Interpersonal and intrapersonal considerations for the delivery of coaching and coach education: A critical realist perspective.

PAUL GARNER

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Abstract

Coaching is fundamentally a relational process that requires effective interpersonal communication. Contemporary work that supports this notion, has promoted a holistic, person-centred approach that advocates an altruistic intent to foster human flourishing. However, given the dominant, extant focus on sport specific professional knowledge in typical coach education settings, an enhanced understanding of interpersonal knowledge is needed to help coaches adopt a person-centred approach in practice. Furthermore, useful tools to assist developing coaches in their thinking, planning, action and reflection are essential in managing the multiple stakeholders who operate in complex coaching environments. Accordingly, this thesis investigates the interpersonal approach of expert adventure sport coaches (ASCs) in alpine skiing, using two studies that were published during the doctoral journey.

Study 1 explored the leadership tone of expert coach behaviours, using semi-structured interviews and observational data, collected with the Coach Leadership Assessment System (CLAS). Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis and interpretations were made to support how we might develop interpersonal knowledge in coach education.

Study 2 investigated the intentions that triggered behaviour, where data were collected using video stimulated interviews, and analysed using thematic analysis. Interpretations were made to support how we might develop the intrapersonal knowledge required to deliver effective interpersonal knowledge in coach education.

Adopting a critical realist lens, an iterative research strategy involved investigation into the domain of the actual and empirical in study 1, towards a deeper investigation into the domain of the real in study 2. Findings from study 1 substantiated previous research that suggests behaviours consistent with transformational leadership (TFL) support learning and development environments characterised by trust and autonomy support. However, results also highlighted the important role of context in determining effective behaviour that was not always aligned with TFL, but instead supported the use of transactional behaviours in certain

circumstances. Challenging the behaviours approach to effective coaching, study 2 identified the four-component POWA model that promotes: *perspective*, *other-centredness*, a *willingness to learn* and an *accurate self-assessment*, as guiding intentions behind person-centred practice.

Having considered each level of critical realism's stratified ontology, the POWA model provides a thinking tool to guide person-centred decision-making, in a way that recognises the vagaries of context. The model can be used to scaffold delivery, planning and reflection, with notable implications for the ongoing development of interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge within coach education. Finally, this work has the potential to cultivate greater levels of humility in sport coaching settings which, in these troubled times, is a virtue much required that is often in scant supply.

Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of the University of Gloucestershire and is original except where indicated by specific reference in the text.

No part of the thesis has been submitted as part of any other academic award. The thesis has not been presented to any other education institution in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Any views expressed in the thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University.

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To Kate, who makes it all happen.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Research rationale

This study explores the interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge and behaviours (Côté & Gilbert, 2009) of coaches and coach educators in a variety of sport contexts. The issues under investigation are recognised to be 'wicked problems', a concept introduced by Rittel and Webber (1973) to explain problems that are inherently complex and ambiguous. They stress that the solution to a wicked problem cannot be found via a linear, systematic approach and that a clearly defined problem at the outset is not always easy to identify. In addressing the intractable, wicked problem of how highly effective coaches behave in the interpersonal space, this thesis follows an iterative process where the research questions are adapted and refined due to the sequential nature of the published studies that are the essence of this work. The starting point was to better understand the behaviours exhibited by coach educators when delivering coach development and assessment in a formal coach education setting (Nelson et al. 2006). As a result of this first study, the research agenda refocussed to better understand the intentions of coaches coach developers, that lead to person-centred delivery. The purpose of the research project therefore changed from one of trying to understand behaviour to an endeavour concerned with the intention that triggers behaviour. In asking, *what are the most important qualities we should seek to develop in coaches, and which traits, skills, or virtues should we be looking for in coach developers*, this thesis will argue that humility is the cardinal characteristic of effective coaching when we aim to be person-centred.

Coaching is fundamentally a relational process that requires effective interpersonal communication (Jowett, 2017). Oftentimes, coaches believe their job is to coach the sport whereas in reality, this is secondary to coaching the person, for without the person the coach is redundant (Côté & Gilbert, 2009). Despite what we might see in practice, there are few contemporary schools of thought that suggest coaching should be about the coach; instead, a uniting theme despite a nuanced picture across coaching scholarship, is one around developing the person. For some, this altruistic focus is ultimately to drive sporting performance, for others it is to influence a more holistic agenda (Cassidy, 2010). The premise

of this research is that coaching should be person-centred, not to the detriment of the coach, as this would likely compromise their ability to help the other, but in a balanced way "that fosters positive processes in human growth and potential for all actors including themselves [coaches]" (Mallet & Rynne, 2010, p.455).

Consistent with Nelson et al. (2014) person-centredness is relevant to coaches and coach educators, whether the activity is to coach an athlete or to coach a coach the underlying principles remain the same (Watts et al., 2022). There are multiple actors within coach education, coaches; coach educators; coach mentors; coach developers; coach assessors; tutors etc. The terminology lacks definitional clarity and with education and development used interchangeably across the literature, this thesis will adopt the following approach. Coach education is used as an umbrella term for all activities that promote coach learning, assessment and certification, and coach educators as those who deliver within formal learning environments, such as coaching qualifications (Nelson et al., 2006; Watts et al. 2022). Coach development and coach developers refer to coach learning away from formal settings, where an absence of assessment allows for an unequivocal focus on learning and development. Whilst the terminology poses its own issues, the act of coaching athletes or coaches is equally complex, constantly changing and fraught with ambiguity (Jones & Wallace, 2006), therefore in what follows, the terms *coach* and *coaching* are often utilised when referring to coaches of athletes or coaches of other coaches (coach educators/developers).

To adopt person-centredness and to operate effectively within this stratified ecology, we require thinking tools that embrace inconstancy whilst offering some level of reliability. We need something to hold onto, that provides guidance without yielding to the reductionist trappings of the positivist objectivism, that until recently, has prevailed across much of coaching research (Andrews, 2008; Bush et al., 2013; Paquette & Trudel, 2018). If we are to cover useful ground in such a quest, then coach education and development should ask *what* needs to be learned and *how* should the process be facilitated? Effective coach education and development requires coach educators/developers who understand what person-centred coaching (PCC) is, what it looks like and how to articulate that knowledge (the *what*). It also requires a person-centred delivery (the *how*) to avoid, as Dempsey et al. (2021) note, a failure to reproduce learner-centred policy in practice, where coach educators lack the agency or

freedom to walk the talk. Similarly, Stodter and Cushion (2019) highlighted a need for more in-depth research into coach educator practice in order to support effective delivery, and to reduce intention-practice mismatches that occur when there are insufficient evidence-informed frameworks to guide thinking.

1.2 Research context

The participants in this thesis all operate within alpine skiing and whilst there is very little research conducted around coaching and coach learning in snowsports (Garner & Hill, 2017; Garner et al., 2020; Garner et al., 2022), there is a small body of literature that seeks to understand the practice of adventure sport coaches (ASCs) (e.g., Berry et al., 2015; Collins & Collins, 2013; Collins & Collins, 2016; Eastbrook & Collins, 2021), which also advocates ASCs as ideal participants in a study around person-centredness. Christian et al. (2017) found the characteristics of high-level adventure sport coaches to include humility and an intention to develop the whole person, whereas Collins and Collins (2015) assert that ASCs need to be teachers, coaches, and leaders in order to manage the risk, technical skill development and personal development of their learners. Given the accreditation and technical expertise required of ASCs to maintain high levels of safety, coaches typically operate in commercial environments, where the enjoyment of the 'client' is an important factor. This contrasts with a high proportion of other organised sport where coaching is undertaken largely by volunteers for no financial reward (CIMSPA, 2020). That ASCs operate as professionals is an important contextual consideration in this research, but arguably predisposes this coaching population to have the 'other' at the heart of their decision making and hence position them as ideal participants for a study into person-centredness. The alpine ski coaches and coach educators/developers in this study all coach across multiple contexts that range from youth development to elite sport, including coaching in commercial and non-commercial environments, with individuals and groups. This variety of operational settings further supports the suitability of these coaches for an investigation into their person-centred practice.

It is useful at this stage to elucidate in some detail, the background of the researcher within the research environment and the idiosyncrasies of the snowsport industry, and in

particular the professional roles of the research participants. Alpine skiing is one of a number of activities that comprise what is generically termed snowsports, alongside telemark skiing, cross-country skiing, freestyle skiing, snowboarding and mogul skiing (bumps). Unlike many mainstream sports there is a competitive and non-competitive (pastime) version of these various activities, with levels of engagement ranging across a diverse population, from occasional holiday participant to expert year-round recreational participant, from novice coach or instructor to career professional, and from amateur to Olympic athlete.

In study 1 the coach educators worked with trainee coaches on training and assessment courses, where the role of the coach educator was predominately to coach the trainee to ski to a prescribed level of technical proficiency. Whilst the nature of this work may differ from an elite coach/athlete arrangement, where often the coach lives and travels alongside the athletes throughout a season, there are nevertheless notable similarities. The length of these courses ranges from 1 to 10 weeks, and with daily contact between coach educator and trainee both on and off the slopes, there is time to forge meaningful relationships. Trainee coaches are required to evidence a high level of performance (in addition to demonstrating sound pedagogic skills and understanding) as they aspire to meet exacting assessment criteria, requiring an all-round ability to ski short and long turns, to ski bumps, off-piste (ungroomed terrain), steeps and freestyle. Furthermore, the highest level of qualification includes ski racing with a timed giant slalom race that involves skiing within 18% of the world number one (using an opener's coefficient based on their FIS points); coach educators often support trainee coaches in their preparation for this test.

The outcome of collaboration (between coach educator and trainee coach) towards these goals represents something of high importance to the trainee, that can have a life changing influence. Trainee coaches who are successful in gaining the highest level of qualification, meet the requirements to establish a business in most alpine nations, and therefore open the door to an otherwise unachievable career in snowsports. For this reason, the courses that form the research environment in study 1 are perceived to have high-stakes for the candidates, with the coach educators operating in pressurised conditions, with important consequences for all concerned. They spend significant periods of time with their learners, build relationships and engage socially outside of the immediate coaching environment.

In study 2 the coaches/coach educators worked with a variety of learners: an intermediate holiday skier, a group of expert backcountry skiers who skied throughout the winter recreationally, a group of trainee coaches on a development course preparing for assessment, and with groups of trainee coaches on assessed courses. There is a clear distinction between coaching trainee coaches and coaching recreational skiers of any ability, the goal is different although levels of motivation are often similar. Those engaging in snowsports tend to be passionate about their activity whether they are on holiday, training for an assessment, a competitive race, or exploring the backcountry. The professional ASCs who support their development are typically highly qualified, work full-time as 'career coaches' and invest significant levels of effort and emotion into their role.

My own involvement in the snowsport industry also provides noteworthy context for this study. I have been a coach educator for over 20 years. I have been integral in designing the coach education curriculum for my national accreditation body and have delivered every level and iteration of the training and assessment courses that feature in study 1. Furthermore, I established a coaching centre in the French Alps over 20 years ago and worked full time as a coach for 12 years, coaching every level of skier from beginner holiday maker to backcountry expert, preparing racers for competitions, trainee coaches for assessment and everything in between. Despite the manifold levels of expertise and the variety of learning objectives, performance goals and underlying motivations of those with whom I have worked, I have always seen my role as one of coach. As noted above, the definition of this term remains contested but has been argued to encompass some of the following: teacher (Jones, 2006), mentor (Bloom, 2013), instructor (Mccullick et al., 2005). Whether we distinguish between these terms or not, adopting a person-centred approach to supporting the development of others in a sporting context remains the focus of this work, and as previously mentioned the term *coach* and *coaching* will be used to refer to those operating in the roles outlined in the preceding paragraphs.

1.3 Research questions

- What characterises effective coach delivery in alpine skiing?
- What intentions facilitate the manifestation of person-centred intent in coach behaviour in alpine skiing?

- How should coach education better promote a person-centred approach?

1.4. Thesis overview

In an effort to address both the *how* and the *what* of a person-centred focus in coach education, this thesis presents two published research projects. First, an investigation of the *behaviours* utilised by experienced coach educators to deliver formal coach education, that used transformational leadership as a lens to examine behaviour. Second, having identified the importance of context in determining communicative strategies in study 1, study 2 investigates the *intentions* that trigger person-centred behaviour. By conceptualising a way of thinking that is more consistent than the behaviours suggested by leadership models, it is possible to inform better the *what* of person-centred coach education and suggest ways to address the *how and why*.

The thesis is structured in manuscript format, including the two peer-reviewed papers (Chapters 4 and 6). It was decided to embed the published papers within the narrative of the dissertation in order to achieve the two objectives outline below:

- The papers are integral and represent the iterative nature of this work, which is important to capture. As outlined in the opening paragraphs, the research questions were refined as the project evolved, allowing for the practical application of the research to become more focussed and worthwhile.
- Whilst the findings from study 2 provide a practical application of empirical research in the form of the POWA model, this model has greater real-world credibility with the foundational setting of study 1. The papers, therefore, provide "the story" that establishes the rationale required for "buy in" from practitioners so that this research can land in applied settings.

Although the published papers form the nucleus of the thesis, the eight other supporting chapters allow for deeper reflection on the two studies than is afforded by the constraints of a peer-reviewed publication. Furthermore, with the purpose of a Professional Doctorate to conduct research that has clear potential to influence practice, it is important to convey the detail of the story that is alluded to in the second objective above. Therefore, the thesis is

structured in the following manner. In addition to explaining the composition of the project, Chapter 1 provides a rationale for the overarching aim of this research. Chapter 2 delivers an extended literature review on what we know of coach learning and in particular how coaches develop their interpersonal knowledge. This section primarily elucidates the basis for study 1. Chapter 3 explores the methodological underpinnings and philosophical assumptions that characterise the project, and the way in which the practical tools emanating from the research should be received and understood in practice. Unlike a traditional thesis there is no stand-alone methods section, as the methods used for study 1 and study 2 feature, in some detail, in the published papers. Chapter 4 comprises the published paper from study 1. Chapter 5 is a comprehensive reflection on study 1; with every effort made to avoid duplication of content from the published paper, this chapter concatenates studies 1 and 2, and shares the thinking and reasoning that leads to the second and arguably more impactful paper. Chapter 6 comprises the published paper from study 2. Chapter 7 is a comprehensive reflection on study 2; it also explores the theoretical literature around humility, which supports the POWA model, and visits the philosophical premise (Aristotle's doctrine of the mean) upon which the model is designed. Chapter 8 situates the model within the extant coach development literature, which is in some ways a retrospective review of literature. This was an important exercise and necessary to identify how this research complements and reinforces existing work, whilst also addressing gaps in our knowledge and practice. Chapter 9 outlines the implications for practice, including reports of nascent use of the model with practitioners. The POWA model is an attempt to provide practitioners with *propositional* knowledge about how to enact person-centred practice; it may be used to transform tacit, *practical* knowledge into explicit thought that allows for refinement of extant approaches, or it may be used to initiate new forms of practical knowledge to change either conscious or subconscious ways of working. Finally, Chapter 10 concludes the thesis and makes suggestions for the required direction of future research in this area [see Appendix 7 for a flow diagram of the research journey].

Chapter 2: Background Literature Review

This chapter provides a review of the literature that relates initially to both studies but that ultimately centres on study 1. Every effort has been made to reduce any duplication of content here with study 1, although on occasion there are some unavoidable similarities that enable the coherence of the narrative. As background context for this research there is an initial overview of coach learning (2.1), followed by a review of our extant understanding of the requisite knowledge for coaching expertise (2.2). The focus is then distilled to what we know of coach educator delivery (2.3) with a deliberate move towards study 1, looking specifically at interpersonal knowledge (2.4) and the leadership literature that informs this (2.5, 2.6 & 2.7).

2.1 Coach Learning

How coaches learn has been conceptualised in different ways and involves different subsets that encompass a range of learning experiences (Piggott, 2012). Drawing upon the seminal work of Coombs and Ahmed (1974), Nelson et al., (2006) identified three sources of coach learning: formal, non-formal and informal. This work has been helpful in providing consistency of terminology but also in recognising the conceptual restrictions of education as opposed to a wider appreciation for learning outside of educational settings. Formal learning "enforces compulsory attendance, standardised curricula, and culminates in certification" (Nelson et al., 2006, p.249), whilst non-formal learning is seen as an organised, systematic educational experience usually focussed on specific areas of knowledge, but that does not result in qualification. Finally, informal learning, which is typically favoured by coaches (e.g., Gilbert & Trudel, 2001; Cushion et al., 2003; Côté, 2006; Nelson & Cushion, 2006; Lemyre et al., 2007), is the self-directed process of lifelong learning through experience and reflection, which often involves learning from others in communities of practice (e.g., Garner & Hill, 2017) or mentoring relationships (e.g., Bloom, 2013).

In addition to Nelson et al's. (2006) work around sources of coach learning, Werthner and Trudel (2006) also contributed to our understanding of how coaches learn. Borrowing from Moon's (2004) generic view of learning, Werthner and Trudel identified three learning

processes, mediated, unmediated and internal, using Moon's metaphors of the "brick wall" and the "network" (Werthner & Trudel, 2006, p. 199), to distinguish between instructor-led v learner-led approaches. The "brick wall" requires an instructor who knows how the bricks in the wall fit together, learning is mediated and requires a subject expert who delivers to a planned curriculum. Alternatively, the "network" approach aligns more with non-formal and informal sources where learning is unmediated. With no instructor, learning is self-initiated and the consequence of interacting with the network of ideas, knowledge, feelings and experiences that we encounter on a daily basis. Internal learning refers to a reconsideration of existing ideas and could result from either mediated or unmediated situations.

More recently, work by Stodter and Cushion (2015; 2017) has extended our understanding of coach learning, shining a light on why similar learning situations often result in different outcomes for individual coaches. Their research, that utilises stimulated recall interviews with youth soccer coaches, found that people's biographies form a screen through which learning opportunities are filtered, with new knowledge either rejected, adopted or fitted into coaches' evolving biography. The implication for coach development is that generic learning episodes are less effective than those that are individually and contextually relevant, an important consideration when aiming to enhance the application of a PCC approach.

2.2 Coaching knowledge and the epistemology of expertise

Having visited the literature on *how* coaches learn it is important to consider *what* it is that coaches aspire to learn. What does effective practice entail, what is coach learning striving to achieve? Whilst the coach and coach educator/developer remain two distinct roles, they share the objectives of teaching, developing, evaluating, assessing, selecting and mentoring others. As such, it is appropriate to suggest that both are coaching (either athletes or coaches) and therefore the epistemology of expertise will follow a similar path. Our understanding of effective coaching continues to progress, with a body of literature dating back to the late 1970s (North, 2017). Ever since the work of Smith et al. (1979) that first explored coach behaviours, coaching research has primarily investigated the coach and/or the athlete with findings and interpretations used to inform coach education. The epistemology of effective sport coaching is under constant review with notable contributions

made by a number of scholars (e.g., Abraham et al., 2006; Côté & Gilbert, 2009; Lyle, 2002; Schempp et al., 2006). More recent work from North (2017) has attempted to synthesise these previous iterations of expert coaching knowledge and presents a model that largely aligns with Côté and Gilbert's (2009, p.316) definition, which draws from Collinson's (1996) research in education, that *"coaching effectiveness is the consistent application of integrated professional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal knowledge to improve athletes' competence, confidence, connection, and character in specific coaching contexts"*.

According to Côté and Gilbert (2009), professional knowledge is considered to be sport-specific, such as the technical information required to learn an effective tennis serve, or the tactical understanding to organise a defensive formation in football. Interpersonal knowledge refers to a coach's ability to communicate with other people, which informs the coach-athlete relationship as well as interactions with other stakeholders such as parents, fellow coaches, and administrators. Finally, intrapersonal knowledge is the ability for introspection and reflection, allowing a coach to review and better understand oneself and one's coaching. The notion that a coach requires a triad of knowledge is a useful way to address such a multifaceted undertaking. North (2017) has further developed this framework contending that professional knowledge also includes knowledge of planning and of athlete development processes, that interpersonal knowledge is socially and emotionally driven, and that intrapersonal knowledge includes a philosophical component in addition to reflective capacities.

Despite the recognition that coaches require an integration of these 'knowledges', with no suggestion of a dominant area, the landscape of coach education has historically been consistently and overwhelmingly skewed towards a focus on professional knowledge (Côté & Gilbert, 2009). More recently, Lefebvre et al's. (2016) synthesis review of coaching literature found that from a sample of 285 coaching continued professional development courses (formal and non-formal), 261 centred around professional knowledge, 18 around interpersonal knowledge and 6 around intrapersonal knowledge. Whilst acknowledging that there is inevitable overlap and that intrapersonal and interpersonal knowledge often occupy a secondary focus on many courses, the picture remains stark. Professional knowledge is arguably more straightforward to teach and assess than the often indeterminate, amorphous

realms of inter and intrapersonal knowledge and the extant configuration of mediated coach education and development is therefore not surprising. However, given the widely reported requirement for effective psychosocial attributes when coaching athletes or coaches (e.g., Cushion et al., 2019; Griffiths et al., 2018; Jowett, 2017; Turnnidge & Côté 2018), there is surely a need for greater emphasis on these elements within coach education, and importantly upon the models and frameworks that coaches and coach educators/developers need to organise their thinking and to structure important messages (Langan et al. 2013).

2.3 Coach educator/developer delivery

With effective delivery in mind, it is interesting to understand how the relevant knowledge base is currently expressed in coach education and development. Cushion and colleagues have written extensively on coach education, predominantly from a sociological perspective, over the past two decades (e.g., Cushion et al., 2003; Cushion et al., 2010; Cushion et al., 2019), arguing that coach educators exist in a contested, socio-political and dynamic environment. One that retains definitional ambiguity across coach education and development roles (McQuade & Nash, 2015), and a feeling that coach educators/developers are often ill-equipped to deliver in a way that aligns with the messages they seek to promote (Jacobs et al., 2015; Watts et al., 2022). A top-down approach, where educators are constrained by time and curricula, has reportedly limited an ability to place the concerns of coach learners at the heart of delivery (Dempsey et al., 2021). Furthermore, the added complication of assessment permeates formal coach education structures, yet remains under-researched (Hay et al., 2012). Typically, assessment drives learning in formal contexts (Mallett et al., 2009) and should therefore be central to considerations around coach educator delivery.

Given the myriad roles incumbent upon those involved in coach education and development, it is logical to suggest that the interpersonal approach will differ between roles. What is required of a coach assessor is unlikely to mirror the approach of a coach mentor. There is little in the literature to guide role related behaviour (Cushion et al., 2019). One study that provides some direction around coach developer behaviours is Abrahams et al.'s (2013) work commissioned by Sport Coach UK, UK Sport and the Football Association (FA). This

research outlined the knowledge, skills and behaviours requisite of coach developers across six different domains that include understanding the context; understanding the coach; understanding adult learning; understanding the coaching curriculum; understanding of self; and understanding the process and practice (of coach development). Whilst behaviours were further categorised into leadership behaviours, management behaviours, and coaching behaviours, the authors caution against seeing the findings as a definitive list of coach developer behaviours, instead the intention was "to capture the essence and complexity of coach development roles" (p.181). The challenges presented in this section suggest an imperative to investigate further how interpersonal knowledge (IPK) is manifest during coach-educator/developer-coach interactions.

2.4 Interpersonal knowledge and underpinning frameworks – a behavioural approach

Given the focus of this thesis on person-centred coaching, IPK is to the fore and warrants additional exploration. As Côté and Gilbert's (2009) definition suggests an integration of the knowledges is required, and therefore it is impossible to ignore the importance of intrapersonal knowledge in particular when studying person-centredness, however this review will now provide an overview of research that seeks to deepen our understanding of IPK and how we might develop it across coaching.

Langan et al. (2013) conducted a systematic review of the effectiveness of interpersonal coach education interventions on athlete outcomes. Whilst useful in promoting a need for more work in this area, the findings were underwhelming, with a paucity of data to review. The paper called for a greater understanding of coach education interventions in order to assist both researchers and practitioners to develop a range of strategies that target coaches' interpersonal effectiveness. More recently, and consistent with work that champions coach learning through informal processes (e.g., Culver & Trudel, 2008; Duarte et al., 2018; Maclean & Lorimer, 2016), communities of practice (CoPs) have been identified as a vehicle to develop IPK (Culver, 2004; Garner & Hill, 2017) where learning is facilitated through conversation and social interaction with other coaches.

It is worth noting that for coaches to improve IPK there is a need for more than the right type of coach development intervention. When considering the complex nature of coaching environments, as noted earlier, it is useful to have accessible theory to underpin decisions. It is therefore important to consider the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that underpin IPK. Langan et al.'s (2013) review found that achievement goal theory (AGT) (Nicholls, 1984) was the dominant theory associated with IPK focussed coach education. AGT is concerned with an individual's goal orientation, suggesting that task focussed goals, that are aligned with a mastery climate (Smoll et al., 2007), are more likely to incur intrinsic motivation than ego focussed goals that associate success with favourable outcomes compared to others, i.e., winning. AGT and related work around motivational climates (Ames, 1992; Harwood et al., 2008), has done much to instruct coaches in how they can create environments that foster sustainable motivation towards performance outcomes.

Research around AGT is closely related to self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985) which also occupies a dominant position in sport coaching literature (e.g., Jowett et al., 2017; Ntoumanis & Mallett, 2014; Occhino et al, 2014). SDT posits a spectrum of motivation, as behaviour becomes more self-determined people move from a position of amotivation (non-regulation) at one end towards intrinsic regulation at the other. In reality, successful athletes often occupy a place on the spectrum characterised by self-determined extrinsic motivators, inspired by goals and values that are not purely intrinsic but instead represent integrated regulation. The journey towards self-determination is supported by the three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness, which are widely recognised as important considerations when creating positive motivational environments for athletes. Mageau and Vallerand (2003) proposed a motivational model of the coach-athlete relationship based upon the tenets of SDT, consequently the concept of autonomy and autonomy-supportive coaching has received widespread support in coaching research, across a variety of contexts (e.g., Coatsworth & Conroy, 2009; Cronin et al, 2019; Duda, 2013; Mallet, 2005; Smith et al., 2017).

Building upon these psychological theories, the work of Jowett also plays a notable role in providing a conceptual model for effective coach-athlete relationships (CAR), that are essentially one of the key focuses of IPK. Jowett's (2017) 3Cs+1 model identifies closeness,

commitment, complementarity and co-orientation as essential elements of effective CARs. Closeness reflects an affective component involving considerations such as trust and respect, commitment is the cognitive component that relates to an intention to maintain the relationship now and in the future, and complementarity is a behavioural element that manifests as characteristics such as easiness, responsiveness and friendliness. The final construct of the model, co-orientation runs through all the other three components and is concerned with a mutual understanding within the relationship, of the feeling, thinking and behaviour. Lorimer and Jowett (2013) have subsequently aligned the 3Cs+1 with the concept of a shared understanding, which in turn is underpinned by empathic understanding and empathic accuracy. To appreciate the quality of a relationship empathic understanding measures how coaches and athletes understand the quality of the relationship overall, whereas empathic accuracy looks at how the coach and athlete understand moment to moment interactions. The mutual interdependence of the partnership that is the coach-athlete relationship, and related work (e.g., Lorimer & Jowett, 2011; Rhind & Jowett, 2010) is salient when addressing person-centred approaches.

2.5 Interpersonal knowledge and leadership – a behavioural approach

Despite the wealth of research reviewed in the previous sections that contributes to our understanding of IPK, arguably the most influential body of work that informs IPK is situated around models of leadership. Sport coaching scholars have been exploring leadership theory as a way to understand coach behaviour since coaching became an academic field some 40 years ago (e.g., Chelladurai, 1980; Smoll & Smith, 1989). In the wider leadership literature, there exists a profusion of different theories and it is not the intention of this review to attempt to examine every one. Rather the principal leadership theories that have been applied to a sport coaching context will be looked at here.

The emphasis of leadership within sport is typically contextually driven. For example, research into youth sport (e.g., Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005; Côté et al., 2008; Côté & Hancock, 2016) tends to champion different leadership characteristics to those required in elite performance sport (e.g., Fletcher & Arnold, 2011). The definition of leadership is contested within the literature with Burns (1978) claiming, “leadership is one of the most observed yet

least understood phenomena on earth". According to Graen (2007, p.564) leadership differs from management or supervision in that "leadership should be seen as an extraordinary process", whereby followers and leaders forge a relationship that allows them to go beyond the constraints of normal business. Yet in direct contradiction of the above quote, Kelloway and Barling (2000) stress the opposite approach in that transformational leadership can be achieved by making small-scale sustainable changes to behaviour and that such an approach is not reliant on extraordinary acts.

Whilst attempting to arrive at a universally agreed definition of leadership is arguably futile, there is some commonality in how sport coaching literature has aligned itself with recognised leadership models. Transformational leadership (TFL), which sits within the Full Range Leadership Model (FRLM) (Avoilo & Bass, 1991), has been applied by a number of prominent scholars (e.g., Chelladurai, 2007; Cronin et al., 2015; Turnnidge & Côté, 2017; Vella et al., 2013). Closely related to servant leadership (Greenleaf, 2002), there is widespread support for TFL as a model to guide coach behaviour that has a positive impact upon athlete outcomes (Arthur et al., 2017; Callow et al., 2009; Charbonneau et al., 2001; Rowold, 2006; Stenling & Tafvelin, 2014; Turnnidge et al., 2016). This work is based upon Bass and Riggio's (2006) seminal work in business leadership that suggests a way for leaders to positively affect levels of motivation, commitment and performance amongst followers (Bass & Bass, 2009; Bryant, 2003).

Building upon early work that conceptualised leadership as either transactional or transformational (Burns, 1978), TFL has become the most widely studied and published leadership model since the turn of the century (Arnold, 2017). It is important to note that TFL does not speak of the transformational leader but rather those who demonstrate transformational qualities (Hardy et al., 2010). With this in mind, any endeavour that scaffolds understanding of leadership using TFL should remember the central tenet of the theory, which is fundamentally altruistic in nature (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In a sport coaching setting, literature places emphasis on TFL as a way to promote lasting learning, athlete empowerment and the realisation of potential (Turnnidge & Côté, 2018) by accessing Bass and Riggio's (2006) four behavioural dimensions, known as the '4 Is'; idealized influence (charisma), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration.

Before exploring these behavioural dimensions, it is useful to recognise how TFL aligns with previously reviewed theoretical considerations linked to IPK. The model proposed by Mageau and Vallerand (2003) for autonomy-supportive coaching aligns in particular with *intellectual stimulation,* where leaders are encouraged to empower their learners to make decisions, to problem solve and take charge of their own development. Kidman's (2010) work on athlete-centred coaching relates closely to the notion of *individualized consideration* and recognising the needs of the individual in a holistic sense, not just in a sporting context. Parallels can be drawn between Ames' (1992) research on creating motivational climates and *inspirational motivation*, where effective goal setting and a focus on process as opposed to results is supported. Finally, the concept of *idealized influence* is less manifest in contemporary coaching literature and pertains to the humility one might equate with servant leadership (Greenleaf, 2002) or the practice of legendary coach John Wooden (Jenkins, 2013).

2.6 Social Identity Leadership

Despite the contribution that work around TFL is making to our understanding of coach behaviours, the original model arguably offers a more nuanced perspective than is often embraced by coaching scholars. Furthermore, it should be noted that TFL is not a solitary unchallenged approach to leadership in sport, with notable work on social identity leadership (SIL) stimulating debate around the individual focus of dominant leadership models. Both the deeper dimensions of Bass and Riggio's (2006) early work and the recourse offered by SIL will be reviewed to lend useful depth to our understanding of a leadership lens.

SIL places a greater emphasis on the importance of collective identity, particularly within team sports, suggesting the dimensions of intellectual stimulation and individual consideration promote individual-focussed leadership (Herman & Chiu, 2014). Scholars call for greater attention to the social context of leadership, and importantly how leaders and followers perceive themselves within that context (e.g., Hogg, 2001; Turner & Haslam, 2014). Drawing from social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and social-categorisation theory (Turner et al., 1987), this approach argues that leaders who are able to effectively manage and leverage social identity, can help create a sense of shared purpose and identity among

group members, leading to improved group cohesion, motivation, and performance. Haslam et al., (2017) sought to apply a social identity approach in leadership development, drawing upon the ASPIRe model (Haslam et al., 2003) and the related 5R leadership development program. Whilst the participants of this study were managers within Allied Health teams and not sport coaches, the results support social identity as a way to create more inclusive, collaborative group culture. The 5Rs program has subsequently be utilised in the sports arena (e.g., Fransen et al., 2020; Slater and Baker, 2019) suggesting SIL has an important role to play in moving attention away from developing the coach as an individual, towards a better understanding of both the coach and athlete's roles, in their collective pursuit.

The suggestion that leadership development should approach the collective as opposed to the individual, aligns not only with the philosophical premise of TFL (Stevens et al., 2021) that promotes a process whereby leaders develop followers into leaders, therefore nurturing the collective (Bass & Riggio, 2006), but it also speaks to the reciprocity promoted in the care literature (e.g., Cronin & Armour, 2018), the detail of which this thesis draws upon in due course. Reciprocity refers to the equal concern required for the coach and athlete in a caring, person-centred relationship, where the focus is on collective development. Whilst SIL offers an interesting and useful perspective that encourages effective followership, in addition to high quality leadership, with explicit emphasis on the collective as opposed to the individual, TFL remains a noteworthy lens by which to examine coaching behaviour, a view not only advanced by Turnnidge and Côté (2018; 2019) but further reinforced when reflecting upon links to other areas of coaching theory.

2.7 Transformational leadership dimensions

Returning to TFL, Bass and Riggio's (2006) original work describes two important dimensions of TFL that are often neglected in sport coaching literature that draws upon TFL as a lens to understand coaching behaviour. Bass and Riggio (2006) distinguish between authentic and pseudo transformational leaders with the former a genuine proponent of the altruistic intentions of turning followers into leaders, whereas the latter refers to a leader with warped moral principles who is in fact more concerned with self-interest. Barling et al. (2008) propose a model for pseudo-transformational leadership that hypothesises the

following outcomes of this approach; fear of the leader; obedience of the leader; dependence on the leader; perceptions of abusive supervision and of job insecurity. Further research (Christie et al., 2011) has shown how leaders who exhibit pseudo transformational characteristics are high in inspirational motivation but low in idealized influence, whereby an absence of clear values or moral compass results in inspirational behaviours that are motivated by personal gain. As expounded by Erickson, (1995) authenticity is not an either/or condition, rather people display levels of authenticity, and it is exactly this level or pseudo/authenticity that should concern us when considering the desirable behaviours of coaches or coach educators.

In addition to considerations around pseudo and authentic leaders, there is an instructive body of work around the relative value of bright side and dark side behaviours in leadership (e.g., Higgs, 2009; Judge et al., 2009). Judge et al. (2009) suggest dark side leadership traits to be narcissism, hubris, social dominance and Machiavellianism, whereas bright behaviours are those typically viewed positively in society. Despite *dark side* representing a connotation with negative, ineffective leadership characteristics some scholars argue that when employed in the appropriate context these behaviours can contribute to positive outcomes. Maccoby (2000) argued that narcissistic leaders can be productive and are likely to have a vision that will attract and inspire followers. Although as explained by Higgs (2009) any benefits that arise from narcissistic traits are likely to be short lived and outweighed by the negatives.

In a sport coaching setting Cruickshank and Collins (2015) present examples of how elite team leaders use dark side traits in order to enhance leadership effectiveness. In a subsequent paper Cruickshank and Collins (2016) make an explicit call for dark side behaviours to receive closer attention to help coaches make better decisions. Although this position was roundly criticised by Mills and Boardley (2017) from an ethical standpoint, there remains an argument that some dark side behaviours can afford success, arguably in the short term, in certain circumstances. Given the short-term nature of formal coach education and of some coaching contexts, a better understanding of how dark side behaviours might impact coach education environments is of interest.

A further dimension to TFL theory is that of directive and participative approaches (Avolio, 2011). TFL is often perceived as a democratic process that champions shared decision-making, striving for consensus via participative discussion. Whilst accurate, this provides an incomplete appreciation of how a leader can transform the experience of their followers. Dependent on context a more directive approach is sometimes required where the leader is decisive and takes control. It is a confused interpretation of TFL that assumes democracy has to reign regardless of context. For example, if a leader is to demonstrate authentic individual consideration there may well be occasions when that individual requires direct instruction. This may be in extreme contexts where levels of danger are elevated or when someone is in a state of learned helplessness not knowing which way to turn. If the chosen behaviour is consistent with altruistic intentions, and the decision to act is governed by concern for the 'follower', then direct leadership could arguably still be transformational. It is easy to obfuscate the distinction between directive TFL and a transactional approach if one overlooks the underlying principles of the two models. Ultimately, TFL is about developing followers into leaders, whereas transactional leadership is about motivating followers to get the job done. The difference between directive TFL and transactional leadership can appear subtle, but research shows that small changes in behaviour that mark the shift from transactional to transformational can have important outcomes (Barling, 2014).

The implications of pseudo/authentic TFL, dark and bright side behaviours and directive/participative approaches are significant in our understanding of how both coaches and coach educators behave. As is the recognition that small, everyday behaviours contribute to transformational leadership. Despite making the distinction between transactional and directive transformational leadership, one could argue that even the most transactional of behaviours could be deemed transformational if conducted with the right intentions in a way that is appropriate for the given context. Indeed Hardy et al. (2010) call for more research to explore contextual influences on leadership behaviours, suggesting a place for transactional leadership in developing performance in military recruits. Given the importance of context in guiding leadership behaviours and the variability of the context inhabited by coach educators, research that affords a deeper appreciation of the requisite interpersonal knowledge in coach educator roles is warranted. Study 1 addresses this research agenda with an investigation into

the coaching behaviours of Alpine ski coach educators, when playing different roles within the coach education process. However, before engaging with study 1 the overarching research methodology of this thesis is presented.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Philosophical perspective

The following section outlines a research perspective that aligns with both published papers (Garner et al., 2020; Garner et al., 2022), and which draws upon higher levels of ontology before settling on a sport coaching specific ontology proposed by North (2017), as a model that best frames the overall enquiry. What informs this specific ontology is the paradigmatic perspective offered by critical realism (Bhaskar, 2008; 2010) that can be considered the underpinning philosophical ontology of this work. As suggested by a number of scholars (e.g., Grix, 2010; North, 2017; Pawson, 2006) critical realism disconnects ontological reality from epistemological relativism (Bhaskar, 2010), claiming that the nature of reality can be separate to our understanding of it. Easton (2010) explains further that critical realists assume there is a real world yet recognise this assumption cannot be proved. In terms of this thesis, such an approach suggests the researcher adopts a *realist* inspired ontological perspective in accepting that certain effective behaviours really exist, whilst relying on a more *relativist* epistemological perspective to understand what influences those behaviours, in the belief that knowledge is physically, psychologically, socially and culturally constructed (Holland, 2014).

That critical realism legitimizes a synergy between ontological realism and epistemological relativism, allows sport coaching research to concurrently oppose the unidimensional approach of objectivism, that so often characterises orthodox research in our domain (Collins et al., 2022; Nichol et al., 2019), whilst espousing a more pragmatic position than pure interpretivism. By paying genuine attention to the impact of external forces, we travel beyond our *verstehen* (Weber, 1947) into the deeper reaches of causation (Sayer, 2010), and therefore entertain the possibility of challenging the status quo and effecting real change. This occupation of the middle ground between the dominant paradigms of traditional research, promotes what Grix (2010) termed an epistemic border where *hard* interpretivism meets *soft* post-positivism. This is a position that fails to sit neatly within the prevailing paradigms of positivism and interpretivism but a position nevertheless, and one that advocates that we grapple with causal factors within a complex social system.

Drawing from critical realism, North (2017) uses a more specific bio-psycho-social ontology to inform a sport coaching specific ontology that recognises coaching to be *embedded*, *relational* and *emergent* (ERE). Proposed as both a model and an ontological framework, the ERE model recognises the interdisciplinary nature of sport coaching that exists in an infinitely complex open system. Whilst North (2017) appreciates that ontological claims are fallible rather than substantive, it is through this conceptual framework that we can most usefully understand the reality of sport coaching. In addition, Bush et al. (2013, p.6) also recognise coaching's complexity and call for a re-articulation of sport coaching, introducing the concept of "researcher-as-methodological bricoleur". They emphasise a need to accompany advances in ontology, epistemology and methodology with similar advances in expression and representation. Beyond sport coaching research, Bhaskar (2008) asserts the need for ontological depth, arguing that our world is made up of overlapping layers, or the domains of the empirical, the actual, and the real. A stratified view of reality is at the core of this research, a concept that will be explored before looking at North's (2017) ERE model in more detail.

Bhaskar's (2008) laminated view of the world suggests our understanding of reality is not always as accessible as our experiences may suggest, and that ontological depth can only be acquired by considering the causal mechanisms that exist in the domains of the actual and more importantly the real. Figure 1. presents Bhaskar's domains and offers an explanation of how each layer relates to this study.

Domain	**Explanation**	**Application to study**
Empirical	Our *experience* of the actual. Outcomes that are observed and experienced.	Researcher, coach and athlete's interpretation of what happened. May result in trust or distrust or perceptions of idealized influence and hence transformational leadership or not?

Actual	Things that actually happen. The outcomes of interactions between real mechanisms.	Researcher's observations of coach behaviour – behaviour aligned with conceptualisation of TFL and/or person-centredness or not. (Study 1)
Real	Objects and structures with potential to make things happen (with causal properties).	Researcher explores intention behind behaviour via video stimulated interview to understand what caused humble behaviour. (Study 2)

Figure 1: Ontological stratification

Without consideration for the domain of the real, research is unavoidably more reductionist and makes assumptions that can generate simplistic, unhelpful discourse in practice (e.g., Campbell et al., 2022; Collins et al., 2022; Jones et al., 2011; North, 2017). The real begets the actual and the empirical but the actual and the empirical do not exhaust the real. As a sport-coaching example one only has to look at the burgeoning position of transformational leadership in coach development, as a framework to guide coach behaviour. Whilst in many ways an encouraging development (Turnnidge & Côté, 2017) the application of leadership theory to provide a best fit for coach development predominantly entertains the domains of the empirical and actual. In neglecting to investigate causation there is no understanding of intention and therefore no overt appreciation of authenticity. Neither is the influence of context sufficiently captured and as Bhaskar (2010, p.8) said, 'how the mechanism acts, depends upon its context'.

Here we are faced with a dilemma between pragmatism and attention to diverse contexts. TFL offers four useful behavioural dimensions that suggest an ethically sound, motivational, empowering and individually focussed approach to sport coaching, yet without recognition of a stratified ontology the application of such a model remains sub-optimal, and could be used inappropriately in certain contexts. When discussing causation Elder-Vass (2010, p.23) suggested "it is the way that a set of parts is related to each other at a given point in time that determines the joint effect they have on the world at that moment". This

underpins a need to research the impact of different contexts in sport coaching, a motive that aligns particularly well with a critical realist perspective.

Having reviewed the importance of Bhaskar's (2008) domains and how this conceptualisation helps us to explore causality, it is necessary to return to the ERE model (North (2017) to discuss its suitability as an ontological framework. Fundamental to our understanding of sport coaching and of the ERE model is the notion of *emergence*. Synchronic emergence (as opposed to temporal emergence) suggests that we cannot attribute causation to causal properties without considering how they are arranged at any one point in time (Elder-Vass, 2010), in short, the whole is different to the sum of its parts. If, for example, we propose that an antecedent of person-centred coaching is sharing responsibility with athletes, then a reductionist approach would suggest person-centredness is afforded by acts of sharing responsibility, which is therefore considered to be a causal mechanism for a person-centred coach. However, North's (2017) ERE model refutes this and argues that the emergent nature of sport coaching dictates that person-centredness cannot simply be explained by behaviour per se, as sport coaching is *embedded* in a physical, psychological, sociological and cultural context that is integrally *related* to both the behaviour and how it is perceived. So, the very same behaviour delivered in the context of a different goal-orientation, framed by different intentions and experienced in a different cultural environment may not lead to perceptions of a person-centred approach. It is the domain of the real and the *emergent* causal properties of person-centredness that require exploration so that we can move beyond a one size fits all approach to understanding human relationships.

In considering how sport coaching is embedded in context, North (2013) cautions against overlooking the role of space and time. Given that a principal concern of sport coaching is to support learning and change, there is a necessarily future-oriented temporal dimension that is goal focussed. Equally, the implications of past experience are also recognised in the literature and how history (Day, 2013) shapes the cultural landscapes of coaching, and personal biographies influence the resources and reasoning upon which coaches draw (Jones et al., 2004). These are important considerations that must frame any interpretation of coaching research. Space is of equal importance and of particular interest in

this study. Coaching in an alpine skiing environment affords the coach a multitude of different spaces that are not necessarily synonymous with other coaching settings. This provides a rich research setting that has the potential to provide unique insights for coaching. The preoccupation of coaching research with a training context has been noted (Cushion & Jones, 2001; Groom et al., 2011) and North (2013) calls for a wider ranging appreciation of space. Using a white-water kayaking case study, he identifies coach-athlete interactions that occur over email, phone, during competition, in the gym in meeting rooms etc. and calls for recognition that each space has causal powers that impact coaching effectiveness. Alpine ski coaching features unusual coaching spaces such as uplift-time, restaurants and high-risk environments, all of which feature in this study.

In contrast to mainstream social science whereby ontology is typically dictated by epistemology, critical realism foregrounds ontology in order to be clear as to the underlying structure of reality (North, 2017). The epistemological claims that underpin this research are hence determined by the stratified, laminated ontology suggested by North (2017). As already alluded to earlier in this section, whilst ontological assumptions around sport coaching as a complex open system are situated in a realist paradigm, the associated epistemic position is one closer to relativism. To generate knowledge of the open system it is necessary to step outside disciplinary discourse that Kincheloe (2001, p.684) suggests has the regulatory power to "impound knowledge with arbitrary and exclusive boundaries". Carp (2001) echoes this position claiming disciplinarity privileges certain ways of knowing, instead we must adopt an interdisciplinary approach in order to capture, abstract, describe and represent causal powers and mechanisms (Bush et al., 2013; North, 2017). In summary, this research adopts a sport coaching-specific ontology that is informed by a critical realist philosophy. The epistemological position embraces notions of interdisciplinarity with a particular focus on psycho-social and philosophical ways of knowing.

3.2 Strategy of enquiry

Given the interdisciplinary epistemological assumptions of this research, the strategy of enquiry must embrace an intensive qualitative approach (Sayer, 2010). Sayer (2010) distinguishes between intensive and extensive approaches in critical realist study, with

extensive research concerned with wide-scale surveys in search of generalizability, as opposed to intensive approaches that look to uncover emergent causal factors to understand how they interact to produce events (Bhaskar, 2008). To achieve an intensive qualitative approach, the studies in this thesis utilized a research design that aligns with elements of both ethno-methodologies (Collinson, 2006) and case study research (Easton, 2010). Although not sitting comfortably within a recognised design tradition, this melange affords the research process qualitative methods that promote intuition, creativity and imaginative skill that, as noted by Layder (1988), are crucial for critical realist informed research.

To elaborate briefly on the case study and ethno-methodological leanings of the thesis, it is important to note that there are elements to both approaches that can be construed as contradictory to the extant research aims. For example, a range of data collection methods were used allowing the researcher to provide rich descriptions, drawing from social, cognitive and cultural interpretations of the research environment, which is consistent with a case study approach (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). However, the conventional parameters of a case study would suggest complete and holistic analysis of not just persons but documents and policies, something this research does not include (Yin, 2018; Tight, 2017). Crabtree et al. (2000) are clear in indicating that ethno-methodological conventions refuse to theorize practice and spurn explanatory constructs, a position that contradicts the aims of this study. Yet, although not *fully* immersed in the research setting, the researcher was embedded in the research context, engaging regularly with the research participants and surrounding environment, in order to garner an insider's perspective (Cushion, 2014). As Collinson (2006) suggests, an ethnomethodology is appropriate when attempting to provide an empirical insight into the detailed and observable practices that make up social facts, an assertion that usefully aligns with this study. In attempting to describe and explain the research design as opposed to choosing a neat, predefined approach, it is hoped that the assumptions underpinning the research have been more clearly articulated; a stance entreated by Nichol et al. (2019). Furthermore, such purposeful demurral from neatly categorised methods is consistent with critical realism's occupation of the difficult to define paradigmatic middle ground, as outlined by Bhaskar (2008), Pawson (2006) and more recently Grix (2010).

3.3 Ethical issues

Having expounded the research design it is important to recognise that this research was human-centred and was therefore concerned with protecting the safety and well-being of the participants. A fundamental concern when conducting social research is that participants are neither deceived nor coerced as part of the process. In order to address this important issue voluntary informed consent is an essential consideration that requires significant attention (O'Neil, 2003). However, in view of the naturalistic nature of this research, there is an inherent need to preserve the ordinary, everydayness of the coaching context (McFee, 2014). Consequently, it is necessary for the participants to behave in a way that is as unaffected by the research process as possible, which has implications for the level to which informed consent is indeed *fully* informed. In exploring the causal mechanisms that lead to perceptions of person-centred coaching (study 2), it is important to avoid creating a situation whereby participants tailor their behaviour to demonstrate what they imagine the researcher seeks. However, to hide the focus of the study would be to render the research design covert, which carries with it serious ethical complications (Deventer, 2009).

As explained by McFee (2010) voluntary informed consent cannot always be achieved, instead it is important for researchers to attempt "the best that can (humanly) be done" (McFee, 2010, p.145). McFee (2010) introduces the concept of degrees of covertness suggesting that it is still ethically defensible for research not to be entirely overt. Research must be justifiably worthwhile and must not jeopardize the welfare of the participants, however given the imperative of maintaining the natural coaching environment some form of "deception for the purposes of ensuring spontaneous reactions may be justified" (Schrader-Frechette, 1994, p.8). In the case of these studies, deception would be too strong, but that participants were informed to the same level as the researcher would be equally misleading. Accordingly, participants were informed that the research concerned their behaviours and thought processes in a variety of different contexts. Given the retroductive nature of the research there was no need to present the underpinning focus on leadership in study 1 and humility in study 2, and no reason why omitting this focus negatively affected participant welfare, but every reason why this economical approach encouraged the coaching

context to remain authentic. The methods used for each study are outlined in the published papers (Chapters 4 and 6).

Chapter 4: Study 1

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How coach educators deliver effective formal coach education: A full range leadership perspective

Abstract

Whilst recent work recognises a need for coach education to place greater emphasis on interpersonal knowledge when developing coaching expertise, it is our position that coach educators (CEs) must follow a similar trajectory in embracing the interpersonal knowledge requisite of their role, and move beyond a reliance on content and professional knowledge in order to shape their delivery. In order to better understand CE behaviour, we observed four experienced CEs in Alpine skiing, using an adapted version of the Coach Leadership Assessment System (CLAS) (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019) during delivery of a coach education and assessment course. We also interviewed CEs to further elucidate the observational data. Our findings suggest the benefit of transactional approaches to leadership during assessment, when set against the backdrop of an environment driven by intentions consistent with transformational leadership. Furthermore, we call for a greater appreciation of context when imagining CE behaviours that align with effective practice.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, critical realism, assessment, authentic behaviour

It is well documented that coaching is a complex activity (Bowes & Jones, 2006; Horton, 2015; Martindale & Collins, 2012) and that preparing coaches to operate as effective practitioners in a dynamic environment remains problematic (Avner, Markula & Denison, 2017). The gap between theory and practice is an equally knotty issue and despite some excellent work that informs curriculum design and pedagogic innovations (Lefebvre, Evans, Turnnidge & Gainforth, 2016; Morgan, Jones, Gilbourne & Llewellyn, 2013; Paquette & Trudel, 2018a; Vella & Perlman, 2014), developing coaches often cite poor CE delivery and inferior communication skills, as factors that limit the efficacy of formal coach education (Nelson, Cushion & Potrac, 2013; Paquette & Trudel, 2018b). Whilst there is a call to arms for coach education to place greater emphasis on interpersonal knowledge when developing coaching effectiveness (Côté & Gilbert, 2009; Lefebvre et al., 2016; Turnnidge & Côté, 2018), coach educators must follow a similar trajectory in embracing the interpersonal knowledge requisite of their role, and

move beyond a reliance on content and professional knowledge in order to shape their delivery. In considering the role of the coach educator it is important to clarify our use of terminology, which remains ambiguous in the field. When considering coach education, McQuade and Nash (2015) offer a useful distinction between coach assessors and coach developers, where the former is concerned with accreditation and standards and the latter with coach learning. Although we use these terms later in the paper, when referring to coach education more generally and to those who might be engaged in both assessment and development activities, we will continue to refer to the coach educator (CE).

Given the complexity of the coach education environment, we suggest that CE behaviour should never be prescribed. However, using leadership models to guide coach educator delivery, in what is often a multi-faceted role, is a worthwhile endeavour that has the potential to advance our understanding of the coach education landscape. To our knowledge, there is no existing research that addresses this area of enquiry. Accordingly, this paper embraces a multi-method approach and draws on the full range leadership model (FRLM) (Avolio & Bass, 1991) to examine observational data, coach educator interviews, and developing coach feedback to make suggestions as to how CE behaviour may shape quality delivery.

Coach Education Landscape

In order to better understand CE behaviour, it is essential to understand the environment in which they operate. Hence, we draw from the wider literature, but also from the collective experience of the research team, as educators of coaches both in higher education and for National Governing Body qualifications. In this paper, we set out to investigate the variant behaviours essential for CEs to occupy the different roles that characterise their practice. Given the limited research in this area we make no apology for providing the reader with an extended overview of what this role requires. Coach education has been categorised as occurring in formal, non-formal and informal settings (Coombs & Ahmed, 1974; Nelson, Cushion & Potrac, 2006) with clear evidence that coaches often refer to informal learning as their preferred mode of development (Cushion, Armour & Jones, 2003; Mallett, Trudel, Lyle & Rynne, 2009). Informal learning refers to learning that occurs outside of organised provision (Reade, 2009) and is often driven by reflection, observation, and discussion (e.g., Nelson et al., 2006). Despite coaches reporting a preference for informal learning, the importance of formal coach education must not be underestimated, with some sources suggesting the importance of a balance between the two (Erickson, Bruner, McDonald & Côté, 2008). With the professionalisation agenda continuing to gather momentum (Malcolm, Pinheiro & Pimenta, 2014), sport coaching is becoming more regulated as an industry, with formal coach accreditation now the norm. Whilst informal settings will always shape a coach and we know that social learning is central to coach development (Culver & Trudel, 2006; Garner & Hill, 2017),

formal coach education provides the one guaranteed opportunity that CEs have to provide the essential messages that could, or perhaps should, influence the coaches of the future. Furthermore, formal coach education promotes an understanding that can potentially influence informal discussion and learning among coaches.

Notwithstanding the importance of formal education, current research continues to be critical of quality and reports a pervasive and dominant focus on discipline specific professional knowledge (Avner et al., 2017; Côté & Gilbert, 2009). Beguiled by a reductionist approach that accelerates the certification and therefore operationalization of coaches, coach education could be accused of compromising a focus on learning and development in its quest for professionalised standards. This position is reflected by a 'trait' or competency-based approach (cf. Malcolm et al., 2014), which is indicative of large-scale initiatives to homogenise the process of training and qualifying coaches, such as United Kingdom Coaching Certificate (UKCC) and National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP). Despite this somewhat gloomy appraisal, extant research presents some innovative approaches that require CEs to have advanced interpersonal knowledge. Collins, Carson and Collins (2016) criticise the competency-based approach and call for a greater attention on professional judgment and decision-making (PJDM). They propose "the constructivist approach of a cognitive apprenticeship" (2016, p.358), to help developing coaches acquire the skills to manage the implicit processes and tacit understandings associated with the complexity of real-world contexts. This approach relies on the collaboration of coach and CE to engage in problem solving, and places the CE as a facilitator of learning as opposed to a more didactic imparter of knowledge.

Côté and Gilbert (2009) have further added to the idea of effective coaching by proposing a set of knowledge areas that need to be integrated to assure quality delivery and positive outcomes. They suggest that "coaching effectiveness is the consistent application of integrated professional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal knowledge to improve athletes' competence, confidence, connection, and character in specific coaching contexts" (Côté & Gilbert, (2009, p.316). To the authors' knowledge, there is no definition for an effective CE, although Côté and Gilbert's (2009) definition for effective coaching offers a useful departure point for our paper. In order for CEs to be effective, it is proposed that a more detailed understanding of the requisite components exists.

Interpersonal knowledge

Although there is some recognition for interpersonal knowledge to feature more prominently in formal coach education (Vella et al., 2013; Turnnidge & Côté, 2018; 2019), it is often assumed that effective interpersonal knowledge is innate and cannot be taught, with formal coach education

neglecting to address interpersonal knowledge in a structured way (Avner et al., 2017; Jones, Morgan & Harris, 2012; Lefebvre et al., 2016). Because interpersonal knowledge may be difficult to teach and equally challenging to assess within a coach education setting, it is often understandably left alone or, at best, judged informally.

There are tools that exist within sport coaching research that have been used to capture behavioural data, with much of this work informed by motivational theory (e.g., Erickson & Côté, 2015; Smith et al., 2015; Webster et al., 2013). More contemporary research by Turnnidge and Côté (2019) presents the Coach Leadership Assessment System (CLAS) [see Appendix 1] and a transformational coach development workshop (Turnnidge & Côté, 2017). This recent work is underpinned by the framework of the full range leadership model (Avolio, 2011), which espouses in particular the central tenets of Transformational Leadership (TFL) (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The workshop offers youth coaches a professional development opportunity, in a mediated (Werthner & Trudel, 2006) yet non-formal (Nelson et al., 2006) setting, helping coaches to develop practical strategies to develop a more transformational coaching style. The efficacy of the workshop is measured in part using the CLAS, which is an observational tool for measuring coach leadership characteristics and coach behaviour. More recently, the CLAS has been used to observe and analyse soccer coach behaviour in training and competition settings (Lefebvre, Turnnidge & Côté, 2019) and in the absence of similar resources for CEs, this work will be used to guide and shape our understanding of CE behaviour.

Beyond the dichotomy of transformational and transactional leadership in sport

In referring to leadership as a source to inform coach behaviour, sport coaching literature supports TFL as a model that has a positive impact upon athlete outcomes (e.g., Callow, Smith, Hardy, Arthur, & Hardy, 2009; Charbonneau, Barling, & Kelloway, 2001; Rowold, 2006; Stenling & Tafvelin, 2014). This work is based upon Bass and Riggio's (2006) original conceptualisation of TFL from work in business leadership that presents a way for leaders to positively affect levels of motivation, commitment, and performance amongst followers (Bass & Bass, 2009). Although not without critique (e.g., Arthur, Bastardoz & Eklund, 2017; Figgins, Smith, Knight & Greenlees, 2019), TFL builds upon Burns' (1978) early work that conceptualised leadership as either transactional or transformational, and has become the most widely studied and published model for leadership since the turn of the century (Arnold, 2017). TFL sits within the FRLM (Avolio & Bass, 1991) that also includes transactional leadership (TSCL) and laissez-faire (LF). The FRLM presents TFL as a more effective way to lead than either TSCL or LF, with transformational leaders' intent on developing followers into leaders. Conversely, transactional leaders are more focused on motivating followers for task completion, including dimensions such as

contingent reward and management by exception (Avolio, 2011). LF refers to disinterest and an absence or avoidance of leadership. In a coaching setting, existing literature places emphasis on TFL as a way to promote lasting learning, athlete empowerment, and the realisation of potential (Turnnidge & Côté, 2017; 2019) by accessing four behaviour dimensions known as the 4 'I's'; idealized influence (charisma), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (cf. Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Compared to the original research (Avolio & Bass, 1991; Bass & Riggio, 2006), application of the FRLM model in a sporting context remains relatively nascent (Turnnidge & Côté, 2018; Vella et al., 2013). The current picture is largely dualistic with TFL championed as the new approach, whilst TSCL is consigned to an 'old school' approach, more aligned with an authoritarian style of delivery. Although Avolio and Bass (1991) introduce a dualism in their model, there is a layer of detail and nuance in their work that affords a more complex appreciation of leadership contexts. In particular, that effective leadership requires the leader to display all aspects of the full range model to varying degrees and that TSCL often contributes to positive outcomes. Furthermore, the notion that a transformational leader can call upon directive or participative behaviours (Avolio, 2011) offers an important level of subtlety in how CEs might view effective practice and suggests that the intent to be transformational is of greater importance than the behaviours per se.

The intention that drives leadership behaviour is explored in the wider literature, with considerable work focused on the concept of authentic versus pseudo approaches to transformational leadership (e.g., Barling, Christie & Turner, 2008; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Christie, Barling & Turner, 2011). A pseudo-approach refers to a leader who may express what appear to be transformational behaviours, yet is motivated to do so primarily for personal gain. In contrast, an authentic approach is where the leader is motivated by a genuine desire to develop and advance the prospects of their followers, a position that aligns with a follower-centred approach to leadership, or indeed a learner-centred approach to coach education. This important consideration, that places intention at the heart of the argument, has received limited exposure in sport coaching research. One notable exception is a recent paper by Cruickshank and Collins (2016), which advances the argument that to categorise behaviours as dark (pseudo) and bright (authentic) is unhelpful and unnecessarily dualistic. This position provoked healthy debate (Mills & Boardley, 2017) and supports the notion that we need a better understanding of what behaviours might align with effective (transformational) outcomes.

Despite these criticisms, the FRLM provides a useful framework to inform desired coach behaviour however, there is a paucity of literature that explores CE behaviour. As we have already suggested, CEs often have to occupy multiple and sometimes contrasting roles (e.g., educator and assessor), regularly with the same group, on the same course, and there would appear to be an urgent

need for a deeper understanding of how CEs might behave in such challenging circumstances. Indeed, related work in the field of medicine has documented the need to better understand how to manage an environment where the intention is for learning and assessment to coexist (Watling, 2016; Watling & Ginsburg, 2019). The limited research on CEs tends to focus on what they deliver as opposed to how they deliver. For example, part of the CE's role is to assess a candidate's ability to meet standards, yet the literature appears to focus almost unequivocally on educational content and neglects the skills required for the management of assessment. One notable exception is presented by Hay, Dickens, Crudington and Engstrom (2012), who explored the efficacy of assessment in coach education and how assessment can contribute to learning, however, this work drew largely from educational research (Bernstein, 1971; Hay & Penney, 2009) and not from a coach education setting. Given the inexorable prominence of assessment within coach education and the need to positively influence developing coaches during this process, this paper seeks to explore how CE behaviour may best be conceptualised when fulfilling the different roles that exist in formal coach education.

Methods

Nichol, Hall, Vickery and Hayes (2019, p.19) recommend that those conducting sport coaching research make more effort to "explicitly acknowledge and consider the philosophical and paradigmatic assumptions underpinning their research." Embracing this notion, we adopted a critical realist perspective that legitimizes a synergy between ontological realism and epistemological relativism (Bhaskar, 2010). Critical realism allows an occupation of the middle ground between the dominant paradigms of traditional research, promoting what Grix (2010) described as an epistemic border where hard interpretivism meets soft post-positivism. This position fails to sit neatly within the prevailing paradigms of positivism and interpretivism, but advocates the exploration of a complex social system. It allows us to seek answers so that we might impact on the real world of coaching and coach education.

Participants

Consistent with intensive qualitative research (Sayer, 2010) a purposive sampling strategy was applied (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Once ethical permission was granted from the lead author's institution, all participants were consulted and informed consent for their involvement in the project attained [see Appendix 2]. The participants were four male coach educators, aged between 40 and 50 years old, working in the French Alps for a national training and accreditation body for snowsport instructors and pseudonyms are used throughout. All CEs had been in post for between 14-18 years, had delivered

every level of course including the observed course at least 20 times, were considered expert by candidates and peers in the association, had worked as CE mentors, and had delivered at National and International CE conferences over the past decade.

Data Collection

Drawing from the FRLM (Bass & Riggio, 2006), CE behaviours were observed and examined using the CLAS (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019), which was designed to examine coaches' real time leadership behaviours. Our application of the CLAS deviates from the original conceptualisation of the model in two ways. First, it was used in the field and hence involved event-based coding (Vierimaa, Turnnidge, Evans, & Côté, 2016), as opposed to the video-based continuous coding used during the validation and subsequent deployment of the CLAS (Lefebvre et al., 2019; Turnnidge & Côté, 2019). Second, the CLAS was designed to investigate the coach-athlete relationship, whereas this study explores the coach educator-developing coach relationship. Whilst many similarities exist between these dyads, it should be recognised that significant differences are apparent. However, both coaches and coach educators operate in leadership positions and are subject to similar behavioural options; indeed there is no reason why the CLAS should not be adapted to observe leadership behaviours in any context. These anomalies were discussed with the authors of the CLAS during the design phase of this project and it was agreed that these adaptations did not compromise the appropriateness and integrity of the CLAS as a tool for data collection.

The CLAS consists of five higher order dimensions related to the FRLM, transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, neutral, and toxic coaching and seventeen leadership tone behaviours (cf. Turnnidge & Côté, 2019). Following rigorous training in accordance with the coding protocol of the CLAS (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019), the lead researcher engaged in two separate weeklong data collection periods, observing two different CEs in each week. The four CEs were all delivering technical alpine ski training and assessment courses and were observed for approximately three hours per day. Observation involved the lead author shadowing the course delivery on the mountain, recording every distinct unit of behavioural interaction between CE and candidates.

Data collection period	Coach Educator	Level of course delivered	Day				
			1	2	3	4	5
Week 1	Jack	Level 4 course	3hrs	3hrs	3hrs	3hrs	3hrs
Week 1	Garry	Level 4 course	3hrs	3hrs	3hrs	3hrs	3hrs

Week 2	Dean	Level 2 course	-	3hrs	3hrs	-	3hrs
Week 2	Richard	Level 2 course	-	3hrs	-	3hrs	3hrs

Table 1: Time spent observing and coding coach educator behaviour

N.B. Consistent with other coach education qualifications these levels are mapped against National Qualification Frameworks. Level 1 is the lowest level of qualification, with level 4 the highest level of qualification.

The training and assessment courses were focused on ski performance, not on teaching ability and culminated with a pass/fail decision delivered to candidates on the final day. Although results were announced at the end of the course, this day did not represent the assessment day; candidate performance was continually assessed throughout the course.

A mixed methods approach was taken. Therefore, in addition to observational data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with each of the CEs to gather deeper explanatory data on their leadership behaviours. CEs were asked to reflect on how they behave during a course and to share examples of good practice. Example interview questions were:

- How do you think you adapted your behaviour or style of delivery during the course?
- Why was it important in your opinion to behave in that way?

The lead researcher was also able to collaborate with the governing body to gain access to the course outcome information that showed pass rates and candidate feedback, which provided supplementary data to further support the analysis process [See Appendix 6].

Data Analysis

A thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was conducted of the interview data, candidate feedback, and researcher's reflections to help make sense of the patterns in the observational data. This process started with the lead researcher transcribing the data verbatim and (re) reading the transcripts [see Appendix 3] in order to become fully immersed. Once raw data responses had been coded, overarching themes [see Appendix 4] were established via a process of retroductive analysis that drew upon a deeper reading of the full range leadership model (Avolio, 2011; Bass and Riggio, 2006). In addition, observational data [see Appendix 5] was presented using descriptive statistics with the percentage frequency of leadership behaviours used to show trends in behaviour across the course (see Table 2.).

Importantly, critical realist research seeks findings and beliefs that appear to be truthful (Nichol

et al., 2019; North, 2013; 2017), consulting multiple perspectives during analysis, including that of the researcher. Therefore, our discussion of the findings will draw not only upon the themes emerging from the data, but also from the lived experience of the lead researcher. With 15 years operating as a CE in snowsports, the lead researcher had a high level of familiarity and expertise within the research context that to some extent alleviated the "researcher as professional stranger" metaphor (Flick, 2009, p.110) and helped access what Adler and Adler (1987, p.24) refer to as an 'insider perspective' on the reality of being a CE in snowsports. Seeking to embrace researcher opinion, based on contextual expertise, is consistent with previous research in coach development (e.g., Culver & Trudel, 2006), and is central to critical realist accounts, whereby researchers are encouraged to abstract meaning from the data (Pawson, 2006) by stepping "outside stakeholder narratives to make independent judgments about coaching structures" (North, 2017, p.227).

Methodological Rigour

To ensure rigour throughout the research process, Tracy's (2010) eight criteria for excellent qualitative research were used. At its heart Tracy's model centres on Karl Popper's concept of verisimilitude, which, as explained by Sparkes and Smith (2014), is concerned with a version of reality that is closest to the truth as opposed to a literal truth, with a requirement for authenticity in how the research is presented. Despite the limitations of a relatively small sample size, rich rigor and thick description (Tracy, 2010) was attained through considerable time spent in the field and the privileged access to context afforded to the lead researcher as a result of past experience.

Results

Overall, findings highlighted the dynamic nature of coach educator behaviours and their trajectories over time (see Table 2.). The average number of coded CE events was 60 per day (SD = 2.74) and although it was not possible to code every day for each CE, the data presented an overwhelming picture of behaviour moving towards a more transactional mode of delivery as the courses progressed (e.g., Day 1 - 7% and Day 5 – 73.9%). Conversely, the first three days of delivery were characterised predominantly by transformational behaviours. Although the data suggest transactional behaviours dominate the end of the course, transformational behaviours were still deployed on the final two days. Of the four lower order dimensions of TFL, inspirational motivation and individual consideration were used by the CEs to a greater extent than idealized influence and intellectual stimulation. The occurrence of toxic behaviour on day one represents the only occasion toxic behaviour was observed throughout

the study.

		Leadership							
		Transformational							
		II	IM	IS	IC	TSC	Laissez-Faire	Toxic	Total number of coded events
Day	Courses Focus								
1	Development	8.6%	35.7%	41.4%	5.7%	7.1%	0%	1.4%	77 (2 CEs Observed)
2		4%	50.6%	26.7%	15.1%	3.6%	0%	0%	251 (4 CEs observed)
3		3.7%	45.7%	23.3%	22.8%	4.6%	0%	0%	219 (3 CEs observed)
4		4.2%	36.3%	4.7%	19%	35.8%	0%	0%	190 (3 CEs observed
5		0.5%	12.8%	3.3%	9.5%	73.9%	0%	0%	211 (4 CEs observed)

Table 2: Percentage frequency of higher order leadership dimensions across delivery day where the delivery focus changed from an emphasis on development to assessment (white shading = more development focus, black shading = more assessment focus)

N.B. II = Idealized Influence; IM = Inspirational Motivation; IS = Intellectual Stimulation; IC = Individual Consideration; TSC = Transactional

Interview data revealed the themes of intentionality, transformational behaviours during assessment, directive/participative approaches, authentic/pseudo transformational leadership and expressed humility, which are discussed below. Interview data also suggested that the tone of the CEs' interaction with the developing coaches was largely intentional, with underpinning decision-making processes clearly articulated. The findings are not intended to offer unequivocal answers; instead, the hope is to build a clearer picture of the requisite interpersonal knowledge to guide CE behaviour when occupying different roles within the coach education environment. Supplementary data showed high levels of candidate satisfaction and a number of positive qualitative comments despite varying pass rates. The pass rates represent normative data for these courses where the level 4 is a particularly exacting standard with a lower expected pass rate.

Coach Educator (CE)	Number of candidates on course	Level of course delivered (Entry level =1, International recognition = 4)	Candidate overall satisfaction with course delivery (%)	% Pass rate	Examples of qualitative comments from candidates
Jack	6	4	81	33	I liked that trainers were aware and asking about fatigue levels
Garry	6	4	95	66	I picked up my mood when Garry gave me a word of encouragement and he does identify when we all need one. It is a great skill he has
Dean	10	2	97	70	Lots of positive feedback, which kept morale high
Richard	10	2	94	70	…relaxed environment, I felt Richard set a good atmosphere

Table 3: Course outcome data

Finally, the outcomes of the courses appear to have been transformational in nature. This claim requires us to revisit the place of verisimilitude in critical realist research (Polkinghorne, 1986). With a 60% pass rate across the four courses, an overall 91% candidate satisfaction rating, and the positive qualitative comments in candidate feedback, there is verisimilitude in suggesting that the coach education environment was characterised by trust, commitment, and followers who were satisfied with their leader, all of which are outlined by Bass and Riggio (2006) as outcomes of transformational leadership. It was also the position of the lead researcher, having been immersed in the research context, that the outcomes experienced by the candidates were largely transformational.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to use leadership as a lens to better understand the behaviour of coach educators when delivering a continually assessed coach accreditation course. The findings extend previous empirical research on transformational leadership as a guide for coach educator behaviours, by providing an in depth analysis of how different roles, within a given context, affect leadership

decisions. Furthermore, interview data suggests distinctions can be drawn between the conceptualisation of transformational behaviours (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Turnnidge & Côté, 2019) and transformational intentions, with indications that transformational outcomes can be achieved by behaviours not usually associated with TFL.

Effectiveness requires intentionality

Despite the continually assessed nature of this coach education context, the two distinct roles of coach developer and coach assessor were clearly observed, with the assessor role characterising delivery towards the end of the courses. CEs were intentional in their choice of behaviour relative to their role, and rather than adopting behaviours that would ordinarily align with a learner-centred approach, in the naïve belief that transformational outcomes would ensue, they favoured transformational behaviours in the role of coach developer and transactional behaviours in the role of coach assessor. The intention to be transformational is highlighted by this extract:

> Everyone who does our job is a coach first and foremost. Before they become an assessor they've necessarily taught skiing for years and years, and trying to get people better at skiing is in their blood and they want people to get better, they care about how people are going and worry if things aren't going well. (Richard)

In order to successfully play the roles of assessor and developer, the data suggests CEs also need to articulate their intentions to ensure follower trust and understanding. Turnnidge and Côté (2019, p.8) describe one element of inspirational motivation as "behaviours through which the coach highlights the value or meaning of certain activities and role or provides rationales"; interestingly, it appears in this study that sharing intentionality with followers allows transactional behaviours to provide transformational outcomes. The following extract provides a clear example of shared intention for transactional behaviour.

> It's about being transparent with the process [of developing and assessing]. You've got the job of coach and you've got the job of assessor where you've got to tell them [candidates] whether they are good enough or not. When I set a course up I talk about this with the candidates the night before. (Richard)

When the rationale for this type of behaviour is not shared, the outcomes appear to be different:

> Yeah… I think the times I've got it wrong are when I've not got the elephant in the room out there early enough… I might have left it too late [explaining to the candidate that they are below the required level] or tried to be too nice and that's when it hasn't worked. (Jack)

Further evidence of clearly articulated thought processes, which align with intentional decision-making, can be seen when discussing the transformational behaviours that enable high quality coach development.

> I think all the time when you are coaching you are aware of your behaviour, not just the information you are putting across but how you are interacting with the group, the sort of climate you are setting, whether you are going for a relaxed informal chat or going 'right we need to achieve this task now'. All of those decisions are going on in your head all the time. (Dean)

Here, Dean demonstrates genuine self-awareness as to how he exerts an idealized influence and demonstrates individualised consideration in his delivery.

As CEs aspire to greater levels of quality in their practice, the notion that intentions should necessarily be articulated is somewhat at odds with previous conceptualisations of expertise. Previous research has suggested that expertise is characterised by intuitive behaviour (Nash & Collins, 2006; Schempp, McCullick & Sannen Mason, 2006), however, our data suggests a situation more aligned with Birch's (2016, p.245) assertion that "skills are intentional actions" where interpersonal interactions are guided by explicit knowledge and clearly articulated intention. As such, intuitive behaviour, governed by implicit knowledge, may contribute to a level of expertise, but without conscious intention to guide CE behaviour, subsequent development of CE expertise would be limited. Consequently, we encourage CEs who may view themselves as experts to move beyond this fixed state, and instead continue what should be an unending quest for expertise.

The role of transformational behaviours during assessment

Although the data portrays a more transactional approach in the coach assessor, there is merit in discussing the transformational behaviours that were also present toward the end of the course. As acknowledged by Lefebvre et al. (2019), we recognise that the value of leadership behaviours cannot be purely based on frequency, but must also consider the impact they have in context. For example,

one instance of intellectual stimulation may transform the understanding and subsequent development of an athlete, whilst ten episodes of inspirational motivation may serve only to maintain existing effort levels. Nevertheless, of the 4 Is, inspirational motivation and individual consideration featured more prominently in CE behaviour during the assessment context, and the implications may offer further guidance for CEs operating the dual role of developer and assessor. Once in an assessment context, positive outcomes are time-sensitive and in most cases require a short-term approach. Whilst TSCL aligns comfortably with short-term objectives, we argue that elements of TFL remain important for coach assessors to avoid overall transactional or even toxic outcomes. Specifically, motivation and care for the individual remain important considerations for the coach assessor, as highlighted in these interview extracts:

> I change my behaviour as I see fit for the situation I am in. It might be that on the last day [of the course] there are people who are really worried and getting quite stressed [about the result], so I'll change my behaviour to get them more relaxed and take their mind away from things. It really depends on the situation, I go minute by minute really. (Gary) – Individualized consideration

> … we've got to work as a team, if someone is particularly strong in one area, say the bumps [an assessment activity], I might well link you up with someone else who is not as good [so that you can work together]. (Dean) – Inspirational motivation

In contrast, intellectual stimulation and idealized influence were less manifest during assessment and seemed more relevant to a development focus. We argue that there is good reason why the coach assessor would avoid intellectual stimulation during assessment, where questioning and attempts to share responsibility run the risk of candidate confusion, frustration, and cynicism. Instead, intellectual stimulation is more likely to characterize effective coach development; it promotes learner independence, problem solving and understanding, and is therefore an ideal delivery mode to prepare developing coaches for the rigours of assessment and the complexity of real world travails. Equally, idealized influence is more aligned with the role of coach developer and sets the foundation for authenticity and trusting relationships (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019). The humility and pro-social behaviours connected with this dimension of TFL are requisite from the very beginning of any coach education experience and should be in place before assessment, as explained by Dean,

> you've got to first of all build some relationships with the group, so they hopefully respect you,

> then when you deliver that information midweek [their progress in relation to the assessment criteria] they accept it because they like and respect you. (Dean)

The previous two themes suggest distinctive CE roles require different leadership approaches, including transactional behaviours in order to maintain a transformational environment and that these approaches are deliberately and consciously deployed by effective CEs.

Directive/Participative Transformational Leadership

Given the suggestion that transactional behaviours can result in transformational outcomes, the distinction between TFL and TSCL warrants further investigation. Rather than seeing behaviours as aligned with different models of leadership, it is perhaps more useful to draw upon Bass and Riggio's (2006) recognition that transformational leadership can be directive or participative. This raises the question as to whether the transactional behaviours deployed by the CEs with transformational intentions, are transactional or in fact just directive transformational behaviours?

> I will always make a point of finding times in the week when I definitely put that hat on [assessor] and let people know where they are up to [in relation to the criteria]. If you keep it clear you can do both jobs [assessor and developer]. (Richard)

Here, Richard has candidate success at the heart of his decision. His intention is to provide clarity, which builds trust and facilitates potential however, his behaviours could be construed as transactional as he is essentially, "searching for and responding to deviations from rules or standards" (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019, p.8).

In conceptualising how behaviours change to align with different CE roles, the significance of directive/participative approaches could prove to be more useful than contrasting TFL with TSCL. Indeed, Avolio (2011) made the point that acknowledging directive approaches within TFL proved particularly useful in convincing reluctant trainees that TFL was not a veiled attempt to pursue a purely participative, democratic, and in their eyes ineffectual approach. Although the difference between directive TFL and TSCL may appear subtle, research shows that small changes in behaviour that mark the shift from transactional to transformational can have important outcomes (Barling, 2014).

Authentic/Pseudo Transformational Leadership

In order to avoid an overly simplistic dualism in our approach to leadership in coach education, that TFL is effective and TSCL is less effective, it is important that we continue to avail ourselves of the complexity offered by the original literature. In addition to the directive/participative spectrum the lens of authentic and pseudo motives is also instructive in interpreting the data.

> As time's moved on I am just more open and honest with the people I am coaching… you know if they are coming down [the slope] asking me what they need to work on and I'm not sure I'll say, 'I don't know I need to see you some more, I just haven't got it [the approach they need for development] clear in my head yet' (Jack).

Here, Jack has the humility to admit he does not yet have the knowledge he requires. In so doing, he embraces a degree of vulnerability and arguably exerts an idealized influence; his behaviour is authentic and honest.

Although authentic leadership exists as a stand-alone model (Avolio & Gardener, 2005), in his original work on TFL, Burns' (1978) emphasised the importance of leaders' moral standing. Bass and Riggio (2006) elucidated further, distinguishing between authentic and pseudo transformational leaders. The former refers to a genuine proponent of altruistic intentions and the humility required to turn followers into leaders, whilst the latter describes a leader with warped moral principles, who is driven by self-interest. As we see in Jack's account, pseudo transformational behaviour will often backfire over time.

> The first course I delivered, I tried to be everyone's best friend [self-interest] and then towards the end of the week, I realised a lot of them were not passing, so I switched into this really commanding authoritarian figure saying, 'right if you don't do this you are not going to pass' and it just didn't work. (Jack)

As a new CE, Jack sought the affirmation of friendship, however, despite the pro-social nature of his behaviour, he was motivated by self-interest and hence adopted a pseudo transformational approach. As a consequence, the candidates became overly familiar, which impinged on Jack's ability to communicate honest feedback in relation to the level and maintain transformational outcomes. As a consequence of a pseudo approach, the environment soured, with the implication of damage to performance.

If intention is to be foregrounded over behaviours per se, then every effort should be made to encourage authentic, in place of pseudo, intentions, which at best may be used for what Mills and

Boardley (2017, p. 568) termed “tactical impression management.” The findings of this study support the notion that CE behaviour is more effective when intentions authentically align with TFL.

Research has shown that leaders who exhibit pseudo transformational characteristics often have high levels of inspirational motivation, but low levels of idealized influence, whereby an absence of clear values or moral compass results in inspirational behaviours that are motivated by personal gain (Christie, Barling & Turner, 2011). As expounded by Erickson (1995), authenticity is not an either/or condition, rather people display levels of authenticity, and it is exactly this level that should concern us when considering the desirable behaviours of coaches or coach educators.

Expressed Humility

The final theme was interpreted inductively by the researchers and relates to two particular episodes that provide unlikely examples of expressed humility (Owen, Johnson & Mitchell, 2013), one from the observational data and the other from the interview transcript. On face value, both episodes could be construed as compatible with darkside behaviours (e.g., Higgs, 2009; Judge, Piccolo & Kosalka, 2009). There is an informative body of work around the relative value of bright and darkside behaviours (e.g., Cruickshank & Collins, 2016; Higgs, 2009; Judge, Piccolo & Kosalka, 2009; Mills & Boardley, 2017), with Judge et al. (2009) presenting darkside leadership traits as narcissism, hubris, social dominance and Machiavellianism. In contrast, bright behaviours are those typically viewed positively in society.

Both the observational and interview data in this study generated examples of darkside behaviours, termed toxic in the CLAS (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019). The example of observed behaviour was consistent with social dominance and involved a member of the public, skiing extremely fast and out of control through the developing coaches. Fearing for the safety of his group, Jack pursued the rogue skier and engaged in an angry exchange. Similarly, in the interview data, Dean discussed an approach to motivating his group that was indicative of Machiavellianism.

> Dean: I kept them very much on their toes and said ‘you’re doing really well but if I was to make my decision today you wouldn’t pass’ [an untruth] So we worked really hard the following week and we got a great pass rate.
> Interviewer: So, you weren’t honest with them?
> Dean: Correct, I was harsh with them. So someone I thought was just a pass on say long turns [an assessment activity], I told them they were borderline [i.e., not passing].

Despite the apparent darkside nature of these two incidents, if we consider the intention

behind both acts, there is a level of expressed humility that suggests transformational outcomes. Expressed humility has been defined as comprising three components: an accurate self-assessment, an other-centredness, and a teachability or willingness to learn (e.g., Austin, 2014; Owen et al., 2013). Although not initially appearing to be the acts of a humble leader, on reflection, and considering related theory in more depth, a case can be made for an other-centredness in both episodes. In Jack's case, although his behaviour was coded accurately as toxic toward the individual perpetrator, it appeared to the lead researcher to have the effect of building respect and trust within his group, contributing to a team spirit and atmosphere of care. Equally, in considering Dean's behaviour, his economical use of the truth was intended to motivate his followers for their own benefit, it helped to realise potential and provide a level of inspirational motivation. Arguably both CEs behaved with authentic, morally laudable intentions that fostered positive, if not transformational, experiences for their followers.

It is of essential importance that this line of discussion is not misinterpreted. In no way are we tolerating behaviours that are authentically dark in nature. Rather we encourage a better understanding of how behaviours consistent with the full range leadership model may impact coach education environments. Specifically, it is our contention that intention and influence must be fully explored, so that we have the opportunity to develop coach educators capable of authentically embracing transformational outcomes.

Implications for Coach Developer and Coach Assessor Interpersonal Knowledge

The implications of role and the importance of intentionality, directive/participative approaches, pseudo/authentic TFL and expressed humility are significant in our understanding of how both coaches and coach educators behave. Given the importance of these underpinning concepts and the variability of the context inhabited by coach educators, this paper will now present suggestions as to how the requisite interpersonal knowledge in coach educator roles (coach developer and coach assessor), as outlined by McQuade and Nash (2015), may be addressed.

Coach developer. The observational data suggests the role of coach developer is particularly aligned to the behaviours associated with the '4 I's' as expounded in TFL. Turnnidge and Côté's coach development workshop (2017) and more recently the CLAS (2019) provide two excellent tools that coaches and coach educators can use to think more deeply about their behaviours and the impact on participant learning and development. In aspiring to deliver coach education in a way that embraces a coach-centred philosophy, surely such clear direction for coach educators is welcome. Despite this helpful work, we suggest the importance of context receives greater attention and that transformational intentions are in the vanguard ahead of behaviours per se.

Coach assessor. Developing expertise in others differs from assessing expertise. Indeed, the results of this study suggest the role of coach assessor requires a different interpersonal approach that draws upon a directive or even transactional leadership tone, characterised by clarity and instruction to facilitate understanding of assessment expectations (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2018). The value of assessment in coach education, despite the arguments that link qualification to professionalisation, is disputed in the literature. There are few sources that recognise assessment as providing a benefit for coach learning, with reports of impression management (Chesterfield, Potrac & Jones, 2010), dissatisfaction (Nelson et al. 2013) and confusion (Jones, Allison & Jake, 2016) characterising the assessment experience. It is therefore essential to explore ways to improve this element of coach education.

Looking outside the limited coach education literature towards education, Bloxham and Carver (2014) make the point that assessment is for one of three reasons: quality assurance, certification, or for learning. It is important to have clear motives behind assessment and we encourage coach education to avoid conflating learning and assessment when activity is about certification. Making this distinction more transparent and explicit has potential to result in a number of positive outcomes. With reduced expectations of learning, a greater emphasis can be placed on the more traditional expectations around assessment such as consistency, reliability and validity (Moss, 1994). For CE behaviour to make a positive contribution to assessment, we suggest that if over arching intentions remain transformational and the context is fully considered, effective CEs will have greater success when engaging in a more transactional approach to ensure clarity and purpose for candidates during assessment.

Conclusion and Future Direction

How exactly the interpersonal behaviours required of an effective coach assessor or developer manifest remains unclear and is an area that warrants continued attention. However, it is our assertion that observed behaviour of CEs should be evaluated in multiple sessions, according to contextual variables such as the goal of the session, stage of development, and athletes' background and experience. We also believe that for a fuller understanding of CE behaviour it would be useful to support observations with methods such as stimulated recall (Bruner et al., 2017) that allow for greater accuracy and depth of analysis. Such research aspirations seem well served by a critical realist approach and are appropriately positioned to further develop the excellent contribution made by the TFL workshop (Turnnidge & Côté, 2017) and CLAS coding tool (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019). Finally, although some parallels can undoubtedly be drawn to other sport coaching contexts, this research was characterised by adult coach development and assessment, on a formal coach education course. Given the unique

nature of the research setting, views expressed in this paper should therefore be treated with caution.

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Chapter 5: Reflections on Study 1

5.1 Person-centred coaching – a philosophical approach

In addition to the applicability of the FRLM as a useful way to guide interpersonal knowledge, Study 1 also demonstrated the limitations of trying to understand effective delivery through the lens of practitioner behaviours, calling for a deeper investigation into the influence of context. The findings showed that whilst the four behavioural dimensions of TFL align more or less with a person-centred approach, in certain contexts the behaviours required to attend to the needs of the other and hence bring about transformational outcomes, were more aligned with transactional behaviours. Whilst the literature is clear that, contingent on context, effective leaders demonstrate different levels of neutral, transactional, and transformational leadership (Turnnidge & Côté, 2018), the prevailing perspective is that transactional behaviours typically provide a foundation or point of departure for a more transformational approach, as opposed to having direct transformational outcomes themselves (Avolio, 2011). The underlying philosophy of TFL is to empower followers to become leaders (Bass & Riggio, 2006) and therefore the needs of the athlete or developing coach would be central to decision making. However, despite these philosophical roots, in practice the use of leadership models tends towards a behavioural approach (Vella et al., 2010), where practitioners perceive a better and a worse way to operate. Whilst there is considerable support for understanding effective behaviours in sports coaching (Horn 2008; Partington et al., 2014), there is nevertheless a growing collective voice (e.g., Collins et al., 2022; Nichol et al, 2019; North, 2017) that recognises a need to critically review whether coaching behaviours are indeed achieving what they claim to, that is do the behaviours associated with person-centredness always result in person-centred practice?

Bowles and O'Dwyer (2020) used a self-study methodology to explore their experiences of adopting an athlete-centred approach to coaching. One of their observations was that 'while "knowing about" athlete-centred coaching was not an issue for the coaches, learning "how to" was more of a challenge. This suggests coaches find it relatively straightforward to understand behaviours that typically align with being athlete-centred, but when enacting these behaviours in the real world there are inevitably a myriad of contextual

variables that dictate their appropriateness. One coaching behavior identified by Bowles and O'Dwyer (2020) that is widely recognized as athlete-centred is that of questioning. However, the athletes in their study acknowledged that sometimes there is too much questioning; as coaches we need to be careful to avoid embracing behaviours because they are deemed to support a certain approach, without considering contextual factors such as the expectations of the recipient, their stage of learning, the timing within a season or training period, their mindset or level of ability to respond favourably.

Study 1 calls for research to address these contextual variables and that we should seek to understand what intention triggers person-centred behaviours. If we are to understand person-centred practice, we should look beyond the manifestation of other-centredness and scrutinize the initiating intention of person-centred practitioners. Returning briefly to the critical realist perspective of this research, Bhaskar's (2008) ontological domains provide a useful framework by which to view this matter. It becomes clear that we cannot fully understand the domains of the empirical or the actual without considering the domain of the real. The *real (*intention) offers some insight as to the causal mechanisms that induce the actual (behaviours) and empirical (resulting experiences). This begs the question, should scholarship and practice adopt a behaviour driven approach, or one aligned more fundamentally with a philosophical perspective (Partington & Campbell, 2019)? In light of this paradigmatic consideration and building upon the conclusions of study 1, this thesis refocuses from investigating the domain of the actual to explore the domain of the real, in order to offer greater clarity as to what underpins a philosophical approach to person-centred delivery. What follows is an investigation into person-centred intention and whether it is possible to move beyond the context dependent variability that is associated with other ways of knowing how to operate in a person-centred manner.

5.2 Holism

In terms of a philosophical approach that aligns with person-centredness, perhaps the most relevant starting place is holism and how this perspective has been leveraged across sport coaching. With roots that can be traced back to Aristotle, who famously claimed that *the whole is greater than the sum of its parts*, holism informs a number of disciplines such as

psychology, language, and anthropology (Light & Light, 2021). In sport coaching, holistic approaches recognise two distinct considerations, first a need to look beyond the mental and physical development of athletes, so as to embrace spiritual, emotional, political, social and cultural influences that impact human development (Jones & Turner, 2006). Second to see the game or sporting outcome as a whole, in contrast to breaking performance down into its component parts with a view to training separate aspects of the whole (Light & Harvey, 2019). Both these holistic considerations evince person-centred intentions, demanding a wide lensed perspective to the person and the sport. Over a decade ago, Cassidy (2010) recognised the benefits that holism offered sport coaching and called for a deeper understanding of what is meant by the term. Our understanding of holism has been supported by the socio-cultural pedagogic work of Light and colleagues (e.g., Light et al., 2014) and by work that draws upon humanistic psychology (e.g., Nelson et al., 2014). However, consistent with Cassidy's (2010) assertion, there remains a lack of conceptual clarity and questionable practical application of holism, despite a wide-spread use of the terminology (Light et al., 2014; Mouchet et al., 2014; Potrac et al., 2000; Thompson et al. 2022). One could also posit that given the philosophical roots of holism more research should embrace philosophical perspectives to further underpin PCC practice.

In addition to a call for philosophical thinking, humanistic psychology remains a useful way to understand holistic, person-centred approaches to coaching. Nelson et al. (2014) focussed on humanistic psychologist Carl Rogers's theorising around person-centred learning and raised a number of important considerations for coaches and coach educators who aspire to adopt person-centred practice. Referring to athlete-centred (AC) coaching and coach-centred (CC) education, Nelson and colleagues contend, "coaching practitioners, educators and researchers claiming a 'person-centred' approach need to critically reflect on their practice and consider if in reality they are engaged in the facilitation of learning or teaching" (p.527-528). The distinction between learning and teaching is offered to differentiate between an instructional imparting of knowledge (teaching), and a situation whereby learners are actively engaged in the process (learning). It is suggested that coaching currently adopts an approach to education that aligns with Rogers' version of teaching and that for person-centredness to move beyond rhetoric there is a need for a greater emphasis on a facilitation of learning. They argue that coaching behaviours are inherently context dependent and that

paradoxically a set of person-centred behaviours would fail to deliver a person-centred approach, due to the vagaries of context. They warn coaches against “inadvertently imposing an ideology and value on the athlete rather than providing that which will best meet the athlete’s individual needs” (p.527). However, one might argue that it is the ideology that trumps behaviour and that attending to athlete needs is in fact the ideological constancy that a set of behaviours cannot afford.

5.3 Rogerian theory

It is worth expanding upon Rogers’ research, which makes a notable contribution to how we might understand a person-centred approach to coaching. Whilst Rogers’ work was initially from the perspective of a psychotherapist exploring client-centred therapy, his influence extended beyond this field to other helping professions, including education (Rogers, 1969). Central to his thinking was that “the only man who is educated is the man who has learned how to learn” (Rogers, 1969, p.104), placing facilitation of learning as the principal role of the educator. In order to facilitate effectively, Rogers promoted three essential attitudes: *realness*, *unconditional positive regard* and *empathetic understanding* (Rowley & Lester, 2016). Realness refers to a removal of any façade, where the facilitator portrays their genuine self, not necessarily sharing every emotion but rather sharing what and when they believe this will benefit learning. Unconditional positive regard is about adopting a belief that the other is trustworthy, hence modelling trust so that this may become the defining characteristic of the relationship. Finally, empathetic understanding centres on the ability of the facilitator to empathise and understand the feelings of the learner. Each attitude facilitates the facilitator’s ability to be person-centred, by guiding accurate decision making. They also align with the least demonstrable dimension of TFL, where vulnerability and humility are required to provide an idealized influence.

Rogers’ work is not without critique, with claims that the levels of trust required to adopt a Rogerian approach are not representative of the real world (Thorne, 2003). Thorne and Sanders (2012) went further suggesting that by giving the client or learner the freedom to choose, opened the possibility of empty permissiveness, where potentially harmful or limiting choices go unchecked. However, in seeking to understand how coaches might adopt

a person-centred approach Rogers' work is instructive. Indeed, he recognised that for some learners imposing freedom and shared responsibility is equally as oppressive as instructing and dictating may be for others. What appears to be of critical importance is the empathic understanding and desire to truly discern what the learner needs; how we help coaches to achieve this nirvana is not straightforward, however raising awareness that we should be thinking in this way is entirely possible.

5.4 Care in coaching

Rogers' work is also leveraged to better understand person-centred practice in other disciplines; social care (Beresford, 2011), nursing (McCormack & McCance, 2006) and counselling (Mearns et al., 2013). Whilst it is not feasible for this review to engage with this wider body of work, it should be noted that most of this research sits within caring professions. It is only recently that sport coaching scholars have explicitly engaged with the concept of caring (Annerstedt & Lindgren, 2014; Cronin & Armour, 2018; Cronin et al., 2020; Jones, 2009). This work is founded upon the philosophical writings of Noddings (1984); based upon feminist theory Noddings reaffirmed the moral and ethical roots of teaching, claiming that care was undervalued.

Drawing upon the work of Noddings (1984), Cronin et al. (2020) use the concepts of *caring for* and *caring about* to explore the experience of a strength and conditioning coach, working at a Premiership Football club with one specific athlete. Caring for, has three components, *engrossment* – sustained attention and empathetic concern, *motivational displacement* – putting the needs of others before one's own, and *reciprocity* – an acknowledgment of care from the person being cared for, a mutual approach. Caring about on the other hand is explained as a more distanced version of care, how for example we might care for people suffering disasters in foreign countries. The findings identified that the coach *cared for* the athlete through a rules-based approach that was slightly at odds with Noddings's conception of maternal care. Interestingly the multidisciplinary context of a professional football club led to people *caring about* different things, which in turn influenced how the coach was able to *care for* the athlete.

There is notable synergy between the notion of caring for an 'other' and adopting a genuinely person-centred approach. Similarly, the socio-cultural context and politics of power that influence the capacity of the strength and conditioning coach in Cronin et al's (2020) study, ultimately prevented the adoption of fully person-centred actions. Much in the same way that work on the CAR (Jowett & Poczwardowski, 2007), models of effective behaviour (Turnnidge and Côté, 2019) and current approaches to athlete-centredness (Vinson & Bell, 2019) wrestle with the incertitude of context, so Cronin et al. (2020, p.142) recognise that, "evaluating caring practice will be challenging… because care will always be relational, contextual, and multidisciplinary" (p.30). The other vocabulary that transcends work on care and person-centred practice is attending to the *needs* of the other, but not necessarily the *wants*. This again, is a multi-faceted undertaking; how is the coach to understand the boundary between need and want? However, Noddings's (1984) work is again instructive in that care is conceptualised as reciprocal, where the cared for contributes to the relationship and recognises the care provided. This collaborative approach is similarly supported by engrossment and motivational displacement, allowing the coach to understand the needs of the other.

5.5 Theory of planned behaviour (TPB)

The philosophical discussion offered by work on care and holism provides useful breadth in understanding person-centred intention. However, it is also important to recognise theory that underpins the notion of intention per se. Although not without criticism (e.g., Sniehotta et al., 2014), Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour (1991) states "intentions are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence behavior; they are indications of how hard people are willing to try, of how much of an effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behavior" (Ajzen, 1991, p.181). Ajzen further explains that intention alone is not necessarily a predictor of behaviour, postulating three independent determinants of intention: attitude towards the behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. He likens perceptions of behavioural control to Bandura's (1977, 1982) perceived self-efficacy, in that how well equipped we believe we are to execute a course of action influences our intention to do so. For example, if a coach has little understanding or

awareness of what it means to be person-centred, then the likelihood of them adopting person-centred intentions (let alone translating these into effective behaviours) is reduced.

The attitude of a coach, towards person-centred behaviour has an equally important influence. For example, attaching the concept of humility to person-centredness could arguably have a negative effect on attitudes to person-centred behaviour, especially amongst coaches operating in elite settings. This suggestion is fuelled by a common misconception as to what it means to be humble, but also by the persistent expectations in elite sport that to be successful one needs to exert authority and portray a dominant persona, characteristics that don't comfortably align with humility. This strengthens the case for education around what it means to be humble as a characteristic of person-centredness, so as to change attitudes, not about the importance of results and performance but on how to achieve elite standards.

Finally, subjective norms refer to the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform a behaviour. In the context of sport coaching there should be little resistance to the concept of person-centredness, however the reality of person-centred behaviour may well be at odds with social expectations. Consider the coach who has high levels of perceived behavioural control (they know what is meant by PCC and how they might enact this) and a positive attitude towards person-centredness (they think PCC is a good idea), who nevertheless fails to adopt person-centred intentions as they know the requisite behaviour would contravene the social norms of their coaching context (they don't think PCC would land favourably). It is not uncommon for athletes and parents to claim a surface level alignment with PCC but without a fulsome understanding of how this translates into reality (Ross et al., 2015). When perceived social norms are inconsistent with planned behaviour, there will not only be a lack of person-centred intention, but we are likely to see empty rhetoric around person-centredness, where positive words are used without any discernible change in practice (Avner et al., 2017). In this instance the coach jumps from a positive attitude directly to their default, normative behaviour that may or may not be person-centred. When viewed alongside the conceptual model for PCC *(Figure 2 (3)),* this type of unthinking, poorly considered practice fails to embrace a philosophical element.

Whilst there is limited extant literature that applies the TPB to coach decision making (Sagas et al., 2006), there has been some application of this theory to understand participation in sport (Richardson et al., 2012) and to explore the behaviour of sport spectators (e.g., Eddosary et al., 2015). More widely the theory has been used to explore and predict human behavior in numerous fields (e.g., business, environmental sciences, education, applied psychology and occupational health, see Bosnjak et al., 2020 for a recent review). In regard to this thesis, the TPB is not considered as an underpinning theoretical framework but rather an important lens by which we might understand what affects the adoption of person-centred intention in the first place. Instead, the direction of study 2 is to elucidate what constitutes person-centred intention once it is in place.

Chapter 6: Study 2

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Characteristics of a Person-Centred Coaching Approach

Abstract

Within this paper we propose a need to better understand what is meant by a person-centred approach to coaching and in particular, to consider the intention that drives coach behaviours. Much of the extant coaching literature focuses on pedagogical models and theories of learning; without detracting from this important body of work, we suggest that a holistic approach requires a greater focus on coaches' inter- and intra- personal knowledge. In this paper, video stimulated recall was used to guide interviews with Alpine ski coaches, to explore their thought processes and intentions behind person-centred delivery. The findings suggest these coaches adopted other-centred intentions that are facilitated by an accurate self-assessment, a big picture perspective and a willingness to learn. Consequently, the concept of humility is proposed as a guiding principle for person-centred coaching, and a conceptual model POWA) is presented as a solution to the challenges we identify throughout the paper.

Keywords: person-centred coaching, coach development, leadership, humility

The idea of athlete-centred coaching appears to have become something of a zeitgeist over the past 20 years,[1-3] with a number of related terms, often borrowed from other contexts, featuring in coaching research. Examples include a learner-centred approach,[4] client-centred therapy[,5] holistic coaching,[6] and humanistic coaching,[7] all of which are concerned with reducing the focus on the pedagogue (coach, teacher, leader etc.) to enable the people they work with to flourish. Despite this substantial line of work, there remains widely reported inconsistencies in the definition, understanding and application of these concepts in practice.[8, 7, 5] Perhaps more worryingly, evidence suggests that these athlete-centred approaches to coaching often represent rhetoric as opposed to practical reality.[9] Furthermore, colleagues have recently identified the need to more clearly articulate a move towards person-centred coaching, to further diminish the notion of athletes as purely athletic performers, placing people at the heart of our exchanges.[10] The purpose of this paper is to address these issues by

sharing emerging empirical work that explores the antecedents to coach behaviour and seeks to offer a conceptual model to underpin person-centred delivery.

Alongside mixed definitional understandings that continue to frustrate academics and practitioners alike,[8, 11] there is also a paucity of practical resources to help guide coaches in their approach towards person-centred coaching.[12] This issue is partially addressed by a number of pedagogical models that are rooted in Kidman's[2] original conception of athlete-centredness as one of empowering athletes to be autonomous decision makers. Often referred to collectively as non-linear or constructivist pedagogies, which include work related to teaching games for understanding (TGfU),[13] game sense,[14] non-linear pedagogy,[15] constraints-led coaching,[16] and positive pedagogy.[04] This work is of great value and has contributed to a transformation of understanding around how athletes learn in context, and how coaches influence practice design to generate more independent thinkers, problem solvers and engaged learners.[16] Building upon Kidman's[17] work, our understanding of person-centredness has also been closely aligned with the philosophy of humanism that promotes a more holistic approach to developing the whole person, as opposed to just the athlete.[12] The idea that coaches should consider the needs of their athletes as their primary concern is inherently appealing, however whether this happens in reality is something questioned in the literature.[18, 5] Denison et al.[18] suggest real world coaching is so infused with power dynamics that practice rarely allows athletes' needs to be genuinely placed at the centre of affairs, and that the disciplinary frameworks that characterize modern sport, frequently stand in the way of athlete-centred intent.

In addition to the politics of power that often prevent coaches from adopting the level of altruism to which they might aspire, the use of the word athlete itself may also have an interesting effect.[19] By choosing to be athlete-centred we tend towards prioritizing the athlete over the person, which focuses the coach on athletic performance, on the development of technical proficiency in sport and often on results. Whilst these remain important aspects of a coach's role, a person-centred approach has the potential to encourage us to see beyond sport and to embrace a more holistic perspective, one that was intended in Kidman's[2] early work. In the spirit of adopting appropriate discourse, we embrace the purposeful use of the term 'person-centred coaching' throughout this paper in an attempt to foster greater focus and concern for the human and relational aspects of coaching.

Whilst pedagogical models and theories of learning do much to facilitate the acquisition of skill and development of sporting acumen, coaches' inter- and intra- personal knowledge also require our attention, if we are to further clarify what it means to coach effectively in a person-centred way.[20] For some time, scholars have grappled with how to address the interpersonal aspect of coaching and the messy reality this represents; Armour[21] states that complexity in coaching must be faced not ignored, and ways of grasping it must be found. Acknowledging complexity, whilst at the same time offering

ways to grasp it, is something of an oxymoron given that any model to guide behaviour, is inevitably subject to the unending variables associated with the coaching environment. Despite this uncomfortable reality, there exists a progressive body of work that explores the interpersonal realm, and therefore has the potential to inform our understanding of a person-centred approach. This research draws largely from psycho-socio perspectives that, not exclusively, consider the role of power,[22] the characteristics of the relationship itself[23] and the importance of leadership models to guide coach behaviour.[24]

Leadership and coaching behaviours: A case for 'other-centredness'

Building upon the research of Chelladurai,[25] recent work pertinent to leadership models in sport coaching focuses significantly on transformational leadership (TFL), which has made a notable contribution to coach education. Turnnidge and Côté[24] have expanded the original work of Bass and Riggio,[26] adapting the four behavioural dimensions of TFL to offer guidance for coach behaviour. Conducted primarily in youth sport settings, this research has been well received by coaching practitioners[27] and makes a sound contribution to Armour's[21] call to find ways of grasping complexity.

TFL recognizes the importance of context in guiding more or less effective approaches. In fact, a prescriptive set of behaviours would clearly fail to account for the socially constructed, complex endeavour that is coaching.[28, 29] However, whilst acknowledging the dynamic nature of coaching practice, we should nevertheless avoid wallowing in ambiguity by defaulting to an 'it depends' position. Instead, to continue driving our understanding of successful interpersonal interactions, we must embrace this complexity and explore the impact of context at every opportunity, to do otherwise is to promote bookended thinking and capitulation to circumstance, in place of deeper investigation.

Philosophical perspective and the importance of intention

Further commentary on coaching behaviours comes from Cushion et al.[30] who suggest that the nature and structure of coach education should be less concerned with generic guidelines and mimicking the practice of observed others, with more attention paid to developing a model of critical thinking. This supports the notion that coach behaviour should be governed by choices, made consciously during the coaching process, that are intentional rather than based on 'tradition and uncritical inertia'.[31 p128] In order to embrace a deeper investigative strategy, recent studies have suggested critical realism as a useful perspective,[32,33] where research attempts to occupy the middle ground, or as Grix[34] explains, the epistemic border where hard interpretivism meets soft post-positivism. Here, the aim is to provide what Pawson[35] deems to be a best fit, as opposed to an absolute truth.

Whilst important that academic language and concepts such as ontology and epistemological perspectives underpin research, to provide direction that is founded on clear rationales; it is equally important to minimize the academic-practitioner gap[36] by distilling intellectual writing and converting it to a more accessible format. Therefore, we might ask (and answer) what is meant by the epistemic border? In our view, coach development requires resources that sit between a paint by numbers, prescriptive approach and an eternally open, idealistic 'it depends on the situation therefore let's not have any models' approach. That middle ground is the epistemic border; it is a balanced, open-minded approach to knowledge - not claiming a silver bullet solution, but equally not leaving things infinitely debatable. Such middle ground, paves the way for coach development to pragmatically suggest useful ideas and ways of working, underpinned by empirical research, that represent the current best attempt at saying 'this is a good way to do coaching'.

In embracing the epistemic border, it would appear that a more consistent approach to person-centred coaching requires research that goes beyond the pedagogical behaviours of coaches. To further support this position let us consider two recent studies[37, 38] that have used the Coach Leadership Assessment System (CLAS)[24] to collect observational data that focus on the interpersonal behaviours of coaches. Both reported idealized influence to be the dimension of TFL that is least evident in coach behaviour. This is not altogether surprising; according to the CLAS, idealized influence involves demonstrating humility, a trait that is not always overtly observable. To fully understand whether someone is behaving humbly, it is often necessary to understand their thought processes and motivations. Therefore, compared with other dimensions of TFL, such as intellectual stimulation where behaviours such as questioning, or problem setting are more explicit, we should expect idealized influence to be less observed. Given the inherent other-centredness within the concept of humility, we argue that humility as an integral component of idealized influence, provides a fitting framework for person-centred coaching. Moreover, we hypothesise that person-centred intentions are governed by humility.

Humility

According to Nielsen et al.,[39 p23] a precise and usable definition for humility is surprisingly hard to come by. The popular cultural, dictionary definition emphasizing a need for meekness and modesty, represents the 'old way' of conceptualizing humility, whilst the 'new way', presented by scholars and researchers, aligns more closely with Aristotle's version of a virtue, and is primarily concerned with an accurate awareness and understanding of self. Here, the distinction between new and old is the need for accuracy and a more expansive understanding of the concept, as opposed to the somewhat myopic position of self-deprecation. Nielsen et al.[39] outline the core concepts of humility as understanding self,

relating to others and perspective. Additionally, Owens et al.[40] introduce teachability as a component, which is further elucidated by Tangney[41 p411] who refers to a willingness to seek advice and a desire to learn, or an ability to 'acknowledge limitations'. These components recur throughout a body of literature that draws upon philosophical, psychological and religious perspectives. We hypothesize that humility governs a person-centred approach to coaching and pose the following research questions:

- What causal mechanisms facilitate the manifestation of person-centred intent in coach behaviour?
- To what extent does humility underpin a person-centred approach to coaching?

Method

A critical realist perspective

Consistent with a recent call to action within the sport coaching literature,[32, 33] this study adopted a critical realist perspective. As the forefather of critical realism, Bhaskar[42] introduced the concept of three ontological domains that encourage a laminated view of the world. At the deepest level Bhaskar introduces the domain of the real, where we consider structures that have the potential to make things happen. Arguably, this is the location of dispositions that have the power to make person-centred intention a reality. It is when these structures or mechanisms are activated that we reach the domain of the actual, where events take place. The domain of the actual is consistent with research into coach behaviours which represent events that happen. Finally, the domain of the empirical, constitutes knowledge emanating from what we experience. In coaching research this may come from athlete perceptions, and whilst valuable, this level of knowledge is often partial and fallible. What we experience (empirical) and what was intended (real and actual) are not always aligned. For example, a coach who has genuine person-centred intent (real) might display concern by putting their arm around an athlete (actual), however there is no guarantee the athlete interprets the embrace as person-centred and, in some circumstances, they may reject the gesture (empirical). As Nichol et al.[32 p24] point out, coaching research needs to move beyond exploring the outcomes or outputs of coaching, instead we must delve 'deeper into causal explanatory accounts, identifying emergent entities, powers and mechanisms'. It is with this in mind that within a critical realist perspective, this research foregrounds the domain of the real.

Participants

Consistent with intensive qualitative research, a purposive sampling strategy was applied.[43] Inclusion criteria required participants to be recognized by themselves and others as person-centred in their approach to coaching. More specifically, all coaches followed the same coach education pathway that is explicitly learner centred, and conversations with employers and professional colleagues reinforced the appropriateness of participant sampling. Additionally, having known all the participants for over 10 years, the lead researcher had engaged in numerous conversations that explored the participants' coaching philosophies, further supporting the person-centred nature of their practice. Finally, participants operated as both coaches and coach educators (CEs) within Snowsports; this dual role ensured high levels of expertise and insight around a person-centred approach and provided a novel sample. Although participants refer throughout this study to experiences in both contexts, for the purposes of this paper they will be referred to as coaches, and their interactions viewed through the lens of a person-centred approach, irrespective of whether they are coaching learners to ski, or coaching the coaches. 4 male and 1 female coach, aged between 33-50 years (mean = 44), took part in the study. They all held an international qualification, recognized globally as the highest level of assessed expertise and had coached skiing for between 16 and 30 years (mean = 25.4). Four coaches had worked as CEs for between 18 and 25 years (mean = 20.75), were considered expert by candidates and peers, had worked as CE mentors, and had delivered at national and international CE conferences. One coach, considered expert by peers and employer, had delivered coach education within the work environment for 8 years. Once ethical permission was granted, all participants were consulted and informed consent for their involvement in the project attained [see Appendix 9].

Data collection

To address the embedded, relational and emergent nature of sport coaching, a multi- method approach to data collection was employed.[44, 33] Data were gathered in the French Alps, using stimulated recall with participants in post-event interviews. Stimulated recall interview is an introspective research procedure that uses audio and video footage to assist the recall and interpretation of experience[45] and is suggested as an effective way to facilitate immersion and specificity of recall.[46] As suggested by the work of McLennan et al.,[46] video footage captured from an external perspective can lead to self-consciousness and biased selectivity in what is recalled, however given the importance of capturing coach behaviours, it was decided to use chest mounted GoPro cameras attached to the learners within sessions. Positioned as they were, the cameras were unobtrusive and blended into the skiwear apparel, helping maintain the familiarity of the coaching environment. This allowed video and audio footage to be captured across one entire coaching session (sessions lasted between 3 and 6hrs) for each coach, in

a non-intrusive manner. To further address the limitations associated with videoing participants,[47] the researcher was absent from the filming period to maintain a natural environment.

Following recording, the lead researcher identified all interpersonal interactions (verbal and non-verbal), between the participant (coach) and the learner(s). The video was edited accordingly, producing a mean of 32.6 vignettes per coach (SD = 7.81) that were used to guide the semi structured interviews. Consistent with guidelines advocated in previous research, and in order to minimize recall bias and situate the participants closely with the research context,[48] stimulated recall interviews of between 60 and 90 minutes with each coach, took place within 48 hours of filming. The below questions were used as a starting point for the interview schedule, allowing the researcher to explore the intention behind coach behaviour.

- Was there a reason for that particular behaviour/exchange/gesture etc.?
- Why did you behave in that way, was it a conscious decision or just something you do?
- Can you tell me what was going through your mind at that moment?

Data analysis

Thematic analysis[49] was conducted on the interview data. This process started with the lead researcher transcribing the data verbatim and (re)reading the transcripts to become fully immersed [see Appendix 10]. Once the raw data responses had been coded, sub-themes and overarching themes were established via a process consistent with Bhaskar's[42] DREI model, which promotes retroductive analysis, to abstract the main causal contributions within the research context [see Appendix 11]. Importantly, critical realists seek findings and beliefs that appear to be truthful as opposed to claiming an absolute truth,[32, 33] consulting multiple perspectives during analysis, including that of the researcher and drawing upon pre-existing theoretical frameworks such as that outlined for humility.

Results and discussion

Analysis revealed four major themes that identify causal mechanisms contributing to person-centred coaching, each will be discussed in turn, along with sub-themes where applicable. Table 1. presents an audit trail of how the themes and sub-themes were generated from the data.

Theme	Sub-theme	Raw data extract
1. Other-centredness	Learning through structured autonomy	"Their task was to come up with different ways of standing on your skis that were accurate. So, it's getting them to think across the spectrum, across different terrains, how you might vary how you stand on your skis." (Glen)
	Accurate social assessment	"I was trying to work out what's going on emotionally… first I was trying to get other things out of her, about her skiing, then I very quickly realized it was too early, she needed more time to find her feet and get in a better mood." (Lyndsey)
	Building trust	"It's important to build that relationship where he trusts the accuracy of what I am saying, he trusts my motivation for why I am saying it, it sounds obvious, but I am trying to help him." (Franz)
	Humour	I don't know if I always put it the best way but I'm trying to make her laugh… I want her to feel more at ease…" (Jonny)
2. Accurate self-assessment	Accurate awareness of role	"We're not a set of peers going out training each other in our free time, I'm working professionally they're not working. Even though they are professional ski coaches, so there is that distinction. I want to be seen to be providing that service." (Franz – when running coach training)
	Accurate awareness of abilities	"I'm not the best skier on the mountain but I am constantly adjusting and it's about helping clients to make that same conscious shift…" (Lyndsey)
3. Willingness to learn	[When asked why the CE invited his group to critique his own skiing performance] "So if they [the trainee coaches] do see it [a technical weakness in the CE's skiing] tell me, because I'd be pretty happy to know!" (Bode)	
4. Perspective	Yeah, this is the first day of a level 1, it's their first encounter with it [teaching skiing], they're trying stuff and getting it wrong it's all part of it, you can't hammer them for having no knowledge, because how do you have it on the first day of a level 1? (Jonny)	

Table 4 (1): Generating themes.

Theme 1 – Other-centredness

The first major theme is that of other-centredness, with sub themes of learning through structured autonomy, accurate social assessment, building trust and humour. Given that all participants identified as adopting a person-centred approach, it is unsurprising that other-centredness was a prominent theme in the data. Other-centredness requires an outward looking focus with altruistic intent.[50] There is a symbiotic relationship between other-centredness and the sub-themes, however the discussion seeks to explain how other-centred intention facilitated learning, accurate social assessment, trust and the use of humour.

Learning through structured autonomy. All participants were clear that they sought a degree of autonomy for their learners, recognizing the limitations they had as agents of change. As Bode says, "they've [the learners] got to change their performance, I can't change it for them, I can try and help them, but I can't physically do it for them." This approach aligns with autonomy-supportive coaching,[51] placing the person at the centre of the learning process. Scholars have highlighted the importance of structure in facilitating autonomy-support,[52-54] emphasising the fine line between a laissez-faire approach and a more transformational learning environment that fosters intellectual stimulation.

Curran et al.[54] identified the importance of providing guidance, feedback and expectations in a way that respects athlete's volitions. This was reflected in the data,

> "If he can start to feel what I am talking about you start to build another feedback channel, which is intrinsic… it doesn't take me out of the loop, but he can then get stuff done without me." (Franz)

In order to help the learner take ownership, Franz provides structure around what success might feel like. Glen offers a similar thought when he explains how he uses drills in his coaching, a pedagogic tool often associated with more traditional methods.

> "I'm only getting them to do the drill so they can understand the feeling of separation between legs and upper body" (Glen)

The other-centred intent in this quote is palpable. In practice, Glen shared with his learners the reasoning articulated in the above quote; he offers his learners a way to self-regulate and wants them to understand his motives and the rationale behind the drill.

There are two important messages for coaches to take from this interaction. 1) To be person-centred and foster autonomy, we sometimes need to guide learners using direct instruction, with the coach initially taking the lead (structure). 2) Direct instruction can be person-centred if the coach shares a rationale for this approach. It is then more likely to be accepted for what it is – scaffolding to help the learner achieve a more autonomous state.

For learners to become autonomous they require varying degrees of structure. The important distinction that comes from the data is that the level of structure should be governed by other-centred intention, not by a self-serving agenda or indeed by an unthinking, parrot-like approach to delivery.[55] As Glen puts it, "I'm in with them, trying to help them in that supportive role, rather than, I'm in charge and this is what we're doing."

Accurate social assessment. Whilst the skilful use of pedagogic techniques such as structured autonomy are central to how we operate in a learner centred way, it is equally important to look beyond the learner to the person. Making an accurate social assessment aligns with emotional intelligence[56] and our ability to adopt empathic accuracy, it contributes towards what Jowett and Poczwardowski[57] termed a shared understanding. It could be argued that this sub-theme is actually a mechanism that enables other-centredness, that only when the coach reads the person they aim to help, can they truly behave in the most effective way. However, we argue that other-centred intent is required for a coach

to invest the time to understand the people around them. This quote demonstrates conscious effort by the coach to investigate how the learner is feeling, before deciding which route to ski.

> "I say these things [questions], then I see her react... So, I'm trying to collect information to decide whether I'm happy to take her down the hard one [slope] or the not so hard one." (Lyndsey)

She follows this up with, "I am very tuned in to her there. I hear every thought in that phrase." Interestingly, Jowett and Clark-Carter[58] found that empathic accuracy, the ability of one person to read the emotion of another in the moment, is diminished in longer standing relationships. The suggestion is that familiarity reduces the conscious decision to observe, interpret and understand. Ski coaches often work with people over short, sporadic periods of time, therefore there is arguably a greater perceived need to 'work people out', which can be particularly challenging when goggles and buffs obscure people's facial expressions.

Emotional intelligence (EI) has been conceptualized in a number of ways[59, 56] but Mayer and Salovey[60] present a cognitive ability model that requires emotionally intelligent people to accurately perceive emotion, use it to facilitate thought, understand emotion and finally to manage emotion. The following quote shows how Glen demonstrates some of these abilities, as a conscious thought process.

> "No, it's not a throw away comment… he's [learner] quite intense [perception] and quite tentative. Sometimes he thinks too hard [emotion facilitates thought], so I want to give him the information [management] but I want to create the right climate for Peter [management]" (Glen)

Here we see Glen grapple with his interpretation of who Peter is and how he behaves, in order for him to be person-centred. Glen does not appear to fully explore why (understanding emotion) Peter is so intense, but he does engage with the three other abilities in Mayer and Salovey's[60] model, demonstrating an emotionally intelligent approach and therefore an enhanced ability to make an accurate social assessment.

Building trust. In addition to supporting learning, coaches in this study were also motivated to understand their learners in order to build trust. Whilst learning and trust are arguably inter-dependent, it is interesting to see the lengths to which Franz goes, to specifically build trust.

"There are lots of times when you are coaching skiing when you're not skiing, and a lot of that is chairlift time… there'll be times when it is a deliberate action not to talk about skiing… showing your human side is a pretty facile way of saying it, but to try and bond outside of the ski chat… I make an effort to do that, and I think it builds trust." (Franz)

Skiing lends itself to non-activity related conversation, with enforced time spent riding lifts. Whilst Franz talks about how he uses this time to develop relationships, we might well wonder how coaches in other sports find or create that 'chairlift time' to develop the interpersonal understanding that is so crucial for a person-centred approach.

The intention to develop trust extends beyond the dyad of coach and learner to include intra-group trust, "it's about getting them to work together, not just to trust me, but to trust each other, and being comfortable with each other" (Bode). In many ways trust is synonymous with person-centredness, requiring leaders to demonstrate attributes such as dependability and benevolence[61]. Trust is our belief in the reliability of an other,[62] it is not so much a trait as an outcome, and so it is necessary to ask, how do we create it? The data suggest the coaches engage in specific behaviours that have explicit, other-centred intent to achieve this. A number of scholars have suggested that humility and the other-centredness that underpins humility, is a fundamental component of trust.[40, 63]

Humour. The data show humour to be an important means by which other-centred intention can be enacted. It is widely accepted that sport coaching is a negotiated and problematic social practice,[64] and with humour embedded in social interactions, it is surprising that so little research explores this concept.[65, 66] The below quote talks about how humour can help cement the learning process.

"It's just a way of keeping it light-hearted, but still hopefully getting the point across. And sometimes when you make a joke like that… it might stick in his mind a bit more." (Bode)

The intent here is to help the learner remember advice through the use of humour. Jones et al.,[67] when discussing Bob Dwyer's coaching techniques, identified a similar approach, where humour is clearly adopted with other-centred intention.

Another use of humour reported in the literature is to reduce perceived power imbalances.[66] This was evident in how Bode uses humour to put others at ease, to create an environment that encourages dialogue, flattening any interpretation of hierarchy.

> "I'm trying not to take myself too seriously, so that I'm approachable. You can have a bit of a laugh about it [ski technique] and again not be on the pedestal where you think you're great… get on the same level as everybody else." (Bode)

Finally, humour is used by the coaches as a way to manage tension. This is recognized by Ronglan and Aggerholm[66] as an important consideration and again in this quote we can see how intentional this was.

> "I don't do anything off the cuff [he was asked if his actions on the video were intentional], I was aware that I was standing there for a while, giving lots of technical input and I could sense that, 'oh this is a bit heavy', and I just wanted to throw that [humorous comment] in to lighten it up." (Glen)

What we see here requires an accurate social assessment and aligns with Mayer and Salovey's[60] notion of managing emotion. Having perceived the mood of the group and understood why this was the case, Glen used humour to change the emotional energy. Throughout the data, the use of humour remains other-centred, with no examples of sarcastic, demeaning or what Terrion and Ashworth[68] term putdown humour, where amusement is derived at the expense of the other. This is an important consideration for coaches in how they use humour in a person-centred way.

Theme 2 – Accurate self-assessment

Whilst we have discussed the notion of an accurate social assessment, the data also revealed the importance of self-assessment as a mechanism that contributes to our ability to be person-centred. In writing about intellectual humility, Church and Barrett[69] outline the importance during introspection, of neither under valuing nor over valuing one's beliefs and intellectual abilities, but instead viewing them as one ought – accurately. Of course, this is not necessarily an easy endeavour, and a lack of self-awareness is not uncommon amongst modern leaders,[39] yet this quality is often fundamental in our efforts to relate effectively to others. If we are to be accurate in our self-assessment, we should avoid inflated opinions of ourselves and moments of self-denigration, as both can compromise our ability to effectively influence what is right for the other. An accurate self-assessment in this study was evident in two ways.

Accurate awareness of role. Whilst in some instances it can be helpful to reduce hierarchy, it is also important to recognize hierarchies inevitably exist, and to understand one's position therein. Franz

clearly articulates this and demonstrates an awareness of how he is perceived, as well as the expectations associated with his role.

> "I think you start off with a whole load of credibility from the position that you're in, and I have that position as you know… so that helps." (Franz)

Similarly, Jonny outlines how he shares the parameters of his role when running a national governing body assessment course.

> "One of the things I say at the beginning [of the course] is that we have these criteria to get through, this isn't just a performance week, I've got to deliver a course and there will be bits that they find more interesting and bits that they might not." (Jonny)

Having clarity over one's role allows the coach, in this instance, to adopt other-centred behaviours that are relevant to their professional context. If the primary goal of the group is to pass the exam (and this should be checked), then arguably a person-centred approach would be to ensure the criteria by which they are assessed are addressed during delivery, whether they enjoy that or not.

This final example involves Franz explaining that in order to watch his learners ski, he needed to assume a position on the slope where he was vulnerable to collision from other skiers. Despite him taking this risk, he instructed his group to position themselves in a safer position.

> "They're all instructors so they're used to watching people perform and they'd be comfortable with it [standing in the middle of the slope to observe], but I'm not treating them as instructors, I'm treating them as clients, performers, athletes, whatever… so they haven't got that role. The role that I'm playing involves there being a distinction between us." (Franz)

This provides an exemplar of an accurate social and self-assessment coming together to enable behaviour that is intended to be person-centred around safety.

Accurate awareness of abilities. In addition to understanding one's role, the data also provided strong evidence that understanding one's strengths and weaknesses allowed coaches to be person-centred. Franz is uncomplicated in his self-appraisal, not only does he recognize the weight afforded him by his position as a senior member of the coaching team, but he is aware that his skiing performance is strong. He also recognizes the clarity of his communication and the other-centredness of his motivation.

> "I think I build credibility through the experience and position that I've got but hopefully through the way that I ski, and hopefully the interactions we have make sense so… I'm not just making stuff up, I'm deliberately accurate and helpful." (Franz)

If his opinion of these characteristics was inaccurate then he would err towards the arrogant, however it was widely appreciated that Franz was indeed in receipt of these qualities.

Glen shares an equally positive overview of his strengths when discussing how he manages groups in the backcountry (off piste), where his decision as to whether terrain is safe to ski can have grave consequences.

> "So with off piste stuff… I think I'm pretty good now at saying 'no' [it is too dangerous to ski], you know, I've got better at walking up something and looking at it, and actually… we're not doing it. I wanted to prepare them [the group] for that" (Glen)

Here, Glen recognizes his ability to read the terrain in order to assess the safety of a slope and shares his decision-making process with the group. It is important to note that an accurate self-assessment is not necessarily enough, and the humble leader has a responsibility to think deeply about how others will be affected, by bringing these thoughts into the public domain. Had Glen shared his ability to make accurate safety decisions about off piste conditions with a group of beginners, for whom that context felt irrelevant, then we might rightly suggest Glen was doing so to assuage his ego. However, because the decision to share his self-assessment was contextually relevant and motivated by other-centred intent, we can suggest his actions were humble. In this sense Austin[70 p204] refers to a "proper self-assessment" requiring not only accuracy but also an appropriate level of concern for how that accuracy is managed. Furthermore, Peterson and Seligman's[71 p463] assertion that humility constitutes "a private stance toward the evaluation of the self", could also be instructive.

Theme 3 – Willingness to learn

Continuing with an introspective focus, this theme showed how the coaches demonstrated a willingness to learn, in order to support the other.[41] Here Bode explains why he invites his group of trainee coaches to critique his own skiing performance.

> "It's about trying to put them [the learners] on the same level, we're all working on our skiing. Secondly, it's the truth, that's [technical focus] what I'm working on. So, if they do see it [the error in his technique] tell me, because I'd be pretty happy to know!" (Bode)

Bode is expected to be the template in terms of skiing performance, so to invite criticism places him in a vulnerable position. However, his desire to learn can influence his group in a number of ways. First, they can develop their analysis skills on another skier, second, as Bode points out, this flattens the hierarchy, which is likely to promote dialogue, questioning and trust. Third, and perhaps most importantly, he models humility and sets an example; everyone can continue to learn no matter their skill level, which supports a long-term development approach for his learners.

Interestingly, Bode acknowledges "it is the truth"; it is important to avoid covert attempts to self-promote or as Oc et al.[72 p11] suggest, the notion of "humble bragging", where false modesty can be as detrimental as an open lack of humility. Oc et al.[72] also point out that authentic humility is easily undermined by a desire to avoid vulnerability and meet the expectations of others. Certainly, when considering sport coaching there are undoubtedly, deep seated societal expectations that the coach has the answers, and should portray a position of strength as opposed to a vulnerability.[73]

Further evidence of a willingness to learn revolves around managing difficult questions.

> "You've got to go with it, haven't you, I've asked them to ask me questions, but if I don't know the answer, I'll say so… I might go away and think about it for the next day, but you've got to be honest." (Jonny)

Recent work that explores the epistemology of high-level adventure sport coaches,[74] found the characteristic of humility to be a strong theme, and in particular that high-level adventure sport coaches recognize they do not know everything. They issue a call for more research to understand the processes that foster intellectual humility. Certainly, in this extract we see an openness to learning, but also other-centred intent.

Theme 4 – Perspective

When referring to humility, one might argue that perspective and other-centredness are the same, however the humble leader is not only concerned with doing what is right for their followers, but also recognizes the wider context within which they operate. This theme returns to an outward looking focus, but one that extends beyond the immediate coaching context and takes in the bigger picture.

Here Franz refers to his broad concerns of how learners relate to him as a CE on assessed courses.

> "Well, there's a worry that he [the learner] is subservient and therefore trying to please me rather than get better at skiing, I think that's a general worry that they [the learners] just agree with you, whatever you say, or they try to say something that pleases you" (Franz)

This is synonymous with an accurate social assessment; however, it requires a stepping back, a conscious removal of self from the minutiae of the day-to-day elements of the job in order to adopt this wide angled perspective.

Considering things at a more organizational level Bode explains how he relates the importance of time to his group, encouraging them to adopt patience and frame their development in the context of the entire course.

> "You're with us for 10 weeks, at the beginning all the information is coming from us, a little bit from your peers. But at the end of the course, you will be aware of your own performance and modifying it as you ski down." (Bode)

In emphasizing the learning process,[24] Bode legitimizes a more transactional approach by providing a person-centred rationale. Perspective of this kind allows the coach to help the learner rationalize their progress, negotiate realistic goals, manage expectations and maintain motivation; all behaviours that align with a person-centred approach. The ability to expand one's perspective and adopt a vantage point that provides oversight and balance, allows the humble coach to achieve a number of outcomes; it helps avoid self-enhancing bias[75] and importantly provides clarity around the enormity of what it is possible to know.

Finally, Lyndsey advises her learner not to rely on lessons to develop her performance,

> "Mm, I was trying to let her know that it's about practice… we're limited by how much we can do in 3hrs, she needs to ski and try things... she needs mileage… she doesn't need more lessons as such." (Lyndsey)

Adopting this wide-angled perspective, with concern only for her learner's longer term development, Lynsey compromises her future work opportunities with this client. Interestingly, without that perspective, Lyndsey could continue delivering lessons and remain arguably other-centred in her

delivery, however the lack of perspective would ultimately detract from her ability to be genuinely person-centred, if what the learner really needed was space and time to practice.

A final insight drawn from the data is less connected to person centred intent per se, and more concerned with the explicit nature of intention in the data, and the implication this has on how we address person centredness during the professional development of coaches. When questioned, all participants were able to articulate an overt thought process that had occurred in the moment, as the following data extracts demonstrate.

"…there was a definite thought process that went through my head." (Jonny)

"There is a conscious decision, I am trying to empathise with her as I know the feeling" (Lyndsey)

"I don't do anything off the cuff if I'm being honest" (Glen)

"I am quite conscious of that (the use of humour)" (Jonny)

This explicit decision-making process aligns with suggestions in the literature that coaches should ask themselves why they behave in certain ways,[55] rather than relying purely on tacit thought processes. Expertise is better developed by understanding the procedural knowledge that underpins practice and this is a recurring theme across the participants.

'POWA' a conceptual model of humility

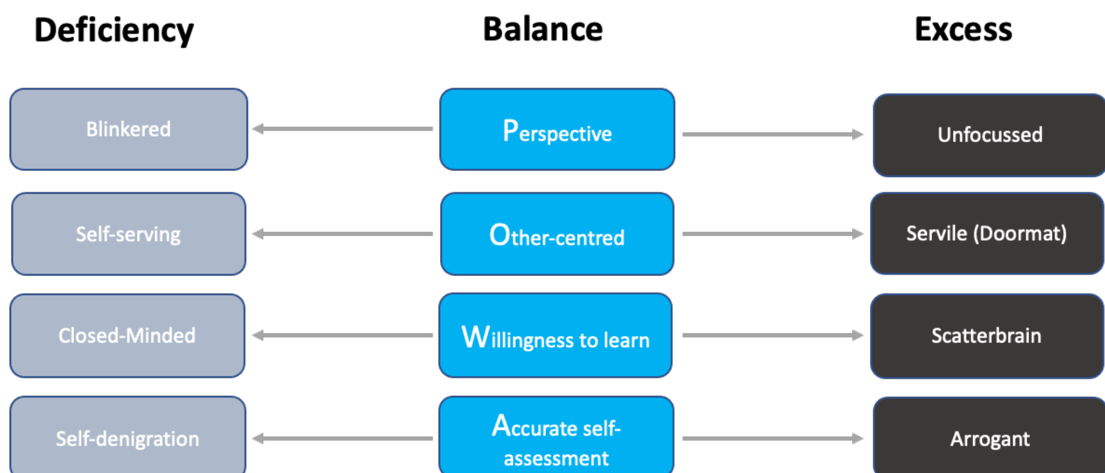
The purpose of this paper was to better understand the intention behind coach behaviour, when adopting a person-centred approach to practice. Furthermore, and consistent with a critical realist methodology, definitions of humility[70, 39, 40] were considered during retroductive data analysis, as it was hypothesized that aligning notions of humility with person-centred coaching could help provide guidance and consistency in practice. The data showed how participants in this study, adopted intentions and characteristics that align with the interpersonal and intrapersonal qualities associated with humility.[70, 39, 40] The results (see Table 1) suggested that other-centred intent is facilitated by the causal mechanisms of accurate self-assessment, a willingness to learn and adopting a big picture perspective. The remainder of this paper will use these themes to support an emerging conceptual model for person-centred coaching.

We argue that the four themes in this study offer a potential roadmap for person-centred approaches to sport coaching. These themes are reordered to from the acronym POWA and hence the

POWA model (see Figure 1.) This work needs to be extended and refined, however as a starting point it offers a useful way to conceptualize humble intent.

Perspective – stepping back to see the bigger picture, seeing things objectively
Other-centred focus – making decisions intended to benefit others, as opposed to purely the self
Willingness to learn – an openness to vulnerability, to receiving and seeking feedback, to acknowledging mistakes
Accurate self-assessment – an honest and correct appraisal of one's strengths and weaknesses
Figure 2(1): The POWA model of humility

It is important to appreciate that expecting coaches to hit each of the concepts within POWA, all the time, is unrealistic, and perhaps lacking in humility to assume it is ever the case! So, to increase the functionality and acceptability of the POWA model, we draw upon Aristotle's doctrine of the mean that suggests for a trait to be virtuous it needs to sit at the average position (mean) between excess and deficiency. As an example, if we approach accurate self-assessment as a virtue, then it represents the middle ground between arrogance (excess) and self-denigration (deficiency). We apply this logic to each of the components of POWA as presented in Figure 2. In some ways, the concept of excellence or virtue equating to an average position seems antithetical, however what is really suggested is balance, not doing too much or too little of something, so that we arrive at the right amount, the best amount and hence excellence.



Using a balanced approach to guide person-centred intent, has the potential to offer coaches a reflective tool to appraise their delivery, to guide decision making and to structure the teaching of how to be person-centred.

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to provide a preliminary understanding of the characteristics that constitute a person-centred coaching approach. Adopting a critical realist perspective allowed us to shed light on the mechanisms that are activated by coaches who have been recognized to value a focus on the person as well as the athlete. Consequently, the findings support a conceptual model (POWA) to guide person-centred approaches. Despite the potential of such a model there are limitations to this research. As noted by Mills and Boardley,[76 p567] "all theories and models are suboptimal to some degree" and as a conceptual piece of work, the ideas presented in this paper require further investigation. Data analysis failed to identify examples of negative behaviours, yet as proposed when presenting the POWA model, we acknowledge such a finding is a rare reflection on reality. Therefore, given the importance of humility as an underpinning virtue for person-centred coaching, there is an urgent need for empirical research to better understand the conceptual components of humility in applied coaching settings, if we are to make a tangible contribution to coach development

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Chapter 7: Reflections on Study 2

Whilst the four components of the POWA model were derived from the empirical data, as suggested in the paper retroductive analysis also drew upon definitions of humility. If person-centredness is synonymous with humility, as this research proposes, it is instructive at this stage to explore the theoretical underpinnings of the POWA model in more depth. In the words of John Seldon, a 17th century freedom advocate, "humility is a virtue all men preach, none practice, and yet everyone is content to hear" (Worthington, 2008). Clearly, person-centred coaching was not 'a thing' in the 1600s, yet this quote is prescient of what we sometimes see in coaching contexts today, where despite a widespread commitment to person-centredness in policy, we see a rhetorical approach in practice. In order to explore how coaches express humility in their practice, it is essential to complement our understanding of what constitutes such behaviour. This section explores the humility literature and challenges common misconceptions that are often associated with the concept of being humble.

Humility is an often-misunderstood concept (Austin, 2014; Tangney, 2000), with notions of self-denigration, modesty and servility commonly clouding what many scholars explain to be a virtue. Our understanding is importantly dependent on the contextual frame in which humility is viewed. For example, in performance sport, many reasons exist that would dissuade leaders from embracing meekness and servility. The picture is not uniform, yet the professional, commercial world of modern sport does much to perpetuate the vision of the coach as power-holding, decision maker, equipped with technological apparatus and specialist support staff in order that they can orchestrate winning results for profit (Holowchak & Reid, 2013). For this reason, much in the same way as person-centredness, humility as we typically understand it, is often a concept that people claim to express (or not) but fail to demonstrate in reality.

Academics have written about different types of humility that despite sharing similar traits, relate to different contexts and are distinct in so much as we may have one type of humility but lack another (Davis et al., 2016). For instance, intellectual humility, which is concerned with our approach to ideas, does not necessarily translate to cultural humility,

which demands an openness to cultural diversity (Danso, 2018; Van Tongeren, 2019). Authors have also written about relational (Wang et al., 2017), political (Hodge et al., 2021), religious and spiritual (Davis et al., 2017) humility, but with a universal understanding that humility of any kind requires an interpersonal and an intrapersonal dimension (Drinane et al., 2017). The intrapersonal dimension involves an accurate awareness of self, one's limitations, strengths and areas for development, it is about "knowing you are smart but not *all knowing"* (Templeton, 1997, p162). The interpersonal dimension is about being other-oriented as opposed to self-focussed. That these two dimensions underpin conceptions of humility provides useful synergy with the need for greater focus on inter- and intra-personal knowledge as outlined earlier in this thesis. Whilst it remains important that professional knowledge (e.g., Côté & Gilbert, 2009) informs the work of a person-centred coach, interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge are arguably more foundational in guiding other-centred practice. It appears humility offers an excellent lens through which to study these less tangible bodies of knowledge. As presented in study 2, definitions of humility are lacking in consistency, however there are trends that echo throughout the literature. These align with POWA and will now be examined in turn.

7.1 Humility

7.1.1 Perspective

George Herbert Mead defined perspective as "orientations within a larger context, that arise through and always remain related to, human conduct in the world" (Martin, 2006, p.67). It is recognised in developmental psychology that our ability to recognise a broader context than the self is something that we develop through experience, with societal perspective taking representing the most developed ability, where entertaining multiple perspectives is consciously influenced by systems of societal values (e.g., political, spiritual, cultural). When considering perspective in a sporting context, Brymer and Oades' (2009) work on extreme sports is instructive and acknowledges the importance of being part of a larger concern, be that nature or indeed our own potential. When death is the likely outcome of error, it not only focuses the performer but often brings a spiritual element to the experience, providing an acute awareness of a bigger picture. The ability to expand one's perspective and adopt a vantage point that provides oversight and balance allows the humble

person to achieve a number of outcomes; it helps avoid self-enhancing bias (Van Tongeren & Myers, 2017) and importantly provides clarity around the enormity of what it is possible to know.

In addition to a spiritual element, Stellar et al. (2018) stress the importance of recognising the role of luck and circumstance in shaping one's accomplishments. The ability to entertain a broader perspective than one's own agency affords; to accept that external forces and events outside of our control (e.g., birthplace, upbringing, genetic endowment etc.) have shaped our fortunes, is an important notion when considering how perspective enables humility. As Murphy (2017) explained, before we condemn others for wrongdoing, we must first ask how we would have behaved in exactly the same circumstances, had we shared that person's history and influences. Here rather than adopting a wider angled lens to appreciate the bigger picture, what is perhaps required is a different lens altogether, in order to see things from another person's perspective.

Contemplating the perspective of others is an other-oriented act, and further evidences the previous assertion that the components of humility are inter-dependent; similarly, understanding one's own perspective contributes to an accurate self-assessment. Holowchak and Reid (2011) provide an insightful model to imagine the perspective to which modern coaches may subscribe. Drawing upon the Aristolean mean they present a spectrum of philosophical perspectives that drive engagement in sport. At one end is the martial-commercial model, characterised by a win-at-all-costs mentality, where sport is undertaken for financial gain, whilst the other end is the aesthetic-recreational model; here competition is tolerated but the emphasis is on fun and the pleasure of beauty in movement/activity. The authors remain dissatisfied with both ends of the spectrum and instead advocate for a balanced position (the Aristolean mean) that sits between the two, they call this the aretic model. Borrowed from the ancient Greek word *arete*, meaning excellence or virtue, this perspective champions the performance and characteristics that lead to winning, as opposed to winning itself; it celebrates effort, development and potential. In short, it accepts something from both ends of the spectrum but with a healthy dose of balance to ensure excellence. This work provides a useful lens by which coaches could develop greater awareness of the perspective they adopt in their practice.

Moving away from philosophical accounts, Vallerand and colleagues' psychological work around passion for an activity, presents a dualistic model (Vallerand et al., 2008) that is instructive when considering perspective in relation to humility. Closely aligned with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985), Vallerand et al. (2008) conceptualise and contrast harmonious and obsessive passion. The former is characterised by an autonomously internalised desire to engage in a given activity, where the activity becomes a part of an individual's identity. Conversely, the latter is more concerned with a controlled internalisation, whereby the passion and enjoyment of the activity becomes a compulsion. The subsequent reliance on the activity to feed contingencies such as self-worth or social acceptance, often requires the individual to engage with the activity to maintain a stable position. From a sport coaching perspective, research suggests harmonious passion towards coaching is more likely to result in coach subjective well-being and life satisfaction (Yukhymenko-Lescroart & Sharma, 2022). Furthermore, Carpentier and Mageau (2014) reported that coaches with an obsessive passion are less likely to employ autonomy-supportive change-oriented feedback, and instead are more likely to pressure their athletes to feel or think in certain ways. Whilst not positioned specifically around humility, or indeed coach values, this work is nevertheless useful in understanding how different attitudes to passion may influence a coach's perspective.

7.1.2 Other-centredness

An altruistic intent is often understood to be the essence of humility. The notion of a self-lowering other-centredness has a largely theological derivation, where most world religions promote a submission to a God, where "devotion that is willing to bear dishonour, shame and loss of social standing" is encouraged (Davis et al., 2017, p.249). Roberts and Cleveland (2017) write from a philosophical view conceptualising an other-oriented approach in a different way. In contrasting humility with self-importance, they make a distinction between a concern for self as a vice of pride where comparative superiority is sought for its own sake, and a concern for self in order to achieve a greater good, such as gaining promotion in order to provide a better life for one's family. The inherent message here is that the humble person orientates themself to focus on the other without necessarily lowering themselves in the process. In other words, an other-centredness that rejects socially comparative self-

importance, is not a call for humble people to embrace servility or to subjugate themselves entirely to the needs of those around them. To use a sporting example there is no lack of humility in striving to beat one's opponent, so long as in victory we avoid taking pleasure in the other's inferiority. Indeed, Austin (2014) explains how humility is not at odds with competitive sport and the objective of winning, but instead it is required in order to recognise the essential role played by an opponent to facilitate a winning performance, as well as the role played by other supporting stakeholders.

Adopting an other-centred approach whilst also striving for success, requires a balanced approach that although not straightforward, is exactly what prevents us from shunning humility as a characteristic in highly competitive environments. Simon (1984, p.11) conceives sport as "a mutual quest for excellence through challenge", where excellence and sometimes winning is only possible when one's adversary delivers their very best performance, which compels the very best in return. In this way, the sportsperson who is striving for victory does not espouse purely selfish motives but instead sees sport as a cooperative as opposed to a combative pursuit. It is perhaps not an everyday take on sport, that winning without giving of one's best is unsatisfactory, but the perspective suggested by Simon (1984) does present a logical argument as to why an other-centredness could develop higher levels of performance, and therefore result in an increase in winning outcomes.

It is perhaps natural to embrace a relational perspective to humility when considering other centredness. However, scholars also identify a need for cultural humility (Foronda et al., 2016), requiring an acceptance of the limitations of one's own cultural worldview and an awareness of the limitations of one's understanding of other's cultural backgrounds (Mosher et al., 2017). The need for cultural humility is particularly apt in performance sport, which often encourages behaviours that would be deemed unethical in other domains. The inherent goal, to dominate and control opponents, would be less accepted outside of sport and therefore, sports people should recognize how their actions may be viewed by those less immersed in that culture. Equally, globalization and the cosmopolitan society in which we live, increasingly requires coaches to understand different cultural backgrounds in order to work effectively with their athletes. Adopting an other-centred approach on this scale requires a capacity to employ a wide-angled lens, to step back and exercise a balanced perspective.

7.1.3 Willingness to learn

This component of humility is introduced by Owens, et al. (2013) in their work around organizational humility, drawing upon the seminal work by Tangney (2002), who not only challenged the prevailing notion of humility as an exercise in self-deprecation, but also identified the need for a willingness to seek advice and a desire to learn, or an ability to acknowledge limitations. Foronda et al. (2016) promote the attribute of openness and willingness to explore new ideas as an essential element of cultural humility, while Argandona (2015) suggests the humble person should have a permanent attitude of looking for counsel, with no concern for hiding one's mistakes.

Adopting a responsivity for learning, acknowledging error and seeking help, can result in a sense of vulnerability, a position that is often shunned in modern leadership. Oc et al. (2019) suggest that authentic humility is often undermined by a desire to meet the expectations of others, a perfectly understandable human disposition. When considering sport coaching there are undoubtedly deep-seated societal expectations that the coach has the answers and should portray a position of strength, as opposed to a vulnerability (Cushion & Jones, 2006; Jones et al., 2016). Therefore, this component of humility not only contributes to an other-centredness but relies upon it, as motivation to periodically embrace vulnerability. A genuine desire to learn, especially in the complex domain of human interaction, often starts with moments of confusion, a state typically viewed as a weakness in our society, particularly for someone who is charged with leading others. However, self-induced periodic confusion is a launchpad for critical reflection, a more accurate self-assessment and ultimately, capacity for humility.

7.1.4 Accurate self-assessment

According to Richards (1988) humility is not about having a low opinion of oneself, but an accurate one that keeps one's talents and accomplishments in perspective. Similarly, in their work on organisational humility, Wallace et al. (2017, p.249) assert that humble leaders are described as "avoiding the spotlight except when doing so is beneficial to the organization". Some researchers prefer to see humility purely as an intrapersonal construct

(e.g., Hopkin et al., 2014), where self-assessment remains private, however understanding exactly when and what to share, regarding one's achievements, is an important element of humility and therefore includes an interpersonal dimension. Returning to the negative connotations associated with conventional perceptions of humility, where it is assumed that humble people need to adopt self-abasement, it is important to recognise the potential damage caused by submissive, self-denigrating behaviour, where one hides one's true qualities. Davis and Hook (2013) found that leaders who fail to speak up for themselves faced damaged reputations that were linked to ineffective workplace relationships.

Whilst knowing when to divulge one's self appraisal is important, making an accurate assessment in the first place is crucial. Writing about education settings, Waks (2018) argues that self-critical humility requires self-awareness and the ability to make discriminatory judgments about oneself. He emphasises the importance of listening to other viewpoints, so that those who are self-critical can appraise others' opinions against their own and remain open to change. Teaching and coaching are closely aligned, bound by a pedagogic approach (e.g., Jones & Thomas, 2015) where Waks (2018) asserts that teachers should reveal their reasons to pupils when teaching, and therefore open themselves up to the independent judgment of their students. This requires an accurate understanding of one's practice. In a similar vein Camiré et al., (2011) recommend coaches share their values and philosophy with athletes and parents, which again requires considerable introspection, reflexivity and self-assessment.

7.2 Humility in sport coaching

In addition to the wealth of literature that exists in the above disciplines, there is a nascent interest in humility in the sport coaching literature, with a handful of papers published in the last decade. Huynh et al. (2020) examined how trust mediated between coach humility, player development and team climate, finding affect-based trust to have a greater impact than cognition-based trust. Tuan (2020) explored the links between coach humility and player creativity and found that the knowledge transfer facilitated by humble characteristics fostered great creativity. Christian et al. (2017) found humility to be a defining characteristic of adventure sport coaches, that supported decision making and a mindset of

ongoing learning and continual development. Vinson and Parker (2021) considered the role of servant leadership in understanding the experiences of Christian athletes and coaches, which includes humility as an essential feature. Watson and White (2007) also write from a spiritual perspective contrasting humility with pride and the trappings of modern sport and a win at all costs mentality. With a mixture of quantitative studies that drew largely upon self-report questionnaires (Huynh et al. 2020; Tuan 2020), qualitative research that utilised interviews (Christian et al., 2017; Vinson & Parker, 2021) and a position piece (Watson and White, 2007), there remains scope for considerable extension to what we know of humility in a sport coaching context.

7.3 Balance and Aristotle's doctrine of the mean

Highly instructive in exploring humility is the dialectic work of Aristotle (trans. 2004) that sought not to theorize in an academic sense, but to understand what people actually say and do in order to be good people. Since Grecian times, virtue ethics has been somewhat supplanted by deontology and utilitarianism as an ethical framework, however this picture has begun to change more recently, perhaps because we recognise the rigidity of rules-based philosophy (deontology) and the limitations of only looking at the consequences of actions (utilitarianism) (Slote, 2010). This revival of virtue ethics has been embraced by sport coaching scholars (e.g., Hardman et al, 2010; Hemmestad et al., 2010) who have extolled the importance of sound moral and ethical underpinning in coaching to foster good character.

Central to Aristotle's virtue ethics is his doctrine of the mean. Introduced in Book II of Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, the doctrine of the mean was developed to help articulate the concept of arete*,* as previously discussed, this translates as virtue or excellence. According to Aristotle, for a trait to be virtuous, and therefore lead to arete, it needs to sit at the average position (mean) between excess and deficiency. In representing arete, the mean is a narrow point on a spectrum of possibilities and is therefore difficult to achieve, with fewer ways to arrive at success than failure. In discussing aretism, Aristotle used the metaphor of a skilled archer trying to hit a target, where the bullseye represents excellence. The suggestion here is that it is far harder to hit the bullseye than it is to miss, in other words there are a multitude of ways to get things wrong but only a few, limited ways to achieve excellence.

Aristotle's work provides a useful framework to explain how humility as a virtue differs from what Nietzsche claimed to be a virtue of the weak (Frostenson, 2016), where subservience and sycophantic deference to those in more powerful positions, is used as a strategic device to inveigle the strong (Bollinger & Hill, 2012). It allows us to see such servility as an excess of humility, with a balanced other-centredness sitting as the virtue of the humble person. Although the intention to serve and adopting an other-focused approach are positions close in meaning, the difference has important implications for the coach. Are we to act as a servant and bow to the wishes of our athletes, or are we to lead in a way that best meets the needs of our athletes, in full recognition that this may on occasion require us to be the master not the servant? Such decisions present dilemmas in practice that understandably result in coaches and coach developers searching for answers when ways of behaving are not clear. This is where behaviours must be considered on a deeper level, where practitioners should question both what motivates their behaviour and the likely outcomes of their decision, or as Hardman et al. (2010) suggest, engage in ethical reflection.

As Mcnamee et al. (2003, p.70) pointed out, "to social scientists and historians Aristotelian thought represents a brave leap back to antiquity". Certainly, the doctrine of the mean is not without critique, with some ethicists decrying the notion of average equating to excellence (e.g., Williams, 2011). Such a position is also likely to reflect common everyday thinking in elite sport, where a martial-commercial model tends to dominate current practice (Holowchak & Reid, 2013). However, to conflate virtuous intent or values with average performance outcomes is unhelpful, as it is a balanced approach to thinking that allows performance to be anything but average, indeed, to be excellent. Consider the team sport coach who decides to prescribe rest and relaxation to their players in the lead up to an important fixture, an approach that attempts to compensate for the otherwise exacting training and playing regimen. The balanced thinking behind this decision avoids an excess of training and facilitates an outstanding performance. The outcome or behaviour is enabled and driven by values that sit at Aristotle's mean.

In aspiring to arete, Aristotle differentiated between intellectual and moral virtues as contributing elements, and whilst the doctrine of the mean is applicable to either, it remains

important to acknowledge this distinction. Aristotle explained that intellectual virtue is acquired through teaching and instruction, whereas moral virtue is the product of habit, learned through experience over time. Neither can therefore be attributed to nature, instead both are developed over the course of our lives. As such Aristotle warns us,

> "it is incumbent on us to control the character of our activities, since on the quality of these depends the quality of our dispositions. It is therefore not of small moment whether we are trained from childhood in one set of habits or another; on the contrary it is of very great, or rather of supreme, importance." (Aristotle, trans. 2004, p.34)

This quote is perhaps more pertinent when applied to moral virtue; Hardman et al. (2010, p346) endorse this position by suggesting that moral perception is learned (over time) and that "coaches should focus greater attention on the ethical implications of their coaching values and actions" in order to create morally good coaches and athletes.

Whilst moral virtues comprise traits such as honesty and compassion, Aristotle identified the three intellectual virtues of episteme, techne and phronesis that include traits such as open-mindedness and intellectual humility (Wilson, 2017). Whilst a detailed review of each is beyond the remit of this thesis, they are worth considering in relation to the POWA model and critical realism. Episteme is translated as scientific knowledge, whereas techne is the art or craft of applying knowledge in practice (technical know-how). Phronesis is more closely aligned with the concerns of this research, referring to practical wisdom that is required to deal ethically with context, practice and experience (Flyvbjerg, 2001). So, it follows that to be intellectually virtuous we need scientific knowledge, the ability to put this into practice and practical wisdom to make good (virtuous) decisions. One might legitimately see some kinship between the causal properties of practical wisdom (phronesis) in determining appropriate action and the domain of the real in critical realist thinking (Bhaskar, 2008), both concepts that are central to arriving at the POWA model.

The similarities between a critical realist perspective and an approach that adopts phronesis at its core, can also be seen at a more paradigmatic level. Flyvbjerk (2001) wrote extensively on the place for phronetic thinking in social science, calling for a balance between

> “unconditional relativism associated with post-modernism and the grand theorising advocated by a natural scientific approach, replacing them with the hermeneutic notion of ‘contextualism, that is, situational ethics’ (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 130).” (Hemmestad et al., 2010, p.452)

While critical realism calls for a comparable level of balance, the POWA model offers a way to address unconditional relativism, providing a tool to help practitioners navigate situational ethics. Furthermore, Hemmestad et al. (2010) suggest phronesis as an overarching framework to interrogate coaching, one that requires “principled reflection, informed by a virtuous perspective” (Hemmestad et al., 2010, p.455). POWA has the potential to start the conversation around a virtuous perspective and at the same time help coaches to “do the right things at the right times” (Jones & Hemmestad, 2021, p.2) in order to have a nuanced view of reality. The four components of the POWA model include both moral (other-centredness) and intellectual (perspective, willingness to learn and accurate self-assessment) virtues.

7.4 A case for the language of person-centredness

In considering the balance suggested by Aristotle's doctrine of the mean, there is merit in elaborating on the call for person-centred approaches as opposed to athlete-centred coaching that was made in study 2 (Garner et al., 2022). The rationale for a focus on the person extends beyond arguments for a holistic approach, where the coach is encouraged to consider the wider context of an athlete’s life. Whilst a holistic perspective remains important, reciprocity within the coach-athlete dyad is also to the fore. The previous discussion around care (Chapter 5) and in particular the prominence of reciprocity in Noddings’ (1984) work, is instructive in understanding why an unwavering focus on the athlete may compromise the ability of the coach to care in the long term. With a lack of balance or reciprocity underpinning the relationship there is a danger that the coach becomes servile in their aim to satisfy the athlete’s needs before their own, potentially contributing to coach burnout and a reduction in their ability to care. There is a notable body of literature concerning sport coach burnout (e.g., Olusoga et al. 2019) that, not exclusively, identifies a

lack of balance between personal life and work, overcommitment and an unmoderated selflessness as contributing factors. This lack of balance can be mitigated if the relationship, instead of unequivocally foregrounding the athlete, accepts the equal importance of the coach, with a person-centred approach recognising the *people* (at least two) involved in the process. Whilst Jowett (2017) has helpfully clarified the mutual importance of both coach and athlete in calling for a "coach-athlete centred approach" (p.154), an *athlete*-centred approach persists within the literature and amongst coaching practitioners (Avner et al. 2017).

The proposed balanced position may seem irreconcilable with coaching literature that often suggests a need for the coach to serve the athlete (e.g., Rieke et al., 2008), however similar calls for balance have been made in the health care literature, where patient-centred care is contrasted with person-centred care. We can draw useful parallels between the role of coach and coach educator/developer and that of clinician to help elucidate the importance of terminology in this instance. Buetow (2016) writes extensively on this topic, providing an illuminating perspective from which much can be learned by coaching scholars, practitioners and administrators. Buetow (2016, p.6) argues that "the clinician-patient relationship should not be patient-centred but a purposeful and consensual balancing act of respective interests in mutual welfare, against available resources." Born from the rise of the bureaucratic state and the hegemony of technical rationality, the patient-clinician relationship has become dehumanized where increasingly, strangers care for strangers and scientific advancement usurps intimacy and personal identity. The similarities with professional sport are clear, where athletes, often treated as commodities (Sanderson, 2009), are subjected to scientific interventions in the name of performance, which serve to further dehumanize and discipline professional sportspeople (Jones et al. 2016). Whilst sport coaches are less concerned with life and death, they nevertheless operate in a similarly measurement obsessed, time poor, pressured environment as clinicians. The need to look beyond the athlete *and patient,* to the people involved in what are essentially caring endeavours, has never been more pressing.

Of course, there is a danger that reciprocity is taken too literally; there is no suggestion that the coach should demand the care of the athlete or expect young athletes to go out of their way to monitor a coach's mental well-being. However, much in the same way that coaches should model the vulnerability required to learn, person-centred coaches should

strive to role model morally sound behaviours. It is through an explicitly caring, respectful and open approach that they can encourage reciprocal behaviour from their athletes and create an environment of mutual flourishing. This extends to dealings with other stakeholders in the coaching environment, including parents, administrators, officials and other coaches.

7.5 Sport coaching is situated in space

As alluded to during the methodological discussion earlier in the thesis, critical realists recognise the casual importance of space and time when seeking to understand social phenomena (Sayer, 2010). Having reviewed the conceptual components of humility and discussed the importance of humility as a virtue for person-centred practice, it remains to reflect upon moments of spatial interest, within study 2. Sport coaching should be cognisant of the causal potential of social spaces aside from training and competing, that currently dominate the research (Lyle, 2018). On this point, study 2 provided an illuminating episode that, due to the word limit, was not unpacked in the published paper. When viewed through the lens of 'space', the coach-athlete interaction in the following vignette shines a light on the all-encompassing, embedded role of the coach, where intention has causal potential in a multiplicity of settings.

7.5.1 Vignette

Glen had captured video footage of his skiers in action, and as is common practice in ski teaching, decided to review this in a mountain restaurant over a coffee. The learners were male retirees based in the mountains for the winter season, the coaching focus was backcountry skiing, where the inherent risk was more elevated that regular piste skiing. There were a variety of characters in the group, ranging from those who perceived themselves to have high ability to those with low self-efficacy related to ski technique. Glen was socially aware and during interview explained the level to which he understood his learners. As Glen gathered his skiers to ask for a recommendation for a coffee-stop venue, the least confident of them, who doubted both his skiing and social standing within the group, suggested a particular restaurant that had "great coffee". Ten minutes later, once they were ensconced in the mountain restaurant, coffee served and video screen ready to roll, Glen caught the eye of his coffee advisor and acknowledged the choice of venue, "Great coffee!". During the

interview Glen admitted that the coffee was in fact average, the intention behind his comment was to bolster confidence, was to affirm his unconfident learner's recommendation, was to "give him kudos" (Glen, interview transcript). Glen recognised the impact this could have on learning and enjoyment,

> "But that's the thing... when you receive stuff like that [positive affirmation] you go, 'oooh… it *was* a good idea wasn't it…' and you feel good about yourself. You know it's little things like that that make people feel 'oooh' and it all adds to their day doesn't it." (Glen, interview transcript)

Coach education does little to prepare coaches for seemingly incidental exchanges of this kind (Culver et al., 2019; Dempsey et al., 2021), that occur away from the training or performance environment, yet the cumulative effect of other-centred micro-interactions that appreciate the wider perspective of an individual's psycho-socio position, can arguably have a material effect upon outcomes such as motivation, performance, learning etc. Consequently, an area for future research is to explore how coach-athlete interactions take place in the social spaces that exist across other sports. Whilst skiing is predisposed to afford the coach valuable uplift time, perhaps team sports could think more deeply about the exchanges that occur during water breaks, or how travel time to away fixtures might offer opportunities for person-centred intentions to become embedded in coaching practice. Certainly, Cronin and Armour (2018) recognise the importance of social spaces, and the endeavours of coaches that happen "off the field", as essential to an ability to care for athletes; this body of work could be extended to foreground social spaces, and to explore how embedding intentions that align with POWA might help coaches to make better use of these spaces.

Chapter 8: General discussion

8.1 An integration of POWA with related literature

As Barbour (1976, p.9) said, models should be "taken seriously not literally", POWA is not presented as the panacea, it is not intended to replace the excellent work already available to coaches and coach educators/developers, rather the hope is that this model can enhance existing resources and contribute to our understanding of how to cultivate excellent interpersonal knowledge. In order to situate and integrate the POWA model within the extant coach education/development literature, this section will draw again upon the ontological stratification that characterises critical realist research (Bhaskar, 1975; 2008). Bhaskar explains how what we research is underpinned by a pre-existing layer of reality that is not immediately readily accessible. To acquire useful knowledge, it is essential that we explore the mechanisms that produce empirical events as they are seldom directly visible. The domain of the real is intransitive, that is to say that it exists independently of our knowledge of it and has the potential to cause actual events to take place. However, how we know what we know about it is transitive, that is to say any theory that we construct or engage with to help understand phenomena that happen in the real world is fallible, it is merely the best truth we have at that moment.

According to critical realism these transitive and intransitive objects exist across three ontological domains, each considering reality at a deeper level. The domain of the empirical, the actual and the real. The domain of the empirical is concerned with our observations and experiences of events that happen in the domain of the actual, that we interpret through our senses. The domain of the real is concerned with causal mechanisms that have the potential to make actual events happen. The ontological distinction between the empirical and actual has recently been critiqued by academics (Elder-Vass, 2022; Fryer & Navarrete, 2022), who assert that fundamentally the difference between the domain of the real and the actual/empirical is of most importance. Elder-Vass introduces the concept of the 'real but not actual', arguing that causative mechanisms have the potential, when triggered, to bring about actual events. What is key to the critical realist is that a one-dimensional, flat ontology that

only considers what we can experience with our senses, is a flawed way to go about understanding the world, and neglects deeper causative considerations.

Research into coaching effectiveness has largely explored the domains of the empirical and actual, focussing on observations, experiences and events such as coaching behaviours and athlete outcomes (Horn, 2008; Kassim & Boardley, 2018; Santos et al., 2019). Whilst this has provided a rich empirical basis for coach development resources, there remains limited evidence of exploration into the domain of the real, that seeks to understand the causal mechanisms, that generate actual events, that lead to experiences. In the coaching literature, research that looks into the domain of the empirical helps us to understand what effective coaching should look and feel like (e.g., Côté et al., 2020; Duda 2013; Horn, 2008; Kidman & Hanrahan, 2010), and provides essential frameworks to underpin coaching practice. In addition, research that explores the domain of the actual recommends taxonomies of behaviour and associated measurement and data collection tools that further support coach development (e.g., Cushion et al., 2012; Occhino et al., 2014; Turnnidge & Côté, 2019). However, largely speaking this work is concerned with transitive interpretations of reality, where context and the various actors involved influence what is effective at any given time. On the other hand, research into the domain of the real offers theory (albeit fallible) to help us understand the intransitive causal factors, that when realised or activated, result in actual events (behaviour) that are experienced by the people in coaching environment (coaches, athletes, parents, administrators etc.). The following sections will consider how POWA might offer insight into the domain of the real to support extant work that focuses primarily on the domains of the actual and empirical [see Appendix 8 for a diagrammatic overview of person-centred coaching in a stratified ontology].

8.1.1 Coaching effectiveness

As early as 2000, Potrac et al. (2000) advocated a triangulated approach to coach behaviour research, whereby coach's cognitions and athlete's perceptions are explored through interview and analysed alongside data from systematic observation. However, despite recognition that the antecedents of coach behaviour are important in both understanding and changing coach behaviour, Horn (2008, p.267) noted that this area of research remained "wide open". Indeed, Horn and colleagues' (e.g., Goffena & Horn, 2021;

Horn 2008; Horn et al., 2010) work into coaching effectiveness used similar methods to other scholars working in this field (e.g., Kassim & Boardley, 2018) and largely neglected to look beyond coach behaviours and athlete perceptions. One notable exception was Mallett and Lara-Bercial's (2016) *Serial Winning Coaches* paper that adopted multiple methods across a variety of research paradigms to investigate why highly successful coaches behave the way they do. In addition to exploring coach personalities, this work also sought to examine the coach as a motivated agent and looked at the personal strivings of the coaches. Findings showed these coaches to be,

> "driven by (a) personal growth and development for self and others, i.e., *getting along* (McAdams, 2015); (b) to be highly successful and achieve through thorough planning and contingency plans that internally fuelled their desire to challenge themselves; and (c) lead through the positive influence over others (i.e., power); i.e., *getting ahead* (McAdams, 2015)."

These findings suggest notable similarities with the components of POWA. A) aligns with a willingness to learn and aspects of other-centredness, b) suggests the need for accurate perspective and c) is again consistent with an other-centred orientation. However, despite this synergy with Garner et al. (2022), Mallett and Lara-Bercial's (2016) work, whilst providing excellent insight, is more concerned with overall values and beliefs as opposed to the thought process that governed specific behaviours. As such findings showed serial winning coaches tend to be athlete-centred and holistic in their approach. The POWA model therefore offers a useful level of granularity that could further our understanding of 'athlete centred'.

8.1.2 Motivational climates and autonomy support

Continuing the psychologized approach to understanding coaching, contemporary motivational theories, such as achievement goal theory [AGT] (Ames, 1992; Nicholls, 1989) and self-determination theory [SDT] (Deci & Ryan, 1985) offer much to guide coaches. AGT and SDT have been widely utilized in coaching research as theoretical frameworks to underpin approaches that strive to develop intrinsic motivation, foster autonomy and empower athletes to drive their own learning and development. These motivational theories underpin the work of Duda and colleagues (e.g., Adie, Duda & Ntoumanis, 2008; Duda, 2013; Reinboth

& Duda, 2006) who advance the concept of empowering coaching, which is characterised by an environment that is autonomy supportive, task oriented and socially supportive.

Gilchrist and Mallett (2016) provide a useful overview of SDT research in sport coaching and highlight a number of issues that often prevent coaches from adopting autonomy-supportive behaviours in practice. They remind us that autonomy-supportive and controlling behaviours are distinct constructs and that whilst the literature is compelling in championing autonomy-support as the more effective direction, there are occasions when controlling behaviours are more appropriate and even preferred by athletes. This is a similar finding to that of Garner et al. (2020) in study 1, when transactional behaviours were deemed more effective during coach assessment. Gilchrist and Mallett (2016) call for coaches and researchers to generate a better understanding of the underlying factors that influence these behaviours.

According to Mayer et al. (2007) the dominant research method deployed when investigating motivation is overwhelmingly the use of questionnaires. Recent systematic reviews into motivational research in sport (Clancy et al. 2016; 2017) revealed that out of 63 reviewed studies, 51 used questionnaires. The evidence to support the reliability of these measures is strong and the role that measurement plays in continuing to support and develop our understanding of motivation is not in dispute, however the self-report nature of this work suggests a clear focus on the domain of the empirical. Therefore, the potential for POWA to contemplate the domain of the real, to help support decisions that contribute to empowerment, autonomy support and the magnitude and timing of interventions, is interesting.

8.1.3 The coach-athlete relationship

The coach-athlete relationship is clearly integral to the interpersonal element of effective coaching and Jowett's research into this area is considerable (e.g., Jowett 2007; 2017; Jowett et al., 2003; Jowett & Slade, 2021). This work is centred around the 3Cs+1 model (Jowett, 2007) that includes affective, cognitive and behavioural elements of the coach-athlete relationship that are both dependent on, and causative of, interpersonal communication (Jowett & Poczwardowski, 2007); with a number of contextual elements

identified as antecedent factors, such as individual characteristics, socio-cultural and sporting context and relationship characteristics. Interestingly, Jowett and Poczwardowski (2007, p.9) stress the reciprocity that is prevalent and required in the coach-athlete relationship suggesting "a coach's friendly attitude attracts the athlete's friendly attitude". The affinity here to the care literature and indeed to a person-centred approach, as previously discussed, is notable.

Jowett's work has consistently illustrated how quality coach-athlete relationships contribute to positive athlete outcomes that include passion (Lafrenière er al., 2008), group cohesion (Jowett & Chaundy, 2004), satisfaction with training and performance (Jowett & Nezlek, 2012) and intrinsic motivation (Adie and Jowett, 2010). This important and influential body of research explores what quality coach-athlete relationships look like (Jowett & Slade, 2021) and is therefore primarily concerned with investigating the domains of the actual and empirical. Whilst contextual antecedent factors are recognised in Jowett and Poczwardowski's (2007) integrated research model, one might suggest POWA could contribute to this work by exploring the causative factors that lead to the 3Cs+1.

8.1.4 The Personal Assets Framework (PAF) and Transformational Leadership (TFL)

Whilst maintaining a psychological underpinning, Côté and colleagues have expanded beyond motivational theories with two decades of work around the role sport plays in positive youth development, laying the groundwork for the Personal Assets Framework (PAF) (Côté et al., 2020; Côté et al., 2016). This framework identifies three dynamic elements that essentially underpin the developmental context: appropriate settings, quality social dynamics and personal engagement in activities. When these three elements are managed and aligned effectively then four developmental effects are suggested as ideal coaching outcomes. The 4 Cs of competence, confidence, connection and character are framed as desirable personal assets promoted by morally and ethically sound engagement in sport. Finally, the framework recognises longer-term changes that the development of personal assets can influence, the 3 Ps of performance, participation and personal development.

When applying Bhaskar's ontological domains to this work, we see it sits principally at the level of the empirical and actual, with attention on how young people experience sport

and the settings/events we might create to enable these positive experiences. Turnnidge and Côté (2018; 2019) have provided another layer of understanding and guidance by investigating the coach behaviours that are most likely to allow the dynamic elements within the PAF to interact effectively, to bring about the positive development of personal assets. Grounded in a leadership approach, and discussed previously in this thesis, this work draws upon the Full Range Leadership Model (Bass & Riggio, 2006) to detail a taxonomy of behaviour to support transformational coaching, that is prosocial, motivational, empowering and holistic. Whilst of great value and well received in the field (Turnnidge & Côté, 2017), this work attends to transitive events that could be seen as occupying the domain of the actual.

POWA, and insight into the intentions that trigger coaching behaviours, provides a reflective lens by which practitioners can consider the domain of the real. As a thinking framework that can guide practitioners to make effective decisions as to where on the FRLM they should be in any circumstance, POWA offers a potential way to bring values and philosophy to bear upon behaviours. In a coach who aspires to be genuinely person-centred, POWA is arguably intransitive and has the capacity to trigger actual events and experiences that are person-centred.

8.1.5 Athlete-centred coaching

There is much synergy between athlete-centred coaching and transformational coaching, with an overt focus on *the other*. However, rather than drawing upon leadership research, athlete-centred coaching is embedded in social psychology and in particular the humanist work of Carl Rogers. Conducted in the field of psychotherapy Rogers' research (e.g., Rogers, 1951; 2012) identified the core components of empathy, congruence (authenticity) and unconditional positive regard towards the client, as underlying characteristics of client-centred practice that would allow therapists to empower their clients to find their own answers. Introduced as a concept in sport coaching in the early 2000s by Kidman (Kidman, 2001; 2005; Kidman & Lombardo, 2010), this approach has been widely adopted by the international coaching fraternity, including National Governing Bodies of sport in the UK, Canada, Finland and New Zealand (Vinson & Bell, 2019). Built upon the premise that coaches should empower athletes to make their own decisions by using games and questioning to

scaffold learning, Kidman also promoted the idea of adopting holistic methods that encourage coaches to develop the 'whole' athlete (Kidman 2010).

Despite widespread support, research nevertheless warns of rhetorical approaches in practice (Avner et al., 2017; Partington & Cushion, 2013) due in part to the political and power-laden landscape of sport coaching (Denison, 2010; Nelson et al., 2014). A lack of underlying theory to support implementation (Côté et al., in press) has also been charged with obstructing practitioners from enacting athlete-centred practice. In many ways the values that underpin Roger's influence on athlete-centred coaching: empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard, are closer to the domain of the real than behaviours such as questioning and games-based pedagogies that are usually attached to this approach. Nelson et al. (2014, p.526) state that "the implementation of a person-centred approach informed by Rogers would unlikely be a straightforward, unproblematic and sequential process for coaching". We should be mindful of residing only in the domain of the actual/empirical, adopting questioning because it is synonymous with athlete-centred coaching, without considering values that trigger truly athlete-centred behaviour. To quote Nelson et al. again (2014, p528), "coaching practitioners, educators and researchers claiming a person-centred approach need to critically reflect on their practice". To this end, POWA is a research-informed tool that can support coaches in their reflections and decisions to be athlete centred in a way that embraces context.

8.1.6 Care

With the 'other' central to our thinking in both athlete-centred and transformational coaching, Cronin's recent contribution to the literature around care (e.g., Cronin & Armour, 2018) is a pertinent inclusion to the discussion on how POWA integrates with existing and related research. Having already discussed the care literature in some detail, the ambition here is to identify how and where POWA might compliment and contribute to this important body of work. Noddings' three requirements for caring: engrossment, motivational displacement and reciprocity, are clearly reflected in the components of the POWA model and within the related sub-themes identified in study 2. Engrossment involves the choice to direct sustained mental attention towards someone else in order to help them, this is inherent in an other-oriented disposition and would appear to have a symbiotic relationship

with the sub-theme of an accurate social assessment, in other words one could argue that engrossment enables this assessment whilst at the same time depends upon it. Motivational displacement relates to both other-centredness and perspective, where similarly there is interdependence between concepts. One's ability to adopt an other-centredness requires motivational displacement, whilst at the same time it is an other-centred perspective that allows this displacement to occur. Finally, reciprocity arguably equates to the balanced position on the other-centredness scale on the POWA model, where a one-sided relationship in either direction (in favour of the coach or the athlete) is constitutive of the deficient or excessive position and hence suboptimal.

Extending the synergy between POWA and care, the concepts of caring for and caring about are also instructive. Caring for aligns with other-centredness, caring about requires perspective. In Cronin et al's. (2020) paper, each specialist arguably cared for the player but had different perspectives and cared about different things. This misalignment of perspective across the wider team, ultimately resulted in a negative outcome for all concerned. Interestingly, recent literature that addresses the interdisciplinary working of performance support teams (for a scoping review, see Burns & Collins, 2023) calls for investigation into how to better develop the interpersonal qualities of those who operate within interdisciplinary teams. The POWA model is well positioned to address this agenda, to support practitioners in looking beyond their individual disciplines to enable a joined-up approach, by adopting genuine person-centred decision making.

8.1.7 Professional Judgement and Decision Making (PJDM)

In exploring the domain of the real and the causative elements that have the potential to trigger actual events, decision making could be seen as the process that connects the real to the actual. A decision is the moment when the potential of an otherwise dormant mechanism (value or thought) is converted to a causative factor. Research into decision making in sport coaching references the complexity of the coaching environment, which essentially relies on accurate decision making to trigger effective behaviour. Looking beyond the coach-athlete relationship itself, or indeed the outcomes coaches may aspire to effect (autonomy, empowerment, mastery etc.), Martindale, Collins and colleagues (e.g., Collins & Collins, 2015; Martindale & Collins, 2005; Martindale & Collins, 2013) have explored the

decision-making process, presenting the professional judgment and decision-making approach to coaching (PJDM). Drawing upon the work of Klein (2008), PJDM identifies decision making as a nested practice, representing a requirement to think at the micro-, meso- and macro- level. This nested approach requires the coach, or decision maker, to engage with in the moment decisions that are also cognisant of the medium- and long-term development plans and wider context prevailing over any given coaching environment. PJDM has been applied as a lens to understand coach decision making in a number of settings, including team sports (e.g., Collins et al, 2016; Crowther et al. 2018) and adventure sports (Collins & Collins, 2015; Collins & Collins, 2017). The central premise of this work is that coaches need to navigate Shön's (1992) "swampy lowlands" by making decisions that draw upon critical thought and reflective practice.

More recently, Collins et al. (2022) highlighted the importance of intention to enable coaches to reflect effectively, arguing that without understanding one's motives it becomes difficult to judge whether behaviours are appropriate or not. Furthermore, they suggest research that explores coaching effectiveness should search for a truth that is conditional and contingent upon context yet a form of truth nonetheless, without which we are less well equipped in our quest to offer "people ways in which to develop their practice" (Collins et al., 2022, p.3). Such a desire to move away from epistemically myopic "grand truths" (Collins et al., 2022, p.14) towards something helpful that is seen as a provisional truth, is welcome and closely aligned with the underpinning tenets of critical realism. Critical realism claims that any knowledge is fallible and that consequently we cannot claim an absolute truth (Danermark et al., 2019), but that we should attempt to investigate and articulate our best attempt at *a truth* in order to negotiate complex circumstances. Bhaskar (1994, cited in Groff, 2000, p.413) refers to an alethic truth that is our version of understanding at the level of the real, it is "What a generative mechanism is called once it has been 'referentially detached,' that is, agreed on as being the 'real reason' for some given phenomenon." Whilst the POWA model and its constitutive components are certainly too nascent to be 'agreed on' as a *real* reason for person-centred practice, this work contributes to our understanding of intention and of the generative mechanisms that give rise to coach behaviour. What is more, in providing coaches with four sliding scales upon an Aristotelian spectrum, POWA can be useful in helping coaches to navigate reflection, decision-making and planning in a way that promotes nested

thinking and reflection across different temporal dimensions (Gilbert & Trudel, 2001; Shön 1983).

Chapter 9: Implications for Practice

Having discussed how the product of this research integrates with the extant related literature, it now remains to consider how best to influence professional practice. Whether the intended recipient of person-centred practice is the athlete, the coach or the coach educator, depends which layer of the coaching ecosystem is of most concern, however a consistent ambition should be to impact each of Bhaskar's ontological domains, the real, actual and empirical. It is the conviction of this work that in order to influence the outcome, how those engaged in the coaching endeavours experience human interactions (empirical), in a way that is consistent with person-centredness as we might understand it from the perspective of Buetow (2016), it is necessary to help practitioners grapple with the domain of the real. That is, we must provide support to scaffold person-centred decision making, to guide intention.

Nevertheless, returning to the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) and how that informs our understanding of intention, Conner and Norman (2005) suggest that intentions don't always predict behaviour, given the constraints sometimes afforded by perceptions of behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). It therefore follows that for person-centred intention to bear fruit, how the practitioner perceives the attitudes of the wider coaching ecology in which they operate is a crucial consideration, and therefore presenting POWA to coaches and coach educators without casting the net more widely, is likely to result in a reduced impact. Hemmestad et al. (2010, p.454) point out that coaching is "rooted in the wider culture in which it occurs", and with the multiple roles found in the coach education workforce including coach educators, coach developers, qualification designers, learning programme designers, facilitators, tutors, assessors, mentors, quality assurers and administrators (McQuade & Nash, 2015), it becomes imperative to align any intervention or new way of thinking, with this wider landscape. Consequently, efforts should be made to share any resources that provide the 'scaffold' beyond coaches and coach educators.

This may seem a lofty ambition but the way forward lies with yet another principle garnered from the critical realist playbook. As Pawson said, "every attempt to conduct research is beset with the impossibility of covering every angle", critical realists don't assume

a definitive knowledge but are necessarily realistic, recognising it is impossible to capture all of reality (Stones, 1996). Therefore, in affecting social change this moderated position, that shuns intransigent dogma, must be communicated to disarm the naysayers and to embrace those who are open to change. Furthermore, the epistemic middle ground (Grix, 2010) thrives on accessible ideas (North, 2010) and realist solutions that obviate the (albeit accurate) complexity associated with interpretivist research, whilst overcoming overly simplistic rationalistic accounts; one might liken this middle ground to the *edge* of chaos put forward by Bowes and Jones (2006) in their attempt to understand coaching from a complexity perspective. It is widely accepted that for research to bridge the theory-practice gap, it must be applicable in the messiness of real-world scenarios (e.g., Abraham & Collins, 2011; Lyle, 2018). Farrow et al. (2013) suggest three reasons that may thwart attempts to bridge this gap, firstly that research often confirms what coaches are already doing and is therefore of little use, secondly that research presents ideas that are too conditional on context to convince coaches to wade through complexity in order to apply the findings, and finally that the language of academic publication renders research inaccessible.

In order to address the issues of language and complexity outlined above, the POWA model was purposefully constructed using accessible language. Furthermore, the use of the Aristotelian mean helps to cut through the complex decision-making process by presenting sliding scales and hence a multitude of options that are further from or closer to an ideal. Furthermore, to represent study 2 in a way that reduces barriers created by academic writing and in-depth theorizing, I have written a practitioner facing article that has been circulated across social media and professional networks.

9.1 Practitioner Article

POWA to the Imperfect Coach

Paul Garner, Senior Lecturer University of Gloucestershire
pgarner@glos.ac.uk

Context

For some time, an athlete-centred approach has featured prominently in coaching and coach development conversations. As a coach developer, parent, academic and coach I have witnessed so many good coaches having a positive influence across the sporting landscape, there is excellent practice

at all levels. However, despite this bright picture there is always room for improvement, from grassroots volunteers right up to the elite and most celebrated coaches in global sport. This should come as no surprise; coaches are not flawless people, they are not immune to self-doubt, to the seductive feeling of power and the desire for recognition. Athlete-centredness sounds great on paper but in reality, it can be difficult to live. This article will explore some of the pressures coaches inevitably experience that contribute to imperfect practice. It will also share the findings of a research project that suggests a useful way to think about athlete-centred coaching, or more importantly a person-centred approach.

The shift from *athlete*-centred to *person*-centred might seem fussy, but I know that words shape the way we think, in subtle but important ways. I am motivated to develop people in the context of sport, not just athletes and this distinction in terminology is something that has really driven my work. I argue that an athlete-centred coach may be less likely to consider the wider, more holistic needs of the person in their quest to develop the athlete, whereas a person-centred coach is likely to positively influence athletic performance as part of their care for the person. Therefore, I have chosen to use person-centred coaching from now on.

Real-world challenges

So, back to our imperfect coaches and the turbulent environment in which they exist. Here are two overarching considerations that pose real challenges to coaches across sport.

Mixed expectations

There are many stakeholders in the coaching environment and depending on the context these are likely to include: parents; supporters; co-coaches; administrators; athletes; specialist support staff etc. It would be unusual for everyone to have the same expectations of the coach, who is usually the central coordinating figure. Often there is an expectation for the coach to have *the* answer, the silver bullet that will bring success and with it comes the pressure to deliver; many coaches will feign knowledge rather than expose their doubts or shortcomings. Maintaining a façade of expertise can be exhausting, something requiring what is known to sociologists as emotional labour (Hochschild, 2000). Certainly, the likelihood of conflicting agendas makes it challenging for a coach to act in a consistently person-centred way. If you have ever worked with a co-coach, at some stage you have probably wanted to do things slightly differently to your colleague. If you've coached children, it is highly likely you have had to manage the challenging expectation of parents. Even the fans clamour for a player's early return from injury, to help secure victory, despite the advice of medics and support specialists will be familiar to most of us. Regardless of the context these challenges exist.

Commercial model of sport

This complexity is often further influenced by a results-focussed culture. The financial implications of winning in elite sport, shape behaviour, the distribution of resources and the way we reward athletic endeavour. Even at a grassroots level the commercialisation of sport and the ensuing global role models, for both athletes and coaches, is keenly felt. For many parents and coaches, 'it's not *all* about the winning' is mere rhetoric, and consequently tempers flare, blame is mis-attributed and those with less power (children) are left to suffer the consequences. Similarly, in elite environments, the commodification of athletes for the financial gain of others is commonplace, with short-termism rife within professional sport – both these observations challenge our ability to adopt a person-centred approach. It is important to reiterate that much good work is happening to address these issues.

Positive youth development within sport, and recent initiatives to focus more on physical activity than competition per se, lead the way in imagining a healthy future. However, we should still strive to grapple with poor practice, where the symptoms of commercialisation and a lack of perspective remain in coaching.

Research rationale

Having briefly identified some reasons as to why a person-centred approach is not always straightforward, I would suggest that in the face of this complexity, it is OK to be imperfect. However, it is not OK to passively accept our flaws with no intent to develop, and therefore having a clear understanding of what we are trying to achieve is important. So, what do we mean by person-centred coaching? Is there a consensus amongst coaches as to what it might look like? The research would suggest not, with no one definition, as academics continue to wrestle with the concept. There are guiding principles, but these often don't hold up in certain circumstances. Much is written about empowering athletes, sharing decision making, asking questions, but what about the times when the athlete needs the coach to offer an answer or make a decision – wouldn't that be person-centred too? Is it about doing what athletes' need or what they want?

As a coach developer, I have long searched for the best way to help other coaches behave in a person-centred way, and for many years, the most helpful answer has started with 'it depends on the context'. At first this seemed helpful, it was honest and offered flexibility and it resonated with many coaching stories I'd been a part of, where extraordinary things had occurred. Recently, I have thought more deeply and wondered whether there is in fact something more useful and less woolly. Rather than searching for behaviours, is there a way to guide the *intention* behind a person-centred approach, that is independent of context and therefore constant? What follows is a summary of my research into person-centred intention, which attempts to provide direction for practicing coaches.

Research story

My research was conducted in Alpine Ski coaching, where I studied both coaches and coach educators. Drawing upon expert delivery, I used video stimulated recall to guide an interview process that explored the intention behind behaviour. With a GoPro camera mounted on the chest of the athlete, every exchange with the coach was recorded, this footage was then edited and used to stimulate interviews, where the coaches were encouraged to share the intentions and thought processes that preceded coaching interactions. The analysis of this qualitative data exposed some strong themes that are useful in answering the question, *how might we guide the intention behind a person-centred approach, in a way independent of context and that is therefore constant?*

POWA model

I have used the four themes to come from this study, to formulate a model of person-centred intention to guide decision-making and ultimately behaviour. The components of this model align with the concept of humility, to the extent that we can say humble intent is foundational for person-centred coaching, or indeed for a person-centred approach to anything. First, let us look at each component in turn, before exploring how the model can be used to support coaching practice.

Perspective – stepping back to see the bigger picture, seeing things objectively

Other-centred focus – making decisions intended to benefit others, as opposed to purely the self
Willingness to learn – an openness to vulnerability, to receiving and seeking feedback, to acknowledging mistakes
Accurate self-assessment – an honest and correct appraisal of one's strengths and weaknesses

Figure 4 (1): The POWA model of humility

Perspective: I like to view perspective using the metaphor of a camera lens. Whilst it is often healthy to concentrate on the detail, it is also important to zoom out and consider the wider context. This responsibility often falls to the coach, especially when working with younger athletes who are not afforded the maturity or experience to be able to look across a season or number of years. Imagine, the youth athlete who is cut from an academy program - without perspective this could easily feel like a mortal blow. In addition to zooming out, we also have the option to change the lens entirely in order to see things from someone else's perspective. The ability to manage our lenses in these two different ways is an essential mechanism for person-centredness.

Other-centredness: The research showed this component to be facilitated by the other components of POWA and that in isolation an other-centredness does not necessarily lead to a truly person-centred approach. This is best explained with an example; imagine the coach who provides detailed instructions for the players before a game, trying to leave no stone unturned, not driven by personal glory but by care for their performance. What if this coach has failed to adopt a wide-angled *perspective*, failed to facilitate longer-term development, failed to empower the athletes to develop their decision-making? What if this coach has an *inaccurate self-assessment* and fails to recognize their own shortcomings as a tactician (despite their best intentions)? What if the coach, *unwilling to learn*, once again delivers this detailed plan in a condescending manner that prevents anything useful from landing? In each of these scenarios the other-centred intent to help the athletes before the game is ineffective and inconsistent with person-centredness. However, when embracing an integrated approach, the data clearly showed how other-centred intentions promoted autonomy-supportive learning, the ability to read people better, an appropriate use of humour and a trusting relationship between coach and athlete.

Willingness to learn: Associated with terms such as openness, transparency, growth mindset, this component is perhaps the most easily aligned with humility. It requires a willingness to risk relative failure and an acceptance of vulnerability, neither of which correspond with our typical understanding of a coach's role. Given the inter-related nature of POWA, embracing vulnerability might require a big picture perspective, where the coach is prepared to experiment and risk short term losses for longer term success. The coaches I observed, consciously decided to share what they were working on in their own delivery and performance with their learners. These self-appraisals were accurate and therefore link to the next component of POWA, but importantly such a candid willingness to learn also helped remove hierarchy, and inspired athletes to be better learners themselves. After all, highly effective sport coaches don't just coach the sport, they coach the person to become better at learning, so that they can then be better at the sport.

Accurate self-assessment: The final component of POWA is perhaps the most difficult to apply. The emphasis here is on accuracy, which for some may require an acceptance that they *do* perform to a high standard in certain areas, and that they must overcome limitations of low self-esteem. For others it may require a recognition of inflated self-worth, an unpacking of why this happens and consideration for how it impacts others. Accuracy is one thing, but how and to whom we disclose this is another. Research shows us that an honest disclosure of self-uncertainty damages trust. In other words, divulging feelings of self-doubt (no matter how accurate they may be) is potentially detrimental to the trust between leaders and those they seek to help. Equally, openly acknowledging one's strengths should be motivated by an other-centredness and not simply to boost one's ego. The implication for the coach is that with accurate self-assessment comes a responsibility to adopt perspective, and to think deeply about how others will be affected by bringing these thoughts into the public domain.

The application of POWA

In the final section of this article, I will present how the POWA model can be used as a thinking tool that coaches can use to support forward planning, in the moment decision making, or reflection upon practice. Its application is further supported by adopting Aristotle's doctrine of the mean, that suggests for a trait to be virtuous it needs to represent a balanced position between excess and deficiency. As an example, if we approach accurate self-assessment as a virtue, then it represents the middle ground between arrogance (excess) and self-denigration or false modesty (deficiency). We apply this logic to each of the components of POWA as presented in Figure 2. In some ways, the concept of excellence or virtue equating to an average position seems wrong, but what is really suggested is balance, not doing too much or too little of something, so that we arrive at the right amount, the best amount and hence excellence.

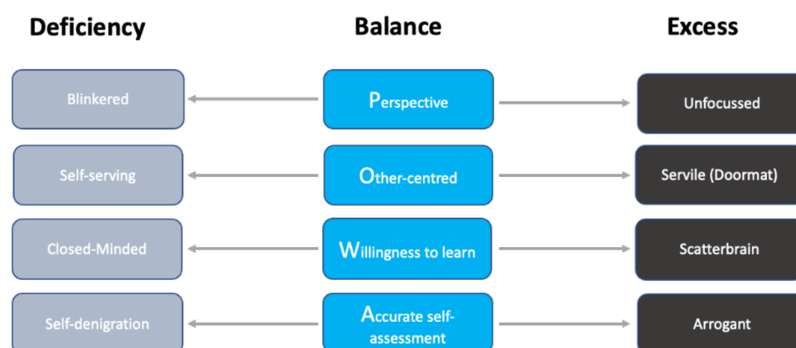

Figure 5 (2): POWA model of Humility and Person-centred intention

So, for coaches to develop their person-centredness they should consider their position on each scale and ask, 'where should I move to be more balanced?' Equally, for those of you who are highly self-aware and on top of your game, POWA is a simple enough model to use in the moment, when faced with a coaching dilemma. Should I make a substitution and who should I take off? How should I approach the difficult conversation around selection? What should I say to this frustrated parent who is upsetting the practice?! These everyday coaching dilemmas cannot always be resolved with a list of

behaviours, as the right action will change almost every time. However, what should not change is our intention to be person-centred; I am passionate that we should strive to coach with more humility and consider the power balance in our interactions, adopt POWA as a model grounded in empirical research, and bring balance to our practice.

Adapted from: Garner, P., Roberts, W. M., Baker, C., & Côté, J. (2022). Characteristics of a person-centred coaching approach. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 17479541221077052.

9.2 Person-centred Coaching Workshop

Finally, drawing upon Lyle's (2018, p.420) suggestion that coaching research might move beyond being applied, to adopt a further level in "application research" that seeks to test ideas in situ, a workshop was designed and delivered to a small group of coach developers in alpine skiing. The workshop drew upon studies 1 and 2, and although this represents a small step towards further evaluating the concepts in this thesis, it is nevertheless an attempt to play the role of "academic translator" (Lyle, 2018, p.433) and further develop the usefulness of the POWA model. Initial feedback from participants was extremely encouraging and follow-up work is planned.

The workshop was conducted across two days in the Swiss Alps, with 6 alpine ski coaches. Both days included classroom content in the mornings followed by applied work on the mountain in the afternoons. The coaches ranged in experience from 5 to 15yrs fulltime professional coaching, and all had been charged with mentoring less experienced coaches during the forthcoming winter season. Considerable effort was made to deliver the workshop in a manner that embraced the content, that is to say delivered in a person-centred way. This was achieved initially with an extended discussion about their aspirations, strengths, weaknesses and interests, which allowed me as the facilitator to tailor the content and to personalise explanations and feedback during our time together.

Day 1 comprised an introduction to the knowledge required for expertise in sport coaching, drawing upon the definition established by Côté and Gilbert (2009), with an overt focus on interpersonal knowledge. Consequently, the goals of the workshop were established, to develop their understanding and ability to reflect upon their interpersonal knowledge in the context of their professional roles. In the classroom, transformational leadership and the CLAS (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019) were presented as a contemporary way to

observe and analyse coaching behaviour. In order to stimulate discussion, video clips of sport coaches in action were used as example material to analyse, following a similar structure to Turnnidge & Côté's (2017) Transformational Coaching Workshop. Additionally, the facilitator shared the process and findings of study 1 (Garner et al., 2020) as a way to contextualise the theory and research tool in a skiing environment.

The applied part of the day involved the coaches taking to the ski slopes to deliver short coaching episodes to each other, with one coach removed from the session playing the role of observer/coder. In collaboration with the facilitator, the observer was charged with using the CLAS to capture real time coaching behaviour. The objective was to introduce the coaches to event-based coding and to provide some raw data that might shine a light on patterns of behaviour during the session. It was made clear that the accuracy of the coding was likely to be compromised due to limited coder training, but that the exercise was still of value as a means to provoke discussion.

The reflective discussions that ensued on the mountain, following each session provided rich, thought-provoking content. The typical focus of such a review of ski coaching is on the technical and tactical accuracy of the ski related content. The coaches had not previously been exposed to reflection on their leadership approach and enjoyed the structure the CLAS provided to articulate something that had previously seemed ambiguous. There was frustration amongst the group that the CLAS appeared to suggest some categories of behaviour were more appropriate than others, yet the coaches felt strongly that the coaching context may dictate an effective approach that did not necessarily align with the theory they had studied in the classroom.

This final point formed the premise for a deeper reflective conversation about day 1 that spilled into day 2. Coaches were encouraged to discuss the usefulness of the CLAS and of using an approach to coach development that foregrounds behaviours as a primary focus. Whilst there was general support for the CLAS as a convenient tool that promoted greater insight to their interpersonal approach, there was equally agreement that in order for them to continue developing there was scope for a deeper level of thought. Day 2 addressed this agenda by introducing study 2 (Garner et al., 2022) in a classroom session. Coaches were also encouraged to consider their own values and to then apply Aristotle's doctrine of the mean concept in order to articulate the extreme ends of a spectrum.

Armed, with an enhanced understanding of how to approach values and having been introduced to the POWA model, the final part of the workshop took place back on the mountain. Coaches were asked to deliver short coaching episodes to each other, with the constraint of having to behave in a way that was purposefully off-centre on one of the 4 POWA scales. Only the coach and facilitator were aware of the brief for each session. Whilst role play is not always welcomed as a training method in professional development, there is widespread support in the literature (e.g., Church & Bateman, 2019; McEwan & Tod, 2015), albeit minimal in coach development research (Morgan et al., 2013). Following each session everyone was asked to reflect on their experience, from their respective positions. Coaches also discussed the impact of behaviour that aligns with the extreme ends of the POWA scales (therefore not person-centred) on the typical learners with whom they worked, and the influence this would have on their colleagues, the way they were perceived in the industry and on their businesses.

In summary, day 1 focussed on person-centred coaching behaviours (PCBs), whereas day 2 concentrated on person-centred coaching intentions (PCIs). Coaches discussed the merits of each approach in the context of the applied sessions, and with a view to continuing to use the presented theory and tools during the forthcoming winter season, both for their own development and to support the development of less experienced coaches. It was noted that the structure and clarity around PCBs and the CLAS provided an appealing level of security and sureness, but that the approach offered by considering PCIs offered a longer-term and potentially more useful solution to what all the coaches recognised as an essential part of their work.

Chapter 10: Conclusions and Future Directions

Consistent with critical realist accounts both specific to sport coaching (North, 2013) and more broadly (Danermark et al., 2019; Pawson 2006), this thesis adopted an interdisciplinary approach, drawing upon psycho-socio and philosophical perspectives in a search for answers to the following questions:

- What characterises effective coach delivery in alpine skiing?
- What intentions facilitate the manifestation of person-centred intent in coach behaviour in alpine skiing?
- How should coach education better promote a person-centred approach?

The first question was explored in study 1; with a focus on coach educator delivery the full range leadership model and the CLAS coding tool (Turnnidge & Côté, 2019) offered useful ways to understand effective delivery. Behaviours aligned with transformational leadership characterised effective delivery during learning episodes, whereas transactional behaviours were more prevalent during assessment episodes. However, study 1 also generated more questions that fed the iterative research process, leading to a renewed focus on person-centred delivery. Through video stimulated recall interviews, study 2 explored the perceived causal mechanisms that facilitate the manifestation of person-centred intent in coach behaviour, with findings promoting four themes that are put forward as causal factors. Lastly, in response to the final research question a model was proposed that draws upon Aristotle's doctrine of the mean (Aristotle, trans 2004). This model is intended to support coach education and development as a tool to scaffold teaching, planning and reflection and has been presented in a published academic peer reviewed paper, in a more accessible practitioner article and as a face-to-face workshop.

During the research journey, limitations of adopting a leadership approach to the coaching process were identified. Often leading to a 'behaviours approach', models of leadership can be insufficient in addressing context, are sometimes misleading and are arguably inadequate in attending to the values that should guide behaviour. Consequently study 2 sought to provide a less transitive proposal to how we view effective person-centred

coaching that culminated in the POWA model. Whilst POWA offers a more or less consistent model that can be used to guide the deep components of North's (2013) ERE, those of strategy, reflection and reasoning, we must remember that adopting person-centred intentions is no guarantee of resultant behaviours leading to outcomes or recipient experiences that marry with these intentions. POWA offers a useful starting point, but coach development must continue to support practitioners in their ability to reflect and evaluate the level to which their behaviours align with their intentions. Reflection should adopt a social lens so that athlete experience feeds into the process, therefore creating a learning loop from the domain of the empirical to the real that allows for each ontological layer to inform and influence one another. This joined up approach allows for a purposeful demurral of one dimensional, albeit sometimes convenient, ways of viewing sport coaching.

Given the typical and recurring focus of coaching research and coach education that aligns with the domain of the empirical and actual (Nichols et al., 2019), this thesis offers a unique contribution to the field by explicitly (although not only) exploring the domain of the real in search of a useful position to help practitioners think about person-centred coaching. Despite this claim, it is important to remain apprised of the fallibility of epistemic models and structures, and whilst this work offers an exciting and accessible intervention, it would be naïve to assume a straightforward unproblematic uptake in practice. One area in particular that requires further research is how to support coaches in "doing the right thing". It is one thing to know how one should think and the intentions one should have but an entirely different proposition to act consistently upon those intentions. Potrac et al. (2018) promote the need for more research into the role of emotion in coaching, recognising that emotion influences how coaches behave and that the micro-politics of the organisations in which coaches operate, impact greatly on these emotions. It is the contention of this thesis that for practitioners to enact behaviours that align with person-centred intent, and hence the components of POWA, that unfavourable emotions may have to be overcome. Person-centredness often requires us to break with convention, to challenge social norms, to convince others to change, to make oneself vulnerable and relinquish power. Consequently, it is suggested that courage is a likely quality that is required in order that POWA can truly influence practice. Understanding the emotions prevalent in coaching environments is likely to help practitioners manage feelings that may otherwise prevent person-centred decision

making, furthermore understanding emotion has the potential to empower practitioners and facilitate the courage required to act in the right way.

10.1 Limitations

In addition to a need for inquiry into emotion, the POWA model remains a conceptual tool that emanates from a study in an Alpine skiing context, and the Person-centred Coaching Workshop has only been delivered once, again in an Alpine skiing environment. Both must be tested and delivered in a variety of contexts and used in future research, with a view to consolidate or refine each tool as required. Consistent with North's (2013) ERE model that offers us a coaching specific ontology, it is essential that sport coaching research recognises the goal-orientation, context and resources that influence coaching practice and effectiveness. A further limitation of this research is that the focus of investigation is primarily on coach intention and coach behaviour, with less attention on athlete perceptions of behaviour. If we are to continue enhancing our understanding of the coaching process, then we must attend to how intention and subsequent behaviour is experienced by athletes. As North (2013) pointed out, causal mechanisms have the potential to realise actual events, bringing them into the domain of the empirical and hence giving rise to outcomes. As essential elements within the stratified critical realist ontology, outcomes (athlete perceptions) must also be considered.

In summary of the limitations reported earlier in the thesis, the sample size for both studies was small; furthermore, the case study approach dictated a single sport setting for this research, albeit with multiple contexts explored within the activity of alpine skiing. Whilst indicative of intensive qualitative research that investigates phenomena at a deep level, this remains to some extent a limitation that can be addressed by further similarly focussed work into different environments, with more participants.

10.2 Strengths

Convention often predisposes us to settle on the limitations associated with research, however in order for work that seeks to shine a light on the complexity of interpersonal interactions to continue, we might well argue for the importance of a positive dénouement.

Indeed, qualitative work demands multiple studies with a similar focus that address different contexts, and good work should inspire this succession. The strengths of this work are derived largely from the critical realist lens that both frames the research process, and the articulation of the research findings. The balance afforded by the epistemic middle ground (Grix, 2010), where attempts are made to avoid unfeasible certainty and impractical equivocation, helps to make the concepts presented in this thesis accessible to practitioners. This ontological perspective promotes the ability to appeal to real-world concerns in a useful way. Moreover, Aristotle's doctrine of the mean, which incidentally offers similar notions of balance to critical realism, also supports the translation of theory to practice.

Despite this realist ontology, a relativist epistemology encouraged exploration into the domain of the real (Bhaskar, 2010), leading to video stimulated recall interviews that allowed for a deep understanding of what precipitates person-centred coaching behaviours. This method of data collection was further supported by ethno-methodological leanings that afforded an insider's perspective, aiding with the detail and authenticity of data interpretation.

Lastly, in addressing the interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge of coaching practitioners, reflective practice is widely espoused as an essential developmental method (e.g., Silva et al., 2020). However, in practice we know that attempts to engage with reflection are frequently characterised by a surface level approach (Knowles et al., 2014). The POWA model is a strength of this thesis and provides a potential tool to support purposeful reflection in practitioners, offering a straightforward way to ask, *"to what extent are my actions aligned with my intention to be person-centred?"*.

The model has been used in this way across a number of different contexts since the beginning of 2023, providing support for its utility to support professional development. These contexts include a presentation to academic staff of The School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences at The University of Birmingham; consequently, the model has been proposed as a way to scaffold staff reflection around annual appraisals, and therefore their approach to working with fellow colleagues and students. The Graduate School of Sport and Professional Practice at The University of Birmingham has adopted the model as the underpinning value structure to support intra-team reflection, and also as a tool to assist in the approach to student supervision. Furthermore, it has been embedded in three

undergraduate modules as a model to support reflection around the interpersonal elements of student placements and coaching.

Finally, the model has been introduced and well received in the following UK coach education settings: Table Tennis England - L3 coaching qualification, British Association of Snowsports - Annual Trainers Conference, British Equestrian Federation - L4 Coaching Qualification, British Rowing - L4 Coaching Qualification, England Lacrosse - coach development workshop, England Rugby Professional Referees - professional development. The impact of these interventions has yet to be captured and provides the focus for follow-up research however, this early uptake of the model suggests a level of support for the product of this research, and its appeal to practitioners across a number of settings.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Study 1 – Coach Leadership Assessment System (CLAS)

COACH LEADERSHIP ASSESSEMENT SYSTEM (CLAS)
(Turnnidge & Côté, 2019)

Higher Order Dimension	Lower Order Dimension	Leadership Tone Behaviours	Content Modifiers
Transformational	Idealized Influence	1 –Discussing/modelling pro-social values or behaviours	1-Instruction/Feedback 2-Organization 3- General Communication
		2- Showing vulnerability/humility	1-Instruction/Feedback 2-Organization 3-General Communication
	Inspirational Motivation	3- Discussing goals/expectations	1-Instruction/Feedback 2-Organization 3- General Communication
		4- Expressing confidence in athlete capabilities (potential)	1-Instruction/Feedback 2-Organization 3- General Communication
		5- Implementing a collective vision	1-Instruction/Feedback 2-Organization 3- General Communication
		6- Providing meaningful and challenging tasks and roles	1-Instruction/Feedback 2-Organization 3- General Communication
	Intellectual Stimulation	7- Eliciting athlete input	1-Instruction/Feedback 2-Organization 3- General Communication
		8- Sharing decision making/leadership responsibilities	1-Instruction/Feedback 2-Organization 3- General Communication
		9- Emphasizing the learning process	1-Instruction/Feedback 2-Organization 3- General Communication
	Individualized Consideration	10- Showing interest in athlete feelings/needs	1-Instruction/Feedback 2-Organization 3- General Communication
		11- Recognizing individual roles and contributions	1-Instruction/Feedback 2-Organization 3- General Communication
Transactional		12- Discussing rewards/penalties	1-Instruction/Feedback 2-Organization 3- General Communication
		13- Searching for/responding to deviations from rules or standards	1-Instruction/Feedback 2-Organization 3- General Communication
Neutral		14- Neutral	1-Instruction/Feedback 2-Organization 3- General Communication 4- Observation
Laissez-faire		15- Showing disinterest	N/A
Toxic		16- Expressing anger/hostility	1-Instruction/Feedback 2-Organization 3- General Communication
		17- Modelling anti-social behaviours	1-Instruction/Feedback 2-Organization 3- General Communication
N/A		X-Uncodable	

Appendix 2: Study 1 – Informed consent

A study into trainer behaviour and candidate reflections during assessed and non-assessed XXXX courses

Research aim
The objective of this research is twofold: First, XXXX recognise the value in collecting evidence to underpin the processes of learning and assessment that occur on XXXX courses. Second, we know very little about what makes a trainer's delivery successful so XXXX are interested in collecting observational data to underpin trainer education and further develop the quality of delivery on courses.

What is your role?
Your involvement in this project is purely voluntary and will have no impact on the outcome of the course. Any information you provide will be treated as confidential and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time without the need to justify your decision. If this work is published at a later date your name will not be used.
At the end of day 1 and day 5 you will be invited:

1. To share your thoughts using four short questionnaires that are designed to provide one measure of your perceived:
- **Competence** at skiing in relation to the course
- **Confidence** when skiing
- **Character** when engaging with skiing on the course
- **Connection** with your trainer and peers during the course
  (The 4Cs – Cote and Gilbert, 2009)

2. To keep a reflective diary during the week that records your thoughts regarding course content and delivery.

How will the data be used?
The intention is to collect data from a number of courses to provide a consistent and over-arching picture of course delivery. The researcher will be looking at candidate outcomes related to the 4Cs and how they change across the duration of the course and the behaviour of the trainer in relation to the observable traits of transformational v transactional leadership.

Statement by participant

- I have volunteered to take part in this project
- I know I can withdraw from the data collection at any time without being disadvantaged
- I know that the results may be published, but they will not be linked to me
- I agree to inform the researcher immediately if I feel uncomfortable
- I have had the chance to ask questions regarding the study
- I know that I will not receive any money for taking part in the study

If you have concerns about any aspect of this study you should ask to speak to the researcher(s) who will do their best to answer your questions.

I have read and understood this form it. I agree to take part in the project entitled "A study into trainer behaviour and candidate reflections during assessed and non-assessed XXXX courses".

Signed (Participant): **Date:**

Appendix 3: Study 1 – Example transcript extract

D: So that course was a L2 Gap, we worked them really hard in the 8 weeks previous so they knew what they were going to expect on the course. So they were really well prepped. A couple of weeks before that we did an assessment and told them where they were at. That wasn't super amazing; we were definitely on the harsh side so it gave them a bit of a rocket for the last few weeks. So when we started off the course we knew everybody so that was a big advantage, so there was no team building required they were already a good unit. They knew me I knew them, I liked them and we got stuck in really. So we started and we hit the ground running and that was massive, so by the end of the first week we were in really good shape whereas normally you're thinking oh we really need to tidy stuff up, so we were in good shape. However, at the end of that week I kept them very much on their toes and said 'you're doing really well but if I was to make my decision today you're not going to pass', so we worked really hard the next week and we got a great pass rate.

P: So you are saying that you were dead honest with them?

D: No.

P: You weren't honest with them?

D: No, I was slightly harsh with them. So I think I was slightly on the firm side, so someone I thought was just a pass on say long turns, I told them they were borderline, that your best turns are there but your other turns aren't there. If you can be consistently good with your turns I am going to pass you. Because obviously it is about wanting to pass them but actually it is about getting them as good as they can possibly be and that is where they get the pleasure from… and I do.

P: So by being economical with the truth in a positive way what is the impact on them?

D: They know it's there for the taking, so they are definitely not finishing that first week thinking it's not worth it. I am basically saying to them that if this time next week I am not shaking your hands saying well done, something has gone massively wrong, but we're not there yet. So, you dangle the carrot, you keep them super motivated and you start again on the Monday. Hopefully they'll do a little bit of training over the weekend and I'll direct that in the areas they need to do it in.

P: So you are really managing their expectations. Ok, so this might be for the course I observed or it might be for your normal way of running a course…

D: OK

P: …are you aware of changing the way you behave during the course?

D: Yep, I am aware that I change a bit. Early on in the course I am really encouraging and positive and try to keep that going all the way through but when you get towards the end of the second week, it's part of the deal… but we do chat that through with them, that as we get towards the end you're going to get less input from us but that's been sort of progressive throughout the whole course. And actually it's now you (the candidate) stopping and saying I did that really well but I am still doing that… exactly… lets whizz round and do it again. And then eventually when it gets really towards the end, it's a practice session, lap and if you really feel like you need to call in then call in but if not I am just going to observe you. That does change the dynamic slightly but hopefully they've done so much of that they feel pretty comfortable doing it… it doesn't feel like it is a real assessment. I also say to them at the beginning of the week, 'everybody here can pass and it's our job as a team to make sure that we all do, so I have no criteria to say 7 out of 10 have to pass or 9 out of 10, everybody here can now pass. So we've got to work as a team, if someone is particularly strong in one area, say the bumps, I might well link you up with someone else who is not as good, but then that person might be really good at teaching and you may need some help from them, so we're going to work as a team to try and get everybody over the line'. And I think that builds the spirit where somebody doesn't have such a good day… I mean we know that happens in sport you don't perform consistently every day… but then hopefully the rest of the team are saying it's alright you're doing OK, keep going. And they get it more from them than from me and that almost carries more weight I think or as much weight really, you know.

Appendix 4: Study 1 – Generation of themes

Coach interpretation of behaviour
Honest reflection
Intuition/PJDM

Uncodable
Disingenuous enthusiasm
Managed dishonesty

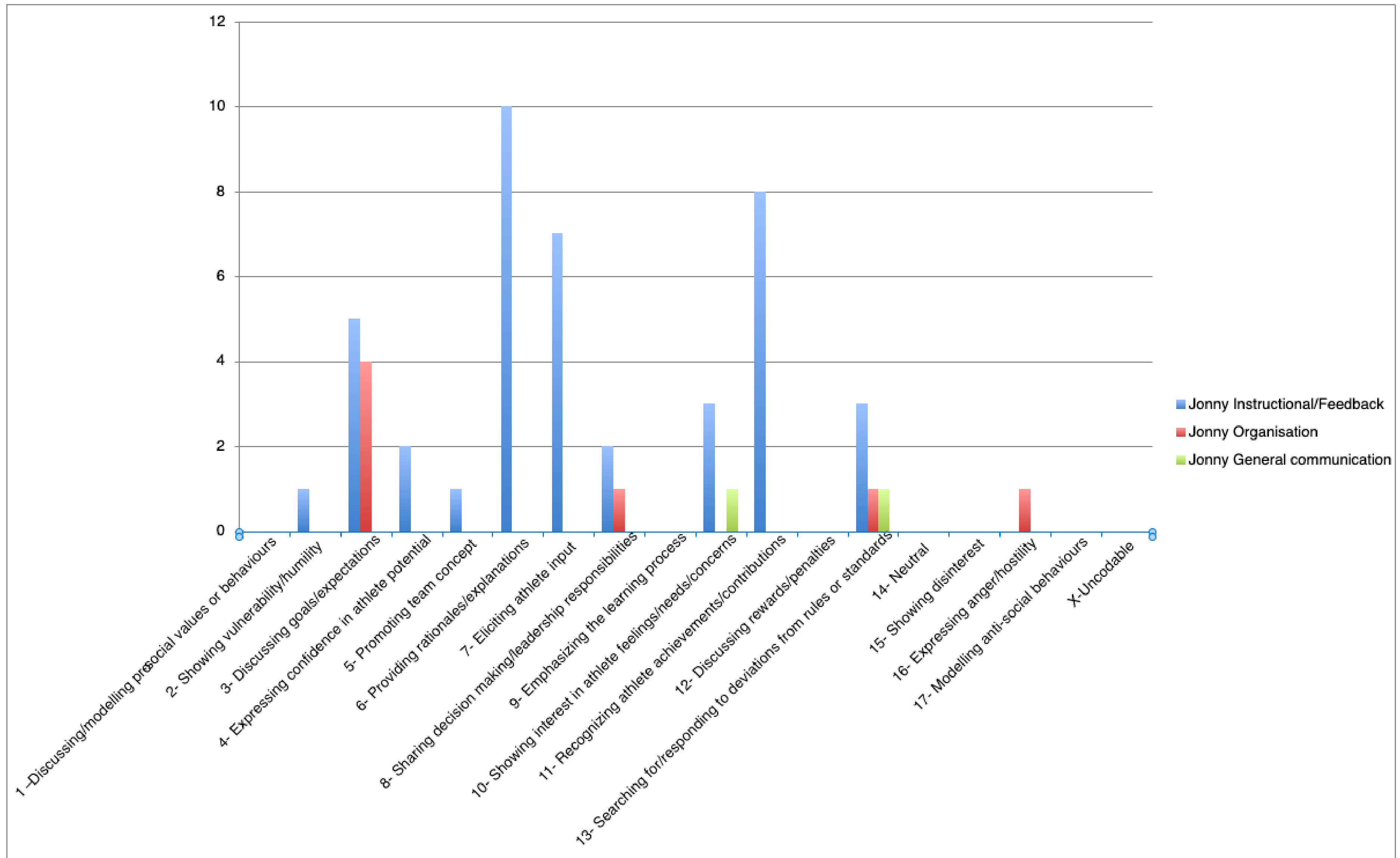
CLAS
Motivation (Mastery)
Sharing decision-making
Pro-social values
Showing interest in athlete needs, feelings and concerns
Providing a rationale/explanation - Explaining approach to leadership
Promoting team concept
Transactional - clarity

Major theme	Theme	Sub-theme	Inductive/Deductive	Occurrences
Coach interpretation of behaviour		Honest reflection	Inductive	4
		Intuition/PJDM		5
Uncodable	Pseudo TFL ?	Disingenuous enthusiasm		5
	Managing expectations?	Managed dishonesty for motivation		2
Transformational	Idealized Influence	Pro-social values	Deductive	7
	Inspirational Motivation	Motivation (Mastery)		4
		Providing a rationale/explanation - Explaining approach to leadership		9
		Promoting team concept		1
	Intellectual Stimulation	Sharing decision-making		1
	Individualized consideration	Showing interest in athlete needs, feelings and concerns		8
Transactional		Offering clarity against the level		7

Appendix 5: Study 1 – Example observational data

Study 1 - Example observational data for one participant on one afternoon

DAY 2 pm					
Higher Order Dimension	Lower Order Dimension	Leadership tone behaviours	Jonny		
			Instructional/Feedback	Organisation	General communication
Transformational	Idealized Influence	1 –Discussing/modelling pro-social values or behaviours			
		2- Showing vulnerability/humility	1		
	Inspirational Motivation	3- Discussing goals/expectations	5	4	
		4- Expressing confidence in athlete potential	2		
		5- Promoting team concept	1		
		6- Providing rationales/explanations	10		
	Intellectual Stimulation	7- Eliciting athlete input	7		
		8- Sharing decision making/leadership responsibilities	2	1	
		9- Emphasizing the learning process			
	Individualized Consideration	10- Showing interest in athlete feelings/needs/concerns	3		1
		11- Recognizing athlete achievements/contributions	8		
Transactional		12- Discussing rewards/penalties			
		13- Searching for/responding to deviations from rules or standards	3	1	1
Neutral		14- Neutral			
Laissez-faire		15- Showing disinterest			
Toxic		16- Expressing anger/hostility		1	
		17- Modelling anti-social behaviours			
N/A		X-Uncodable			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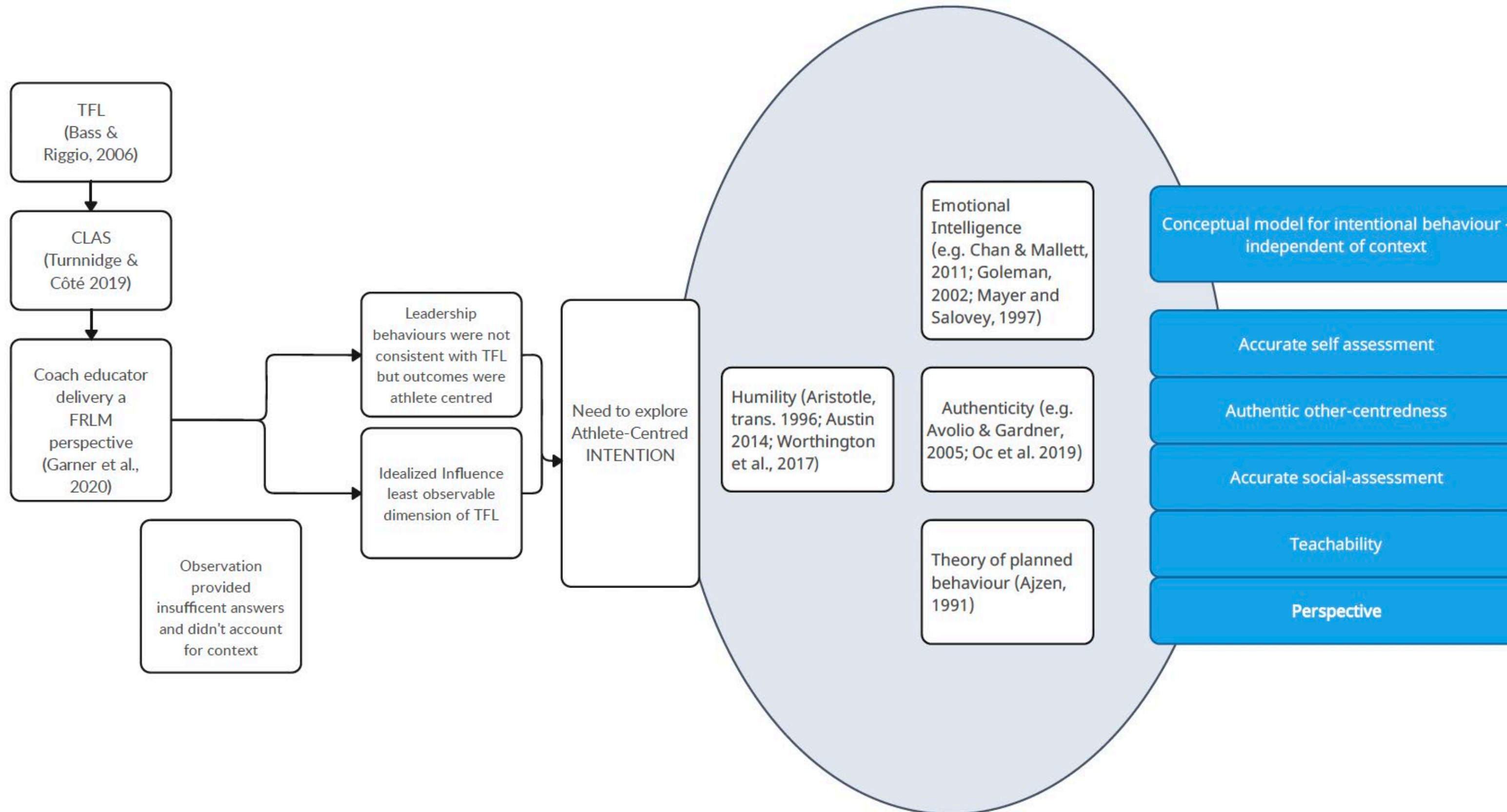
1 –Discussing/modelling prosocial values or behaviours
2- Showing vulnerability/humility
3- Discussing goals/expectations
4- Expressing confidence in athlete potential
5- Promoting team concept
6- Providing rationales/explanations
7- Eliciting athlete input
8- Sharing decision making/leadership responsibilities
9- Emphasizing the learning process
10- Showing interest in athlete feelings/needs/concerns
11- Recognizing athlete achievements/contributions
12- Discussing rewards/penalties
13- Searching for/responding to deviations from rules or standards
14- Neutral
15- Showing disinterest
16- Expressing anger/hostility
17- Modelling anti-social behaviours
X-Uncodable
Jonny Instructional/Feedback
Jonny Organisation
Jonny General communication

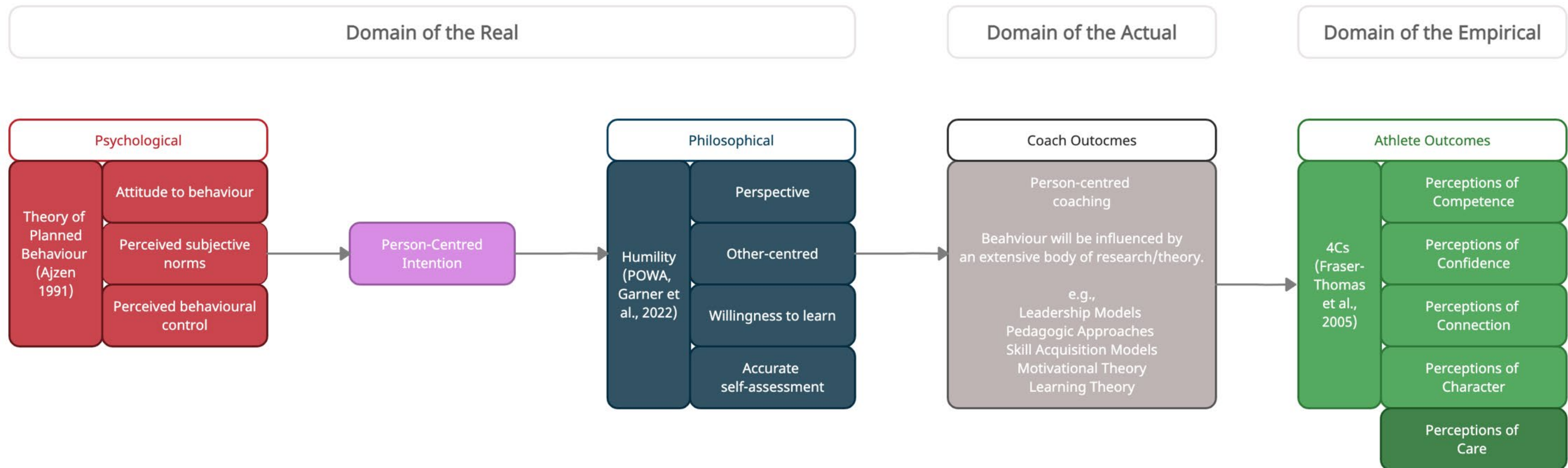
Appendix 6: Study 1 – Candidate Feedback

		Alpine Level 4 Tech Val d'Isere	Alpine Level 4 Tech Val d'Isere	Alpine Level 2 Val d'Isere	Alpine Level 2 Val d'Isere
Training Feedback:	Q1. Encouraged	5.50	4.50	5.75	5.80
	Q2. Receive feedback	5.33	4.75	5.75	5.80
	Q3. Easy to understand	5.83	4.75	6.00	5.80
	Q4. Well organised	5.67	5.25	5.75	5.90
	Q5. Clear on development	5.67	5.00	5.63	5.80
	Q6. Group management	6.00	4.75	5.75	5.80
	Q7. Lecture standard	5.67	4.75	5.38	5.80
	Q8. Clear on performance	5.67	4.75	5.06	5.75
	Q9. Made improvements	5.33	4.75	5.63	5.90
	Q10. Professionalism	6.00	5.25	5.75	5.90
Total Aver Score out of 60		**56.67**	**48.50**	**56.45**	**58.25**
Training Student Comments:		1. Trainer easy to understand - Rated 6. Amazingly 2. Management of group - Rated 6. Great from all of them 3. Performance standard - Rated 6. As much as you can ever be	No comments	1. General Comments - Awesome!	1. Trainers Coaching - Rated 6. 100% 2. Performance Standards - Rated 4.5. Sometimes unclear to relate outcomes to performance

Appendix 7: Research Process



Appendix 8: A stratified ontology and person-centred sport coaching



Appendix 9: Study 2 – Informed consent

Exploring coach behaviour: A critical realist approach

Research aim

The objective of this research is to explore the thought processes that lead to coach behaviours in a variety of different contexts. Coach behaviours contribute to our interpersonal knowledge (IPK), which is one of the most important elements of coaching expertise and contributes directly to the success of the coach-athlete or instructor-client relationship. However, a successful interpersonal approach one day is likely to look very different the next, with different people, conditions, goals etc. So, this research is attempting to reduce some of this complexity in order to find the behaviours or focus that should always be there underpinning effective IPK. The starting point is that trust is foundational to good coach-athlete relationships regardless of context, but what contributes to trusting relationships?

What is your role?

Your involvement in this project is purely voluntary and will have no impact on your current role. Any information you provide will be treated as confidential and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time without the need to justify your decision. If this work is published at a later date, your name will not be used.

1. You will be asked to coach a session in your normal way, paying as little attention to the researcher as possible. The client and/or researcher will wear a chest mounted GoPro camera in order to record your coaching.
2. During the session the researcher may make field notes related to your coaching.
3. Following a period of video-editing, the researcher will conduct an interview during which the video footage of your session will be used to stimulate the discussion.

How will the data be used?

Data pertaining to you will be analysed along with similar data from other coaches and coach educators to provide a clearer picture of how we behave in a variety of contexts. The interview data will also be analysed to better understand the intentions behind your behaviour.

Statement by participant

- I have volunteered to take part in this project
- I know I can withdraw from the data collection at any time without being disadvantaged
- I know that the results may be published, but they will not be linked to me
- I agree to inform the researcher immediately if I feel uncomfortable
- I have had the chance to ask questions regarding the study

- I know that I will not receive any money for taking part in the study

If you have concerns about any aspect of this study you should ask to speak to the researcher(s) who will do their best to answer your questions.

I have read and understood this form. I agree to take part in the project entitled *Exploring coach behaviour: A critical realist approach.*

Signed (Participant): **Date:**

Appendix 10: Study 2 – Example transcript extract

Glen (G), Researcher (R)

G - No, I don't do anything off the cuff if I'm being honest, I was aware that I was standing there for a while, giving lots of technical input and I could sense that, oh this is a bit heavy and I just wanted to throw that in to lighten it up.

R - So whilst you didn't plan the gag, you were thinking before you said it, it would be nice to lighten things up here…

G - Yeah, well I think this happens. Your brain is working delivering and sometimes another part of your brain is almost surveying what's going on and checking what you need to adjust in terms of climate setting or whatever it is.

R - Great. OK, so… it's very in the moment but you talked before we started recording about different characters in the group, is there a thought process there that you're trying to build him up or is there anything behind that comment or is it a throw away comment?

G - No, it's not a throw away comment… he's quite intense Graham and I just feel that… often I want him to focus on the feedback he gets but also try to let him relax a bit, he's quite tentative and sometimes he tends to think too hard, so I want to give him the information but I want to create the climate for Graham, where he's thinking 'oh I'm having quite a nice time' and then he skis better.

R - That's great.

G – It's funny because it comes across as all throw away but it never is.

R - You remember this?

G - Yes it's just rhubarb!

R - So what are you thinking, you're letting them go but in your head?

G - Well, I'm thinking what the hell is he talking about! And he is bizarre that guy, he's mad, but I don't want to be the guy to crush that down because again it's not good for the climate and my relationship with him, so I try to let these guys talk it through and I was thinking hard in my head, how am I going to get out of this, because it's absolute rubbish, but I don't want to be the person putting him down because it will affect his self esteem within the group and he comes out with absolute weird stuff all the time and I don't want to end up… he comes out with something and I'm like no that's not right Walker and… I don't want to do that. So I remember thinking I'll just let this play out and almost ignore it you know…

Appendix 11: Study 2 – Generation of themes

Theme	Sub-themes	Detail
Perspective	• Seeing the bigger picture (timescales) • Showing interest in others' contributions/position	• Franz – Impact might be later in the season/Bode – you're here for 10 weeks • Glen – acknowledging other guides • Bode – legitimising questions
Other-centredness (O-C)	• Intention = learning*, care for feelings and trust*/*trust*** building • Showing interest in people's lives • Decision to withhold or obscure the truth with other-centred motive • Accurate social assessment/emotional intelligence- *Almost always facilitates and precedes O-C* • Pseudo (inauthentic) other-centredness - *Infrequent but evident, even experts are "fallible"* • Other-centred, coach-led behaviors (see Bowles & O'Dwyer, 2019) • Humour (authentic, not self-deprecating)	• Glen – explaining what it will feel like • Glen – likens himself to the client to boost confidence • Bode – you don't need to remember everything today… (well-being, accurate social) • Bode – I said right don't do performance skiing, just be really aware of it, just keep me posted (DIRECT) • Bode – If they get on it makes life easier for me! • Franz – an awareness that learners are trying to please the coach – need to promote responsibility. Give them tools to self-check, feel etc. • Franz – Withhold feedback/instruction and encourage questions • Franz – teach them to learn not to ski • Franz – deliberately accurate and helpful + non activity related trust (lift time) • Lyndsey – need to sense satisfaction or not as people are too polite to tell me • Bode – comments on how skis like an older man, different turns
Willingness to learn	• Open recognition of error • Openness to vulnerability	• Glen – I'll be open and honest we might turn back • Bode – got to deal with what comes if you invite the questions
Accurate self-assessment	• Recognition of motives • Positioning of self in hierarchical structures • Accurate awareness of emotion - *This facilitates other-centredness/humility* • Authentic awareness of abilities	• Bode – tell me if you see me make a mistake (genuine) • Franz – training peers… professionalism required

- *Learning – *structured autonomy*
- *Conscious decision making throughout.*