner and also generate strong emotions. For example, those whose research is not selected to be part of the Research Excellence Framework (the exercise conducted to assess Universities' research outputs) could feel a sense of shame that their work has not been valued, or a sense of pride at their outsider status (Ball, 2003; Leathwood & Hey, 2009). Other emotions, such as an academic's passion for their subject and sense of collegiality, could also be stifled (Rowland, 2008). Thus emotion is an inescapable part of each part of an academic's working life – teaching, administration and research.

Given the significance of emotion within teaching (and its associated roles), it is perhaps unsurprising that there is evidence of links between emotion and teacher wellbeing. Teaching roles involve a significant level of emotional labour (Hochschild, 2003). They involve a form of performance where emotion is managed to project a visible, public portrayal, whether this be in modelling appropriate behaviours, modifying personal likes and dislikes, projecting enthusiasm or seeking to promote a calm environment (see Bellas, 1999 in relation to higher education). In addition, for academics, the types of demands now placed on them in relation to research and administration could arguably exacerbate this sense of a performance. Professions requiring high levels of emotional labour can expose their members to the risk of increased stress and burnout (Hochschild, 2003), although it can also be associated with a sense of passion and commitment (Hargreaves, 1998). With increasing evidence that academics are at risk of

poor levels of wellbeing and issues with work/life balance (Kinman & Wray, 2013; see also Cownie, 2004, specifically in relation to legal academics) it is important to consider any aspects of the role of emotion within the teaching role which may impact on this.

3.   Using concept maps to visualise the role of emotion at an individual level

To date, concept mapping has been used extensively in relation to student learning (Kinchin, 2014, p. 39). It has been applied within a range of disciplines, such as nursing (Yue, Zhang, Zhang, & Jin, 2017) and psychology (Hibberd, Morris, & Jones, 2004), although studies of its use within the social sciences are more limited (Campbell, 2016). Its utilisation within student learning most typically appears to focus on students' knowledge of a particular topic, with an emphasis on how this has evolved (or not) over time, often by using concept mapping at different points in a course. This is one way in which concept maps can be distinguished from mind maps and other forms of graphic depictions which assist in organising, classifying and recording information, because they also provides students with a "meta-knowledge and a meta-learning strategy" (Chiou, 2008, p. 376). The process of producing these maps gives students not only the opportunity to consolidate their knowledge, but also a way of cultivating meaningful learning by forming patterns and links. This results in "a visual means to understand complex ideas, systems, and interrelationships" which demonstrates, develops and deepens their learning (Campbell, 2016, p. 74).

Outside specific disciplines and subjects, there is also evidence of concept mapping being utilised in a broader manner as a tool for reflection. For example, Jankowska (2014, p. 4) discusses its use to trace postgraduate university students' understanding, experience and engagement with the process of professional development planning. She describes concept maps as providing "time for quiet reflection on the topic at hand", an opportunity which most of the students in her study found to be valuable. McMahon, Wright, and Harwood (2015) consider concept mapping's use with preservice teachers to enable them to reflect on, and map their developing knowledge of, challenging behaviour. This reflective function is demonstrated by the structure of concept maps. A map will consist of nodes (boxes or other geometric shapes) which are interlinked by arcs or lines (Campbell, 2016; Freeman & Jessup, 2004). A key distinction from mind maps is that each of these arcs or lines will also be labelled and it is these labels which represent the higher-level reasoning skills by signifying relationships and identifying connections in a systematic and reflective manner, combining with the linked nodes to create propositions (Kinchin, 2014).

The value of reflection within teaching is well established in the literature, with Schön's concept of the "reflective practitioner" often being referred to (Schön, 1991). In the context of teacher training, Akinbode (2013) argues that it is important for teachers to be able to identify and explore the emotions involved in teaching, to enable them to reflect on their teaching practice. Although Akinbode acknowledges that it contradicts traditional notions of professionality and objectivity, she suggests that understanding the influence of emotion on responses can enable resulting subjectivities to be identified and avoided as appropriate. It has also been suggested that reflection has a role to play in assisting with promoting good levels of wellbeing amongst teachers (Jones et al., 2013). At its broadest level, such reflection is necessary to explicitly identify, explore and utilise the role of emotion within teaching.

It is arguable that such reflection is particularly important for academics. Unlike teachers in compulsory schooling, many academics were selected on the basis of their

research record and profile. This means that teaching can be an aspect of their role that they are unprepared for and which is required of them, rather than being chosen by them (Nevgi & Löfström, 2015, p. 53). Karm argues that:

The ability to reflect is a precondition for professional growth. Through reflection, academics become aware of their personal teaching theories – conceptions of learning and teaching, approaches to teaching, values, beliefs, and sense of self as an academic – on the basis of which they can plan future teaching activities and academic development activities. (Karm, 2010, p. 203)

Therefore, mapping the emotional journey of teaching could form an important part of training and development for academics, enabling them to meet their professional responsibilities and develop their individual professional identity in a more meaningful way which positively influences their future teaching practices (see Fig. 2).

Jankowska's (2014) and McMahon et al's (2015) reflective studies also demonstrate that concept mapping can be used to obtain qualitative (rather than quantitative) information (see also Kinchin, Hay, & Adams, 2000). Although it is not envisaged that teachers (or others) would be mapping the emotional journey of teaching solely for research purposes, they may well wish to ascertain how their perceptions and understanding of this journey have changed over time (or even between cohorts, types of delivery and subject-matter). To do this, it is highly questionable whether quantitative methods focused on assessing the validity of links made within a concept map, and measuring its size and structure, would be appropriate (McMahon et al., 2015). Instead, a more flexible, iterative approach can be taken in line with sound reflective practice.
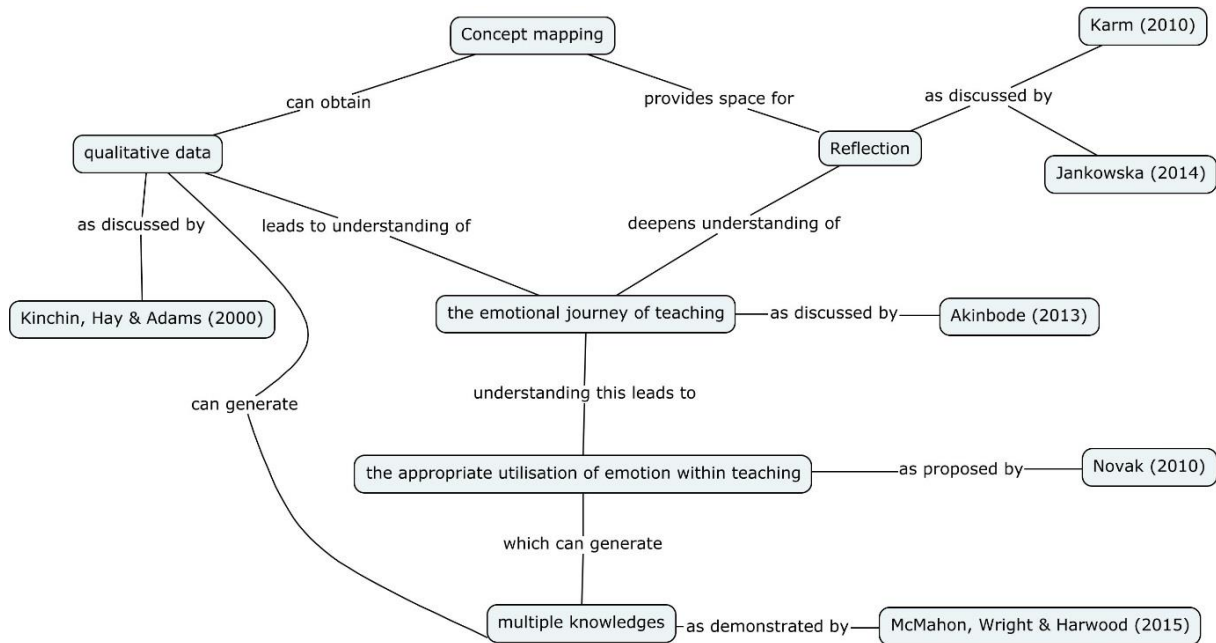

Fig. 2. A concept map indicating the potential use of concept mapping in examining the emotional journey of teaching at an individual level

Another relevant finding is the way the studies demonstrates the use of concept maps to explore topics where no one "correct" answer exists. Instead, there will be what

McMahon et al. (2015, p. 1, p. 4) describe as "multiple knowledges" or "'messy' knowledges". This equally applies when considering the role of emotion in teaching – the range of scientific and philosophical conceptualisations involved and its relatively recent emergence as a field of study means that no single, coherent approach to its consideration has been developed (if, indeed, that is even possible or beneficial). The highly individualised nature of emotion and the different ways in which it will be understood, experienced and reflected upon are likely to lead to a broad array of different results when mapped out.

4. Using concept maps to visualise the role of emotion at a collective level

As well as being used for individual reflection, concept mapping could be utilised within higher education is as a collective tool for reflection by staff, either at the level of an individual lecture, seminar or tutorial, or across a specific course or qualification pathway. Although reflection is often characterised as an individual activity, variants involving collaboration with peers have been shown to offer potential to enhance the process by adding multiple perspectives and enabling discussion of potential solutions when issues have arisen, as well as fostering a constructive team approach (for an interesting discussion in the context of negotiation, see Johnston & Fells, 2017; see also Nissilä, 2005). It may be that staff are more comfortable doing this by focusing on the student's emotional journey through the learning (or non-learning) process (an issue highlighted in the pilot study discussed below). However, the inter-linked nature of teaching and learning means that this in itself would be likely to engender some discussion of the emotional aspects of teaching and thus promote a more open climate for discussion of emotion and wellbeing generally.

4.1. Pedagogic frailty

One particular aspect of such a collective application could be the use of concept mapping to identify issues of pedagogic frailty which are created, or exacerbated, by the role of emotion within teaching (see Fig. 3). Pedagogic frailty describes the situation where a "decline in a range of factors", such as the working conditions of academics, lead to an "increased vulnerability to sudden adverse actions" which may then be caused by relatively minor triggers, such as displaying resistance to an innovation in teaching because of a small potential increase in workload (Kinchin, Alpay, Curtis, Franklin, Rivers, & Winstone, 2016, p. 2). This type of frailty can be caused by academics retreating into their comfort zone, focusing on content rather than pedagogy and prioritising safe, homogenous forms of teaching. This in turn can potentially lead to a reduction in meaningful learning, or even create a "comfortable cycle of non-learning" (Kinchin et al., 2016, p. 4; Kinchin, Lygo-Baker, & Hay, 2008). An example of this within the Law School could be the perceived pressure on legal academics to focus on producing legal professionals, promoting the law degree as a heavily vocational option, at odds with commonly-held liberal conceptions of its purpose. Legal academics may respond to this by retreating into a form of "trade school" mentality (Thornton, 2001, p. 10) which could manifest itself in transmissional forms of teaching that effectively focus on learning legal rules by rote, rather than applying more creative forms of critical analysis and evaluation.

The role of emotion in pedagogic frailty has, to date, not been fully explored. However, it is arguable that it has a significant part to play. If, as demonstrated above, teaching is imbued with emotion, then emotional reactions must be involved in some, if

not all, of the factors which can lead to a decline in the working environment and departmental or institutional vulnerability. The emotional stresses and strains of dealing with different pressures and demands (for example, the need for legal academics to promote employability) could exacerbate, or even create, situations of non-learning and generate a retreat into a safe, but ineffective, pedagogic comfort zone (Kinchin et al, 2016). The consequences of this, including a loss of resilience and adaptability, could also provoke further emotional responses, effectively perpetuating an emotional cycle of frailty.

However, it is important to note that such pedagogic frailty is not an inevitable consequence of the pressures on, and marketization of, higher education. For example, in relation to legal education, Cownie and Bradney (2005) characterise the response of the legal academy as one of resistance to the pressures of marketization and neo-liberalism. It is arguable that concept mapping offers the possibility of assisting in combatting pedagogic frailty through encouraging the development of emotional competencies and awareness, and fostering a constructive dialogue between staff, leading to a more supportive and resilient working environment. Mapping an individual or collective journey through the emotional experience of any part of the academic experience at an individual, departmental or institutional level could result in a greater understanding of how emotional components are impacting on the teaching (or even research or administration) experience. This may lead to some uncomfortable conclusions. For example, it is possible to envisage a situation where a staff member or group were feeling positive emotions towards a particular teaching experience, but upon unpacking this was a result of it falling within their "comfort zone". Equally, negative emotion cannot be necessarily equated with a poor teaching experience, if they have been generated by unease or mistrust at moving away from the "safe" and towards the new and innovative. Nevertheless, such conclusions are likely to be significant for both the pedagogic and emotional development of those involved.
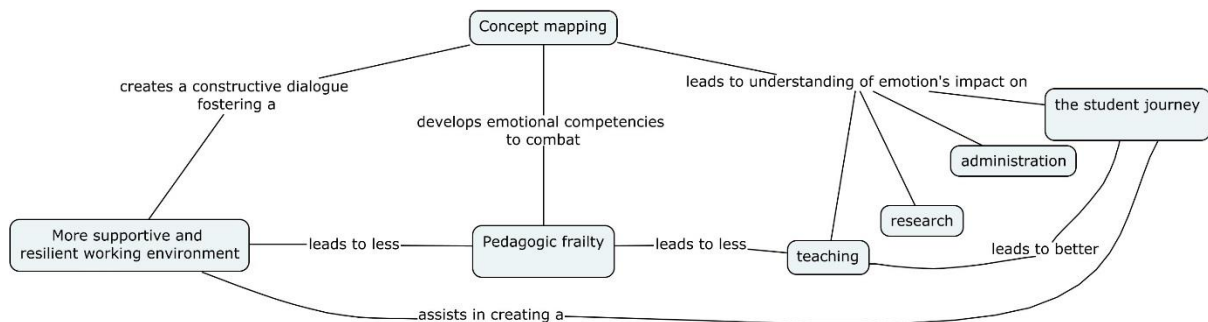

Fig. 3. A concept map indicating the potential use of concept mapping at a collective level to combat pedagogic frailty

5.   Other applications of concept mapping

So far, this discussion of the applications of concept mapping has focused on teachers, particularly academics, mapping their individual or collective emotional journeys. However, it is also possible that valuable information could be gained by asking students to undertake a similar process. This may involve students mirroring the reflection of the teacher by mapping their own emotional journey through a particular teaching event or course. It could also potentially add another dimension to the suggested use of concept

maps as a way to measure the forms of personal change which (within a constructivist view of teaching) are viewed as necessary to generate meaningful learning (Hay, Kinchin, & Lygo-Baker, 2008). By tracing not only the evolution of their subject-knowledge, but also their emotional journey, students could arguably identify any links between the two and highlight to the teacher the forms of both academic and emotional support required to facilitate their learning. Concept mapping has already been used within the Law School to identify the quality of learning of first year law students studying the law of contract (Hay & Proctor, 2015), but this would extend its use to encompass emotional aspects too.

A final potential application for this type of concept mapping lies within the area of distance and blended learning. This is increasingly becoming a part of the offering of higher education institutions, requiring both the academy and students to engage in different forms of e-learning (Castillo-Merino & Serradell-López, 2014). There is a growing acknowledgment that emotion plays an important role within this type of online environment. This ranges from the emotion involved in engaging with technologies that may be new or different, to the sense of isolation potentially engendered by distance learning, to the potential for emotional misunderstandings within online transactions (particularly via the use of text-based communications) and the role of emotion within virtual teams (for discussion of these issues see, for example, Asoodar, Vaezi & Izanloo, 2016). Concept mapping has the potential to trace the emotional journey of e-learning and teaching in a way which will continue to enhance the increasing understanding of emotion within online environments, also providing a valuable comparator to face-to-face learning experiences.

6. Challenges in mapping the emotional journey of teaching

Although the use of concept mapping in tracing the emotional journey of teaching has great potential, there are a number of key challenges to its utilisation in this way. The first of these relates to the emotional content involved. The traditional Cartesian dualism that dichotomises reason and emotion has been longstanding and persistent within education generally and higher education particularly, and is perhaps most evident within legal education and the law itself (Maroney, 2006). This may make it challenging for some within the legal academy to accept, let alone embrace, an explicit engagement with this facet of teaching.

This position is arguably best encapsulated by Fish (2008), writing in relation to the incorporation of values within higher education. Specifically in relation to teaching, Fish has argues that it is inappropriate for college and university teachers to involve themselves in trying to impart values to students or develop character:

So what is it that institutions of higher learning are supposed to do? My answer is simple. College and university teachers can (legitimately) do two things: (1) introduce students to bodies of knowledge and traditions of inquiry that had not previously been part of their experience; and (2) equip those same students with the analytical skills – of argument, statistical modelling, laboratory procedure – that will enable them to move confidently within those traditions and to engage in independent research after a course is over. (Fish, 2008, pp. 12-13)

He argues that this provides such teachers with an aim to focus on that they are trained for and which is achievable. Trying to do more, such as developing students' character or trying to instil particular values, will distract them from their core responsibilities and involve them in areas where they are untrained, inexperienced and

are likely to do "a bad job at a job they shouldn't be doing at all" (Fish, 2008, p. 14). He acknowledges that it may be along the way a teacher does in some way touch on a value or help shape a character, but argues that this is merely an accidental side effect and not something that should be aimed for (Fish, 2008). Such issues can become a subject for impartial analysis, but nothing more than that (Fish, 2008).

Although Fish's focus is on the role of values and character-formation in higher education, it can be seen that his arguments could also be applied when considering whether academics in higher education should acknowledge or engage with emotion in their teaching. However, to apply such arguments it would be necessary to either view teaching and learning as a wholly cognitive process, in which emotion had no necessary role, or to view a wholly cognitive approach to learning as either the most beneficial or practically expedient approach to take to what Fish regards as the core business of the university.

As discussed above, this contradicts the weight of scientific evidence on the relationship between emotion and cognition. In relation to learning, Gates summarises the link between emotion and cognition well, by suggesting that:

> *The maturation of student emotion is seen as contributing to student intellectual development and thus the academic mission of universities and colleges.* (Gates, 2000, p. 485)

Therefore, it is arguable that to seek to artificially separate emotion from cognition would impact on the very intellectual development of students which Fish (2008) views as the proper role of the academic. In relation to teaching, the work of Postareff and Lindblom-Ylänne (2011) and others suggests, once again, that there is no clear separation between the role of cognition and the role of emotion (see also Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). As Hargreaves argues:

> *Teaching, learning and leading may not be solely emotional practices, but they are always irretrievably emotional in character, in a good way or a bad way, by design or default.* (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 812)

If this is the case, then a decision to ignore emotion in teaching is, in fact, a fundamental statement about the nature and form of teaching to be provided. By ignoring something that is present, it is not a case of avoiding including something, but of suppressing or disregarding something that is potentially valuable and, in any event, arguably inescapable. Therefore, perhaps the key challenge for using concept mapping to trace and reflect on emotion within teaching is to be able to raise awareness and understanding of this. The difficulties in obtaining such acceptance are likely to be exacerbated by the current conditions in higher education, which may well lead to a lack of time and energy on the part of the academy to engage with such discussions (in accordance with the discussions above on pedagogic frailty and the marketization of the academy). However, it is arguable that the value of pursuing such lines of enquiry outweighs the difficulties in encouraging acceptance and participation.

A further key challenge in mapping the emotional journey of teaching may arise in terms of the format used. Particularly in the social sciences, teachers may not be familiar with the use of concept mapping. Even if they are, they may be more accustomed to applying it to student learning than to issues of teaching and reflection. Of course, in some instances the use of forms of mapping and other types of visualisation of the affective domain (encompassing feelings and emotion) may be more accepted. For example, Irvine (2016, p. 211) refers to the longstanding connection between emotion and sociology and develops this to encourage participants in a study of the "walk of

shame" to produce cognitive and affective maps. These are drawings which visually link the spatial environment to the participant's emotional experience, showing the places, people and emotions encountered on their journey home. However, this type of acceptance cannot be taken for granted and it may be that unfamiliarity with the method leads to both conceptual and practical barriers to its use. This point will be explored further using the results of a small scale empirical study carried out to pilot the use of concept mapping to trace the emotional journey of teaching.

6.1. Translating theory into practice

The pilot study itself involved the author facilitating an hour-long interactive seminar on the topic of "Novakian concept mapping" with a group of seven legal academics at a single higher education institution. The individual academics involved differed in levels of teaching experience, seniority and their specialist subject areas for teaching and research. The first part of the seminar consisted of a "warm up" activity in which participants engaged in a brief, undirected discussion (in two pairs and a trio) on their own perceptions of the role of emotion within teaching. Following this general discussion, a verbal explanation of the process of concept mapping, and its potential relevance in the context of emotion, was given and participants were provided with an example of a concept map, taken from Kinchin (2015b, Fig. 1). Participants had been provided in advance with some sample materials indicating the timing and content of a typical contract law tutorial delivered face to face to a small group of students.

These materials were given to provide a clear focus for the concept mapping exercise. The topic of contract law was chosen as one which is compulsory within a qualifying law degree and which therefore all participants, despite specialising in a diverse range of subjects, would have some familiarity with. Following the discussion of concept mapping as a tool, participants were asked to use these materials to trace the emotional journey of teaching this tutorial. They were advised that this could include both preparation and feedback and reflection after the session.
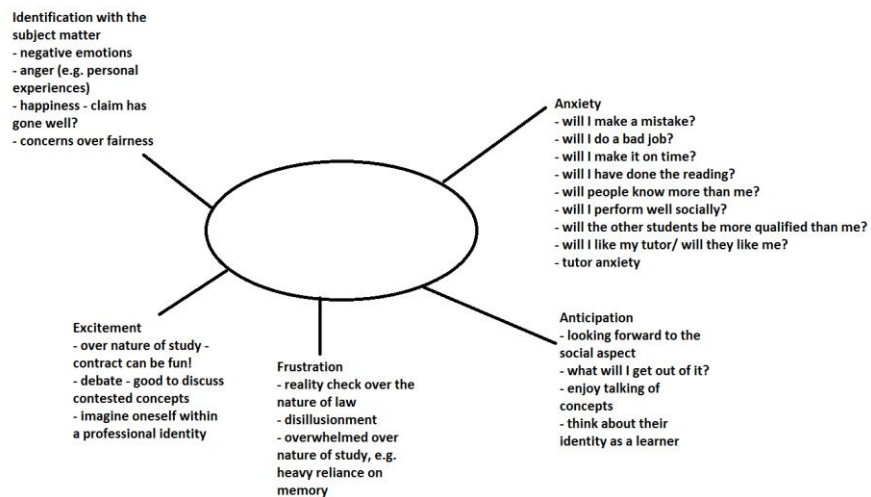

Fig. 4. The concept map produced by participants' group A in answer to the focus question "what is the emotional journey involved in teaching this tutorial?"

The concept maps produced by each of the three participant groups were strikingly different in both format and content and illustrated a number of potential challenges. One group of participants ("group A") in fact produced a spider diagram, rather than a concept map (see Fig. 4), which therefore lacked the descriptions of the links that are key to the formation of propositions and the process of understanding and reflection (Kinchin, 2014).

All three groups appeared to struggle with structuring their work in a way which included both nodes and links, seemingly because of their greater familiarity with the format of mind maps and spider diagrams. It has previously been noted by several commentators that concept mapping requires a period of instruction before being undertaken to assist in familiarising participants with the conventions involved (Campbell, 2016; Novak, 2010). Hay et al. (2008) suggest that this can be completed within a period of ten to twenty minutes, with another twenty to thirty minutes required to construct an appropriate map. Reflection on the seminar facilitated by the author suggests that insufficient time was allowed to enable participants to fully appreciate the importance of the key components of a concept map and that this form of careful explanation and instruction is indeed vital to the process. This is a key finding to take forward in future research on this topic. The fact it was academics, rather than students, who were involved, did not appear to lessen this requirement. It may be that a greater understanding of the appropriate format could also be encouraged in other ways, for example, in relation to students, Kinchin (2014) suggests that at its most basic a "fill-the-gap" type of activity could be used (p. 41). Other methods could involve the use of Post-It Notes or even the cmap computer programme (Campbell, 2016) to scaffold academics' understanding of the format. The difficulty is in striking a balance so that academics (or other teachers) have sufficient guidance to assist them, whilst retaining the autonomy to produce a concept map which offers a depiction that is meaningful to them either individually or as a group. Another way to facilitate this balance could be to allow participants a period of reflection following the initial production of the concept map, to allow further development and refinement (Kinchin, 2016).
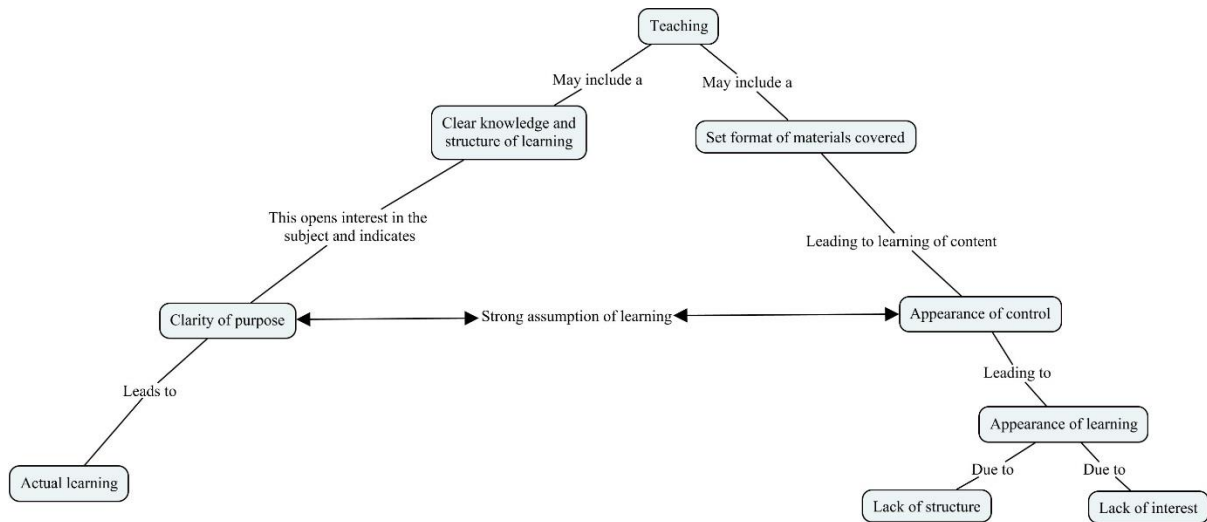

Fig. 5. The concept map produced by participants' group B in answer to the focus question "what is the emotional journey involved in teaching this tutorial?"

In terms of content, group A's visual depiction focused almost entirely on the role of emotion within learning and the student journey through the tutorial. While this produced some potentially useful (and useable) insights, it did not therefore answer the original focus question ("what is the emotional journey involved in teaching this tutorial?"). A second group of participants ("group B") engaged in verbal discussion about the role of emotion in both teaching and learning, however, the concept map they produced focused almost entirely on the learning journey in terms of factors involved in both non-learning and meaningful learning (see Fig. 5). In fact, their depiction did not explicitly include any emotional factors, although it was clear from the surrounding discussion that there were implicit links within their concept map.

It was noticeable within the discussions and concept maps of groups A and B that the participants tended to focus on the role of emotion within student learning, rather than on teaching specifically. This could imply that legal academics are more comfortable exploring and analysing the emotions of others, rather than taking part in a more introspective, personal reflection. It could also be a result of a student-focused approach to teaching in which the students' learning journey has become the dominant preoccupation.

It was the third group of participants ("group C") whose concept map was most clearly linked to the focus question in the sense it explicitly engaged with emotion, although this seemed to be in an almost generic way (tracing the typical emotional journey involved in any teaching experience), rather than analysing it in terms of the specific content provided as a focus (see Fig. 6). This fairly generic focus may result partly from the relatively short period of time given to complete the concept map. It may also have occurred in part due to a lack of familiarity with the specific subject-matter provided, or from a greater focus on how to structure the concept map then that demonstrated by the other two participant groups. Such a broad approach may also demonstrate a reluctance to discuss private thoughts and emotions within a work environment, something which could perhaps be tackled by introducing the role of emotions in a more tacit manner, for example, asking a more general question about successes and failures within teaching.
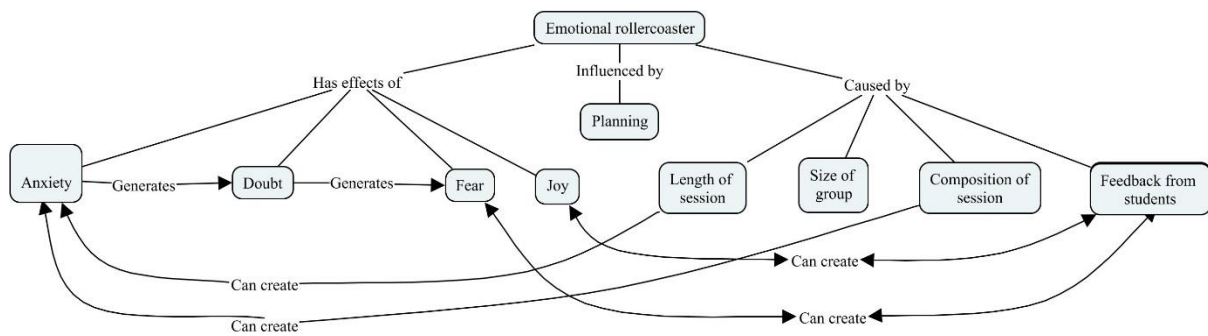

Fig. 6. The concept map produced by participants' group C in answer to the focus question "what is the emotional journey involved in teaching this tutorial?"

Following this seminar, the author translated the concept maps produced into cmaps (including adding several links in line with the participants' discussion and explanation of the concept map during the seminar) and sent a copy to each group's participants, inviting comments and amendments, to ensure it accurately reflected their perceptions.

Despite the limitations of the study, particularly in terms of timing, there are already valuable insights apparent within the concept map produced by group C. The wording of the top node ("Emotional rollercoaster") clearly emphasises emotion as playing an important role within the teaching experience. The identification of more negative than positive emotions within the overall concept map and the links made between anxiety, doubt and fear could be indicative of the need for more knowledge and understanding of, or reflection on, the use of emotion regulation within teaching (see, for example, Hall & Goetz, 2013). The emphasis on the role of feedback in generating strong forms of emotion (fear and joy) is also of interest at a time when there is an increasing focus on student feedback in many higher education institutions, both at departmental and institutional levels, and at a national level (for example, via the National Student Survey). For individual academics, it may suggest a need to reflect on the role of feedback in a different way or to consider how to manage the emotional responses generated. At a collective level, for departments and institutions, it may indicate a need to re-evaluate how student feedback is used and also the manner in which it is presented to staff.

The feedback on the use of concept mapping from all three groups of participants in the study was positive overall, with a suggestion that this format opened the way to discuss the role of emotion with colleagues. However, it was interesting to note that one participant (from group C) did comment that they were "not a visual learner" (junior legal academic), implying they therefore found the concept mapping exercise of limited value, or perhaps were unwilling to invest the time in the technique required to obtain more tangible benefits. Law is usually characterised as a "predominantly text-based discipline" (King, 2016, p. 80) and lawyers are commonly associated with forms of logical-mathematical intelligence, rather than bodily-kinaesthetic or spatial forms (Gardner, 1983). There are potentially interesting comparisons to be made, therefore, with academics in more visually-based disciplines, who perhaps have a greater familiarity with data depicted in the form of a concept map and are accustomed to a more visual style of learning.

A further question which arises from this study, and which presents itself as an area for future research, is to what extent an expert "interpreter" of a concept map is required when dealing with an area such as emotion, which may be outside the expertise of many within the academy (particularly, it is arguable, within the Law School). For example, would a legal academic necessarily know that one way to deal with anxiety and stress could be through learning emotional self-regulation techniques? It may be that, in the same way Novak (2010) states that a teacher's role is to encourage and facilitate the negotiation of meaning, a facilitator would need to be present, at least initially, in any collaborative reflection on emotion. This raises the question of how practically feasible that is, and also how that could be replicated where the focus is on individual reflection, although it may be the use of some form of mentor is possible. Of course, it may well be that simply giving individuals or groups the space and ability to visualise the emotional journey of teaching in itself is sufficient to promote positive outcomes, but the issue of how to deal with specific emotional needs or demands that arise will need to be explicitly addressed when and where such understanding and reflection is encouraged.

7. Conclusion

All of these elements of effective teaching can be visualised through the application of concept mapping. Once they are visualised, they become more tangible and malleable so they may reveal alternative perspectives that can

contribute to the development of powerful knowledge within our universities.
(Kinchinb, 2015, p. 5)

The quotation above refers to the use of concept mapping as a potentially transformative tool within the facilitation and creation of meaningful learning. However, it could equally be applied to the use of such maps to trace the emotional journey of teaching. Emotion is an inescapable part of teaching, and one which is inextricably linked to the learning experience of students and the wellbeing of all involved. Within higher education, as evidenced by the experience of legal academics, it also permeates the research and administrative work that is undertaken, often reflecting the pressures of marketization. Rather than seeking to suppress such emotion (in itself arguably an impossible task), emotion should therefore be acknowledged, reflected upon and utilised to develop and improve teaching practices and promote meaningful learning. Concept mapping provides a powerful tool to aid this process, providing a tangible visual way of tracing and reflecting on such emotional journeys and experiences. This can be done both individually and collectively and could involve a range of specific applications, for example, to identify relevant issues of pedagogic frailty or to consider the emotional impact of e-learning. The challenges of using concept mapping in this way include a potential reluctance on the part of the academy to accept or engage meaningfully with the role of emotion, linking to issues of pedagogic frailty and a desire to maintain a "safe" status quo without tackling the potentially difficult questions involved in utlilising emotion constructively. There is also a potential lack of familiarity with the appropriate format to be used, and possible difficulties in interpreting the results. However, the results of the pilot study undertaken suggest that, while these challenges are real, there is the opportunity to create something meaningful and relevant, even within a very limited period of time. It is likely that putting into place relevant forms of support and guidance will be key to its successful use, but concept mapping has too much potential to be limited solely to the cognitive domain. Its use in developing metacognition and self-regulative processes (Chiou, 2008, p. 376) suggest a much wider potential.

To foster such uses, it is suggested that further empirical research be conducted to develop the techniques used within the pilot study. This may involve including greater preparatory work and explanation on the role and structure of concept maps, refining the question the map is designed to answer, building in a period of reflection on the initial map produced and making comparisons between teachers within different disciplines. Concept mapping's ability to visualise and interpret the emotional journey of teaching can and should be utilised to assist in the development of an exciting and emerging field.

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