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Investigating philosophical discussion with children as co-researchers

**A case story
of doing educative research
using collaborative philosophical inquiry**

Judy A. Kyle

**The Department of Educational Studies
McGill University
July 2000**

**A dissertation submitted to
The Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
McGill University
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education**

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Canada

To the memory of Audrey Shaw Kyle

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research was completed with the financial assistance of a three-year doctoral fellowship awarded by FCAR (Fonds pour la formation de chercheurs et l'aide à la recherche) of the government of the Province of Québec. As part of that grant I received additional funding which permitted me to complete a six-month research *stage* at the National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales, Slough, England. Funds for research materials used in the co-research project were provided through a research funding agreement between the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal and McGill University.

I am grateful to the many people who helped to shape this research by contributing their time, thought, interest and inspiration: the children who were my co-researchers; my philosophical and research mentors; my Edinburgh School 'family' of children, parents, teachers and administrators; my dissertation advisory committee; friends and family.

The experience of working with the seventeen eleven and twelve-year-old Grade Six students who volunteered to act as my co-researchers and who produced the interpretive data for this research has been a privilege and a highlight of my teaching career. I take this opportunity to thank them again for the after-school time they each contributed to a project which extended over forty-eight sessions and an entire school year. Their philosophical insights have profoundly influenced and transformed my own thinking and with this dissertation I honour their participation in this project by entering their work into the public record of educational research.

This work owes its existence to the contributions of the following people whom I regard as my philosophical and research mentors:

John Wilson (Senior Research Associate, Department of Educational Studies, University of Oxford), the 'special teacher' who started it all when he helped me to recognize the philosophical in myself and who was a catalyst in my coming to realize that my own ability to 'do philosophy' must have begun in my own childhood. I thank John for his contagious enthusiasm, for helping me to identify my professional passion, for his provocative encouragement which continues to inspire my work and for introducing me to. . .

Dr. Monica J. Taylor (Senior Research Fellow, National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales and Editor of the *Journal of Moral Education*), a kindred spirit and cherished friend. I thank Monica for her unwavering support, for her philosophical, moral education and research expertise and for her participation in this research project in Session 6 when she introduced us to the practice of research interviewing.

Mr. Chris Whetton and Dr. Marian Sainsbury who welcomed me to the Department of Assessment and Measurement during my *stage* at the National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales. I thank them for inviting me to join the Key Stage 1 research team with whom I gained first-hand experience of the realities of a research enterprise.

Drs. Matthew Lipman, Ann Margaret Sharp and the late Ronald F. Reed (Philosophy for Children pioneers and activists) who introduced me to the IAPC Philosophy for Children program. I thank Mat for the stroke of genius which I take his creation of the Philosophy for Children program to be. I thank Ann Margaret Sharp for her on-going work in the implementation and development of the Philosophy for Children 'movement' and for her abiding confidence in and encouragement of my work. And I am grateful to be one of many to have had the privilege of working with and having been 'coached' by Ron Reed. With this dissertation I pay tribute to their work.

Dr. Pieter Mostert (Philosophy for Children associate and long-time friend) whose mentoring throughout and invaluable assistance at a critical moment made all the difference. I thank Pieter for recognizing and seizing that moment, for his freely-given time and attention, and for his exquisite expertise in helping me bring this project to fruition. Also, I thank his family, Ria, Jeanette and Evelien, for their help in making that possible. Pieter's contribution to my effort has been a life lesson in the very meaning of friendship.

Dr. Michael Chervin (McGill Research Group colleague and friend) co-author with me of the MRG research article which led to this research. I thank Michael for his assistance in writing the successful FCAR research grant application during which I began to shape the ideas for this research, for the profound influence on my thinking of his insights into radical aspects of feminist research and post-modern philosophy, for the way he puts theory into practice in his commitment to community work and for cheering me on.

Dr. Richard 'Mort' Morehouse (Philosophy for Children associate and Editor of *Analytic Teaching*) who has been a supportive colleague from a distance since we met at a Philosophy for Children training session in 1980. I thank Mort (and Pamela Maykut) for the help I gleaned from *Beginning Qualitative Research: A Philosophic and Practical Guide*, the book they co-authored.

The people of my Edinburgh School 'family' past and present (students, parents, teachers and administrators) also helped to make this research possible:

Mrs. Marilyn Tobman (principal of Edinburgh School from 1980 to 1991) who, during her eleven year tenure as Principal of Edinburgh School, encouraged me to begin the Philosophy for Children program in January 1981 and who contributed to its growth to the point of its being offered to all students. I thank Marilyn for her belief in the value of nurturing children's abilities to think for themselves, for her help in initiating the program which provided the children co-researchers with the philosophical experience needed for this project, and for her moral support and friendship.

Miss Ann MacLeish (former Regional Director of the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal) who believed in and provided administrative support for the Philosophy for Children program at Edinburgh School from its inception. I thank Miss MacLeish especially for the important part she played in my obtaining authorization to conduct this research.

The students and staff of the *present* Edinburgh School community whose patience, encouragement and support has kept me grounded in the educational everyday. I thank the children from Kindergarten to Grade Six for the many philosophical moments which continue to confirm my dedication to the value of this project. I thank my teacher colleagues and the school secretary, Céline Elbarmelgui for the many ways in which they have offered practical and moral support. And I especially thank John Roumeliotis (Edinburgh School principal, friend and colleague) for the countless ways in which he has helped me to bring this project to completion.

The members of my dissertation Advisory Committee have also contributed in important ways to the realization of this work:

Dr. Nancy S. Jackson, (Associate Professor, Department of Educational Studies, Faculty of Education, McGill University) whose introductory course in qualitative research inspired me to seek her guidance with this project. I thank Nancy for agreeing to supervise my work, for her steadfast interest and caring involvement no matter how far away she had to be geographically, for her gentle prodding, encouragement, and sense of humour and for helping me to "bring 'the monster' to heel" in as timely a fashion as possible.

Dr. Gérard Potvin (professeur honoraire, Département d'études en éducation, Faculté des sciences de l'éducation, Université de Montréal) whom I first met at the World Congress of Philosophy, Montreal 1983, and with whom I subsequently served on the Comité de l'éducation philosophique (CePh), a subcommittee of the Société de Philosophie du Québec. I thank Gérard for his philosophical expertise, for modeling what it is to be a lifelong learner, for his unfailing willingness to read and his attention to detail in his responses to earlier drafts of this dissertation, and for his practical advice in the final stages of this project.

Dr. Claudia Mitchell (former Director of Graduate Program in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Faculty of Education, McGill University) who encouraged my initial application for doctoral studies and who was for me another inspiring teacher. I thank Claudia for recognizing the importance of offering children opportunities to do philosophy, for her creativity as a teacher and her ability to bring out the creativity *in* teachers, and for her contributions as a member of my dissertation advisory committee.

Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber (present Director of Graduate Program in the Department of Educational Studies, Faculty of Education, McGill University) with whom I did a reading course and who was available for consultation during the sabbatical absence of my supervisor. I thank Lynn for her practical advice in how to conduct a qualitative research study, for her assistance in sorting out similarities and differences between 'cooperative' and 'collaborative' learning, and for her contribution to my dissertation advisory committee.

Stanley Nemiroff (former Chair of the Department of Religion and Philosophy in Education, Faculty of Education, McGill University) who made it possible for me to train other teachers to do philosophy with their own students and who handled the administrative aspects of the McGill Research Group on Children's Philosophical Reasoning which led to this research. I wish to thank Stan especially for his administrative and philosophical assistance in developing the graduate level Philosophy for Children teacher training program at McGill, for his philosophical participation in the MRG research project, for encouraging me to make the decision to pursue doctoral studies at a pivotal moment in my teaching career and for his participation on my dissertation Advisory Committee even after his retirement from active duty.

Personal friends have also provided invaluable moral and practical support and encouragement from the beginning:

Claudia and Gilbert Rock, whose fine friendship, moral support and detailed interest in all phases of the project has been especially helpful. I am grateful to Claudia (an English as a Second Language teacher and author of ESL instructional materials) whom I met as a fellow student in the early stages of the doctoral program and whose interest in my work with Philosophy for Children led to her becoming my 'student' when she participated in the last year of the teacher-training program I offered at McGill. I will especially remember how, on her own initiative, she cleared her schedule to spend concentrated time editing and summarizing the *Co-researching Stories*. In addition I thank Gilbert (a college teacher in marketing and a producer of related instructional materials) for his instant responses to my technical calls for computer advice and assistance.

Dr. Joan Russell (now Director of the Music Education program in the Department of Educational Studies, Faculty of Education, McGill University) who was a few steps ahead of me in the doctoral program when we met. I thank Joan for our many theoretical conversations, for the specialized knowledge of someone who has "been there" recently, and for her moral support and practical assistance at various stages of this process. Although we discovered that we had attended the same elementary school around the same time, ours is a recent friendship with surprisingly deep roots.

Susan van Gelder (former Edinburgh School colleague and friend) who subsequently became an elementary school Philosophy for Children teacher and who now specializes in computer education. I thank Susan for her weekly moral support, for her computer assistance in reproducing the research maps in the appendix, for providing emergency printing resources in the middle of the night and especially for making me feel a part of her family.

Finally my family has provided me with unconditional love and support as needed. I am grateful especially to my father and late mother for lifelong lessons learned; to my stepmother for her loving encouragement; and to my four brothers and sisters for helping me to "think I can" in moments when I least "thought I could".

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CPI	Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry
Cw1	Communication with One
D4L	Discussion for Learning [also D(4L) – Discussion (for Learning)]
DRG	Discussion Research Group
EMSB	English Montreal School Board [formerly the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal]
FCAR	Fonds pour la formation de chercheurs et l'aide à la recherche [the research funding agency of the Government of Québec]
FFR	For Future Reference
IAPC	Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children
IFS	Implementation Feasibility Study
MRG	McGill Research Group [into Children's Philosophical Reasoning]
NFER	National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales
P4C	Philosophy for Children
PSBGM	Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal [now the EMSB — English Montreal School Board]

ABSTRACT

This thesis is about an investigation of how children with philosophical experience use philosophical discussion as a way of doing research. A Lawrence Stenhouse description of 'research' as "systematic and sustained enquiry made public" (Bridges 1996, p. 2) served as my starting point for what to count as 'research'. As an interpretive case story of children participating in research as co-researchers, this research is about how I engaged in an after-school Discussion Research Group co-research project with seventeen volunteer students from my Philosophy for Children classes. Our co-research was a methodological experiment in merging genres of research (Anderson, 1989) in which we adapted and combined Philosophy for Children and qualitative research techniques in a philosophical exploration of philosophical discussion. Bringing together the children's philosophical expertise and my interest in the use of qualitative research methodologies, I explored how and whether 'to do philosophy' is 'to do research'.

Using an open and systematic inquiry approach, I answer the dissertation research question in three ways: by demonstration, by surfacing philosophical inquiry research acts and by conceptual investigation. In a set of co-researching stories, I use document and verbatim transcribed data obtained from audio and video tapes of forty-eight co-research sessions to demonstrate the co-researcher children at work using their own voices. Using these data I surface philosophical inquiry research acts by identifying philosophical inquiry 'moves' the children use in the research context. And I present a conceptual investigation of research roles as a way of answering how the philosophical work the children co-researchers do can be seen as 'doing research'.

This investigation offers a textured portrayal of children using philosophical discussion as a way of doing research. It presents their work as a complex and comprehensive account of 'philosophical discussion'. It uses children's verbatim data to surface the philosophical in research thereby supporting my assertion that to do philosophy is to do research. It presents a conceptual refinement of a variety of research roles. And it presents a viable example of how philosophical and qualitative research methodologies can work together for mutual benefit.

RÉSUMÉ

Cette thèse rend compte d'une investigation de la façon dont des enfants expérimentés en discussion philosophique utilisent cette démarche comme façon de faire de la recherche. Une description de Stenhouse présentant la 'recherche' comme "une étude systématique et suivie rendue publique" (Bridges 1996, p. 2) me sert de base pour reconnaître ce qui mérite le nom de recherche. Comme histoire interprétative d'un cas d'enfants participant à une recherche à titre de co-chercheurs, cette recherche rapporte comment je me suis engagée dans le projet parascolaire de co-recherche, le Groupe de Recherche Discussion, avec dix-sept élèves volontaires provenant de mes classes de Philosophie pour enfants. Au plan méthodologique, notre recherche expérimentait la fusion de genres de recherche (Anderson, 1989); nous y avons adapté et combiné des techniques de Philosophie pour enfants et des techniques qualitatives lors d'une exploration philosophique de la discussion philosophique. Regroupant l'expertise philosophique des enfants et mon intérêt pour le recours à des méthodes de recherche qualitative, j'ai exploré si et comment 'faire de la philosophie' c'est 'faire de la recherche'.

Selon une approche ouverte et systématique, je réponds à la question de recherche de cette dissertation de trois façons, par une démonstration, en faisant émerger les gestes de recherche de type investigation philosophique et par un examen conceptuel. Dans un jeu d'histoires de co-recherche, je m'appuie sur une transcription littérale des données d'enregistrements audio et vidéo de quarante-huit sessions de façon à montrer les enfants co-chercheurs au travail et à les laisser parler eux-mêmes. En utilisant ces données, j'amène à la surface les gestes de recherche de type investigation philosophique en identifiant les manœuvres d'examen philosophique que les enfants utilisent dans ce contexte de recherche. Et je m'adonne à un examen conceptuel des rôles en recherche pour indiquer comment le travail philosophique des enfants co-chercheurs peut s'appeler 'faire de la recherche'.

Cette investigation offre une illustration articulée d'enfants utilisant la discussion philosophique comme procédé de recherche. Elle présente leur travail comme un compte complexe et englobant de la 'discussion philosophique'. Elle utilise les mots même des enfants pour faire émerger le philosophique que comporte

la recherche et offre ainsi appui à mon affirmation que 'faire de la philosophie', c'est 'faire de la recherche'. Elle raffine des perspectives conceptuelles sur un ensemble de rôles en recherche. Et elle offre un exemple vivant de la façon dont les méthodologies de recherche philosophique et qualitative peuvent coopérer de façon mutuellement avantageuse.

PROLOGUE

Talking Bears?

Hello! Today, I, Staci, will tell you about a very special bear. Her name is Cotton Candy and [she] is very intelligent. You might think, "An intelligent bear, well that's [im]possible!", but my bear is an exception. She is a stuffed, talking bear. No, she does not have a talk button! Anyways, let me go on . . .

Two years ago, on October twenty-sixth, I received a used, grey, stuffed bear from one of my friends at my birthday party. Later, I washed my bear and then, just like that, she started to talk to me! At that stage, she wasn't that great at talking, so I helped her with her voice. Well, she was less than a week old! Anyways, my bear started talking more and more, and now, at two years of age, she has developed a very selective vocabulary.

Now comes the interesting part! One day, when I was at DRG, we were discussing communication, and I brought up the subject of my bear. Everyone started to laugh, but then Ferrari and I got into a discussion about "Is it communication if you are making the voice?" Anyways, a few sessions later, I brought my bear to DRG. Everyone saw that I talked to her, but they could also see how I carried on a conversation with my bear. I guess that some people don't think that having a conversation with a stuffed bear (yourself) is communication, but it's like you're having a conversation with someone else. Even if you're just talking to yourself, you are communicating to yourself, and making thoughts fit into place. . .

Bear, or no bear, I still believe that talking to yourself is communication.

[DD/S28/93.03.18Th/DRG/CoR/Staci/"Talking Bears?"]

PART ONE
INTRODUCING THE CASE STORY

Chapter 1

Introduction

It is important that the process of investigating the world not remain a specialized activity. Our everyday lives teach us skills which we use to observe and reflect on our experience. We focus on problems, ask questions, collect information and analyze and interpret "data." We already "do research" as we interact with the everyday world. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 17)

When children participate in discussions in my Philosophy for Children classes,¹ they "interact with the everyday world", they "focus on problems, ask questions, collect information and analyze and interpret 'data'", and they "observe and reflect" on their experience. Yet we do not usually count that as 'doing research' and we do not consider children to be 'researchers'. Is it that children do not do those things very well? Is it that they only 'play' at doing them? And what if we were talking not about *everyday* research, but of *qualitative educational* research? Could children contribute to *that*? Could they identify and formulate research problems and questions? Could they design and carry out appropriate research methods such as conducting interviews, creating and following interview schedules, or keeping field notes? Could they make methodological decisions? And could they engage in data interpretation?

These were some of the questions I wondered before we began. I wanted to see what would happen if I invited my students ("children who can do philosophy") to research with me a topic of mutual interest: "Discussion for Learning". Would any be interested in using their existing philosophical abilities for research

¹ In my philosophy classes we use the curricular materials and pedagogical methodology associated with the Philosophy for Children program created by Matthew Lipman, Ann Margaret Sharp and associates at the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC), Montclair State College, New Jersey. This program is specially designed to provide students from Kindergarten to Senior Secondary level with opportunities to develop their existing philosophical thinking abilities. The materials include a philosophical children's novel known as a "novel-*qua*-text" together with an instructional teacher's manual; and the pedagogical methodology involves the creation of a classroom "community of inquiry".

purposes, I wondered; and would they be interested in researching the topic I proposed?

My objective for this research was to design a project which would feature both the people and the process — a *research* project that would feature philosophically experienced *children* (as co-researchers) using the process of *philosophical discussion* to investigate our mutual experience of that process.

When designing the co-research project, in keeping with a notion of 'research' as 'exploration', I decided to rule out nothing in advance. That is, I assumed my co-researchers to be capable of acting as researchers and I set out to include many elements of qualitative research practice (such as accounting for who the co-researchers were by making 'researcher profiles' and research interviewing) until such time as our work presented contra-indications to either. Similarly I did not rule out reaching *out from* our class philosophy experience — as in our use of concept mapping which was not part of our *mutual* class philosophy practice at the time.

1.1 The Co-research Project: Description and Objectives

During the 1992-93 school year I approached my two Grade Six Philosophy for Children classes to see if I could interest anyone in helping me with a doctoral research project I was planning originally titled, "Discussion for Learning: From the Perspective of Student Co-researchers". Having been the philosophy teacher for most of these students from their early primary school years, and using a methodology that would involve our engaging in the very activity which would be the subject/object of our research, I wanted to research an idea I had that 'to do philosophy' is 'to do research' and that children who can do philosophy can do research.²

² I use the phrase "do research" in relation to children in a way which corresponds to the Philosophy for Children use of "do philosophy". That is, just as I take "do philosophy" to mean do *some* (not *any* or *all*) philosophy, so I take "do research" to mean do *some* (not *any* or *all*) research. At the same time, although my use of both terms is 'limited' in this way, I also interpret openly the 'some' in both cases. My interest is in how children *can* do both philosophy and research.

When I invited my students to participate, I told them I needed volunteers to act as co-researchers *with* me (as opposed to being researched *by* me) in an after-school research project.³ I explained that I had in mind to work on two ideas at the same time: Discussion for Learning and Children as Co-researchers.

"Discussion for Learning" was the expression I devised for use with my students specifically for purposes of this research. When I explained it to my students, I said that it referred to "our own experience of philosophical discussions" from our philosophy classes and that one of my research project objectives was to investigate how, together, we would characterize that form of discussion and how we learn from it.

When I explained "Children as Co-researchers" to my students, I told them that as another co-research project objective, I wanted to find out whether children who can do philosophy can do research. Further, I told them that I assumed their existing abilities to 'do philosophy' would qualify them to act as 'real' researchers and that together we would do philosophy as a way of doing research about our own experience of philosophical discussions to see if we could say how we learn from them.

Seventeen of my philosophy students volunteered to become my co-researchers. We called ourselves "DRG" [Discussion Research Group] and during 48 hour-and-a-half sessions from the end of October (1992) to mid-June (1993) we investigated our own experiences of philosophical discussion. In this dissertation I tell an 'interpretive case story' of what happened.⁴

³ When I refer to children doing "co-research" I mean children doing research *with one or more adults*. The question of whether children who can do co-research with adults can also do research either independently or with other children independently of adults is beyond the scope of this dissertation. With this qualification I use the phrases "do research" and "do co-research" interchangeably, taking the 'research' in "do research" to *mean* the 'research' in "co-research".

⁴ For more on how I coined the phrase "interpretive case story" to characterize our co-research, see 'An Interpretive Case Story' under 3.2 Characterizing this Research in Chapter 3. Methodology Matters.

1.2 Introducing 'Sigma'

While conducting this research, I recognized that I had at least three overlapping and interactive researcher identities and in this report I distinguish between them using the following conventions: as "I [Judy]" I am my students' class philosophy teacher; as "I [Alison]" I am a DRG co-researcher; and as "I [Sigma]"⁵ I am the researcher with overall responsibility for this research. Keeping these three research identities straight and knowing which one (or ones) were 'active' at any one time was a matter which occasionally produced what I refer to as 'Sigma Tensions' in me and these had an impact on research decisions I and we made during the course of our co-researching together.⁶

As 'Sigma' Co-researcher I approached this project in the same way as I [Judy] did the children's philosophy classes where I made the assumption that philosophy is something children *can already do* by virtue of their ability to use language. That is, in class philosophy my students would 'do *philosophy*' by exploring their ideas about philosophical issues which mattered to them and I [Judy] would 'teach' them by "surfacing the philosophical"⁷ in what they said and did — thereby teaching them not 'how to do philosophy' but rather how some of what they *already knew how to do* counts as 'doing philosophy'. Similarly, in our DRG sessions, I [Sigma] considered my students to be capable of 'doing *research*' by virtue of their demonstrated ability to do *philosophy* such that in DRG sessions we would 'do research' by exploring our ideas about philosophical issues which mattered to our research; and in that process I [Sigma] would 'surface' the *research* in the philosophy we were doing.

5 For the story of how I adopted the term 'Sigma' to refer to my role as adult co-researcher, see The 'Sigma' Story under 3.4 'Sigma' in Chapter 3. Methodology Matters.

6 For more on this see Sigma Tensions under 3.4 'Sigma' in Chapter 3. Methodology Matters.

7 I am grateful to research colleague Michael Chervin for this phrase which he used in the title of a graduate course he conducted at McGill University in 1993: "Surfacing the Philosophical in Intercultural, Multicultural and Anti-racist Approaches to Education".

1.3 Purposes of Conducting the Co-research Project

This research has both a kinship *with* and a contribution to make *to* what Kirby and McKenna refer to as “researching from the margins”:

. . . researching from the margins is based on the commitment to advancing knowledge through *a process of exploration grounded in the experience of people who have usually been treated as the objects of research.* (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 61, my italics.)

In DRG we too sought to advance knowledge and our exploration process was grounded in our teacher and student experience as co-researchers; and this is different from being treated as the ‘objects’ of research and therefore “on the margins of the production of knowledge” (p. 17). However, our co-research also differs from researching from the margins in that it is more about the researching process itself than it is about reflecting the experience and concerns of the co-researchers as such (p. 22) — and therein lies the contribution it has to make. Although our co-research is not *about* (although it does not preclude) using research skills “so they can be used to examine and publicly name how the experience of living in the margins affects our lives, our opportunities, the way we think and act” (p. 62), it *is* about “demystifying the research process” and about making research skills available to those who need them (p. 24). It is about giving research voices to children and teachers; and it has implications for “how research skills can enable people to create knowledge that will describe, explain and help change the world in which they live” (p. 17). Our co-researching is therefore not only “a necessary part of” change but is *itself* “action for change” (p. 24).

An over-riding purpose I have for telling our co-researching case story is to demystify its surprises. One surprise might be the very notion that children as young as eleven or twelve can ‘do philosophy’. A second might be that they can do ‘research’ beyond the *quasi* research projects they do in school. Third, although the importance of talk for learning has been increasingly recognized,⁸ it can still be surprising to think in terms of particular *kinds* of talk such as, for example, ‘discussion *for learning*’.⁹ Fourth, the characterization of ‘inquiry’ as a kind of talk

⁸ See for example Britton 1969/1990; Bruner 1983; Edwards and Westgate 1994; Lemke 1990; Phelan 1989; Tannen 1994; Tough 1973; and Tough 1979.

⁹ A notable exception is the book *Talking with Children* (Reed 1983), written by a Philosophy for Children teacher educator for a parent audience as a way of

which is at once 'collaborative' and 'philosophical' may also be surprising. And fifth is the idea that young philosophers can engage in reflective, reflexive and recursive thinking-about-thinking and talk-about-talk¹⁰ — and that as they do so, they can make a contribution to (educational) research.

The following purposes have inspired and guided my work on this project:

1. *To describe and demonstrate 'discussion for learning'— the 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' form of discussion which characterizes the Philosophy for Children 'community of inquiry'; and to examine the contribution it can make to learning and to research.*

2. *To do research with young children as co-researchers as a way to honour and put to practical (educational research) use their complex, subtle and sophisticated philosophical thinking.*

3. *To do philosophical research using a qualitative approach by adapting existing qualitative research practices; and to surface elements of doing philosophy in doing qualitative research.*

4. *To contribute to social change and the emancipation of children by demonstrating how children's philosophical capabilities warrant changes in their participation in school as well as within and beyond educational research.*

bridging the 'talk' gap between home and school. Reed offered an analysis of different types of 'talk' of which the one closest to the one represented by 'discussion for learning' is "Talk for Discovery".

¹⁰ For more on reflective education see Calderhead 1989; Henderson 1992; Pollard and Tann 1987; Schön 1991; Schön 1987; and Steering committee 1991. For more on reflexivity in research, see Carr and Kemmis 1986; Eisner and Peshkin 1990; Hammersley and Atkinson 1983; Lather 1991; Reed 1992b; and Watson, Burke, and others 1989. And for more about recursive thinking-about-thinking and talk-about-talk, see Britton 1969/1990; Buchler 1954/1979; Lipman 1991b; Lipman, Sharp, and others 1980b; Mead 1910/1979; Reed 1983; Reed 1992c; Ryle 1979; and Saw 1980.

1.4 Research Interest

...the first three steps in doing research from the margins: identifying your research interest, identifying your specific question, and recording your conceptual baggage. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 44)

In keeping with these three steps, and as a way of beginning to record my "conceptual baggage",¹¹ in this section I identify the "research interest" out of which I produced the "two ideas" I told my students I wanted to investigate ("Discussion for Learning" and "Children as Co-researchers") and which led to the specific question I brought to my students ("What is 'discussion for learning' and how do we learn from it?").

Ideas from Philosophy for Children Teaching Practice

In researching from the margins, your experience guides the way the research is done and how it is understood: your experience is at the centre of the research process. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 45)

My interest in designing and conducting this co-research project arose out of my Philosophy for Children teaching practice which began in 1981 — after eighteen years of general elementary school teaching experience at a variety of levels. It was in the early 1970s during an introductory course in moral education with moral philosopher John Wilson, a visiting lecturer from Oxford University, that I first became aware of my own capacities for 'doing philosophy'. Not having studied philosophy formally and pursuing this new interest, I wondered when and how *I* had learned to do philosophy; and this eventually led to my completing a Master of Arts in Philosophy of Education for which I submitted a thesis titled, "Philosophy for Children" (Kyle 1976). It was not until 1981, five years later and after training in the IAPC Philosophy for Children program, that I began to do

¹¹ "Conceptual baggage is a record of your thoughts and ideas about the research question at the beginning and throughout the research process. It is a process by which you can state your personal assumptions about the topic and the research process. Recording your conceptual baggage will add another dimension to the data, one that is always present, but rarely acknowledged. By making your thoughts and experience explicitly, another layer of data is revealed for investigation. ..." (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 32).

philosophy first with children and later also with other teachers and their students. Then, after ten years of Philosophy for Children teaching practice with multiple classes at all elementary levels, I began part-time doctoral work as a way of making sense of that experience and with a view to making a contribution to educational theory and practice.

From my Philosophy for Children teaching practice I brought the following fundamental ideas to this project. One was that children can be sophisticated philosophical thinkers. A second was that 'doing philosophy' (using the particular form of discussion which is featured in the Philosophy for Children 'community of inquiry')¹² can be a powerful vehicle for learning — therefore also for 'doing research'? And a third was a concern that the strengths of both children and of philosophical discussion are seriously underestimated.

"Discussion for Learning"

A discussion is
what you have with your parents
when you've done something wrong.¹³

My interest in investigating 'discussion' began with growing concerns about how the term 'discussion' is understood and used in learning contexts in and out of school settings. In this section I describe three of those concerns and how they led me to characterize "Discussion for Learning" as *philosophical* discussion when designing this research.

First, the word 'discussion' is used in a variety of ways with meanings ranging from *oral* activity (as in almost any kind of talk which occurs between two or more people) to the *written* part of a formal paper. The term 'discussion' is *over-used* when it appears in such a wide variety of contexts that it loses meaning

¹² The methodology associated with Philosophy for Children is implemented by building a classroom "community of inquiry" by means of philosophical dialogue and the discussion of issues arising out of the use of the Philosophy for Children curricular materials. For more on community of inquiry methodology see the following: Daniel 1993; Lago 1990; Lipman 1991b; Lipman, Sharp, and others 1980b; Morehouse 1993; Peirce 1955; Reed 1992a; Sharp 1987; Sharp 1988, April; and Sharp 1991.

¹³ This was an answer once given by one of my six-year-old students when I asked the children, "What is a discussion?"

(other than the minimal one of talking/thinking/writing about — anything). It is *under-used* when its power for learning is not invoked thereby allowing for so-called 'discussions' which amount to mere wheel-spinning or opinion exchange. And 'discussion' is *mis-used* when just about anything counts as discussion.

In the quotation above, the use of the term 'discussion' represents an *over-use* if all that occurs in such a 'discussion' is that the parents talk *to* the child *about* the misdemeanor. It represents an *under-use* if the talk does not have a learning component to it — a point that is easy to miss because of our tendency to equate such 'discussions' with lectures in which there is certainly a learning *intent* even though the learning may or may not 'take'. And it represents a *mis-use* if the talk with the parents really *is* (or is *perceived* to be) a lecture — or an opinion exchange, or any number of other possibilities which pass for 'discussion' but which are not really discussion in any meaningful sense of the word. Such uses of the term 'discussion' are based on an assumption that the mere act of talking with others is sufficient to count — an assumption which fails to recognize either the complexity of this activity, or its 'power' for learning.¹⁴

A second concern was how the term 'discussion' can also refer to many different *kinds* of group talk, some of which are better than others for particular contexts and purposes. For example, debating is often taken to be a form of discussion although in relation to 'discussion for learning' it is arguable whether debating counts as 'discussion' at all. For a second example, in curriculum support documents for teachers, "Discussion" is advocated without guidance for good practice on the assumption that discussion is something that everyone already knows how to do. And for a third example, in training sessions and workshops, time is often provided on the agenda for "Discussion" so that participants can have a chance to talk, share experiences, exchange opinions or express concerns. What is missing in each of these examples is a presentation of 'discussion' as a powerful time for, way of and instrument for *learning*. And also missing is a recognition of the reciprocal relationship between the content and process aspects of both 'discussion' and 'learning'.

¹⁴ On the complexities of discussion, see Bridges 1979; Edwards and Westgate 1994; Wilson 1972b, p. 45-54. And for more on its power for learning, see Lipman 1991b; Lipman, Sharp, and others 1980b; and Siegel 1988.

And a third concern was that discussion is a complex activity which is all too easily taken for granted as if, like breathing, it is something that everyone can do. In educational settings, discussions can be formal or informal, disciplined or free-wheeling, pedagogically powerful or a waste of time. When teachers talk of 'great' discussions which have occurred in their classes, they often mean exchanges of ideas and opinions in which there appeared to be a high level of student interest.¹⁵ On the other hand, when *students* talk approvingly of in-class discussions (conceivably the same ones to which the teachers refer), they say discussions are 'great' as ways to *waste* class time, as diversions *away from* the business at hand, as ways to keep the teacher off the topic and therefore as ways to *avoid* doing 'work'.

"Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry"

Before approaching my students with "Discussion for Learning" as a research topic, I asked myself how *I* would characterize 'discussion for learning' based on my teacher experience of our class philosophy discussions. The result of those reflections was my formulation of the expression "Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry". However, since I wanted to see how we would characterize our class philosophy discussions *together*, at the outset I resolved *not* to use this expression with my co-researchers. In what follows, continuing to outline my concerns in designing this research, I explain how I chose each of the terms of this expression.

To articulate my perception of important subtle differences between 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' discussion (for learning) and other group talk in education, I begin by critically reflecting on a television program which was broadcast as part of an academic distance education course on a local educational television channel (1993.06.28). It featured a small group of three university teachers talking about art. At first, based on the following criteria, this *looked* like a model instance of dialogue and discussion: (a) the participants were talking about ideas and issues around a common subject (art); (b) they were speaking in a very civilized manner (one at a time without interrupting); (c) they were listening attentively and with mutual respect; (d) they were asking questions of each other;

¹⁵ For a case in point see Sola and Bennet 1985, p. 99.

and (e) they were adding to what each other said. Comparing this to what I had in mind by my 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' synonym for 'discussion for learning', I was able to identify what was missing.

'Inquiry'. When I formulated the 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' synonym for 'discussion for learning', I chose the word 'inquiry' in order to narrow the field commonly covered by the term 'discussion' keeping in mind that the term 'inquiry' can *also* cover too wide a territory and would need adjectives to narrow its scope further. It was a first step in my attempt to distinguish the kind of discussion I had in mind from other forms of people talking together.

'Philosophical' Inquiry. As a second step I added the adjective 'philosophical' to 'inquiry' as a way of (a) characterizing 'discussion for learning' as the kind of discussion in which my co-researchers and I engaged in our Philosophy for Children classes; (b) distinguishing 'discussion for learning' from other forms of inquiry such as scientific or legal inquiry; and (c) to call attention to the *activity of doing* philosophy as distinct from the study *of* philosophy.

'Collaborative' Philosophical Inquiry. And third, I characterized 'discussion for learning' as *collaborative* philosophical inquiry¹⁶ to refer to the *how* of the interactions between discussion participants. I chose 'collaborative' to describe the ways in which 'discussion for learning' participants interact when working to make meaning and to call attention to the social attributes which give this form of discussion its power for learning.

Returning now to what was missing in the example of the three professors discussing art, I offer an interpretation of why this was *not* an example of dialogue or discussion in the sense of collaborative philosophical inquiry. This interpretation is an illustration of how I used it while thinking out my notion of 'collaborative philosophical inquiry'.

First, there was little or no sign of *inquiry* in this example. All three participants had a didactic purpose — a specific point of view to 'put across' or to 'transmit'. Even though questions were asked, they were not posed in an inquiry

¹⁶ Hereafter I use the phrases 'discussion for learning' (D4L) and 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' (CPI) interchangeably to refer to the 'philosophical discussion' process we were investigating.

mode — their purpose was rather to elicit each others' (ready-made) points of view. It was question-and-answer rather than question-leading-to-more-questions and the same could be said of their statements. That is, A used B's statements primarily for piggyback purposes — as a way of bolstering or providing support for his own.

Second, although the content of their views may have been in some sense 'philosophical' (as might be expected when talking about art), the participants were not engaging in any recognizable process of *philosophical* investigation. It resembled more a three-way interview in which interviewer A asked questions of the interviewee, B, in order to find out what B thinks but not to do anything much with it. A might challenge B but not to make mutual progress or to make new meaning together.

And third, at first it looked as if they were *collaborating* since they were working on a common project in order to present a televised session for students on the subject of art and each was contributing a differing perspective. However, each contribution was discrete and independent. In terms of collaborative philosophical inquiry, they were not collaborating *at all*.

With regard to the point about didactic purpose, it was evident that this whole exercise was intended to be a theoretical art 'lesson' on distance education television and it was made to *look like* dialogue and discussion. However, although it was a sort of 'exchange', they were not giving to each other and they were not taking from each other either. They were giving to the students 'out there' in television land in a one-way transmission. It was not even interactive — not among the professors and not between professors and students. Rather they were three experts *displaying* their expertise. Where there was disagreement, there was also a tacit agreement to disagree as if to 'display' the diversity of ideas around a common topic. There was no 'engagement' *with* the subject matter in any 'critical' sense and it was as if they were all 'straight men' for each other. There was no real exchange and no apparent intent *to* exchange; and they each seemed satisfied that there was nothing to 'argue' about since they were all 'right' in their own ways.

Such 'dialogue' and 'discussion' can be fine if this is the language-game we choose to play. It becomes problematic, however, if we need it, think it, or *believe* it to be something else. And it becomes problematic in the extreme when reputed

critical pedagogues like Ira Shor and Paulo Freire (Shor and Freire 1987) not only advocate 'dialogue' but make it the basis of their liberatory pedagogy without problematizing the term in a way that distinguishes some forms of dialogue from others which are not really dialogue in the sense intended at all.¹⁷

By contrast, the concept of a 'good discussion' which underlies my interest and concern in 'discussion' issues both conceptually and in practice began to be influenced by John Wilson's analysis of "the discussion-form" in *Practical Methods in Moral Education* (Wilson 1972b, pp. 45-54). And since 1980, the interpretation of a good *philosophical* discussion that has guided my work in Philosophy for Children has been the following:

A good discussion occurs in any subject when the net result or outcome of the discussion is discerned as marking a definite *progress* as contrasted with the conditions that existed when the episode began. Perhaps it is a progress in understanding; perhaps it is progress in arriving at some kind of consensus; perhaps it is progress only in the sense of formulating the problem — but in any case, there is a sense of forward movement having taken place. Something has been accomplished; a group *product* has been achieved. (Lipman, Sharp, and others 1980b, p. 111, my emphasis)

It is this form of discussion that formed the basis of this research. And, with the help of my co-researchers, my research interest has been to add to this characterization of what counts as 'philosophical discussion'.

"Children as Co-researchers"

Research from the margins is not research on people from the margins but research by, for, and with them. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 28)

My use of the term 'research' in my invitation to my students to work with me as 'co-researchers' was a 'research from the margins' political act. That is, it was to engage in research *with* my philosophically experienced students (rather than simply report what they/we had to say about 'discussion for learning') as a way of doing research "by, for, and with" a teacher and children — two groups of "people from the margins" of educational research. Having articulated my concerns regarding 'discussion' and having elaborated on these concerns by formulating an

¹⁷ Elsewhere I have written more on the problems associated with everyday uses of the terms 'dialogue' and 'discussion' (Kyle 1994b, pp. 2-16).

expression which was intended to capture what I took to be essential elements of the particular form of that is characteristic of Philosophy for Children community of inquiry discussions, next I elaborate on my interest of doing this research with *children*.

In particular I was interested in questions of 'who' counts as researchers and I was interested in the researchers-as-'*instruments*' dimension of designing a research project involving a teacher and *young children* as co-researchers. Based on my experience of doing philosophy with young children, I had become convinced that if there *were* differences between adults and children in terms of abilities to think philosophically, they were differences attributable to children's shorter life and language experience than they were to any inabilities to think abstractly. By 'doing philosophy' with 'actual learners' (children) in ways that would also count as 'doing research' in an educational research project, I wanted to explore the close conceptual relationships between 'doing philosophy' and 'doing research'. In particular, I wondered about extending the relatively recent recognition of 'teachers-as-researchers' to 'children-as-researchers' (or at least as '*co-researchers*') by engaging in research that was about teachers *and* students (-as-learners/researchers) *together* — teachers and students as *co-researchers*. Since the role of children in research is usually limited to that of research 'subjects' in the sense of researched, I wanted to see if they could be research 'subjects' in the sense of researchers. And finally I wanted to work with children as co-researchers as a way of according students researcher 'voices' not only in their own education, but also in educational research. Thus, by extending 'researcher' status beyond 'teacher-as-researcher' to 'teacher and children as co-researchers', I wanted to see if teacher and children could be knowledge co-producers rather than transmitter and receivers of knowledge respectively.

1.5 Dissertation Research Question and Rationale

In keeping with Kirby and McKenna's three steps of researching from the margins as cited in 1.3 above, having identified my research interest and having begun to record my 'conceptual baggage', in this section first I take the step of "identifying [the] specific question" (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 44). I refer to this question as the '*dissertation* research question' in order to distinguish it from 'the *co-research* question' which I brought to my Discussion Research Group co-researchers. Second I introduce the IDEAS-INQUIRY interpretive framework I formulated while working with the data. And third, using the IDEAS-INQUIRY framework, I identify the three inter-related "Leading Ideas" of this dissertation.

Identifying the Dissertation Research Question

This dissertation is in answer to the following research question:

How do children who are experienced in doing philosophy use philosophical discussion as a way of doing research?

The children to whom the question refers are eleven and twelve years old and they are experienced in doing philosophy by virtue of their participation in their school's Philosophy for Children program. They do philosophy with their philosophy teacher in an after-school research project in which, drawing on their experience of discussion in and out of class philosophy,¹⁸ they use philosophical discussion as a way to investigate the co-research question I put to them: What is 'discussion for learning' and how do we learn from it?

The dissertation research question is in keeping with the original research idea I wanted to investigate (whether and how 'to do philosophy' is 'to do research') and also with the two ideas I told my co-researchers that I wanted to

¹⁸ 'Class philosophy' is the expression we used only in DRG to refer to the philosophy we did together in our regular Philosophy for Children classes.

investigate ('Discussion for Learning' and 'Children as Co-researchers'). In answer to this question my principal interest has been in our DRG characterization of "philosophical discussion" and in interpreting whether and how philosophical discussion can serve as "a way of doing research".

IDEAS~INQUIRY: An Interpretive Framework

Like doing philosophy, doing research is a matter of content as well as of process, of IDEAS as well as of INQUIRY. Here I explain the IDEAS~INQUIRY interpretive framework I formulated while selecting data for use in demonstrating how we used philosophical discussion ('collaborative philosophical inquiry' [CPI]) as a way of doing research into 'discussion for learning' [D4L]).

In formulating the expression "IDEAS~INQUIRY" I began with Harry F. Wolcott's identification of "ideas" and "inquiry procedures" in qualitative study as "dual facets joined in complementary opposition, much like two sides of a coin". Lamenting that "sometimes these facets...become hopelessly separated", he continued as follows:

...once we recognize that *ideas and procedures are forever joined* — that they really are two sides of the same coin — then their complementary features offer alternative ways to approach qualitative study by variously emphasizing one dimension or the other (Wolcott 1992, p. 6, author's italics).

Wolcott's coin analogy with its dichotomous reference to "two sides" is problematic however, because he still refers to the coin's two "sides" as different and *separate* and his use of a coin analogy also implies that the relationship between the two sides is static.

Two sides of a coin cannot "come up" together; on each toss, one side must prevail. Similarly, researchers assign priority either to ideas *or* to methodological approaches when addressing a new problem. One must begin somewhere (Wolcott 1992, p. 6).

By contrast, also using a coin analogy, Matthew Lipman has pointed out that, "It is the coin *as a whole* that has purchasing power, not just one side or the other (Lipman 1992, p. 4, my italics).

To avoid such a separation of "sides", in our case story in which the process *is* the content, I settled on the expression 'IDEAS~INQUIRY' to express not

only the complementarity but also the *inseparability* of the IDEAS we were researching ('discussion for learning') and our INQUIRY procedures ('collaborative philosophical inquiry'). In this expression, I use the term 'IDEAS' to refer to the 'content' or *what* we researched (the *ideas* we discussed and the *theory* we generated); I use the term 'INQUIRY' to refer to the 'process' (*how* we researched, discussed, generated theory); and I use the symbol '~' to represent the complex, dynamic, interdependent and interactive relationship between these two "facets". It is a relationship which *does* permit all "sides" of the coin to "come up" together while at the same time allowing us to pay attention to one side while still keeping the other in view and this *without* necessarily assigning "priority" to either.

The 'IDEAS-INQUIRY' framework conveys how the 'content' [IDEAS] was the 'product' [-] of the 'process' [INQUIRY]. That is, in order to research D4L/CPI (content) we engaged in D4L/CPI (process) such that, although distinguishable from each other, the 'what' [IDEAS] and the 'how' [INQUIRY] were products of each other. And finally, I settled on the IDEAS-INQUIRY framework to express the WHAT-HOW of our D4L/CPI research because it is more suggestive of 'doing philosophy' as a way of 'doing research' than either "CONTENT-PROCESS" or "THEORY-PRACTICE". The terms 'IDEAS' and 'INQUIRY' better identify our co-researching enterprise with both 'philosophy' and 'research' and as such my formulation of this expression is well suited for use in a *variety* of settings — not only ones (such as Philosophy for Children) which are *explicitly* philosophical.

"*Discussion for Learning?*" The research question I brought to my co-researchers ("What is discussion for learning and how do we learn from it?") represents 'what' we were researching — that is, the *content* or IDEAS dimension of our research; and 'Discussion for learning' is the phrase I formulated for use with them to refer to the specific form of discussion which is a hallmark of Philosophy for Children communities of inquiry. Inspired by the link between *language* and *learning* as drawn in the literature of Language Across the Curriculum and Whole Language (Barnes, Britton, and others 1969/1990; Britton 1970) in which it is argued that language is an *essential* tool for learning,¹⁹ I adopted the phrase 'discussion for learning' to represent a particular form of

¹⁹ See also Barrow 1982; Chilver and Gould 1982; Corson 1988; Corson 1990; Goodman, Smith, and others 1987; Harste, Short, and others 1988; Moffett 1976; Newman 1985; and Robertson 1980.

"language-use" in the sense of being a "language-game" (Wittgenstein 1953/1972, p. 5e). And since discussion involves the use of language, I anticipated that there would be strong links between *discussion* and learning.

The term 'learning' in discussion for learning I used to refer to general processes of 'figuring out', 'working out', 'finding out' or 'becoming aware of' Unlike a phrase such as 'teaching *and* learning' (which suggests that teachers teach and learners learn), in the phrase 'discussion *for* learning', I linked 'discussion' with 'learning' using the term *for*. This is to suggest a reciprocal relationship between discussion and learning such that *all* participants (including the teacher or discussion leader) 'learn' in a discussion for learning.

"Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry". The issues I wanted to explore regarding whether children who can do philosophical discussion can do research represent the *process* [INQUIRY] dimension of this story for it is not *just* about content [IDEAS] as it might be if an educational researcher were to look at what my students and I had to say about 'discussion (for learning)'. I was interested not only in *what* we would say about 'discussion (for learning)' but also *how* our use of philosophical discussion would constitute 'research' [INQUIRY]. In other words, I wanted to do a study which folds back on itself with content and process being intertwined as strands of a single thread.

Three "Leading Ideas"

From our DRG work I have selected three intertwining "Leading Ideas"²⁰ for this dissertation. They are the use of (1) philosophical discussion (2) as a way to do research (3) with children as co-researchers.

Leading Idea 1: Philosophical discussion. With regard to the first Leading Idea, to portray the kind of *discussion* that is characteristic of class philosophy sessions, I have selected data from our conceptual work [IDEAS] on 'discussion for learning' — the co-research topic I brought to my students and one

²⁰ "Leading Ideas" is the term used in Philosophy for Children practice for the ideas identified by members of a 'community of inquiry' after a collective reading of the novel-*qua*-text and which form the basis of a class philosophy inquiry.

of two synonyms for 'philosophical discussion' which I coined for use with my students in this project.

Because of time and space constraints, in selecting this first idea as a principal area of interest for this dissertation, I made a decision to focus primarily on our conceptual work regarding the *first* part of the question I put to my co-researchers (What counts as 'philosophical discussion'...) and to deal only *indirectly* with the second part (... and how do we learn from it?) — even though in our DRG investigation we gave full treatment to both. To represent this decision, in the dissertation text I recast the 'discussion for learning' synonym for philosophical discussion by writing it this way: "discussion (for learning)" or "D(4L)".

Leading Idea 2: Philosophical discussion as a way to do research. With regard to the second Leading Idea, to portray the kind of *research* that is characteristic of 'philosophical discussion as a way of doing research', I have selected data from our conceptual work [IDEAS] on 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' — the other synonym I formulated for 'philosophical discussion'. Although I originally intended this synonym for my own use only, in practice we did pay a great deal of attention to it in our conceptual work on what counts as discussion (for learning).

In selecting this Leading Idea as a second principal area of interest for this dissertation, in addition to our conceptual work [IDEAS] with regard to whether and how 'discussion (for learning)' is 'collaborative', 'philosophical' or 'inquiry', I also paid particular attention to *methodological* [INQUIRY] issues regarding *how* we use philosophical discussion to do research. Here too, in view of time and space limitations I deal only indirectly with the links between 'research' and 'learning' reserving these for more extensive treatment in a later document.

Taking our own DRG inquiry as a case in point, to characterize philosophical discussion as a way of doing research in general terms, from the outset I thought of our process [INQUIRY] as an *exploratory* way to do 'research' with the co-researchers participating as 'explorers'.

A researcher needs the skills of an explorer: good eyes, good ears, a clear mind and a vision of the land to be explored. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 43)

To engage in *this* kind of research as co-researcher/explorers we would need the skills of good *philosophical* eyes and ears, clear minds and our own visions of the *philosophical* 'land' to be explored. I favoured 'exploration' to describe our DRG investigating of 'philosophical discussion as a way of doing research' for the following reasons: (a) to portray the tentative, searching, first-time way in which we conducted our inquiry; (b) because of how 'exploration' characterizes both the content and the process of our story; (c) to suggest seeking, search — *research*; (d) to anticipate 'findings' that would be neither exhaustive or conclusive (while at the same time aiming to make them as comprehensive as possible); and (e) to suggest 'going beyond' in a way which is characteristic of both philosophical discussion and research.

Also in the early stages but in more specific terms, what I had in mind when I used the term 'research' in relation to 'philosophical discussion' was the rather broad and generic category of *qualitative* research since I was interested in finding qualitative alternatives to the reliance on quantitative research methodologies then in use in Philosophy for Children research.²¹ As we progressed, I came to see and to characterize this research more specifically in relation to the qualitative research traditions of "grounded theory" (Strauss 1987), "research from the margins" (Kirby and McKenna 1989), "educative research" (Gitlin, Siegel, and others 1989/1993) and "philosophic" qualitative research (Maykut and Morehouse 1994).

Leading Idea 3: Children as Co-researchers. With regard to the third Leading Idea, "Children as Co-researchers", the second idea I told my students I wanted to investigate in the co-research project, I decided to place the children both figuratively and literally at the center of this project. When I decided to investigate whether and how 'to do philosophy is to do research', the children with whom I worked on a regular basis and whom I considered to have the philosophical capabilities I had in mind, were an obvious choice for co-researchers. These children contributed to this research by providing a 'case in point' of the use philosophical discussion as a way to do research; and their involvement in this

²¹ See 2.5 Philosophy for Children Research Context in Chapter 2. Situating the Case Story.

project as *co-researchers* is what makes this research 'educative' in the emancipatory sense (Gitlin, Siegel, and others 1989/1993).²²

1.6 'Answering' the Dissertation Research Question

Researching from the margins is a continuous process that begins with a concern that is rooted in experience. The research process consists of planning to gather information, actually gathering it and making sense of it; concurrently the researcher engages in a process of self-reflection as one of the participants in the process of creating knowledge. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p, 44, authors' emphasis)

In section 1.3 above I accounted for how I began this research with concerns "rooted in experience"; and in section 1.4 I identified the dissertation research question and rationale. Now, to account for how I planned, carried out and made sense of our DRG work while "concurrently" engaging "in a process of self-reflection as one of the participants in the process of creating knowledge", in this section I outline how I 'answer' the dissertation research question in the following chapters and *stories*. First I describe and comment on the "open and systematic approach" I have taken to 'answering' the question; second I provide an overview of the three parts and six chapters of the dissertation; and third, I preview the three different ways in which I 'answer' the research question.

An Open and Systematic Approach

When my students respond positively to 'doing philosophy' relative to other work they do in school, they often say that what they like about it is that "there are no right answers". However, aware that this can lead to a "that's *my* opinion" form of relativism, I ask them if this means that *any* answer will do. Then I suggest that perhaps instead of saying that there are "no right answers" we should say that there is "no *single* right answer". This 'ups the ante' by requiring a search for *multiple possible and plausible* 'answers' with the need to distinguish which may be better than others and why.

22

For more on what Gitlin and others mean by 'educative' research see 'Educative Research' Actors under 4.2 Research Actors in Chapter 4. Surfacing Philosophical Inquiry Research Acts.

Children of the ages of my co-researchers are very interested in making, having and even feeling very strongly about their own opinions. However, when someone says, "Well that's *my* opinion", I call this a "discussion braker" pointing out that when someone says that, they put the brakes on any form of dialogue or discussion from that point on. If they then respond that they have "the right to their opinions", I ask if that necessarily means that "their opinions are right". At the same time, as a way of endorsing their interest in thinking for themselves by developing their own opinions, I tell them that philosophy is more about *making* opinions than it is about 'having' them; and I advise them to put their philosophical energy not into holding on to opinions that they already have, but rather into keeping an open mind and systematically revising the opinions they think they have with a "self-corrective"²³ view to having them be the best they can be. This is consistent with the open and systematic Philosophy for Children 'community of inquiry' methodology and it is the approach I have taken throughout this dissertation.

'*Research*'. My use of the term 'research' is derived from Lawrence Stenhouse's description of research as "*systematic and sustained enquiry made public*" as quoted by David Bridges (1996, p. 2). In a footnote, Bridges related this description to two similar earlier ones:

Richard Peters and John White employed a very similar account of the use of the term research in academic communities to refer to "systematic and sustained enquiry carried out by people well versed in some form of thinking in order to answer some specific type of question" (Peters and White 1969, p. 2). They contrast this with a broader definition employed by Mace who in his *Psychology of Study* maintained that "research is, after all, just 'search', looking for answers to questions and for solutions to problems" (Mace 1963).²⁴

In my interpretation of the data from our DRG investigation I portray our inquiry as "systematic and sustained"; and its presentation in this dissertation is a first phase of its being "made public". Later, I revisit my use of the term 'research' when I return to the issues of what counts as 'research'.²⁵

23 For more on the Philosophy for Children notion of 'self-corrective' inquiry, see 'Self-corrective' Research Actors under 4.2 Research Actors in Chapter 4. Surfacing Philosophical Inquiry Research Acts.

24 Stenhouse L. (1980) *What counts as research?* unpublished mimeo, CARE Archive, UEA, Norwich as quoted in Bridges, 1996 #1283, p. 2.

25 See 2.4 Why do 'Research' with 'Children'? in Chapter 2. Situating the Case Story and also 5.4 On 'Research' in Chapter 5. Conceptual Investigations.

Important to note in the descriptions of 'research' just given is the emphasis on *inquiry* and *search* as a way of *looking* "in order to answer some specific type of question" or "for answers to questions and for solutions to problems".²⁶ The emphasis is *not* on the answers and solutions found. This too is consistent with the Philosophy for Children "self-corrective" approach to inquiry.

In producing this dissertation version of our case story, I have taken an approach of open and systematic inquiry with regard to the questions I raise and consider while at the same time making arguments in favour of philosophical discussion, of philosophical discussion as a way of doing educative research, and the recognition of children to contribute to research as co-researchers. In so doing, I have faced the challenge of taming a monstrous amount of audio and video-tape data by using the qualitative research approach of 'listening to the data' and identifying in those data important elements of the story they tell. Many of those elements I worked on individually and in a self-contained manner anticipating that they could be arranged and re-arranged differently as I continued listening to the data and continuing to make decisions about how and where to feature which parts of the story. This has been and continues to be an on-going process such that, like a stop-action photograph, what is finally captured in the dissertation document is necessarily representative of moments of *transition* in an inquiry that has many dimensions and could continue in a variety of directions. In the interpretive process of presenting the dissertation in its present form, I have made countless choices and decisions many of which may well be arguable but each of which has had its own justification.²⁷

It is therefore in keeping with the philosophical practice of a Philosophy for Children community of inquiry that at the end of the dissertation I 'arrive' at "tentative conclusions" — that is at a 'stopping place' rather than a 'final destination'. As in a class philosophy session the success of which is informally judged by the "Leave them wanting more" mantra of the Philosophy for Children pedagogical approach, so I will judge the success of this dissertation account of our

²⁶ The notion of philosophical inquiry in terms of a "quest" is one I recall first being suggested to me by Gérard Potvin. Upon reflection this is not a surprising interpretation given the root 'quest' in words such as 'inquest' and 'question'.

²⁷ For a more detailed accounting of the decisions actually made, Data Selection under *Stories: Introduction* in Part Two: *Co-researching Stories*.

research enterprise by whether and how its systematic open-ness inspires further inquiry.

Three Ways of ‘Answering’ the Dissertation Research Question

Next I preview how I write in answer to the dissertation research question in three different ways: by demonstration, by surfacing philosophical inquiry research acts and by conceptual investigation. In the extensive *by demonstration* way of answering the *co-research* question (as presented in Part Two: *Co-researching Stories*), I have interpretively selected data and provided Sigma commentary as a way of featuring the co-researchers at work using their own voices. The *by surfacing* answer (as presented in Chapter 4. Surfacing Philosophical Inquiry Research Acts) and the *by conceptual investigation* answer (as presented in Chapter 5. Conceptual Investigations) are my *Sigma* ways of answering the *dissertation* research question by citing data from the *Co-researching Stories* (in Chapter 4) and by reflecting on our work on this project in philosophical terms (in Chapter 5).

By demonstration. At the center of this dissertation is a demonstration of how seventeen young children and their philosophy teacher used a ‘collaborative philosophical inquiry’ (or ‘discussion for learning’) form of discussion to explore how this form of discussion resembles or differs from other forms of group talk and also how we learn from it. As such it is also contains a demonstration of how young children who are experienced in this form of discussion (and their teacher) act as co-research ‘subjects’ in the sense of research *agents* as they use their philosophical discussion expertise as way of doing (qualitative) research.

My decision to answer the dissertation research question by *demonstration* was influenced by a point made by Anselm Strauss in the book *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists* (Strauss 1987), a book that I was using as an “object-to-think-with” (Papert 1980, p. 11) in my efforts to “think out” (Ryle 1949) how what we were doing could count as ‘research’. Strauss described his book as a “handbook of sorts” for researchers-in-training in which he *demonstrated* a particular style of qualitative analysis (“grounded theory”) through the use of extensive verbatim transcript examples taken from his experience of

teaching undergraduate student researchers how to do this style of research and he explained his rationale for doing so this way:

... how qualitative analysis is *actually* done is made vivid by showing through illustration various researchers working together as teachers, learners, and research teammates. The realities of doing analysis — whether one does it as a solo researcher or is fortunate enough to have working colleagues — are particularly difficult to convey, except by showing researchers *at work*. (Strauss 1987, p. xii, author's italics)

Just as the realities of doing analysis are “particularly difficult to convey”, so are those of doing *philosophy* — not to mention doing philosophy as a way of doing research. While reading this book I was repeatedly surprised by difficulties Strauss reported that his students had while learning how to do this form of research — difficulties which were *not* problematic for my philosophically nurtured students.²⁸

The demonstration part of my thesis argument is not presented as a demonstration of “how *qualitative analysis* is actually done” [my italics] but rather of how ‘*discussion for learning*’ was “actually done” by young children and their philosophy teacher as a way of doing qualitative philosophical research. My use of the Strauss reference as a published example of what counts as ‘doing research’, and my demonstration of my young co-researchers at work exercising the very “research skills” that Strauss put high on the list of how to teach (undergraduate) student researchers to do research, constitute one part of my argument that my young co-researchers were indeed engaged in ‘doing research’.

By ‘*surfacing*’. My second way of answering the dissertation research question is by surfacing philosophical inquiry research acts in the demonstration presented in the *Co-researching Stories*. My decision to answer the dissertation research question by *surfacing* is the current result of my search for a way to answer the dissertation research question directly and in its own terms and was influenced by Michael Chervin’s use of the term ‘surfacing’ as cited in 1.2 above. When I asked Michael to explain the origin of that term, in an email message he replied that according to his memory, it actually all started with the title he had selected for a graduate course he had taught at McGill: “What made me use the “surfacing” word or image?”, he wrote, “Likely that it beckoned an active process of investigating; and that despite what might ‘seem’ to be, there may actually be something more!” (M. Chervin, personal communication, June 10, 2000).

28 See the co-researchers at work in Part Two: *Co-researching Stories*.

To make the *by surfacing* argument, I identified a selection of class philosophy 'inquiry moves' which I recognized to be in use by the co-researchers in our DRG discussions and, with reference to relevant literature from a variety of sources, I linked these to *research* inquiry moves as identified by others, thereby 'surfacing' philosophical discussion 'inquiry moves' as 'research acts'.

By conceptual investigation. As someone who does philosophy with children I am very familiar with the surprise and skepticism which abounds regarding whether philosophy is really something that *children* can do. From the beginning of this project, therefore, I have been very attentive to the probability that similar issues would surface with regard to whether *research* is something children can do. I expected the expression 'children as co-researchers' to at the very least raise a few eyebrows and so throughout the process of doing this research, I have worked on this and related issues in conceptual terms. In what sense could I argue that this is "real" 'research' the children were doing, as I put it to them in my invitation to them? Were they 'co-researchers' by virtue simply of accompanying me, an academic researcher? Or might there also be further conceptual grounds for my claim? What counts as a 'researcher' anyway? And does the 'co-' in co-research signify simply *with* or does it imply more than that?

In answer to questions such as those, I carried out conceptual investigations of my own before, during and after the research with the children — up to and including the writing of the dissertation. For example, before the research began, I wrote two comprehensive examination papers in which I explored these issues. During the time period that we were conducting our DRG co-research, I compiled and reflected on an annotated bibliography on 'cooperative' and 'collaborative' learning. And I watched and listened to my case-in-point co-researchers. After completing the 'fieldwork' with the children, while working with the DRG data, I also went back to two antecedent research projects and used those to reconstruct and fine-tune my conceptual understanding of a number of concepts related to what it is to do 'research'. And at different points during the writing of the dissertation, I continued these conceptual investigations as I worked on putting these ideas into writing.

In carrying out these conceptual investigations I was influenced by the conceptual analysis techniques which were part of my own introduction to what it is to do philosophy (Wilson 1963/1987). At the same time, however, I was also

influenced by the categorization work that is a feature of some forms of qualitative research (Kirby and McKenna 1989; Maykut and Morehouse 1994; Strauss 1987). Thus, in answering the research question *by conceptual investigation*, I combined philosophical and qualitative research techniques as I reflected on the meaning of the philosophical/empirical work we did in our Discussion Research Group.

1.7 Dissertation Overview

This dissertation is presented in three Parts and consists of six Chapters and a series of *Co-researching Stories* featuring the co-researchers at work.

PART ONE INTRODUCING THE CASE STORY

In the two chapters of Part One I introduce and situate our Discussion Research Group co-researching 'case story'.

In this first chapter, **Chapter 1. Introduction**, I provide a general introduction to the dissertation by describing the Discussion Co-research Project and identifying its objectives; by outlining my four reasons for wanting to conduct this research; by accounting for the concerns arising out of my teaching practice that led to the design of this research; by identifying the dissertation research question and setting out the principal areas of investigation; and by explaining and previewing the approach I take to 'answering' the dissertation research question.

In **Chapter 2. Situating the Case Story**, I provide a context for this research by tracing how I became interested in the idea of using philosophical discussion as a way of doing research; by identifying the origin of the research ideas; by pointing to literature sources that provided the starting points for thinking about the issues in relation to the three principal areas of investigation; by elaborating further on my interest in doing 'research' with 'children'; by summarizing the relevant Philosophy for Children literature to which this research seeks to make a contribution; and by providing three summary descriptions of other instances of children doing research.

PART TWO

CO-RESEARCHING STORIES

In Part Two: *Co-researching Stories*, as a way of signalling its central importance, I present the case story in six chapter-length sets of co-researching stories preceded by an Introduction and ending with an Epilogue and a summative Conclusion.

Stories: Introduction

Stories 1: Starting Up

Stories 2: Philosophical "Blossoming"

Stories 3: Discussion as 'Communication'

Stories 4: Living and Learning

Stories 5: Making 'Inquiry' Progress

Stories 6: Collaborating Cooperatively

Stories: Epilogue

Stories: Conclusion

Beginning with *Stories 1* and ending with *Stories: Epilogue*, all forty-eight sessions are accounted for at least once in chronological order and in varying degrees of detail.

PART THREE

DOING PHILOSOPHICAL EDUCATIVE RESEARCH

I the four chapters of Part Three, with reference to the *Co-researching Stories*, relevant literature and the two "antecedent research" projects which preceded and influenced the design of this one, I provide additional information, explanations and interpretations pertaining to our work in the *Co-researching Stories* until I land at a 'Tentative Conclusions' stopping place in Chapter 6.

In Chapter 3. **Methodology Matters**, after the extensive presentation of the co-researchers at work in Part Two, I take up methodological issues by accounting for the design and arrangements of a research environment in which children can engage in such co-research. In the six sections of this chapter, first I

consider and make a decision about whether or not to account for our methodology; second, I explain my description of this research as an 'interpretive case story' and I itemize eleven of its 'qualitative/interpretive' characteristics; third, I provide a research biography of the process of obtaining authorization to conduct this research; fourth, I expand on the 'Sigma' aspects of my role as adult researcher in this project; fifth, I identify and elaborate on five categories of 'sampling' used; and sixth, I outline some of the ways I had of working with the data.

In **Chapter 4. Surfacing Philosophical Inquiry Research Acts**, I answer the dissertation research question a second way when, with reference to relevant literature on how to do both philosophy and qualitative research, I surface the 'research acts' in the philosophical 'inquiry moves' that children with philosophical experience make when working in a research context. In the five sections of this chapter, first I present an overview of philosophical inquiry/research acts in each of the six sets of *Co-researching Stories*; and in the remaining four sections I group the research acts into the following categories: Research Actors, Idea Building Research Acts, Philosophical Interviewing Research Acts and Advancing the Inquiry Research Actors. In each category, with reference to relevant literature, I identify research acts and then illustrate them using data extracts from the *Co-researching Stories*.

In **Chapter 5. Conceptual Investigations**, answering the dissertation question a third way — on a philosophical meta-level this time — I explain how, by reflecting on this research, I came to conceptual terms with my claim that children can act as 'co-researchers'. In the first of three sections, I interpret the 'co-research participation' of the DRG co-researchers by revisited the research roles of the various participants in the two antecedent projects in order to come to terms with what to count as 'co-research *participation*'. In the second section, again with reference to the two antecedent research projects, I build further on my interpretation of 'co-research participation' by re-interpreting notions of 'research *collaboration*' in the light of my work with my co-researchers on this project. And in the third section, with reference to Ludwig Wittgenstein's duck-rabbit theory of "aspect-seeing" I argue that the 'philosophical discussion the children use in this project can be *seen as* a way to do 'research'.

Finally, in **Chapter 6. 'Tentative Conclusions'**, I bring the dissertation to its 'stopping place' by reflecting on its research questions and on the

research demonstration process; by identifying research achievements of the dissertation and the Discussion Research Group project; by suggesting perspectives for further research; and by considering possible implications of this research.

1.8 Implications and Significance

The value of the research, after all, depends not on some platonic measure of worth but on its value for appropriate audiences. (Strauss 1987, p. 301)

As a demonstration of a project which features the voices of young children in the service of educational research, our *Co-researching Stories* are intended for language-users of all ages in the entire educational community within its larger social context. As research stories by, for and about young philosophy students and their teacher researching together their own learning through discussion, they are not *only* for educators and their students, they are not *especially* for parents, and they are not *primarily* for educational policy-makers. They are — at once — for all.

In its broadest interpretation, this is a study which has implications for participants' learning *from and with each other* in educational settings and in a variety of 'everyday' settings such as families, work places, community groups and other social groupings in society at large. It also has implications for participants' learning from and with *themselves* as each internalizes the process of dialogic discussion by engaging in (spoken and/or written) collaborative philosophical inquiry with *oneself* — a point brought out by my young co-researchers.²⁹ And it has implications for "policy-making" in a wide sense since, as Finch has pointed out, "policy is made not only by governments but at many other levels, including individual schools and classrooms, where it is made and remade in the course of daily practice" (Finch 1988, p. 185).

29 See especially Sessions 9 and 10 in Part Two: *Co-researching Stories*.

Audience constituencies. To identify "appropriate audiences" for this research I began by reflecting on its relevance for beneficiaries (Finch 1988) whom I grouped arbitrarily into five interactive and overlapping 'constituencies'³⁰: (1) Home and School Constituencies of students and teachers, students' families, and in-school administrators; (2) Teachers' Union and School Board Constituencies of union officials and school board consultants, officers and elected commissioners; (3) University Constituencies of teachers-in-training, teacher educators and educational researchers; (4) Government Constituencies of members of the Ministry of Education and advisory bodies such as the Quebec Superior Council of Education; and (5) Society Constituencies of media journalists, members of business and labour communities and research funding agencies.

These audience constituencies are interactive yet distanced from each other. They overlap and are interconnected since members of one may be members of others. All will have been students; many may be parents; and there is an important sense in which education is and ought to be everyone's business. In addition, all will have had experience with discussion and learning in some form or another (although not necessarily with 'discussion *for* learning'). Despite all their interconnections, however, these audiences are also distanced from each other. Students and teachers in elementary schools seldom have meaningful contacts with their counterparts in secondary schools or other educational institutions. Teachers often feel distanced from administrators, teacher educators and educational researchers — not to mention members of governmental ministries of education and even society at large. Parents too often feel distanced from the activities in their own children's schools and school boards. And members of other audiences are metaphorically distanced from each other by virtue of their physical distance from "the classroom" — other than as occasional spectators.

30 I use the term 'constituency' to refer to any group of people in an identifiable category without using the diminutive 'sub-constituency' and I underline the point that none of these constituencies stand alone. The term 'constituency' is useful here more for its connotation of "a part that is needed to form a whole" than for its political connotations although the latter are not denied. I take the different constituencies (and their sub-constituencies) to be components of the whole community which the education system is intended to serve as well as the people who serve within that system.

Social change agents. Our *Co-researching Stories* give *political* voice to children and teachers and this has social change implications for members of all other constituencies (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 158). Union and school board constituents, for example, having been children themselves, being or having been teachers themselves, perhaps having children of their own now, and having children's best educational interests at heart, have an opportunity through our research to reflect on how the co-researchers are learning by engaging *together* in exploratory research about matters which are interesting and important not only to them but also to the wider community.

Chapter 2

Situating the Case Story

In keeping with qualitative research practice, next I set a context for our case story by situating it in a variety of ways. In 2.1 **Doing Philosophy as A Way of Doing Research**, I trace the beginning of my interest in the idea of “merging” doing philosophy and doing (qualitative) research. In 2.2 **Origin of the Research Ideas**, I situate our story in relation to the teaching and research experience with **Philosophy for Children** which led to my undertaking this research. In 2.3 **Literature Starting Points**, with reference to what have now emerged as the three **Leading Ideas** of the dissertation, I outline the literature which I considered to be relevant from the outset. In 2.4 **Why do ‘Research’ with ‘Children’**, I elaborate on my rationale for wanting to do ‘research’ with ‘children’. In 2.5 **Philosophy for Children Research Context**, I outline the research context to which this research makes a contribution paying particular attention to studies which were just beginning to report the use of qualitative research methodologies. And in 2.6 **Instances of Children Doing Research**, I set the stage for our *Co-researching Stories* in relation to three different instances of children doing research.

2.1 Doing Philosophy as A Way of Doing Research

When I first began to think in terms of ‘using philosophical discussion’ as ‘a way of doing research’, it was partly in response to a call for “conceptual sophistication” in qualitative social research in the introduction to a critical ethnography literature review article by Gary Anderson (1989).

Merging genres. In his article Anderson wrote about how the “unique genre of research. . . known as ‘critical ethnography’” was produced by the *merging* of “interpretivist movements in anthropology and sociology” with “neo-Marxist and feminist theory”. He attributed this in part to a “dialectic” between ethnographers who were viewed by critical theorists as “too atheoretical and neutral in their

approach to research" on the one hand, and critical theorists who were viewed by ethnographers as "too theory driven and biased in their research" on the other (Anderson 1989, p. 249).

This methodological and theoretical debate in the field of education parallels a reassessment of dominant ideas and methodologies under way in the social sciences and humanities. Geertz's (1983) phrase "blurred genres" characterizes the fluid borrowing that has occurred across disciplines, bringing with it new perspectives and new debates in educational research. (Anderson 1989, p. 249)

Need for conceptual sophistication. Anderson also noted that "research methods tied to the assumptions of a positivism borrowed from the natural sciences are increasingly viewed as incapable of providing conceptually sophisticated accounts of social reality" and that "what characterizes the present postpositivist world of the social sciences is a continued attack on positivism with no single clearly conceived alternative" (pp. 249-50).

Within disciplines and fields generally, broad paradigms and grand theories are increasingly found lacking in their ability to provide guidance in asking and answering persistent and seemingly intractable social questions. In periods when grand theories are in disarray, attention turns to epistemological issues and modes of representation. (Anderson 1989, p. 250)

Anderson quoted Marcus and Fisher (1986) as having said that, "The most interesting theoretical debates in a number of fields have shifted from the level of substantive theoretical issues to the level of method, to problems of epistemology, interpretation, and discursive forms of representation themselves" (p. 9). And he concluded his introduction by saying that, "the current situation, although chaotic, is also full of opportunity. Current theoretical and methodological dissatisfaction has led to a resurgence of interest in intellectual traditions such as phenomenology, hermeneutics, feminism, and Marxism" and that critical ethnography represents "one of the many methodological experiments that have grown out of the ferment" (Anderson 1989, p. 250).

Absence of reference to philosophy. Conspicuous by its absence in Anderson's account of the merging of research genres, is any *reference* to philosophy even though he made frequent reference to terms and ideas associated with *doing* philosophy such as "dialectic", "theoretical", "conceptually sophisticated accounts", "asking and answering persistent and seemingly intractable social questions", "epistemological issues and modes of representation", "theoretical

debates", "substantive theoretical issues" and "problems of epistemology, interpretation, and discursive forms of representation" (Anderson 1989, pp. 249-250). Recognition of the importance of *doing* philosophy as part of what it is to do research is difficult to find despite the identifiable presence of philosophy "here all around" as I remember Ferrari, one of my young co-researchers, putting it once. In my original formulation of this research for funding purposes, I wrote about this phenomenon saying that after many years of doing philosophy with young children, while reading language-across-the-curriculum literature, I was surprised to note there too the absence of *any* reference either to philosophy or to the explicit exercise of children's philosophical abilities:

Noticeable in the same [language-across-the-curriculum] literature, however, are many philosophical moments: some celebrated (although not for what they really are), some considered to be serendipitous *by-products* and others all too often missed entirely. Absence of any reference to philosophy need *not* mean that the learning that occurs through language is without a philosophical dimension, however; it may just mean that it is so implicit as to go unnoticed. (Kyle 1991)

The same can be said for curriculum documents prepared for practising teachers of compulsory programs in English language arts (Gouvernement du Québec 1983a) and moral education (Gouvernement du Québec 1991). It is not that philosophy is *absent*; but rather that the importance of its presence is not recognized in any way that would favour its use to best advantage.³¹ Not to see the philosophical dimensions of inquiry as 'philosophy' wherever they occur is to miss opportunities to invoke explicit use of IDEAS and INQUIRY procedures which are important (if not defining) attributes of doing philosophy.

For a more recent example, consider a statement made in a Québec Ministry of Education policy document on "Educational Integration and Intercultural Education". Under the heading of "Helping students achieve greater proficiency in French", the document states that,

Many [students at the college level], in both the regular sector and continuing education, lack the advanced language skills necessary, for example, to argue a philosophical point on a question of ethics or to analyze a poem. (Gouvernement du Québec 1998, p. 14).

31 The same can be said of the most recent school reform document: The Québec Education Program (Preliminary Version, October 1999).

Judging by the way distinctions are made, issues are raised and principles are elaborated in this document, it is evident that philosophical sensibilities came into play in its preparation. Again it is not that philosophy is *absent*; it is rather that it resides between the lines.

The statement just cited makes the assumption that what is needed to argue a philosophical point is “advanced language skills”. In response I would argue that although “advanced” language skills may be *necessary* to argue a philosophical point, they are *not sufficient*. That is, to argue a philosophical point on a question of ethics. . . is not *only* a matter of “advanced” language skills but *also* requires a sense of what it is to ‘do philosophy’. Nowhere in this document which deals with “transmitting shared democratic cultural values” and which values “dialogue” is there any reference to the contribution philosophy can make to this enterprise.

By contrast, my assumption that my students could engage in *research* was based on my recognition that they had a *keen* sense of what it is to do philosophy. In addition, my assumption that their ability to do philosophy would enable them to do research was based on my recognition of the philosophy that ‘resides between the lines’ of doing (qualitative) research. So it was that I came to wonder if there might be a reciprocal relationship between ‘doing philosophy’ and ‘doing research’. And it was while we were engaged in our DRG fieldwork that I began to perceive our work as a “methodological experiment” in the “merging” of theoretical and methodological strengths (Anderson 1989, p. 250) of philosophical and qualitative research into a more explicit theoretical *and* methodological role for philosophy in qualitative research [PhQLR] — a role which would feature the interactive IDEAS-INQUIRY relationship and be well-suited to conducting research into educational matters arising *in, from* and *beyond* Philosophy for Children. Our *Co-researching Stories*, therefore, represent a “methodological experiment” of putting into practice an explicit role for ‘doing philosophy’ as a way of ‘doing research’ by merging elements such as ‘conceptual analysis questioning’ and ‘self-corrective inquiry’ (from philosophy and Philosophy for Children) with ‘reflexive’ and ‘educative’ elements (from qualitative research).

2.2 Origin of the Research Ideas

... creators of new information must outline why a particular method has been chosen to study the particular research question (this is the process by which the researcher accounts for her/his personal experience that led to the research undertaking). The researcher should not shy away from the experience being studied — the more familiar with the experience the researcher is, the better potential understanding of it she/he will have. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 44)

In this section I trace the origins of the research ideas for this project to the following: to my decades of Philosophy for Children teaching practice during which I have seen children engage in the forms of philosophical 'dialogue' and 'discussion' that characterize the Philosophy for Children 'community of inquiry' methodology; to my work on two earlier research projects which led me to begin to see the 'community of inquiry' process as a *research* process, and the possibilities of children participating in that process as research agents; to the two research proposals that led to the present study; and to my readings and writings.

The Philosophy for Children 'Community of Inquiry'

My choice to investigate dialogue and discussion as both a research method and research subject is derived from notions of 'dialogue', 'discussion' and 'inquiry' that are given full curricular play in the Philosophy for Children pedagogical methodology referred to as the 'community of inquiry'.³² In this section I summarize Lipman's explanations of the origin of the phrase 'community of inquiry' and how participants internalize the process of community of inquiry discussions — a process which cultivates philosophical reflection.

Origin of the phrase 'community of inquiry'

Lipman has credited the origin of the phrase "community of inquiry" to the writings of Charles S. Peirce (Buchler 1955).

³² See especially the following: Gazzard 1996; Lipman 1988c; Lipman 1991b; Lipman and Sharp 1978; Lipman, Sharp, and others 1980b; Matthews 1984; Reed 1983; Reed 1992c; and Sharp 1987.

This phrase, presumably coined by Charles Sanders Peirce, was originally restricted to the practitioners of scientific inquiry, all of whom could be considered to form a community in that they were similarly dedicated to the use of like procedures in pursuit of identical goals. (Peirce 1955)

According to Lipman, the adoption of the community of inquiry as a methodology for Philosophy for Children was also inspired by the work of John Dewey (Dewey 1938/1960; Dewey 1938/1972) and Lev Vygotsky (1934/1986; 1978).

Since Peirce, however, the phrase has been broadened to include any kind of inquiry, whether scientific or nonscientific. Thus we can now speak of "converting the classroom into a community of inquiry" in which students listen to one another with respect, build on one another's ideas, challenge one another to supply reasons for otherwise unsupported opinions, assist each other in drawing inferences from what has been said, and seek to identify one another's assumptions. (Lipman 1991b, p. 15-16)

'Community'. Lipman has also traced the notion of 'community' in the Philosophy for Children community of inquiry pedagogical methodology to an article by G. H. Mead first published in 1910 (Mead 1910/1979).³³ in which Mead offered a critique of "the fallacy" of "the division of labor" between the school (which was assigned "the business of storing the mind with ideas, both materials and methods. . .") on the one side, and on the other, the home, the industry or profession, the playground, street and society in general (which had "the task of organizing and socializing the self to which these materials and methods belong"). Lipman endorsed Mead's call "to admit the child's personality as a whole into the school" and he saw the establishment of a community of inquiry in the classroom as both a place and a way for "the social impulses of the child [to] become the ground of the learning process" (Lipman 1979, May, p. 23).

'Inquiry' and internalized dialogue. And with regard to 'inquiry', noting that Mead had worked out a theory of thinking as internalized speech a generation before Vygotsky, Lipman summarized that theory as follows:

Human conversation, discussion, dialogue — these are the matrix of thought and reasoning. When we speak to others, we also listen to ourselves the way those others might listen to us: we adopt their attitudes towards our own verbal expressions. By taking into ourselves the possible attitudes of others towards our own symbolic expressions, we introject or internalize the entire community of persons with whom we communicate. This internalized forum therefore replicates in

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In an introduction to a reprint of that article, Lipman summarized Mead's thinking as it relates to community of inquiry pedagogy (Lipman 1979, May).

thought the social community of symbolic behavior or discourse.
(Lipman 1979, May, p. 23)

The expression 'community of inquiry'³⁴ refers therefore to a 'community' of individuals engaging in 'inquiry' together using a process of 'dialogue'.³⁵

... communities of inquiry are characterized by dialogue that is disciplined by logic. One must reason in order to follow what is going on in them. ... When the classroom has been converted into a community of inquiry, the moves that are made in order to follow the argument where it leads are logical moves, and it is for this reason that Dewey correctly identifies logic with the methodology of inquiry (Dewey 1938/1960, p. 5). As a community of inquiry proceeds with its deliberations, every move engenders some new requiredness. The discovery of a piece of evidence throws light on the nature of the further evidence that is now needed. The disclosure of a claim makes it necessary to disclose the reasons for that claim. The making of an inference compels the participants to explore what was being assumed or taken for granted that led to the selection of that particular inference. A contention that several things are different demands that the question be raised of how they are to be distinguished. Each move sets up a train of countering or supporting moves. As subsidiary issues are settled, the community's sense of direction is confirmed and clarified, and the inquiry proceeds with renewed vigor. (Lipman 1991b, p. 236-7)

According to Lipman, as well as serving the community as a group, this dialogical process can also be "internalized" by individual community members.

A dialogue that tries to conform to logic, it moves forward indirectly like a boat tacking into the wind, but in the process its progress comes to resemble that of thinking itself. Consequently, when this process is internalized or introjected by the participants, they come to think in moves that resemble its procedures. They come to think as the process thinks. (Lipman 1991b, p. 15-16)

After so many years of Philosophy for Children 'community of inquiry' practice, I was interested in finding ways to take the children's philosophical thinking beyond the classroom as the sole or primary venue for 'community of inquiry' thinking and putting it to work for an educational 'research' community context seemed to me to be a promising way to do that.

34 It should be noted that although the phrase 'Community of Inquiry' is used by Philosophy for Children theoreticians and practitioners; it is not usually used by or with children.

35 In *Thinking in Education*, (Chapter 14: Thinking in Community, pp. 229-243) Lipman made a detailed analysis of the differences between the concept of 'dialogue' and related concepts by drawing on the work of others in this area (Lipman 1991b).

Philosophy for Children agenda of educational reform

Lipman's pedagogy of the 'community of inquiry' is radically emancipatory in spirit if not yet evident enough in practice for he seeks nothing short of a wholesale reformation of both education and philosophy in a way which reconstructs the concept of children as thinkers and social beings. From the outset, Lipman recognized that he could not mean 'philosophy' in any traditional sense:

To be sure, when I advocated philosophy in the schools, I was not talking about the traditional academic philosophy taught in the graduate schools of the universities" (Lipman 1991b, p. 262)

Rather it would have to be "a philosophy redesigned and reconstructed so as to make it available and acceptable and enticing to children" (p. 262). At the same time he recognized that "the pedagogy by which this subject was to be presented would have to be just as drastically redesigned as the subject itself" (p. 262).

At least a decade ahead of the relatively recent recognition of and emphasis on narrative as a 'way of knowing', Lipman had already settled on using 'story' as the 'material' vehicle for introducing children to philosophy. However, in designing the methodology, he made the distinction between *doing* philosophy and *learning* philosophy and based the "community of inquiry" pedagogy on the former (p. 263). Thus his Philosophy for Children program consists of using a series of specially created philosophical novels as a well-spring of philosophical ideas with which children are invited to *do* philosophy following community of inquiry methodology.

Lipman acknowledged the relatively recent emphasis of the teaching of 'thinking' as an educational goal, stating that this takes the form of "critical thinking" with little or no acknowledgment of the "special connection between philosophy and the teaching of thinking or even between philosophy and the teaching of critical thinking" (Lipman 1991b, p. 263). He attributed this in part to people's stories of "their own dreadful experience with philosophy" or of "the irrelevance of philosophy instructors they have known" (p. 263) and suspected that these are "merely pretexts". Calling the omission of philosophy from the curriculum a "colossal gaffe", he then invoked a banking analogy reminiscent of but quite different from that of Freire:

Our curricular deficits are like our incredible federal budget deficit — real avalanches that we try to make go away by not thinking about

them. When all groups are party to the budget deficit, none are likely to come forth and offer to make the sacrifices that are necessary in order to set matters right, nor is there likely to be an accounting to show what brought the disaster about so it will not happen again. Similarly with the curricular deficit: It is likely to remain and get worse, because every profession that is "in" sees a reappraisal of the curriculum as utterly perilous to itself (Lipman 1991b, p. 263).

Not to be missed in Lipman's view of the role of philosophy in the curriculum is the reciprocal reconstruction both of philosophy and of the pedagogical methodology with which it is 'delivered' to children. Over time this relation is not only recursive but also transformative in that those involved in the 'doing' of philosophy with children (both teachers and children) are transformed by the experience. It is hardly surprising, then, to find that a spirit of continual renewal pervades the community of inquiry literature such that philosophy for children agents (children, teachers and teacher trainers) are constantly searching for ways to improve the project itself whether that be by finding (or making) new materials, or by finding new methods of working with the materials. I say it is not surprising since the community of inquiry pedagogy is reflexive in the Lipman sense of "self-corrective", and it is this feature that makes me think that it is well-suited to some aspects of feminist and 'critical pedagogy' projects.

Two Antecedent Research Projects

While teaching Philosophy for Children, I was involved in two research projects which preceded and influenced my work on this project. The first project was titled, "Philosophy for Children: An Implementation Feasibility Study" (hereafter "IFS") and the second was the "McGill Research Group into Children's Philosophical Reasoning" (hereafter "MRG"). As one way of answering the question, "Where did the research idea for this come from?" (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 157), and in order to ground our DRG project in its own "antecedent research", I looked back to see what links, if any, I could trace to the formulation of our DRG research. When I did so, I was surprised to find that ideas for this study had been incubating for a long time such that the actual inception of the ideas for the present research is difficult to pinpoint.

Our DRG research design builds on and represents a departure from the methodologies of these studies in two conceptually distinct but interactive ways. First, it represents a theoretical transition from a quantitative to a qualitative

methodological framework; and second, in terms of specific methodological practices, it represents a transition from 'community of inquiry' practice for its own sake to the use of important components of that practice in a *research* context. In what follows, first I provide brief descriptions of these IFS and MRG "antecedent research" projects. Second, I tell how, on the basis of our work on the IFS and MRG projects, I decided to use the term 'research' to refer to our DRG work as a consequence of transitions I made from seeing the 'community of inquiry' as a classroom practice to seeing it as a way of doing 'research' by virtue of its serving as both research *context* and *method*. And third, I tell how I made the decision to invite my students to act as co-researchers with me on the basis of ethical, epistemological and political considerations arising out of our MRG research.

Project descriptions

IFS – Implementation Feasibility Study, 1985. This first project was a study of "the feasibility of offering the Philosophy for Children program (a) to young children, and (b) by teachers who are new to the program and who do not have a formal background in Philosophy" (Kyle and Portelli 1985, p. I). Acting both as the principal investigator (who collected and analyzed the data), and as the internal observer (of teachers and students being initiated to Philosophy for Children), I was interested in examining children's abilities to 'do philosophy' in the context of a classroom community of inquiry. As internal observer, my attention was on the question of how this counts as 'doing philosophy' and by extrapolation, what it is for children and teachers to 'do philosophy' together. The methodological design of the IFS study was positivist.³⁶ And we concluded that "with adequate concurrent training, it is possible and profitable for teachers without a formal background in Philosophy to offer the program to young students" (Kyle and Portelli 1985, Abstract).

MRG – McGill Research Group into Children's Philosophical Reasoning (1987–1993). In 1987, together with three adult co-researchers, I began work on a

³⁶ The IFS 'subjects' were 35 grade four students whose reasoning abilities were pre- and post-tested using 'objective' multiple-choice written tests the results of which were statistically analyzed, and we took care to account for the absence of control groups. The 'treatment' consisted of concurrent philosophy training for the subjects' teacher and both were observed by an internal and an external observer who provided descriptive analyses and evaluations of the implementation of the program.

second project into children's philosophical reasoning. This project was an outgrowth of the earlier IFS project and was foundational to our DRG research. The MRG project grew out of my own and another practising elementary school philosophy teacher's everyday Philosophy for Children classroom experience. Working with the chairman of the McGill Faculty of Education Department of Religion and Philosophy and a masters student research assistant from that department, our objective was to research the complex reasoning which we recognized to be happening in our classes. In particular, on the basis of both experience-based observations and the earlier IFS feasibility study (Kyle and Portelli 1985), we questioned whether the results of multiple-choice written tests such as the specially designed New Jersey Test of Reasoning Skills (Shipman 1983) could adequately represent the scope of the philosophical reasoning that our students were demonstrating in their Philosophy for Children class discussions (Chervin and Kyle 1993, pp. 11, 12). It was during this research that we began to recognize and articulate the limitations of quantitative methodologies for philosophical research purposes.

The original research design of the MRG study was also positivist.³⁷ We built on the IFS study by selecting and adapting additional standard research instruments and at the same time sought to modify these instruments the better to 'get at' instances of children's philosophical reasoning and to characterize young students' abilities to 'do philosophy' more completely and in a variety of ways.³⁸ At that point, however, we were still only modifying previous practice rather than adopting an entirely different methodological perspective. Then, in an unwitting move towards an even more qualitative approach, we designed our own interview and classroom observation instruments to gather data on more elusive aspects of

³⁷ In the MRG study there were 132 student 'subjects' in six classes in two schools. They were taught by philosophically-trained teachers and were also pre- and post-tested — this time by using *three* types of data-gathering instruments: multiple-choice written tests, individual student interviews, and in-class observations.

³⁸ For example, in order to judge the adequacy of the pencil and paper test results, we constructed an interview protocol to examine children's philosophical reasoning related to their responses to selected multiple-choice questions. While it was a fairly standard interview protocol, it foreshadowed our transition to qualitative research since it was a protocol in which it was "our explicit intention *not* to include pre-determined categories of reasoning so that the data collected would enable us to explore children's reasoning in an open-ended way" (Chervin and Kyle 1993, p. 13).

children's philosophical reasoning. And eventually, in a series of "At first . . . but now" insights, we came to recognize the transition we were making from a positivist to an interpretive approach to research. The result was a narrative "research-story" which chronicled the gradual but radical transition from a quantitative, positivist research methodology to one which was interpretive and therefore more appropriate for our research objectives (Chervin and Kyle 1993, pp. 11, 12).³⁹

DRG – Discussion Research Group (1992-1993). The qualitative methodology of the research design for our DRG research therefore represents a distinct departure from the positivist assumptions and practices of the early IFS study while at the same time being a logical progression from transitions made to and in the MRG study. For this DRG study, taking a bold step consistent with qualitative research methodology, I decided on an 'emergent' design with respect to *all* aspects of the research.

Coming to see the 'community of inquiry' as 'research'

IFS. In the first study we did not see the 'community of inquiry' as a *method* of research; rather it was the *subject* of and at the same time provided the *context* for our research into whether teachers without prior training in philosophy could implement the Philosophy for Children program successfully while participating in concurrent training seminars. The community of inquiry was the 'subject' of the IFS study in that functioning as a community of inquiry was identified with what counts as '*doing philosophy*'; and it provided the 'context' as both children and teachers were studied as they interacted within the contextual dynamics of communities of inquiry in the making. For example, from the first external observation report of one of the grade four classes, after describing and analyzing the class discussion, Dr. Portelli concluded with the following comments:

One of the major aims of the IAPC program is the formation of a community of inquirers which, it is believed, can be best achieved by doing philosophy with children. Lipman, the director of the IAPC (Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children) describes such a community as one that "would involve shared experience, but that would necessarily involve common commitment to a method of inquiry. . . . it is the method of systematic self-correction. And such a

³⁹ Our reference to our research account as a "research-story" is the antecedent to my choice of *Co-researching Stories* to refer to our DRG work in this account.

classroom — one which has been converted into a community of inquiry — would find disrespect for persons repugnant. For the community would draw on the experience of each and make the resultant meanings available to all.” (Thinking Skills Fostered by Philosophy for Children”, pp. 3-4).⁴⁰

It seems to me that i) the participants are gradually fulfilling this aim and ii) they do understand one of the major roles of philosophy as viewed by the IAPC program: to encourage discussions and sharing of ideas on topics and issues of philosophical character and that interest students. >>> (cited in Kyle and Portelli 1985, p. 30)

MRG. In the MRG study into children’s philosophical reasoning, building on the results of the IFS, we decided to examine the reasoning of children who were actively involved in communities of inquiry on the assumption that such children would be more likely to provide instances of philosophical reasoning. It was during the course of this second study that we made the transition from seeing the ‘community of inquiry’ as research *subject* and *context* (IFS) to seeing the ‘community of inquiry’ as research *method* (MRG).

‘Inquiry’ as ‘Research’. The story of how and when I decided to refer to our *DRG* work as ‘research’ began during my collaboration with Michael Chervin on the research report article which was a result of our McGill Research Group investigation (Chervin and Kyle 1993). While writing that article we came to see that our own MRG ‘research’ process corresponded closely to the philosophical reasoning process we were analyzing in the data. That is, we recognized that *we* (adult MRG researchers) were doing what the *children* were doing. In a section titled, “From ‘Community of Inquiry’ to Collaborative Inquiry Research” we described the moment this way: “While working together in this way, we came to realize that the *research group* was functioning in ways which are characteristic of a ‘community of inquiry’” (p. 15, my italics) and to explain what we meant, we used Lipman’s own words:

...students listen to one another with respect, build on one another’s’ ideas, challenge one another to supply reasons for otherwise unsupported opinions, assist each other in drawing inferences from what has been said, and seek to identify one another’s assumptions. A community of inquiry attempts to follow the inquiry where it leads rather than being penned in by the boundary lines of existing disciplines. (Lipman 1991b, p. 15)

We had gone from being a research 'team' of individual (adult) researchers contributing varying types and levels of expertise to our examination of community of inquiry issues to being a small *research* 'community of inquiry' engaged in collaborative research activity which closely resembled what the students were doing in their communities of inquiry. Further we wrote that, "By relating *our* research activities to the notion of a 'community of inquiry', *we have developed a notion* of 'collaborative inquiry as a research method' the strengths of which are the ways in which it parallels *the children's* philosophical activity as described by Lipman above" (Chervin and Kyle 1993, p. 15, my italics).

After examining this relationship in more detail, we drew six parallels which "favour the collaborative and productive exploration of ideas": (a) source materials, (b) progression, (c) meaning-making, (d) discussion and language-use, (e) time and (f) procedures.⁴¹ And we concluded this section by considering wider implications of this realization:

Although we have drawn these parallels directly out of our work in the area of children's philosophical reasoning, it is by no means limited to that context. Not only do we see collaborative inquiry as a research method as capable of extending beyond this particular context to a wide variety of other research settings, but we also notice its convergence with feminist research methodologies. (Chervin and Kyle 1993, p. 16)

Especially important here is that the notion of "collaborative inquiry as a research method" which we *adult* researchers "developed" was directly attributable to our reflexive observations of our own 'inquiry' activities as they related to those of the *children* — not the other way around. We were *seeing* our own (adult) 'research' activities *as* 'inquiry' in a way which at least "paralleled" the 'community of inquiry' activities of the children. Realizing that *we* were engaged in a research process which corresponded to what the *children* were already doing was only part of the story, however, for it raised ethical, epistemological and political questions for us regarding *who* "should be included in (and who should not be excluded from) *doing* this research" (Chervin and Kyle 1993, p. 28, my italics).

DRG. Our DRG study therefore, both builds on and represents a departure from its IFS and MRG antecedent studies. For example, the methodology of the present DRG study into discussion for learning represents a progression from

⁴¹ For further elaboration on each of these parallels see Chervin and Kyle 1993, pp. 15-16.

(a) co-operation (without collaboration) *among* research participants (teachers, students, teacher-trainer, observers) in the IFS study; to (b) collaboration *within* a research 'community' of inquiring researchers who were examining phenomena 'outside' of that community (i.e. young children's philosophical reasoning) in the MRG study; to (c) collaboration *within* a community of inquiring co-researchers (teacher and students) who were examining *our own* processes of collaborative philosophical inquiry (in the DRG case story). Thus, just as in the MRG study we were able to say, "From their differing perspectives, all four researchers made theoretical contributions to the development of the research method,"⁴² we can say the same for the teacher/student co-researchers of the DRG project for whom the 'community of inquiry' was subject, context, *and* method.

Coming to see children as research agents

'Research' for social change. The story of how and when I decided to make the emancipatory move of inviting my young students to participate in this 'research' as *co-researchers* began when Michael and I took the above ethical, epistemological and political issues seriously, having come to our questions regarding teachers' and children's participation in research from quite different perspectives. When we began our MRG research in 1987, I joined the project as an *unfunded* practising teacher with relevant interests and experience who was in a position to provide access to the children 'subjects' of the research. During the course of the project, and for unrelated reasons, in 1991 I returned to academic work thereby ending a hiatus that began when I completed my Masters degree in 1976. Much had changed, I realized as I 'discovered' ideological and methodological educational literature in such areas as 'qualitative research', 'teacher-as-researcher research', 'action research', 'feminist research', 'research from the margins' and 'critical pedagogy'. By contrast, Michael participated in the MRG research as a *partly-funded* Masters research assistant who was *very* familiar with such ideological and methodological concerns, not only by virtue of his academic studies but also through his volunteer work with local community groups.

Ethical concerns. With regard to children's participation in research, together we wondered how ethical it is to do research *on* children without carrying

⁴² In particular, see section "3.2 Data-gathering Instruments: 'Improvements'" (Chervin and Kyle 1993, pp. 22-27).

out that research *with* them.⁴³ And, if it is *not* ethical to restrict their participation (e.g. to data collection only), then why not include them from the very beginning when determining the research focus? Or if not that, we wondered, How else *could* children participate in a meaningful and practical way? (Chervin and Kyle 1993, p. 29).

Epistemological concerns. This last question began as an epistemological question when, during data analysis, we “found ourselves at times wanting to ask a student what she or he meant by a phrase we were analyzing” (p. 29).

At first we thought that widening the frontiers of our collaborative inquiry would allow us to gain further knowledge. Soon, as we came to question the underpinnings of our need for “accurate” knowledge in this particular sense, we moved beyond our epistemological concern and transformed it into an ethical one. (Chervin and Kyle 1993, p. 29)

In our research report, we noted that from my Philosophy for Children teacher perspective, “raising the question of the children’s participation in the research as both conceivable and ethical [was] an extension of [my] everyday practice with children.” I “was very familiar with the notion of children directly participating in the on-going definition of classroom procedures for inquiry for it is part of ‘community of inquiry’ pedagogy for children to have a say in setting both the conditions and the content for their inquiry” (p. 29). In addition, we noted how from Michael’s community-based education perspective, he made the assumption with regard to the children of the research, that the people most directly affected by an issue ought to be those who are central in having a say in defining it, exploring approaches to it and acting on it (p. 29).

Political concerns. Further, we reported that our ethical question became “even more meaningful” when we considered that “adequately characterizing children’s philosophical reasoning [was] important to us not only as a purely academic concern, but also as a political one” (p. 29). We were concerned about how “children have been denied civil and human rights on the basis of a presumed deficiency in their reasoning capacity and competence” (p. 29). We were concerned about how “children’s social rights are circumscribed by virtue of the fact that they are still considered to be generally ‘unreasonable’ and lacking in adequate reasoning

⁴³ For our reflections regarding the participation of *teachers* as researchers in relation to our MRG project, see Chervin and Kyle 1993, pp. 28-29.

capacity and competence" (p. 30). And "by reflecting on our own [MRG] research process, we raise[d] the possibility that "institutionally circumscribing the ways that the complexity and richness of children's philosophical reasoning can be researched may have the *effect* of contributing to justify the *status quo* evaluation of children's reasoning as, by definition, "less than that of adults" (p. 30).

At first, we had taken it for granted that what partly motivates us in our research is the belief that we are contributing to the well-being of children. But now we recognize that, in our actual research practice, the participating children really were our *objects* of study (euphemistically called our "research *subjects*"), and were functioning as our "sources of data", not as our partners in research. (Chervin and Kyle 1993, p. 30)

In the MRG project we addressed that concern by "recursively revising the way we referred to the children" from "research subjects" at first to "research students" (p. 30). However, we also recognized that, "While this might indicate a sensitivity to the issue, it does not solve it", and we went on to ask whether we should be engaging the children themselves in doing research such as this (p. 30). We concluded, therefore, that for ethical, political and epistemological reasons, "We now would no longer exclude children from participating as research partners in future research related to them" (p. 30).

Although these ethical, epistemological and political concerns added to my rationale for inviting my students to act as 'co-researchers' *with* me in our DRG project, they did not address the issue of how and whether the work we actually did should count as 'research'. Nevertheless, on the strength of the foregoing, *I* decided to *see* our work *as* 'research', to engage in it myself as a university-based 'researcher', and to treat my students as if they *were* 'co-researchers' — and *then* see what, if any, limitations we would encounter.

Research Proposals, Readings and Writings

Once I had made the decision to pursue doctoral studies, I wrote two successful research proposals the preparation of which also influenced the shaping of this study as did the readings and writings I had done up to this point.

Research proposals

Influential in the development of the ideas and methodology for this research was the thinking that went into the preparation of (a) my application for doctoral fellowship funding, and (b) my doctoral proposal for the present research.

Doctoral Fellowship Application (FCAR 1991). My original title for this research was "Language for Learning and Linguistic Philosophy: Toward a Philosophy-based Curriculum" (Kyle 1991).⁴⁴ This proposal was in response to how "conspicuous by its absence is any reference either to philosophy or to the explicit exercise of children's philosophical abilities" in language-based curriculum literature despite the existence of noticeable philosophical moments in that same literature. The title of our DRG research ("Discussion for Learning") grew out of "Language for Learning" title of the FCAR proposal and our philosophical orientation continued to be linguistic philosophy. However, as a result of subsequent doctoral course work, the methodology changed and the curriculum orientation of the project expanded to a broader orientation towards classroom research.

Doctoral Research Proposal (McGill 1992). Elements of our DRG research can also be traced to the doctoral proposal I submitted after a year of preparatory course work and which reflected concerns arising out of my exposure to the literature on contemporary educational research issues. Our DRG project is an outgrowth of my proposal at that time to do "an educational inquiry which is collaborative, practical, and action-oriented" and which was to feature "the use and

⁴⁴ My stated objective for this proposed study was "to render explicit a number of common Linguistic Philosophy elements which are implicit in Language for Learning and School Philosophy with a view to elaborating a "philosophy-based curriculum": a *language*-based curriculum which makes full use of its philosophical attributes."

adaptation of methods from both analytic philosophy and qualitative research". It is consistent with that proposal's overall objective to study "both theoretically and empirically, the educative power . . . of Discussion for Learning" and also with its three specific objectives which were: "(1) to describe Discussion for Learning as an instrument for learning; (2) to make visible kinds of 'learning' for which Discussion for Learning serves as an instrument; and (3) to consider the practical implications of Discussion for Learning and to produce a number of practical guidelines for its implementation in a variety of settings" (Kyle 1992, p. 2).

In addition, our DRG research is consistent with my proposed methodology which was to be "at once philosophical and empirical". Philosophically my proposal was "to begin from the theoretical perspective by using the analytic philosophy method of conceptual analysis (a theoretical method which emphasizes lived language-use) in order to make some preliminary distinctions between common forms of (oral or written) discussion". By "empirical methodology" I meant "the methodology to be used for those aspects of the study which arise out of practice" to which I quickly added that "the separation of philosophical and empirical methodologies is artificial and is invoked here only to draw attention to these two different but inseparable dimensions of the process under investigation" (pp. 12-13). It was in the empirical methodology for this proposal that the idea of working with children as co-researchers first appeared, a move which I attribute in part to reading and writing influences which I describe next.

Readings and writings

My original implementation of the Philosophy for Children program in my grade five class in January 1981 had the status of a pilot project and although no formal research report was required, elsewhere I did write about different aspects of initiating the Philosophy for Children program.⁴⁵ Also influential in shaping this study was the reading and writing that were part of returning to academic study after a fifteen-year absence. Here, for example, is a partial list (in alphabetical

⁴⁵ In one article I described the process of initiating Philosophy for Children (Kyle 1981). In another I included excerpts from my own reflective journal and wrote about a particular kind of philosophically reflective writing which I then called "thinking-*in-writing*" which was an outgrowth of implementing the Philosophy for Children program (Kyle 1983b). And in a third I described some of the philosophical discussion procedures which were invented by my early classes (Kyle 1983a) .

order) of terms I was encountering for the first time in the lexicon of educational literature and which had an impact on the sense I was trying to make of both my teaching experience and the research I was interested in doing: Action Research, Cooperative Learning, Collaborative Research, Critical Pedagogy, Cultural Studies, Ethnography, Feminist Research, Gender Studies, Grounded Theory, Language Across the Curriculum, Language for Learning, Narrative, Phenomenology, Popular Culture, Positivist/non-positivist, Post-modern, Qualitative Research, Reflective Practice, Reflexivity, Response to Literature, Social Construction of Knowledge, Teachers-as-Researchers and Whole Language. By the end of a year of preliminary course work I was able to recognize a pattern of radical initiatives in education most of which could be traced back to the mid-1970s — the same time as the founding of the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children.

As mentioned earlier, in my reading of language-based curriculum and moral education literature, and after more than a decade of doing philosophy with children, I was surprised not to find *any* reference either to philosophy or to the explicit exercise of children's philosophical abilities. One of my [Sigma] objectives for this research, therefore, has been to bring to bear my own and others' documented philosophical experience with children⁴⁶ on 'discussion (for learning)' issues in such a way as to recognize the philosophical capabilities of children and teachers and to take advantage of philosophical opportunities across the curriculum (see Research Purposes in the Introduction).

Finally, also included in my conceptual baggage for this project were three papers I worked on at the same time as we were conducting DRG research, two of which were unpublished doctoral research papers. For the first of these I did a critical examination of the concepts of 'dialogue' and 'discussion' as they appeared in relation to contemporary issues in education, with particular reference to community of inquiry literature (Kyle 1994b); and for the second I researched theoretical and methodological issues relating to children as researchers with particular attention to the capacity of children to participate as co-researchers (Kyle 1994a). The third paper was the article I co-authored with MRG co-researcher Michael Chervin and was titled, "Collaborative inquiry research into children's philosophical reasoning" (Chervin and Kyle 1993).

⁴⁶ See for example Kyle, Morehouse, and others 1985; Matthews 1980; Matthews 1984; Pritchard 1985; Reed 1983; and Reed 1992c.

2.3 Literature Starting Points

As part of the process of identifying my interest in conducting this research and of preparing research proposals, I drew on literature from a wide variety of sources. In what follows, I situate our case story further by commenting on literature sources that influenced the early shaping of the project.

Discussion

Although much attention has been given to language, talk and inquiry in educational literature, with one notable exception outside of the Philosophy for Children literature (Bridges 1979), that attention has fallen short of accounting in *philosophical* terms for the contribution discussion can make to understanding and learning.⁴⁷ In particular, within the contexts of cooperative, collaborative and critical pedagogies, although authors of carefully constructed curricular programs based on contemporary educational theory have made frequent references to the importance of communication skills for students and teachers, they have also made questionable pedagogical *assumptions* regarding talking and communicating with the result that they have provided little guidance for teachers who are expected to implement the discussion aspects of these programs.⁴⁸ One such assumption is that the mere act of talking with others is sufficient to count as educative discussion; and another is that by virtue of their training, teachers already know how to engage students in educative discussion. This can lead to the use of talk for talk's sake in classrooms as if any kind of talk will do. Having formed the view that our class philosophy discussions were educative in ways not otherwise represented in the literature, what I wanted to research with my co-researchers was how, *together* we would characterize those discussions — what, in philosophical terms, we would say *counts* as 'discussion' (for learning).

47 See for example Britton 1969/1990; Hamm and Adams 1992; Henderson 1992; Tannen 1994; Tough 1973; Watson, Burke, and others 1989.

48 See how 'discussion' is prescribed, for example, in the following two examples of compulsory programs which reach across the curriculum for students in English-speaking elementary schools in Quebec: Gouvernement du Québec 1983a; and Gouvernement du Québec 1983b.

In this research I was interested in investigating relationships between language, learning and discussion. We would work to add to our understanding of each — separately and together — by examining our own processes of philosophical discussion in practice; by asking what, if anything, makes philosophical discussion distinguishable from other forms of classroom-learning talk and by asking what contribution, if any, engaging in philosophical discussion can make to that learning. In addition, based on the idea that thought can itself be communicative — whether or not it is done with others — I was also interested in exploring with my co-researchers how our *individual* thinking can be affected in ‘empowering’ ways by virtue of our internalizing the processes of discussion (for learning). In this regard I was interested in examining our class philosophy practice of philosophical discussion *in writing* in the form of “thinking-in-writing” (Kyle 1983b) or “blurb” writing as we called it at the time⁴⁹ — a kind of collaborative philosophical inquiry with *oneself* — in relation to similar Language Arts practices of ‘journal’ (Atwell 1990) and ‘dialogue journal’ (Reed 1993) writing.⁵⁰

“Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry”

As mentioned earlier, it was during the early proposal-writing phase of this work that I formulated the phrase ‘collaborative philosophical inquiry’ as a way to characterize the kind of discussion which were characteristic of our class philosophy sessions. In this section I elaborate on my reverse-order formulation of that expression and I comment on the literature sources upon which I drew in this process.

‘Inquiry’. My choice of the term ‘inquiry’ is a deliberate reference to the kinds of discussions which involve the kind of inquiry that has been given full

49 Inspired by Descartes, we now use the term “Meditations” to refer to such philosophical thinking-in-writing.

50 For how my young co-researchers addressed ideas of communication with oneself, see S10: Conceptualizing ‘Communication’ — Communicating with “Cotton Candy”, A Talking Bear under *Stories 3: Discussion as ‘Communication’* in Part Two: *Co-researching Stories*. For my critical comparison of our class philosophy practice of thinking in writing to language arts dialogue journal writing, see Kyle 1994b.

curricular play by Matthew Lipman and others in Philosophy for Children.⁵¹ In particular I drew on the theoretical framework of the “community of inquiry”⁵² which, as also mentioned earlier, had its origins in the writings of Charles Peirce and has been profoundly influenced by the work of John Dewey and Lev Vygotsky.

‘Philosophical’. My use of the term ‘philosophical’ was a political move to call attention to the philosophical dimension of all areas of the curriculum — recognition of which, as already mentioned, is difficult to find in language-based and moral education curriculum literature. My interest in this research therefore is to demonstrate how it is possible to recognize and take advantage of the *philosophical* dimension of language for learning issues across the curriculum by bringing to bear my own (see References) and others’ documented philosophical experience with children.⁵³ Theoretical domains of reference for the philosophical aspects of inquiry include the following which are concerned with language in relation to the practical activity of *doing* philosophy.

Language across the Curriculum, Whole Language and Response to Literature. The title “Discussion for Learning” reflects the influence of the theoretical domains of Language across the Curriculum and “Whole Language” in which the use of language is portrayed as an *essential* tool for learning.⁵⁴ In addition, I had detected unacknowledged philosophical dimensions to literature I had read on the uses of discussion in other areas and activities such as Response to Literature (Bakhtin 1981; Rosenblatt 1938/1983; Rosenblatt 1978), Drama as taught by Dorothy Heathcote (Wagner 1976) and poetry (Dias and Hayhoe 1988). Not only was I interested in the learning that can occur *among* students who use language in interpersonal discussion but I was also interested in the learning which occurs *within* individuals who have participated in collaborative philosophical

51 See for example Lipman 1988c; Lipman 1991b; Lipman and Sharp 1978; Lipman, Sharp, and others 1980b; Matthews 1984; Reed 1983; and Reed 1992b.

52 See especially Lago 1990; Lipman 1991b; Lipman, Sharp, and others 1980b; Sharp 1987; Sharp 1991; Sharp n.d.; and Thomas 1992.

53 See especially Kyle, Morehouse, and others 1985; Matthews 1980; Matthews 1984; Pritchard 1985; Reed 1983; and Reed 1992c.

54 See for example Barrow 1982; Chilver and Gould 1982; Corson 1988; Corson 1990; Goodman 1986; Goodman, Smith, and others 1987; Harste, Short, and others 1988; Moffett 1976; Newman 1985; and Robertson 1980.

inquiry discussions on a regular basis. Since it was also my intention that our research should have as wide a field of application as possible, I was also interested in possible uses of discussion for learning in an outreach sense extending *beyond* the curriculum.

Linguistics and Linguistic Philosophy. Taking language to be a powerful tool for learning, I have also drawn on sources from Linguistics⁵⁵ and Linguistic Philosophy regarding how being conscious of our own use of language as we construct our understanding of the world (Wittgenstein 1953/1972) can contribute to effective use of such language 'tools'. For philosophical *process* issues, I have drawn on sources from 'analytic' or 'ordinary-language' philosophy⁵⁶ since my emphasis is on the practical activity of *doing* philosophy — a process which enhances the *product*, whatever that product may be across the curriculum. If language is an essential tool for learning, then Linguistic Philosophy has an important contribution to make in enabling students to learn to use that tool well.

Philosophy of Language. For issues of philosophical *content*, from the neighbouring but different domain of Philosophy of Language, J. L. Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* (1965/1970), Ludwig Wittgenstein's complex notion of the "language-game" in *Philosophical Investigations* (1953/1972) and also Austin's *Philosophical Papers* (1979) have been influential in convincing me (a) that the ability to think philosophically accompanies the ability to use language; and (b) that for people to 'do' philosophy it is important that they become conscious of their own language-use as a way of philosophically constructing their understanding of the world. It was through works such as these that I discovered my own *existing* ability to 'do philosophy' and they have contributed to my belief that the philosophically uninitiated such as students (including young children), teachers (without prior philosophical training) and people (in general) are capable of and can benefit from engagement in philosophical inquiry.

Critical Thinking and Reflective Practice. Since this research is concerned with the exercise of a variety of specific thinking skills, in order to distinguish the contribution philosophical inquiry can make which includes and

⁵⁵ See for example Bruner 1986; Carter 1982; Halliday 1974; Halliday 1975; Halliday 1978; and Smith 1978.

⁵⁶ See in particular the following: Hospers 1953/1967; Scheffler 1960; Scheffler 1979; and Wilson 1963/1987.

differs from that of 'critical thinking', I have drawn on sources from the literature on Critical Thinking⁵⁷ and Reflective Practice⁵⁸ (research domains related to and extensions of critical thinking and philosophical inquiry) in relation to philosophical inquiry literature associated with Philosophy for Children.⁵⁹

Philosophy in Education. A relatively new pedagogical area of interest is that of Philosophy in Education (Lipman nd) which advocates providing students from the Primary level on with opportunities to exercise their abilities to reason philosophically. The Philosophy for Children program from the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC), Montclair State College, New Jersey is the best-known such program and it features prominently in this study since it was the context within which my co-researchers regularly exercised their abilities to engage in philosophical inquiry.

Philosophical Discussion. My interest in discussion as a form of communication dates from my own transition from a silent participant (to the point of withdrawing from a university course because it relied too much on small-group discussions) to a vocal participant in a philosophical course on moral education some time later. For matters relating to *philosophical* discussion I was first influenced by an analysis of "the discussion-form" in the "Language and Communication" chapter of *Practical Methods of Moral Education* (Wilson 1972a). Later, for practical guidance in how to conduct *philosophical* discussions in the Philosophy for Children classroom, I drew on the chapter "Guiding a Philosophical Discussion" in *Philosophy in the Classroom* (Lipman, Sharp, and others 1980a). For more detailed examinations of discussion in relation to other forms of group talk from a philosophical perspective I consulted "What is a discussion?" (Buchler 1954/1979); and for a comprehensive articulation of the educative qualities of discussion from an epistemological perspective I drew on

57 For example see Ennis 1962; Ennis 1987; Fisher 1988; Grant 1988; Lipman 1988a; Lipman 1991b; Maimon, Nodine, and others 1989; McPeck 1981; McPeck 1990; Mezirow 1990; Paul 1990; Ruggiero 1988; Siegel 1980, November; Siegel 1985; Siegel 1985, Spring-Summer; Siegel 1987, November; Siegel 1988; and Sternglass 1988.

58 See for example, Eby 1992; Henderson 1992; Pollard and Tann 1987; Schön 1991; Schön 1983; Schön 1987; and Zeichner and Liston 1987, February.

59 For Matthew Lipman's Philosophy for Children perspective on thinking skills and critical thinking, see Lipman 1985, Winter; Lipman 1988a; Lipman 1988b; and Lipman 1991b.

David Bridges' treatment of the concept of 'discussion,' including its learning possibilities, epistemological underpinnings and teaching by discussion (Bridges 1979). For an articulation of the attributes of dialogue and discussion in the context of communities of inquiry I drew on the chapter, "Thinking in community" in Lipman's *Thinking in Education* (Lipman 1991a). And for a conceptual analysis of 'discussion' and consideration of its uses in more general terms in the classroom, I drew on James T. Dillon's *Using Discussion in Classrooms* (Dillon 1994).

Philosophy and Educational Research. My interest in the role of philosophy in empirical research originated in my initiation to conceptual analysis and its implications for the formulation of research questions, data analysis and the interpretation of results. Years later, during my initiation to qualitative research methodology, my interest in the role of philosophy grew as I read relevant social science literature with my philosophical eye and that became the inspiration for the design of our DRG research project. Further, I note that this interest coincides with initiatives by David Bridges and others in the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain who had also begun to explore the relationship between philosophy, empirical enquiry and educational research.

'Collaborative.' My use of the term 'collaborative' was also a political move — this time to characterize 'discussion for learning' in such a way as to draw attention to both its social interaction and social change dimensions.

Collaborative and/or Cooperative Learning. In particular I was interested in seeing if we could make distinctions between the 'collaboration' of discussion for learning and the 'cooperation' of Cooperative Learning (Johnson, Johnson, and others 1988), an educational 'movement' with its own prescriptions which was being emphasized in local schools. Although the common attributes of Cooperative Learning⁶⁰ and collaborative learning⁶¹ are important — namely that participants come together, do things (talk) together and do so productively and in harmony —

⁶⁰ On the attributes of Cooperative Learning, see the following: Aronson 1978; Cohen 1986; Johnson, Johnson, and others 1986; Kagan 1985; Sharan 1976; Slavin 1982; and Slavin 1986.

⁶¹ On the attributes of collaborative learning, see the following: Golub and Committee on Classroom Practices 1988; Hamm and Adams 1992; Mason 1970; and Smith 1990.

just to do these things is not enough. When I chose the term 'collaborative' therefore, I was interested in exploring the differences (if any) between these two descriptors such as, for example, (a) whether *collaborative* philosophical inquiry features people *working* together in a sense more rigorous than that advocated in Cooperative Learning; and (b) what (if any) differences there might be in the kind(s) of 'learning' which result from each.

Feminist, Critical and Social Change Theory. Although this study is primarily concerned with young children in an in-school setting, as already mentioned, its implications are not limited to such settings and ultimately the intended "beneficiaries" (Finch 1988) are language-users of all ages in a variety of 'everyday' settings such as work places, community groups, families, and other social groupings in society at large. This everyday aspect involved me in an exploration of the literature on feminist and critical theory and social change since implicit in this study are activist intentions of contributing to the "empowerment" of students, teachers, women — people. For example, I have been interested in issues such as the following: what is meant by and the implications of different "ways of knowing" (Belenky, Clinchy, and others 1986); doing philosophy with the illiterate and under-educated (Daniel 1989; Horsman 1990); and the emancipatory aspects of doing philosophy for women and children (Sharp 1981; Sharp 1989).

Children as Co-researchers

In order to explore how far my students' abilities to 'do philosophy' would enable them to 'do research', from the outset I accorded them the status of 'co-researchers' in a sense which includes and goes *beyond* roles of young children in research as represented by the research "collaborators" of Bronwyn Davies (1982b) and the "surrogate researchers" of Andrew Pollard to whom Stephen Ball made reference when he spoke of Pollard's strategy "of using a group of children as surrogate researchers both to collect useful data and as a way of overcoming the problems of the teacher role" (Ball 1985, p. 39).⁶² In addition, just as this work with children as co-researchers includes and goes beyond roles of children in research, so my role as the adult co-researcher includes and goes beyond the roles of adult researchers working with young children. For aspects related to a *teacher*

⁶² See also Carr and Kemmis 1986; Davies 1982a; Hitchcock and Hughes 1989/1993; Pollard 1987; and Walford 1991, p. 11.

choosing to work with *children as co-researchers*, I drew on sources from child psychology, teacher-as-researcher research, critical pedagogy, collaborative research, Philosophy for Children and action research.

With regard to children as co-researchers, in search of factors which would either favour or mitigate children's capacities to participate as philosophical co-researchers, I was interested in what different sources from child psychology had to say about children's thinking⁶³ in relation to their abilities to think philosophically as portrayed in Philosophy for Children literature.⁶⁴ And with regard to a teacher as co-researcher with children, I was interested in relatively recent developments whereby teachers have begun to gain recognition as qualified researchers who are in a privileged position to conduct research in their own classrooms.⁶⁵ For issues relating to the 'emancipation' and 'empowerment' of teachers and learners in educational settings I drew on sources from critical pedagogy,⁶⁶ collaborative research⁶⁷ and Philosophy for Children.⁶⁸ And for issues relating to research for social change I drew on sources from action research.⁶⁹

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- 63 Child psychology sources I consulted include the following: Donaldson 1978/1987; Piaget 1932; Vygotsky 1934/1986; and Vygotsky 1978.
- 64 For children's abilities to think *philosophically* my sources include Chervin and Kyle 1993; Gazzard 1983; Levine 1983; and Lipman 1991b.
- 65 Teacher-as-researcher sources I consulted include the following: Elliott 1988; Fosnot 1989; Hammersley 1993; Mac an Ghaill 1991; McConaghy 1990; Stenhouse 1988; and Wells 1993b.
- 66 Critical pedagogy sources I consulted on issues of social and educational emancipation include the following: Aronowitz and Giroux 1985; Freire 1970/1990; Giroux 1986; Giroux 1983; Giroux 1988; Giroux and McLaren 1986.
- 67 Collaborative research sources I consulted on issues of 'empowerment' include the following: Anderson 1989; Ball 1993; Carr and Kemmis 1986; Schensul and Schensul 1992; and Staton 1993.
- 68 Philosophy for Children sources I drew on for issues relating to emancipation and empowerment of children and teachers in particular and educational change in general include: Chervin and Kyle 1993; Lipman 1991a; Lipman, Sharp, and others 1980b; Matthews 1988; Sharp 1981; Sharp 1989; and Splitter 1987.
- 69 Action research sources I drew on for issues relating to research for social change action include the following: Entwistle and Nisbet 1972; Kemmis 1988; Kirby and McKenna 1989; Møller 1993; Stenhouse 1988; van Manen 1990.

2.4 Why do 'Research' with 'Children'

Having briefly outlined my rationale and objectives for doing 'research' with 'children' in the Introduction,⁷⁰ here I situate the case story by elaborating further on what I mean by 'research' and why it was important to do this research 'with children'.

Why 'Research'

If 'to do philosophy is to do research' and if 'children can do philosophy', then it should follow that 'children can do research'. Beyond adopting the Stenhouse description of 'research' as outlined above, I worked on what it was in practical terms that I mean when I use 'research' to describe what we were doing in this project. Consider for example this Sigma memo I wrote exploring the meaning of 'research' in relation to our experience of 'doing philosophy' after hearing an everyday use of the term 'research' on television.

While watching a medical show yesterday, it occurred to me that the word 'research' is problematic. In medicine, we do 'research' to find an answer that is mysteriously lurking 'out there' somewhere and if we 'search' enough we will 'find' it. But what does the 'search' look like? — a little like Sherlock Holmes and his magnifying glass? But isn't it more about the researcher and what s/he does? . . .

What were we (DRG) doing? We were looking into (but only with a metaphoric magnifying glass?). We were also putting our 'findings' or 'figurings out' together in new (?) ways, we were building on each others' ideas and on the ideas of others (not us) and we were 'creating' (as in constructing new) a . . . way of interpreting the phenomena we were 'looking into' — understanding — >>> theorizing. We were constructing a theory and that is . . . what it is (in part) to 'do philosophy'?

[Sigma Memo/96.03.10Su-2/TV Memo/'Research' is. . .]

Our co-research did *not* resemble the media concept of research used in the medical report I reflected about in this TV Memo. Although we *were* dealing with questions in a complex way, we were not 'searching' for 'answers' in the way we expect of medical researchers.

⁷⁰ See 1.1 The Co-research Project: Description and Objectives in Chapter 1. Introduction.

In order to argue that what we were doing *was* 'research' in a full sense, first I look at two contrasting interpretations of 'research' as elucidated by others; second I consider the relationship between doing philosophy and doing research by returning to the Stenhouse definition advanced in the Introduction; and third I comment on what we were setting out to do in relation to the 'research projects' students are called upon to do in school.

Contrasting interpretations of 'research'

To consider the concept of 'research' more closely, first I look at research as a culturally defined activity by referring to an article by Gérard Potvin (1991, p. 29) in which he reflected on the concept of 'research' in the phrase "teacher-as-researcher" (Stenhouse 1975) by relating it to the French use of the term *recherche* which covers a much larger conceptual territory. Then I look at a contrasting interpretation of 'research' which covers an even wider conceptual territory by characterizing 'research' as an 'everyday' activity.

'Research' as culturally defined. In his article, "L'enseignant-chercheur: une perspective élargie", Potvin noted that in French the word *recherche* is used to designate the pursuit, perhaps not completely conscious and intentional, of all life activities of the order of knowing (*connaître*), making or doing (*faire*), or of being (*être*) as well as the pursuit of the objects of these activities such as *savoir-connaître* (knowing how to know), *savoir-faire* (know-how), *savoir être* (knowing how to be) — and this as soon as these activities are marked by uncertainty (Potvin 1991, p. 29).

... recherche s'emploie pour désigner la poursuite, même incomplètement consciente et intentionnelle, de toute activité vitale de l'ordre du connaître, du faire ou de l'être, de même que la poursuite de l'objet de ces activités dès que cette poursuite est marquée <<d'incertitude >> ... (Potvin 1991, p. 29)

Further, Potvin pointed out that *recherche* is also used when one wants to express that one is either 'going after' (*que l'on tend à atteindre*) or 'wanting or looking to go after' (*que l'on veut atteindre, que l'on cherche à atteindre*) something (e.g. happiness, an opportunity, a thing, a lost ship, an experience, a process, a strategy or a solution) when that something cannot be attained by some effective, automatic process:

Dans ce sens, on parle de recherche du bonheur, de recherche d'une occasion, de recherche d'une chose, de recherche d'un navire perdu, de recherche d'une expérience, de recherche d'un procédé, d'une stratégie ou d'une solution, et tous ces usages sont parfaitement intelligible et corrects. (Potvin 1991, p. 30)

Potvin also observed that, by contrast, the English term 'research' is much more restricted, saying that it is used primarily to express that one wants to know (*que l'on veut connaître*) or to portray (*ou même représenter*) whatever is the object of research; but it is not used to express that one wants to make the object of research happen (*le réaliser*), to transform it or to create it (*le transformer ou le créer*). After consulting an unabridged English dictionary he noted that the only synonyms given were 'investigation,' 'inquiry,' 'scrutiny' and 'examination' as if to suggest that the object of research is left untouched by the process of researching. To reach the complexity of meaning of the French term *recherche*, Potvin argued, is to leave aside the term 'research' and to use instead words like 'quest' or 'seek'. Potvin considered that, more than a matter of semantics, these uses of 'research' and *recherche* reflect cultural differences (*chacune est marquée par sa forme culturelle caractéristique*). As a result, when Francophones want to refer to research in the English sense, he pointed out, they have to use other words (*e.g. examen or investigation*) or they ought to specify that they are using *recherche* in a restricted sense (*au sens restreint*) (Potvin 1991, p. 30).

Our co-research was also *not* 'research' in the restricted sense that Potvin attributed in cultural terms to an English interpretation. Nor, strictly speaking, did we set out to do research in the wider sense of *recherche* that Potvin attributed to a French cultural interpretation. Conspicuous by its absence in Potvin's account is the notion of 'exploration' which I have used to characterize our work. As a *philosophical* exploration, however, our 'research' included many (and did not necessarily rule out any) of the aspects Potvin mentioned.

'Research' as an everyday activity. For another contrast, it is hard to imagine a wider interpretation of 'research' than that found in social research. For example, throughout their book, *Experience, Research, Social Change: Methods from the Margins*, Kirby and McKenna characterized 'research' as an 'everyday activity': "We already 'do research' as we interact with the everyday world" (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 17 as cited on p. 5 above). Speaking of social science in general, Martyn Hammersley too said that "the methods it employs are merely

refinements or developments of those used in everyday life" and that "...all social research...involves participating in the social world, in whatever role, and reflecting on the products of that participation. Irrespective of the method employed, it is not fundamentally different from other forms of practical everyday activity" (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983, pp. 15-16).

For Kirby and McKenna this inclusive use of the term 'research' is a deliberate move to "reclaim" both the word and the activities it signifies:

... we use the word "research" knowing it includes everything from re-search, to searching, to making sense of... Just as we recognize that it is not only teachers who teach, not only cartographers who create maps, we use the word "research" as a familiar word, reclaiming the understanding that research is something we all do in our everyday lives. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 35)

What is not clear, however, is whether their "we all" includes children. Even if it does, although the point is important, it is not enough to characterize 'research' as *just* 'everyday activity'. Following Kirby and McKenna, I set out to 'do research' with my co-researchers in the sense of our own *class philosophy* 'everyday activity' and as Hammersley put it, the methods we employed were "refinements or developments of those used [in our class philosophy] everyday life" as we "reflected on the products of [our class philosophy] participation" (p. 15-16).

Doing philosophy and doing research

The use of 'research' which I wrote about in my Sigma TV Memo above was an 'everyday' use of the term and it is still common for *that* everyday use to be based on what is often referred to as the 'scientific paradigm'. If our research is to count as *philosophical* research, then it will join an on-going struggle for philosophical activity of *any* kind to count as 'research'. When David Bridges cited Stenhouse's definition of 'research' as "*systematic and sustained enquiry made public*" (Bridges 1996, p. 2), it was in the context of examining relationships between 'philosophy of education' and 'educational research'. He acknowledged the dominance of the scientific paradigm whereby scientists "gather data, test hypotheses, develop and run replicable experiments and collaborate in large often international teams" and publish their research in some "prestigious journal"; and he pointed out that, "It is easy for research to become defined in terms of this paradigm" in a way which makes the work of philosophers "something which may well be dignified and respected as e.g. 'scholarship', but which is a distant remove

from research *per se* (p. 1). Bridges considered alternative moves for philosophers in response to this and he opted for Stenhouse's description as an "even wider definition of research which would encompass at least some philosophising." Satisfied that the activities of philosophers meet the criteria of being systematic, sustained and made public, he then considered "how far philosophical work represents an 'enquiry' . . ." (p. 2). Following Bridges, my reason for adopting Stenhouse's description of 'research' for our work is that it is wide enough to include philosophical activity as research. Our co-research story was 'research' according to the criteria of the Stenhouse definition as put forward as an argument for philosophy as educational research by David Bridges.

School project 'research'

When I invited my students to be co-researchers with me, I referred to the work we would do as 'real' research to distinguish it from the kind of "research projects" they did in school subjects. However, it could be argued that such projects also meet Stenhouse's criteria of systematic, sustained inquiry since they involve the use of systematic research techniques which include project design and consulting library sources; they are sustained over a period of weeks or months; they are for inquiry purposes in the sense that students 'search' for the best information on a specific topic; and they are made public in the form of project reports, science fair displays and presentations for classmates and/or the school. In such school research projects, students 'do research' in order to find out something they or others did not know. What I meant by 'research' for our co-research purposes goes beyond this, however, such that Stenhouse's description may be somewhat limited. Our co-research project qualifies as 'real' research in a sense that goes beyond that of school research projects by virtue of its comprehensive philosophical qualitative research methodology and the contribution it can make to educational research in general.

Why 'Co-research' with 'Children'

When I first encountered 'qualitative research', I was struck by the kinship of its reflective and reflexive practices with what I was doing every day with my students in class philosophy. In principle, I saw nothing to prevent my students from engaging in qualitative research activities. On the contrary, I saw a lot to suggest that they were well qualified to engage in this research. This project was a way to demonstrate publicly not only that 'research' is an 'everyday' activity for children, but that, in collaboration with a teacher, philosophically nurtured children have a contribution to make to *educational* research. Having provided accounts of Why 'research', next, returning to and tempering the notion of researching from the margins (Kirby and McKenna 1989), I offer three reasons for the importance of doing co-research with children.

1. *Opportunity to research*

Most of us have not had the opportunity to research, to create knowledge which is rooted in and representative of our experience. We have been excluded from participating in, describing and analyzing our own understanding of reality. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 16)

As a teacher in a French Immersion school, I [Judy] have felt "excluded from participating in, describing and analyzing [my] own understanding of reality" when my daily reality did not correspond to the results of research cited in support of French Immersion⁷¹ and I have often wondered what such research would look like if conducted by or at least *with* those (teachers *and* children) whose experience it is. And as a teacher researcher working on our antecedent MRG research which was supported both theoretically and financially for the academic participants but not for the teachers involved who were expected to volunteer their services, I felt that research was considered to be "*solely* the domain of academics" (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 41, my italics). The advent of teacher-as-researcher research

⁷¹ For example this from an internal school board document: Report of the Mathematics Programs Investigation Committee: "The results of testing at the primary (K-3) and secondary I level have proven that there is no loss of mathematical achievement due to studying mathematics in French, (Scholastic Effects of French Immersion —An Overview After 10 Years. Fred Genessee, September 1978)."

(Elliott 1988; Stenhouse 1975; Stenhouse 1988; Wells 1993b) has opened up opportunities to research for *teachers*, and it is important now to find appropriate ways to extend opportunities to research to *children*.

2. *Opportunity to create knowledge*

We want to demystify the research process and get the word out about the different kinds of knowledge and understanding that methods from the margins can begin to make publicly accessible. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 24)

In school, children are often considered to be knowledge *receivers* and teachers are portrayed as knowledge *transmitters* — neither are considered to be knowledge *creators* or *producers*. According to Kirby and McKenna, “creation of knowledge is the business of research” (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 41), and “Demystifying the research process is the first step in decoding and demythologizing the way knowledge is created” (p. 24). The participation of children and teachers in co-research is important because of the “different kinds of knowledge and understanding” that they can “make publicly accessible” thereby contributing to the demystification of (a) the research process, (b) how knowledge is created and, in our case, of (c) what it is to do philosophy as a way of doing research.

3. *Knowledge and power*

It is impossible to discuss research without talking about power and influence. . . . One of the basic elements of power is that those who have positions of power are able to manufacture ideas. Another is being able to place ideas that have been created into the public agenda. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 23)

It is also important to do co-research with children because “. . . research activities should empower the people who are usually merely the objects of research,” and “. . . since knowledge can be used as a tool of control, it is in the best interests of . . . those on the margins . . . to engage in the production of knowledge” (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 41). Children need public credibility with regard to ideas they “manufacture” by “being able to place ideas [they have] created into the public agenda” in such a way as to be taken seriously. An example from doing philosophy with children is the issue of the discriminatory treatment children report receiving from adults in store check-out lines. This is a power problem with regard to which children feel they have little (if any) recourse —

because they are children. Now if they could help design, conduct and *make public* a 'systematic and sustained enquiry' into this matter, we might learn that this problem is not as serious or widespread as it seems, or we might learn that this is an important civil rights issue which ought to be placed on the public agenda in a way that only the people experiencing the problem can. Without children's own voices, the problem is likely to persist and remain invisible. If children are *capable* of doing such research and *want* to do it, then anything that prevents them from exercising that capability becomes a barrier put there by others.

2.5 Philosophy for Children Research Context

Having accounted for the origin of the research ideas and having situated my research interests with reference to a variety of literature sources, next I situate our research relative to the Philosophy for Children research context to which our research makes a contribution — paying particular attention to the emergence of the use of qualitative research methodologies.

For the first twenty years since the introduction of Philosophy for Children in the 1970s, empirical research reports have been primarily concerned with (a) documenting the implementation of the Philosophy for Children program in a variety of settings worldwide; and (b) making statistical evaluations of claims made for its effectiveness (Lipman and Gazzard 1986). More recently however, researchers have begun to recognize the limitations of quantitative effectiveness studies and have introduced or advocated the use of qualitative research techniques in order to evaluate important areas of the program which quantitative measures miss.

Literature Search. To find out if and how qualitative research methodologies were being used by other Philosophy for Children researchers, I looked at two Philosophy for Children journals (*Thinking, The Journal of Philosophy for Children* and *Analytic Teaching*)⁷² which, since their inception,

⁷² *Thinking* has been published by the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children, Montclair, New Jersey since January 1979. And *Analytic Teaching* was first published in 1980 out of Texas Wesleyan College as a newsletter for practitioners and is now published with the wider agenda of "reflective teaching and community inquiry" by Viterbo College, La Crosse, Wisconsin.

have reflected the theoretical concerns of philosophers, the pedagogical concerns of teacher-trainers, and the program implementation reports of teacher-practitioners. In these journals, contributors have also been concerned with a wide variety of issues including the analysis of the Philosophy for Children curriculum for its philosophical content; the publication of newly constructed curricular materials; and the exploration of relationships between Philosophy for Children (curriculum and pedagogy) and other contemporary educational initiatives. I found nine reports which included the use of qualitative measures and which I considered to be relevant to our DRG project .

Evaluation of Philosophy for Children Effectiveness. All nine reports and studies were concerned with evaluating the effectiveness of the Philosophy for Children program with regard to aspects relevant to our DRG research: *e.g.* techniques for evaluating its effectiveness (Slade 1992); recognizing children's philosophical reasoning (Chervin and Kyle 1993; Santi 1993); the construction of research instruments for analyzing the thinking in classroom philosophical discussions (Chervin and Kyle 1993; Perrot 1993); techniques for investigating the relationship between doing *philosophy* and learning to think (Chervin and Kyle 1993; Santi 1993); ways to characterize and evaluate philosophical reasoning within the dynamics of the community of inquiry (Chervin and Kyle 1993; Pálsson 1994); ways to evaluate the contribution a Philosophy for Children community of inquiry approach can make to other curricular areas: *e.g.* moral reasoning (Milvain 1996) and science (Sprod 1997); and evaluation of Philosophy for Children using other than IAPC curricular materials such as children's literature (Milvain 1996; Niklasson, Ohlsson, and others 1996). In our DRG research we moved beyond *evaluating* to *demonstrating* the effectiveness of the Philosophy for Children program by putting our philosophical abilities to work in a *research* context.

From 'Skills Tests' to 'Dialogue and Discussion' to 'Research.' In the late 1980s, independently of each other, some researchers began to question the reliance on pencil-and-paper tests of reasoning skills which were used in so many of the quantitative research studies evaluating Philosophy for Children and they looked for ways to assess the thinking and dynamics manifested in *live* Philosophy for Children dialogues and discussions. As early as 1985, in an unpublished research report, I expressed my own misgivings when I realized that the test results for some students did not reflect the quality of reasoning I had witnessed from them in classroom discussions: "Instruments to study the same children in the dynamic

oral setting are also needed in order to provide a more complete assessment of their reasoning ability" (Kyle and Portelli 1985, p. 11). This observation which was a starting point for our McGill Research Group (MRG) study which began in 1987 (Chervin and Kyle 1993, p. 12). In the early 1990s, Christina Slade in Australia questioned the use of quantitative methodologies which were based on skills tests which "concentrate on the responses of individual children under test conditions" saying that this is "inimical to the practice of P4C⁷³ in teaching thinking skills through dialogue" (Slade 1992, p. 29). In Hawaii Tom Jackson also sought to go beyond the use of a paper-pencil test because it was "taken by individual students working alone" and was "inadequate as an instrument to measure what we are trying to do" (Jackson 1993, p. 37).⁷⁴ And in a 1994 research article from Iceland, Hreinn Pálsson made an explicit move towards qualitative research when he asserted that "the stated aims of Philosophy for Children *require* an interpretive research methodology" (Pálsson 1994, p. 33, my emphasis). Setting a context for his research, Pálsson too noted the limitations of written tests and he identified a need for Philosophy for Children research which looked at the dynamics of the community of inquiry.

In relation to our DRG research these studies represent a search for research methodologies which are able to describe and evaluate aspects of Philosophy for Children which seem to be inaccessible using quantitative techniques. They represent a shift from evaluation of the program based on 'results' in the form of test scores and tallies of individual skills to describing the dynamic process of putting those skills to work in the context of actual dialogues and discussions. Our DRG research represents a further shift away from program evaluation for its own sake to the use of philosophical dialogue and discussion for *research* purposes and in contexts beyond classroom Philosophy for Children discussions.

Participant-Observation Research Designs. Making qualitative assessments of the philosophical thinking that is manifested during a Philosophy for Children discussion requires a discerning ear and eye. Without entirely letting go of

73 "P4C" is the acronym for Philosophy for Children which is commonly used within the IAPC Philosophy for Children community.

74 "Social interaction dimensions of a reflective community of inquiry are completely missed by the test as are oral communication and carry-over into other content areas, all important indicators of whether the project has been successful" (Jackson 1993, p. 37).

positivist techniques, researchers have reported using various forms of in-class participant and/or observation techniques such as, for example, the construction by researchers of instruments such as observation checklists and interview protocols (Chervin and Kyle 1993, p. 17, 24-27) for that purpose, and the creation of specific classroom activities and materials such as philosophical texts designed to provoke philosophical thinking (Niklasson, Ohlsson, and others 1996, p. 18; Sprod 1997).

In our 1987-1993 MRG project we had a positivist reluctance to entrust such observation to the children's own teachers and to risk the 'subjectivity' of the teacher who was also a member of the research team. Instead we gave the task to two "philosophically-trained" researchers both of whom were not known to the children and could therefore be more 'objective' (Chervin and Kyle 1993, pp. 17, 24-27). During the co-writing of our article, however, we made important transitions to the point where we became prepared to trust not only the children's teachers but the children themselves as researcher participants when we concluded that, "For ethical, political and epistemological reasons, we now would no longer exclude children from participating as research partners in future research related to them" (Chervin and Kyle 1993, p. 30).

In most of the studies I looked at, other researchers tempered *their* positivist research designs with add-on qualitative participant research measures. In the Swedish study, for example, researchers added a qualitative participant observation design to an overall design which had quantitative overtones such as the search for "significant" differences, the use of "experimental" and "control" groups, and a similarity in design to "double-blind" quantitative studies (Niklasson, Ohlsson, and others 1996, p. 17). And a more recently reported study conducted in England is another example of how the researcher added qualitative participant-observation techniques in order to elaborate on the results of what was otherwise a positivist research design (Sprod 1997). By contrast, however, as early as 1987 in Iceland, Hreinn Pálsson reported a great deal of 'participant' involvement by a principal researcher in his explicitly "interpretive" study.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ "In my case, I not only joined in, but I also brought different ideas about the context that should be in place in the classrooms. So, this was not only an observational study of a particular context for teaching philosophy to kids, but also a study of bringing such a context about. My actions, ideas and interpretations shaped the study..." (Pálsson 1994, p. 34).

These studies are relevant to our DRG research as examples of 'participant-observation' research; as research which attends to both the content and process in the dynamics of philosophical classroom discussions in contexts other than our own class philosophy and DRG; and as research which begins to recognize the multi-faceted role of the principal researcher in the conducting of the research. In our DRG study it was not my purpose to *assess* either my students' thinking or the Philosophy for Children program but rather to put the products of both to use for research purposes. As Sigma researcher, although I was a 'participant' *with* my young students, and although I made 'observations' about our thinking as manifested in our DRG research sessions, it was not my purpose *to* observe what 'they' were doing in the same way as for the studies I have seen in the literature. The emphasis in DRG was rather on research *collaboration* and 'participant observation' was a part of the interpretive process for *all* the DRG co-researchers.

Data Analysis. To evaluate the dynamic *process* of philosophical inquiry as practised within Philosophy for Children communities of inquiry, researchers have continued to make use of quantitative techniques of analysis (Jackson 1993; Milvain 1996) or have explicitly moved away from them (Chervin and Kyle 1993; Slade 1992). They have featured the analysis of transcripts, observation reports or evaluation surveys.⁷⁶ They have paid attention to the *process* of discussion (Milvain 1996; Perrot 1993; Santi 1993). They have explored and adapted methods of discourse analysis (Perrot 1993; Slade 1992; Sprod 1997). They have explored the research use of philosophical analysis methods and criteria (Chervin and Kyle 1993; Santi 1993; Slade 1992). They have used community of inquiry criteria for data analysis.⁷⁷ They have used graphic methods to examine and represent the dynamics of discussion (Milvain 1996). And they have advocated a qualitative approach to data analysis.⁷⁸

Most relevant to our DRG work was Hreinn Pálsson's data analysis approach whereby he evaluated a combination of content, process and other

76 See for example Chervin and Kyle 1993; Jackson 1993; Milvain 1996; Niklasson, Ohlsson, and others 1996; Perrot 1993; Santi 1993; Slade 1992; and Sprod 1997.

77 See for example Chervin and Kyle 1993; Milvain 1996; Pálsson 1987; Slade 1992; and Sprod 1997.

78 See for example Chervin and Kyle 1993; Niklasson, Ohlsson, and others 1996; Pálsson 1987; Santi 1993; and Slade 1992.

observations. Guided by his multi-level research questions, Pálsson described his data analysis criteria as follows:

The lessons were analyzed in terms of: content, dialogue as a teaching method, and the teachers' perceptions. Specifically, each lesson was assessed for the level of success in the teaching of philosophy as a content (discipline), and as (dialogical) practice. Also, the teachers' expectations and perceptions about their own performance was used in the evaluation of each lesson. (Pálsson 1987, p. 34)

In 1992, saying "we can only sketch the directions we might take", Christina Slade shifted away from test results and made an early move toward the use of qualitative data analysis methodologies when she advocated evaluation of Philosophy for Children based "on the processes of dialogue in the community of enquiry, rather than the skills which might be a consequence of that interaction" (Slade 1992, p. 35-6). What was needed, she argued, was "a well-motivated theory of analysis of discourse" whereby "in the fashion of ethnomethodological studies, the concepts would emerge from the enquiry, rather than vice versa" (p. 35). In particular she pointed in the direction of detailed transcript analysis of classroom discussions which would go beyond the *process* of turn-taking and systematically account for the *content* or "patterns of critical discourse" which would not only be useful in and of themselves but might also contribute to the clarification of concepts such as critical and creative thinking (p. 36).

Then, in 1993, based on her own previous work in analysis of classroom dialogue, Christine Perrot offered a detailed technique for analyzing the transcripts (Perrot 1993) whereby she decided on three "foci of analysis" which she "applied" to selected transcripts and with which she was able to "show important characteristics of talk which can assist in making judgements about that talk's epistemic nature and even its epistemic quality" (pp. 44-45). Techniques I have used when interpreting our DRG transcripts resemble Perrot's data analysis technique with important differences. Unlike Perrot, I did not decide what my 'foci of analysis' would be in advance, nor did I classify them in categories; and my purpose was a philosophical one of portraying both what and how we were thinking and researching rather than examining the form or quality of our thought.

From a philosophical perspective, in the research reported by Marina Santi (1993), the researchers combined philosophical interpretation based on their own observations with a form of qualitative analysis in which transcript data was examined in terms of pre-identified philosophical categories remarkably similar to

Perrot's "foci of analysis". They acknowledged that the "four kinds of analysis" they proposed "need to be better investigated and proven" but suggested this as "a possible way for qualitative evaluation of the effects of this activity on children" (p. 22). Without a more detailed account of why *those* categories were selected and just *how* the data were analyzed, this too represents an early step in a qualitative direction. And more recently, citing the work of both Slade (1992) and Santi (1993), Niklasson reported that he and his colleagues "agreed with them on the main aims of evaluation methods for philosophy with children" and also used discussion transcription analysis as one of their methods (Niklasson, Ohlsson, and others 1996, p. 17). The relevance of Santi's research to our DRG project is that it represents a move farther away from a quantitative methodology and closer to one which is not only predominantly qualitative but also has an emphasis on the *philosophical* dimension. It is also important for its recognition of the importance of discussion transcript analysis and the inseparability of content and process in the social context of a philosophical discussion.

Still, in the most recent reports, researchers used the language of a positivist theoretical framework even though they reported having used qualitative data analysis techniques. For example, although Cath Milvain (1996) took a qualitative approach in her moral reasoning research, her use of language such as "only one controlled variable" (p. 22), her acknowledgement that her "small sample" might not permit her to "gauge consistency of findings" (p. 29), and her apparent apologies for her "subjective judgement" (p. 28) are indicators that her steps toward qualitative data analysis were tentative. Nevertheless, relevant to our DRG project were Milvain's graphic representations of (a) the "flow of dialogue" which she indicated "by drawing lines between people as each participated in the discussion (Figure 1I-iv, p. 23); (b) the "comparison of the proportion of time given to student discussion with that given to teacher" (Figure 2I-iv, pp. 24, 25); the comparisons of the types of responses given by students (Figures 3-6, p. 26); and (d) the frequency of the occurrence of philosophical thinking in terms of "intellectual risk", "reflective", and "empathetic" factors (Figure 7, p. 27).

And finally, although Sprod wrote that his study "used a mixture of quantitative and qualitative measures", judging by his emphasis on statistical analysis of test results, his calculations of "interobserver reliability" in the epistemic episode level, and his concerns about the "generalizability of the research" and the possibility of making "biased interpretations", his methodology was quantitative

with qualitative measures of discourse analysis used primarily to elaborate on the quantitative results (Sprod 1997). The relevance of this research to our DRG project is that it provided more examples of the use of discussion transcript analysis techniques, in particular with regard to the dynamics of philosophical inquiry discussion (Sprod 1997).

Beyond Philosophy for Children. Three articles were relevant to our DRG exploration because of their use of the community of inquiry methodology beyond the context of the Philosophy for Children program itself. Two were concerned with other curricular aspects: moral reasoning (Milvain 1996) and science (Sprod 1997); and a third anticipated our conceptual work on 'discussion for learning' by suggesting that the analysis of classroom philosophy dialogues might lead to important philosophical conceptual distinctions between 'critical' and 'creative' thinking in its own right (Slade 1992). An important difference, however, is that for Slade it was presumably the adult researchers who would produce the distinctions by virtue of their after-the-fact systematic analysis whereas in our DRG project I recognize the co-researcher children to be engaged in and responsible for the conceptual analysis that yields the philosophical distinctions they make.

Our DRG study differs from these studies in that it was an outgrowth or an extension of Philosophy for Children rather than an evaluation of the effectiveness of the program's implementation. Also our DRG research is unique for its inclusion of children as researchers. Thus, our DRG study's Philosophy for Children research context as represented by these research articles is one in which other researchers are tentatively exploring the use of qualitative research techniques to portray the dynamic complexities of the *process* of philosophical inquiry as practised within Philosophy for Children communities of inquiry.

2.6 Instances of Children Doing Research

To conclude this chapter, and prior to telling our own *Co-researching Stories*, next I provide a context for our work by describing and commenting on three instances of young children doing research. For each, I comment on whether and how I consider the children in these projects to be *doing* 'research' and in what ways their research process can be described as instances of qualitative research.

Social History Research

Village Heritage:

Miss Pinnell with the help of The Children of Sapperton School

Sapperton, Gloucestershire, U.K. (1986)⁷⁹

This is a student co-researcher story that grew out of a British primary school history project. It is the story of a teacher and twenty-six children of Sapperton School who began the 'research' as a project to look into the history of their own village of Sapperton, Gloucestershire, U.K. It took "five fascinating years, countless questions, and two giant scrapbooks" to produce "this amazing village history" (Pinnell 1986, Publisher's note, front flap) which won recognition first in competitions and subsequently by sponsors who considered it to be worthy of publication (Pinnell 1986, p. 110-111). Ultimately it was turned into a full-colour publication with an Introduction by Michael Wood, a British historian.

The pages are alive with Romans and Anglo-Saxons, saints and villains, conquering Normans and ruling nobles, Royalists and Roundheads, engineers and architects, navvies and labourers, craftsmen and even their own local and influential historian. Scenes recreated by the children merge with contemporary documents, while the Domesday record is paralleled by a fourteenth-century subsidy roll, a seventeenth-century muster roll, a nineteenth-century census and the children's own present-day survey. There is even the amazing discovery of a coffin-filled crypt, as recently as September 1985, beneath the magnificent marble tombs in the parish church... (Pinnell 1986, Publisher's notes)

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I am grateful to my British friend Jennifer Bembridge for having provided me with this example of children as researchers.

Without necessarily so intending, this project exemplifies five features of qualitative research (Bogdan and Biklen 1992, pp. 29–33). For example, it “has the natural setting as the direct source of data and the researcher is the key instrument” (p. 29). Miss Pinnell kept a detailed photographic record of their research activities and the children made use of pad and pencil both on location and in constructing making the equivalent of “field notes” on their return. In order to convey a sense of the complexity of this project, in what follows I provide a detailed (but incomplete) account of the extent to which their natural setting was a direct source of data. Although most of the text of the book is written by Miss Pinnell, it is clear from the text, the photographs and other figures and illustrations that the children were thoroughly involved as research agents. Although the teacher provided the research narrative, she speaks for herself *and* her student co-researchers as a team.

Miss Pinnell and the students explored every nook and cranny of their village collecting data in a wide variety of ways. They went out on the street and questioned a hundred passers-by. They collected a wide variety of documents (including maps, aerial photographs, census data, then-and-now village plans, old histories.⁸⁰ They consulted surveys of their area including the *Domesday Book* (both in its Latin original and in translation) and they conducted surveys of their own. They examined museum artifacts (such as tools and coins). They visited archeological sites. They studied a tapestry (The Bayeux Tapestry) which depicted invading Normans. They studied the architecture of their village from a historical perspective visiting sites and making their own architectural drawings. And they tracked down an “eminent archaeologist” through a local official who knew of a television program which might have information relating to their village.

They reconstructed the family trees of important local figures. They assessed the wealth of Sapperton by consulting documents such as the “Gloucestershire Subsidy Roll 1327”. They took oral histories from the people of the village many of whom were authorities on the history of the houses in which they lived. They read wills to learn more about earlier inhabitants as ‘real people’ through their detailed accounts of all their “earthly possessions”. They consulted

⁸⁰ Examples of old histories they collected are the following: Samuel Rudder's *A New History of Gloucestershire 1775*; A. J. Roberston's legal history, *Anglo-Saxon Charters* which provided details of land ownership and duties, and A. H. Smith's *The Place-Names of Gloucestershire*.

local newspapers. And they visited and photographed trees which, according to tradition, were carved with the names and initials and other information of importance to earlier inhabitants.

They consulted journals such as the *Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society Transactions* (1928). They wrote to and received a response from an expert from the Victoria and Albert Museum in London for additional information regarding a vault discovered in the crypt of a local church during the course of their research. And they found references to Sapperton in a letter from the poet Alexander Pope to a friend quoted in the pages of an early twentieth century book on the history of the area.

They took trips on the local canal in order to have first-hand experience of the canal while researching the “navvies” who cut the canal and built the 28 locks. They drew diagrams of the geological survey canal tunnel as they researched its construction and they made cross-section drawings “pretending” they could “cut through the ground to see inside the Sapperton Tunnel” and showing how boats had to be “legged” through the tunnel (p. 81). They read fictional stories set in and around the tunnel “to help capture the atmosphere of the canal in its heyday” (p. 82). They studied the “human cost” of building the tunnel by noting that the number of burials in Sapperton almost doubled during its construction and by reading accounts in local newspapers of the day (p. 83). And they took part in a fourteen-mile Canal Walk, an annual event organized to raise funds for the restoration of the canal.

And finally, they traveled by railway to see their valley from a different perspective and to gain first-hand knowledge about the transportation system which replaced the canal. They studied the building of the railway and the cutting of its tunnel. They visited a nearby railway museum to see early steam locomotives. They researched their own school through more oral histories and through records relating to the “new building” (1848) for the school. They researched the history and activities of “The Sapperton Craftsmen”, makers of “beautiful and simple furniture, inspired by the tradition of William Morris” and who came to Sapperton and built houses for themselves on land given to them by a local lord (p. 98). After all this activity they recognized their conservation-conscious heritage and hoped their ‘research’ would have also made an important contribution.

The above list indicates that in scope and methodology this was a major undertaking that was conducted with great attention to detail. With regard to how it meets criteria of qualitative research, in addition to the criterion of (1) the natural setting being the direct source of data and the researcher(s) as key instrument(s), the other four criteria used by Bogdan and Biklen are also recognizable in this project to a remarkable degree: (2) it is "descriptive"; (3) the researchers are "concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products"; (4) the researchers tended "to analyze their data inductively"; and (5) "'meaning' [was] of essential concern" (Bogdan and Biklen 1992, pp. 29-33).

What is missing in qualitative research terms however is any deliberate and self-conscious, reflexive account of the research process itself by the researchers. Although the public end-product of the research, the book, *Village Heritage*, shows evidence of the children's participation as research agents on every page. However, both in the text and in graphic representation, their voices *as* children's voices and *as* researchers are featured only occasionally. Information is also lacking in terms of the children's contributions to the planning and design of the research and although it is conceivable that they played a major role, this is not made explicit. These need not be considered to be omissions since the intent was not to produce a student co-researcher driven research project and formal report, but rather to engage in research activity which was documented in detail. That it should exemplify qualitative research to the degree that it does is serendipitous.

Acid Rain Research

St. George's School, Montreal (1990)⁸¹

This second example of children doing research is a rather ambitious research project which was initiated by a research scientist⁸² and was conducted over a period of six weeks "to investigate one of the major sources of pollution in our environment — acid rain" (St. George's School Students 1990, appendix F). Conducted via modem and computer over the National Geographic Society's Kids Network, it involved more than 450 classes located in 46 of the United States, Canada, Japan and the USSR. The project consisted of students collecting data by measuring the amount of acid in the rainwater in their communities and also by studying three questions of special interest to and identified by the principal researcher: (1) What are the sources of acid-producing gases in your community? (2) Where on the network is acid rain most intense? and (3) What do you think we should do about acid rain? After receiving the students' data, the scientist and a colleague reviewed the reported findings and wrote to the students to discuss the results.

This is an example of students acting as co-researchers not in a simulation of research but as full research partners. They were addressed as "student-scientists" and their data were treated as seriously as if they had been collected by adult researchers. Although the principal researcher and the student-scientists never met, it was nevertheless a collaborative project. The Principal Researcher described their activity as one of "working together" and the contribution of the student-scientists was different from that of the adult researcher(s). Although it is obvious that the adult scientists knew more about what it is to do research and that, by their involvement in such a project, the students would learn a lot about scientific protocols and procedures, at no time was this made to be the focus of the project.

⁸¹ When these research projects were carried out, the Philosophy for Children program was a feature of the curriculum at St. George's School. However, unlike the present DRG study, these projects were not a direct outgrowth of the children's participation in that program but rather of their work on other areas (Science, Language Arts and Computer Technology) of their curriculum.

⁸² John M. Miller, Acid Rain Unit Scientist, Deputy Director, Air Resources laboratory, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, United States Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C.

On the contrary, the students were addressed in a manner not distinguishable from one that would be used with adult colleagues. It was collaborative in four different ways: (1) *among the students* at St. George's as they divided up the research tasks; (2) between students and their teachers⁸³ in the school; (3) among St. George's student-scientists and those in other schools on the Research Team Cassiopeial as well as with other teams on the National Geographic Society's Kids network; and (4) with the adult scientists in Washington, D.C.

As it happened, the student-scientists' research findings were problematic to the adult-scientists and the way in which this was handled is illustrative of the co-researcher status of the students. Problems with the data were not attributed to the fact that they were collected by children, but rather such problems were deemed to be not at all unusual for scientific research: "As so often happens in a scientific investigation, the data are full of surprises and they raise as many questions as they answer" (St. George's School Students 1990, appendix F). The problem was discussed by comparing the in-coming data with the scientists' expectations and those collected by other adult-scientists; and new questions were articulated and possible explanations offered together with actions they would need to take to answer them.

We have to do our testing over again because scientists believe maybe the pH paper that they sent to us and the rest of the network was not the correct kind. They have reason to believe that they sent the right pH paper to the west but were not entirely sure. Our pH readings were from 5.0 - 5.4. We are not sure if these readings are correct. The scientists are sorry that they may have sent us the wrong pH paper and they've invited us to do the testing all over again. (St. George's School Students, 1990, p. 7)

Another indication that the students were taken seriously as co-researchers is that their participation was solicited not just as data collectors but also as idea and action generators. Their views on possible explanations and possible solutions to the problems of acid rain were taken seriously. The students at St. George's also took their own contributions seriously as indicated by taking the initiative to collect signatures from "people in our school who promise to do as much as they can for the environment" (St. George's School Students 1990, appendix I); and a letter-

⁸³ The role of the teachers is invisible in this project as documented by the research report. Although it is inconceivable that a project of such a scale could be conducted without them, no reference is made to them either by the students or by the principal researcher.

writing campaign which included letters to the Prime Minister of the day to enlist his support for their efforts.⁸⁴

What is not clear from this report is what *else* may have happened to the research results. The students identified the project as one of "a bunch of kids trying to learn more about acid rain and where it is" as if to say that it was *only* one of kids learning and not one of research proper. Furthermore, after describing various dimensions of the project, the "big question" was expressed in local terms: "Is there acid rain in our area?" It would be interesting to know if the adult-scientists did anything further with the data from this project in terms of publication or of contributing to further research.

84 "Our class wrote letters to different people and companies. We wrote about the environment. We paired up into groups of two or three. Everyone chose who they wanted to write to. A lot of people wrote to Brian Mulroney, one group wrote to Brazil about the rain forests and a whole bunch of people wrote to McDonalds. When Brian Mulroney wrote back, we were very disappointed because he said nothing. All he said was Canada was in good hands and that he is glad that we are concerned. He also sent us the same letter twice!!!" (St. George's School Students, 1990, pp. 11-12). Nor did the students stop there. They wrote a second letter to Prime Minister Mulroney stating their disappointment in no uncertain terms.

Making Documentaries Research St. George's School, Montreal (1992)

This third instance, another one from St. George's school, is a project in which the children did research for purposes of producing documentary films.⁸⁵ It was a class project which was designed by the students in collaboration with each other and their teachers and which exceeded the teachers' expectations with regard to the aims of the school:

In our classroom, and in our school, we stress thoughtfulness and problem-solving; we focus on process rather than product; and we encourage exploration for we feel that one must take risks in order to learn and to grow. We stress the essential role which collaboration must play in a community of learners. (Zack and van Gelder 1992, p. 5)

In the teachers' report on this project, their description of the students and the ways in which they carried out their 'research' activities characterizes the students as research agents to a remarkable degree even though 'research' for its own sake or to build the children's 'research skills' was not the explicit purpose of this project.

Both content and process-oriented, the following are the objectives as stated in this report:

The vital aspects of our project included (1) a critical look at timely issues, both in the documentaries viewed, and in the topics the children chose for their own documentaries, (2) a look at various genre (sic) in the media, (3) student-selected topics, and (4) collaborative teamwork, student-student, student-teacher and teacher-teacher, as we delved into the domain of electronic media, a technology which was novel both for the students and for the teachers. (Zack and van Gelder 1992, p. 5)

With regard to their 'research' activities, the students had a limited time frame within which both to plan and execute their research and to produce their documentaries. Their activities resemble those which might be involved in qualitative research:

Within [the] time frame they had to decide how to proceed, whom to interview, write the interview questions, make the contacts, tape the interview (they were responsible for the setting up of the set: video

⁸⁵ This account is taken from an article written by the two teachers involved in the project (Zack and van Gelder 1992).

camera, microphone, lights), choose the clips, and then edit the selections, incorporating music, narration, credits, and artwork. (Zack and van Gelder 1992, p. 6)

These are activities which correspond to the planning, data collection and analysis, and production of a research report.

In terms of the children's capabilities to participate in such a project without having to be shown how or having their hands held, Zack had this to say:

The children took charge of their enterprise. All group members, of wide-ranging abilities and interests were actively involved. They were motivated, diligent, enthusiastic, and responsible. They impressed me with their self-sufficiency and initiative. (Zack and van Gelder 1992, p. 6)

They were capable research partners both for each other and for the teachers involved in the project and they learned the value of collaboration *by* collaborating:

The children saw me and Susan van Gelder as learners, since we ourselves were probing and discovering as we went along. . . . We relied on each other for support, adult and child learners alike. In their own work groups, the children were able to see that collaboration was a growth process, as the group members jelled into a cohesive team. (Zack and van Gelder 1992, p. 6)

Another research aspect, that of on-going evaluation of both the process and the product of the project by the co-researchers as it proceeds were also reported:

The quality of final product was not as good as they would have liked, since there were glitches, and loss of quality due to the repeated re-taping of the tapes. However, they themselves were not only the ones best able both to reflect upon and to assess what they would do differently next time, but were also the ones who insisted that the process of the learning was more important than the end product. (Zack and van Gelder 1992, p. 6)

And they even had to deal collaboratively with a controversial ethical issue which threatened the integrity of the project as they saw it. In a documentary project concerning problems in rock music, the students had selected excerpts of lyrics which exemplified the violence and swearing prevalent in some of the songs (p.6). Worried that such lyrics would be considered unacceptable by the parents of the student film-makers, the teacher found herself "in the unenviable position of having to suggest deleting the excerpts, because there was such extreme violence (especially against women), and obscene language . . ." (p. 6). The students were "torn" but recognized the problem and eventually worked out a compromise

whereby the lyrics were retained but with a commentary explaining their decision (p. 6).

Characterized not as 'research' but as an "investigation" each documentary was a project which included research methodologies and which had multidimensional benefits for students and adults alike:

... the issues with which the children dealt, the entrepreneurial nature of the activity, the problem-solving approach which they used, the fact that they needed to learn to compromise as they worked together in a collaborative mode, and that they were able to assess the degree to which their project was successful and to suggest changes, contributed to their growth. (Zack and van Gelder 1992)

and

Thus the investigation touched their lives outside of the classroom as well as inside the classroom. In partnership with adults (their teachers as well as the invited guests who were the interviewees) the children dealt with topics such as censorship, warning labels, freedom to speak, sensitivity to audience, and the need to discuss aspects which might trouble them, such as for example sensational content which aims to sell by virtues (sic) of its shock appeal. (Zack and van Gelder 1992, p. 6)

These documentary investigations are another example of how, acting as research 'agents', children can 'do research' as an integral part of a larger project. Although these were also examples of 'school research' projects, unlike other such projects which amount to simulations of what it is to do research, the research which these children carried out served the same function as that carried out by adult researchers who work on documentary films.

In all three instances the children were actively engaged in 'doing research' in the sense of being "creators of new information" (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 44) by virtue of engaging in "systematic and sustained enquiry" and in each case the results of their work were "made public" (Bridges 1996, p. 2) whether in a form of a book, as part of a wider report and communicated at a press conference called for that purpose, or as a documentary film. These examples therefore support my claim that children can act as co-researchers. What distinguishes our *Co-researching Stories* from these examples is the way in which we made explicit and reflexive use of philosophical discussion as a way of doing research.

Summary

To situate this case story, first I attributed the beginning of my interest in the idea of doing philosophy as a way of doing research to Gary Anderson's observations regarding "merging" research genres and to his call for conceptual sophistication, noting that he made no explicit reference to *doing* philosophy in his account (Anderson 1989). Second, I traced the development of the ideas for this research to my experience with Philosophy for Children communities of inquiry and the Philosophy for Children agenda of educational reform; to my research experience working on two 'antecedent research' projects; and to two research proposals I wrote as well as other readings and writings which influenced my work on this project. Third, I identified literature sources with which I began regarding the topics of 'discussion', 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' and 'children as co-researchers'. Fourth, I elaborated on what I mean by 'research' and why I considered it important to do this research with children. Fifth, I summarized and provided a critical review of the research literature on Philosophy for Children with particular attention to the use of qualitative research methodologies. And I concluded this chapter by situating our case story in relation to three contemporary instances of children doing research.

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PART TWO
CO-RESEARCHING STORIES

*Stepping Out*⁸⁶

What I want to tell you now is the story of how [our] story got made up. First there's the story, and then there's the story of how it happened. What I mean is, first it had to happen, and then *afterwards* came the story. So this is the story of what came first. It's the story of how it happened.⁸⁷

Like Pixie's story, our co-research case story as presented in this dissertation is a collection of stories within stories. It features a teacher and seventeen children engaged in co-research and there are at least as many versions of our story as there were co-researchers who lived it — more if we count our individual and collective memories of it and still more if we consider its varied reader interpretations (Bruner 1986). The version presented in Part Two: *Co-researching Stories* is my [Sigma/Alison/Judy] account of how my young co-researchers and I conducted an exploratory study of our own experience of what, for purposes of this project, we referred to as "discussion for learning". Like Pixie, I [Sigma] also faced storytelling challenges of how to tell many overlapping and interactive stories within stories: stories of how the story got made up — of *what came first*; stories of *what happened*, and stories of *how* what happened happened.

⁸⁶ *Stepping Out* are the words on the back cover of my co-researchers' Grade Six yearbook the full title of which is *Stepping In, Stepping Out*. I deem *Stepping Out* to be fitting also as a title for these *Co-researching Stories* as a way of signalling our "stepping out" from 'class philosophy' to 'research philosophy' — with all the conceptual baggage that entails.

⁸⁷ In *Pixie*, the Philosophy for Children novel-*qua*-text for nine-year-olds, this is how the main character and storyteller Pixie begins to tell her story (Lipman 1981, p. 2).

These *Co-researching Stories* are presented as a way of answering the dissertation research question by *demonstration* — that is, by *showing children at work* using philosophical discussion as a way of doing research into what counts as philosophical discussion ('discussion for learning'). As indicated earlier, I saw this co-research project as a "methodological experiment" in "merging" methodological strengths from two different research traditions (one from philosophical research, the other from social science qualitative research) with a view to making a contribution to both.⁸⁸

These *Stories* are therefore about how I brought the philosophical discussion experience and expertise of my Philosophy for Children students together with what I was learning about how to do 'qualitative research'. This was in search of a 'way of doing research' better suited to Philosophy for Children, a field dominated by research done in the quantitative research tradition.⁸⁹ At the same time, I was struck by an apparent lack of recognition of the benefits of 'doing philosophy' (as distinct from 'acknowledging philosophical underpinnings') in my exposure to qualitative research practice at the time. And, in the Philosophy for Children spirit of building on each other's ideas, I dared to think that such a methodological experiment might also make a contribution to qualitative research.

While philosophical discussion in the tradition of Philosophy for Children is the basic process we use in our co-researching of 'discussion for learning', we also go beyond seeking to increase our understanding and mastery of the philosophical discussion experience. As a result, our co-researching sessions take on aspects not seen in standard class philosophy sessions (*e.g.* co-researchers keeping field notes, audio and video recording, writing experience profiles and interviewing each other). Documenting this dual process of increasing our understanding and mastery of the philosophical discussion experience provided data for my [Sigma] meta-analysis for this dissertation and these *Co-researching Stories* are a record of these achievements as well as those of philosophical discussion.

⁸⁸ For my account of when and how I came to see our work as a methodological experiment, see 2.1 Doing Philosophy as A Way of Doing Research in Chapter 2. Situating the Case Story.

⁸⁹ See 2.5 Philosophy for Children Research Context in Chapter 2. Situating the Case Story.

As such the *Co-researching Stories* also demonstrate that children co-researchers can fulfil many research functions in addition to conceptual investigation through philosophical discussion.

In *Stories 1: Starting Up* “come” stories of how we organized ourselves and brainstormed our own Co-researcher Questions in DRG Sessions 1 and 2.

In *Stories 2: Philosophical “Blossoming”* come research interviewing stories in which my young co-researchers reveal more about themselves as philosophers and as researchers as they work on ways to conduct research interviews by interviewing each other.

In *Stories 3: Discussion as ‘Communication’*, come stories of how, with the help of Cotton Candy, a stuffed bear, we explored the relationship between discussion (for learning) and ‘communication’ — and in particular whether it makes sense to think of having a discussion (communicating) with oneself.

In *Stories 4: Living and Learning*, come social issue stories of how, at the same time as we worked on making conceptual distinctions between different forms of group talk, we also addressed a social issue in need of change and also stories of how our discussion of Co-researcher Question #14 (“Can you learn if you’re dead?”) led us to explore issues of Lifelong Learning.

In *Stories 5: Making ‘Inquiry’ Progress* come stories of how we used the techniques of ‘mapping thinking’ and ‘blurb’ or ‘memo’ writing to help make our inquiry progress visible to ourselves and in particular how helpful concept mapping was in helping us to build a concept of ‘inquiry’ from the ground up.

In *Stories 6: Collaborating Cooperatively* come stories of how we continued to use our research mapping skills, and how we explored examples as we tried to decide whether to describe our philosophical form of discussion (for learning) as ‘cooperative’ or ‘collaborative’. And in the *Stories: Epilogue* comes the story of how we celebrated the conclusion of our co-researching. Finally, in *Stories: Conclusion I* [Sigma] summarize some of the achievements of our DRG co-research.

Then, because our *Co-researching Stories* are not *just* stories but also an interpretive research report, “*afterwards*” (in Part Three) will come my [Sigma] accounts of *why* things happened the way they did as I use what happened in the *Co-researching Stories* to argue that our use of philosophical discussion is a way of doing ‘real’ research.

Stories

Introduction

The *Co-researching Stories* presented here are in a state of transition and are a 'fourth generation' version. The first generation of stories consisted of the live experience, the second consisted of the version(s) captured in the audio-visual and documentary data, and the third consisted of the stories represented in the first transfer from audio-visual data to verbatim text together with Sigma commentary. For this fourth generation I have compressed those data to fit the requirements and limitations of dissertation presentation. Each generation is the result of choices made and, as with successive generations of video-tape copies, there are inevitable losses in making successive transitions to each new generation. It would be a mistake to think that any one version tells the *whole* story or that each tells the *same* story.

The various transitions to the present version are the results of many decisions. For example, when using audio tape at the beginning we taped only our research discussions until we decided that we should tape each session in its entirety. Later, when using video-tape, we only had one camera and the stories data that were captured depended on decisions made by the children co-researchers who were operating the camera at the time. When making the third generation transfer of audio-visual data from tape to text, I [Sigma] made data selection decisions in relation to the thesis that I was formulating as I worked with the data. And, for this fourth generation version, I made decisions and compromises which were a function of time and space constraints. Although arguable, each of these decisions had its justification. And although the present version would benefit from further refinement, it was designed to serve the purposes first of answering the dissertation research question 'by demonstration' and later, of providing data to support the *by surfacing* argument.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ See Chapter 4. Surfacing Research Acts.

Data Selection

Data selection challenges in producing this version of the *Co-researching Stories* included how to render and do justice to the complexity, coherence and comprehensiveness of our responses to our DRG research question in the time and space framework of a dissertation and within the time-frame available for its completion. Also they included how to capture the dynamic 'live action' thought on static paper. In the interpretive process of selecting the data and deciding how to present it, I was guided by the data we produced, the dissertation research question and my four stated purposes for conducting this study.⁹¹ In what follows I mention some of the issues which were at play and the decisions I [Sigma] made in producing this current version of the *Co-researching Stories*.

'Children as co-researchers' considerations. An early decision I made which is consistent with feminist and research-from-the-margins practice, was to feature the children's co-researcher 'voices' by using their own words in the presentation of the *Stories* by resisting as much as possible the temptation to "voice over" their words with Sigma summaries or reports. I also had space economy and philosophical reasons for staying close to the data in this way. This meant including extensive extracts of verbatim data from our co-researching audio and video tapes and this decision presented further challenges.

Masses of data. One of the first considerations after making the above decision was the overwhelming yield of data that would result given the duration of the project (forty-eight 1.5 hour sessions). I needed an initial strategy for selecting which of the data to transcribe.

Answering the DRG research question. I began by recalling the question I had put to my co-researchers ("What is 'discussion for learning' and how do we learn from it?") and I selected data by staying as close as possible to the approach we adopted beginning in Session 9 and which led to our repeated exploration of five concepts: 'discussion', 'learning', 'collaborative', 'philosophical' and 'inquiry'. Then, combining conceptual analysis techniques of beginning by identifying important concepts in the question (Wilson 1963/1987) with the

⁹¹ See 1.3 Purposes of Conducting the Co-research Project in Chapter 1. Introduction.

grounded theory strategies of 'theoretical sampling', I selected and organized the data by following five *conceptual* 'data trajectories' (Strauss 1987).

Narrative sequencing. In order to provide a 'live' sense of our co-researching and to demonstrate its progression, I set out to interpretively present the data using the narrative framework of an overall 'story' in chronological order beginning with our getting organized (Session 1) and generating our own Co-researcher Questions and having a preliminary research discussion (Session 2) through our work on all five conceptual 'trajectories' and ending with our celebration (Session 48). Thus, as a way of representing the complexities, coherence and comprehensiveness of our work, I set out to tell stories which would document our work in each of the forty-eight DRG sessions, trace the trajectories of each of our conceptual explorations and include the research maps we made.

This decision presented additional challenges regarding whether and how to present these stories in chronological terms. At first I tried presenting the data in five trajectory 'stories' (each with its own beginning, middle and end) and arranged in a chronological sequence across the project as a whole. This worked well until I realized that the five trajectories were intertwined, interactive and interdependent in a way that undermined this strategy. Nevertheless, still seeking to produce a version of our *co-researching* that adequately portrays the complexities, coherence and comprehensiveness of the experience, guided by the chronologies of each trajectory within the whole, I continued to select, transcribe and present the data in conceptual trajectory stories all the while searching for a better solution.

Surfacing the philosophical. At the same time, the challenge to find a way to surface the philosophical in our use of discussion for learning as a way of doing research was paramount. That is, it was *philosophically* important to follow the lines of our arguments, the twists and turns of our thought threads, the examples and analogies we produced and worked with and the ways in which we built on each others' ideas (even if and when those trajectories might seem circular or repetitive). It would be necessary, therefore, to spin out data sequences in real time since selecting snippets, samples or extracts *from* the data would not adequately portray the complexity and comprehensiveness of the IDEAS~INQUIRY in the work we were doing.

The more I worked with the data, the more I came to appreciate the magnitude of this task given how focused my co-researchers were in philosophical terms and how difficult it would be to find shortcuts. On the other hand, the only way to compress the stories while still demonstrating the thought *progressions*, *idea building* and collaborative *elaboration of philosophical argument* in our use of philosophical discussion was to select some data sequences to spin out fully while others not; and this meant making choices regarding how and how often to spin out *which* sections while still maintaining the momentum of the narrative.

Focus on 'discussion' (for learning). The main casualty of this decision-making has been the most recent decision to concentrate on the data pertaining to the 'discussion' part of 'discussion for learning' while acknowledging but setting aside the data pertaining to the second (for learning) part for a future occasion. This was a difficult decision to make because of the volume and quality of the 'learning' data we produced in response to the original question I brought to my co-researchers.

However, in the version of the *dissertation* research question which I finally adopted, (How do children with philosophical experience use philosophical discussion as a way of doing research?) the learning is *implicit* in the concept of 'research' while the *term* 'learning' is neither present nor prominent. In light of this evolution in focus, the data in the *Stories 4: Living and Learning* series are presented not to philosophically explore the concept of 'learning' but to demonstrate and distinguish between different kinds of research discussions ('Sample Discussions', 'Everyday Life Research Discussions' and regular 'Research Discussions') while at the same time making a place for the children's 'everyday' voices on social issues which matter to them thereby serving emancipatory purposes in a way different from their participation in this research as co-researchers. And finally, while working with the data throughout the whole project, I reflected constantly on the learning dimensions of what we were doing and saying as well as what I, the adult researcher, was learning in this process. Chapters 4 and 5 are the results of those reflections.

Introducing the Co-researchers

Of the seventeen volunteer student co-researchers, twelve were girls and five were boys. Considering all our research roles to be 'under construction', I [Sigma] assumed that until and unless there were contrary indications, the children could perform virtually any research role. We brought our *teacher/student* selves to the project and created *co-researcher* identities in our very first session when, for confidentiality reasons, we decided to give ourselves the following co-researcher pseudonyms:⁹²

ALISON	CHOCOLATE	EINSTEIN	JENNIFER	LORI	TRACY
AMBER	CINNAMON	FERRARI	JOEY	MARIAH	WHOOPI
ARACHNID	DAISY	JAGUAR	KIRBY	STACI	YASMIN

Introducing the Children Co-researchers

To introduce the young children co-researchers, I outline three kinds of experience which influenced the contributions they made to this research: Learning Experience, Philosophical Experience and Research Experience.

Learning Experience. The young co-researchers were in their final year in a French Immersion elementary school. They had spent Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2 learning entirely in French; they began to learn in English in Grade 3; and by Grade 6 they spent close to an equal amount of time in each language. From their earliest years in school, they spoke regularly in front of the class and (sometimes) the whole school since the emphasis in French Immersion is on oral expression. Their learning experiences involved the preparation of talks or project presentations for their classmates and also included extemporaneous talks and improvisation. They also worked in groups or teams and wrote little plays to present for others. They had experience giving each other feedback and their oral presentations would sometimes be springboards for class discussions.

⁹² See The Confidentiality Pseudonym Story in *Stories 1: Starting Up* — Session 1.

Philosophical Experience (1988-1993). Most of the seventeen young children co-researchers had their first philosophy experience in school in a Philosophy for Children program with me when they were in Grade 1 (age 6). From the very beginning they had explicit instruction in how to engage in philosophical dialogue within the context of their developing communities of inquiry. They learned to think critically about each other's ideas in ways which were non-confrontational, exploratory and constructive of new ideas using elements contributed by their classmates. They learned to explore ambiguity, not to fear confusion and to pursue their thought trails knowing that they may or may not reach definitive 'answers'. They learned to acknowledge and to compliment each other's points-well-taken while also pointing out absurdities and logical fallacies and considering the probabilities of possibilities raised. They put to use their capacities to wonder, to make subtle thinking moves and to use their imaginations in the service of making sense of their worlds. Those co-researchers who came to philosophy later (Daisy in Grade 4 and Tracy in Grade 6) were able to join already functioning communities of inquiry and, by putting their own existing thinking abilities to work, were able to catch on and contribute quickly.

Research Experience. The only previous research experience these young student co-researchers could claim would be the simulated research projects which they were learning to do within the context of their elementary school program. When they did 'research' projects in English Language Arts and French, they learned how to consult library reference materials, and how to put together a report of their 'research'; and in their natural science classes they had experience with more formalized research procedures involving hypotheses, observation, experiment and conclusions. Some of the students also had experience with research-like experiences within the context of a school program for gifted students called "Les Explorateurs". As far as I know, none of the students had experience in what I termed 'real' research into questions which were of interest to a larger community and for which they might actually be making a contribution to knowledge.

Introducing the Adult Co-researcher

As I did for the children co-researchers above, recalling and adding to information already provided,⁹³ next I outline the learning, teaching, philosophical and research experience which influenced the contributions I [Alison/Sigma/Judy] made as the adult co-researcher.

Learning experience. The issue of effective use of discussions for learning purposes has been with me for as long as I can remember. As a silent middle child (of five) in a family which engaged in 'lively' dinner table 'discussions', I remember listening to (but not otherwise participating in) family discussions, preferring instead to allow the voices of other family members to prevail. My silence carried over into elementary, secondary and undergraduate school discussions in which I was uncomfortable enough not to participate orally in class discussions at all.

Undergraduate Studies (1962-1972). As an undergraduate evening student who was also a full-time elementary school teacher, I remained silent in class discussions and once even resigned from a course because of its discussion format. It was only in my final year when I was taking an introductory course in moral education from John Wilson, a visiting professor from Oxford, that I learned to participate comfortably in class discussions due to his encouragement and recognition of my ability to 'do' philosophy — an ability that I did not know it was possible to have. During that course I learned from both Wilson *and* my fellow students how important, even *necessary*, it was — both for myself and for others — *to* participate in discussions; and it was this experience which marked the beginning of my pedagogical preoccupation with the importance of philosophical discussion.

Graduate Studies (1973-1976). When John Wilson returned to give the moral education course again two years later, he agreed to my request for a series of private tutorials during which I further explored what it is to 'do philosophy'. Then a year later and at Wilson's suggestion I moved to Oxford where he was the director of the Farmington Trust Moral Education Research Unit to pursue my

⁹³ See 2.2 Origin of the Research Ideas in Chapter 2. Situating the Case Story.

interest in moral education. Wilson helped me to recognize my interest in children's conceptual thinking and, while studying independently, I made the observation that programs of moral education *presuppose* an ability to 'do philosophy'. That was when I began to wonder whether philosophy was something *children* could do.

Having sketched out a preliminary study plan at Oxford, I subsequently decided to do further degree work in Canada and returned to register in an M.A. program at McGill University. Later, when I had completed required course work and was contemplating a topic for my M.A. thesis, I dusted off my Oxford preliminary study plan, gave it the title "Philosophy for Children" and embarked on preliminary stages of my thesis research. Not long after that, my thesis director called my attention to a small item in a recent issue of *Time* magazine the headline of which was: "Big boom in small philosophers". It described the early work of the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC) in Montclair, New Jersey and I wrote to Matthew Lipman, Director and Ann Margaret Sharp, his Associate Director, requesting more information. They were very forthcoming and their assistance permitted me to complete a masters thesis in which I explored ideas from my own experience in relation to the work they were doing at that time.

Teaching Experience (1963 – present). Early in my teaching career and before my own introduction to philosophy, I remember being drawn to those aspects of teaching which generated interesting *thinking* on the part of the children. Memorable moments for me had little to do with delivery or transmission of specified curricular content and a lot to do with the thinking that such content generated in the students. For example, I remember designing "Top Secret" projects which were highly process-oriented with the content directly determined by the process the students engaged in to produce it. Or I remember being much more interested in the "New Math" program of that era than in accelerations of traditional math programs (such acceleration was common practice in private schools such as the one I was teaching in at the time). Rather than feel threatened by the emphasis on the reasoning behind a mathematical algorithm such as division of fractions, I was drawn to it and I remember being less impressed by the 'right answers' the children were able to produce than I was by their abilities both to understand and to articulate their understanding of why those 'answers' were deemed to be 'right'. As an elementary school teacher I encouraged my students to participate freely in class discussions despite (or perhaps due to) my inability to do so myself as an undergraduate student.

Philosophical Experience. In 1980, four years after completing my M.A. thesis on the subject of Philosophy for Children (Kyle 1976), I attended a two-week comprehensive graduate-level residential workshop in Philosophy for Children (designed for philosophers and teachers with a philosophy background) which was conducted by Matthew Lipman and Ann Margaret Sharp, the creators of the Philosophy for Children program. There I experienced its theory, its content and its “community of inquiry” methodology. Three years later, after having implemented Philosophy for Children with multiple groups for several years, I returned to IAPC and spent a month with international visiting scholars who were interested in the Philosophy for Children ‘movement’ and establishing centers in their respective countries.

Doing Philosophy with Children (1981-present). In January 1981, I began to do philosophy with children (ages ten and eleven) in my own Grade Five class (Kyle 1981) and since then I have worked with over seventy different groups (“Communities of Inquiry”) of young children (ages six to twelve). This work has given me on-going opportunities to recognize how capable children are of engaging in philosophical discussion. And in keeping with the democratic methodology of the Philosophy for Children program, the children and I have continually refined our classroom procedures in an effort to produce discussions which were philosophically meaningful for everyone (Kyle 1983b; Kyle 1993c; Kyle, Morehouse, and others 1985).

Philosophy for Children with Teachers (1985-1993). As I worked with communities of inquiring children, I became increasingly convinced that we were involved in a meaningful process and I sought ways to bring collaborative philosophical inquiry to children beyond my own sphere of activity. First I wanted to know if teachers without a background in philosophy could also learn to do philosophy with children in ways which would be mutually significant and in 1985, in response to a request for training from two of my colleagues, I started “in-house” teacher training by working on an *ad hoc* basis with two of my own colleagues (Kyle and Portelli 1985). As a result we were able to offer the program to all the students in Grades One to Six in our school. Later, encouraged by the reactions of these teachers, the children, and their parents, I designed and conducted a Philosophy for Children teacher training program at McGill University from 1987 to 1993. While teaching these courses, I visited classes in other schools for the

purposes of modeling and evaluation and had rich opportunities to witness the growing pains and to contribute to the successes of students and teachers in a variety of educational settings, each presenting a unique set of circumstances to be taken into account.

Research Experience. The two 'antecedent research' projects already described also form part of my Sigma co-researcher context and have influenced this research. The first was the *Philosophy for Children Implementation Feasibility Study, 1985* (IFS) and the second was the McGill Research Group study into *Children's Philosophical Reasoning, 1987–1993* (MRG).

Stories 1

Starting Up

In the first two sessions of our Discussion Research Group, we organized our research materials, we dealt with the issue of confidentiality for the children co-researchers and we brainstormed and could not resist having a preliminary discussion of “Co-researcher Questions” for the project. From the data for these two sessions I tell Co-researching Stories to demonstrate how, from the very beginning, my co-researchers expressed their research ‘agency’, generated questions from other questions and built on each others’ ideas. In terms of the IDEAS we discussed, the Session 2 ‘preliminary’ discussion yielded no less than sixteen possible criteria for assessing the question: “Does it matter who you talk to?” for a discussion to count as a ‘discussion’ for learning. And with regard to the INQUIRY dimension, I present these data to show how easily the co-researchers took to the researching enterprise. In addition, in my interpretation of these data I identified “patterns of engagement with the questions” we generated — patterns which show these children carried on a discussion which had five “points of entry” and which took the form of “multiple parallel discussions”.

S01: Getting Organized and Confidentiality Pseudonyms

For our very first Discussion Research Group [DRG] session we met in Room 10 after school from 2:32 p.m. (when school was dismissed) until 4:00 p.m. Expecting my young co-researchers to be hungry at the end of a busy school day, and in appreciation for their having agreed to participate, I provided apples and cookies for refreshments.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Terms presented in **boldface** refer to DRG Research Practices which are listed in an alphabetically organized catalogue available on request. Each research practice is described under the following headings: Type, Adapted Class Philosophy Practice (yes or no), Purpose(s) and Description.

On my Sigma plans⁹⁶ list for this session I had written the following: (1) Welcome refreshments — bring own snacks on research days; (2) Distribute Materials; (3) 'Discussion for Learning' — brainstorm; (4) Data Collection Activities — add to the list; (5) Equipment Needs — tape recorders, tapes etc. For the "Data Collection Activities" I planned to use my doctoral proposal chart of possible research activities to give my co-researchers an idea of the kinds of ways we might collect data and to invite them to add to the list. Whoopy was name recorder. Although we did not record this session on tape, I did detailed Sigma notes from memory.

We spent most of our time getting organized with the research materials I had bought and while we were doing that, I described the research project objectives in general terms and talked about how we could collect data. We looked at my chart of possible research activities and I invited my co-researchers to contribute more.

The Confidentiality Pseudonym Story

We had eaten our refreshments, research materials had been distributed and it was time for me to talk about the project so that we could get started. I began by describing the research project in very general terms and by addressing the question of confidentiality which, since my co-researchers were children, was a university ethics requirement for this project. It was my Sigma intention to begin by talk about the *issue* of confidentiality with my co-researchers and to ask them if *they* could suggest a way for us to handle it.

95 The number of co-researchers indicated for each session includes 'Alison'.

96 In this sequence I refer to two Sigma research practices (Sigma plans, and Sigma notes) and four co-researcher practices (refreshments, research materials, and the name recorder procedure and research pseudonym name cards). As we began to accumulate data, I [Sigma] designed data source code conventions which I used to identify the origin of each data item.

When I [Sigma] thought about this issue before our first session, it occurred to me that we might be able to adapt our class philosophy practice of invoking **fictitious character names** to mask the identities of real people when telling anecdotes and giving examples to support points we make in discussions. We did this because, for *philosophical* purposes, it was the *issue* rather than the specific person which was of interest. Before bringing this idea to my co researchers however, I consulted an experienced researcher who cautioned against this idea for practical reasons having to do with confusion when dealing with tape transcriptions. So, reluctantly, I decided *not* to suggest this to my co-researchers when we met for the first time.

When it came to the actual moment, however, thinking I was only giving my co-researchers an *example*, I told them about my **research pseudonym** idea and how I had abandoned it on the basis of advice I had been given and I explained why. Then I asked for their suggestions.

Well, they loved the idea of pseudonyms! I tried to press the point that I had it on good authority that it wasn't a great idea although admittedly it would be fun. Well, they weren't buying it. They were dying to make new names for themselves . . .

[D/S01/92.10.27Tu/Sigma Notes]

In a surprising (to me) exchange, it was Whoopy who said with confidence and in a tone which suggested to me that I should know better, "Well, Judy! We can just try it and if it doesn't work, we'll change it!"

. . . I found the suggestion (and the respectful way it was put) to be irresistible. The next half hour was spent mirthfully choosing their names and recording them in their new McGill steno pads. They were very excited about the whole thing and I began to wonder if I had lost them already, if the project had taken on some trivial game-like quality and if I would have to rescue it already!

All of this in the name of confidentiality which seemed to have been the last thing on their minds! They seem much more interested in having alter identities instead.

[D/S01/92.10.27Tu/Sigma Notes]

Then, to help us learn each others' research identities, we decided to make **research pseudonym name cards** similar to name cards we had used for our own names in class philosophy. For my pseudonym I chose "Alison" (my middle name) as we laughed together and played with our new research identities.

"Loggers" and "Secretaries". Next, as a way for everyone to assume co-researcher responsibilities, we tried to think of ways to keep a record of our proceedings and decided we needed "Loggers" (to keep a research log) and "Secretaries". People volunteered for these jobs by putting their names on sign-up sheets that we circulated and Yasmin tried doing a log for this session although with limited success.⁹⁷ Near the end I suggested that we either brainstorm our research questions or begin to write "researcher biographies" in order to try and say who we were to be doing this research. However, as time was short by this time, we did neither. Nevertheless, it did not prevent the first session from ending on a high note and my co-researchers departed with enthusiastic appreciation for the snacks, the materials and their new DRG identities.

They really seemed to enjoy the first session and were most appreciative (both collectively and individually) for both the refreshments and the materials I provided. >>> Although we didn't quite follow my plan and the spiritedness of the researchers was at times a hindrance, it was over-all a good beginning, I think.

[D/S01/92.10.27Tu/Sigma Notes]

Sigma reflections. Keeping the children's identities confidential was a requirement of the university's ethics procedures.⁹⁸ I was therefore doing my duty by invoking confidentiality procedures and the question I brought to my co-researchers was not 'Should we?' but '*How* should we?'. Not questioning the confidentiality requirement, my co-researchers responded as if this signified to them that this was 'real' research. They "loved the idea of pseudonyms" and were "dying to make new names for themselves". It was an opportunity to play with their personal identities by giving themselves names they wish they had, funny names, or new and different identities. What it did *not* seem to be about for them was confidentiality.

When I mentioned that I had sought advice regarding the idea of using pseudonyms and had been advised against it, I remember feeling ambivalent. Knowing how well the fictitious character procedure worked in class philosophy, I still rather liked the idea of pseudonyms myself and was wondering just how "hopelessly confusing" it would be. And yet I thought I'd better heed the counsel of

⁹⁷ See Sigma Tensions under 3.4 'Sigma' in Chapter 3. Methodology Matters.

⁹⁸ See Appendix A. Certificate of Ethical Acceptability for Research Involving Human Subjects, Faculty of Education, McGill University.

someone who was in a position to know. However, since there was a built-in escape clause that if we found they did not work, we could just stop using them, deferring to *Whoopy's* better judgement, I agreed that we could try them. Because of my [Sigma] commitment to keep their identities confidential, and because of the enthusiastic response to using pseudonyms, we donned our research identities and carried on and I resolved to think more about it later.

An Alternate Interpretation of the Pseudonym Story

After our first session in which we chose our research pseudonyms, still wondering about what had happened, I consulted a colleague who reminded me that there was another way to think about what had occurred.⁹⁹ In my Sigma notes, I made the following observation:

By succumbing to the students' reasoning, I was in fact offering them an opportunity to "own" their own research process. It certainly was the case that they could make suggestions which were contrary to the 'better judgement' of the 'principal researcher' and have those suggestions prevail.

[D/92.10.27Tu/Sigma Notes]

Hoping that my colleague was right, I concluded that entry with, "The challenge is ours now to make it work and the stakes are high!"

Research decision-making. This was my [Sigma] research project: its objectives were mine and so was the responsibility for ensuring the children's confidentiality. Before we began I had made a Sigma decision to work with my students as co-researchers who would participate as fully as possible in making research decisions, and this pseudonym story put that decision-making policy to an immediate test. When I told my co-researchers the story of having accepted the advice not to use pseudonyms, I *thought* I was telling it as a "too-bad" kind of story; and I *thought* I had already *made* the decision and was only telling them the story as an invitation to work out some *other* way to ensure confidentiality. When they scooped up the idea of pseudonyms, their enthusiasm prevailed over my protests. It was as if they had hijacked the decision. There was no power struggle — they were just eager to have different identities.

⁹⁹ I am grateful to McGill Research Group (MRG) colleague Michael Chervin for this interpretation.

Co-researcher 'empowerment'. This interpretation of The Pseudonym Story shows how early I [Sigma] encountered the issue of co-researcher 'empowerment'. Evidently my co-researchers empowered *themselves* by respectfully and enthusiastically suggesting a way to proceed which would enable them to have research pseudonyms while at the same time providing for my concerns. And it shows how I [Sigma] was disposed to defer to their judgement without insisting on exercising my authority or invoking the advice of a more experienced researcher. It was not a matter of my 'empowering' *them* for that would have been to patronize them. It was rather an indication of the relationship we brought with us from class philosophy — a relationship of mutual respect and one in which we were used to deferring to each others' judgement.

Confidentiality. Beyond the issue of research decision-making, as a result of The Pseudonym Story I [Sigma] began to wonder about general confidentiality requirements for children in research and I began to question the assumption that because children are *children*, their identities in research must be *protected*. Since our research was not about which child thinks what but rather about *how* (well) children *can* think, and since these children were acting as researchers and not as researched, then what *about* the confidentiality requirement in this case? Could it be that requiring confidentiality for children in some instances of research is a way not of protecting them but of marginalizing them? If we say there is a need for confidentiality because they cannot answer (wisely) for themselves, then perhaps we need to re-examine our presumptions about children in research and allow for the possibility of turning what is now a requirement into an issue to be decided on a case by case basis.

Resolution. Eventually we resolved the co-researcher identification issue when, for their own account of our research for their Grade Six yearbook, *Stepping Out*, we decided to include everyone's real name but without linking it to his or her pseudonym.

S02: Co-researcher Questions and Preliminary Discussion

To show how we brainstormed further questions from our research topic, "Discussion for Learning", and to make visible the content-process [IDEAS~INQUIRY] interplay in our very first research discussion, I present several interpretations of the data from Session 2. After presenting a brief description of my Sigma plans for this our second DRG session, first I tell how, using the topic "Discussion for Learning" we brainstormed our Co-researcher Questions for this project; and second, to show how the young co-researchers began their work on what counts as 'discussion for learning' in this session, I interpret the data from our 'Preliminary Discussion' of the brainstormed questions in five different ways: by how we were (1) Engaging with the Questions, (2) Starting a Discussion and Idea Building, (3) Building On and With Each Other's Ideas, (4) Generating Questions from Questions, and (5) Analyzing Concepts.

Session 2 • Thursday, October 29, 1992 • 13 Co-researchers¹⁰⁰

We met again two days after our first session and again we were thirteen co-researchers. My Sigma Plans for this session consisted of the following: (1) Serious brainstorming on O/H — of co-researcher questions; (2) Researcher profiles; and (3) Computer assignments. Since we did not get as far as **brainstorming** our co-researcher questions in Session 1, I thought we might start with that using the overhead projector (O/H). With regard to "Researcher Profiles" I thought we might generate some questions which we could use as the basis for our answers to the question, "Who are *we* to do this research?" My plan was to invite my co-researchers to describe their experience with discussion in general (at home, with friends, in other classes in school) and in particular (in Philosophy for Children classes with me). And with regard to "computer assignments" we needed a way to decide who would use which computer when to work on their researcher profiles.

¹⁰⁰ Unless otherwise indicated, the data in this section are from the verbatim transcript of Session 2, Thursday, October 29, 1992.

Brainstorming Co-researcher Questions

As we generated our "DRG Research Questions" (hereafter "Co-researcher Questions" [C-RQs]) for our study, I [Sigma/Alison] recorded them on an overhead projector transparency the way we normally did in class philosophy. I wrote "Discussion for Learning" as the title and, below the title in square brackets, without comment, I wrote my alternate expression: "[Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry]". As I wrote on the transparency, my co-researchers recorded the questions in their steno pads for future reference. Then we had a preliminary discussion of the questions which interested us and some made co-researcher notes by jotting down ideas in their steno pads as the discussion progressed. Daisy was the name recorder and we made an audio tape recording of only the discussion part of this session. The following are the Co-researcher Questions we generated in this session.

Discussion for Learning [Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry]

C-RQ01	Daisy	What would you discuss?
C-RQ02	Daisy	How would you discuss? -talking, writing??
C-RQ03	Yasmin	Different kinds of discussions? -times of day -places -people
C-RQ04	Ferrari	The language of philosophy?
C-RQ05	Ferrari	Special philosophy language?
C-RQ06	Allison	Does it matter who you talk to?
C-RQ07	Allison	Dialogues and D4L?
C-RQ08	Arachnid	Does your brain produce ideas without you knowing?
C-RQ09	Daisy	Too confusing to have special philosophy language?
C-RQ10	Arachnid	How would we learn with no imagination?
C-RQ11	Arachnid	Who invented philosophy?
C-RQ12	Alison	Could you do philosophy without questions?
(C-RQ13)	Arachnid	Can you learn if you're dead?
(C-RQ14)	Kirby	Can you have a discussion without the other person talking back? [D/S02/92.10.29Th/DRG/Sigma/C-RQs]

Questions (C-RQ13) and (C-RQ14) are recorded on the transparency but were added in a later session. And, the fact that the same person asked two consecutive questions is a sign of our use of the class philosophy procedure we called the “Rule of Two”.

Preliminary Discussion of the Co-researcher Questions

From class philosophy experience with these students, I [Judy] knew that they would not be satisfied with simply brainstorming a list of questions. As expected, they wanted to discuss them at least to some extent and so I suggested we have a “preliminary discussion”. I [Sigma] had in mind, however, that we would keep these questions with us and perhaps focus on one at a time over the course of the project. It did not quite work out that way.

1. Engaging with the questions

To show how our discussion process enabled us to discuss many different questions to some depth in one discussion, I identify patterns of engagement with the different questions in the data from the Session 2 preliminary discussion of our Co-researcher Questions [C-RQs].

In this discussion we recorded our ideas on an overhead transparency, in co-researcher steno pads and on audio tape. Later I [Sigma] produced a verbatim transcript of the discussion from the audio tape. Then, using the outliner feature of my word processor, I chunked the verbatim transcript data into twenty-three dialogue segments based on their content. With the chunked transcript, I traced the order and frequency with which we took up our questions and I created a line graph to make a visual representation of our discussion activity (see Figure 1 below). Using these methods I was able to identify and interpret ‘patterns of engagement’ with our co-researcher questions in this preliminary discussion. In what follows, first I describe patterns of engagement with the questions; and second, I identify and reflect on a pattern I refer to as “Multiple Parallel Discussions”.

While chunking the transcript, I recorded the following observation:

Because these questions are the result of brainstorming, they may or may not be related to each other. Those that clearly are (e.g. 4,5 and 9) show how they/we listen to each other. Those that are not (e.g. 8, 10) suggest prior thought about some of these questions?

[VT/S02/82.10.29Th/Sigma Transcription Notes/(-jk95.07.19)]

Patterns of Engagement with the Questions

Dialogue Segments. One of the first patterns I noticed when chunking this transcript was that it consisted almost entirely of dialogue segments punctuated by the name recorder inviting the next person to speak or the occasional time out. This pattern was consistent with our class philosophy practice and it is also attributable to the use of the **name recorder procedure** which affords each participant both an uninterrupted opportunity to speak and the prerogative to engage another participant in dialogue (Kyle 1993c).

Description. Ten out of thirteen co-researcher questions were addressed at least once. Of the twenty-three segments, I counted four as Time Outs [C-RQ "0"]: one of these was the session Introduction by Ferrari; one was a Time Out by Alison (segment 3) to remind co-researchers to specify which question they were addressing for recording purposes; another was a Time Out by Arachnid (segment 8) when he wondered about our uncharacteristic laughter which we attributed to the fact that we were recording the discussion; and the fourth was to say that time was up at the end. Otherwise the discussion proceeded uninterrupted.

Question Order. We did not begin with any particular question or discuss each in turn. Rather, the order of the discussion followed the co-researchers' interests such that we addressed the questions in the following order (where "0" represents the Introduction, Time Outs or the Conclusion):

SEGMENT:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
QUESTION:	0	4/5	0	2	6	8	13	0	6	6	11	7	6	10	11	12	6	12	6	12	6	12	0

Figure 1. Order of engagement with co-researcher questions [C-RQs]

In the first eight segments we addressed five different questions before returning to C-RQ06 (Does it matter who you talk to?) in segments nine and ten. In the next four segments, we took up three new questions, including C-RQ12 (Can you do philosophy without questions?) for the first time in segment 16. Then, without being aware of it, we settled on alternating between those two questions, C-RQ06 and C-RQ12 from segments 17 to 22. The graph in Figure 2 makes this pattern visible.

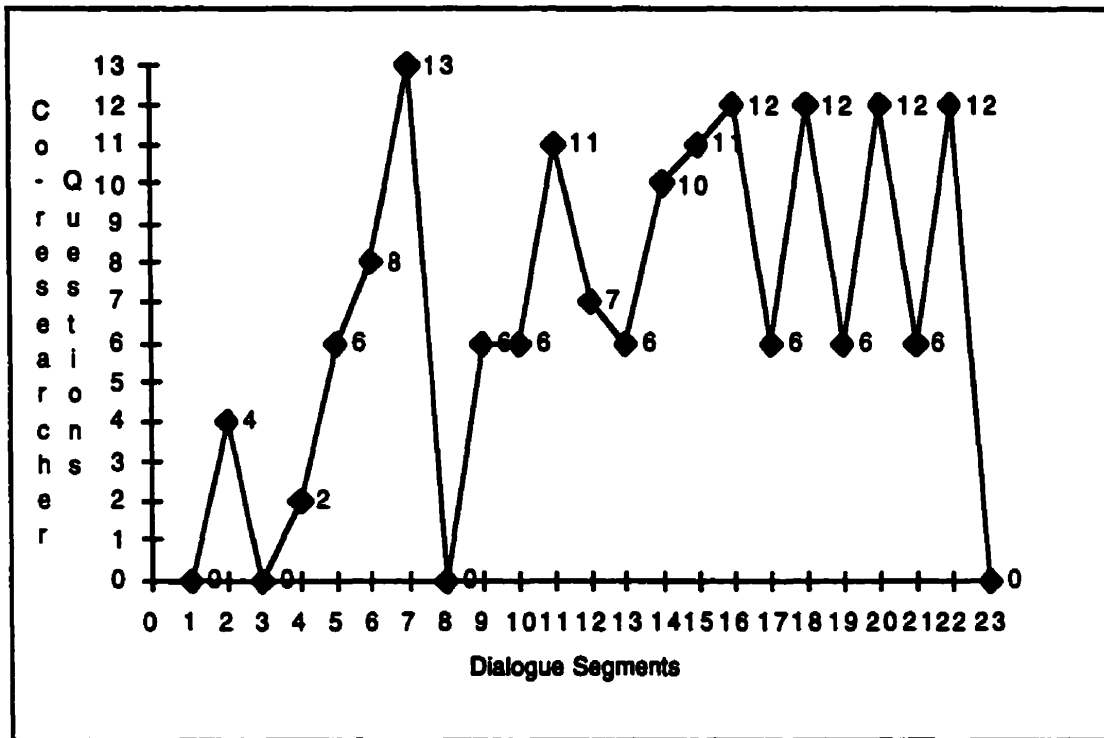


Figure 2. Order and frequency of co-researcher questions addressed (S02)

Frequency. In descending order, we addressed C-RQ06 (Does it matter who you talk to?) 7 times, C-RQ12 (Could you do philosophy without questions?) 4 times; C-RQ11 (Who invented philosophy?) twice; C-RQ02 (How would you discuss?), C-RQ04/05 (Special philosophy language?), C-RQ07 (Dialogues and Discussion for Learning [D4L]?) and C-RQ08 (Does your brain produce ideas without you knowing?) once each; and C-RQ01 (What would you discuss?), C-RQ03 (Different kinds of discussions?) and C-RQ09 (Too confusing to have special philosophy language?) not at all.

In class philosophy discussion there is a constant tension regarding when to stay with one question and explore it in depth and when to let the discussion follow the interests of individual contributors. When we choose to do the latter, I [Judy] often wonder about the wisdom of that approach and wonder what we accomplish if we talk about all the questions in what seems to be a random order. In this instance, I had expected we would just toy with the questions as a way of satisfying the interest that accompanies brainstorming. Since I was anticipating that we would come back and deal with them 'properly' over the course of the project, my expectations were not high. Therefore, when I was working with the data, it was a revelation to me (a) that we had dealt with all the questions except three in some fashion, (b) that we had dealt with two questions in considerable depth, and (c) that for other questions, although we may have said little, what we did say was important.

Multiple Parallel Discussions

This whole transcript is a good example of how it is possible to have several discussions simultaneously. Although all the questions have to do with Discussion for Learning, the co-researchers jump around from question to question at will and without loss to any . . . This parallels the way we had come to work in philosophy class.

[VT/S02/92.10.29Th/Sigma Notes/(-jk95.07.22)]

When I [Judy] reflect on class philosophy discussions, I often marvel at our ability to address many questions in seemingly random order without worrying that we are 'changing the subject'. This challenges the common assumption that it is better to do 'one thing at a time'; and it also challenges the part of Philosophy for Children methodology which advocates generating ideas and then grouping and prioritizing them until the community has chosen one or two to work with in depth. In practice there is often a counter-current as participants pursue their own interests in the questions and their own responses to what others have said.

Juggling is a metaphor which I [Judy] use when I think about the class philosophy phenomenon of keeping many ideas aloft at once as in my interpretation of the patterns of engagement with the questions in this transcript. I would not now describe these several discussions as 'simultaneous' because one person spoke at a time in a rather linear fashion. However, at any given moment, jugglers have many objects in the air at once, some going up, some down, some caught and others

dropped. If we liken what people say and think in a discussion to a juggler's clubs or balls, then as in juggling, while one is speaking the others are thinking, while one subject is taken up (aloud) others are 'caught' in thought and some are dropped and not picked up. It is in this sense that it is possible to have several discussions simultaneously with what people *actually say* in a discussion as the evidence of many (though not all) of the ideas that have been airborne.

Is it really possible to think about and listen productively to different ideas at the same time or at least in the same discussion? So far my Sigma interpretation does little more than identify patterns which raise this possibility. If it does make sense to speak of having several discussions going on within one discussion, then this could have implications for the concept of discussion as a research practice for it involves looking for the many in the one in a way that adds depth and complexity to our perception of the function of research discussions. However, it would not be *enough* for there to be 'multiple parallel discussions' because such discussions would only be as useful as the data they generate. One criterion for judging the productivity of such multiple parallel discussions for research and learning purposes could be how well participants are able to generate additional useful questions and another criterion could be the 'content' of such multiple parallel discussions in terms of the ideas and distinctions they yield.¹⁰¹

2. Starting a discussion and idea building

To illustrate my use of the IDEAS-INQUIRY framework to represent the interplay between content and process in this research, I present this data sequence from our first discussion in Session 2 in which the IDEAS (content) we were exploring were any that interested us from the full range of our brainstormed co-research questions. To look at our INQUIRY (process) — *i.e., how we were discussing* — I examined the beginning of the discussion and identified what I refer to as a "multiple points of entry" pattern of engagement with our co-researcher questions — another pattern I recognized to be characteristic of how class philosophy discussions also often get started.

¹⁰¹ For examples of how the DRG co-researchers met these criteria see '4. Generating questions from questions' and '5. Analyzing concepts' later in this section.

Using the Session 2 chunked transcript and its visual representation, this time I examined our patterns of engagement with the questions *in relation to each other*. In particular I examined the *scattered* pattern of engagement at the beginning of the discussion in relation to the *regular* pattern which occurred in the second half and I categorized the early interventions as individual 'points of entry' to the discussion. Not counting the three time outs, there were five such interventions before someone addressed one of the questions for a second time. After these five points of entry, the discussion became recursive — folding back on itself while still moving on — as people began to comment on points made in these first five and subsequent interventions.

Setting the scene. The preliminary discussion of the Co-researcher Questions [C-RQs] began with three different co-researchers (Mariah, Yasmin and Chocolate) speaking to and having dialogues about five *different* questions. Implicitly invoking the "Rule of Two", Yasmin and Chocolate addressed two different questions; and although the interveners referred to or had dialogues with others, no one referred to comments made regarding any of the immediately preceding questions.

Five Discussion 'Points of Entry'

(1) *Mariah — Special language for philosophy?* The discussion began with Mariah addressing Ferrari's question about the special language for philosophy (C-RQ04 & C-RQ05). She agreed that it might be "kind of hard" but after awhile, like learning one's first language when little, "you'll get used to it".

(2) *Yasmin — How would you discuss: talking or writing?* Next Yasmin addressed Daisy's question (C-RQ02) about how you would discuss and she argued that "you couldn't discuss something if you were writing it". Daisy countered this citing an example I [Alison] had once given but Yasmin still was not convinced.

(3) *Yasmin — Does it matter who you talk to?* Then Yasmin turned to Alison and picked up on question C-RQ06 saying she thought it did matter who you talk to because neither a baby nor an elderly person would understand. She qualified this by saying, "It depends". I [Alison] asked her how young a baby she was thinking of and she answered: "probably under two years". I asked if she

thought that as soon as a baby could talk it would be possible to have a discussion for learning kind of discussion with it. Yasmin again said yes — at first — and then she immediately qualified that with, “it would sort of depend on the subject”. You’d have to choose something they like, she went on, something they know a lot — and then she qualified that too saying they’d just have to know, maybe not a lot. Then I [Alison] summarized, “So in order for somebody to talk in a discussion for learning, they’d have to know something about what they’re talking about?” Yasmin agreed.

(4) Chocolate — Does your brain produce ideas without you knowing?

Next Chocolate addressed Arachnid’s question (C-RQ08) about whether your brain produces ideas without you knowing saying, “When a question pops into your head, you don’t feel it”. We laughed at this and, joining in the laughter, Arachnid responded that you can sort of feel it “if you’re thinking” or if “all of a sudden it just pops into your head” or “you’re maybe trying to think one or you’re on the path to finding one”. Chocolate did not pursue this.

(5) Chocolate — Can you learn if you’re dead? Instead Chocolate wanted to address another of Arachnid’s questions (C-RQ13), the one about whether you can learn if you’re dead and she said quite emphatically that “you can’t learn anything” because “you’re dead”. Arachnid countered with “you’ve never been dead” implicitly questioning her authority to say that, whereupon Chocolate repeated, “You’re just dead!” Then she started to say it again — but said instead, “It’s tricky”.

[VT/S02/92.10.29Th/DRG/Reconstructed from Verbatim Transcript]

Multiple Points of Entry

This “multiple points of entry” pattern is one I [Judy] have often noticed in class philosophy and it often worried me as I thought we were not paying attention to each other’s ideas enough and that our ‘discussion’ was actually *not* a ‘discussion’ but rather a linear parade of different ideas or an opinion exchange. However, I have also noticed that, depending on what happens next in the discussion, it can be an important (and perhaps even essential) prelude to that which follows in the discussion since it serves the purpose of enabling participants to contribute to the agenda of the discussion by choosing which questions and ideas to put on the table. If early interveners raise points of interest to other participants (as

happened in this case), subsequent contributors pick up and work with those threads and the *discussing* begins. Now I only worry if the session *remains* at the 'points of entry' parade phase without becoming recursive — and that does *not* often happen. I have learned to *expect* and welcome this 'start-up' phenomenon and to have confidence that the course of the discussion will be productively complex.

Recognition of this pattern of beginning a discussion with multiple points of entry as an agenda-setting activity is relevant to the conducting of class discussions in any subject and also to discussion as a research method. As a pattern which portrays how participants bring a variety of issues to the discussion in succession without acknowledging any of the earlier points raised, it runs counter to the more common idea that it is better to discuss one thing at a time and *not* to change the subject. However, it is also a pattern that *makes possible* the phenomenon of multiple parallel discussions which I identified above and it permits individual participants/*researchers* to pursue related but different lines of inquiry, the results of which they can contribute later on in the discussion. In addition, the Rule of Two contributes richness and texture to the inquiry in that it also enables participants/*researchers* to explore more than one avenue at a time while at the same time considering them in relation to different aspects of the project or to the project as a whole.

3. Building on and with each other's ideas

For this next sequence, as a further portrayal of how we put to use our class philosophy practices for research purposes, and to illustrate the dynamics (~) of the IDEAS-INQUIRY relationship in a discussion, I show how we engaged in the Philosophy for Children community of inquiry practice of 'building on and with one another's ideas' (Lipman 1991b, pp. 15-16).

Setting the scene. Although the first three co-researchers addressed five *different* questions in succession and did *not* comment on what each other had said, in every case they *did* begin each intervention by making reference to the co-researcher who had originally brought up the question they wanted to address. Following the class philosophy procedure of 'right of reply' whereby someone

whose point is mentioned can bypass the name recorder procedure and have an immediate right to reply, they engaged in dialogue with the person who had originally proposed the idea.

Ten Inquiry 'Moves'

Part of the Philosophy for Children methodology involves paying attention to 'mental acts' (Lipman, Sharp, and others 1979, p. 196) and how we *do* things with words (Austin 1965/1970). Inquiry 'moves' are actual words and phrases which serve inquiry purposes such as, in this case, building on and with each other's ideas. To identify such moves, I examined *what* co-researchers were saying [IDEAS] and, bringing my linguistic philosophy knowledge to bear, I interpreted our DRG transcript data by asking what the speaker was *doing* with the words s/he was using [INQUIRY]. For this sequence I have selected phrases from the data which I refer to as Inquiry 'Moves' and I group them under ten headings to indicate subtle differences in the ways my co-researchers were engaged in the exploratory INQUIRY *process* of building on and with one another's IDEAS.

(1) *Reference to other co-researchers' questions.* At the beginning of the discussion, the transcript shows that the initiators of each new dialogue began with reference to another co-researcher's idea.

Mariah said, "I wanna go to Ferrari's question. . ." ; Yasmin said, "I would like to comment on Daisy's question. . ." to which Daisy responded, "Well, just as [Alison] was talking, she told us that. . ."; Yasmin said, "I'd like to bring up the one Alison said. . ."; and Chocolate said, "I'd like to comment on the com-, the question Arachnid said. . ."

Referring to each other's questions using each other's names served the purpose of engaging each other in dialogue. In each case, the co-researcher whose question was referred to took advantage of the "right of reply," (a practice which was a procedural importation from our class philosophy sessions) and a dialogue ensued as opposed to a statement of opinion with reference *to* the other person's idea but without engaging further with the person who had proposed the idea.

(2) *Reference to the idea (not the person)*. It also happened that one co-researcher worked on another's idea by naming the idea itself (not the person whose idea it was) as when Daisy referred to Arachnid's idea without naming him:

Daisy said, "How would you learn with no imagination? Well, it is possible to learn. . ."

Or as when Daisy (again) asked for clarification of Alison's idea first by citing the idea and then by addressing Alison directly:

"Dialogues and Discussion for Learning" . . . What do you mean by that. . . Alison?"

(3) *Reference to comments (beyond the questions)*. Later in this discussion, we referred not only to each others' *questions* but also to each others' *comments*.

Arachnid said, ". . . and I have another one? It's a comment on [Yasmin] . . ." ; Whoopy said, "Well, I'd like to comment on [Yasmin] . . . ; and Kirby said, "I want to comment on what Whoopy said about. . . "

(4) *Ideas as community property?* On a meta-level, there was an awareness of the collaborative aspects of the work we were doing.

Later in the discussion, Jennifer had her first turn to speak and began by saying, "Well, everyone else took my ideas, but . . . ". This was greeted with friendly laughter and another co-researcher asking, "Did they grab them out of your head?" whereupon Jennifer resumed by saying, "Well, they're not exactly mine, I kind of {?}" and she carried on to make a distinction between questions which are and are not 'philosophical' .

Not only was Jennifer thinking about her ideas without reference to their content, but she was thinking about them in possessive terms and as things of value which "everyone else took". Then she had second thoughts about *whose* they were ("Well, they're not exactly mine . . . ") countering her own previous use of the word "my" to refer to the ideas she was thinking about.

(5) *Reference to collaborative "we"*. As further indication that my co-researchers saw this as a group enterprise, there were instances of spontaneous uses of a collaborative "we" such as when unidentifiable voices interjected in a dialogue which seemed to be faltering saying, "Why don't we just ask you?"

(6) *Ideas without reference to question or questioner*. Sometimes ideas stood on their own and we referred to them with a kind of shorthand as when Jennifer added to an idea without referring to the question or the questioner: "And I also think that you don't need imagination to learn".

(7) *Questions without knowing who the questioner is*. Later in the discussion, Ferrari provided an instance of wanting to build on someone else's idea when he made reference to a question and asked whose question it was:

I want to discuss. . .about. . .'Who invented philosophy?'
Okay. Who, who brought that up again?

This was an indication that he wanted not to simply state what he thought but to have a dialogue with the other person. He did it again with his next idea:

And I also want to talk about, >>> : 'Could you do philosophy without questions?' Who brought that up?.

(8) *Recursive reference to each other's points*. Once a discussion had been in progress long enough, recursive reference to each other's points in order to probe more deeply began to happen as when: Jaguar said, "Oh yeah, going back to the point with. . .Ferrari? Why would somebody be. . .?". Or as when Mariah said, "I want to bring back the point, I think it was [Yasmin]. . ." and, thinking on her feet, she made a self-corrective discussion move by producing a counter-argument, by raising an epistemological issue, and by making two further distinctions. Or as when Mariah (again) said, "I want to bring back >>>, 'You don't need a question to have philosophy' and built onto it by relating 'questions' to 'subjects' to 'dialogue' and saying "that is still philosophy".

(9) *Information requests directed to other co-researchers.* It also did happen that one co-researcher addressed another as a source of information indicating that we saw each other as potential sources of knowledge — as when Ferrari, knowing that this was Tracy's first year of doing class philosophy engaged her in an impromptu interview saying, "Okay, when you came into school, Tracy, and our first philosophy class. What were you wondering of philosophy?".

(10) *Cumulative reference to others' ideas.* Nearing the end of this discussion, Chocolate provided an example of a co-researcher making reference to the ideas of a *cluster* of other co-researchers in a synthesizing, cumulative manner when she said, "I wanna comment on what Mariah, Whoopy and Kirby said >>> when they all said — you know — the discussion with — like babies and plants and everything". She recapitulated what they said and added supportive and nuanced points to the case they were making.

4. *Generating questions from questions*

Amber . . . if someone else brings up another — like — question — then we can change it — like we can — like it might come — another question might come out of that . . .

To demonstrate how our generative questioning "stimulated our line of investigation to profitable directions" (Strauss 1987, p. 22) and yielded more questions and 'discussion for learning' criteria, I present this data sequence from our work with the co-researcher question that received the most attention in the preliminary discussion: "[C-RQ06] Does it matter who you talk to?" This sequence is representative of how, through such questioning, we continued our INQUIRY — all the while building on and with each other's interventions. This marks the beginning of our exploration of the IDEAS aspects of discussion for learning.

Generative Questioning 'Moves'

These data are from dialogues 5 and 9A, the first two (of seven) dialogues pertaining to "[C-RQ06] Does it matter who you talk to?"

In this fifth dialogue segment, working with someone else's idea right from the beginning, Yasmin was first to address my [Alison's] question, [C-RQ06] ("Does it matter who you talk to?"). In her initial response, she generated further questions, opened up a direction of inquiry and produced a possible criterion for determining whether it mattered who you talk to.

Yasmin And >>> I'd like to bring up the one Alison said — or Judy: Does it matter who you talk to? I think it does because — I mean — if you were to talk to a baby — they wouldn't understand. Or even if you were to talk to an elderly person — you know they couldn't under-, they wouldn't understand either. It depends.

Yasmin began with what might seem to be her 'answer' to the question ("I think it does"). However, it was not to express her own already-established 'opinion' because she immediately began to reason ("because I mean") and she produced an example ("if you were to talk to a baby") out of which she pulled a candidate criterion for mattering ("they wouldn't understand"). Next she produced a second example from the opposite end of the life-continuum ("if you were to talk to an elderly person") and tested it against the same criterion ("they wouldn't understand either"). Then, as if to suggest that there might be more to say about this, she concluded tentatively with, "It depends," without saying on what it might depend.

Although she *asked* no questions in this intervention, Yasmin *generated* several by introducing (a) babies and the elderly people as two examples for us to think about and (b) capacity to understand as a criterion for deciding whether it mattered who you talk to for discussion for learning. She thereby opened up several lines of inquiry, one of which I [Alison] pursued in a follow-up dialogue with her.

Rather than agree or disagree and rather than simply state *my* own opinion, in a generative move, I questioned Yasmin on what *she* just said.

Alison So how — how young a baby, do you think?

Yasmin Well — probably under two years.

Alison Okay — so — so as soon as the baby could talk — could you have a discussion for learning kind of discussion with it?

In this segment, after hearing her response, I built on Yasmin's point by equating her answer (age two) with the typical age that children begin to talk. I thereby indirectly introduced my view that the ability to think philosophically comes with language. The difference is that I did not express this *as* my own view but rather I offered it as an idea to be considered. In so doing, I built on Yasmin's baby instance by introducing a criterion of *minimum age* to which Yasmin replied, "probably under two years". Associating this age with a baby's *ability to talk*, I suggested this as a third criterion.

Yasmin Yeah — but it would sort of depend on the subject. Like you could talk about something like >>> yeah — something that they like and they know a lot — well, they wouldn't know a lot about it — they'd just know . . .

Here Yasmin tentatively agreed and then continued to build on this idea by adding the qualifier that "it would sort of depend on the subject" — a fourth criterion. She tried to think of an example but had trouble thinking of something specific and instead produced another qualifier ("something that they . . . know a lot"). Then she immediately self-corrected when she qualified her own qualifier: "well, they wouldn't know a *lot* about it, they'd just know . . ." thereby providing a fifth criterion, *the ability to know*.

Alison Okay — so in order for somebody to talk in a discussion for learning — they'd have to know something about what they're talking about.

Yasmin Yeah — they have to know something.

Alison Okay. Okay.

I [Alison] restated the point we had co-constructed, Yasmin confirmed my interpretation and we left it there for the moment.

In just this one exchange, by building on and with each other's ideas, Yasmin and I [Alison] generated five *possible* criteria for determining whether it matters who you talk to in a discussion for learning. That is, in order to participate in a discussion for learning one had to: (1) have the *ability to understand* (whether or not one could talk or indicate understanding in other ways); (2) be of a *minimum age*; (3) have the *ability to talk*; (4) have a *subject* (something to talk about); and (5) have the *ability to know* (something to talk about). It is unlikely that either of us went into this exchange with an awareness of the five criteria; and it is also unlikely that we came out of it with that awareness either for, as Sigma, I have only now identified them through this data interpretation. However, the way we were building on each other's ideas and applying the criteria as the dialogue progressed points to our awareness of these criteria in the making. Although not explicitly stated, they figured implicitly in our thinking.

The next installments of this trajectory occurred in Dialogue 9 when Arachnid took up Yasmin's point about what babies can know and together they explored these possibilities further.

Arachnid . . . and I have another one? It's a comment on [Yasmin]: You can't talk to a baby about like >>> something like a big issue? But >>> some young kids are pretty smart. Like I've seen kids that know all the presidents of the United States who . . .

Yasmin Oh yeah. Like — well like I said — >>> — I said it depends on what you're talking about. I mean you could talk to — like somebody who's thirty about — like I don't know — something like the referendum and you can have a really interesting conversation — and that's a pretty complicated subject — and you could talk to a baby — I don't know — about — the colours of the rainbow or something like that. (*laughter*)

Voice Or their A, B, C's.

In this segment, Arachnid began by reiterating Yasmin's idea that "You can't talk to a baby about . . . something like a big issue" and then he countered this idea with "some kids are pretty smart". Citing his own experience, he considered the possibility that we might be able to talk to kids younger than we expect when he said, "I've seen kids that know all the presidents of the United States . . .". Yasmin did not disagree. Rather she used *Arachnid's* point to refine *her own* point that "it depends on what you're talking about" and then, producing two examples on the fly, she suggested that those subjects could be different depending on

whether it was an adult (referendum) or baby (colours of the rainbow). Now, rather than hold on to her previous point that you can't talk to a baby, she allowed for the possibility of age-appropriate subjects which *would* make 'discussion' possible even with a baby.

Arachnid But >>> if they *knew* that this kid knew all the presidents of the United States — {???} to be kind of smart. / don't know all the presidents of the United States.

Yasmin Well — it depends on the — on the child — I mean if it could be this real . . .

Arachnid Like >>> you said >>> it depends on the subject? It should also >>> depend on. . . how *smart* they are and who they are.

Yasmin Yeah — cuz you could have a really interesting conversation with a baby who's like — a child prodigy — so . . .

Arachnid And also the age — I mean — you can't get too young— so . . . first born.

This time Arachnid built even further and refined *his* own point to include distinctions *among* kids thereby offering support for Yasmin's point while at the same time adding on to his own. He did this by adding two more criteria: (6) *you would have to know what the baby knows* ("if they *knew* that this kid knew all the presidents of the United States . . .") in order to know you could have a discussion with it; and (7) and (8) it would depend on "*how smart* they are and *who* they are." Arachnid and Yasmin concluded this dialogue by reinforcing each other's points. Arachnid said, "like you said, it depends on the subject?" and added, "It should also . . . depend on . . . how *smart* they are and who they are"; and Yasmin agreed saying, "Yeah, cuz you could have a really interesting conversation with a baby who's like, a child prodigy, so . . ." When this dialogue ended, Arachnid trailed off wondering how far you can take this. He reconsidered the criterion of age saying, "And also the age, I mean you can't get too young, so . . . first born . . ."

As I [Sigma] noted while chunking the transcript, this is an example of the process of knowledge *construction* in progress given that at the outset Yasmin thought you *could not* talk to a baby.

Now, as a result of dialogue, she sees something she didn't see before (although she seemed to suspect something was fishy with her own thinking at the time).

[Sigma Transcription Note: 95.07.20Th]

5. Analyzing concepts

In the remaining Session 2 dialogues we continued to explore whether it matters who you talk to in order to have a discussion. This time I begin to identify conceptual analysis moves we were making— moves which turned out to be an implicit part of our co-researching process throughout the project.

Conceptual Analysis 'Moves'

About a third of the way through this preliminary discussion of our brainstormed co-research questions, we revisited the question "Does it matter who you talk to?" [C-RQ06] in seven non-consecutive dialogues between which we dealt with other questions of interest. Near the end we alternated between this question and "Could you do philosophy without questions?"[C-RQ12].¹⁰²

In the second part of the ninth dialogue, Whoopy opened up a different line of inquiry when she raised a question which was a logical extension of Yasmin's example of babies.

- Whoopy** Well, I'd like to comment on [Yasmin]. Well — people . . . Yasmin — *[laughter]*. Well — people sometimes talk to their plants — so I mean *[laughter]* . . . It's really true that — that they — some people say that . . .
- Voice** . . . you expect them to talk back?
- Whoopy** . . . if you talk to your plants they grow better or something like that? So I don't . . . They must have to respond in some — some way . . . and >>> some people can just talk to people >>> — the person doesn't even have to say anything — so they could be talking to a baby — and they don't have to say anything — and they just think of an answer for themselves (sic) and they just walk away — so . . .

Here Whoopy reached for an example of something (plants) to which people talk but which *cannot* talk back (a contrary/borderline case). Her suggestion was greeted with skeptical laughter when someone interrupted asking, " . . . you expect them to talk back?" hinting at another possible criterion of 'discussion,' namely that of *expectation of response* (Criterion 9). Undaunted, Whoopy cited the claim that plants "grow better or something like that" in support of some

¹⁰² See 'Figure 2. Order and frequency of co-researcher questions addressed' earlier in this section.

response to having been talked to and then, in an analogical move, she transposed her example back to babies and made the point that they can respond without actually saying anything ("so they [people] could be talking to a baby, and they [babies] don't have to say anything, and they [babies] just think of an answer for themselves (sic) and they just walk away").

By introducing the contrary/borderline case of plants and relating it to the case already under consideration, Whoopy was able to add the point that although there "must" be *some* response, ("They must have to respond in some, some way . . ."), that response need not be uttered or even verbal in order to count as a response and therefore as participation in a 'discussion' in some sense (Criterion 10). Here Whoopy was engaged in knowledge construction when she took one example (plants), related it to another (people) in order to clarify yet another (babies).

Next Yasmin expressed concern about the central concept of 'discussion' and in her explanation she produced another possible criterion.

- Yasmin** Yeah, but then it's not really considered a *discussion*, a discussion is like between two, or three or four, whatever, .
..
- Voice** ... people ...
- Voice** ... three or four "whatever". . . (ha)
- Yasmin** ... *people*.

In this syncopated segment, when she said that a discussion "is between two, or three or four, whatever, . . ." Yasmin suggested that it does not count as a discussion unless there is more than one participant. Someone noted her use of the term "whatever" and in a corrective move added "people" while someone else was amused at the ambiguity ("... three or four "whatever". . . (ha)") whereupon Yasmin confirmed that she did mean "people". Thus Yasmin was pointing to two new criteria: that there had to be *more than one participant* (Criterion 11) and they *had to be people* (Criterion 12).

After what seemed like a false start, Whoopy took this a step further in a tentative move that resembled the “necessary but not sufficient” move of conceptual analysis.

- Whoopy** Some people kind of, like. . .
- Voice** That’s what we’re trying to figure out . . .
- Whoopy** . . . put it, put it in, stuff, and they kind of get a decision with
 . . . there’s two people *there*, there’s two people there but
 they’re talking to themselves.
- Voice** . . . talking to themselves.

In her apparent false start, it is hard to work out what Whoopy was trying to say when she said “Some people kind of >>> get a decision with . . .” but someone provided encouragement with a meta-level observation (“That’s what we’re trying to figure out . . .”) and Whoopy finished by saying that you might have two (or more) people there and they might be talking, but that would still not be enough to count as ‘discussion’ since they could be talking to themselves. Implicit in this comment is another possible criterion for ‘discussion’ namely that the participants *must not be “talking to themselves”* (Criterion 13).

This dialogue segment illustrates how we built on each other’s ideas *even in disagreement* as when Yasmin added new criteria when she contested Whoopy’s points about plants. And Whoopy fine-tuned the interpretation we were building by contesting Yasmin’s new criteria — all of this in a mutual spirit of non-confrontational inquiry. We also see in this dialogue segment how those who were listening (“Voices”) were also participating with helpful interjections, observations and encouragement.

In the next segment of the “Does it matter who you talk to?” trajectory, in a dialogue with me [Alison], Jennifer continued to build on the ideas generated so far when she turned the question back on itself. Consulting her own experience, she continued with Yasmin and Whoopy’s examples of babies and plants, but turned her attention to the person who is conversing *with* them to see what (if anything) that person can get out of such apparent one-way talk.

- Jennifer** . . . Uhm. Sometimes >>> when you don't know the answer to a question >>> not like a question like "What's the capital of >>> a province" — or something — like a philosophy question —? Like if you talk to your plant or a baby — if you say it out loud — and like then you say it — you figure it out — kind of — like — now you say — "Hey! I should've known that" you know.
- Alison** So you're kind of having a discussion with yourself when you're talking to the plant.
- Jennifer** Like when you say it out loud — you kind of think it out more.
- Alison** Uh huh. Okay.
- Jennifer** When you think — like — when you're thinking of which one to say — out loud — like then when you're talking — like you don't exactly —
- Alison** So it makes more sense when you talk it out —
- Jennifer** Yeah
- Alison** Cuz that could have a lot to do with the learning part. Because if you didn't — maybe that could be something that would say — >>> the more discussion we would have — the more we would learn — because when you talk things out — you learn things more — or you figure things out more. Yeah. That's — that's a good point.

With regard to the person who is talking (to a plant or a baby), Jennifer added that the very act of talking can lead you to figure things out. Here she made a distinction between a factual question such as "'What's the capital of, like, a province,' or something, . . ." and "like a philosophy question" suggesting that in the case of the latter only if you start out not knowing the answer to a question, you can, by talking (to a plant or a baby) figure it out to the point where you might think, "Hey! I should've known that" you know.

In an attempt to understand what Jennifer was saying, I [Alison] asked her if she would characterize this as "kind of having a discussion with yourself when you're talking to the plant" but Jennifer seemed more interested in the connection between talking and thinking ("Like when you say it out loud, you kind of *think it out* more"). It is not about what the listeners (the plant or the baby) get out of such talk, it is about the talker. Struggling to clarify what she meant, she tried again ("When you think, like, when you're thinking of which one to say, out loud, like then when you're talking, like you don't exactly . . .") and I [Alison] tried to help ("So it makes more sense when you talk it out . . .") to which Jennifer agreed.

Then, in a further example of the very phenomenon Jennifer was working on, I [Alison] reflected aloud on the implications of this point in relation to the discussion for learning research question (If talking = more sense = more learning, then the more discussion the better) and I ended up increasing my own understanding of the point Jennifer was making and of its importance. This I have interpreted as a Criterion 14 of how it matters who you talk to in a discussion for learning: *the talker's ability to figure something out for him/herself*.

It is conceivable that in making this intervention, Jennifer was picking up on Whoopy's "false start" above when she said, "Some people kind of, like. . . put it, put it in, stuff, and they kind of get a decision with . . ." and that it was Jennifer who said, "That's what we're trying to figure out . . .". If so, it is further indication of how tuned in the researchers were to each others' reasoning — all the more so considering the fact that there was another dialogue alternating with this one at the time.

In the next segment of the "Does it matter who you talk to" trajectory, Kirby built on Whoopy's point (about plants' growth response to talk) by taking exception to it.

Kirby Okay. I want to comment on what Whoopy said about the plant responding in the growth. Well I think — to have a discussion with someone they have to talk back to you.

Whoopy Oh — well — I don't really find so because there's a lot of people that talk to themselves and find an answer for . . .

Here Kirby started by restating Whoopy's point as she understood it. Then, when she added that "to have a discussion with someone they have to talk back to you" she was "building" *with* Whoopy's point by suggesting that it is not enough for there to be a response ("in the growth") — thereby making another 'necessary but not sufficient' conceptual analysis move. This could be a possible Criterion 15: "*They have to talk back to you*" for it to count as 'discussion'.

However, Whoopy countered this by making use of Jennifer's earlier point about people figuring things out for themselves by talking. And when she added the observation that "there's a lot of people that talk to themselves and find an answer for . . .", she moved the issue away from plants and back to people while we all chuckled at the idea of people talking to themselves.

Next, in a recursive move, Mariah revisited an earlier point (about talking to a baby) and explored it in epistemological terms.

Mariah I mean — you can talk to a baby but maybe the baby can't respond. {???} You — you can't — even when people could talk — like when you're talking to them — I mean — no — never mind — I mean — like — when you talking to a *baby* — maybe they could — like — maybe they could kinda put it in their head what you're saying but maybe they can't respond so you don't *know* like if they can — just because they're small it doesn't mean that they're *dumb* — like — they don't know *anything* — well . . .

Mariah was thinking on her feet and her intervention contained cumulative traces of points made so far by several different co-researchers. She too made a false start by making reference to people and then she reverted to the example of talking to a baby to make her point. She did not dispute the points made but she did question them. In an “even if. . .” move, she argued that even if you could communicate with a baby and “could kinda put it in their head what you're saying”, there is still a problem with this. Assuming the baby cannot respond, then the person talking to the baby has no way of knowing whether or not they can or have “put it in their head”. At the same time, with a hint of self-correction, Mariah also took into account the point Arachnid made early in this trajectory when she said that “just because they're small, it doesn't mean that [babies are] *dumb*, like, they don't know *anything*, . . .” Implicit in Mariah's thoughts are hints of what I will call a possible Criterion 16: *ability to know if the other “could kinda put it in their head what you're saying”*.

In the final segments of the “Does it matter who you talk to?” trajectory for Session 2, Chocolate began by pulling together ideas raised by three other co-researchers as she explored the idea that babies and plants might indicate they understand in ways other than talking.

Chocolate Okay >>> I wanna comment on what Mariah >>> Whoopy and Kirby said >>> when they all said — you know — the discussion with — like babies and plants and everything. Well — it's true — like Mariah said — you *could* have a discussion with them. I mean — they might not exactly talk *back* — but you could feel >>> that they could *understand* you >>> they could — once in a while — when you say something and you want their opinion — even though you *know* they wouldn't answer back — sometimes they would do a movement or just make a sound that you know they understand you . . . So >>> like she said >>> they *could* understand you.

Chocolate recapitulated and synthesized points already made. She referred explicitly to the contributions of others ("what Mariah, Whoopy *and* Kirby said"), she related the points made to each other ("when they all said . . .") and she considered them in relation to the whole discussion (the discussion with, like babies and plants and everything"). She endorsed Mariah's idea that "you *could* have a discussion with them" and then elaborated ("I mean . . .") by accounting for the probable objection ("they might not exactly talk *back* . . .") and by countering it with how understanding might be communicated without talking ("but you could feel that they're, that they could *understand* you"). And she produced movement and gesture as two possible alternatives ("once in a while, when you say something and you want their opinion, even though you *know* they wouldn't answer back, sometimes they would do a movement or just make a sound that you know they understand you"). She then concluded, tentatively, that "they *could* understand you."

Finally Daisy addressed a point raised by a fourth co-researcher (Jennifer) and suggested a nuanced distinction between *understanding* and *responding* when she argued that an inability to *respond* need not necessarily indicate an inability to *understand*.

Daisy . . . >>> what Jennifer said was >>> you know about the >>> babies? Well — I think babies understand but they can't respond . . . Like for >>> you know talking — doing philosophy with babies? Well . . .

>>>

>>> maybe the babies understand but they just *can't* respond.

Jennifer Yes — well . . . like [Chocolate] said — they like maybe. . . *Chocolate* said, . . .

>>>

They make like, they make like the movie {???} or if they *don't* — like I said — you can still . . .

Daisy related the point she wanted to make to one Jennifer made and at the same time brought this discussion full-circle by implicitly returning to what I have called, "Criterion 1: *ability to understand*". She situated her comments in the context of "doing philosophy with babies" and raised the possibility that "maybe babies understand but they just *can't* respond". In so doing, she made a move towards a subtle distinction between a baby's ability to understand and his/her

ability to respond. She was inclined to assume that babies *can* understand, whether or not they are able to communicate that understanding through talk or any other means.

Jennifer, in turn, allowed for and considered this possibility to be plausible in relation to what another co-researcher (Chocolate) had said and she produced an example to support that view when she made reference to a movie [the Bruce Willis film "Look Who's Talking"] in which a baby's thoughts were featured by means of voice-over throughout the film even though the baby was unable to talk.

Summary. In the verbatim transcript for Session 2 I traced our building on one another's IDEAS *process* of INQUIRY in a variety of ways and these were cumulative and grew as the discussion work proceeded. Throughout, we took each other's ideas seriously by listening intently and working together to try to come to some conclusions, however tentatively, in response to our own research questions. What is important here is not only *that* we made these moves, but rather that the data show so many different co-researchers doing so — often enough to support my interpretation that such inquiry moves form yet another 'pattern of engagement' not only with the issues but also with each other.

In addition, notably absent from this transcript is any tone of competition or combativeness. Although some co-researchers disagreed with points raised by others, we challenged each other's ideas without attacking or undermining the person who proposed them. This is consistent with an implicit understanding of the nature of our philosophical enterprise as 'research' even though individually we may not yet have been in a position to so describe it.

Stories 2

Philosophical “Blossoming”

Next when it was Daisy's turn to ask Amber and Kirby a question she asked, "How long have you enjoyed philosophy?" Putting her question to Amber first, she gave her two possible ways to answer ("Have you enjoyed it since Grade One? Or have you just started enjoying it recently?").

Amber replied saying she thought she'd enjoyed it more since Grade Four because, "I was more mature . . . I knew more what it was about . . . I had more ideas . . . and I was like — *blossoming*". This was greeted with laughter and she went on to say that she really liked it the *most* these past two years".

With Mariah pressuring by saying "— Moving on—," Daisy turned to Kirby who answered saying she didn't think they had philosophy in Grade One. In Grade Two "I wasn't very interested in it . . . and in Grade Three, before I started 'blossoming' — [*listeners giggle*] — I just started — to talk and then — in Grade Five I liked it a lot a lot and this year I like it a lot a lot."

[S07/92.11.19Th/DRG/Narrative reconstruction from verbatim transcript]

After brainstorming our Co-researcher Questions and discussing them in a preliminary way in Session 2, in Sessions 3 and 4 my co-researchers began to work on making "Researcher Profiles" of themselves as a way of accounting for who they were to be doing this research. Then, after we had our first research discussion in Session 5, in Session 6 we had a visit from Monica, a British educational researcher and friend and colleague of mine who introduced us to the practice of conducting research interviews.

In Sessions 7 and 8, my young co-researchers practised their research interviewing skills on each other. During these interviews they invented their own ways of conducting interviews and they asked each other about themselves with such questions as when they each had started doing philosophy, how they liked it and why they had decided to join this research group. Then in Session 9, before we turned our attention back to our research topic, we reflected on our research practice to this point.

S03/04: Researcher Profiles

When we met for Session 3 the following Tuesday, in keeping with qualitative research practice of acknowledging the role of the researcher in the research, and as a way for my young co-researchers to record their own conceptual baggage in their own words (Kirby and McKenna 1989), we brainstormed twenty-one Researcher Profile questions to use as a guide to what we might include in such a record. Two days later in Session 4, using computers for the first time, we spent an “independent research” session working on them.

S05: Research Discussion

Philosophical Discussions, Debates and Talk Shows

By the time we met again for Session 5 on Tuesday of the following week, we combined working on our Researcher Profiles and having our first research discussion at the same time. In that discussion we looked at our class philosophy discussions in relation to other kinds of discussion in our experience. In this case, following the interests of my co-researchers, we compared philosophical discussion to political debates and talk shows as seen on television.

In my interpretation of the data from that discussion I identified an additional thirty-six points of comparison which added to the theory of ‘discussion’ (for learning) we were generating. With regard to political debates, drawing on our mutual class philosophy experience, we explored the following as points of comparison with class philosophy discussion (for learning): how we do not get paid; how we do not take sides; how we decide what to discuss; how we discuss a

range of topics; how we learn from our discussions; how many topics we discuss; how we can go from one subject to another; how we do not *have to stick to the subject* and how sometimes we do; how we do not know in advance where the discussion will lead; and how we can say what we really think and can just give our opinion.

In the second part of this discussion, making comparisons with television talk shows, we explored issues of changing the subject, time, sticking to a plan, purpose and audience. For example, we talked about how in class philosophy discussions we have the right to change the subject, how the subject can change when someone asks a question, how a subject can change when questions generate new questions, how we can change the subject *while* working to prove a point since we don't have to stick to a plan; and how we can even *set out* to change the subject.

We talked about how we do not have someone asking pre-arranged questions; how our time is not as limited as on talk shows in which you can only get the big points across people have to be brief to let everyone who wants to have a say; how on television there are too many interruptions for commercials; how the role of the teacher is different from that of a talk show host; and about how in class philosophy we look at other sides of issues and follow the trail wherever it leads rather than stick to unchangeable plans.

And we talked about how our discussions are *unlike* talk shows in which they *do* answer everybody's questions; how talk show questions are not for the people who are talking; how, unlike our discussions, the purpose of a talk show is to get information about the people on the show and for them to tell the audience why they are there; how on talk shows they ought not to have people who are supposed to know everything since they may or may not always be right; and how we may or may not learn from talk shows.

S06: Introduction to Research Interviewing

A Visit from an Educational Researcher

For this session we had a visit from my friend and colleague, Monica, a professional educational researcher who was visiting from England and she agreed to introduce us to how to do research interviews.

*Today, Monica, a researcher, came to see us.
I was interviewed with Monica.
I know the technique of the researcher.
I can ask any of the questions.*

[D/S06/92.11.17Tw/DRG/CoR/Einstein/Research Notes]

My co-researchers took to research interviewing very readily as indicated by the above notes in Einstein's steno pad and to illustrate further, I interpret data from the very beginning of Session 6 when we were meeting Monica for the first time.

Session 6 • Tuesday, November 17, 1992 • 12 Co-researchers

In response to my invitation to describe her work as an educational researcher, Monica explained that she worked mostly with older pupils (ages 13-15) sometimes interviewing them about what they feel it is like to be in school, how they learn things and how they feel that they relate to other pupils and teachers. She mentioned that she also talked with teachers and the school principal or with other people at the school board. "So," she concluded, "it's a variety of things". Then she asked if we would like to ask her questions about what she had just said or, alternatively, if we would like *her* to ask *us* about what we were doing to see what kinds of questions would come out of that.

In the question and answer session that followed, *without* interviewing training or other preparation, the co-researchers conducted what could be described as a group interview of Monica. The following are questions she was asked as identified by using my [Sigma] research practice of question extraction from the data:

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Einstein | What and who do you research? |
| Mariah | Do you only go to one school or a lot of schools? |
| Jaguar | What makes you like research? |
| Daisy | Why do you work with that age group and not any others? |
| Yasmin | When you were a child, did you do philosophy in school or something similar? |
| Mariah | Do the kids join [the research] like how we do here? |
| Cinnamon | Were you always interested in philosophy? |
| Whoopy | Do you <i>choose</i> people? |
| Mariah | Do the kids <i>enjoy</i> the research? |
| Jaguar | What would you do if one of your students said they didn't want to participate? |

Most of these questions elicited short answers from Monica and the questioners were satisfied enough with her replies not to ask follow-up questions. The questions came from the co-researchers' own curiosity and from listening to each other's questions. They received no instruction on research questioning, no one prepared any of these questions in advance and we did not even know that this was something we would do in this session.

The questions asked represent a variety of angles of exploration. Einstein asked about subjects and content. Mariah and Daisy asked sampling questions. Jaguar asked about the researcher and her preferences. Yasmin was interested in the researcher's philosophical preparation to be a researcher. Whoopy asked about subject selection criteria. Mariah asked about the research from the subjects' points of view. Jaguar anticipated ethical research dilemmas. And we had only just begun.

First it was Yasmin's turn to ask Monica a question. In a data segment that demonstrates the transfer of philosophical procedures from class philosophy to DRG, she went beyond *questioning* Monica to *interviewing* her and from there they ended up having a *philosophical dialogue*.

Have you ever taught adults?

Yasmin began by asking Monica if she had ever taught adults to which Monica replied, "Yes, a very little bit". Then, without pursuing Monica's answer, Yasmin followed up immediately saying, "Okay. And I had another question, okay, were they?— It's sort of like — sort of — two questions — but — one" .

When Yasmin said she had another question, she implicitly invoked what, in class philosophy we referred to as the "**Rule of Two**" which allows people to ask two questions or do a comment and a question or two comments when it is their turn. Then she did a meta analysis of her own questions when she characterized them as "two questions — but — one." This too was an imported class philosophy practice — to think of a question to ask and also to think *about* the question you're asking in relation to its character and its appropriateness (this time in terms of the procedure).

Were they beginners?

As if she had planned her questioning sequence in advance, next Yasmin asked, ">>> Now were they beginners? Like — had they never done this before?" to which Monica replied by asking Yasmin what she meant: " >>> do you mean had I taught them about research or taught them other things?" Yasmin replied by saying, "Well >>> are they just >>> beginners at research? Like — they don't know what it is and you just brought up something?" Then, after more clarification, Yasmin concluded this sequence by saying, "Okay. And—".

When she asked whether they are "beginners at research," Yasmin seemed to be assuming that "they" were researchers as if she were interpreting Monica's responses in terms of her own DRG experience. And her ending this exchange with "Okay. And —" suggests that she was ready with yet another question. However, first Monica realized that Yasmin thought she was a teacher and she took a moment to explain that she had a colleague with her who was a teacher who had not done research before and it was she whom Monica taught to do research.

Which (teenagers or adults) learned more easily?

Next Yasmin said, "Okay. Can I have, one more thing?" to which I [Alison] replied, "Just consider it a dialogue" .

When she asked permission for "one more thing", Yasmin was paying attention to agreed procedures because now she knew she was exceeding the Rule of Two. And, when I [Alison] said, "Just consider it a dialogue," I recognized a pattern from class philosophy experience, and, using philosophy shorthand, I [Judy] invited Yasmin to carry on as if it were a class philosophy dialogue.

Yasmin continued saying, "Okay and — considering that you >>> taught both — teenagers and adults >>> now which would you say was easier to >>> learn how to do this — or who was better or things like that?"

When Yasmin said "— considering that you taught both —," she used the interviewing technique of building subsequent questions on the responses to earlier ones — a technique that Monica would show us *later*. Here Yasmin built a cumulative set-up to the question itself after which her questioning changed from being information-seeking to asking for a comparison and a value judgement.

What do you mean by 'teaching'?

At this point Monica said that she hadn't taught young people and then she asked Yasmin for more clarification of what she meant saying, "Well I suppose — I mean in the sense that — I take you to mean 'taught' but maybe I should ask you what you mean by — 'teaching'?"

Here Monica turned the tables and began asking *Yasmin* questions. However, they were questions more typical of *dialogue* than they were of interviewing. They were *philosophical* questions calling for conceptual reflection from both participants. Thus what began as a question-and-answer session and transformed into an informational interview (of Monica about her research) showed signs of becoming a philosophical dialogue between Monica and Yasmin on the subject of 'teaching and learning' with Monica raising the questions and Yasmin responding. Instead of exercising her questioning prerogative, and thinking on her feet, Yasmin joined in the dialogue when she answered Monica's questions.

- Yasmin** Well — sort of like showing them what it is >>> you know — like [Judy].
- Monica** Well >>> when you do things like this like you ask me questions — or — like I ask you questions — or work in this *kind* of group — do you think that's teaching or learning?
- Yasmin** Well — learning — because you're tea-, like *showing* us something and we're — sort of like — *learning* it. [said tentatively]
- Einstein** [barely audible in the background] — Sort of a teacher —
- Mariah (?)** Learning what to do.
- Yasmin** Or just — compiling the — information.

In this exchange Yasmin and Monica produced three distinctions. Monica spoke in terms of teaching and learning as an either/or matter (“—do you think that's teaching or learning?). By contrast, Yasmin equated teaching with *showing* as if to say that when A shows B something, A *teaches* B and B *learns* from A. However, she was not sure about this. Then, after Einstein and Mariah spoke their thoughts, demonstrating the subtlety of her thinking, Yasmin suggested “compiling the — information” as another way of thinking about learning. She was tentative about the teaching/learning dichotomy and produced a different way of thinking about it.

In response, Monica used Yasmin's ‘showing’ criterion to explore the issue further.

- Monica** Why am I — showing you? And >>> do you think you are showing me anything?
- Yasmin** Well, yeah. In a way. Sort of. [giggles] Maybe not. Heh, heh.
- Monica** I >>> just wonder if >>> the more I — do you >>> think because the person's older that you must be teaching? Or do you think you can teach if you're *your* age?
- Yasmin** You can teach both — because both can *learn*.
- Voice** Good point.
- Yasmin** Thank you! [Everyone laughs]

With that, and to everyone's satisfaction, the dialogue ended when Yasmin observed that it works both ways: since both can learn, both can teach.

Without preparation and *before* Monica showed us anything about interviewing, Yasmin anticipated two important issues of this research. One had to do with the emergence of a 'dialogic' interviewing method which arises out of philosophical practice and is well-suited to philosophical research.¹⁰³ Like other research interviewing protocols, it featured an interviewer who questions one or more interviewees by building cumulative new questions out of their responses. However, it changed when the questions themselves changed — from information-seeking questions to exploratory philosophical and conceptual ones; and it became 'dialogic' when the interviewer let go of the information-seeking role to engage *with* the interviewee in exploring an idea or concept together.

A second issue Yasmin anticipated had to do with the close relationship between teaching and learning which is fundamental to the interpretation of 'transformative co-learning' that I came to formulate later.¹⁰⁴ Her tentative conclusion that, "You can teach both — because both can *learn*" underlies the notion of teachers and students as co-researchers and is a building block of a more general interpretation of teachers and students as co-learners, an interpretation that rejects dichotomous notions of teaching as distinct from learning and does not accept the idea that you have to be a certain age or size to teach or that you have to be less than that age or size to learn.

103 For more on this see 4.4 Philosophical Interviewing Research Acts in Chapter 4. Surfacing Research Acts.

104 See 5.3 On 'Transformative Co-learning' in Chapter 5. Conceptual Investigations.

S07/08: Interviewing Practice

Philosophical “Blossoming”

Beginning in Session 7, the first session after Monica's visit, and continuing in Session 8, some co-researchers decided to practise interviewing each other. In this section I tell how these co-researchers got along when they tried to conduct their own research interviews for the first time. First I describe the two different systems of interviewing these co-researchers invented. Then, from the interviewing data from these two sections, to show how aware some co-researchers were of their own initiation to philosophy, I summarize what they had to say in response to questions about when they started to like doing philosophy.

Systematic Interviewing

Entirely on their own, on two separate occasions, and independently of each other, two groups of co-researchers invented their own approaches to interviewing each other from the very beginning. They organized themselves into pairs of interviewers and interviewees and invented two different 'systems' for conducting the questioning such that everyone would have a fair chance to participate. They were careful to make the confidentiality statement both at the beginning and to thank the interviewees at the end. These were procedures they must have learned from Monica's visit and not only did they need no reminder to implement them at the first opportunity, but they continued to do so on every subsequent research interviewing occasion.

Two double group interviews (S07)

In Session 7, four co-researchers practised interviewing by asking each other questions about how they felt about philosophy, discussion and participation in the Discussion Research Group. This story demonstrates how, spontaneously and without further guidance, they were able to organize themselves in a way they had not seen before and to conduct interviews which produced useful data.

Session 7 • Thursday, November 19, 1992 • 10 Co-researchers

For this session I had no Sigma plans preferring instead to establish our co-research agenda together. Since Session 6 with Monica had ended before we could practise interviewing each other as agreed, we decided to have a session in which people could pursue their own research interests. Mariah, Daisy, Amber and Kirby moved into the adjacent Library on their own to practice interviewing using a tape recorder. Arachnid, Jennifer, Joey, Staci and Whoopy decided to work on their researcher profiles using the computers. And I [Alison] spent my time going back and forth between the two groups.

The data in this **research interviewing** sequence were produced by my young co-researchers with very little assistance or intervention from me. Using a small audio tape recorder, they went into the library where they organized themselves into interviewers and interviewees and before they began, for data identification purposes one co-researcher did a **session introduction**.

Later, after transcribing the audio tape and for interpretation purposes I [Sigma] broke the transcript into **time out** and **dialogue** segments using my research practices of **verbatim transcript chunking** and **verbatim transcript coding**. This enabled me to examine patterns of interaction by looking at who was interviewing whom, the kinds of questions the interviewers were asking, the kinds of responses the interviewees were giving and how these interviews might be useful for our research purposes.

In the Session 7 data I identified two separate interviews, each of which I have termed a "double group interview". In Interview S07-1 Daisy and Mariah both interviewed Amber and Kirby. And in Interview S07-2 they changed roles so that Amber and Kirby could both interview Daisy and Mariah.

In this session the co-researchers seemed very giggly and playful and I [Alison] assumed that to be because it was their first time recording themselves. I was prepared to write this session off as a 'practice' and I made a mental note to find out more about research interviewing myself so that I could guide them since I could readily see ways in which their interviewing techniques could improve. For one thing, they seemed constrained by the turn-taking procedure and by the question and answer interview format. And when interviewers simply said "thank you" after an interviewee's response, they seemed to me to be *resisting* the class

philosophy practice of engaging in dialogue with people about what they just said. If they did pursue an idea it was formally in a new question.

In view of my question of whether doing research is something philosophically trained children can do, I was more interested in what the data show that they were *already able to do* with regard to research interviewing. It was only when I heard the results of their first efforts while transcribing the audio-tape and chunking the transcript that I was able to identify the patterns reported above. And only then did I appreciate how *efficient* they were in their use of time; how *seriously* they had taken the confidentiality aspects of conducting research interviews; how they built complex questions from each others questions and answers; how they elaborated on their own questions in ways which elicited complex responses by their respondents; and how, by conducting the session with game-like procedures in which everyone had a turn in turn, they made sure that everyone had an opportunity to participate.

Finally, their method of proceeding with two interviewers taking turns with two pairs of interviewees was their own variation on a kind of group interview Monica had talked about but it was not something they had seen before. As an interviewing strategy it had advantages. Although all participants were present and participating in the same overall interview, this arrangement allowed time for both the interviewers and the interviewees to think about what the others were saying and to build on that while it was someone else's turn. Their giggly dispositions notwithstanding, it was evident to me that these co-researchers did a remarkable job in this their first attempt at research interviewing.

Five parallel rounds of questioning (S08)

In Session 8 a different group of co-researchers interviewed each other about their reasons for participating in DRG and I tell this story to show how a new set of first-time interviewers organized themselves, how they too had systematic procedures and how those procedures yielded different patterns of interviewing.

Session 8 • Tuesday, November 24, 1992 • 13 Co-researchers

For this session again I did not make Sigma plans in advance and we decided to take another session to work on computers and to continue practising research interviewing techniques. Alison, Amber, Cinnamon, Staci, Whoopy and Yasmin stayed in Room 10 to use the computers while Mariah, Joey, Daisy, Jennifer, Einstein, Tracy and Ferrari went into the library to practise interviewing. Of these, only Mariah and Daisy had been present for the first research interviewing practice in Session 7.

Using a single small tape-recorder, these co-researchers also produced these data on their own. Before they turned on the tape recorder, they organized themselves into three pairs to do individual interviews in which one would be the interviewer and the other the interviewee — this time without switching roles. And Ferrari, who was not there for the planning phase, made his own ways to participate after he arrived.

After transcribing the audio tape, again using my word processor outliner I chunked the transcript into segments using each of the interviewer's new questions as a heading for a different segment. Any transcript chunks which were peripheral to the interviews I identified as time outs. There were 24 segments including six time outs: two to get started and make the confidentiality statement (1 & 2), two to sort out the order of questioning (4 & 6), one to remind themselves who was next (14), and one in which they got side-tracked (17). Working with these data, I collapsed the outline to the question level of headings to get an overview of the questions they asked and then I examined the interview interactions segment by segment.

To interpret these data, I made two **visual representations**¹⁰⁵ of the co-researchers' Session 8 activity segment by segment. In the first I graphed individual co-researchers' patterns of engagement with the questions and with each other by tracing who talked to whom and in what order. There were three parallel individual interviews which were conducted by an organized system of taking turns to ensure that everyone had an opportunity to participate without having to wait too long for a turn. Einstein interviewed Jennifer. Tracy interviewed Mariah. Daisy interviewed Joey. Ferrari made two interventions of his own, the first of which was a question for the whole group. And there were six time outs. In the second visual representation I charted the interview questions the interviewers asked thinking up their questions as they went along and I identified five parallel rounds of questioning in which Einstein asked Jennifer six questions and Tracy and Daisy asked Mariah and Joey five each.

In this session, again entirely on their own and like their colleagues in Session 7, these co-researchers also demonstrated a systematic approach to interviewing each other. Although the patterns of interview engagement differed from those of Session 7, in both cases the co-researchers were careful to give everyone (except perhaps Ferrari) an equitable chance to participate. This time three interviewers, each of whom had his/her own interviewee, took turns interviewing in five 'rounds' of questioning. Thus they produced three individual interviews and one group interview each with quite different content while all exploring their reasons for participating in DRG. Again they remembered to make the confidentiality statement and to thank their interviewees although at one point Jennifer questioned whether confidentiality was really necessary since they were 'just' doing philosophy and she wondered if that was something to be confidential about.

In all three individual interviews, the interviewers had difficulties to surmount. Jennifer and Einstein heckled and Daisy and Joey had difficulties understanding each other. However they also helped each other out and they were still able to produce useful data. The result was a reflexive exploration of their own reasons for participating in this research thereby providing a window on who these

¹⁰⁵ See Figure 1 and Figure 2 in *Stories 1*. Additional supporting visual representations described here are kept in the DRG Research Data Files.

co-researchers were and the dynamics of their interactions with each other as they performed this research activity for the first time.

Philosophical “Blossoming”

In the interviews they conducted in both Sessions 7 and 8, following Monica’s example while practising interviewing for the first time, the co-researchers asked each other what they remembered about their early experiences of doing philosophy. Mariah began by asking her interviewees, Amber and Kirby, if they liked “philosophy and discussion” and both answered in the affirmative. Then, building on Mariah’s questioning, Daisy asked the same interviewees *how long* they had enjoyed philosophy. When Amber replied, she used the metaphor of “blossoming” which amused her co-researchers and inspired them to reflect on their own philosophical blossoming. The data indicate that these co-researchers enjoyed philosophy now although that was not always the case and Amber’s metaphor of ‘blossoming’ was both useful and fun as it helped them to express how it took awhile to ‘grow’ into philosophy.

There was general agreement that although philosophy was something they had to get used to at first, it got better as they matured. It all began with Amber saying she thought she’d enjoyed it more since Grade Four because “I was more mature . . . I knew more what it was about . . . I had more ideas . . . and I was like — *blossoming*”. Picking up on Amber’s metaphor, Kirby dated her own blossoming to around the same time as Amber’s and said that her enjoyment kept increasing from one year to the next from Grade Two (when “I wasn’t very interested in it”) to Grade Three (“before I started ‘blossoming’ and when “I just started to talk”) to Grades Five and Six (when “I like it a lot a lot”). Later she added, “When you’re blossoming, you — absorb all the information!”

Daisy’s blossom opened in Grades One and Two, closed in Grades Three and Four and then opened again in Grades Five and Six while Mariah blossomed at first sight in Grade Four. In fact Mariah associated blossoming with exploring (“— to see the world”) and later she claimed, “I was *always* blossoming” (“‘cause I love talking”). And finally Joey, who had been absent for Session 7, needed several explanations of the term ‘blossoming’ in the sense the others had been using it before he could answer. After Jennifer asked him, “When did you start *growing* into philosophy?” and Mariah asked when it was that philosophy was “part of your

world,” Joey too said that he “had to get used to it first” and he estimated that to have happened “about Grade Two”.

S08: A Philosophical Interview

Philosophy and Macaroni

Einstein was a co-researcher who were particularly sensitive to the philosophical dimension of our work from the beginning. Witness, for example, the following distinction between philosophy and science that he recorded in his research notes for Session 6:

Philosophy is different than science. Science is fact.

[D/S06/92.11.17Tu/DRG/CoR/Einstein/Research Notes]

Next, to represent the subtlety of my young co-researchers’ abilities to recognize and show concern for the philosophical dimension of our work, I interpret data from parts of a Session 8 interview Einstein conducted with Jennifer in which he explored her concept of philosophical questions and in which it seemed to some that he was “off the subject”.

Session 8 • Tuesday, November 24, 1992 • 13 Co-researchers

In this session some of the co-researchers were working on their Researcher Profiles using the computers in Room 10 while Einstein, Jennifer and others were practising research interviewing in the library next door. It was Einstein and Jennifer’s first time practising research interviewing and they were in a playful mood throughout.

‘Cool’, Macaroni and Cheese, and Condoms

Einstein’s questions. In his Session 8 interview with Jennifer, as with others’ interviews with each other, Einstein’s first, second and fourth round questions had to do with how Jennifer felt about doing philosophy and participating in DRG.

However, his third, fifth and sixth round questions were quite different:

3. What do you think 'cool' is?
5. Do you or can you turn ordinary questions like 'Kraft Cheese and Macaroni' into philosophical discussions?
6. Can you tell me how you do philosophy?

Using data from these three rounds of Einstein's interview with Jennifer, I examine the dialogic and philosophical character of this early co-researcher interview.

On the third round of questioning, after a few playful exchanges, Einstein began as follows.

Einstein Jenny, do you consider yourself cool, and if you do, what do you think 'cool' is?

Voice (?) But that's not [?] philosophy.

Einstein asked this question in two parts. In the first part he framed his question in personal terms ("Do you consider *yourself* cool?"). Then he followed up with a related *philosophical* question ("What do you think 'cool' is?"). Someone objected that his question was "not philosophy" thereby indicating a concern for the character of *philosophical* questions and suggesting that there was something inappropriate about this one.

Jenny did not take Einstein's question seriously at all — so much so that Mariah (?) expressed concern at the disruption. So Einstein tried again.

Einstein But what does >>> 'cool' mean — though, Jenny >>> in your terms?

Jenny That's off the point. Heh, heh. [*Others laugh*] Well cool is uh —

This time Einstein reversed the order of his question thereby putting the philosophical question first ("What does — 'cool' mean . . . ?) although still in relation to Jenny's experience of it (" . . . in your terms?"). At first Jenny expressed concern about the relevance of Einstein's question ("That's off the point.") but then she started to answer it anyway ("Well cool is uh —").

At this point Einstein greeted me [Alison] as I came in from Room 10 to see how they were getting along and there was more giggling. As Jenny continued her attempt to answer Einstein's question, three other co-researchers interjected and questioned its relevance to philosophy.

Mariah I think it's really getting off the subject.
Jennifer Uh cool —.
Daisy Yeah.
Joey (?) What does cool have to do with philosophy? [*Others join in*]

Einstein however was undaunted. He assured the others that he had a plan and Jennifer tried again to answer the question.

Einstein You'll find out after — I'll tell you after — I have my link cut up, I just — .
Daisy (?) Oh. Ok.
Einstein I just want her to answer the question first.
Jennifer Uh — . . . — cool means —
Einstein Cool!
Jennifer — someone who puts "man" at the end of each sentence
— No. — Ah — . . .
Mariah Next. [*some giggle*]

Daisy was prepared to trust that Einstein knew where he was going with his line of questioning ("Oh. Ok."). Mariah however, seeming to be not impressed with Jenny's attempt, said, "Next" in an apparent effort to move on to something else. Jennifer, meanwhile, kept trying.

Jennifer I have no idea. I mean once —
Einstein [*Many at once.*] Wait wait wait — no — wait wait wait — I have
Jennifer — all I know —
Tracy It's when you're cool.
Jennifer Cool is me.
Voices? [*Many at once*] — are you?

When Jennifer admitted she did not know ("I have no idea"), others joined in. However, Einstein persisted ("Wait wait wait . . . I have") and Tracy and Jennifer tried some ideas ("It's when you're cool" and "Cool is me."). Next Einstein tried to help Jennifer by giving her some examples to consider.

Einstein Wait — is cool — to you sort of mean like you're the head of the class top of the class or stuff like that? Or you're a rebellious kid — who never listens to teachers? . . . Or a mixture of both?

Jennifer . . . ah . . .

Einstein — Remember, anything you say is confidential.

Showing that he was aware that his examples were framed in personal terms, Einstein invoked the confidentiality proviso to reassure Jennifer that she could feel comfortable trying to answer.

Jennifer It's probably like — it's probably >>> in between.

Einstein In between . . . so — considering yourself cool is not being the smartest kid in the class but it's not also, >>> interrogating the teachers?

Jennifer (?) Sort of B minus.

Einstein So it's sort of in between.

Jennifer (?) B minus.

Einstein — Sort of like >>>

Jennifer Yeah — it's like — sometimes getting on teachers' nerves >>> and sometimes —

Einstein? Not?

Jennifer . . . being [?]

Einstein So between an A and a C, you'd call yourself a B — that would be cool, right?

Jennifer Yeah.

Einstein Okay. Thank you very much, Jennifer.

Jennifer . . . sort of . . .

Einstein Thank you very much, Jennifer. Next?

When Jennifer gave an impersonal response ("it's probably >>> in between"), Einstein produced two possible interpretations for her to consider ("not being the smartest kid in the class" and "not also . . . interrogating the teachers"). Jennifer (?)'s response was to use a grading system to express how 'in between' she meant ("Sort of B minus"). Then, as if he could see that he was forcing the issue, in the rest of this round Einstein paraphrased what he thought Jennifer was saying ("So it's sort of in between", and "So between A and C, you'd call yourself a B — that would be cool, right?). Then he gave up, thanked Jennifer and said, "Next" to move on to the next interviewer's turn.

In this segment, Einstein's plan appears to have been to ask Jennifer a philosophical question (What is 'cool'?) without giving her much of an idea of why he was doing that. It was a question which seemed to the others to be "off the subject" and they said so. Nevertheless he persisted with a sense of purpose.

It was a difficult question for Jennifer though, for several possible reasons. First, it was unexpectedly out of context. Second, Einstein had framed the question in personal terms in a way which was not characteristic of philosophical questions in these students' class philosophy experience. And third, under the best of circumstances it is difficult to say what counts as 'cool' — all the more so with reference to oneself in front of one's peers. In the end Jennifer held a middle ground with her "B minus" response and Einstein decided not to pursue the matter further. In his Round 5 question to Jennifer, we see more of Einstein's unstated plan emerging.

Einstein's Round 4 question for Jennifer was about what she gained by coming to DRG; however, by the time they reached Round 5, his question for her was of a different order.

- Einstein** Jennifer — do you or *can* you turn ordinary questions like >>> suppose, take this: Kraft Cheese and Macaroni: Is it really Kraft Cheese and Macaroni or is it Kraft Macaroni and Cheese? —
- Others** Ooh!
- Einstein** — and turn — and turn them into — philosophical discussions? *Can* you do it, or *do* you do it?
- Jennifer** That's what kind of philosophy is because . . . it's like we turn — questions around kind of like — remember the first day we did those — condom ones and it was like kind of a stupid question — and we turned it into like a philosophy discussion kind of? >>>

The others reacted to Einstein's question ("Ooh!") as if wondering about its relevance again. However Einstein did not skip a beat and neither did Jennifer. She immediately recognized what he was getting at ("That's what kind of philosophy is because. . . it's like we turn — questions around kind of like —") and then very quickly produced her own example of a seemingly "stupid" question from the first day of our co-researching (S02) nine sessions earlier ("— remember the first day we did those — condom ones and it was like kind of a stupid question — and we turned it into like a philosophy discussion kind of?").

When Jennifer talked about “those — condom ones” she was referring to an occasion very early in the year in which we had talked about condoms and to which Ferrari had referred in Session 2 when we were discussing whether you could do philosophy without questions (“Okay. There’s philosophical questions when we’re talking about philosophy, when we’re in the philosophy room, talking about philosophy. But not every time, because remember when we brought up the condoms — at >>> lunch time — and that one isn’t very >>> phil — that — it is philosophical because — uh.”).

When it was Einstein and Jennifer’s turn again for Round 6, Einstein gave further hints of his research agenda when he asked Jennifer his last question. (Unfortunately the audio tape recording ended abruptly before the end of this exchange.)

Einstein >>> Okay. Jennifer. Can you tell me — how you *do* philosophy. Can you give me an explanation please.

Jennifer *Of course* I can. [*She giggles*] Well, first of all —

Einstein Okay —

Jennifer — I wait for — a discussion to rise. And when it’s risen to about my height, [*giggles*] then I — join in — and — I —

Alison (*Signals time’s up?*)

Einstein But we’re in the middle of a question!

Jennifer — and I say my own opinion. — Or —

Einstein Is that *how* you do it?

Jennifer How — What do you mean how I do it? I get my opinion and — or I get my *question* or — or my *discussion* or —

Einstein I mean what are the procedures I mean — who has the ideas here?

End of recording.

Jennifer’s giggles and the metaphor she used of the discussion “rising” to “about my height” both suggest that she might have been joking when she said, “*Of course* I can” (give an explanation of how you do philosophy). On the other hand, she also seemed to have a sense of what she wanted to say and it is evident that she was thinking about what she was saying *as she was saying it* , (“— and I say my own opinion” followed immediately by “— Or —”) indicating that she was considering that there may be more to it than that. Einstein, meanwhile seemed to have a sense of what he would count as a satisfactory answer and just as the recording ended his

questions suggest that he was looking for more from Jennifer ("I mean what are the procedures I mean — who has the ideas here?").

In this round Einstein made his research agenda more explicit when he asked Jennifer very directly for an explanation of how to "do philosophy". Despite her playful mood, Jennifer did not shrink from the question but responded with confidence ("Of course I can") although it was more difficult than she anticipated and she turned to metaphor to begin her explanation. What is interesting here is how quickly she associated 'doing philosophy' with 'discussion' and with 'saying' or 'getting' my opinions, questions and discussion. Also worth noting, however, is how Einstein seemed not to be satisfied with her answers and how he pressed her with leading questions. Although time ran out before they could pursue this further, in Session 9, when asked, Einstein explained what he was trying to do (see below).

S09a: Reflections on Interviewing Practice

Einstein's Philosophical Interviewing Agenda

One of the kinds of notes that I [Sigma] recorded as we went along I coded as "FFR" or "For Future Reference". Some of these were for immediate or near-future action while others were for long-range future action as in further research projects. In the DRG Catalogue under "Notes" at the end of Session 8, for example, I noted the following regarding how to do research interviewing:

- *FFR (For future ref): decide procedure clearly in advance and stick to it?*
- *FFR: Need better training. Need to want/need answers (responses) to their questions for research purposes rather than to simply ask them.*
- *FFR: We really need time to work on interviewing techniques. Time to listen to the tapes and analyze them for clues of how to do it better. There is no reason to assume that CoRs would know this.*

[D/S08/92.11.24Tu/DRG/Sigma/ DRG Catalogue Notes]

These notes were written after the sessions in question but *before* I reviewed the interviewing practice tapes. In this instance, I [Sigma] brought these concerns to my co-researchers' attention at the beginning of Session 9 and next I tell how, when and why we realized that we needed to prepare written interview questions in

order to 'see' better where we were going. Little did we know that Einstein had already thought of this as we found out when he provided us with the *philosophical* rationale he had for his line of questioning when he interviewed Jennifer in Session 8.

Session 9 • Tuesday, December 1, 1992 • 12 Co-researchers¹⁰⁶

Concerned about the amount of time we had spent on interviewing practice, I prepared detailed plans for this session as a way of getting us "Back to the Subject". Before moving on, though, we took some moments to reflect on our two interviewing practice sessions.

Seeing the Need for Interview Questions

After determining that Yasmin would be the name recorder for this session, I began by expressing some of my [Alison/Sigma] thoughts on our interview practice so far.

"Alright," I began, >>> what I noticed from the group that was working in the other room >>> last time is that what we need to develop — and it may take some time to develop — are a set of >>> interviewer questions — which we could have handy for you to choose from so that you don't always have to think up what question — on the fly — when you're doing >>> a research interview."

"My guess," I continued, "is that the real interviews won't happen for a little while. There was an awful lot of >>> giggling going on >>> on the tapes — and that's normal >>>. People — do that when they hear their own voices or they think they're going to hear their own voices on the tape and so on. And >>> also they play to that a little bit — you know you get so giggly that [you] start — seeing if you can be more giggly? And >>> we have to rule that out — if it's going to be serious research that we're doing. So, what >>> we need is some practice. And gradually when you get used to it, that'll disappear.

¹⁰⁶ Unless otherwise indicated, the source of the data for this sequence is the verbatim transcript of the audio tape for DRG Session 9, Tuesday, December 1, 1992.

"What I wanted to say about the interviewer questions is >>> that I think that — what will help us a lot — will help you a lot — I mean I think — what was happening with the practices was that — you were doing the same topic over and over again. And in some cases the same question over and over again. [Someone— ?Tracy? — in the background recognizes what I'm saying but is unintelligible.] That's right. All that says is that we need >>> some questions to have handy."

After taking a moment to remind people that Yasmin was the name recorder, I went back to my [Sigma] agenda saying we'd hear from the people on Yasmin's list "when I finish talking — it will just take me a couple of minutes more, okay?"

>>> What I want to do — today," I began, "— is >>> suggest that we go back to having>>> a group discussion in here — where we — get back to our subject and I have a few things to put us back on track. Okay? ..."

">>>. When we start having regular discussions in here," I continued, "you will get a sense of what we think — what we think we think — about these kinds of discussions — and that will make you better interviewers because you'll have a kind of >>> framework — you'll have a kind of sense of what it is you want to ask. But right now we *don't* have that sense."

"In fact," I added, "I heard some people ask me — 'Well what *are* we researching, anyway?' And >>> that's because we only talked about it maybe the first couple of times and we — and it's not part >>> of how we're working together. So I think we need to work on *that* today."

"I will do >>> a couple of little things on the overhead — for you to see — you *might* want to write some of it down — in your notebooks — and then >>> what I would suggest is that the people who are going on to computers go to computers and the rest of us stay here to discuss for *today* anyway and — the people at computers can contribute >>> through the name recorder list at the same time."

Next I [Alison/Sigma] asked to hear the three people from the list after which I said that I'd do "the thing on the overhead."

"Time out," Einstein said and then, confirming my concern that we had lost sight of our research purpose, he asked, "What does 'DRG' stand for?" Many talked at once in response to this question and I [Alison] replied, "Discussion Research — it's the research group into the topic of "Discussion". Then Yasmin said that Mariah, Jennifer and Tracy were the three people on the list.

"Oh!" Mariah began. Then, adding to my [Alison's] point about people asking the same questions over and over, she said, " >>> when we were doing >>> our interview last week — Tracy, she kept on asking me the *exact* same question — [someone (Daisy?) giggles in remembrance] — five times — and like —".

"Why do you like DRG?" Jennifer recalled and Mariah replied, "Yeah".

After interjecting to ask Einstein if he thought we could erase the *Explorateurs'* white board in preparation for using the overhead projector, I responded to Mariah.

"Okay. >>> Yes, well that's what we were saying and so — but that just tells us that we need to >>> do some work so that that won't happen. Okay?". Next it was Tracy's turn but she passed and we went on to hear what Jennifer had to say.

"Okay," Jennifer began, "when we do the >>> interviews? I think we should like write — backup questions."

"We should do *back-up* questions?" I [Alison] repeated. "Yeah," Jennifer replied and then tried to explain: "Like >>> you start off with a few questions and then kind of you get on a roll, you know? — and then you could —."

"Yes," I [Alison] said. "And >>> when you're a *good* interviewer, researcher-interviewer, you base your questions on what the person just said."

"Yeah," Jennifer responded, " >>> that's what I meant like — you — just back-up just in case like you finished with that point >>> you're on then you >>> don't ask the same question — you have a — question written down."

"Oh, I see, okay. That's good," I [Alison] said. Then I went on to say, "Okay. — But the other thing that you need as good researcher-interviewers, is to know where you want to go with your research — like >>> Monica when she was here she needed to know what she wanted to know. Now if we have >>> done some work ourselves, then when you go — and maybe we'll get somebody from Grade Four, for example >>> just to be somebody different — and — and >>> they might come in — and you might want to see what *they* think about what *we* said. And see if they think the *same things* that we said. But if we haven't *said* anything, you won't even have that to ask. So that's why I want to do a little bit of work today. Okay? Next?

Next Daisy questioned the relevance of some of the questions — in particular Einstein's line of questioning when he interviewed Jennifer in Session 8. However, later in this session we would find out that Einstein was able to explain his reasons for asking the questions he did in the way that he did. By this time, however, I was impatient to get on with my "Back to the Subject(s)" Sigma Plans and so I exercised my Sigma prerogative and moved on to my explicit introduction of the phrase 'Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry'.¹⁰⁷

In my Session 9 Sigma research notes I reflected on the Sigma tension that I experienced during this segment as follows:

There was a bit of tension (not negative, mind you) here as I could tell that they wouldn't have minded listening to the tape of the last session and having a discussion about it. However, I pressed on with my agenda realizing that not everyone present knew what we were talking about and that it would be something worth doing, but perhaps later when we were looking for our interviewer questions.

[D/S09/92.12.01Tu/DRG/Sigma Research Notes]

¹⁰⁷ See Back to the Subject(s) under S09b: From Back to the Subject(s) to Discussion as 'Communication' in *Stories 3: Discussion as 'Communication'*.

Worth noting in this segment is that although I [Alison] may have been the first to mention that we needed interview questions, my young co-researchers showed that they too recognized the problems I mentioned. Mariah and Jennifer remembered that repeating the same question over and over was a problem; Jennifer suggested that we should make 'backup' questions; and Daisy expressed concern about some questions that seemed to be off the subject. Putting our research-interviewer questions in writing, we agreed, would help.

Reflecting on our Interviewing Practice

There was a lively exchange about the value of some questions which had seemed to Daisy to be off the topic, but which Einstein was able to justify by consulting his notes.

[D/S09/92.12.01Tu/DRG/Sigma Research Notes]

Now, to demonstrate how we used philosophical discussion to reflect on our own research activities, from Session 9 I present verbatim transcript data to show how Einstein responded to questions about his research strategy when he was interviewing Jennifer.¹⁰⁸

Einstein's Research Interviewing Agenda

In Einstein's research notes, he recorded what happened in these Session 9 reflections as follows.

Daisy said that Jennifer was getting fed up with my interviewing questions. But I defended myself and asked Daisy to ask Jennifer, she asked but Jennifer said that she wasn't fed up with [my] questions.

[D/S09/92.12.01Tu/DRG/CoR/Einstein/Research Notes]

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Unless otherwise indicated, the data in this sequence are from the verbatim audio tape transcript of Session 9, Tuesday, December 1, 1992.

Here is what Daisy said when she questioned the relevance of Einstein's questions:

Daisy — what Einstein was asking Jennifer was — you know — “Do *you* think you’re cool?” — You know. “What’s the difference between Kraft Cheese and Macaroni and Kraft >>> Macaroni and Cheese” — you know — like those are kind of like — off — the subject.

Daisy had two objections to Einstein's line of questioning: one was to his having framed a question to Jennifer in personal terms (“Do *you* think you’re cool?”) and the other was to the relevance of the content of his questioning which she judged to be “off — the subject”. Einstein interrupted to explain.

Einstein May I, may I? Point of information? She has my questions wrong though. >>>

Jennifer Yeah it's true. He >>> said those things and then he said >>>

Ferrari He was trying to prove a point.

Interjecting with a **point of information**, Einstein objected to Daisy's characterization of his questions and, when Jennifer seemed to agree with Daisy, Ferrari supported Einstein's move when he said, “He was trying to prove a point”. At this point Jennifer said “Yeah” as if to agree with Ferrari and others joined in although what they were saying was unintelligible on the tape. While transcribing I noted, “Sounds as if they were saying it was not off the subject.” Daisy, however, was still not satisfied.

Daisy Yeah but it took about fifteen questions to get to the point — and I mean >>> and after awhile [Jennifer] >>> you could kind of hear that she was getting fed up — [Alison chuckles.] — you know >>> with this stupid question. [Others utter their thoughts inaudibly in the background.]

Here Daisy shifted her objections from concerns about *relevance* to concerns about *efficiency* (“It took about fifteen questions to get to the point”) and about the *appropriateness of the questioning* (“—you could kind of hear that she was getting fed up — you know like with this stupid question”).

At this point I [Alison] asked Einstein if he would like to respond to Daisy's objections.

Einstein Okay sure. When I wrote, "Do you consider yourself cool?" that's a perfectly normal question because >>> a lot of kids they say, "Oh I'm cool", "I'm too cool to do philosophy." But if you consider yourself cool, what *is* 'cool' — in your eyes?

When Einstein said, "When I wrote . . ." he was referring to an interview guide which he had made on his own initiative and from which he was working.

While transcribing this segment, I [Sigma] noted the following:

Explains the rationale for his question which appears to be aimed at exploring the function of an assumption. This is complicated.

[S09/92.12.01Tu/DRG/Sigma Transcription Notes]

When he said that his 'cool' question was "perfectly normal" Einstein was suggesting that philosophy deals with everyday "normal" questions. Then, as if to show *how* "normal" his question was, he illustrated by quoting what "a lot kids" say and his example, "I'm too cool to do philosophy" suggested that some think it is *not* 'cool' to do philosophy. Einstein's interest was not in what it was about philosophy that might make it not cool in kids' eyes; it was rather in underlying assumptions about what it is to be 'cool' for those who might say such a thing. His personalizing the question to Jennifer was therefore not to test her to see if *she* was 'cool' but rather to invite her to try to say what counts as 'cool' by using her "own eyes".

Next, apparently accepting Einstein's explanation, Daisy turned to his other question as an example of a stupid question. However, Einstein was ready with an explanation for this too.

Daisy No but I mean >>> the question about Kraft Cheese and Macaroni —

Einstein No!

Daisy — and Kraft Macaroni and Cheese. I mean that was >>>

Einstein No that was a — that was a —

Daisy — stupid.

Einstein — perfectly normal question — because >>> I have the proof right here. "Jennifer, did you or *can* you turn ordinary questions" — *that* was an example — "like Kraft

Cheese and Macaroni or Kraft Macaroni and Cheese into the discussion." That's to prove her self-confidence.

Daisy (?) Hm.

Alison And you were >>> taking what looks like a silly question to see if they could make something >>> not so silly out of it? Is that what you mean?

Einstein Right.

Alison Yeah.

Einstein To see what her self-confidence was. I mean if they say, "Oh I can't" that means they have pretty low self-confidence but if they say "I can" that means they learned something off of philosophy.

Alison Hm-hmm.

When Einstein said, "I have the proof right here" (referring to his interview guide in his steno pad) it was to show that he had a question written down as part of a planned questioning strategy. Kraft Cheese and Macaroni was an example he was giving her to think about when she answered his question about turning "ordinary questions" into philosophical discussions.

This was not an idea I [Judy] remember our having dealt with in class philosophy. Rather it seemed to be an idea born of observations they had made on their own regarding their own philosophical discussion experiences and they were exploring this as a possible description of how to do philosophy. Also worth noting in Einstein's explanation is the link he made between "self-confidence" and "learning something off of philosophy" for it shows that he was also interested in *how* Jennifer would answer his question — that is, with how much self-confidence. It is as if his question was to test a hypothesis he had that with the ability to do philosophy comes self-confidence. If Jennifer was not thrown by his Macaroni and Cheese question, that is, if she did not say "I can't" but instead showed that "I can", then he could attribute that self-confidence to having learned something from philosophy.

Looking back at the data in relation to this criterion, at first Jennifer *did* have difficulty with the 'cool' question but partly because of her (and others') philosophical concerns about its relevance to what they thought they should be talking about ("That's off the point."). In *every one* of Jennifer's subsequent interventions she made an effort to answer Einstein's question but was interrupted by the interventions of others — including Einstein. At one point she said she had no idea. However, even then she did not stop at that but kept trying when she said,

"I mean once—". Her persistence in *trying* to answer the question despite her own concerns and others' interruptions is an indication of 'I can' self-confidence. And with regard to the Macaroni and Cheese question, in her first response she went straight to the answer when she said, "That's what kind of philosophy is because . . . " and then went on to provide an additional example. According to Einstein's self-confidence criterion, Jennifer's "I can" responses to both questions indicate a degree of self-confidence that Einstein might say she had learned from doing philosophy.

Meanwhile, Daisy still wanted to say, "But >>> we shouldn't do those kinds of questions really for the — discussions cuz — you know after about five or six —". Einstein tried to interject but Daisy continued, "— *any* of our questions — people were getting fed up". When Einstein replied saying, "Well ask Jennifer herself", Daisy qualified her objection saying it was not only about Einstein's questions but about those of other interviewers including her own as well.

Daisy I'm not saying anything about anybody you know like with Einstein's questions with *my* questions and with>>> Tracy's questions you know >>> the >>> person who was being interviewed was kind of getting fed up.

Einstein Why don't you ask Jennifer herself and ask her if she —

Daisy [To Jennifer] Well, were you getting kind of fed up?

Jennifer's answer was not intelligible on the tape but judging by the reactions of others, it seems that she said that she liked Einstein's question. Daisy then said that *Mariah* was fed up; but *Mariah* said, "I just said that he was getting off the subject". So Daisy tried Joey saying that he was "sounding kind of fed up" with her [Daisy's] questions. "Were you?" she asked. But Joey replied, "I didn't understand the question!"

At this point I [Alison] could see that Daisy was not getting any support from the others and that some of the co-researchers present in this session had not been in the sessions we were talking about and so I said that we could defer this discussion until I had done a transcript and we could look at it again then.

By this time my co-researchers had taken charge of our research agenda for this session:

(By using the name recorder list, the children co-researchers have been able to reclaim the agenda. There was a need to reflect on their previous research experience which I didn't plan for and which they did as a matter of course. —jk)

[S09/92.12.01Tu/DRG/Sigma Transcription Note]

Had we had the same co-researchers in attendance at each session and had I [Sigma] managed to produce transcripts from one session to the next, then we would have been in a better position to explore these concerns in more depth. As it was, in a moment of Sigma tension, I was anxious to get back to my own agenda for that day which was to try and shift our attention away from interviewing and back to our research questions.

Stories 3

Discussion as 'Communication'

Of great interest to my co-researchers (from the very beginning of the project) was the possibility of having a discussion with *oneself*. Consider, for example, the following research notes which Whoopy wrote in her steno pad at some point during Session 6 (Monica's visit). These notes were inspired by the preliminary discussion of our co-researcher questions in Session 2 during which we explored the possibilities of having a discussion with babies or plants.

Comment from Discussion

This is something concerning one of our discussions about "Can people talk to themselves or have a discussion with themselves?" I remember bringing up the point about people can talk to themselves because on Sunday my mother was talking to me about a phone she was going to buy. She had asked me what colour she should get. I gave her my choice and she had immediately said no. Then after "talking to herself" for a while, she decided on a colour.

[D/S06/92.11.17Tu/DRG/CoR/Whoopy/Co-researcher Notes/
"Comment from Discussion"]

Whoopy wrote these notes entirely on her own initiative and they are an indication of the staying power of this idea.

Three sessions later in Session 9, Ferrari provided a second early example of co-researcher sensitivity to a related issue when we were trying to say what 'collaborative' means. Einstein said it meant "working together" and I [Alison] asked if they would agree that we 'work together' in our discussions. When many voices agreed, I asked further, "Even when you're two? Would you call that collaborative?" This time a chorus of voices replied, "Yes".

That was when Ferrari introduced the related notion of *working with oneself*:¹⁰⁹

Ferrari When you're by yourself it's collaborative because you're working with yourself.

[VT/S09/92.12.01Tu/DRG/Verbatim Transcript]

In *Stories 3*: Discussion as 'Communication' I tell how, on my *co-researchers'* initiative, our exploration of 'discussion' (for learning) followed a line of inquiry that turned away from *my* interest in making comparisons with *other* forms of group talk. Instead it turned inward to *their* interest in the underlying notion of 'communication' as we addressed the fundamental question of whether, for something to count as a 'discussion', some form of 'communication' must occur. In this part of the investigation they were especially interested in the idea of communication with *oneself*— a data trajectory which I coded as "Cw1".

S09b: From Back to the Subject(s) to Discussion as 'Communication'

In Session 9, after the previous two sessions of research interviewing practice, and concerned that we were drifting, I [Sigma/Alison] shifted our attention from methodological activities back to exploring 'discussion for learning' during what turned out to be a pivotal session.

*Session 9 • Tuesday, December 1, 1992 • 12 Co-researchers*¹¹⁰

For this session I [Sigma] had prepared a detailed "Back to the Subject" course-correction plan to which I [Alison] moved as soon as we took care of housekeeping business and after we finished reflecting on our research interviewing practice. We then began a research discussion which started with the question of how important it is for a discussion (for learning) to have a subject and it was

¹⁰⁹ For more on this story, see S09b: Back to the Subject(s) in *Stories 6: Collaborating Cooperatively*.

¹¹⁰ Unless otherwise indicated, the source of the data for this sequence is the verbatim transcript of the audio tape for DRG Session 9, Tuesday, December 1, 1992.

during that exploration that our inquiry turned inward to the notion of 'communication'.

Back to the Subject(s)

As mentioned earlier,¹¹¹ the expression 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' was *not* a phrase with which my co-researchers were familiar but rather one which I [Sigma] had invented as a way of identifying the characteristics of the kind of discussions (for learning) which I understood to be characteristic of community of inquiry discussions in the Philosophy for Children program. To allow for the possibility that we might come up with descriptors *other* than my 'collaborative philosophical inquiry', at first I did not intend to use the expression 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' with my co-researchers deciding instead to use the more general and accessible term 'discussion for learning' to refer to the kinds of discussions which were a feature of class philosophy. Next I tell what happened when I changed my mind and decided to 'come clean' about the interpretation of 'discussion for learning' that I [Sigma/Judy] had formulated before we began.

"What is the research subject again?"

After telling my co-researchers I was a little concerned when I heard someone ask what it was we were researching, I used the overhead to respond to Einstein's question about what the D in DRG stood for.¹¹² After others answered for me — "Discussion" — I went on to suggest for the first time that henceforth we consider using the expression "collaborative philosophical inquiry" (shortened to "CPI") to refer to the kind of discussions we had in philosophy classes. First, though, we checked our understanding of the three conceptual elements of 'CPI'.

First 'Collaborative': they seemed to know that that meant working together and that we certainly did that in our discussions. "Even if when talking between two people," I asked? "Even if talking with one," Ferrari put in, for he thought it was quite possible for someone to work something out with oneself in a 'collaborative' way. Interesting.

111 See "Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry" under 1.4 Research Interest in Chapter 1. Introduction.

112 This was one of the rare occasions on which I used an overhead transparency for overt teaching purposes rather than as a way of recording our mutual discussion tracks.

Second, 'Philosophical': we did not linger over this since it seemed to go without saying that we knew we had philosophical discussions in philosophy. Indeed!

Third, 'Inquiry': here they did not seem to know the meaning of the term. Clearly they were guessing and after several tries, the closest they came was to "information". Someone next to me mumbled something about asking questions, though it seemed to me she was a little unsure. I responded that information is what you are looking for when you inquire but that actual inquiry was the asking of questions. Did we do that in our discussions? They agreed that we did.

[D/S09/92.12.01Tu/DRG/Sigma Notes, p. 3-4]

Then, adding to the transparency and in teacherly fashion, I attempted to introduce my co-researchers to conceptual analysis in a way that foreshadowed our practice of **theoretical sampling** using the five conceptual terms 'discussion', 'learning', 'collaborative', 'philosophical', and 'inquiry'. I suggested that our next research move would be to ask ourselves if we thought that CPI would count as a kind of Discussion for Learning (D4L); and that to answer that question we should look at 'discussion' and 'learning' separately. The white board onto which the transparency projected had material from the teacher whose classroom we were using and I did not erase it. This presented a distraction. While I pushed on with my explanation that one of the ways to do conceptual analysis was to place the different kinds of discussion on a chart in which there would be "model cases", "borderline cases" "contrary cases" and so on, my co-researchers' attention was taken up with the problem of not being able to see what was projected because of the un-erased writing on the white board. Several suggested at various points that I erase it, but I did not.

Later while transcribing these segments, I recognized several moments of Sigma tension: the Senior Researcher acting as research *teacher*"; my "influencing or even setting the agenda"; our being in "too much of a rush" and "lack of continuity in attendance". Awkward as they felt at the time, these moments turned out to be pivotal in our research process because they led to our explicit use of "collaborative philosophical inquiry" [CPI] to guide our data production as we began to analyze our understanding of 'discussion (for learning)' by concentrating on the five conceptual elements of 'discussion', 'learning', 'collaborative', 'philosophical' and 'inquiry' — separately and in relation to each other.

Finally we took a time out to organize people at the computers and then we carried on with Yasmin's name recorder list and began the day's discussion.

Discussion has to have a subject?

I invited my co-researchers to start either by naming a kind of discussion and saying where it belonged on the chart or by saying things about discussions.

"What was the subject of the whole discussion?"

Whoopy started off with a request for clarification about what the subject had been in the previous session in the library. Neither I nor Whoopy had been present but Jenny [?] confirmed that a discussion had indeed taken place.

Whoopy 'Cuz I mean >>> Daisy was saying that it had nothing to do with the subject — but I was wondering —

Allison — what was the subject. Heh, heh. Yes. Okay.

Alright. I wonder if we can turn your thing into something useful here and say, Do we have to have a subject? Does a discussion have to have a subject in order >>> to be a discussion?

Whoopy No. I mean you can just like talk about it and not even know what you're talking about.

Allison You could? Okay.

Jennifer asked if they could make comments and, in a directive response, I answered, "Yeh. Yeh. Anything that — that helps us to figure out what discussions are. We're focusing on discussion. Another time we'll come and focus on the learning. Which ones are discussions for learning"? Then Yasmin said it was Mariah's turn. Mariah, taken by surprise because she was working at the computer, said that it seemed they were always talking about the same topic, *i.e.* discussions, and she added that she would prefer to change. I countered by saying that they had been merely practising and that now we would be concentrating on the topic "that we go to other people with". We then started an inquiry about what constitutes a discussion.

'Discussion' has to be about something?

Staci Okay >>> about the >>> the discussion that we're doing?
>>> About the discussions >>> I don't think — well I — I
think you have to have a topic because >>> if you don't
have >>> a topic or a subject — whatever — then you can't
really talk about it- well you can talk about it but . . . like
>>> usually when you start a discussion you don't just say
like, "Well, we'll talk about nothing — or something." You
have to say like, "Let's talk about cats or dogs" or
something like that, you know. You can't just say >>>
nothing, you know? You can't just — you have to have
something to talk about. Well you don't have to if you don't
want to talk but —

Staci self-corrected throughout as she worked on producing this case of a discussion that did not have a subject; and she simulated the dialogue of such a discussion to see how it would sound. The only exception to the requirement that a discussion have a topic, she thought, would be "if you don't want to talk" at all.

Next, while I paraphrased Staci's point about the necessity of a topic, Whoopy interjected to ask if she could comment. However, I continued with Staci's idea in order to record it on the transparency. To Staci I said, "Okay, and you were saying >>> you could talk about anything" and Staci replied, "Yeah". Only after I [Alison] thought I had interpreted Staci's point to her satisfaction, did I ask Whoopy if she had anything to add.

Whoopy Well — it's a comment — if you wanted to talk about school,
you just don't go, "Okay, well let's talk about school." You
jus>go on >>> It's not like — you have kinda like a subject
— to talk ab-

Alison Aaah.

Jennifer? — you generally have to introduce it —

Whoopy — but it's not like — What [Staci] just said is like — If we
have to talk about — if we wanted to talk about school we
have to say well, you know —

Staci No-o!

Whoopy — but — I mean if you're going to talk about something
you're not going to say, "Well let's talk about our cat and
our dog."

Picking up on Staci's simulated dialogue, Whoopy took issue with what she had just said. She too illustrated her point with simulated dialogue only this time to say that in a discussion, you don't necessarily state what you're going to talk about. My "Aaah" was in recognition of the fine distinction I could see that Whoopy was heading for between implicit and explicit discussion subjects.

Staci Well >>> could I comment back? I wanted to say like — I know you don't say like, "Let's talk about school" you just say — "Well today in school I did this, I did that" — but >>> you have to like — You can't just say — nothing — You don't just — like — say >>> I don't know — "uh — well — uh — well —" [*She starts to laugh. Others laugh with her.*] You have to say it — like something that makes sense.

Staci integrated Whoopy's point with her own first by agreeing with what Whoopy said and then by producing more simulated dialogue that maintained her own point: although you do not explicitly announce the subject, it is embedded in what you are saying *about* it. Staci also made a different point about the *sense* of what is said in a 'discussion': you have to actually say *something* and something that *makes sense*.

In a reflexive move, Whoopy continued working on this distinction by reaching for our own DRG discussions as an example.

Whoopy But usually when a subject isn't like — you already know what the — what you're going to talk about it — like you always — you already have like — If we're — if we have >>> DRG, and we say that that's the subject, then we talk about DRG. But — with cats and dogs — It's not like — when you're going to talk to somebody you're gonna say, "Okay let's talk about — this — our subject is gonna be dogs — cats and dogs."

Here again Whoopy was pointing to a distinction between subjects which are implicit and explicit.

Staci Yeah I know but when we're — okay. There's two different things. When we're in philosophy in class, we always >>> pick a topic to talk about — well, like — when you're just in the schoolyard and you go up to your friend and you go — you don't say, "Let's talk about dogs or something." But in >>> *philosophy*, you *do*. Like we — we find a topic to discuss.

Whoopy So that's kinda like — . . . but it's the exact same thing kind of —

Staci So we're right and wrong.

By now Staci made the distinction explicit ("There's two different things") and she expressed it by contrasting (*not* DRG but) *philosophy class* (explicit topics) with *the schoolyard* (implicit topics). Both girls realized that they were now on common ground.

To help sort out the distinctions Staci and Whoopy were working on, I added that "you might always *have* a topic but you don't always say what it is before you start talking". Whoopy replied, "Like a subject is ah —". Staci, however, felt that it proved her "right" because "you have to have a topic". I then tried to show how the two positions were compatible.

Allison It proves both of you right because — I don't think she's — I don't think she's disagreeing that you talk about *something*, but she's — I think the point that you're making is that you don't say what it is *before* you talk about it.

Staci Yeah, well I didn't really *mean* you say >>> I meant you — you *still* have to have a *topic*. You don't say, "Let's talk about nothing." >>> You have to have something to talk —

Next I introduced another everyday context example when I said, "So if you're talking to your friend on the phone for hours (which I'm sure you do these days, right?) —" in response to which several answered, "Yeah, yes, uh huh. Yeah."

Allison You probably go from topic to topic to topic without — without saying, "Well let- now let's change the topic" — I mean you may do that *sometimes* but you don't do it every time you change, right?

Staci Yeah.

Allison But you're always talking about *something*.

Whoopy Well — so we shouldn't call it a 'subject' 'cuz a subject is something that you've already planned in your head that you're going to talk about.

The example of going from topic to topic in a phone conversation with a friend supported both Whoopy's view that you don't say you're changing the subject each time and Staci's idea that "you are always talking about *something*". At the end of this segment, Whoopy articulated that what makes a subject a subject and different from Staci's 'something' to talk about is the fact that it was premeditated. Thus for Whoopy, Staci's 'something' could *not* be just anything and still count as a 'subject'.

'Discussion' could be about nothing?

Our discussion changed direction when next Staci provided a contrary case. Reflecting further on her own experience of talking on the telephone with friends, she described instances when they 'talked' — but not *about* anything.

Staci Actually, Judy, you're *wrong*. Sometimes when I'm — talking on the phone with my friends we just go, "Wha-, Wha-". [*Everyone laughs.*] We just make each other laugh.

Allison So it's possible to ha- — Is that a 'discussion'?

After almost calling this a discussion (talk but *not* 'about something'), I stopped short and instead asked my co-researchers if *they* thought it was one. Neither Staci nor Whoopy did. When next I tried to draw a conclusion from Staci's observation, I ran into a problem of terminology and suggested that, for purposes of conceptual analysis, we *make* our own distinction by using the word 'topic' if it's predetermined and 'subject' if it isn't. Easier said than done.

Staci But topics and subjects are the same thing.

Allison Well that's right but >>> we can *say* — we're going to use one this way and the other one that way just so that we can talk.

Whoopy? Okay.

Allison So 'topic' is >>> announced beforehand? And 'subject' is not.

We'll see if it works. It might not because we're so used to using them by [*writes on transparency*] >>> not.

Whoopy Well you can put 'discussion' instead of 'topic' [Alison: *unintelligible*] 'cuz like — when you do a discussion it's not like if you have to know what it is, you can just like discuss it.

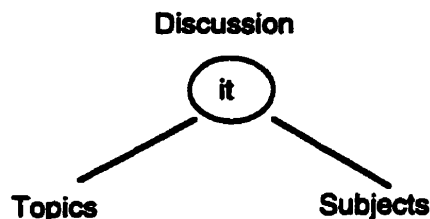
Staci No, you mean 'discussion' instead of 'subject.'

Whoopy Yeah well —

Although it may seem as though we were not getting anywhere with this, Whoopy's observation that "when you do a discussion it's not like if you have to know what it is, you can just discuss it" was a new point. Presumably she said "'discussion' instead of 'topic'" because of how we had said that predetermined 'topics' were a feature of DRG and class philosophy 'discussions'. Now she was saying that such 'discussions' are not *limited* to 'topics' ("when you do a discussion it's not like if you have to know what it is, you can just like discuss it.") — and *that*, as Staci pointed out, makes 'discussion' interchangeable with 'subject'

according to our intentionally limited sense of being talk about something which is not necessarily announced beforehand. Again they both had a point and I [Alison] tried to make our reasoning visible by making a diagram.

Allison Well, well let me draw a diagram. You have a- you can have a discussion . . . and all discussions have an "it" — that you're talking about — "it" —



Staci Not —
Allison — you're talking about something.
Staci — yeah — yeah.
Allison And — some of them are — topics —
Staci No but that's not true still.
Allison — you announce them beforehand?
Staci Oh yeah it is.
Allison And some of them 'subjects' — you *don't* announce them beforehand. [*They chuckle.*]

However, Staci was still not satisfied because this did not account for the "Wha-wha-wha" telephone talk she was thinking about.

Staci Yeah but — it's the same thing as >>> 'cuz sometimes when I'm talking with my friends on the phone and we're sort of feeling lazy and we — we don't want to hang up the phone like we still want to talk? —
Whoopy Yeah.
Staci — But we don't have >>> anything to say so we just go like, "Wha- wha-wha-wha-wha." [*chuckles*]
Allison Okay but —
Staci And it's sort of like a — uh —
Allison — but is that a 'discussion'?
Whoopy No.

In our pursuit of Staci's issue we circled back to whether or not it was a 'discussion' at all and in the process we generated two further possible distinctions: one between sense and nonsense discussions and the other between a part of a discussion and a whole discussion.

Staci Hmm — it's a *nonsense* discussion.
Whoopy Not really.
Staci Yes!
Whoopy It's just something to say so that you won't hang up the phone. [*chuckles*]
Staci Yeah but it's *part of* a discussion.
Allison That's what we have to do — we have to tie it down
 > > > What we want — what we need are other words —
 like — what *else* could you call that?
Staci I don't know.

Staci's classification of 'wha- wha-' talk as a '*nonsense* discussion' was an intriguing move which made me wonder later if a discussion had to make sense in order to count as a discussion. Her determination to count her 'wha- wha' talk as 'discussion' led me to the idea that perhaps we were forcing ourselves into an either/or mode (i.e. 'discussion' or '*not* discussion') when what we needed were more talk categories. Whoopy suggested "Mumbling" and "Mumbo jumbo" as other words to describe Staci's example. I replied that I would bring them a working list next time, if they didn't come up with one that day.¹¹³ Meanwhile, the present discussion moved on in an unanticipated direction.

'Discussion' as 'Communication'

During this next segment I experienced one of my moments of 'Sigma amazement' when our exploration of 'discussion' (for learning) took an unexpected conceptual turn. Up to this point we had explored 'discussion' by comparing it to other forms of group talk (such as television talk shows and political debates) and also in terms of whether 'discussion' (for learning) had to have a subject; and *my*

¹¹³ The list I had in mind was one of different types of group talk I had produced in the research proposal for this project and which we worked on in Session 12. See "What's the Same/Different...?" under S12: An Everyday Life Research Discussion: *Don't Talk Back!* in *Stories 4: Living and Learning*.

inclination was to continue articulating what counts as 'discussion' (for learning) in relation to still *other* forms of group talk in our experience.

Meanwhile on the transparency I started a list of words that might count as discussion which we could later try to put into our chart. My co-researchers, however, were intent on following a *different* conceptual path — one that led to the concept of 'communication' which *underlies* the concept 'discussion'. Kirby, who had just joined arrived, opened up a whole new area of inquiry when, building on Staci's example, she made a connection between 'discussion' and 'communication'.

Not a discussion because not really communicating?

Kirby began by saying, "I might be totally off 'cuz when I just walked in I didn't really know what's going on — so >>> can I say something?"

Kirby Okay. First thing when [Staci] said about "wha -wha-wha?" — She said that's a discussion? — I don't think that's a discussion 'cuz you're not really communicating — you're "wha- wha-" — and >>> they don't know what "wha- wha" means — they just go "blah- blah." So they're not really communicating but you sort of are going "blah-blah-blah". So it's very confusing. I don't think it's a good discussion.

In her intervention, Kirby examined the relationship between 'a discussion', 'really communicating' and 'meaning' and seems to say that meaning and communication were essential characteristics of discussion. However, she also seems to be saying that if something like 'blah-blah-blah' *is* a 'discussion', it is not a "*good* discussion".

I responded, "Okay, Alright. This gives me a whole different idea, here" and when Staci interjected, "Can I comment?", I carried on before acknowledging her.

Alison Let's — let's write — I'll just make a list of words that are *around* the word 'discussion'. So 'communication', 'discussion' — and >>> we'll make a collection. [*Some giggle loudly — not clear why.*] Alright. Go ahead.

Without saying so explicitly, here I was encouraging my co-researchers to join me in a conceptual analysis of 'discussion' in terms of its different forms.

Staci responded by considering the one Kirby had mentioned: 'communication'.

Staci It's true. It's communication, I mean. — Say >>> there are such things — aliens on another planet. How do you know? They might talk like "Blah-blah-blah-blah." — So it *is* a form of communication because that's sort of like — baby talk — like "Ga-ga-ga-ga." So — that's still a form of communication.

In her response Staci reached for an 'invented case' (aliens) and compared it to the 'model case' we had considered earlier (baby talk) and concluded that both were instances of 'communication'.

Kirby Still, when I'm talking to you — "Blah -blah -blah" — we don't *know* baby language. But if I'm talking to you — "Blah -blah -blah" — I don't really know what my comment is. [Some giggle.]

Staci Who cares?

Kirby? But that's not really communicating?

Judging by Kirby's comment that "we don't *know* baby language" she seemed to think that to be "really communicating" we had to know the language and what our own comments are. Staci's "Who cares?" response suggests that in the case of friends 'communicating' on the telephone this shared meaning was not relevant.

Staci You're sort of communica- — you're trying to say to the other person that you're — you don't want to *talk* but you're you just wanna — sort of — have fun. You know? Like — talking on the phone — so —

Kirby I guess that's true. I — that could be communicating but communicating and discussion are different things.

Here Staci's point was that in "Wha-wha" situations, there *is* meaning and some communication because you're indicating that you want to have fun. Kirby granted Staci's point but then stated outright that there is a distinction to be made between 'communicating' and 'discussion'. After this exchange and without agreeing with Kirby, Staci went on to explore the possibility that both "Wha wha wha" *and* "talking" count as two "parts" of a 'discussion' as if to say that what is minimally required is that participants say *something* whether or not it makes sense.

Next, when I asked Kirby if she had a second thing to say, she tried to relate what we were investigating to class philosophy discussions. Kirby thought about the telephone conversation example Staci had raised and she tried to make a distinction based *not* on what participants *say* (words or nonsense sounds) but based on what they talk *about* — thereby returning to the criterion explored earlier in this session that a ‘discussion’ has to be “about something”. In telephone conversations “you usually talk about school or something” whereas “when you get into *philosophy*, you don’t really know what to talk about,” she observed. And that led her to endorse the point made earlier that in philosophy discussions “it’s good to have a topic — to start you off”.

From “blah-blah” to “mini-mini” ?

When it was Yasmin’s turn next, she asked “why blah-blah” and not something else like “goo”? At first I [Sigma] thought Yasmin was making a conceptual analysis move here by exploring the possible *meaning* of “blah-blah”. However, instead she was asking about the *sounds*. Far from being unproductive, Yasmin’s move led Staci to think of a then-current instance from the world of advertising, and that in turn led her to make an important point about ‘communication’.

Staci Can I comment? [*Others talk at the same time.*] Well — I was just using “blah-blah-” as an example. It could’ve been [*sings*] “mini-mini hm hm” [*from a doughnut commercial current at the time*]. That’s still communication. They’re trying to tell you to buy mini’s.

Staci said that her example of “blah- blah” could easily be replaced by “Mini-mini hm hm”, pointing out that although “mini-mini” might *sound* like nonsense, it is really communication.

From “mini-mini” to discussion/communication?

There were no other significant comments until, Ferrari said, “ >>> Staci. Okay you said that >>> it’s still a discussion?” to which Staci replied, “NO! It’s not a *discussion*; it’s *communication*”.

Ferrari Communication. It’s communication. But putting it a different way, when you communicate with someone, you don’t go >>> “So how’s it doing, de-day-di day” (*sings sort of*) — You don’t start singing when you’re doing that.

After turning Staci's point over in his mind, Ferrari tried a different angle and challenged Staci's 'mini-mini' example on different grounds when he said, "You don't start singing when you're doing that".

Staci Yeah but there's different forms of communication. There could be talking, singing, dancing, like mime or — like — stuff like that.

Ferrari Well when you're communicating you're communicating. Well when you're — when you're talking — when you're dancing it's — singing. [*Others laugh wonderingly*]

When >>> you're singing — when you're talking but you're singing at the same time so its singing. When you're dancing you're dancing — everything.

Staci So but you can — it's still communicating — it's sending out a message.

Ferrari Different form so it's not communicating.

Voices overlapped. Then Tracy made an important point about communicating with *no* sound when she interjected, "You know that — some people >>> they do sign language — to communicate — like —". Someone responded "—huh?". Some chuckles and laughter. Staci said, "Yeah. That's a good point!" and then I suggested that we keep going on the list. Later I wondered if what Ferrari was trying to say was that a thing is what it is and not some other thing, or that something cannot be two different things at the same time.

From "blah -blah" to discussion/conversation?

When it was Jennifer's turn next, in a recursive move, she reflected on her own research experience as she related an example from an earlier discussion and went on to say.

Jennifer — sometimes it starts off with a blah- blah — Like maybe the blah- blah >>> isn't a discussion — but — like it ends up as >>> discussion.

As she continued, her criteria seemed connected with whether the utterance was relevant to anything else, that is, whether there was a 'point' to it. Jennifer's mention of 'conversation' suggested to me another possible form of 'communication' to add to Staci's list. And later I wondered if a student without philosophical background would make this kind of point.

'Blah- blah- blah' is not communication?

Next Whoopy led us into an exploration of the relationship between 'communication' and 'meaning' when she challenged Staci's view that "blah- blah- blah" counts as 'communication'. For her, communication "means that two people can understand each other".

Whoopy When you go "bla-blah-blah" can you understand what I just said?
Staci Yeah!
Whoopy What?

Staci tried to explain by saying that when she says these words, she means "I don't have other things to say".

Whoopy Yeah but "blah-blah-blah" does not *mean* that. I mean you can put that as —
Staci [*Voice getting louder*] Yes, it means "I do not have anything to say"—

Later, I noted that Staci and Whoopy were exploring the meaning of 'meaning': "Implicit distinction: what the words mean {meaning of} and what the person means by the words {meaning by}". Staci, however, collapsed the distinction saying, in effect, that the meaning of "blah- blah- blah" is what she means *by* it — namely, "I do not have anything to say".

Whoopy was still not satisfied and gave Staci a transposed example in which she changed the context. Raising her voice, too, she said, "Yeah, but I might say that to my mother and my mother might take it a different way —". Staci protested and many other voices joined in at once and loudly. Then Staci continued.

Staci If the other person knows what you mean then that's communicating.
Whoopy Just >>> say that they don't.
Tracy — if they *don't* —
Staci Yes but if they *do*!
? Yeah but you know what it means —
Whoopy Yeah but you >>> it's not *necessarily* tha >>> you *know* >>> that they understand what you mean and it's not communication if they don't understand.

Staci's argument is that ["blah- blah- blah"] *is* communicating "if the other person knows what you mean". However Whoopy and Tracy insisted that she also account

for when the other people do *not* understand. This led to Whoopy's idea that it is not enough for either *Staci* or 'the other people' to know what she means. *Staci* has to *know* that the other person understands.

Persisting with her point and thinking aloud, *Staci* added what she considered "a good point": "It *means* — *nothing* — exactly, so — it's still communicating that it means nothing". When Jennifer, Alison and Whoopy all suggested that she was contradicting her own earlier point that "blah -blah -blah" meant *something*, *Staci* stood her ground while at the same time allowing for Whoopy's point that it could vary. And that enabled her to maintain that "*either way* >>> it's *still* communicating".

At this point, using the transparency, I [Alison] tried to recapitulate the points that both *Staci* and Whoopy were making. Later, I realized that I had provided *my* interpretation — *not* theirs! However, the girls did not find this important enough to protest at the time.

"Mini-mini" in advertising is communication?

The other point Whoopy wanted to make took us back to the "mini-mini" jingle in the doughnut commercial which she stated was *not* 'communication' but was just "making whatever they're saying, more interesting". *Staci*, however, disagreed by invoking her minimum criterion that saying anything at all is communicating; thus, the mere utterance of "mini mini" qualifies it as an act of 'communication'. The discussion continued.

Staci Okay. Well >>> say I was this big — advertisement guy who's >>> making these commercials and advertising and stuff like that. >>> You would know that it was communicating because usually >>> it's sort of sending out this message and it sticks in the person's head. Because — that's how — You know in class everybody's always going "mini-mini" — that's because they remember it from the t.v. and that's like —

Whoopy Yeah but that doesn't say that you have to buy mini minis.

Staci But the message — But it's still — it's staying in your head so that means that they communicate to us.

Whoopy Yeah but what you said is like — that they use that — for other people to buy mini minis —

Staci Well it's both things.

Elaborating on her point by producing the example of an advertiser who created the “mini mini” jingle to send out a message”, Staci took her observation that “it sticks in the person’s head” as an indicator that it counts as an instance of ‘communication’ (message sent and received). Whoopy, however, was still not convinced and argued that the mere repetition of ‘mini mini’ in a commercial “doesn’t say that you have to buy mini minis”. In other words, there is no ‘message’ in the expression ‘mini mini’. Staci, meanwhile, maintained that it’s still ‘communication’ regardless of *what* is being said. It is enough that “it’s staying in your head so that means that they communicate to us”. For Whoopy it would only be ‘communication’ if *the actual message* (e.g. “Buy minis”) were stated. When Staci expanded her position to include Whoopy’s point that ‘mini mini’ was to make it more interesting (“Well it’s both things”), Whoopy continued to insist that it was *not* both and it wasn’t communication. By the end of this exchange, Staci had incorporated Whoopy’s point while Whoopy was still resisting incorporating Staci’s.

In response to Whoopy’s insistence, Staci produced yet another example — one from everyday speech and which makes more literal sense than either “blah-blah- blah-” or “mini mini”.

- Staci** Yes it is!!! — It’s — like if I said something to you, okay: “Hi, [Whoopy].” That’s communication. And still like if I go, “mini mini hm-hm hm-hm-hm” [*sings the jingle*]— I’m still communicating to you.
- Whoopy** What are you saying to me, though?
- Staci** I’m saying that you — you — like that — I saw — I saw the commercial and that you should buy a mini. [*Inaudible comment in the background.*] Because I’m sort of using >>> their commercial — and — whatever —

On the basis of the persistent conceptual work Staci and Whoopy were doing here, I wondered whether their disagreement was pointing to a distinction between ‘communicating *to*’ (Staci) and ‘communicating *with*’ (Whoopy). With regard to Whoopy’s question, “What are you saying to me though?” I also noted that her minimum criterion seems to be that the words must be words — that they must mean something in and of themselves. In Staci’s response to Whoopy’s question, and in contrast to Whoopy’s more literal requirement to ‘say’ *in words* what she means, Staci uses the term ‘saying’ more figuratively.

Reflecting on *Staci's* point, Whoopy thought about an actual instance from English class saying, "there's somebody who sits at our group — in English — and she's always saying that. But I don't go out and go and buy minis just because she said that". Staci said, "Yeah, I know but — since it sticks in people's heads — it's like sort of communication because you know that the message gets through — into their head", and I chuckled. At this point Jennifer interjected, "She means kind of blah-blah", and Staci stated explicitly, "It doesn't matter what the message is". Whoopy laughed at that and I confirmed Staci's point with her by saying, "Ah! Okay, So as long as something goes from your head to that person's head, regardless of what it is —". Staci responded, "Yeah". I noted later that Staci's minimum criterion is "that the message get through" (*i.e.* not necessarily understanding but minimally repetition — a completed transmission).

Next, just as Whoopy was about to accept Staci's point, she thought of another possible objection:

Whoopy Oh so like — But [Staci], just say that I say "Bye" to you — and something else and then like you have something else — I mean. Like if I say "Bye" —

Staci Yeah —

Whoopy — and you think that I said "Hi" — I mean [*laughs*] >>> It's kind of like different.

New criterion: Must be the message as sent. How can we know which message is received? Must be the same message to count?

[VT/S09/92.12.01Tu/DRG/Sigma Transcription Note]

Staci responded, "Yeah but that's *hearing* and it's —" and I [Alison] added, "That's *miscommunication*—". A pause followed and was broken by many speaking at once. Then someone said, "That's understanding", and we all laughed. When it was time to stop, Jennifer concluded the session saying, "Staci's having a hard time —". This was just the beginning our exploration of the relationship between 'communication' and 'discussion' (for learning) and it ended on a high note.

S10: Conceptualizing 'Communication'

Communicating with "Cotton Candy", A Talking Bear

In the very next session, my Session 9 moment of 'Sigma amazement' intensified when our 'What counts as discussion (for learning)?' inquiry took another unexpected turn. I had been surprised earlier when my co-researchers pursued a line of inquiry that led us *into* or *behind* the concept of 'discussion' by exploring whether and how 'discussion' necessarily involves 'communication' — a move which was in sharp contrast to my penchant for exploring 'discussion' (for learning) by moving *out* from it and comparing it to *other* forms of discussion. It was *they* who made the connection between 'discussion' and 'communication' and I was amazed at how intensely it sustained their interest.

Next, to examine *how* dependent 'discussion' might be on 'communication', we worked on what we would count as 'communication' and this line of inquiry sustained my co-researchers' interest and attention even more. It was in this session that we investigated the aspect of communication with *oneself* — systematically and in detail.

Session 10 • Thursday, December 3, 1992 • 11 Co-researchers¹¹⁴

During Startup for this session we dealt with several organizational issues, including DRG computer work. Most of the students chose to work on the computers either at the keyboard or on their own, leaving only two to do discussion. However, the set-up of the room made a lively exchange possible and considerable progress was made. We began by playing back the end of the tape from the previous session.

¹¹⁴ Unless otherwise indicated, all verbatim data are taken from either the verbatim transcription of audio tape, or Sigma Transcription or Research Notes pertaining to Session 10, Thursday, December 3, 1992.

Conceptualizing 'Communication'

Staci began with a **tape intro** saying, "Okay, well we're resuming the >>> discussion about communication? — well >>> the discussion about discussions really". She then embarked upon a fairly lengthy dialogue with Ferrari about the nature of communication, the importance of a receiver and what/who counted as a receiver.

Answering

Staci first noted that Ferrari had said earlier that "when you communicate with someone, there should be an answer". Then, addressing him directly, she provided an everyday example when she took issue with the point he was making:

But I don't think that's true because if you make a statement like — if I go, "Mum, I'm going to the store," — well, there would be — an answer. But say you go, "I finished my homework" — there doesn't have to be an answer. . . . So >>> it's sort of wrong, what you said.

Having thought of one example, Staci then self-corrected and produced another. Her tentative conclusion is an example of our class philosophy practice of respectfully saying that what a person *said* is wrong (rather than the person himself) — and this in a way that invites further inquiry.

- Ferrari** Okay >>> Staci, you said — it's sort of wrong?
When your mother says, or when you say, "I did all my homework," your mother'd probably say, "Are you su-u-r-e?"
And then you'd say, "Y-e-s".
- Staci** Okay well — no, because (heh-heh-heh) — usually I don't tell my mom I'm finished my homework.

Later, I noted that this was a diversionary reply by Staci in which she does not address the point but diverts away from the issue altogether — even though it was her own example.

Undaunted, Ferrari continued by producing another example.

Ferrari Well let's say you say >>> "Mummy can I have a cookie?"
She'd say, "Yes".

Staci But that's a question. That's not a statement.

Ferrari Okay, so — "Mother, I want a cookie."

Here again Staci challenged the example Ferrari produced rather than addressing the point he was trying to make. This time she made a distinction between a question (which would call for an answer) and a statement (which would not). Without skipping a beat, Ferrari transformed his example into a statement to accommodate Staci's distinction and I [Alison] chuckled appreciatively at their agility.

Next, after trying one more diversionary move, Staci modified her position while still maintaining it.

Staci Then she goes, "*Excuse me?*" She goes — "You don't say
[?I want?]"

Ferrari But that's a st- — that's a —

Staci Yeah, but there — okay — fine — there's not *always* an
answer. There *can* be an answer, but not always.

Still not satisfied, and to press his point that in 'communication' there is *always* an answer, Ferrari produced another example .

Ferrari There's always [an answer] because it always sparks
someone's interest — you know let's say they say >>>
"Mother, I'm going outside." And — you know —

Staci pounced on this latest example and superimposed a new one of her own involving "Joe", a fictitious character she thought up on the spot.

Staci No, if you say like, "I don't like >>> " — okay, well, say
there's a name like — a guy named Joe — you go, "I don't
like Joe." You know —

Still undaunted, Ferrari used *Staci's* example to support the point *he* was trying to make.

Ferrari She's gonna say something. She's probably >>> gonna
say, "Well what happened today in school with Joe?"

So then, still trying to maintain her claim that communication does not always require an answer, Staci made a new move. She eliminated the second person

(mother) from the relation — and this opened up a new line of inquiry into the realm of communication with oneself.

- Staci** Yeah but what happens — Sometimes if I'm in my room alone and I'm just talking to myself, who will answer? No one.
- Ferrari** Yeah but that — that's not — you're not >>> saying it to *someone*. You're —
- Staci** I'm 'communicating' to myself.
- Ferrari** But that's not *communicating*. 'Communicating' is with someone else.

By substituting herself for the second person, Staci tried to produce a plausible example of 'communication' in which there was no one else to answer. When Ferrari countered that 'communication' involves saying it to *someone*, Staci argued that that *someone* was herself — whereupon Ferrari stipulated that to count as 'communication' the *someone* had to be someone *else*.

In response to this, Staci made a further adjustment to her case when she substituted *something* else for herself in her example.

- Staci** Okay fine. I'm communicating with my stuffed animal.
- Ferrari** But that's not communicating.
- Staci** Yes it is! Okay. It — whatever. >>> It doesn't matter — or I don't think it matters if you're >>> really talking to *someone*. It can be *something*. . . 'Cuz like — I see some people —
- Ferrari** — But that's not when they're communicating 'cuz 'communicating' — is when you — you get an answer back.

As Staci countered every point that Ferrari made in her efforts to maintain her position, she also added modifications to accommodate Ferrari's objections. In so doing, together they examined different criteria for what to count as communication: *e.g.* whether there must be an answer and whether that answer must come from *someone* or *something* else. And just at the end, Ferrari added a new criterion: that "communicating" — is when you — get an answer back".

Understanding

Next Staci personified both the “stuffed animal” in her last example and what it is to communicate with oneself when she introduced us to *her* stuffed animal, “Cotton Candy”. However, it was difficult to tell how serious she was or whether she was playing with Ferrari in her continued insistence on being right. Ferrari, meanwhile, entertained (and was entertained by) her persistence and he matched it with his own as they continued to make progress with their exploration of ‘communication’.

- Staci** >>> I have this bear — and it's my favourite bear — her name is Cotton Candy. (She ate one of my other bears this morning because she has a pouch in — in her stomach — okay). Well >>> I always make her talk — so I tell her things and >>> she answers me back.
- Ferrari** Yeah. — *Really?*
- Staci** Yeah. — Well — I make her answer me back. But still — that's communicating.
- Ferrari** No it isn't — you know why? . . . Communicating seriously is — speaking with someone else.
- Staci** I *am*. I'm speaking with my bear. It's a different voice.

Staci readily acknowledged that she was doing the talking for her bear. However, using his argument that ‘communication’ is “speaking with someone else”, Ferrari countered that Staci's talking with her bear does *not* count as ‘communication’. Staci then argued that this *is* ‘communication’ because, “It's a different voice”. She most likely meant this literally since she would actually change her voice when speaking as Cotton Candy. It is also possible, however, that she meant that Cotton Candy's “different voice” represents a different point of view.

In his response, Ferrari called Staci's attention to the issue of whether Cotton Candy was a *someone* or a *something*. He states that Cotton Candy is a *something* and is surprised when Staci counters that it's mean to classify bears as ‘somethings’ when they're really ‘someones’.

Showing signs of frustration, Ferrari interrupted Staci and gradually the absurdity of her example dawned on him. I noted that he wanted to take her seriously but didn't understand what she could seriously mean.

Ferrari [Confusion]... Okay fine. I want to make it a better way. ... If — You communicate with you[r] bear?

Staci Yeah.

Ferrari Oh — Whoa — [Alison chuckles.] You talk to your bear?

Staci Yes. I talk to my bear >>> My bear's very cute and you — you would think so too. [Others chuckle while Ferrari puts his hand to Staci's forehead?] I don't think I have any fever. [More chuckling.]

Ferrari You talk to your bear?

Staci Yes! In the morning, she goes, [Staci changes her voice to bear's voice] "Hi, Mommy." And I go, "—

Ferrari But she doesn't talk back. You commu— That's not communicating though. Even —

Staci Yes it is!

Ferrari — when you're saying — It's called "saying someth—" — it's >>> maybe —

Staci When you say something you communicate.

Ferrari . . . but 'communicate' is when — I'm communicating with you and you're communicating with me —

In conceptual analysis terms, for Staci just 'saying something' is sufficient for 'communication'. For Ferrari, on the other hand, 'saying something' is necessary but *not* sufficient since by this account 'communication' is a reciprocal event.

When Ferrari doubted Staci and checked her head for signs of fever, he could have written off her argument but he did not. Rather he continued to work *with* her examples as he tried, still unsuccessfully, to convince her. Staci, meanwhile enjoyed the attention and was not about to back down.

Putting her case to Ferrari in personal terms, Staci said, "Just because you never do — [talk to a thing]". At that, changing his behaviour to meet her objection, Ferrari immediately turned to a computer and said, "I'm talking to the computer now" — and I [Alison] chuckled. Not satisfied, however, Staci replied, "So talk!" as if to say that *saying* you are talking to a computer is not the same thing as *actually* talking to it.

"I'm talking! Yeah. Hi, Computer," Ferrari replied and added, "He's not saying anything —". Then, changing her voice to a deeper voice, Staci joined in saying, "Hi. Hi, Ferrari," and Whoopy and others laughed.

Reflecting on the little role-play that they had just enacted, Ferrari and Staci interpreted it differently and in so doing they introduced a new conceptual element — ‘understanding’ — to the inquiry.

Ferrari That's >>> called >>> making a *statement* to the computer.
Staci Yeah but maybe >>> it doesn't *understand* you; but my bear understands me because I — like / talk back to *me*.
Ferrari He doesn't talk back to you either — stuffed bear.
Staci *She*. — Okay. Next. [*Chuckles*]

In this new move, Staci pointed to two differences. One was that unlike Cotton Candy, maybe the computer did not respond to Ferrari because it did not *understand*. Cotton Candy, on the other hand, *did* understand because she “talked back” (“*I* talked back to *me*.”). In his reply, Ferrari did not accept Staci’s distinction whereupon, after specifying that Cotton Candy was a ‘she’, Staci decided it was time to give someone else a chance.

What is intriguing here is that there *is* a discernible difference between the example of Ferrari talking to the computer and Staci talking to her stuffed bear. Ferrari did not feel as though he had ‘communicated’ with the computer simply by virtue of having said something to it *even if* it *did* respond as when Staci role-played its ‘voice’. Staci, on the other hand, *did* feel a sense of having ‘communicated’ with her bear by virtue of having said something to it and it having “talked back” when she role-played *its* voice. The difference was in what Staci referred to as the ‘understanding’ that she claimed occurred when “*I* talked back to *me*”. Ferrari may have been right to argue that ‘saying something’ is not enough to count as ‘communication’; and similarly Staci may not have been wrong to suggest the added element of ‘understanding’ (whether between self and other or self and self) *is* enough to count as ‘communication’.

Talking

When Chocolate joined in next, she opened up the concept of 'communication' to include more than just talking.

You don't have to talk to communicate

Chocolate Okay. >>> I don't think you have to talk to communicate >>> because you could communicate with your eyes or something. You don't have to — talk like — you don't have to go — "Hey, how are you?" — because sometimes if you just look at the person you could see if they're sick if they're happy if they're sad. So — there's>>>different ways of communicating — there's not always talking.

Time out. Unfortunately, we did not take up Chocolate's point just then because the beeper signaled the time to change the people working at the computers and we took a five-minute time out.

Talking to yourself

When we resumed, Arachnid, who had been listening while working at a computer, supported Staci's idea of talking to her stuffed bear.

"Okay," he began, "so I was listening to the discussion before and >>> Staci >>> said she talked to her teddy bear? And>>>Ferrari found it was>>> funny or weird. And it's not *really* weird — I'm not saying that / talk to *my* [?stuffed?] animals, but say >>> you want to talk to someone but no one's in the house or no one's *there* — I mean it's just >>> like — you're talking to yourself — not really talking to yourself but — You're just getting thoughts out —". "Right," someone agreed, and Arachnid continued, "— It's not like you're — purposely trying to have a conversation with your stuffed animal".

Here Arachnid made a distinction between two kinds of 'talking to yourself'. One might be considered weird ("purposely trying to have a conversation with your stuffed animal"); but the other might not ("just getting thoughts out" when you feel "talking to someone but ... no one's there.") Staci, however, rejected the basis for this distinction and countered that she "purposely" had "a conversation" with her

teddy bear. Then she became defensive when Arachnid chuckled and she asked him not to make fun.

Talking to a telephone

Next Staci returned to a point raised earlier by Ferrari about not being able to talk to *something*. Addressing Ferrari directly, she said pointing, "You see that football over there? It's a phone. . . That's talking to something. . . you're talking to the person but you're not talking *directly* to the person because >>> you have to go through all the wires and stuff so you're really talking to the phone". Here Staci deliberately produced an example of talking "to" a 'thing' (telephone) in the *absence* of a person and she also produced a new consideration — that of talking *directly* or *indirectly*.

Ferrari and Staci then argued back and forth about whether you were speaking to a person (Ferrari) or speaking to a phone (Staci). In his struggle to make sense of Staci's argument, Ferrari introduced yet another consideration, that of *intention* as if to say that who or what you speak *to*, depends on to whom (or to what) you *mean* to speak. Next Staci tried to clarify what she meant and in the process she made a different distinction which led to another new consideration.

"No. But what I'm saying," Staci said, "is that — you're talking to the person, like you're *addressing* >>> whatever you're saying to the *person* but you're really *talking* to the phone, you're not talking to the person. If I was here and I'm talking to you — that means I'm talking to you. But if I was talking on the phone, I would really be talking to the phone".

Here Staci made a distinction between 'addressing' and 'talking to' someone or something based on both physical proximity and intention: you can 'talk to' a *thing* (a telephone) which is 'here' while at the same time 'addressing' *what* you are saying 'to' a *person* who is not here. She equated talking *on* the phone with talking *to* the phone. At this point, Ferrari expressed misgivings about how much sense and how much progress we were making. However, in a staccato exchange, Staci insisted she was serious. Finally, willing to give Staci the benefit of the doubt, Ferrari tried a different approach.

"Watch this," Ferrari said: "Arachnid —".

Arachnid responded and Ferrari noted, "He answered".

"That is really — that is 'talking' — not —," Staci began.

"That is 'communicating'," Ferrari insisted.

Staci continued to insist that talking on the phone "is communicating with the phone but the phone is sending it to the *person!*" through the wires. Arachnid protested that "you're not >>> *meaning* to speak to the phone", and Staci acquiesced adding, "But you're still >>> talking to— >>> into the *phone* — you're not into the person — like you're not talking directly to the person — it's like *indirectly* to the person".

Time out: Is this really philosophy?

By this time, Ferrari had reached his limit, and he asked me for a philosophical assessment of what we were doing. My response to Ferrari's question was a stream-of-consciousness account of how what we were doing now related to what we had done before. I mused that maybe the *how* of their discussion was getting out of hand but the *what* was indeed very philosophical because they were trying to explore the dependent nature of the relationship between discussion and communication and what constitutes communication. Ferrari, however, was not satisfied. Staci, on the other hand, was anxious to keep going and this time she produced a different example.

Talking to dogs

Staci ... You know I was saying about my teddy bear and you were saying that I was talking to a thing?

Ferrari Yes.

Staci A lot of people talk to their dogs. . . .

Ferrari Yeah I know but that —

Staci But dogs can't talk back!

Ferrari But >>> they commu— they don't communi — they say, "Hey, come here, boy. Come here, boy." *That* they understand but you don't say, so uh —

Staci [*Jumps on Ferrari's words.*] But they don't understand — they — they can't really hear —they hear the tone of your voice, that's why.

This new example of people talking to dogs addressed Ferrari's and Arachnid's objections to the telephone example by removing the ambiguity regarding who (a person) or what (a telephone) was being addressed while at the same time retaining

the problem of reciprocity since “dogs can’t talk back!” Later, I noted how Staci had come up with another example only this time of an *animate* ‘thing’ which supposedly cannot communicate and how she was getting closer to her stuffed bear.

At first Ferrari agreed that people talk to dogs but then he self-corrected regarding whether they ‘communicate’ when he realized that there were limits to dogs’ abilities to understand. Before he could finish his thought, however, Staci pointed out that dogs *don’t* ‘understand’ and then she offered a different explanation for why they respond as if they do (hearing the tone of your voice). Ferrari agreed with Staci’s interpretation saying, “Yeah. Okay”.

Talking to a telephone (revisited)

Ferrari returned to Staci’s telephone example and began by checking his interpretation of what she had said.

Ferrari >>> Well >>> Staci >>> you said that when you look at/to/listen to the phone? — that you’re talking — you’re communicating with someone eh? That’s what you said.

Staci Hmm. No, no.

Ferrari You’re communi— you’re talking — to the phone.

When Ferrari self-corrected here, he was trying to make a distinction between ‘communicating’ (“with someone”) and ‘talking to’ (“the phone”). However Staci objected that this was *not* a distinction that *she* was making. She reiterated the idea that “you *are* talking to the person but it’s sort of like indirectly. . . So you *are* talking to the phone!”

Although Ferrari agreed with the distinction Staci was making between talking *directly* to the phone and talking *indirectly* to the person, nevertheless, when he made the point about being “face to face”, he *still* made a further distinction between these two forms of ‘talking to’ and ‘communication’. “That’s — communication” he said, as if to suggest that talking to/on the telephone is *not* ‘communication’ because the talkers are not face to face.

Staci It’s [?almost?] like — talking to the phone. . . . because the phone takes your communication thing — and —

Ferrari Right now —

Staci —brings it to the other person —

Ferrari — right now we're having communication —
 Staci Right —
 Ferrari But I'm looking at the phone and saying —

This time, when Staci said that “the phone takes your communication thing and *brings* it to the other person” she seemed to treat ‘communication’ as a *thing* (i.e. a message or *what* is being said) which is *distinct from* the activity of talking (directly or indirectly) to the telephone. She did not deny that she and Ferrari were “having communication” right now. It was not necessary to do so to make her point. Although it may seem as though Ferrari and Staci were repeating themselves here, actually they were engaged in a process that led Staci to produce yet another ‘talking’ example.

Communicating with a tape recorder

Staci Yeah. I'm communicating also with this thing here, with the tape recorder.
 Ferrari But >>> it's not communicating with you!
 Staci Yeah! Because — when we turn it off and then we play it back then it is.
 Ferrari . . . [Thinks about this]

This time Staci used the term ‘communicating’ (rather than ‘talking’) to describe what she was doing with the tape recorder. Prepared for Ferrari's retort, she had deliberately produced an example which accounted for the earlier arguments requiring a response (or ‘talking back’) for ‘communication’ to have occurred. Whereas both the telephone and dog examples had been inconclusive in this respect, the tape recorder was an example of a *machine* that *could* ‘talk back’ and thus, according to Ferrari's criteria, a case not just of ‘talking’ but of ‘communicating’. Staci's argument gave Ferrari something to think about further.

In these segments, Staci's ability to construct new examples (‘talking to dogs’ and ‘communicating with a tape recorder’) by accounting for the objections raised in earlier dialogues and by revisiting the telephone example served to advance our inquiry by leading us to explore what counts as ‘communication’ in relation to five interrelated examples: communicating without talking, talking to yourself, talking to a telephone, talking to dogs and communicating with a tape recorder.

Understanding (revisited)

Next we took the inquiry further still by exploring 'communication' in relation to 'understanding' as represented in examples we continued to think of and remember.

Understanding

I asked my co-researchers if communication could only be said to happen if the person/thing/object that you are trying to communicate with understands the message. When someone interjected "like the blah-blah? ", I responded with further questions: Do they have to understand what *you're* trying to say? Or >>> does it *matter* what they understand? Could they *think* they understand >>> and have it — *be* communication? Or *not* be communication?" and then I added, "maybe you're not talking *to* the phone, maybe you're talking *into* the phone".

I heard one or two "Hm-hmm's!" in response. Then I added that when you're talking *to* something — even your bear — it's as if, in your imagination, the bear understands or hears you. Otherwise you wouldn't *talk* to it if you didn't think that. Staci accepted all of these points. Then I moved our exploration in a different direction.

Allison — But — you don't feel that about the telephone — The telephone >>> is the *vehicle* — it's the thing that *takes* your message — but you don't >>> talk to the *telephone* in the same way you talk to your bear —

Staci Yeah, I guess not — no, it's just because — of the way that it's shaped — like the football because it's sort of like you're talking into a thing.

The telephone in question *was* in the shape of a football — a "thing" *not* usually used for communicating. But Cotton Candy was in the shape of a bear — a 'thing' which, in children's *literary* experience at least, might well be associated with talking and communicating (*e.g.* The Three Bears, Winnie the Pooh or Yogi Bear). Then, after I offered a reflexive meta observation about the philosophical moves we had been making in our exploration of different sorts of examples, the discussion continued.

Understanding Cotton Candy

After asking if she could comment, Staci pursued my exploration of 'understanding' using an anecdote about Cotton Candy.

"Okay," she began, "the thing about my bear, you know, the thing about understanding >>> . Last night when I was in bed I was really bored so I put one of my little bears inside >>> Cotton bear's stomach — and in the morning she goes, [*Staci changes her voice.*] [???], I've got a big stomach ache.' And then >>> she said, >>> 'Can you >>> open my tummy? It hurts.' [*Others are entertained.*]

So then >>> my dad —". . .>>> opened up the velcro pouch and >>> took my other bear out >>> and she goes, [*She changes her voice and is not very intelligible*]

Then Staci concluded, "So it's sort of like >>> I make her say what I'm thinking for her?". "Hm hmm?" I [Alison] responded and Staci went on, " So it's sort of like — she — >>> like I understand her."

Talking with yourself

Taking Staci seriously, I tried to interpret her example by relating it to our earlier idea of 'talking with yourself' and added that she was like a ventriloquist. She disagreed with that saying that she couldn't talk without moving her lips; but I countered that that was the only thing missing. Then, when I realized Staci was only half listening, I suggested that we move on.

Understanding animals

Next, Chocolate took up Staci's point about talking to dogs, and went on to explore the wider issue of understanding animals.

Chocolate >>> people *do* talk with their animals. Like — I talk with my aunt's cats all the time. . . . because — I go there after school and I'm like, "Oh! I'm so tired." And >>> sometimes when I ask them >>> I know they wouldn't answer me I mean >>> I'm not stupid — but >>> sometimes I ask them — "Do I really look tired?" or something. And sometimes when I >>> look them in the eye — sometimes I could *tell* — what their *answer* is.

Although she knows the cats wouldn't answer her, at the same time when she looks them in the eye she says that sometimes she could *tell* — what their *answer* is.

While transcribing this segment, I detected a distinction being made here between understanding what someone is saying (literally) and *being* understanding as in sympathetic, and I noted further that this anecdote supports her earlier observation that it is possible to communicate without talking.

When Staci responded, she built on Chocolate's point by adding another illustrative anecdote about her cousin's dog, Oreo. When Staci had asked, "Is Oreo —?", the dog seemed to answer with a 'woof' that sounded like 'no!' and shook his head. Chocolate supported Staci's Oreo story with her own experience of cats meowing in a way that sounds like 'yes'.

These examples we were using took the form *not* of hypothetical instances but rather of actual anecdotes from our own experience. For purposes of our inquiry, these stories constituted mutually reinforcing real-life examples of reciprocal 'understanding' between people and their (stuffed or not stuffed) animals.

Communicating

To conclude this part of our exploration of what counts as 'communication', Mariah, Arachnid and Staci returned to the issue of reciprocity using two examples we had already generated: 'communicating' with a tape recorder and with your dog.

Communicating with a tape recorder

Mariah, who had arrived late after a gymnastics practice, challenged the assertion Staci had made that she 'communicated' with the tape recorder.

"When you told >>> that to Ferrari," she said, " >>> Like — *you* could communicate with it but that doesn't mean that it'd have to come back and communicate to *you*. "Yeah but—" Staci interjected. "Do you understand?" Mariah wanted to know.

"No but it *can*," Staci tried to explain, "because — you know how I said >>> when you — turn it off and then you play it back? [*Chuckling.*] Then it communicates to you". "Yeah—," Mariah replied, "but it >>> communicates to *you*, but you— but do *you* communicate back?" "Yes!" Staci said. "Right now I'm communicating — to the recorder. "Hi recorder, how are you?"

"NO!" Mariah insisted. Then she asked, "But when it's playing, do you — do you communicate with — it?" "Yeah," Staci persisted. " — just >>> yeah here's an example. Before >>> me and >>> Whoopy were >>> listening to it and I was >>> there was something that >>> Whoopy said and I was like, 'No, >>> you don't, you don't do that' and then I said something different on the tape so I sort of *am* — you *can* communicate with it while it's re- — like replaying what you said."

". . . But," Mariah said while someone giggled in the background, "— you're not >>> communicating to the *voice* inside the tape — you're not communicating to the recorder". "Well that's because the recorder doesn't have like a *person* inside it or something," Staci replied. "But you're still communicating with it really. If you think about it — Because — [*others giggle gently*] — Oh nevermind".

For Staci it seems that 'communication' could be a one-way relation as in 'communication' as *sending* a message, for example, saying something — *anything* — to the tape recorder. For Mariah, however, some form of reciprocity *at the same time* seems to be a minimal condition for something to count as 'communication' (as in 'sending, receiving and *sending back*' a message).

Staci's response to Mariah's question is very interesting because of her example of how talking to a tape recorder and just playing it back can *have an effect* on the message *sender*. Thus if/when hearing a tape recorder replay what you said produces a response in you that you might not otherwise have had, then in a sense the tape recorder is 'sending back' a message of sorts. Perhaps it is in *this* sense that Staci means that she can 'communicate' with Cotton Candy. Even though it is *Staci* who is providing Cotton Candy with the words/thoughts, it is *the effect that so doing* has on *Staci* that makes this count as 'communication'. I noted that this could be an interesting line of thought to pursue.

Communicating with your dog

Next Arachnid returned to the issue of talking to one's dog only this time he made a distinction between 'talking' and 'responding'.

"Okay," Arachnid began. " >>> I'm commenting on — Staci? — when you said >>> you >>> talk to your dog? But >>> it doesn't talk back? But it *does* respond. Let's say >>> you scold it. It's not >>> just standing

around >>> it goes and hides or something — [???] — Even though they don't *talk* they still respond. If you say "Sit," they sit — it's like —.

"Yeah! That's what I said!" Staci exclaimed. "I said that they can — communicate with you and you can communicate with them".

Arachnid's point that it is possible to respond *without* talking supports the point Chocolate made at the outset and it is the mirror image of the point Staci was making when she talked about how hearing a tape replay what you said can count as a 'response' by virtue of the fact that it *produces* a response in the message sender.

Communicating with a t.v.

To elaborate on the point about communication she was making, Staci produced an example using the taping we were doing in our DRG here and now. Arachnid argument that the tape recorder was not 'talking back' because "it's your own voice" was not enough to convince Staci. For one thing, in a strict sense she would argue that both the tape recorder *and* Cotton Candy can be said to 'talk back'. And his objection that "it's your own voice" is also not enough, for in the case of communicating with oneself one could also say that "it's your own voice". Still not wanting to surrender the point she was making, Staci tried again only this time she produced a 'retroactive t.v.' example which did not lead us anywhere.

"We're communicating now."

Next Arachnid tried to elaborate on the point *he* was making — also by making an example out of our here and now.

Arachnid Okay — well let's say — *now* — we're communicating like — you just stopped talking and I *talked* — it's like >>> if you're >>> talking to the >>> tape — and then — you stop and rewind it — and it >>> and *you* say it's communicating back to you — but it's just saying the same things over. It's not really talk — it's —

Staci *I know!* —

Arachnid Like >>> if we're communicating now >>> Okay let's say you say like you just said "I know". >>> I'm not going to communicate and say, "I know". I say something *else*. And if it's just saying the same thing, it's not really communicating.

Staci Yeah but — if it's like — oohh — I keep on forgetting what I'm going to say but — it's sort of — if — . . . >>> If the

tape machine . . . wasn't . . . on — I guess I wouldn't really be communicating — *with* >>> the machi — like — I dunno — but I *might* be in a certain way because it's >>> in the room and it's listening.

Arachnid's point — that it is *what* you say that matters — *does* make a difference. He adds that you must do more than simply repeat for it to count as 'communication'. This time Staci was at a loss.

As soon as Staci made the remark that the tape recorder was "listening", Arachnid said, "But—" and Staci self-corrected saying, "It's not *listening*, but—". Nevertheless, Arachnid took up the point she was trying to make just the same.

Arachnid — but you're not talking — you're not communicating *with* it. You're communicating with *me*. — It's just hearing what's going on. Right now — right now >>> Ferrari is hearing what's happening but you're not communicating with him.

Ferrari, who by this time had reached for a dictionary, laughed at this. I [Sigma] later noted that Arachnid was taking Staci seriously and might be allowing that her argument had possibilities while not being convinced by it.

Doubting and Defending Dictionaries

'Conversation'

For some reason which confused Staci and Arachnid at first, while "listening" to but not "communicating" with Staci, the word Ferrari decided to look up in the dictionary was '*conversation*'.¹¹⁵

Ferrari 'Conversation' first. "An informal spoken exchange of thoughts and feelings; a talk. — close >>> acquaintance or association; >>> manner of life; behaviour; — sexual intercourse — **make conversation**: to talk for the sake of politeness."

While Staci and Arachnid were trying to redirect his attention to 'communication', Ferrari persisted and found relevance in the definitions he found for 'conversation'. It was only when Staci emphatically insisted that we were talking about 'communication' not 'conversation' that Ferrari finally relented.

¹¹⁵ In what follows, all references to the dictionary are to *Webster's illustrated encyclopedic dictionary*. (1987). (1990 ed.). Montreal: Tormont Publications Inc., p. 357.

"Let's move on . . ."

Next Staci said, "Well . . . I guess everybody has to — see it their own way". Then she said, "Well let's try to move on to something else because this is getting [?boring?]" Others giggled gently, but Ferrari and Arachnid disagreed even though, as Staci pointed out, they seemed to be repeating the same thing over and over. In the dialogue that followed, Staci and Arachnid went over old ground yet again (that the tape recorder doesn't *talk* back and that it only speaks with one voice — not its own but that of the original speaker).

Although the inquiry seems repetitious at this point even to the participants, it is as if the repetition is *necessary* in order to gain momentum to push on to a new point. They did get into new territory, however, when they began an exploration of what counts as 'a different voice'. Staci argued that by changing the *sound* of the voice she *made* it a *different* voice. Arachnid, on the other hand, insisted that as long as the same person was doing the speaking it was the same and *not* a different voice. Staci's interpretation comes close to the metaphoric sense of 'voice' which is tied to personal perspective and point of view that we find in contemporary academic literature while Arachnid's is a much more literal interpretation. Two other points worth noting in this segment are how quickly Staci resumed the inquiry despite her objections to its repetitiveness and also how non-combative Staci and Arachnid were as they laughed and giggled their way through this exchange. It ended with both of them eager to find out whether what Ferrari found in the dictionary could help to resolve the issue.

'Communication'

Ferrari Okay — it says, "The act of communicating; transmission; the exchange of *thought* —" *Exchange*. Both people. "— exchange of thought" >>> okay where am I? Oh yeah, here. "— an exchange of thoughts — message or the like as by speech, signals, or writing".

"Speech, signals or *writing*. Speech, signals or writing," Ferrari repeated, trying to make sense of what he had just read. Then he added his own interpretation based on our inquiry: "That's the way you communicate — three different ways. But they have to write back. That's 'communication'". Later I [Sigma] discovered that the idea of having to write *back* was Ferrari's, not the dictionary's.

Ferrari >>> “—signals or writing; Something communicated; a means of communicating — especially — a system for sending and receiving messages, as by mail, telephone or telegram.”

Checking this against his memory of what Staci was arguing, Ferrari went on, “She said that but she never said you’re speaking *to* the phone. That doesn’t say that here. So you could call >>> what’s his name, The Tormont Webster’s >>> ”. Although Arachnid tried to interject, Ferrari continued reading, this time emphasizing the parts he took to be relevant:

Ferrari — *okay and it says, “a system for sending and receiving messages as by mail, telephone — any message by which human >>> beings pass information to — one another — including publishing, broadcasting and telem-communication-nevermind — tele- telecommunication- telecommunications. A network of routes, [skips a line of dictionary text by mistake] connective, passage or channel. The art and — and technology of communicating — in all — its forms.”*

In this segment, Ferrari looked to the dictionary expecting to find an ‘answer’ but he was not quite satisfied with what he found. Rather than taking the dictionary at its word, he brought his own knowledge and experience of the concept of ‘communication’ to bear on what he was reading. Although he accepted what the dictionary said (“Speech, signals or writing”) and incorporated that into our theory-in-the-making (“That’s the way you communicate — three different ways”), he also noticed immediately that something *we* were concerned about was missing: (“But they have to write back. That’s ‘communication’”). Then, reading more, he came across a reference to the telephone and noticed that the dictionary was not helpful with regard to the issue of speaking *to* the phone about which Staci was so adamant. However, rather than take that to mean that Staci was wrong, instead he suggested checking with the author of the dictionary (the Tormont Webster’s).

Doubting dictionary authority

Staci, by contrast, questioned the authority of the dictionary author (“the guy who wrote that”). First she made an explicit reference to the importance of doing *philosophy* to working out word meanings (“He may not even be a *philosopher*.”). And then she noted the importance of interpretation in the writing of dictionaries (“I can make a dictionary of what *I* think. I mean he might not be right.”).

Ferrari, Arachnid and Tracy, however, were more inclined to go by the dictionary definitions on the strength of Tracy's observation that dictionary definitions "are [accepted?] as *true*". And, Arachnid tried to demonstrate that by using Staci's own tape recorder case in relation to the dictionary definition of communication as an "exchange of thoughts" they could argue yet again that the thought Staci gave to the tape recorder is the same as the thought the tape recorder gave back. Staci, however, disagreed and to illustrate why, she used the playing back of the Session 9 audio tape at the beginning of this very research session and argued that hearing what *she* had said played back (*i.e.* "I know."), she now thought *differently* (*i.e.* "So what?"). She concluded that when this happens, "I sort of *am* communicating".

I [Judy] was not surprised by my students' questioning of the dictionary authority and noted that thinking for oneself with regard to dictionary definitions was a by-product of doing philosophy.

Defending dictionary authority

Ferrari, who was still busy with the dictionary, came to its defense.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Ferrari | Now, after we looked in the <i>Webster</i> Dictionary, one of the best dictionaries, you're actually trying to find a more philosophical — answer for something that we found right in here. I think this case should be closed now because— both of us >>> Arachnid and I — both >>> well — I found an answer right here — and you can't contradict this — |
| Staci | But it— |
| Ferrari | — in any philosophical way — |
| Staci | — it's not that — yeah but everybody has a different point of view |
| Ferrari | —just in case |

Here Ferrari used an "appeal to authority" when he referred to the reputation of the *Webster* dictionary as though asking, "Why are we trying to reinvent the wheel?" At the same time Staci was flirting with relativism "in order to maintain her right to be right".

"Okay but if — if —" Arachnid began, "— like if right now I'm communicating with Ferrari, it's not the same kind of communicating with the tape". "Did I say that?" Staci asked, sounding resentful. ". . . I said it was — it's like — it's not the sa-". "She's getting angry," Ferrari remarked.

"It's not exactly the same," Staci continued, "but it's not different either. It depends on your point of view I guess".

"Point of view," Ferrari said, "we'll look that up". "Oh, Ferrari!" Staci said.

For the first time there are signs of frustration turning into anger here and yet the dialogue still does not degenerate into a competitive argument. Rather, Ferrari looks for *another* way out. Here again is an instance of doubt driving the inquiry; and Ferrari's intent seemed not so much to be to defeat Staci's argument, but rather to continue to look for a solution upon which they can agree. Staci, however, just said, "Oh, Ferrari!" as if to say here we go again.

Doubting dictionary writers

By now it was Ferrari's turn on the list and he continued to explore Staci's position with regard to the authority of dictionaries. This time Ferrari tried an appeal to common sense to make the case. Staci surprised him when she said she didn't agree with "Webster" and his response was to ask if that meant that she *never* "agreed" with the dictionary. Staci emphatically denied this reiterating her arguments that dictionary writers can't know everything and also that "everybody has a different point of view". Ferrari made another appeal to common sense when he said that "it's kind of easy", that the word itself is self-explanatory and that you "don't have to put some — philosophical senses *into* this".

When Staci tried to reply, Ferrari continued to argue for common sense and Arachnid attempted a **Point of Information** interruption. Nevertheless, making reference to the actual dictionary definition Ferrari found for 'communication' and also to Ferrari's own observations earlier, Staci argued that the dictionary definition might still be incomplete.

Defending dictionary writers

"Point of information," Arachnid interjected again. Then he stated that a dictionary writer could not be dumb, to which Stacy replied, "Did I say he was dumb? No, I just said that everybody has a different point of view". Arachnid found it difficult to accept the fact that Staci was still not satisfied with what they had found in the dictionary. When Staci suggested that the only person she might

have to agree with if she didn't want to was her mother, Ferrari seized the opportunity to use this to argue his case. Constructing a 'mother as ultimate authority' argument, he asked Staci, 'What if your mother were a dictionary writer? ... *was Webster?*' as if to say, *then* you would believe the dictionary? However, if he thought he had her cornered now, he was disappointed because Staci denied that that was what she meant. She was referring more to the fact that there were negative consequences to disagreeing with her mother. In any case she said it didn't matter if her mother was Webster or not. She could and would still disagree. Despite not understanding why Staci was being so difficult, when we had to stop Ferrari still seemed eager for more: "To be continued" he said, making a vocal drumroll.

Later, I [Sigma] observed that we were making good progress, even if slow, and that it was still centered on the nature of 'communication'. Unfortunately the tone had become one of debate and the frustration level had mounted as Staci seemed more intent on winning the argument than advancing the exploration.

Stories 4

Living and Learning

Next: Summarize for them and take us back to original topic and see what we've accomplished so far and where we want to go next with it. If they need a change, we could look at a list of different kinds of communication and see which, if any, we would classify as 'discussions'. This way they could keep talking about communication but with a slight shift in direction which might give a sense of progress.

[D/S10/92.12.03Th/DRG/Sigma Research Notes]

In the next six sessions, we had three different kinds of discussions as we went back to our 'discussion for learning' research topic. In Session 11 we had a **sample discussion** on a topic of our choice: Is there a God? In Session 12 as part of our continuing exploration of 'discussion' we had an *everyday life research discussion* during which we did look at different kinds of communication. In Sessions 13, 14 and 15 we began to find ways to track our progress by exploring different ways to make our ideas visible to ourselves: by 'mapping' our thinking and by using video tape. And in Session 16 we began to explore 'learning' by having a **research discussion** using a question from our Co-researcher Questions list.

S11: A Sample Discussion

Is there a God?

After our Sessions 9 and 10 concentrated inquiry into the concept of 'communication' as it relates to 'discussion for learning', in Session 11 we decided to have a computer work session combined with a sample discussion on a 'real life' topic unrelated to the subject of our research but conducted for research purposes.

Session 11 • Wednesday, December 9, 1992 • 7 Co-researchers

Plans. I presented them with three options for today's work: 1) Computer work; 2) 'Communication' discussion (continued); or 3) New discussion. These three options were selected on the basis of my wanting to set a sense of direction to the research but always in consultation with them. . .

Choices. . . the clear choice for today was to have 3) a new discussion and there was an equally strong desire, especially since the group was so small, that we not use a name recorder but rather speak spontaneously. The topics they suggested for this discussion were both taken from the high-interest lists in their philosophy classes (2 different ones): a) Is there a G-d? and b) Swearing.

[D/S11/92.12.09We/DRG/Sigma Research Notes]

The topic we selected for this discussion was (a) Is there a God? and we engaged in this as a **sample discussion** research activity in order to see if it might count as an instance of "CPI" (Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry). There were two parts to this discussion. In the first part we had a wide-ranging discussion of the question, "Is there a G-d?". Then in the second part, just as he had in Session 10, Ferrari started to feel uncomfortable with how the discussion was going and again he raised the question of whether this was philosophy we were doing right now. Whereas in Session 10, I [Alison] gave him a stream-of-consciousness response to this question, this time other co-researchers (who did *not* want to change the subject) joined in and produced data which are indicative of the co-researchers' understanding of what counts as a 'philosophical' discussion.

To Believe or Not to Believe?

Because the co-researchers had requested that we not use a name recorder, I decided just to turn on the audio tape recorder and let the discussion follow its own course. In my [Judy] experience, the discussion which followed was representative of a class philosophy discussion on this kind of topic in terms of the IDEAS twists and turns it took.

In this discussion we talked about God vs Evolution, we talked about *The Bible* as an authority, who wrote it and how it compared *The Torah*. We talked about the appearance of God, about God, the Tooth Fairy and Santa Claus, and whether there could be proof of God's existence, or if God is dead. We talked about how the world was made and about how to prove that something does not exist. We talked about Adam and Eve and how animals "got" on Earth. We talked about which came first, apes or dinosaurs and whether dinosaurs were not "true". We talked about how the people who wrote the Bible could write about something they did not know (since they were not there). We talked about tricking Adam and Eve. We talked about the possibility of having had previous lives, about reincarnation and about déjà vu. And we ended up talking about what happens when you die and about atheists and agnostics.

"Is this philosophy we're doing right now?"

After Ferrari had tried to interject for the fifth time, we turned our attention to his concerns that we were not really doing philosophy in a way which would serve our research purposes. In the dialogue that ensued, my co-researchers addressed many standard issues pertaining to what it is to do philosophy and they were able to articulate whether and how they were doing philosophy right now.

Worn out minds. We wondered if we were doing philosophy if we feel as though we've "worn out our minds >>> " and we want to "try something—really new" [Ferrari]. However, we also recognized that [when doing philosophy], a discussion that may feel tiring to one can also seem new to others: "This *is* really new. Have we ever had a conversation on this like that?" [Mariah, Whoopy].

Repetition. We wondered if we were doing philosophy if "it's getting kind of repeating" [Ferrari]; and we recognized that [when doing philosophy] the repetition need not be a problem [Whoopy, Staci, Alison].

The subject. We wondered whether doing philosophy depends on what the subject is [Alison]; and we recognized that even if it *is* a philosophical subject, one can still think "the subject should change" [Ferrari].

Sense of progress. We talked about whether [when doing philosophy] the subject should change because “it’s not *going* anywhere” [Alison]. We thought no, not if we are “getting *into* it” [Staci] and “really like it” [Yasmin]; or yes when or if we recognize that there are limits to our knowledge and we don’t know how far it can go: “We don’t know any more than that at the end of the Bible” [Ferrari].

Questions we cannot answer. We talked about whether it is philosophy if we are “dealing with questions that we couldn’t answer if we tried” [Alison]. A first response was that, “It doesn’t matter” [Staci]. Another response was that [philosophy] is not about “*answering* the question about what happened”; it *is* about getting “new ideas from other people” [Mariah]. And we recognized that it is about “thinking of *ideas*” [Ferrari] — about “what other people might think” [Mariah, Staci].

Why bother? Coming back to the issue of why we discuss some topics if “it’s not going to be getting *anywhere*” [Ferrari], one response was that “that’s what we’re supposed to be doing >>> — “we’re supposed to find out what discussions are about” [Staci]; and another was that it is “to find out other people’s opinions sometimes” [Mariah].

Not knowing all the answers. Returning to the issue of the limits to our knowledge, we talked about whether we “would actually know all the questions and all the answers to what the subject is” if we *did* change to any other subject [Whoopy]. Referring to the suggested alternative subject of condoms, she said, “We don’t know all the answers to them. Not even the doctors know all the answers to them”.

Suitable subjects. We talked about how [to do philosophy] you need a discussion subject that you can “carry on”. You cannot do that with a subject like condoms which is “wearing out” and boring because it is talked about too much [Mariah]. We talked about how, even if “you don’t see people >>> talking about God” [Ferrari], you can still discuss that [in philosophy] because “you don’t have to talk about what hap[pened]”. Also [in philosophy] “you don’t have to talk about something that’s popular” [Staci].

Answers make questions. We talked about how [in philosophy] you can discuss topics (like condoms and how the world began) *even if* “we know so much about them” [Daisy] or *even if* we already know that, “That’s how it happened” [Ferrari] because for every answer there is always another question: *e.g.* “How do you know?” [Whoopy], “What stars?” and “What *made* the stars?” [Daisy].

‘Asking’ and ‘commenting’ more than ‘answering’. We talked about how [philosophy] is more about “asking questions and commenting on —each person” [Whoopy] than it is about having “all the answers and all the questions” which, we agreed, we did not for either of the subjects we were considering [Whoopy, Ferrari].

Finding out good questions for a purpose. We talked about how, even though “the questions we’re finding out from this” [discussion about God] were “neat” and “kind of cool”, nevertheless “the sad part” is that we had “no questions” and “no *answers*” for our DRG research purposes (“the tape recorder”) [Ferrari].

Finding out answers. We talked about whether changing the subject (from God to condoms) would produce answers anyway (“Why? What can you say about condoms?”) [Mariah]. Ferrari thought there was likely to be an answer to *any* question about condoms: “Okay, ask me any question [about condoms] — there will be an answer” [Ferrari].

Finding out possibilities. We talked about how “philosophy is about looking at possibilities”; how “the more questions the better — in philosophy”; how “the more you *don’t* find the answers, >>> the more *likely* you are to do philosophy —I think —sometimes”; and how “You >>> might get a step *towards* the answer but you might not get the answer itself” [Alison].

Quest for answers. We talked about whether a good philosophy subject is one that offers good questions and the possibility of figuring out answers (“I know but the [condom] questions are so good — but the answers, I mean — if you could just figure out an answer—” [Ferrari]); and, how “Philosophy *is* without answers!” and that “You don’t *have* to have answers to have philosophy!” [Daisy].

Unlimited answers. Finally, returning to the issue of there being an answer to any question about condoms, we talked about how a seemingly straightforward answer ("AIDS") to a question ("Do you know *why* they have condoms?") can really be more complex than it seems since it can lead to a consideration such as whether the use of condoms is the *only* way to protect against AIDS which in turn leads to consideration of other ways of getting AIDS and whether condoms would offer protection in each case.

Of particular interest in this dialogue is the number of different aspects we covered in our reflections on whether we were doing philosophy and whether we would do better to change the subject. Second, the subtleties in the points raised and the responses given is indicative that these are insiders' *recognitions* of what it is to do philosophy. Third, the particular issues raised are familiar to anyone who has experienced the frustrations and challenges of doing philosophy. And finally, the fact that we eventually continued with the original discussion was itself an indication that we were satisfied that to do so *was* to do philosophy *and* for our research purposes. It was not necessarily to say that we thought that to change the subject and talk about condoms would *not* be to do philosophy for we came to recognize that it is possible to do philosophy with *any* subject. It was rather that the will to continue with the original discussion topic prevailed.

Also of interest is how we engaged in this dialogue in ways which are also characteristic of what it is to do philosophy. For example, although there were strong and opposing desires operating, we listened to and addressed the points raised on many sides of the issues and, reflecting on our own experience of doing philosophy, we provided reasons for the positions we took. We generated new questions, we acknowledged the merits of points made which supported opposing views, we provided and explored examples of what we meant and adjusted our positions accordingly. And by the time we decided to resume the original discussion, it was with a sense of reassurance that we were indeed doing philosophy for our research purposes.

In response to Ferrari's concern, after having transcribed and interpreted the audio tape, I [Sigma] came to recognize that there was a great deal of 'progress' made in this discussion if only measured by the number of different aspects we covered as represented by the italicized headings. However, whether we made as much *philosophical* progress is another question and would require a different interpretation of the data. For present purposes I have been concerned rather with portraying our abilities to recognize whether we were doing philosophy *at all*, or *enough to justify continuing the discussion* rather than to examine whether we were doing philosophy *well* in this discussion.

S12: An Everyday Life Research Discussion

"Don't Talk Back!"

Staci	>>> No >>> I don't mean that I can never disagree with my mother. I can disagree with her all I want it's just that she says, "Don't talk back" you know? Obviously, because she's my mother. >>>
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[VT/S10/92.12.03Th/DRG/Verbatim Transcript]

Staci made the above side remark in a discussion near the end of Session 10. As it turned out, however, the issue of being told not to talk back was a live issue for many of my young co-researchers. It came up often and was heartfelt in the research discussion we decided to have in this session.

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Preliminaries. Again they came in all enthusiastic and ready to go. It is almost as if the fifteen-minute break isn't necessary. They [were] full of anticipation to see what it is we [were] going to do today. They were keen to continue the ["Is there a God?"] discussion from yesterday although it is not always a good idea since not the same people are there each time. Better to have each session be self-contained?

[D/S12/92.12.10Th/DRG/Sigma Research Notes]

Mindful of Ferrari's concerns about whether we were drifting away from our research topic, and still hoping we would explore 'discussion for learning' in

¹¹⁶ Unless otherwise indicated, the data for this sequence are taken from the verbatim transcript for Session 12, Thursday, December 10, 1992.

relation to *other* forms of discussion, for this next session I had prepared a transparency titled, "What's the same/different . . . ?" on which I had listed different forms of group talk for us to consider.

Discussion: "What's the same/different with . . . ?" Since their previous discussions seemed to veer in a different direction from looking at different 'neighbouring concepts' of discussion, I decided to bring them my list from my research proposal and see what they would do with it. It was presented as a single list and they were to do with it whatsoever they saw fit.

However, not wishing to impose this activity on my co-researchers, during Startup I suggested the following three options: (1) Computer work; (2) Continue yesterday's discussion; (3) Judy's "What's the same/different. . ." activity. After some spontaneous exchanges on the advantages and disadvantages of using the name recorder, they chose the latter. The research discussion that followed is yet another example of how the co-researchers were able to follow two lines of inquiry at the same time. On the one hand we worked on the Same/Different list making as many distinctions as we could in relation to 'discussion (for learning)' and *at the same time* we explored 'real life' injustices from my co-researchers' perspectives.

"What's the Same/Different. . .?"

The audio tape for this session begins with the discussion of my, 'What's the same/different. . .?' list already in progress.

"Don't talk back!" rules out discussion

Amber — "Well do as [???] says."
"Well, — can I do it later?" Or, "No, I don't want to do that."
She says, "Don't talk back! Do it now!"
And then, >>> "Well, can I please discuss this with you?"
"Go and do it now!"

Verbally role-playing a conversation she might have with her mother, Amber noted how her mother's words, "Don't talk back!" and "Go and do it now!" rule out discussion of any kind. Rather than taking up the issue, I [Alison] took her intervention to be an example of a way of talking that was not on the Same/Different list I had distributed. So I suggested that we add "Don't talk back!" or "Fight" to the list.

Talking back (to parents)

Daisy, meanwhile, *did* want to take up the issue that Amber had raised. She recounted that when her mother had asked her to feed the cat, she had answered "No!", her mother had yelled at her and she had yelled back. We all agreed that such exchanges did not count as 'discussion' and suggested other possibilities instead such as 'trying to get your point across', 'an argument' or 'a quarrel'.

Back to the "Same/Different. . .?" list

Concerned that we might get side-tracked by this "Don't talk back!" issue, I tried to direct our attention to the first item on the list saying, "So you understand the first one >>>? Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry? That's >>> what we do in philosophy class — when it's — at its best". When there was no response to my question, I took this to be a first indication that we were on parallel agenda threads: my co-researchers were on the "Don't talk back!" thread while I was on the relevance of our explorations to collaborative philosophical inquiry thread.

Talking back (to children)

Staci produced another example like the one Daisy had given. She mentioned that when her parents are discussing something and she would like to make a comment, she waits for a break in the conversation and they get mad at her even if she wasn't interrupting. Still keeping to the Same/Different list, and concerned that we were repeating ourselves with personal stories, I [Alison/Sigma] asked Staci how she would classify this exchange and in reply she produced "talking back to *children*" as a new distinction.

"Mind your own business" and "Don't interrupt"

After producing yet another example drawn from her own personal experience, Staci noted how children's attempts to participate in adult discussion (*e.g.* with her parents at the dinner table) are ruled out as 'none of [the children's] business' and as 'interrupting'. She implied that this would not be so if the same 'opinion' or 'comment' were expressed by an adult.

In CPI people wouldn't respond that way?

Allison So are you saying that if >>> that were in a CPI — discussion — then — people wouldn't respond in that way? Or, —

While transcribing this section, I [Sigma] noted that when I said that, I was “not paraphrasing really but inviting Staci to make a comparison as part of today’s activity and also to model for the others”. In response to my question, Staci observed that in class philosophy we have a *different* (without saying ‘better’) way to deal with interruptions, speaking out of turn and indicating a wish to speak (“Get on the list!”) compared to, say, dinner table conversations in which one just speaks or, in the case of Staci’s young sister, raises a hand.

Different kinds of opportunity to speak

Allison So are you saying then — that — people — can — have — different kinds of opportunity to speak?

Staci Yeah, but I don't think they *should*.

Allison — in — which one? —

Reverting to *my* agenda of classifying different kinds of ‘discussion’, next I [Alison/Sigma] asked Staci what she would call the one she had just described. My rephrasing and questions led us to recognize how ‘dinner table talk’ can sometimes *turn into* a ‘fight’ or an ‘argument’ — as when one is sarcastic. Staci continued her example of dinner table talk showing how she ended up talking back to her father and when I started to remind her that we didn't want this to develop into a personal story about what it's like to *your* parents, Staci replied, “No - no! I know — No, but —”. “It's another story,” I said. Then I asked, “— but what does that tell us >>> ?” and, “What difference or what similarities do you see there?”

Staci recognized that one can react differently in similar situations (“with my parents I just talk back to them, I don't know why”) whereas (“If somebody *else* yells at me, I get all embarrassed and mad and everything — and I don't talk to them for at *least* a few minutes”) and that opened up a different avenue to explore.

It depends on who you talk to

At first Staci thought that there *was* a difference (“there's a difference when you talk to different people”) and she agreed that it was a family issue. Then she

immediately self-corrected when she realized that, since she would not talk back to her grandparents, it might not be. That move on her part prompted me [Alison] to inquire further and, building on Staci's point, I generated a new distinction. If it was not whether the people were 'family' or 'not family' that made a difference, I [Alison] wondered what *did* make a difference. " >>> So it has more to do with the fact >>> that it's a >>> parents and children situation than — so if — . . . whereas in a CPI discussion >>> they're all your classmates and me".

Staci agreed with the distinction that talking back (or whether a conversation turned into a fight or an argument) was more a parent/child than a classmate (CPI discussion) situation and she supported this view by imagining an exchange with Whoopy (a CPI classmate) in which they might express different views. She attributed the likelihood that she "probably wouldn't yell at her as much" with "hostility" to the fact that Whoopy was her *friend* and that she *liked* her.

I [Alison/Judy] knew I was introducing a new element when I asked Staci if she thought it that in this context it might be a matter of there being more 'respect' between classmates than between a parent and a child. As co-researcher Alison, I imagined that, like many people her age, Staci might not characterize her parents as 'friends' or admit to 'liking' them, and I wondered if 'respect' might be a better way to explain the difference we were exploring. Also, as Judy, I knew that the fostering of mutual respect among CPI discussion participants is an explicit objective of the Philosophy for Children community of inquiry and I wondered whether Staci would accept such an interpretation. Staci agreed that when there is a difference of views there *is* respect (among CPI classmates); and at the same time she speculated that a similar difference of views (with parents) would be characterized as a *lack* of respect (for one's elders).

Next, I [Alison] asked Staci, "What if your parents came to a philosophy class? — Or — not *your* parents but anybody's parents. What if parents came?

This question was a deliberate move on my part to explore the possibility of combining 'parents' and 'classmates' in one setting to see if we thought it would be more like a philosophy class or whether it would turn into a dinner table 'argument' or 'fight'. Neither, it seems. Staci imagined that parents would be like the audience of a talk show and would jeer and cheer ("Boo and Yeah") at the "good points" and

"the bad points". And she reiterated her speculation that in response to something "that wasn't exactly in their favour", parents would say that "kids have no respect for adults". Whoopy, on the other hand, for reasons she did not explain, thought that "Nobody would talk" if parents came to philosophy class.

"It's not like [adults] are really any different" Staci concluded,
... "They've just lived longer".

They're all 'communication'

When I [Alison/Sigma] expressed concern that this had become a dialogue between Staci and me, Staci agreed and we moved on to Daisy who brought us back to the Same/Different list.

- Daisy** Okay, I have >>> a couple of things to say. >>> But first of all >>> what's the difference between 'conversation', 'chat', 'quarrel', 'argument', >>> 'debate', 'gossip', >>> 'dialogue', 'talking', 'discussion' and 'communication'?
- Alison** All of those?
- Daisy** Well, they're all communication.
- Alison** Oh they're all — so that's what's the same about them.
- Daisy** Yeah.

I [Alison] noticed that there were some items from the 'Same/Different?' list that Daisy had not included and when I asked her about that, she replied that brainstorming was actually thinking. When I mentioned our class philosophy practice of "Questions Arising" I was thinking about a brainstorming activity which we did out loud, *not* just in our heads.

Amber wanted to comment but it wasn't her turn yet.

- Daisy** Okay, and I have something else to say? >>> I think the reason why >>> Staci was saying that she doesn't talk back to anybody else apart from her parents is because — she's used to her parents — I mean, she's known her parents ever since when she was born. [Alison: Uh-hunh.]
You know, and like — some people she might feel a bit more shy —
- Alison** So the more fami- you are — familiar you are with somebody, the more likely you are to —

Staci asked if she could comment and I replied, "Yeah—". But first, in an afterthought, Daisy concurred with Staci saying that she wouldn't talk back to my

grandmother but would talk back to my mom. Again Staci asked if she could comment and this time Daisy said, "Yeah."

Our [Alison and Daisy] allowing Staci to comment here when I had asked Amber to wait her turn was an example of Staci exercising her **Right of Reply**.

Parents / friends distinction

Using her right of reply, Staci explored the point Daisy made about talking back to her parents saying she was more familiar with them since she had known and been with them since she was born. When she finished with the words, "It's sort of different", I immediately picked that up and said, "That's what we want to do — figure out *what's* the difference and does that *affect* what kind of discussions. . . Do we want to put something on as classroom discussions that are *not* CPI? ... are they different —"? Here I was pursuing my *own* agenda of exploring different *kinds* of discussions in relation to CPI while at the same time, and in parallel, Staci was pursuing *her* agenda of exploring the differences in discussions between parents and class mates.

"No —," Staci replied, , " >>> what happens is — usually when I'm with my friends we talk about different subjects than when I'm with my dad ... with my dad it's sort of like >>> it's not like I'm talking with a *friend*."

"Personal," someone said; and Staci agreed, "Yeah."

When someone said "personal" and Staci agreed, it was not yet clear which conversations they thought to be 'personal' — those with a parent or those with a friend. Seeking clarification, I settled on the more general point that the subjects of conversations with parents and friends were "different" — without asking her to say which she considered to be more "important" or "personal". Staci agreed that they would be "different" and also specified that she meant conversations with a *best* friend.

Talking to a teacher

Daisy

>>> I wouldn't >>> you know — say >>> really personal stuff —you know >>> for example [to] my *French* teacher >>> than what I would say to my parents. >>> I wouldn't tell — my teacher >>> you know like >>> "I hate everybody in the world and I want to kill myself." You know I wouldn't say that — not that — [*Whoopy and Alison make interventions.*]

Daisy ... — I wouldn't say that to my mom either — but I'd say >>> "I'm really depressed". You wouldn't >>> say — "I'm depressed" >>> to your *teacher* — really. [Alison: Okay]

In conceptual analysis terms, Daisy's example of talking to a *teacher* is an example of considering the 'related case' of an adult who is not family. To test this case she also produced the 'extreme case' of a *personal* subject: *i.e.*, depression to the point of contemplating suicide. Assuring Whoopy that she was not talking about herself, she agreed with my reformulation of what she was saying in more general terms — that "there are some things that you would say to *some* people and not others".

Two kinds of 'talking back'

Amber >>> well >>> what I want to find out is like — is there such thing as 'talking back' >>> I mean >>> doesn't everybody — talk back? — I mean — if I say, "Hi" — and then you say, "Hi, how's >>> Good-day" — like, then you're 'talking back' to me >>> [Everyone laughs.]

When Amber asked if there is such a thing as 'talking back' she pointed to the ambiguity of the expression 'talking back' noting that it can also be interpreted as something everyone does when answering someone else. Before letting her go on, I [Alison] checked my understanding of the distinction she was making and we discovered that not only did Amber think her *mother* didn't know the difference, but as a result, neither did *she*. This added to the points both Staci and Daisy made earlier when they spoke of their parents who accused them of 'talking back' in the 'you're in trouble' sense when they thought they were 'talking back' in the 'giving a response' sense.

'Small talk'

Amber was keeping detailed notes and she added "small talk" between 'conversation' and 'chat' on her copy of the "What's the Same/Different?" list.

You might talk to a teacher

Arachnid Okay — you said that you couldn't talk to your teacher like you — you couldn't say to your teacher like, "I'm depressed?" [Daisy: I said that.]

Okay >>> Daisy? — And well you could. What happens — it's like, I mean — you *could*.

Daisy I know but >>> you wouldn't exactly say to your teacher, you know, some >>> really private things that >>> you'd say to your *parents*.

Arachnid What happens if the teacher *is* your parent? [*Someone chuckles.*]

Daisy Then you'd tell your *other par-* — well then you wouldn't tell them at school, I mean, >>> you know —

Arachnid Well — if you tell — okay let's say you tell *any* teacher something — it doesn't necessarily have to be in school —

Daisy Like what?

Arachnid Well sometimes I see — I mean [one of the school's regular substitute teachers who lives nearby] — she just goes over there. And I can just see her walking down the street.

Daisy I know but you wouldn't exactly talk — you know like — you know like *that* — to teachers.

Arachnid It's possible though.

Alison The question would be why not?

Arachnid Yeah, why not?

Alison >>> ah — what's the difference? What makes >>> you say that you wouldn't?

Arachnid And what happens if >>> you have a social worker and the social worker is also a *teacher*?

Daisy What are you talking— *I don't know!* Please. You're making up impossible situations practically.

Alison But that's what this is *for* — is to figure *out* these impossible situations... Next?

In 'real life', at least one of Daisy's parents *was* a teacher — although not in our school. This dialogue between Arachnid and Daisy is another example of how, given enough time, a discussion can become 'self-corrective' as when a point made by one is later revisited by another in order to test it using a variety of examples. Arachnid was exploring possibilities and was not prepared to rule out any; and as he adjusted each example to account for Daisy's replies, they created new possibilities which Daisy in turn adjusted in response to his new possibilities.

Why parents say, 'Don't talk back'.

Whoopy >>> I wanted to say something about >>> talking back? Well, actually >>> there's no such thing as when you talk — back, well — there *is* such thing — but — the only reason why parents say that is just >>> to stop you. . . It's just like a way that — if you're not listening to them or something? — and they just have to say something to >>> make you feel bad or something.

Amber . . . I think that maybe — sometimes parents — say “Don’t talk back to me” cuz — they’re stuck? — and they don’t know what else to say. . .

Whoopy I remember once with my mom she goes, “Go to your room!” I said, “What did I do?” She goes, “Just go to your room.” [Everyone laughs.]

Drawing on their own experience again, Whoopy and Amber produced several more examples to explain when and why parents say, “Don’t talk back” to children. They related anecdotes which portrayed children in a no-win situation with adults who say “Don’t talk back” for no apparent reason. The examples rang so true to Staci that she asked for a copy of the tape.

Double standard

Listening to Whoopy’s examples, Staci detected an injustice which adults would recognize as a ‘double standard’.

Staci >>> Okay, right, you know how you >>> Whoopy you were saying >>> that >>> you said, >>> “Well — I mean —” and then your mother said, “Don’t talk back?” They’re always telling us not to interrupt and she just interrupted you.

Whoopy I know. Exactly.

Quarrel~argument — the same but different

Next Staci turned back to the Same/Different list we were using to tell us about a distinction she had made between ‘quarrel’ and ‘argument’ noting that they were “the same but different”. Staci classified them as “the same” by including both in the larger category of “fights” and she distinguished between them in two ways. An ‘argument’ she said, “goes back and forth” implying that a quarrel does not; and she pointed to a difference of degree based on an emotional factor when she said that “a quarrel is when you — get so angry that you don’t want to talk” suggesting that an ‘argument’ involves talk while a ‘quarrel’ does not. I asked her about two of the points she was making.

Allison Okay. — But, do they go back and forth in a ‘quarrel’ — too?

Staci Some- — it depends. — But most- — in an argument definitely.

Allison Is one — is one worse than the other? Like more >>> does an argument turn into a quarrel?

Staci Well I think — yeah it does but — I think you can get
[chuckles] more out of an argument — cuz you can find
out the reason —

What is interesting here is Staci's observation that "you can get more out of an argument" and this not because you can *win* it but rather that "you can find out the reason—".

Next Daisy interjected saying, "I always thought that an — argument was bigger than a quarrel. I thought a quarrel was like — smaller." However, Daisy was out of order so Amber continued and made two comments. The first was to take issue with the point made earlier that you wouldn't talk to a teacher. Making reference to television shows, she asked, "Say your parents are *beating* you, okay? And you don't have anybody else to talk to. . . wouldn't you go to your teacher?" Then, self-correcting she added, "but you wouldn't tell them *really* intimate things", to which Daisy replied, "Well *obviously* — yeah."

'Quarrel'~'fight' — *the same*. Amber's second point had to do with quarrels and arguments both being 'fights'. A 'quarrel' is "*just another way of saying*" 'fight', she said. Then, to illustrate her point, she substituted one for the other in the same phrase and concluded that they were "sort of like the same thing". Here Amber used the conceptual analysis technique of reflecting on how we use the terms 'quarrel' and 'fight' *in language*.

"Don't talk back" is adult (not kid) talk

Next it was Daisy's turn and she too said she had "a couple of things to say". For the first, on the issue of "Don't talk back!", Daisy observed that saying "Don't talk back to me!" is something that *adults* would say to children but that children would *not* say either to adults *or* to a friend. Here again we have an example of a reflection on our everyday use of language only this time it is in terms not of *what* is said ("Don't talk back!") but rather of *by whom* it is said in a social context.

'Gossip' ~ 'talk'

Next Daisy turned to the term 'gossip' on the Same/Different list we were working on. She stated that "'gossip' and just plain. . . 'talking' are practically the same thing because 'gossip' is really like — telling what's going ... " She presented an example with real names that we asked her to change, and continued.

Daisy Okay >>> Jack got married to Jill or something like that.
 >>> And >>> you know like — that's 'gossip'. And it's you
 know like 'talking' as well.

Allison So it has — to do — . . . but is all talking like all gossip?

Daisy No.

In conceptual analysis terms, here we began by looking at whether 'gossip' is synonymous with 'talking'. At first Daisy thought they were "practically the same thing" on the grounds that both involve talking to tell something. It was when I [Alison] asked Daisy if she thought *all* talking is like *all* gossip and she said No, that we began to think in terms of how they might be different. However, we did not go there. Instead I suggested that we look at the relationship of 'talking' *to* 'gossip'. However, when I went further and suggested that "you can't gossip without talking", at first Daisy agreed but then immediately came up with the possibility of gossiping in writing ("in a —*letter* or something). Then I tried to move the point further when I sensed that Daisy might also be thinking of a distinction between gossip/talk as different from talk/discussion. Since there is nothing in the verbatim transcript to suggest that Daisy was thinking in those terms, it is also possible that *I* was and was asking her in order to see what she thought. At this point, she just said "Yeah" and we moved on.

'Sharing ideas' can turn into a 'discussion'.

Next it was Staci's turn and, taking up the term "sharing ideas" from the Same/Different list, she told an anecdote about watching television with her mother in order to make the point that sometimes 'sharing ideas' can *turn into* a 'discussion'. Then I [Alison] asked Staci how she could tell when 'sharing ideas' had "*turned into*" a 'discussion' and that led to our making some further distinctions.

Allison It started off — I think — by sharing ideas. How did you — how do you *know* when it's a 'discussion', when it's changed?

Staci Well when we — both start to talk.

In the exchange that followed, I tried to follow Staci's line of thinking as closely as possible. I took her words literally *i.e.* that if one person is telling something to someone else s/he is "sharing an idea" whereas if *both* people talk it is a 'discussion'. But Staci did not accept this literal interpretation. It was more about *what* was said than it was about *who* was talking ("No because my mum was sharing her idea *that I was really weird.*").

While transcribing this segment, I [Sigma] coded it as "SRL" [Sigma Researcher Learning] to indicate that it was an instance of my having learned from working on Staci's co-researcher ideas as an 'object-to-think-with'. At first I made an assumption that when Staci talked about 'sharing ideas' she meant simply saying them aloud for someone else to hear ("So 'sharing ideas' is just one person telling other people"). However when I said that to her, she immediately said no and went on to specify the idea in question ("Well, no, because my mum was sharing her idea that I was really weird"). Even then I still did not understand what she meant because when I revised my interpretation ("So, it's when you both start to talk *about the same thing.*") Staci again said No, that it didn't have to be [about the same thing]. Actually she was more interested in the idea that everybody thinks she's weird, including her mother. Meanwhile it was only *then* that I was able to produce a version that she *could* agree with and we were able to talk about the point at which 'sharing ideas' *turns into* a 'discussion'. This however, turned out to be just a first step and in the next segment I [Sigma] learned more as we took it further.

How 'sharing' turns into 'discussion'.

At this point, it didn't seem clear to either Daisy or Staci what I [Alison] was trying to do so I told them I was still trying to see when 'sharing ideas' changes into a 'discussion'. Suddenly Staci came to and produced a new example for us to think with.

Staci Oh! Okay! If you — if you just — went up to >>> . Say it was recess and >>> Dodie went up to >>> Kinicky or something — [*chuckles*] — . . . And >>> said >>> "Hey I think that that girl is pretty cute," and then he walked off — that would be sharing an idea.

Allison Okay. That's — [*Staci interjects.*] just one way.

Staci — but if they were like hanging out together and >>> they say "Well I think that girl is pretty cute" >>> and then he said, "Well I think she's ugly" and then >>> started this discussion on *why* and —

People laughed at Staci's choice of names for the fictitious characters in this example she was thinking up on the spot.

Later, I [Sigma] noted two new elements that Staci introduced in this example and that might be helpful in distinguishing between 'sharing ideas' and a 'discussion'. One was that of a contestable issue and the other, related to the first, is the question of *why*. In this example if one simply says that he thinks the girl is pretty cute and walks off, then he is simply 'sharing an idea' — whether or not anyone responds. If, on the other hand, someone else replies that she's ugly, then there is an issue to have a discussion *about* and one way to have that discussion is for each to say *why* s/he thinks so.

Having remarked that Staci's example of someone saying something and just walking off is a "one way" remark, I [Alison] was still interested in whether we could distinguish between 'sharing ideas' and having a 'discussion' on the basis of how many times each person spoke and whether or not they talked about the same thing. When I asked Staci what she thought, she was convinced these distinctions didn't work and produced another example to illustrate why. She stated that sometimes people responding to each other is just "small talk" and not discussion and that talking about whether someone is cute or ugly is "not — really about the same thing". "Small talk" was not on the Same/Different list so Staci's recursive reference to it is an indication that she must have added it to her own copy.

While transcribing this segment, I [Sigma] made several observations. First I noted that Staci "seems to have a sense of a variation of dual monologues or two one-way streets, not interactive. Is this a new category?". By this I meant that whereas until this moment I [Judy] had only made a distinction between 'dialogue' (which is interactive by virtue of both participants contributing to each other's

ideas) and 'dual monologues' (in which each person speaks his/her mind *without* interacting with what the other person says). Upon reflection, it now seems to me that what was new to me in Staci's reply is the notion of two non-interactive *single* monologues (in which a person says something — *i.e.*, shares an idea — and, instead of waiting for the other person to reply as in a dual monologue, s/he does the equivalent of *walking away*).

A second observation I made while transcribing this segment was to ask what Staci means by "the same thing". For me [Alison], if both participants were talking about how cute the girl was, they would be talking "*about the same thing*". For Staci, however, if one said she was cute and the other said she was ugly then they would be talking about *different* things.

A third observation I [Sigma] made was that, "This [whole transcript] has many examples of co-researchers thinking on their feet and not in a competitive way. It shows them thinking 'live' as it were. The production of examples is particularly interesting in this regard."

And a fourth [Sigma] observation was about how, "This is also an example of a philosophical dialogue/interview in a way." In this instance it was as if I [Alison] was the interviewer and Staci the interviewee. It was an interview to the extent that the focus was on what *Staci* was saying; and it was dialogical to the extent that my questions were derived from her responses in a way that led to *my* revising and constructing my own interpretation of what counts as 'sharing ideas' and how sharing ideas can turn into a discussion. Unlike other research interviews, it was not *just* about what Staci was saying but rather about co-constructing theory. In my transcribing note I also added that it "Would have been useful as training for the co-researchers to do their own [FFR?] — and also useful in regular class to *approfondir* the notion of philosophical dialogue."

After Staci began to think about how 'sharing ideas' could be "Like a 'conversation'—" or "— chat", I [Alison] started to reply, "Well now that's an interesting — thing — because —", but Staci interrupted saying "'Chats' are small —". Several people began to speak at once as I finished my own thought and said, "... 'conversation' and not a 'discussion'." Staci, however, was thinking more in how they related to each other in terms of size. "Well 'chats' are small and 'conversations' are long," she said.

Sharing of 'misunderstandings'

Next, after Amber passed and it was Daisy's turn, she began by reflecting on the everyday life experience of two exchanges she had had with her parents the night before. In the first they had talked about which high school she would choose to attend the following year. They had just been to an Open House for one school and her father was "*pushing*" for a different school while her mother was willing to let Daisy choose.

Using her life-experience account, Daisy produced an additional term for our Same/Different list. At first she called this exchange with her parents "kind of like a small argument". But then, not satisfied with that description, after I asked her what she would call that, she came up with "misunderstanding" which was not on the list. Presumably she was looking for a term that was not as strong as an 'argument' and yet still reflected the differences of opinion in the exchange. It was while I was thinking about how to record this new item on our list that I [Alison] noticed that it made more sense to write '*misunderstandings*' than '*understandings*' on the list. Here then was another instance of how we produced new distinctions by recounting and reflecting on each others' everyday life experience.

For the second thing she wanted to say, Daisy thought of a different exchange she had had with her father that same evening only this time about the fact that he had eaten all the oranges that someone had given the family when they were the only ones she would eat.

Daisy . . . So like I was yelling at him? Like — I guess I would call that — uh — a '*sharing of ideas*'.

Alison . . . Sounds like a '*shouting of ideas*' —

Daisy ignored what I said because she was busy trying to use the distinction we had just made with her other example to suggest a new category of her own: "*sharing of understandings*". It was interesting to me that she used the word '*understandings*' rather than '*misunderstandings*'. Also I [Sigma] noted (a) that Daisy seemed to be searching for a term that reflected the nature of the dispute better than '*ideas*' and (b) that when I [Alison] made the observation that, "It doesn't have to be nice — to be a sharing of ideas or a sharing of — ", she welcomed that point with an enthusiastic, "Yeah!"

At this point I recorded another transcribing note only this time “about the kind of listening that is required in CPT”.

One provides the ‘raw material’ for others to fit into categories or from which to draw elements of categories. Each can do it for him/herself just as for each other in [a community of inquiry].

[D/S12/92.12.10Th/DRG/Sigma Transcription Note]

‘Sharing ideas’~ ‘opinion exchange’

Staci was next and using the Same/Different list, this time she took a look at the relationship between ‘sharing ideas’ and ‘opinion exchange’.

Staci I think they’re like the same thing. . . Well — it depends — because say — ‘sharing ideas’. I just got a different >>> point of view now because — sometimes if >>> somebody says, “Well, she’s cute” and then the person — shares that idea with them.

Alison Oh! Then they would have to think the same thing.

Staci Right.

Alison Hm-hmm.

Staci — But — so *now* the ‘opinion exchange’ is what I thought ‘sharing ideas’ would be.

Here Staci returned to work on her *own* ‘raw material’ (the example of people ‘sharing ideas’ on whether or not someone was “cute”) and what this segment shows is how, without hesitation, she modified her earlier ideas publicly. This contrasts to her holding on for dear life to the idea that she could communicate with her stuffed bear in the Cotton Candy story. In this instance she seems to change her mind on the basis of the content of the view being expressed: *i.e.*, if two people agree, then they are “exchanging” opinions rather than “sharing” them she now suggests.

Comparing ‘opinion exchange’ and ‘sharing ideas’ to class philosophy ‘discussion’

At this point Staci said there was nobody on the list and so she asked if anybody wanted to go on. I [Alison] decided I would.

Alison >>> Okay >>> I still want to come back to >>> how it compares with what we do in >>> *philosophy* class.

I have this idea that >>> there's a difference between 'opinion exchange' and >>> 'discussion' — certainly "CPI" kind of 'discussion' — in that >>> in an 'opinion exchange' people have already made up their minds. — And in a 'discussion' >>> people *work with* what they've already made up — their minds — but they end up with something different. >>> it sounded to me as if the tape that we did the other day¹¹⁷ — was more — it got stuck. And it got stuck because it was an 'opinion exchange' and *not* because it was a 'discussion'. I was wondering what — you'd think about that.

Later, I [Sigma] noted how here I [Alison] was making a contribution of my own as one of the co-researchers and putting my [Judy's] own particular view on the table. In fact it was (and remains) a strong view. As their philosophy teacher, I monitor closely for when our 'discussions' stay at the level of *mere* opinion exchanges instead of showing some form of identifiable 'progress'. It is not that I think that it is only a 'discussion' if and when people change their minds. It is more that I am looking for open-mindedness, a *willingness* and *readiness* to modify an existing opinion. When *teaching* this point in philosophy class I have been known to distinguish CPI discussion from opinion exchanges by referring to them as opinions-in-the-making. It is not that I am against people having or expressing their opinions. Rather I take our philosophical discussions to be the forum for considering our opinions to be works-in-progress.

*Class philosophy example — Shoe hat:
An 'inquiry' and a 'misunderstanding'*

Next it was Daisy's turn and she had an example of a class philosophy discussion for us to work on. It was a logic session during which we were trying to work out whether the sentence, "No shoes are hats" was true or false. In an effort to consider a way in which the statement *might* be true, a student who was not always taken seriously by his classmates had sketched a picture of a man wearing a shoe-shaped hat and tried to argue that here was a shoe that was a hat. At the time I recall that it was an exchange in which only he held this view, somewhat like The Cotton Candy Story; everyone else argued against it.

¹¹⁷ See S10: Conceptualizing 'Communication' — *Communicating with "Cotton Candy", A Talking Bear in Stories 3: Discussion as 'Communication'*.

If I remember correctly, during this 'discussion' people had argued against the shoe being a hat because it was made of leather which they did not consider to be a material used for making hats. So then someone suggested that if the shoe were painted gold that that would then make it suitable for a hat. We laughed a lot during that discussion and Daisy characterized it not only as a 'misunderstanding' but also as a misunderstanding of *collaborative philosophical inquiry*! When I [Alison] pressed her on whether she thought it *was* an 'inquiry', Daisy said "that's what I think" and then added "*and it was a misunderstanding*".

At this point we reminded ourselves how this discussion had come from the logic statement, "No shoes are hats" and I [Alison] recalled how the person "was trying to — turn it around so that — there *could* be some — shoes that could be hats". In the dialogue that ensued, Daisy unwittingly revealed that there was an *ad hominem* argument for not taking the idea (that a shoe could be hat) seriously and that was that people did not take seriously the *person* who was championing that view. Unlike Staci earlier who rather enjoyed being "weird", in this case the fact that "he *is* crazy" is taken to mean that the idea he expresses must therefore also be crazy. Nevertheless, out of this segment we emerged with a new and useful recognition — that something could count as an 'inquiry' but not a *good* one. Or it could be an 'inquiry' which went awry. It was an inquiry in that we were *inquiring*, but whether or not we think it succeeds depends on how we judge its results.

Why 'thinking doesn't belong'

Next Daisy asked why 'thinking' was on the Same/Different list when most of the other words, like collaborative philosophical inquiry, brainstorming, conversation, chat, quarrel, argument, seminar, debate, gossip, communication" were "talking". I [Alison] asked if they all involved two people and Daisy answered that brainstorming could be done alone. Then I replied that maybe brainstorming didn't belong on the list and asked her, "What makes it a list? What makes them belong together — or not belong together?"

Here again I [Alison] had imported my own agenda, this time making categorization moves regarding the criteria by which items are included or excluded from certain categories. It is not until the end of this segment that Daisy returned to

the point about 'talking' that she had wanted to make at the beginning and she did that by going from my point to hers.

Daisy Well >>> because if what it says — like — 'brainstorming'? — You usually >>> do it like — either alone or you can do it >>> like — talking. And — and thinking — . >>> Some people talk aloud but — usually — you don't think aloud if a lot of people are around — listening — on the loudspeaker or something.

There are hints of 'communication with one' [Cw1] in Daisy's observations. Only this time she notes the social convention of not talking to oneself aloud — especially if a lot of people are around to hear.

Time Out: Alison should get on the list.

Not only was I [Alison] importing my own agenda here and there in this session, but apparently I was also hijacking air time and when it was her turn next, Staci respectfully called me on it.

Staci I don't mean to be saying this to be rude but — uhm — [chuckling] — you never get on the list!

Alison Yeah — I do —

Staci You get on the list but —

Alison >>> today I've been bad about that because I've been — doing dialogue when I shouldn't have. I stand corrected.

Before she made this observation, Staci showed a concern for relevance and politeness, and then an even stronger concern for our agreed procedure of "getting on the list to talk". If I really was a co-researcher *with* them, then I should have to abide by the same procedures. After we agreed that I *did* sometimes get on the list, Staci still maintained there were other times when I did not and should.

Not accepting my apology at face value, Staci went on to justify her observation and out of this exchange emerged a plan to do things differently in class philosophy as well.

Staci No it's cuz like — I know you should be able to because you lead the discussions and everything but it's sort of weird how you're — how you're telling us to get onto the list.

Alison Well what I — what I try — to do — is to clarify — to make sure that we're understanding what the person is trying to say.

Staci Hm-hmm.

Alison And that's the role that I'm playing. If I had something to say myself, like I did a minute ago, then I would get on the list for that.

Staci Yeah. You say, "Get on the list".

It is the apparent double standard that was bothering Staci and my description of the role I was playing did not entirely satisfy her. If I was going to say, "Get on the list" to my co-researchers, then I [Alison] should do likewise. When I continued, I suggested that we change our class philosophy procedures to have student leaders who would take over the role I was playing. However Staci saw that not as solving the problem but rather as transferring the power to someone else.

Staci's calling me on my having more say than I should reminded me of students in my very first philosophy class who also did the same thing. In my early years of implementing Philosophy for Children, we used to have sessions which I referred to as "Discussion Discussions" during which the topic for discussion was how we were conducting our own discussions (Kyle 1987). When I continued, I told them that story and suggested that perhaps it was time to do that with them now.

Alison And I have been trying all these years to model for you how that should be >>> but we don't ever *talk* about it.

Staci Uh-huh.

Alison I just do it — but — Yes, I get more 'air time' — I get to talk more >>> . My very first ever philosophy students did that. They said — >>> "With all due respect, >>> you get to talk more than we do — and so that's —. And I tried it then — I have — video tapes of those kids leading discussions, actually — I think it's time that you guys could do it too.

After I added that it would be for "Only the people who wanted to do it in the classroom", Daisy asked if we could try something like this next week in the research group and Whoopy added, "And then bring it to class". I replied, "Yeah sure! Good idea!"

What is so important about this segment is the way in which my co-researchers noticed the power imbalance which was implicit in the way I [Alison] was succumbing to the temptation to use my teacher and/or researcher prerogative to have more of a voice than I was allowing them to have. What is also important is the respectful way in which they brought it to my attention such that we

considered making adjustments not only to the way we functioned in DRG but also to our class philosophy practice. It is an example of how respectful “talking back” can effect a change for the better. Judging by the rest of the transcript for this session, I [Alison] appear to have learned my lesson for I only spoke when spoken to for the remainder of the session.

Thinking~discussion

Next, Whoopy wanted to comment on what Daisy had said about “how thinking can go with discussions and stuff?”

Whoopy Well before you discuss something you have to think.

Daisy Not really. Some people just blurt things out — like — you know >>> they say stuff that they don't really mean you know like they might say >>> “I hate all teachers with purple hair”.

Whoopy Oh so you didn't think it before — though?

Where thoughts come from, how they just ‘bubble up’, how you just ‘get’ an idea — these are issues that children enjoy talking about in class philosophy. Daisy was convinced that she did *not* think before she said, “I hate all teachers with purple hair” but Whoopy was not. While transcribing this segment, in a Sigma transcribing note I made the additional observation about how, “like these very discussions, we think *while* talking”.

Whoopy added, “But you must have to think of something to get on people's nerves”, and she may have been thinking that Daisy's example about hating teachers with purple hair was hardly accidental. In order to work as an example of what she was trying to say, Daisy had to think it through first. Daisy denied this though, and in so doing she introduced a new angle: that of “blurting things out” *without* thinking first. She also made a distinction between *saying* something and *meaning* what you said. Whoopy still insisted, however, that somewhere in there Daisy had *decided* what she was going to say and that she had a specific intention in mind. When it began to sound to Daisy as if Whoopy was reading her mind (“I was?”), I [Alison] intervened substituting “people in that situation” as a way to generalize the example. Then Daisy offered the further observation that *what* she said “came to my mind” as if to say that that was different from actually *thinking* it. Upon reflection, there is an intriguing distinction

lurking here: *i.e.* that between not only *saying* something and meaning it, but also *thinking* something and meaning it.

When Daisy continued, she related this example to the example of adults talking back. During their exchange, Whoopy remained convinced that it is not possible to say something without thinking first and Daisy held to her position that when someone “blurts out” that they do *not* think first. This particular segment shows once again how my young co-researchers produced examples on the spot thereby providing themselves with immediate common experiences for purposes of thinking things out.

Thinking out loud with two people

Next it was Amber’s turn and she wanted to talk about two points Daisy and I [Alison] had been working on earlier about thinking between two people, and about thinking out loud.

- Amber** Okay I wanted to say — something about >>> the thing >>> about >>> ‘thinking’? — Well like — you *can* do it with two people — sort of. Like — you can do like — you know >>> when — we’re writing a story or >>> a play together? >>> with a partner? Well >>> you’re both >>> you can sort of like think orally — like you could say, “Oh well I think maybe uhm ah —” — like blurbs sort of.
- Daisy?** That’s ‘sharing ideas’.
- Amber** Yeah but that’s thinking too.
- Daisy** . . . Don’t talk back to me! [*Everyone laughs.*]
- Amber** Excuse me >>> young lady — Go to your room! [*Everyone laughs.*]
- Daisy** No!

Can it be ‘sharing ideas’ and ‘thinking’ *at the same time*? Perhaps they are not disagreeing here but rather highlighting more than one aspect of a single type of exchange.

Blurting out — accident (without thinking)

When it was Staci’s turn next, she picked up on Daisy’s earlier point about how people sometimes blurt things out without really meaning what they say calling it “saying things by accident”. She then related an incident about a joke that angered a teacher — a joke that had been typed on a computer screen by someone who had

"typed it out without really thinking". This reminded Staci of another 'blurring things out' computer story which seemed irrelevant at the time. Asked to make her point she said, "Well >>> some people think that >>> when you blurt it out — Some people — take it the wrong way".

After some concluding remarks, I [Alison] made two suggestions for following up on our "Same/Different. . .?" list: one about making pairs of terms and the other about going into more detail. And I told them that if they ever turned any of their notes into something on the computer, I would like to have a photocopy of it for the files later. The tape then ends with me making one last suggestion that may well have been inspired by the map-like arrows on Amber's "What's the Same/Different. . .?" Research Notes — a suggestion which foreshadows the research map-making that we would soon be doing extensively beginning in Session 17.

Alison Another thing you can do is make diagrams — like this — circles? Like you start with the one that starts the smallest like maybe 'thinking' and then — then the next bigger circle could be — what comes next — like maybe 'talking' — or — and then send them out in different directions — like you could try and see how they're related to each other by taking them off the page and re-arranging them the way you like. And anything that you do along those lines >>> and then bring it back — and then *that* could be the beginning of a discussion. Okay? So this is just the beginning >>> a *first* look.

S13-15: Beginning to Make our Progress Visible

Having made moves to get 'back to the subject' in Sessions 9 and 12, in the next three sessions we began to work on ways to make our progress visible to ourselves as a way of helping us to stay 'on track' and to make decisions about where to concentrate our energies on a session by session basis.

S13: Exploring Map Styles

On Thursday, December 17, 1992 we met for our only session of the week before Christmas and since many of the co-researchers were to sing in a school choir concert that night, I made no specific Sigma plans. The five co-researchers who appeared did not want to start something new and so we decided to have an

'independent research' session. Arachnid, Tracy and Whoopy chose to work on the "Same/Different" activity from Session 12 using computers this time. Daisy and I [Alison] worked on different possible ways of 'mapping' our discussions. We all listened to an audio tape mainly to satisfy curiosity rather than for research purposes. And near the end of the session we tried to read one of the session transcripts I had on hand by taking parts. We did not audio tape this session.

Later I [Sigma] recorded Daisy's and my [Alison's] early attempts to think about mapping our progress in my Sigma Research Notes as follows:

Mapping our progress. Daisy was interested in working with me on the problem of figuring out a way to chart our progress so that we could feel that we were getting somewhere. We went downstairs and got some large, brown paper but that was less than successful because we hadn't figured out what we wanted to do with it yet. Also, Daisy was reluctant to start it in the absence of other researchers. So we spent some time together playing around with different possible styles of charts or schematic maps that we could use. Daisy was full of neat ideas I'd not seen before. Must start a collection of different chart styles. [Note to myself: Bring in books with other samples next time.]

[D/S13/92.12.17Th/DRG/Sigma Research Notes]

These early attempts marked the beginning of our work on graphic ways to represent our ideas.

S14: Making Our First Video Tape

On Thursday, January 7, 1993 in our first session of the new year, we began to use the school's video camera for the first time as a way of acting on my [Sigma/Alison] observation after the animated dialogue between Ferrari and Staci on 'communication' in Session 10 that "we need to start video-taping soon" in order to obtain better and more complete data.

We therefore decided to have another session of independent research activity during which the eight (and after gymnastics, ten) co-researchers worked on activities of their own choosing. Daisy, Mariah, Joey, Jaguar and Tracy decided to take an audio tape recorder and have their own research discussion in the library using a chart Daisy had made in the form of steps to track the progress (up the steps) of the discussion. They decided to use "a list of words as our topic" — referring to the words on the Same/Different List. They ended up working especially on making distinctions between a 'quarrel' and an 'argument'. They also

discussed 'gossip' and whether it was good or bad as well as the difference(s) between a 'chat' and 'talk'.

Amber and Whoopy decided to work at the computers with Amber working on her Researcher Profile and Whoopy saying, "I'm doing something on discussions: saying what's the same and what's different". And Chocolate decided to write a blurb on one of the co-researcher questions "from the first discussion we ever had: Does it matter who you talk to?" I [Alison] helped Jennifer work out how to use the video camera after which she acted as a roving camera operator moving between the library and Room 10 asking the various co-researchers about the research they were doing that day.

S15: Reflecting on Our First Video Tape

When we met the next time, almost a week later, we decided to watch the video tape we had made in Session 14 — partly to satisfy our curiosity and also to work out how to make the best use of video tape in our co-researching. Having already watched the video at home, I [Sigma/Alison] was ready with some preliminary observations and I followed those with suggestions that we have a discussion every other week using philosophy procedures. Then I raised the issue of co-researcher identity confidentiality to which our introduction of video tape gave rise since we would now be adding faces to the pseudonyms. After discussing this issue, we took notes and all made observations as we reviewed the tape in two parts.

Co-researcher confidentiality and the use of video tape. After my preliminary remarks and a discussion, Daisy suggested that for the video confidentiality issue, we make a list and have everybody sign it to say whether they were comfortable with each video. I added that before the research is finished that I would want to do something like that as well as getting their addresses in case I needed to check with them when I was working with the data after they had graduated. We reviewed the video in two ways: the first looking at how to improve the technical aspects of our research (using the video camera, etc.) and the second looking at how to improve the content and process of a discussion.

Technical observations and suggestions. We watched the first part during which Jennifer interviewed co-researchers who were working at the computer and then we came up with the following observations and suggestions:

- People being taped should know beforehand that they were going to be interviewed so that they would be taken less by surprise and would have more to say. [Whoopy; reiterated by Daisy]
- The interviewer/camera operator should ask more questions when talking to each person; examples were given. [Einstein]
- People interviewed should look directly at the camera and the interviewer/camera operator should not repeat what people said. [Arachnid]
- It would be good if the operator could keep the camera steady and not cut off people's heads (show less body, more head). The same questions were repeated to different people. [Ferrari]
- The first part of the video during which we were getting the camera out and finding out how to use it was not necessary and should not be used. [Joey]
- People should not go too close to the camera, even if they don't know it's on, because of focus problems. [Mariah]
- The camera operator seemed to be very natural and relaxed while she was asking the questions and did good zooming in on the work on the computer. [Alison]
- The camera was held pretty steady and there was never too much light in the picture so that we couldn't see the person's face except occasionally when they were near the computer. Focus was generally good. [Einstein]
- There was a lack of consistency in the placement of each interviewee's head on the screen; there should be a special swivel chair such that each person's head would be similarly placed in the frame. [Ferrari]

What is interesting and important about the co-researchers' observations is their range and variety. These students brought a certain media production literacy to this project — and this without any specific training of which I was aware.

We also watched the second part in which some of the co-researchers were having the 'Same/Different' discussion in the library. The video tape resumed at a point where Daisy was explaining how to use her Step Chart and it proceeded to a point where the discussants brought up the subject of 'gossip'. I [Alison] stopped the tape after the tape reviewers had had a chance to see enough to give them an idea

and opened the list for more observations — this time directed at both process and content issues of the *discussion*.

The range and variety of reviewers' observations and comments for this part are indicative of my co-researchers' abilities to discern subtle differences and accord importance to them.

- Discussion process: (1) discussants should express their ideas clearly (elocution, vocabulary and articulation); and (2) camera operator should concentrate exclusively on the people who were doing the talking in the interests of the content of the discussion. [Arachnid]
- Aspects of the discussion: (1) the way the participants decided to start the discussion (with questions) was not useful since nobody had any questions; (2) the demeanor of the discussants (who seemed to laugh at everything that was said) did not serve the discussion well; and (3) how useful was Daisy's Step Chart for purposes of the discussion content? [Whoopy]
- Topic: suggestion that another time they choose a better topic. [Daisy, Whoopy]; support for Whoopy's first two observations. [Daisy]
- Step Chart: needed better *explanation* for both discussion participants and viewers. [Alison, Arachnid]
- Respect: concern about how the discussants were making fun of each other — in a way which did not serve the discussion well and was *not* usually seen in class philosophy discussions; Discussion *process*: Importance of filming the people who were *not* talking in the discussion as a way of showing the social context in which the discussion occurred, and whether other discussants were interested and participating. [Alison]
- Need of a star in a movie. [Joey]

None of these observations and comments had to do with the actual content of the discussion in the sense of taking up specific points made *in* the discussion on the tape. However, all were concerned with process issues which could *influence* the content of a discussion — for good or for ill.

S16: A Research Discussion:

“Can you learn if you’re dead?”

Acting on the concerns I expressed in Session 15 regarding the progress we were making, in this next session we decided to have another ‘research discussion’ and we chose co-researcher question #13, Can you learn if you’re dead? as our topic.

Session 16 • Thursday, January 14, 1993 • 5(7) Co-researchers

Living and Learning

Once we had selected the question, and before we began the discussion itself, we negotiated the procedures by which we wanted the discussion to proceed. We ended up choosing the Passport Questions Procedure where in order to say something, you have to give a question first. Then I prepared the transparency and mentioned that the focus was on the ‘learning’ part of ‘discussion for learning’.

During the course of this discussion we produced the following ten “passport” questions:

1. Can reincarnated people learn the same thing twice without knowing it? [Daisy]
2. How are we supposed to know if we’ve never been dead? [Chocolate]
3. If you could learn when you’re dead, what would you learn? [Alison]
4. If you are dead, where do you learn? [Mariah]
5. Would you do philosophy if you’re dead? [Amber]
6. Would old dead people have to go back to school in heaven or. . .? [Amber]
7. If you died as a student would you continue your studies? [Chocolate]
8. How do you know you’re not dead now? [Daisy]
9. Is it your spirit that learns or just your dead body? [Mariah]
10. Do animals go to heaven? [Amber]

In response to the first seven questions we explored a wide range of ideas regarding living and learning. Then for the last three we veered off onto two different but interrelated sidetracks — one epistemological and the other having to do with evolution — in which we also pursued issues having to do with what counts as evidence for questions such as these.

Research discussion — Questions 1 to 7

1. Can reincarnated people learn the same thing twice without knowing it? [Daisy]

Commenting on C-RQ#13, Daisy said, “I think the answer to this question here, ‘Can you learn if you’re dead?’ is Yes — reincarnation”.

In my [Judy] class philosophy experience, when discussing matters pertaining to death it is not at all unusual for children to raise the possibility of reincarnation very quickly. In this segment Daisy practically *assumed* that people are reincarnated as a way of bringing them back to life (“Just like cats have nine lives”) so that they *can* learn. She then asked the *further* question of whether such reincarnated people can “learn the same things twice” and this “without knowing it”. In so doing she foreshadowed ideas about “invisible learning” — or learning “without knowing it” — that would emerge later. And at the same time she raised the epistemological issue of how or whether one knows when or what one learns. By introducing reincarnation, Daisy found a way to resolve the issue of a ‘dead’ learner, and she used a standard concept of ‘learning’ without opening it up to scrutiny.

2. How are we supposed to know if we’ve never been dead? [Chocolate]

Also addressing C-RQ#13, Chocolate said, “I wrote, — I have — kind of — an answer to that. I think — I don’t — really think — we can learn — if we’re dead. I mean, if you’re dead, you’re dead.” Although Chocolate tried to take into consideration the notion of reincarnation which Daisy had raised, based on her own inability to remember if *she* had had a past life, she did not really take it seriously. She too was interested in the epistemological issue of how we would *know* if we can learn if we’re dead but she had her doubts saying that “if you’re dead, you’re dead”.

3. If you could learn when you're dead, what would you learn? [Alison]

In this next segment I [Alison] began my question with, "If you *could* learn when you're dead", and then I invited my co-researchers to go beyond the issue of *whether* or not you could learn to consider *what*, hypothetically, you would learn. Then, in a moment of Sigma tension, I let my co-researchers know of my concerns about the relevance of our discussion for our research question while at the same time, in the spirit of doing 'research', I let the discussion continue without assuming that I knew where it would go. Like Daisy I too used the term 'learning' in my question without questioning what we meant by it.

4. If you are dead, where do you learn? [Mariah]

Mariah's question was an extension of the one I [Alison] had just asked. She too began by assuming, hypothetically, that we *could* learn "If dead. . ." and went on to wonder *where*. And when she elaborated on her question in this segment, she considered two possibilities: one that you just stay in your grave and learn, and the other that you go to school. Mariah too took it for granted that we all knew what we meant by 'learning'.

5. Would you do philosophy if you're dead? [Amber]

Stated as a rhetorical question, this one that merits a closer look. Was Amber making a joke or is there more to her question than meets the eye? This was the first question that did not contain the word 'learn'. However, it is at least possible that Amber was somehow equating 'doing philosophy' *with* 'learning'. Since she did not elaborate on what she meant, it must remain just that — a rather intriguing possibility.

6. Would old dead people [adults with jobs who don't go to school] have to go back to school in heaven or. . .? [Amber]

By raising this question in this way, Amber built on the concept of learning in Mariah's question as something that you either 'just do' or that you 'go to school to do' by adding a notion of learning as something that can also be done (a) by grown-ups, (b) from your job, or (c) by going *back* to school. This puts new meaning to the expression 'lifelong learning' by extending it to after you're dead! In all seriousness, it is worth noting that it is the *children* who are adding these

dimensions to our still unexplored concept of 'learning'. Would Amber have thought of this question in this way if she did not already have some notion of adults learning, of learning on the job and of going back to school to learn?

7. If you died as a student would you continue your studies? [Chocolate]

When Chocolate took up Amber's question about having to go *back* to school, she raised the additional question about people who died *before they had finished* school when she wondered whether they would have to *continue* their school in Heaven. In so doing, she introduced an additional dimension to the concept of 'learning' which was lurking in the background of this discussion — that of "Cont. Ed." or Continuing Education. Like Lifelong Learning only a little more specific, we now have a notion of people who, for one reason or another (in this case because they *died*) were unable to complete their normal program of learning. Would they get to *continue* their studies in Heaven, she wondered? Then, like Mariah earlier, she juxtaposed this with the alternative of being able to "do whatever you want".

Next, drawing on the example of her own mother, Chocolate added a related question about people who *had* finished school but who had gone back to school as adults *not* to continue unfinished schooling but *to pursue other interests*. Here Chocolate added yet another variation of how 'learning' fits into people's lives when she raised the case of adults who may have died before completing studies they were doing out of *interest*. This is a subtle variation on the theme of lifelong learning in the sense that these people do not necessarily have gaps in their normal course of elementary-high school-college progression but rather choose to continue learning of their own accord.

"*God's School of Knowledge*"? Next it was Daisy's turn and she began by saying, "I have something — I'm not sure who it goes to but — if you're dead. . . where are you going to go, 'God's School of Knowledge' or something? I mean like, where are you supposed to go?" She looked at me and, looking at the transparency and pointing to #4. I said, "So this is one of them up here that you're commenting on? '*. . .where* do you learn?" Daisy replied, "It's kind of a question. Where would you learn? God's School of Knowledge?" "Okay," I said as I added, "God's School of Knowledge under #4. on the transparency.

"God's Shopping Mall?" Then, picking up on Amber's earlier point about learning from your job, Daisy added, "And also — I also have something — where would you go to *work*? God's Shopping Mall or something like that? I mean where would you work? I mean — everything's so easy and light and — " (At this point Jaguar walked in from gymnastics practice.) Without pausing I said to Daisy, "So where would you learn? Where would you work?" As I asked that I joined the word 'work' to 'learn' on the transparency. "Yes," Daisy replied. It is hard to tell whether Daisy was making a joke when she said this. Her tone of voice suggested that she might be. However, no one reacted and I took her seriously as I added the points she was making to the transparency.

From this point on the discussion moved on to two different side-tracks, one epistemological (How can we know about being dead? How do we know we are not dead now? How do we know that this is not heaven?) and the other evolutionary (Legend has it that we were apes). These explorations, especially the latter, led us to consider complex, subtle and interrelated questions regarding evidence. What would count as evidence? (Who could tell us — apes cannot talk or write? How could they tell us — Where would they get the materials to write? How else could we find out — examining shape or bones?). How would such evidence be preserved? (Over time paper would disintegrate or the apes would eat it.) And how credible would such evidence be? (Even if they could write, it would depend on where it is published — in tabloids or *National Geographic*).

Time's Up

To bring our research discussion to a close, I went back to C-RQ#13:

Alison	Did we — did we talk about learning if you're dead?
Voice	Nope.
Chocolate	— kind — kind of —
Voice	Yeah, we did.
Chocolate	At the beginning but then we —
Alison	— also talked about —
Mariah	— reincarnation —
Alison	— being dead.

Before we began this discussion I was doubtful about its relevance to our 'discussion for learning' research question. I [Alison] expressed those doubts during the discussion and my question at the end suggests that I was still doubtful at the end. Indeed, even as I began to transcribe these segments, I did so thinking this could be an example of a *non-productive* research discussion. After transcribing and living with these data however, I [Sigma] came to appreciate the complex concept of 'lifelong learning' that my young co-researchers brought to this discussion and the influence that had on our inquiry. Using the idea of 'reincarnation' to bring people back to life (if only theoretically) such that we *could* talk about learning, we talked about many different aspects of "Living and Learning". Without looking directly at the concept of learning (that would come later), we drew on our own experience and that of people we knew who learn at different ages and stages in their lives to produce a complex portrait of learning. We talked about a variety of forms of "lifelong learning" — *e.g.* varieties that correspond to continuing studies that may have been interrupted when one died, going back to finish school, going back to school as a 'mature student', or taking more courses to pursue one's own interests even after finishing school. Conspicuously absent from our deliberations however were any considerations of *why* we would learn or *whether* we should learn. Rather we worked from an assumption that you *would* be learning when you're dead and then looked at what might have to be different in order to take the fact that the learners would be dead into account.

Stories 5

Making 'Inquiry' Progress

Now that we had tried two of my suggestions for making our progress visible (using and reviewing video tape in Sessions 14 and 15, and discussing one of our co-researcher questions in Session 16), in Session 17 I invited my co-researchers to try a third (making research maps).

S17: Making Our First Research Map (Map 1)

Although I [Judy] had had experience with concept mapping when we began this research, my young co-researchers had not. They had, however had subtle and incidental exposure to it since I [Judy] may have produced maps and diagrams on transparency during class philosophy sessions; and also since there are visual representations of ideas in both the Philosophy for Children novels and in accompanying activities in the teachers' guide.¹¹⁸ However, the Philosophy for Children materials do not *feature* concept mapping as such and neither did I in our class philosophy sessions.

Making Map 1: "CPI"

Unfortunately, when we set out to make our first map we suffered a complete technical breakdown in this session and were not able to record any of our proceedings. Here, as recorded in my Sigma Notes for Session 17, is what happened.¹¹⁹

118 See, for example, the concentric circle class membership diagrams in *Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery* (Lipman 1982, p. 14) and in its accompanying instructional manual (Lipman, Sharp, and others 1979, pp. 72, 76).

119 See Appendix B-1 for Einstein's computer generated version of Map 1.

For this session Cinnamon was the name recorder and my Sigma Plans for this session read simply, "Try mapping our research as we go".

Mapping process and content

The Sigma Notes I jotted down after the session are recorded in two columns, one headed "Process" and the other "Content".

Process. First we had to decide *how* we were going to make our map. From a large roll of brown paper usually used for painting murals I had brought a piece which measured about 9 feet by 3 feet for us to use. The first thing we had to decide, therefore, was *where* to put it while we worked on it. After considering Room 10 our research location, and the floor in the hall, we finally decided on the library where we put three library tables together end to end and all sat around the map. It worked beautifully and my co-researchers loved it.

Content. We started the map by writing "CPI" in a bubble at the top with lines joining it to a bubble marked "Discussion" below and to the left, and one marked "Learning" below and to the right. Very soon into the process, I noted: "they caught on quickly" and "fine distinctions being made". At one point there was a reference to a previous "Staci discussion" about talking to her bear. In this instance someone came to see "talking to [the] bear as *really* a dialogue with *oneself*". In my Sigma Notes I wrote further that we were "getting into CPI now" as "we check things against the 3 elements: Collaborative, Philosophical and Inquiry". I also noted that people were "making [their] *own* maps using different styles in their notebooks". And I concluded that some went away wanting to work on it more at home.

Of particular interest here is how readily the co-researchers took to the mapping activity without much explanation or teaching from me and how motivating the mapping activity was in that the co-researchers wanted to do more on their own. From a content point of view, also of interest is how drawn the co-researchers were yet again to Staci's bear and the notion of communication (or having a dialogue) with oneself.

S18: Imaginary Friends & Interpreting Map 1

The writing of “blurbs” — a form of thinking-in-writing which we used in class philosophy — was another way of contributing to and advancing our exploration of discussion for learning in addition to the making of research maps. In Session 18, in response to and as a way of further exploring Staci’s Cotton Candy argument that it is possible for one person to ‘communicate’ with oneself [Cw1], Arachnid proposed that we each create our own ‘imaginary friend’. Later, because of the technical problems we had when we made our first research map in Session 17, I [Sigma] thought it important for us to reconstruct what we had done as soon as possible both for data production purposes and also for the benefit of the five co-researchers who were not present that day.

Session 18 • Thursday, January 21, 1993 • 10 Co-researchers

The Startup for Session 18 took a long time and after we talked about opening a **Data File**, it was marked by our wanting to do different activities. We ended up deciding that each co-researcher could choose what to work on. Because there were a variety of activities happening simultaneously, the audio tape was difficult to decipher because of so many different conversations occurring at once.

Imaginary Friends and Communication with One [Cw1]

According to Arachnid, the idea of ‘imaginary friends’ came to him during Session 17 when we were constructing our first research map.

Imaginary friends? The session began with a full explanation by Arachnid of Map 1 in which he described it as based “on all the things that have to do with learning and discussion”. He began by explaining the bubble he had added which read, **dialogue with a bear / imaginary friend / animals**. This bubble was linked to one that said **one person** which was in turn linked to both **CPI** at the top of the map and **Discussion** below it. Arachnid added, “we were wondering if you could have a discussion, or CPI which is “Colla-, Collaborative Philosophy Inquiry”. [Chorus: *Philosophical!*] a discussion with — one person?”

Ferrari wanted to add something and he tried to explain a different bubble which was linked to the **one person** bubble. That one read, **Having a discussion**

with your good side of you and the bad side of you and your mind. That's three (things) (sic). He mentioned that this type of discussion occurred when one side of you is telling you to do something "and the other side is telling you *not* to do it."

Ferrari >>> So let's say you're >>> going to do something and one side of you is telling you "Do it" and the other side is telling you *not* to do it so you're *thinking*, I mean, you're consciously telling [yourself] what to do so it's almost like >>> a one-person discussion but in your mind it's like an interesting discussion.

"That's good," Staci said. Arachnid added, "Good example". And another voice said, "Yeah, that *is* good".

Although I appreciated Arachnid's move from Staci's stuffed bear to 'imaginary friends' for purposes of our exploration of whether it matters who you talk to and whether it makes sense to talk about 'communication with one', at the same time I was reluctant to encourage my co-researchers to spend too much time or energy on inventing their own imaginary friends. Although I could see that the idea had strong appeal and would be fun to do, I was not entirely convinced that this would be a promising line of inquiry for us to pursue.

A [Sigma] search of the co-researchers' data files yielded three Imaginary Friends documents. The one by Arachnid was done by hand in his research steno pad and is an example of a detailed character sketch. Another by Daisy consisted of her imaginary friend's vital statistics only and is an example of why I had misgivings. And the third one, by Ferrari, was typed at home and is an example of a reflective research blurb or memo.¹²⁰

Interpreting Map 1 — "CPI"

After Arachnid and Ferrari had done their 'imaginary friend' and 'having a discussion with your good side, your bad side and your mind' explanations of our first map, I was not satisfied that we had described Map 1 – CPI well enough for those who had not attended DRG in Session 17. So when it was my [Alison's] turn, I tried to explain what we had tried to do myself since no one else was

¹²⁰ For Ferrari's 'Imaginary Friend' blurb see S19: Making Progress: 'Homework', Impromptu Interviews & a "Maxi-Map" later in *Stories 5: Making 'Inquiry' Progress*.

offering to do so. What I said, essentially, was this: "[CPI] is the kind of discussion that we do in philosophy class >>> We took 'Discussion for Learning' and we started off with two circles >>> we tried to draw — what we were saying >>> we figured out that there were three kinds of discussion: one-person discussions, small-group discussions, large-group discussions >>> ".¹²¹

Whoopy interjected to say that nobody knew what Einstein was doing on the 'Learning' side of the map because he "just did it" without telling us what he was doing and why.

Then Staci asked, "Is 'CPI' — 'Discussion for Learning'?" and I [Alison] replied, "Yes. Well, that's what we want to figure out. *Is it?*" "Yes," Staci said, "because >>> I don't think we do CPI in class. I think we do >>> Discussion for Learning"

I went on to remind them of the meaning of the letters 'CPI' and how discussion for learning was a simpler way of saying it. Then I added that "my research question for *you*, for *us* was: *Do we learn from those discussions, and if so, what do we learn?*" and do we only learn from only one kind or "all kinds of discussions like that"?

Making our own different maps. After discussing computer compatibility issues for map-making with Ferrari, I explained how each co-researcher might make *different* maps of the same ideas. This was to point out that these maps we were making were just to get us started and that we might repeatedly revise them as we progressed with our inquiry.

Amber's data file contained a map she had done in Session 17 while we were making Map 1. In other co-researchers' data files there were also steno-pad maps done by Arachnid, Einstein, Ferrari and Whoopy. Although they were similar to each other in many respects, they were also different. For example, Amber had not placed [CPI] anywhere on her map. Arachnid had [Discussion] at the top, [CPI] in the middle and [Learning] below that. And Einstein had done three maps and [CPI] appears only off to the side on the one which features [Discussion]. On Ferrari's map [CPI] also appears off to one side as if as an

¹²¹ For my [Alison's] exact words see *Co-researching Stories: Making Progress Research Acts* under 4.5 Advancing the Inquiry Research Acts in Chapter 4. Surfacing Research Acts.

afterthought. Meanwhile Whoopy put **CPI** at the top of her map — twice: above both **Discussion** and **Learning** which were side by side.

Ferrari's concerns. Later (in Session 18), Ferrari and I [Alison] reflected on how we had made Map 1 the day before. Ferrari was particularly interested in the **Learning** section. Although he thought that Einstein had worked too quickly for people to follow, his main concern was that Einstein had joined so many of the bubbles to each other such that it didn't mean anything anymore. However, I tried to reassure him that each item could be related to more than one other item and in more than one way.

S19: Making Progress

'Homework', Impromptu Interviews and a "Maxi-Map"

In Session 19, I came with a new video camera and four new hand-held portable tape recorders and we used them for the first time in what turned out to be a very busy "pot pourri" independent research activities session.

*Session 19 • Wednesday, January 27, 1993 • 10 Co-researchers
and Cotton Candy*

Startup. Joining us for the first time in this session was Cotton Candy, Staci's bear. She came, as planned, to be photocopied or photographed for the Data File.

Ferrari's DRG 'Homework'. After we made our first map in Session 17, Ferrari was anxious to get to a computer to write some of his ideas and much to my [Sigma] delight and amazement, he arrived at Session 19 with the following three blurbs which he had titled, "Staci's Bear Talk", "CPI" and "Imaginary Friend". After describing each one briefly, he read them to us.

"Staci's Bear Talk". As Ferrari read his "document", Staci held Cotton Candy in her lap.

Staci's Bear Talk

On the seventh session of DRG, Staci said that she was having conversations with her bear. At first it seems a little funny but then it kind of makes you think for awhile. On the day of DRG when Staci told us about having discussions with her (stuffed) bear, it left me walking home with a lot of thought. It was very interesting because we could tell that she wasn't lying about what she was saying and it made people very confused. We know it's impossible for a bear to talk, but the way that she was saying it made it very interesting. She explained that one morning she woke up and asked her bear, "Are you hungry?" and the bear answered, "Yes." We didn't believe her at first. We knew she was making the answers in her head but to her it could be like the bear's actually saying it.

The reason why I'm writing about it for our "DATA FILE" is because people would like to know why I believe all what Staci said . . . For a conclusion, I would just like to say that I'm not sure about what I wrote on the map discussion where I wrote a line from CPI and made a bubble and in it I wrote one person. Of course you know I could be wrong. It could be a two man discussion and that's why I decided to write about Staci's talking bear.

[D/S18+/93.01.23Sa/DRG/CoR/Ferrari/HW-"Staci's Bear Talk"]

After Ferrari finished reading, Staci told the group another Cotton Candy story after which I commented on the 'document' Ferrari had produced. I marveled at how in his blurb he had "told a story", I told my co-researchers a little bit about the relatively recent recognition of narrative in the academic world, and I thanked Ferrari. I also remarked on how the discussion had stayed with him a long time since it had occurred in Session 7 and we were now in Session 19. And I said I hoped others would be inspired to bring in DRG-related things they might think of doing off-site.

In this his first research blurb dated Saturday, January 23, 1992 (sic), Ferrari wrestled with the dilemma that Staci's story about her bear's ability to talk presented to the other co-researchers.

In the first paragraph he demonstrated how he was prepared to suspend belief in the face of an idea that at first "seems a little funny" and he admitted that "it kind of makes you think for awhile". More than merely treat it as an amusing idea, however, he recognized that "it left me walking home with a lot of thought". He found it to be "very interesting" because of Staci's credibility and he included other co-researchers in this assessment when he said, "We could tell she wasn't lying about what she was saying". Saying that this "made people very confused", he went on to explain the dilemma. First he stated what they *did* know ("We know it's impossible for a bear to talk") and then he noted that it was "the way she was saying it" that "made it very interesting" (my italics). Next he provided a taste of the bear story itself and the reaction of the other co-researchers to it: "We knew she was making the answers in her head". And then he created a theory that could accommodate Staci's interpretation: "but *to her* it could be like the bear's actually saying it" (my italics).

In the second paragraph he took a reflexive, meta-level look at why he wrote this blurb and provided a *research* rationale for it when he explained why he wrote about Staci's bear for the Data File. Then, concluding his blurb, he wrote explicitly of how the research discussion about Staci's bear had prompted him to have second thoughts about what he had written on the research map in Session 17 and he explained the connection between those second thoughts and his writing about Staci's bear talk.

"CPI." In a second research blurb, written at home and dated Sunday, January 24, 1993, Ferrari did more work on his understanding of "CPI" and whether it is something that can be done by one person. In this one he speculated on the importance of this for our DRG research.

CPI

What CPI stands for is Collaborative (more than two) Philosophical (philosophy) Inquiry (demanding questions). The reason why I'm writing about this is because I think that CPI could be one person because when you ask yourself a question, you usually answer it by yourself. If you've heard the expression, Think before you say or do something. When you're thinking, you're getting two points of view. What your brain thinks you should do and your mind. Having a discussion with yourself is almost like what most of us do. Answering your own questions has happened at least once or twice in philosophy, for example let's say we were in philosophy and you ask a question then you get onto the list again to answer it. Has that ever happened to you?

Maybe to someone who hasn't thought it over yet about CPI maybe wouldn't get the point of view that I get about CPI Maybe what I wrote down could change the whole map about CPI.

[D/S18*/93.01.24Su/DRG/CoR/Ferrari/HW-"C.P.I."]

Ferrari began this second research blurb with a clear statement of the meaning of CPI: "CPI stands for: "Collaborative (more than two) Philosophical (philosophy) Inquiry (demanding¹²² questions)". Then he immediately explained that he was writing about this because he took issue with the idea that CPI is for "more than two". In a detailed explanation he provided several examples to support his view and then he speculated that he may be onto something important for our research purposes ("Maybe what I wrote down could change the whole map about CPI").

"Imaginary Friend". The third research blurb 'document' that Ferrari wrote at home, this one undated, was inspired by Arachnid's suggestion in the previous session that everyone try inventing their own imaginary friends. In this blurb Ferrari provided vital statistics for his imaginary friend and then went further

¹²² Ferrari's use of the phrase "demanding questions" is worth noting since we did not use such an expression in DRG. Since, as French Immersion students, my co-researchers spent so much time thinking and learning in French, and since "demander" in French means "to ask", it is conceivable that his use of "demanding questions" is a carry-over from French.

and theorized about the point of *having* an imaginary friend and its relevance to our philosophical research.

Imaginary Friend

Name: Dick Franky

Age: 10

Sex: Male

Favourite Foods: Italian, Chinese

Culture: Italian

Birthday: July 30

The point of having an imaginary friend is to have discussions with your friend but it's really you that's asking them. Your imaginary friend could also be your conscience because you could have a good side friend and a bad side friend. Usually these two people come in handy when your gonna do something wrong and something right. Like in some TV shows, when they have to make a decision either what to do when something is wrong. The bad conscience stands on the right side of your head and the good conscience on the other side. Now what this has to do with philosophy is that we're doing a map discussion in DRG We're trying to figure out what CPI is. We figured it out and it means to have a discussion with two people or more. But with one person it wouldn't be doing CPI. Now what we're trying to research with our DRG group is trying to find out if having an imaginary friend would be a two man discussion. Arachnid came up with the idea, but an imaginary friend just can't come by making it up. For example, if you say you want an imaginary friend, it won't just come to you like that. It will come like this. . . If one day you notice yourself talking to yourself and being answered, that's when you know that you have an imaginary friend. My imaginary friend came to me by talking to myself and getting an answer. That's when I found out I truly do have an imaginary friend. But an imaginary friend can't pick up things in his hands but if your friend can, it's probably an illusion.

[D/S19/93.01.27We/DRG/CoR/Ferrari/HW-"Imaginary Friend"]

When Ferrari explained the point of having an imaginary friend, he provided two different interpretations: one was similar to the Cotton Candy case ("to have discussions with your friend but it's really you that's asking them") and

the other was a moral interpretation (“could also be your conscience because you could have a good side friend and a bad side friend”). This second one was a point he had raised when we were constructing our first research map in Session 17 and here he took the opportunity to explain and explore it in more detail in writing. Next Ferrari articulated “what this has to do with philosophy” specifically in relation to the work we were doing in DRG. Of interest here was his desire to understand better the present research issue *i.e.* whether certain kinds of discussions counted as CPI.

Doing DRG ‘homework’ was not part of our DRG project arrangement and the fact that Ferrari took the time and initiative to do this work at home is an indication of just how sustained an interest he had in working on these ideas.

New equipment and interviewing. After a brief demonstration of the new audio recorders, I made some suggestions about how we might use them, one of which was for interviewing. Then, following up on observations we had made ourselves in Session 9,¹²³ I introduced the research practice of using interview guides. I explained that these documents consisted of a piece of paper with a list of questions drawn up beforehand. And I suggested that when someone had a guide that was ready, we ought to do some test runs with co-researchers before going to anyone outside of the group.

Map-making. Next, instead of suggesting that we move into the library and continue working on the master map as I had planned, I realized that my co-researchers would rather make their own choices about what to do today so that we could begin to use the new equipment. So instead I ended Startup by talking about the value of map-making in general and I suggested that once every two weeks we work on the map we started using colour coding to distinguish the dates we made additions.

123 See S09a: Reflections on Interviewing Practice — Einstein’s Philosophical Interviewing Agenda in *Stories 2: Philosophical “Blossoming”*.

Independent Research Activities

At this point he co-researchers worked at different activities with Einstein filming what everyone was doing. Daisy was working on an interview guide. Arachnid was working on a list of his own which was inspired by the "What's the Same/Different. . .?" list we worked on in Session 12 and which he explained this way:

Arachnid I'm working on — a list. It's about — all kinds >>> of forms of discussion. (*Reads from a paper he has in his hand.*) Examples are: 'quarrel', 'debate', 'gossip'. And you have to put — what you — what the definition is and what you think is the same and what's the difference? (*Points to the computer screen.*) And what I'm doing, I'm putting a bit of comedy in it? (*He reads from the screen.*)

And Joey waited to review a video tape he had made of an earlier session as camera operator.

Two impromptu interviews

Ferrari Interview: "What is 'DRG.'? Next Einstein moved back into the library where, without an interview guide, and video-taping at the same time, he conducted an impromptu on-camera interview of Ferrari who was sitting formally at a library table. After asking Ferrari for his name, Einstein began by asking him, "What *is* DRG?"

Ferrari >>> DRG is >>> "Discussion Research Group" that we're helping Judy — pseudonym?: Alison — to get her Ph.D. [Einstein: Okay] In our DRG group, >>> we're trying to get — research which — like (*Smiling*) — "No man has done before."

Einstein And >>> I hear that you're trying to research >>> what the >>> philosophical discussions >>> how they are different from >>> normal discussions. Am I correct? [Ferrari: Yes.] Okay.

>>> what do you do — exactly? Do you use computers or something in DRG?

Ferrari >>> We have — eight different computers for everybody. Two computers we can't use but — everybody has their own time card which they can use — for — computers.

Einstein And what do you do on the computers?

Ferrari Well we have Researcher Profiles >>> Normally >>> what you would want to do — if you wanted to write some — really wicked — blurb or something — really interesting that you would like to put down on disk — then you could do that if you want.

Einstein Okay. Thank you, Jaguar. I mean, thank you, Ferrari.

The “time cards” Ferrari mentioned were the computer log cards on which we tracked the amount of time each co-researcher logged at the computers in an effort to be fair about who got to work on them when.¹²⁴ When they finished this interview, returning to Room 10 with the camera, Einstein playfully interviewed Cotton Candy and Staci. Whoopy, meanwhile, said she was organizing the computer log cards and explained how. Mariah said she was reviewing the video of the discussion Joey had filmed and that she was “trying to find things we should change”. At Einstein’s request, she read part of the list she was working on. And Jaguar was working on his Researcher Profile at a computer.

While Einstein was interviewing Ferrari, I [Alison] was in another part of the room and only saw this rather professional-looking and sounding interview for the first time when I [Sigma] reviewed the video tape later. It made me wonder about the need for an interview guide at all. On the other hand, I also wonder what this interview would have been like if they *had* used an interview guide. As is, it is really an information providing sort of interview — the kind one might expect from a roving news reporter perhaps. Worth noting is Ferrari’s portrayal of ‘research’ as what “No man has done before”. This suggests that he understood ‘research’ and what “we’re trying to get” in DRG in ground-breaking or contribution-to-knowledge terms. This goes well beyond the kind of ‘research’ he might have done for a school project such as the school Science Fair which, by comparison, are reports on *other* researchers’ work.

124 For an example of a computer time log card, see Figure 18.

Daisy Interview: “What is an interview guide exactly?” As she worked at a computer, Einstein conducted a mini interview of Daisy on the subject of interview guides.

- Einstein** What is an “interview guide” exactly?
- Daisy** (*Continuing to work on the computer and talking at the same time*) Like >>> if I want to interview for example >>> you — I would use this >>> so I could figure out >>> what I wanted.
- Einstein** What you want to say and all that stuff?
- Daisy** Yeah, exactly.
- Einstein** Oh it’s sort of like a list of questions to interview somebody.
[Daisy: Yeah.] Okay. Thank you.

This mini interview, also conducted without a guide, is another example of interviewing for information. This time Einstein either repeated what Daisy said or he put words in her mouth. The concept of an interview guide that they articulate is rudimentary at best as was my [Alison’s] introduction earlier in that session that an interview guide “is simply a piece of paper with a list of questions on it”. Daisy, however, hinted at more when she said, “I would use this >>> so I could figure out >>> what I *wanted*”. This suggests a researcher agenda which the interview guide would serve. Einstein, however, interpreted her to mean that it helps her to figure out “*what you want to say and all that stuff?*” which may or may not suggest a researcher agenda.

Knowing my students’ capacities for asking *philosophical* questions, and witnessing their enthusiasm for the activity of research interviewing, I was less than satisfied with the interviewing in these two examples. I was more interested in ensuring that our interviewing served *philosophical* research purposes and as such empirical information-seeking was not enough. However, at that particular point I needed to learn more myself and I was hopeful that qualitative research literature on research interviewing in depth would help.

Reconstructing Map 1 — CPI

Later Ferrari took over as camera operator and he and Einstein went into the library where, with Map 1 - CPI spread out on a library table, Einstein reconstructed what we had done.¹²⁵

Einstein's explanation. Einstein began his description of how we had made this map as follows:

(Looking into the camera.) Hello, Ferrari. What we have here is a map of our thoughts. You see we were mapping our thoughts — of the two things. *(Points to the [DISCUSSION] bubble on the left.)* The main subject here — is "Discussion". And over here *(Points to the [LEARNING] bubble on the right.)* — is "Learning".

And discussion — from [DISCUSSION] we get [CPI] *(follows a line with his finger from [DISCUSSION] up to CPI at the top of the map.)* Our lines here — represent — what's attached on to [DISCUSSION]. And over here *(Points to the right side of the map.)* our lines represent what is attached on — to [LEARNING].

(Pointing at [DISCUSSION] and turning to look into the camera.) From discussions we get what we call [CPI]. And CPI — is — collaborative, philosophical, inquiries. So that's 'collaborative' — it means more — two or more. 'Philosophical' is philosophical — like philosophy class. And 'inquiries' are like ideas, blurbs, thoughts, essays.

He continued with an explanation of all the other subcategories of discussions.

(Turning back to the [discussion] side of the map and pointing to each bubble as he mentions it.) And — from discussions we also have [large group] and [small group]. *(Pointing to the lines that link these two bubbles to CPI at the top.)* And [small group] and [large group] are also CPI. And from [small group] we also have [DRG] which is our Discussion Research Group which we are working on now >>>

¹²⁵ To best follow Einstein's reconstruction, see his computer graphic version of Map 1 in Appendix B: *Co-researching Stories Research Maps*.

(Pointing at the line linking **discussion** to the **one person** bubble on the left.) There's a **discussion** — **one person** because there can be a one-person discussion. (Sitting down at the table beside the map.) That's what we're trying to find out. Like a one-person discussion. Like I could talk to myself. Like, "Hi! — (swivels on his chair pretending to be two different people) — Hi, Einstein. Hey man, did you know that $E=mc^2$? — Sure." Okay, anyway.

Einstein provided this reconstruction without hesitation and with an air of authority — an indication of how well he felt he understood the relationships we drew on this map. He was at ease with the concepts and relationships the map represented as he explained what the words in each bubble and the lines that connect them meant. And he showed that he was aware of the frontier of our inquiry when he reached the **DISCUSSION — ONE PERSON** bubble and said, "That's what we're trying to find out" — *i.e.* whether there can be a one-person discussion. However, there were also some holes in his explanations.

(Standing up and pointing to the map.) From **ONE PERSON** we can get **DIALOGUE WITH A BEAR** which was brought up by Staci, and **IMAGINAIRY FRIEND (sic) OR ANIMALS**.

And from **ONE PERSON** you can also get **HAVING A DISCUSSION WITH YOUR GOOD SIDE OF YOU AND THE BAD SIDE OF YOU AND YOUR MIND. THAT'S THREE (THINGS)** — So you know like conscience.

And **ONE PERSON** also leads up to CPI (Turning to look into the camera again.) Well that's what we're trying to figure out. Like, is it 'collaborative' talking to yourself? Because you are only one person.

As he continued, Einstein made increasingly subtle interpretations. He acknowledged which co-researcher brought up a key point ("which was brought up by Staci") and he offered a further interpretation of the **HAVING A DISCUSSION WITH YOUR GOOD SIDE OF YOU AND THE BAD SIDE OF YOU AND YOUR MIND. THAT'S THREE (THINGS)** bubble when he said, "So you know like *conscience*."

(Moving over to the other side of the map.) Over on this side, we have **LEARNING**. (Pointing to the line linking **LEARNING** to CPI) Learning is also CPI — because you *learn* how to do it. In **LEARNING** you get

RESULTS. And our results were — as you and I did, Ferrari — we did a **RAP**.

And then from **LEARNING** we also get **PROCESS**. And 'process' is — things that we *process* — from learning. Like >>> **MAXI DISCUSSIONS**.¹²⁶ Those are the processes — that's one thing that we process from learning. We also get **THOUGHTS** — and thoughts lead to **MAXI DISCUSSIONS** — and thoughts lead to **IDEAS** — and *ideas* lead to **MAXI DISCUSSIONS** — and ideas lead to **BLURBS** — and blurbs lead to **ESSAYS** — and blurbs and essays all lead to **MAXI DISCUSSIONS**.

(*Pointing to the lines linking a series of bubbles in a row.*) And from **PROCESS** we also have **IDEAS** — **BLURBS** — **ESSAYS** — And —

At this point, Einstein had reached the part of map that Ferrari (and Whoopy earlier) had said that some of the others had trouble understanding. So, still operating the video camera, Ferrari took this opportunity to ask him about it.

Questioning Einstein's mapping. Up to this point, Einstein did his reconstruction of the map without being interrupted. By this time Daisy, who had been working on her interview guide nearby, gradually moved closer to the table to observe and I [Alison] was also standing by, watching.

"Einstein," Ferrari interjected politely, "I have a question for you." Einstein stopped and said, "Sure".

Ferrari You had **PROCESS** leading to **ESSAYS**. When you do an essay, what is it — (*He adjusts the position of the camera so he can see Einstein while he talks to him.*) What does it mean — by having an **ESSAY** going — I don't understand what you mean by **PROCESS** going to **ESSAYS**. When you write an *essay*, what kind of process are you getting — by *doing* that?

¹²⁶ 'Maxi discussion' is the term we used in class philosophy to refer to an in-depth discussion that could last for many class philosophy sessions — depending on how long the students sustained their interest in it. We usually began such a discussion with a broad topic or question, we did "Questions Arising" to generate questions we thought that we should address in a discussion on that topic and then used those questions as points of entry into the discussion.

Einstein It's a process of **LEARNING** (*points to* **LEARNING** *on the map*) — because — you *learn* — in essays — cuz like — You learn how to do it. You learn *it*. Like you learn — an essay — you learn *from* an essay. An essay is something you have to learn. You have to *try*. And 'essay' means try. So you have to *try* and write something —

Ferrari Well [Einstein], when you do an *essay*, you don't exactly — *learn* something from it. It's almost like writing another *story*.

Einstein But you *can* learn something from it.

When Ferrari asked Einstein about "**PROCESS** leading to **ESSAYS**" he picked two bubbles which were on opposite sides of the **LEARNING** side of the map such that the "leading to" relationship between **PROCESS** and **ESSAYS** was based on a daisy-chain of links to and through other bubbles. Although Einstein's response to Ferrari's question had a quality of 'thinking on your feet' to it, undaunted by the question, he responded with confidence and as he did so, he played with subtle shades of what it might mean to 'learn' (*i.e.*, you learn *in* essays; you learn *how to do* essays; you learn *it*, you learn *from* an essay, and because 'essay' means try, you also learn to *try* or you learn *by* trying). And when Ferrari was still doubtful, Einstein added the nuance that you do not *necessarily* learn but that you *can* learn from essays. Then he turned back to the map to resume his reconstruction.

Einstein Okay. Also we have from **LEARNING**, **HOW TO DO CPI**, because — you learn how to do *CPI* And **HOW TO DO CPI** leads to **MAXI DISCUSSION**. And **LEARNING** also leads to **MAXI DISCUSSION**.

Ferrari Yeah but — when you *learn* — you don't really need to have a maxi discussion — *because* —

[At this point I [Alison] came back into the Library after having left for a moment to check out a noise that came from the other co-researchers in Room 10.]

Einstein But you learn how to *do* them. You learn how to do them — you learn how to —

Ferrari So >>> *Should* it be — flipped by the other way around because — having a maxi discussion — *learning* a maxi discussion should be — 'Maxi discussion is *learning*' — because you're learning from *doing* a maxi discussion, you're not learning *how to do* a maxi discussion. Because in other words, if your teacher *said*, "Do a composition in *philosophy* >>> it would be doing >>> a maxi *discussion*. It would almost be like doing a discussion with your group.

At first Ferrari questioned whether there should be a link between **LEARNING** and **MAXI DISCUSSION** at all since having a maxi discussion is not a necessary condition for learning. However, when Einstein replied that there *is* a relationship between these two because you have to “learn how to *do*” maxi discussions, Ferrari adjusted his objection to include Einstein’s point by now questioning the *direction* of the relationship between learning and maxi discussions (“*Should* it be — flipped by the other way around”) because “you’re learning from *doing* a maxi discussion, you’re not learning *how* to do a maxi discussion”.

Then Ferrari produced an example which I [Judy/Sigma] interpret by reflecting on what he might have meant in terms of our class philosophy experience. When he said, “Do a composition in *philosophy*—” I interpret that to mean write a ‘blurb’ since the term ‘composition’ is one he might have used with his language arts teacher but is not one we used in philosophy. And when he said “It would almost be like doing a discussion with your group”, he might have been referring to how reading our blurbs aloud would often lead to a discussion of the ideas in it. Einstein, however, held his ground.

Einstein But learning is the main *thing* because we couldn’t *get* a maxi discussion if we didn’t *learn* how to *do* it — first of all. . . >>>

By now the argument came to resemble that of ‘Which came first, the chicken or the egg?’ and that may explain why Einstein held his ground. **LEARNING** “is still the main *thing*” he argued in favour of retaining the relationship the way it was on the map, “because we couldn’t *get* a maxi discussion if we didn’t *learn* how to *do* it — first of all.”

Asking Alison. After this exchange, Einstein took over as camera operator and I [Alison] moved around to the other side of the table. Daisy meanwhile had pulled up a chair and was sitting at the table at the top of the map such that she could see it upside down. Pointing to the lines on the map and looking at Einstein who was behind the camera, I interjected to explain how you can *write* on the lines which link the bubbles to describe the relationships they had to each other.

Ferrari I was saying we could write *why* it’s leading to **PROCESS** and why process leads to **MAXI DISCUSSION**. See but — if we knew that *before* we started off we could’ve made straighter *lines* which could have — we could have wrote on *top* because now [Einstein], here where you wrote curved lines we could still *do* it — but —

I offered to go and get a pen so that we could do that now.

Ferrari's interpretation. Convinced that the way we had done the map was not good enough, Ferrari was intent on making changes to it to make it better. Of particular interest is how, despite his doubts about Einstein's rendering of the relationships on the map, he was not pressing to over-ride them or to delete them and start over. Rather he was interested in exploring what Einstein had in mind and then finding a way to make appropriate modifications to the mapping Einstein had done. It was not so much that Einstein was *wrong* but rather that his map was *inadequate*.

Ferrari (Looking into the camera.) Now what I wanted to say, [Einstein], is that — What you did over here — now — wasn't taking ideas from other people. You were taking your *own* advice. So I don't think that many people — if we had all the DRG group — would — exactly — agree on what you did because — **PROCESS** is here four times! Now you explain to me — why **PROCESS** is equal to **THOUGHTS** and thoughts is attached to **MAXI DISCUSSION** and maxi discussion is attached to **HOW TO DO CPI** and it's all attached to **LEARNING**. Everything you *did* here is attached to **LEARNING**. Learning **ESSAYS** and — **BLURBS** — Over *here* you kind of did — almost like a spider web. Now could you explain me why?

Ferrari was standing on the same side of the table as Daisy so he too was looking at the map upside down. As he spoke he extended both arms as if he were a salesman demonstrating a new product as he pointed to each element on the map and their linking lines. The more he said, the faster he spoke.

It was not only that Einstein's mapping left something to be desired in terms of content, but also in terms of process. Ferrari was bothered by the fact that Einstein had run away with the ball as it were. He had done this part of the map *on his own* and *without* involving the other co-researchers who were present. If he had, he might have avoided the problems Ferrari was identifying of everything being linked to everything else to the point of losing meaning. However, even at that, he *still* did not rule out the possibility that Einstein might have a plausible explanation and so again he asked him to explain. Einstein *did* of course have an explanation and he did not hesitate to offer it again. In terms of persistence, these two were a match for each other.

Einstein Sure **PROCESS** — you process thoughts. And from thoughts you get maxi discussions. You also process maxi discussions. [Ferrari: Just over here you —] You process ideas and you process —

Ferrari (*Cradling the top part of the **LEARNING** section of the map with both hands*) Just over *here* it was okay. But as soon as you entered — **PROCESS** to **MAXI DISCUSSION**, you made this line — and all these lines here — (*someone hands Ferrari the red marker which he uses as a pointer*). Oh, thank you very much. All these lines here — are leading *together*. So — **LEARNING** would have to mean **PROCESS**, **RESULTS**, **RAP**, **HOW TO DO CPI**, **MAXI DISCUSSION**, **ESSAYS**, **BLURBS**, **IDEAS**, and **THOUGHTS** — Which is not *true!* . . . Because you don't *learn* from doing — maxi discussion, thoughts — and you >>> line these all up together. [Einstein: Well not exactly.] So could you explain to me how — why you did that? Why you lined them all *together* because — all — every single line goes to **LEARNING**.

As he talked, Ferrari's used his hands in an animated way and he used the cap of the red marker to move around the map touching each bubble and tracing each line emphatically to help make his point.

For Einstein, it seems, the relationships between all these concepts were reciprocal. For Ferrari however, each represented something different in a way that precluded reciprocity. The more Ferrari pressed Einstein, the more it became apparent that he had an agenda of his own and one about which he had strong feelings. Each time he asked Einstein to explain his actions, it was as if he was looking for Einstein to give in and admit that there was a problem. Eventually Einstein began to express an interest in how *else* he could have done it.

Einstein Well it's because >>> Well how *else* did you want me to put it on? Because I mean I can't put it onto — I can't put **THOUGHTS** onto **DISCUSSION**.

Ferrari You could have made another — *bubble* —. Okay listen — we're gonna — (*waits a moment to say something to Alison who is talking to someone else*)

A likely reason why Einstein said, "I can't put **THOUGHTS** onto **DISCUSSION**" was that 'thoughts' was under 'learning' — *i.e.* on the other side of the map from 'discussion'. Now that Einstein was showing signs that he might consider modifying how he had done the map, Ferrari had a suggestion to make. But first he wanted to check with me that it was alright to make changes to the map.

Ferrari Alison — May I ask you a question? I wanted to know if — maybe we could — make a line going across here (*he motions with his hand a possible dividing line above the* **PROCESS** and **MAXI DISCUSSION** *bubbles*) — going like *that* — and make a line leading to something else. Because *this* — over here — if you look at it very carefully — every single thing is attached to **LEARNING** — every single subject here is attached to everything else.

Allison And they shouldn't be?

Ferrari No — it doesn't make sense because — You don't learn **THOUGHTS** with **IDEAS**. Well it's almost — you *could* because — when you hear someone else's *idea* it gives you *thoughts*. But *here*, you *can't* get **RAP** from — (*to Einstein*) Am I blocking your view?

Einstein No. From **RESULTS** — but Judy told me to — that you get rap from results. Because rap *is* a result.

Ferrari Yeah okay. But look over here. You went **PROCESS** to **THOUGHTS** — to **IDEAS** — But to **BLURBS** — When you get an *idea* — yes, sometimes you make a *blurb* but — **ESSAYS**. Essays is the same thing like a blurb.

Allison Each one you're doing, you're talking yourself *into* it. (*Chuckles.*)

Ferrari But *now* — *essays!* — you're adding *all* the way to **PROCESS** (*he traces the marker along the bottom line on the map*) — which **PROCESS** is added to **MAXI DISCUSSION**. It's making Ring around the Rosie.

Allison It's saying *too much* do you think?

Ferrari It's — it's too much information, I mean — one *word* could make *all these* (*points to THOUGHTS-IDEAS-BLURBS-ESSAYS*).

Try as he might, Ferrari could not get any of his objections to stick — not even for himself. First he objected to the link between **THOUGHTS** and **IDEAS** and soon self-corrected when he realized that someone else's idea could give you thoughts. So then he tried objecting to the link between **RAP** and **RESULTS** but when Einstein said that I [Judy] had sanctioned that one and that rap *is* a result, Ferrari conceded that point too. So then he went to how Einstein had linked **PROCESS** to **THOUGHTS** to **IDEAS** to **BLURBS** to **ESSAYS** until he realized that these links too made more sense than he had thought. And *even though* he recognized that there was some merit in them, he *still* maintained that what was problematic was how they were mapped.

Alison's suggestions. Next, using the analogy of map insets which are enlargements of particular portions of a larger map, I [Alison] suggested that we could try to make a map of just one connection. However, this did not really lead anywhere. Reassuring both Ferrari and Einstein that this was "just the *beginning*" and that "this is maybe the *first* version and that we might scrap this one altogether" I [Alison] suggested that we not worry so much about this at this point. "But this one will teach us how to make a better one. [Ferrari: Yes!] And *that* better one will teach us how to make an even *better* one." Then, as this session came to an end, we talked about practical matters regarding how we should continue to do our mapping.

S20: Process/Content & Sigma Stalling Tactics

My having produced the new audio and video equipment the day before revived my co-researchers' interest in doing research interviews which we had last done in Session 9. However, I had not had time to investigate techniques of research interviewing. So now in Session 20 the very next day, in more moments of Sigma tension, I [Alison] continued to resist my co-researchers' enthusiasm and tried again to hold them back.

Session 20 • Thursday, January 28, 1993 • 8 Co-researchers¹²⁷

To begin this session, I [Sigma/Alison] explained the distinction between process and content in our research work. In a session which I described in my Sigma Notes as a "Process Session", we reviewed another one of our video tapes and we talked about how we were conducting our research and how we could develop our research practices. Then we spent most of the session collecting, identifying and dating documents for a data file. We talked about how best to use the video camera for research purposes. We thought about confidentiality issues and the importance of using our research pseudonyms on everything.

We also talked about how best to proceed with research interviewing. When it was my turn at the end of Startup, as one of eight items to bring to my

¹²⁷ Unless otherwise indicated, the data for this session are from the verbatim transcript of the video tape for Session 20, Thursday, January 28, 1993.

co-researchers' attention, I made an *explicit* request to *delay* conducting research interviews until I could spend more time preparing for it.

With regard to doing interviews and using the little, new tape recorders >>> I need just — this weekend >>> to read — up on it. >>> I think only >>> Daisy's interested at the moment so I'll just >>> talk to you — about it today; but anybody else — wait until I do a little thing — with you — about interviews — before you get started >>> with that. So that can come later.

But, I looked at it last night and it's more complicated than we think. Because we have to keep — it has to be about this (points to the 'content' Map 1: CPI-Discussion for Learning, which is taped to the white board behind)— it can't be about — you know — “Do you like philosophy?” because — that's not — that has nothing to do with — what's the difference between certain kinds of discussions.

We did that when Monica was here. Right? Because we did- — we just wanted something to talk about and she didn't know you — and she didn't know what to talk about so she said that. And that was fine.

And for practising to do that >>> the interview guides that we make need — to — be — very specific — and that's why we need to work on the map — on a regular basis.

Daisy interrupted with a point of information saying that she thought the people we were going to interview weren't going to be from DRG and if so, that would make it hard [to work on our ideas from the map]. To this I replied that they might be people from my other philosophy classes. However this did not address the issue she was concerned about. Later Mariah wondered if we could interview *adults* instead of kids. She had in mind people like Monica or somebody from McGill who might be invited to watch us work on the map and then we could interview them afterwards. That in turn led me [Alison] to suggest that we might consider interviewing their own *parents* after our up-coming philosophy demonstration class planned for the end of the year. Unfortunately, despite my co-researchers' enthusiasm for these ideas, we never did actually carry them out.

My co-researchers accepted my request for a delay and, thinking about my concerns, and keeping in mind my call for interviewing for DRG map-related research *ideas* (as contrasted with survey questions such as “Do you like philosophy?”), they made suggestions about who *else* we might interview. Still, I

remember being aware (and not proud) of my stalling tactics and I was not happy about standing in their way.

S21: Exploring 'Philosophical' (Map 2)

Ferrari's Theory

Philosophy is . . .

"A family of its own in which everything makes sense".

The next two meetings of DRG were cancelled due to Parent Interview evenings and when we resumed a week later for Session 21, we made our first 'sub-map' (Map 2: Col-labor-ative Philosophical Inquiry) as we began to explore how discussion for learning is philosophical. When I talked to my co-researchers about the difference between 'content' and 'process' in our DRG research activity in Session 20, I said that both were important. And because in the previous session we had been mostly caught up in 'process' activity, for Session 21 I suggested and my co-researchers agreed that we spend this session on 'content'. *Which* content, however, we could decide together.

Session 21 • Wednesday, February 10, 1993 • 4 Co-researchers

In a session I think of as the "lollipop" session, we (Alison, Ferrari, Joey and Mariah) met in the Library so that we could spread out our big research map chart paper on a library table. Savouring lollipops which were the refreshments I had brought for this session, we sat on chairs around the table facing each other for discussion purposes and also so that we could easily add contributions to Map 1: "CPI-Discussion for Learning". Mariah operated the video camera and did not contribute to the first part of the discussion.

When we began, I recalled that what I wanted to get at in the research project was whether there is anything special about our class philosophy discussions, "Or are they just like every — any other discussion you might have any other time, any other place?" Then I reviewed my reasons for the phrase "Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry" I had devised saying, "because that's what it's *trying* to be".

Allison But I don't know whether you — whether the *students* in the class >>> see it as >>> if it's anything different? — You might not because you've always had — philosophy in school so it might not seem like, "Oh my goodness! This is really different!"

Joey asked, "And "inquiry"? What's 'inquiry'?" And I replied briefly that inquiry is where you "sort of explore and ask questions and try to figure out".

Joey So that's what we're doing. We're doing philosoph- — we're doing —

Ferrari That's why she gave us the name, "Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry"

Joey Yes. That's right!

Comparing and Contrasting

At this point I suggested that there were a couple of ways we could look at this, one of which was "to do a —*contrast*. Like — see what's different between what *we* do in class and *other* things — like debating, for example". However, I did not know what experience my co-researchers may have had with debating so instead I suggested t.v. talk shows they may have seen.¹²⁸

T.V. talk shows. Using the show *Sally Jesse Raphael* as an example, we agreed that they discuss things. Then I asked, "Now do they do it the way *we* do? Or is there something — different — about what they do?" Joey said they have an audience and we agreed that in class philosophy discussions we too have an audience because, as Ferrari put it, "Yes, because when we talk — people *listen*." and Joey agreed saying, "Yeah, exactly". But then Ferrari noticed that there *are* differences. Although people do raise their hands to speak on a talk show, they don't have a name recorder list or an overhead projector the way we do in class philosophy.

¹²⁸ For more on what the co-researchers had to say about the similarities and differences between class philosophy *discussion* and debates and talk shows, see S05: Research Discussion — *Philosophical Discussions, Debates and Talk Shows* in *Stories 2: Philosophical "Blossoming"* above. Here we directed our attention specifically to similarities and differences in relation to doing *philosophy*.

Allison Okay. Now why not — do you suppose?

Ferrari Well it's a *talk* show. See — when you do *philosophy* it's almost like — it's — it's — . . . I can't find the good words to put it — It's almost like we're doing it — like *on purpose* like — we're *doing* — *philosophy* — like we're not — doing — a *debate* — we're doing *philosophy*. [Alison: Okay.] So doing a debate would be — doing a debate and — doing philosophy would be doing philosophy.

Joey, meanwhile was beginning to think along a different line as he wondered aloud whether what they do on the *Sally Jesse Raphael* show is 'discussing' or 'debating'. Acknowledging that that was a good question, we did not pursue it at that time.

News shows and interviews. Next I asked about news shows on which there were interviews with people and when Ferrari responded to that, he amused us with a little parody of what it *would* be like if the news *were* done in a debating fashion.

Ferrari Well that's almost >>> that's — almost — 'inquiry' — [Joey: Yeah.] — and asking questions [Alison: Uh-hmm.] So it's inquiry. But it's *not* debate because if the news forecast >>> man says, "Tomorrow it's going to be 20 degrees" you don't see some man say, "No it isn't! going to be 20 degrees! [We all laugh] it's going to be 19!" >>> That's *debating*.

That was not quite what I meant, however, and when I asked them if they ever watched news shows "where they have a whole bunch of people around and they talk about — the issues — they talk about what's going on in politics — ? Or something like that?", Ferrari and Joey shook their heads and so we moved on.

Family shows. When we tried to think of other kinds of t.v. shows, Joey said that he only watched family shows like *Roseanne*.

Allison Yeah, well *okay*. But let's *look* at *Roseanne*. — Do they talk — about things?

Joey Well sometimes — There's always an *issue* to it. [Alison: Yeah.]

Ferrari There's always like — not like — There's always a *moral* to it. Like at the end of the story there always has to be something that — that she did *wrong* [Joey: A fable] and the mother has to say — no I mean the kid has to say, "Oh, I'm sorry" — You know there's always a moral to it.

This reminded me the show *Doogie Howser* in which the main character ends each show by actually typing the "issue" or "moral" of the show into his computer and we took a moment or two to imitate and appreciate how he did that and how, as I put it, "They make you *think* a little". Joey and Ferrari agreed. But then Ferrari compared this example to debating.

Ferrari But he's not — but he's not always — but — it's not really *debating* — like — when you see — *news* it's not really *debating*. It's >>> *collaborative* — no, no. Collaborative means uh— what does it mean?

Allison Working together. . .

Ferrari Working *together*. When you work together to find out what — the — *forecast* is going to be so it's *collaborative*. But it's *not* philosophical. [Alison: Uh-hm] Because once you're up — cuz you get up in the sky with a helicopter, that's how you find out the forecast. >>> — it's not philosophical. And 'inquiry' — yes you could ask questions . . . like. . . Well you don't ask questions to your t.v. but — I don't think you'd be asking questions because as soon as you find out the temperature, you see it on the news forecast.

In making these observations, on his own initiative, Ferrari was using the three CPI concepts ('collaborative', 'philosophical' and 'inquiry') as an inquiry tool.

Still not yet having decided what topic we were going to concentrate on for this session, thinking of one possibility, I asked:

Allison Okay. So what — do we want to make a map maybe of the difference between — CPI — or >>> what we do — well I mean we can call it whatever you like —

This time it was Joey who suggested a conceptual approach and this in very clear terms.

Joey Maybe we can just do like uh Collaborative =, and then after Philosophical = and Inquiry = .

Allison Well we could have four different pages.

Joey . . . We need three.

Allison Three? 'Collaborative'? 'Philosophical'? and 'Inquiry'? [Joey: Yeah.] And then use — use those other things, like the news or whatever just to throw light on whatever it is that we are trying to say?

At this point Joey started to think about *Roseanne* again saying that it is “also like family life a bit” while I was still trying to work out which new map we should make for our second map. When I asked which of the concepts we should do — which would be the easiest to start with, Ferrari was also thinking about other t.v. shows and this time he thought of *Coach*. When I said I had never watched that one, he gave us a brief account of an episode he had in mind and then concluded, “— so — I find it’s debating. >>> It’s debating. But it’s *not* philosophical”.

It was when I asked him “Why not?” that, using a ‘family’ metaphor, he began to articulate the beginnings of a theory about what philosophy is. . .

Ferrari Well in philosophy —. Philosophical is — is almost like — is like another — it’s like — . . . Someth- — it’s like — it’s just — itself. There’s nothing that — that — that is another word for ‘philosophy’. >>> like philosophy — has its *own* family. Let’s just say like that. There’s nothing else that’s almost like philosophy — just — maybe debating. But philosophy is philosophy. [Alison: Okay so we could —.]

In making this observation Ferrari was making a conceptual analysis exploratory move of trying to say what something is by trying to say what it is *not*. In this case, by comparing and contrasting using a variety of examples, the best Ferrari could say was something like this: whatever philosophy is, it is *not* debating. And because he was finding it so difficult to find what it *is*, he said, “It’s just — itself” and “. . . philosophy — has its’ *own* family”. Then uttering a classic example of a ‘tentative’ conclusion, he said, “Let’s just say like that. There’s nothing else that’s almost like philosophy”. But then, almost in the same breath, and in a self-corrective move he added, “— just — maybe — debating”. Then he returned to his earlier conclusion: “But philosophy is philosophy”.

Beginning Map 2: Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry

Mariah	I think —, okay. I think philosophy — can be — >>> anything. Like — just as long as you’re — talking — and you’re >>> having — okay.
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When Mariah, who was operating the camera, made this comment I noticed that we seemed to be gravitating towards ‘philosophical’ as a topic for our next map

and so I said, "Well let's put some things down just about philosophy then. We'll just do 'philosophy'. And then we'll figure out the rest — from there. Okay? So who wants to start?"

Joey thought I should start (the map) and so, with no objection from anyone else, I took a moment to work out with them how and where we should start — at the top? in the middle? Did we think it would 'go wide' or 'stay narrow'? Then, after considering various alternatives, using a red marker, I wrote 'Philosophy' across the top of the page and said:

Allison And then we'll put — like a family tree — [Ferrari: Uh—hm] and we'll put all the things that we can think of that — that philosophy makes us think of — that's part of philosophy — and I hope that Mariah is not going to forget what she just said a minute ago because I didn't — Okay. So we'll write here, 'Philosophy'. [*Writes Philosoph-* and stops.] Do I want to put 'Philosophical' or 'Philosophy'? [Ferrari: 'Philosophical'; Mariah: 'Philosophy'] [*I hesitate a moment and then finish the word by writing 'Philosophical'.*] Okay. Alright. So. . . [to Ferrari] I heard you say, "It's just itself".

Ferrari Yes. . . Like a family of its own.

Next I drew a short line down from 'Philosophical' and a long horizontal line across under the word 'Philosophical' in the style of a family tree and I asked, "Shall I write along this whole think, 'Family of its own'? When Ferrari said to write a "bubble", I turned the horizontal line into a long narrow rectangle and wrote "Family of its own" inside it in block letters. Then I said, "And I want to know who's in the family" at which everyone chuckled while Joey said, "We're stuck," and Ferrari jokingly started to name all the co-researchers.

"*Philosophy can be anything*". Then I turned to Mariah and asked her what she had said before.

Mariah Well I thought that >>> that philosophy should just be like >>> is anything as long as you're having a discussion with two people. Like — kind of like >>> a quarrel or something
—129

Allison So — can be about anything.

129 This example of 'quarrel' that Mariah gave may have been inspired by the discussion she was involved in with others in Session 14 when they worked on the Same/Different list. See S14 Making our First Video Tape under S13-15: Beginning to Make our Progress Visible in *Stories 4: Living and Learning*.

Mariah agreed to my interpretation of what she was trying to say as that philosophy can be *about* anything and so I drew a line down from "Family of its own" and joined it to a bubble in which I wrote "can be about anything".

"In philosophy anything makes sense". At this point Ferrari interjected with a related point.

Ferrari And also in philosophy I've learned that anything makes sense in philosophy.

While I was still writing Mariah's idea, I asked Ferrari if he wanted to write what he had just said on the map but before he could answer, I needed to talk to Mariah some more about her idea.

Allison >>> Mariah, did you say — do you want to say, "Must have — at least two people?" Or —

Mariah Yeah.

Allison Or must have discussion? Or —

Mariah Must have two people.

As I continued to write on the map, I remarked that "This is going to be like rules of the game". Meanwhile, using a green marker, Ferrari made a new bubble on the other side of the map I which he wrote: "Anything you say in philosophy makes sense".

Allison [To Mariah.] Two people or more?

Mariah Yeah. Two people or more.

By this time Ferrari and I were writing on the map at the same time and I suggested to Mariah that she move around with the camera and tape over our shoulders as we wrote. Then I asked what else we wanted to say.

Even an imaginary friend? Ferrari read the bubble I had just made which said, "Must have two people or more" and, thinking perhaps of our Cotton Candy discussion, he exclaimed, "Oh — no!"

Ferrari >>> Now we have to start everything again. — Remember >>> [Alison chuckles.] — having a discussion with yourself? So — from "must have two people or more?" you could write, "imaginary friend"? And under "imaginary friend" write, "have a discussion"—

Allison So the "people" [Circles the word 'people' in the "must have two people or more" bubble and draws a joining line

to a new bubble and says aloud as she writes] — “could be imaginary friend”?

Ferrari Imaginary friend.

Alison “Could be — imaginary friend” — okay. >>>

After I checked with Mariah that the camera was working properly, Ferrari continued saying, “Okay from — ‘could be an imaginary friend’ — we could write ‘your conscience’”. Then, making a connection with a bubble he had written earlier he went on: “Anything you say in philosophy makes sense” even “could be an imaginary friend”.

Ferrari Okay so [*making a connection with a bubble he had written earlier*] — “anything you say in philosophy makes sense” even “could be an imaginary friend”. So do you think — should we make a line all the way here? [Alison: Hmm.] Cuz “could be an imaginary friend” makes sense.

Then we took a few moments to work out just how to write this on the map.

Maybe the ‘must’ should say ‘usually’? Up to this point we had been thinking up what to write and putting our ideas on the map without really discussing them. Now, in view of Ferrari’s remark about having to start all over, I wondered aloud if maybe the word “must” in Mariah’s idea was too strong.

Alison >>> Okay. . . But I think we need to work on this more. . . Maybe the “must” should say “usually”. . .

Ferrari Okay, so circle “must”—

Alison Or do we mean by “must” — Mariah, do you mean ‘has to’? . . . We can’t — possibly do it with less than two people?

Mariah No. I don’t think so.

Alison You don’t? Not even with an imaginary friend?

Mariah Yeah. With an imaginary friend.

Alison That counts as a second person. Well what about your own conscience?

Ferrari Your own conscience is two people: the good side and the bad side. — It would be three people. So circle “must” — uh no, circle “two” — and it could be your conscience? [Alison: Uh-hmm?] And make a line and say “your conscience” >>> your good side, and the bad side of you.

I circled the word “two” in the must have two people or more bubble and attached a new bubble in which I wrote Your conscience. . .good/bad side. Then I asked Joey if he felt like drawing on the map yet but he said he did not.

Philosophy is about figuring out good and bad? At this point Ferrari said he had another idea about the conscience-and-good/bad-side issue but it turned out to be a false start and he soon abandoned it. Seizing the opportunity, I asked a new but related question: "Do you think when we do philosophy that we're trying to also figure out — what's good and what's bad?" Taking my comment to be an observation, without responding to it, he immediately looked to how we could put it on the map. However, I wasn't satisfied with that and I suggested that we try and think of some discussions we'd had and see if in those discussions we were trying to figure out what's good and bad. Ferrari remembered one about violence on television and I remembered one on homosexuality. But he did not respond to my question so I tried again:

- Allison** Aren't we sort of — even though we don't say that it's good or bad, isn't that sort of what we're doing? . . . Is it okay to be homosexual? Is it okay to have all this violence on t.v.? Is it bad to have —
- Ferrari** That's up to the producers —
- Allison** I'm saying that when we do a philosophical discussion —
- Ferrari** Oh, you mean do you think it's bad—?
- Allison** — whatever topic we're doing, aren't we sort of working on — whether something is good or bad? Or what's the good of it? Or —
- Ferrari** So from "good" and "bad" we could do "discussion and philosophy".
- Allison** Well I just wondered if [*points to two existing bubbles*]— like "it could be about anything", "must have two people", we could have another one that says, "It's about what's good and bad"? — But it's not, is it?

Instead of responding to my question, Ferrari again was all set to put my idea on the map as-is but I was not happy with that and began to consider that maybe to him philosophy is *not* about what is good and bad.

At this point in the discussion we began to think about some of the subjects that we talked about in class philosophy to see if we thought philosophy could be about "anything" as Mariah suggested, or whether it is about "figuring out good and bad" as I [Alison] wondered. As we recalled different topics we had discussed, we also said if we thought they were about good and bad and most of them seemed bad. So then we tried to think of 'good' topics and that took us to the *Pixie* novel. However, after recalling a few 'good' examples, we also recalled the sibling rivalry in *Pixie* and that led us back to fights and violence. We continued by recalling

Harry subjects too and then added different ones to the map as examples of 'good' or 'bad' subjects that count as part of talking about 'anything' in philosophy.

What makes this 'philosophy'? At this point I said, "We still need to figure out — what makes this 'philosophy' — even if it's "a family of its own" — because you can talk about all of these things — and have it not be philosophy. Can you?"

Ferrari Well when you talk about these things it's not — when you talk about these things — outside of philosophy. . . we don't have . . . It's >>> just not the same. I don't think it's — It's just — not — the same. Because when you talk about it >>> let's say outside of the school you talk about violence on t.v., it's just not the same because you don't have >>>

Reaching for "what you don't have", all Ferrari could think of was a name recorder or a camera lady or an audio cassette player. Not satisfied with this answer, we tried comparing it with other discussion or talk activities in school and spent some time comparing philosophy to the *discours oral* they had to do in French which was similar but not the same. From there we kept working at it for the rest of the session and some of the observations we made were that philosophy:

- comes from your mind; you don't really have to do research. . .to answer a question [Mariah]
- not all the information's in your mind. You usually have to think but in philosophy when we write blurbs, we just — write what we think about— [Mariah]
- a discours is talking about [something] but you don't debate on it. You don't — You ask questions but it's totally different from philosophy. [Ferrari]
- in your discours you have to make sense when you talk —in philosophy you can say anything and >>> you could kind of change it and put it >>> make it make sense. Does that make sense? [Ferrari]
- another thing about philosophy >>> you ask questions and you comment. [Ferrari]

Is it like other questions and answers in school I asked?

Ferrari Yeah. But it's really different from philosophy. Because in philosophy — it's — just — totally different. It's like — there's an animal that it's a family of its own. Like the [??] bird is the family of the cat. But philosophy. There's nothing else like philosophy. Philosophy is philosophy.

With that we continued exploring 'philosophy' and charting our explorations on Map 2.

S22/23: Exploring 'Learning' (Maps 3, 4 & 5)

A week later, in two back-to-back sessions on two consecutive days, we turned our attention to the 'learning' part of 'discussion for learning'. We were six co-researchers the first day (Wednesday, February 17, 1993) and four the second (Thursday, February 18, 1993). Only Alison and Ferrari were present for both sessions. In Session 22 we started two new maps: Map 3: "Learning what. . ." and Map 4: "Learning is. . ." And in Session 23 we continued working on Map 3 and began a fifth, Map 5: "Model-Borderline-Contrary Cases" of Learning.

S24: Pot Pourri Computer Work and Interviews

In our next session the following week, we decided to have another "Pot Pourri" session in which everyone could decide what research activity to do for the session. As soon as Startup began, in an attempt to give us a sense of direction, I [Alison/Sigma] took my turn first and talked for awhile about what kinds of things we could be doing next. Commenting on how much we had been concentrating on *content* recently through our research mapping work in the previous few sessions, and anticipating that there would be a desire to do more interviewing as soon as possible, I drew links between research mapping and interviewing and also between research mapping and writing research blurbs.

Sense of direction. Alright, a couple of things just to give us >>> a little sense of direction — where — we're going. We've been doing quite a lot of *content* work — lately — those of us who've *been* here but we haven't all been here. But most of *you* have been, actually — but not all at the same *time* though — like *today* — which is good. So we've been *mapping* — and *discussing* — which has been good. Which has been *wonderful* actually. . . and I think we need to do — *more* of that — if you can — manage that — because I think the *more* we do of that (*pointing to Map 1 which is taped to the white board behind*) — the better we'll have interview questions when it comes time to interview.

From mapping to interviewing. And my thoughts at the moment — and you can get on the list to tell me if you think they're not *good* thoughts — is to have as interviewers, people who have done the most work on the map — because — *this* is the main part of the research — and when we do the interviews, we go out to find out what other people think — *about* what we've been talking about — only to get people — who — *haven't* been part of the research. So we could *interview* other DRG people — who *haven't been* here — about what *they* think as *their* way of joining in — to our map discussion.

Before we do any interviewing — with the little tape recorders — what I want to do next is I want to make an interview guide sheet — which I talked about — and I came across an article in a part of a book that shows us how to *do* that.

At this point I explained that I would have more time to concentrate on DRG work and that they should be getting a lot of things for their folders “so it should start — looking — like — more *research*”. Then, for today's session I said that if we could do more mapping that would be good, or if they wanted desperately to watch some video I had some with me — but that they could choose their own research activities. Then I remembered something else I wanted to say.

From mapping to writing research blurbs. Oh! And the other thing is — I had *this* thought — and I hope it's not a *horrible* thought. (*Makes a face in anticipation.*) It occurred to me — that when we do the mapping — *all* the thinking that we're doing is — thinking — out loud — thinking. Call it ‘thinking on your feet’. And I thought it would be *really good* — if we could — match that up with — research blurbs — DRG blurbs. Like pick one aspect — and *start* our DRG session with a one-minute, or two-minute — *everybody* — Some people could do it on computer if we have enough computers — where we all do a blurb on one question. Now there was a question that Amber brought up in the last video tape that was really good. She was questioning >>> facts. Because we were saying — we were looking at learning — last time. And we were saying — one of the things we were saying was that we were learning *facts* — [Einstein: Yeah. I remember that.] — when we were having discussions and so on. And then *Amber* threw in a twist — when she said — “Is everything. . . that's true — a fact?” — or something like that. [Einstein: No she said, “Is everything we *learn* a fact?”] Well we could show the

video and find out exactly what she said. [Daisy: No, she said everything that's *true*. Because I said — I remember I said —] She didn't say, is every fact *true*. [Einstein: No, no. It was something about sucking in ideas and taking in ideas and >>>] Well that was *intake* of ideas.

Then I went on to suggest that we could pick one question that *everyone* could write a blurb about and start the session that way. Having just mentioned it, I hoped that one day we would decide to do that.¹³⁰

During Startup Ferrari wanted to tell us about some research 'afterthoughts' he had about learning words without their meanings, something we had talked about in the previous two sessions. He had these thoughts while watching a program on television and was reminded of the discussion we had been having in DRG. For this session Arachnid decided to spend time working on the computer and watching one of the video tapes that he had been camera operator for. Whoopy operated the camera and worked on printing out her Researcher Profile. And Mariah, Daisy and Ferrari did some more practice interviews using the little tape recorders.

S25: Video Discussion

The next day, Thursday, February 25th, in our last session before the Spring Break, we decided to watch and reflect on one of our videos again. We chose the video from Session 21, February 10th and watched for about fifteen minutes and then had a discussion which was inspired by what we had just seen. Issues we explored further were the similarities and differences between debate and discussion and the meaning of 'labor' in 'collaboration'. We did not map this discussion and at the end Whoopy said she thought we should have.

¹³⁰ We *did* all write research blurbs one day but not until Session 44. See Research Blurb Writing under S44: What's the 'C' in CPI? in *Stories 6: Collaborating Cooperatively*.

S26: Interviews~Dialogues & Can Learn from Anything? (Map 6)

Startup. In Session 26 on Wednesday, March 10, 1993, our first session after the March Break, we were ten co-researchers.

Interviews~Dialogues

During Startup when Einstein asked, "When are we going to interview people?" I thanked Einstein for mentioning that because I had interviews on my list for Startup and it was the next thing I wanted to talk about. First I told them that I had watched the video tapes of the last two sessions. Then, acknowledging my stalling tactics about research interviewing, I told them about a 'discovery' I thought I might have made about interviewing while listening to the audio tapes of the interviews Mariah, Daisy and Ferrari had recorded in Session 24.

Allison >>> I have been trying to sort of put you off but you are super keen and you keep — keep >>> jumping ahead of the game — But I think I made an interesting — and important discovery — when I was watching the tapes — last night — so I want to tell you about that. And — it was those people doing the interviews that made it possible for me to make the discoveries. So — it was an important thing that you did that — and the way in which you did that. But you may not be happy with the discovery — that I made — that I *think* I made.

Einstein said, "Uh oh." and "I was the one who taped the interview". After reminding people to get on Amber's list if they had anything to say, I continued.

Allison >>> what I noticed was >>> first of all I noticed the *kind* of exchange it was — was question and answer. And — that's what interviews are. They are question and answer.

And what my big discovery is — I think we don't *want* interviews — for our research — because — if it's — the kind of — The kind of interviews people were doing were good for a different kind of research. And that different kind of research is for — finding out —

At this point I gave them an example that was very close to what we might be doing but which was not. It was the example of a school board that might do a research project *about* the Philosophy for Children program to find out if it is a good program. They might want to know if the kids like it or if they think they learn from

it. "Then we would do — interviews of the kind the people were doing in the library — and we would ask — kids — if they liked it and what they liked about it and — and that kind of thing."

Allison But that's *not* what *this* research project — is about. (*Points to Map 1 which is taped to the whiteboard to the left.*) Although it sounds like it — sometimes — like when I ask you to — What kinds of discussions do we do? Are they kinds of discussions that we learn from? — I'm not asking if you *personally* learn from it — I'm asking it — asking — the question is — Is this a kind of discussion which is *good* for learning?

Einstein So it's discussion in general.

Allison That's right. — So what >>> my big discovery was — It's not that we shouldn't do interviewy kinds of things — but that we should do what we do *best* — which is not do interviews but do *dialogues*. — So that — two people could still go in — to the library — and could still — do something on tape — but instead of one person asking another person yes or no questions — *instead* you could — take a question from here — and work on it together. Do you know what I'm saying?

Einstein Yeah!

Allison Just *like* the dialogues that you have — in class — sometimes — "I want to comment on so-and so —" only you just — the two of you would go and *work* on it — just two people working on it until they —

To illustrate this point I talked about Staci's bear. "Now *does that bear talk or does that bear not talk?*" [Voice: Yeah.] Two people could go in there and they could >>> take the little tape recorder — and they could — question each other — in a sort of interviewy kind of a way — but we wouldn't be doing interviews at all. And what I think is *important* about this — is we may be *inventing* a new kind of research when we're doing this. So I think that that's — that's one thing that I wanted to say." Then I went on to try and articulate what I thought might be some differences between standard research interviews and a research *dialogue*.

Allison So basically what you would do — is — A dialogue would be different — from an interview — Interview — is — is — when an interviewer wants to know something from the interviewee. Right? — But in a dialogue — it's where the two people are trying to figure something out — together. And they still use questions and answers and comments and so on. So that's one thing.

That was all that was said about this on this occasion and I am not sure if it was a major 'finding' or not. It certainly felt like progress (to me) at the time and I

wondered if it might explain at least some of my resistance to interviewing that had produced so much Sigma tension.

Map 6 — Can Learn from Anything?

*Is everything you learn that's true
a fact?*

Amber

After Startup we had another discussion for the 'learning' side of discussion for learning. This time we began another map, Map 6 which we titled, "Can learn from anything?". It was a very rich discussion as we worked with questions such as the following:

- Can you learn from anyone? [Amber]
- Can you learn from anything (e.g. talking computers) [Mariah]
- Is there anything you can't learn from? [Alison]
- Can anybody learn from anybody? [Alison]
- Here's a thing. What can I learn from it? [Alison]
- Can you learn from yourself? (e.g. from your mistakes) [Amber]
- Can you learn from a blank piece of paper? (e.g. if it's recycled or not) [Amber]
- Can you learn from the world, the universe? (everything on or in it) [Tracy]
- Can you learn from places? [Tracy]
- Do you know when you're learning? [Mariah]
- Can you learn from dreams? [Amber]
- Can you learn from everything? (e.g. science) [Tracy]

By this time Amber was beginning to wonder whether you *could* learn from everything. Looking at the grey blinds in the window she said you could learn from them that they are grey. But if you look at them again, then you already know they are grey so that time you do *not* learn from them. In response to that I said that maybe you *can* learn from everything but you don't *always* learn from everything. And so we continued right to the end of the session.

S27: Exploring 'Inquiry' (Map 7)

When we met for Session 27 the next day, we moved away from our exploration of 'learning' and turned our attention back to the bigger question of whether my expression 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' is a good description of our class philosophy discussions.

At this point, we needed to post our six research maps side-by-side for an overall view. This would help us decide what to do next and enable us to add to different maps. Since useable wall space was lacking, I suggested that we put our other maps up on the bulletin board in the corridor outside Room 10. We decided to abandon our special colour-coding since the video tapes would indicate the order in which items were added to the maps. In addition I suggested that camera operators focus on research discussion and mapping activities in particular, and that they make sure they capture what people are saying adequately. Then I pointed out that Map 1, our original "master map", provided an overall view with the subsequent white chart maps being equivalent to city map 'inserts' on road maps.

Session 27 • Thursday, March 11, 1993 • 7 Co-researchers

Since I [Sigma/Alison] had no specific plans, we used our usual Startup procedure to work out what we would do. We began this session with our original research map (Map 1) taped to the bulletin board in Room 10 for easy reference and, after talking about how to adjust our research mapping and video taping practices, I [Sigma/Alison] asked for suggestions for today's session. First I suggested that we continue our work on our latest map (Map #5: Learning from . . .) and we refreshed our memories about the contents of the bubbles under **Learning** on Map 1.¹³¹ Then, pointing to another **Learning** area on the master map, I suggested that we could look at a bubble we had not yet explored: **how much we could learn without knowing that we're learning**.

We examined several possible activities and topics and I reminded them that our projects and discussions must be "for research purposes". At this point, the co-researchers were busy with various activities: reflecting at the computer (Staci was composing her document called "Talking Bears" about her bear and

131 See Map 1: CPI-D4L in Appendix B: *Co-researching Stories Research Maps*.

communication), putting up the white maps in the corridor, video-taping the various activities. Then, seated in the corridor, we started our research discussion.

“DRG in the Hall” (Map 7)

After bringing Map 1 out into the hall and before beginning our discussion that was to be about “something completely fresh and different”, I tried to review what we had done so far. Then Mariah suggested that “maybe today we could do — ‘Inquiry’” and I added that we could compare it “to ‘learning’ — if it’s the same or different ”.

Conceptualizing ‘inquiry’

1. *‘Asking for information’.* To begin I posed the question, “What is inquiry?” and when there was no immediate response, I suggested that we write the word in a bubble and think of an everyday use of the word ‘inquire’. Then, in a bubble joined by a line to **Inquiry**, I wrote **asking for information**.

My starting with an everyday use of the words ‘inquire’ or ‘inquiry’ was a standard conceptual analysis move. However, I was not interested in simply making a map which would be the equivalent of dictionary definitions of the term ‘inquiry’ and when I asked, “When we do CPI, are we doing ‘inquiry’? Yet?”, I was trying to advance our exploration by tying it to ‘inquiry’ within the context of ‘discussion for learning’ or ‘collaborative philosophical inquiry’. Not wanting to lead us into simple yes or no answers, I pushed the issue further still when I asked if there is “anything else we do — in CPI — that would count as being ‘inquiry’ — that anybody can think of . . .?”.

2. *‘Asking questions.’* Whoopy continued by coming back several times to the word ‘questions’ and, with a nudge from me, she made a distinction between the neighboring concepts of ‘asking questions’ and ‘asking for information’ saying that the first expects “an answer” could be different from “information”. That prompted me to suggest that we look for different kinds of questions — some of which might expect ‘answers’ and others ‘information’ — or indeed any other distinctions we might make.

3. *'Asking questions' ~ 'Asking for information'?* While Whoopy was writing "asking questions" in a bubble above and to the right of **Inquiry**, Mariah asked, "Isn't 'asking questions' sort of 'asking for information'?"

I replied that it reminded me of our practice of saying, "Point of Information" — a class philosophy convention whereby people could interrupt a discussion to provide relevant information. Sometimes it would be information one participant knew that others did not or sometimes it would be information someone had looked up in a dictionary or other reference source while the discussion was in progress. That prompted me to ask further whether we could think of questions which do not necessarily ask for information in such ways.

4. *'Inquiry'— a special kind of asking?* Next Joey produced a useful example ("Can I rent a movie?") which provided us with a specific kind of 'asking' (for permission). Before writing it on the map, I [Alison] I wanted us to figure out whether or not we thought it was a "special kind of asking". Then, after suggesting we use our class philosophy and/or DRG experience as our guide, I used our example of 'asking for permission' in a class philosophy context and asked if it could count as an 'inquiry'.

Joey, however, was aware of the problem of trying to decide on whether something counts as 'x' without having first accepted criteria for counting something as 'x'. When he asked if I already knew the answer, I replied that I probably knew more than they did, and that I thought that part of the problem was that we rarely used the word 'inquiry'.

5. *'Inquiry' ~ 'inquirer'?* Despite an obvious struggle with the words 'inquire' and 'inquiry', using the example of *The National Inquirer*, Mariah was still able to make a useful distinction between the 'just gossip' (of *The National Inquirer*) and the "You — ask questions" of our interpretation of 'inquiry'. I clarified the terms: inquiry, a noun and inquirer, a person who inquires before adding, "So *The National Inquirer* is a newspaper that thinks it inquires".

Mariah's "just gossip" distinction and Joey's "some of it's not true though — most of it" observation next led us to consider whether they were just 'playing' with the word 'Inquirer' [Alison] and whether we should take a closer look at what it is to ask questions [Whoopy: "They're not really asking questions though; they're

kinda like — responding to questions that are not true.”]. Joey seemed to suggest that not just any questions or answers will do when he said, “No just making up their own questions and answering themselves”.

6. *‘Inquiry’— and truth?* When I asked if Oprah [Winfrey] and Sally Jesse Raphael,” were doing ‘inquiry’, Joey introduced the element of ‘truth’ into the conceptual equation. It is not clear whether Joey was making such a conceptual link or whether he was simply hoping that what was portrayed on these television shows *was* true. Even if it was just a wistful hope, in a collaborative inquiry setting, Joey’s “Yes but— I hope they’re telling the truth” served a research purpose by articulating an element (‘truth’) which had been hinted at in our consideration of *The National Inquirer* but which we had not yet addressed in explicit terms. We could now ask the question whether to count as ‘inquiry’, the questions being asked must be seeking the ‘truth’ — or would any question do?

7. *‘Inquiry’ as ‘asking for information’ — revisited.* Whoopy questioned our DRG idea of ‘inquiry’ as ‘asking for information’ because, taking *The National Inquirer* as an example she said, “they’re not really asking for information because they’re *giving* things [not ‘asking’] that are really *false* [*i.e.* not ‘information’]. So perhaps we could be wrong about both ‘asking’ and ‘information’. She then conceded that sometimes they do ‘ask’ but that they change what people say.

Then she made an intriguing shift from looking at whether this was ‘asking’ or ‘information’ to whether it was ‘asking *for* information’ (“it’s not really for information it’s for — it’s to — mix up the information for other people to read”) — thereby shifting from what counts as ‘asking’ and ‘information’ to the *intent or purpose* of ‘asking for information’.

Checking my understanding of what Whoopy was saying, I [Alison] made three distinctions between: asking for information, doing something with the information, and whether or not something really *is* information. Agreeing with the first two (“Yeah. It’s not the same.”) Whoopy suggested that instead of being information, “It’s kind of like gossip” — thereby referring to another item on the Same/Different list we had worked on in Session 12.

8. *‘Inquiry’—‘leads to somewhere’?* Next I wondered whether these distinctions could help us to decide whether we should characterize our class philosophy discussions as ‘inquiry’. Whoopy then added the idea that inquiry leads

you “into something else”. Below and to the right of **Inquiry** on the map, Mariah added a new bubble: **leads to somewhere**.

9. *‘Inquiry’ as ‘looking for the truth’?* On my next turn I asked if we could say that we use inquiry in philosophy to try to figure out what’s true, but Joey wasn’t sure. We decided that this idea needed further exploration.

10. *‘Clearing things up’?* Mariah added the idea of inquiry being “trying to clear things up” and added **clairing things up** (sic) to the map. She had made the observation that it is not Oprah (the interviewer) but rather the “psychiatrist” (the guest expert) who does the ‘inquiring’ on talk shows. By doing this, she went beyond ‘inquiry’ as asking questions (interviewing) to what the expert (“psychiatrist”) is trying to *accomplish* (“trying to clear things up”) — a meta-level activity which Mariah associated with doing philosophy. In so doing she moved our own inquiry forward by proposing a new criterion (“clearing things up”) for what counts as ‘inquiry’.

11. *Not ‘trying to find the truth’?* Mariah’s point about ‘inquiry’ as ‘clearing things up’ may have prompted Arachnid to return to an earlier one about ‘inquiry’ as ‘finding the truth’. Taking *The National Inquirer* to be an example of ‘inquiry’, Arachnid tried to qualify the point that ‘inquiry’ is about ‘looking for the truth’ by saying that it is not *always* ‘looking for the truth’. That in turn led me to modify my own point by saying that ‘looking for the truth’ is only part of what we mean by ‘inquiry’ and that it matters more that we are *looking* for the truth than whether we succeed in *finding* it or not. Then, using an example from class philosophy, I made the further point “it goes without saying” that when we are ‘inquiring’ (“looking for something”) in class philosophy we are looking for the truth.

Arachnid was satisfied with this. With a “completely different” point, he too moved to a meta-level when he proposed that the ‘truth’ that might be the object of an inquiry might be not ‘information’ but rather whether or not someone was *telling* the truth. In order to be able to ascertain this truth, one would have to already know the truth in the informational sense. [“Although you’re still asking, it’s not for that information”]. This move opened a new direction to our inquiry in that it required us to think beyond ‘inquiry’ as ‘looking for the truth’ to having to specify the kind of truth one might be seeking — in this case whether the

information is true or whether the person providing the information was telling the truth.

12. *Looking for truth in different ways.* Mariah added a whole new level of epistemological complexity to our discussion when she talked about how difficult it might be for inquirers to know whether someone was telling the truth or not. We had said that they would have to know the truth first in order to judge whether someone was lying or not. However, Mariah pointed out that they would also have to *know that they know* the truth. They could be wrong. I [Alison] noted that although this observation did not undermine the point that inquirers are looking for the truth, it did destabilize our confidence in how one would know whether or not one had 'found' it. When Arachnid suggested that we put something about 'knowing it's the truth' on the map, he insisted that, more than just 'looking for the truth', we also include something about "to be sure". When he suggested "more than one opinion", I hesitated and suggested instead that "in many ways" might be better and he was satisfied with that.

13. *'Figuring things out'?* Next I suggested that "we're trying to figure out what 'inquiry' is ... so we're inquiring into 'inquiry'". Since this met with agreement, we added 'figuring things out' as a new bubble to the map.

14. *'Inquiries' and 'inquests'* In my second point, using examples I thought my co-researchers might have heard about on the news, I introduced the idea of legal inquiries and inquests as 'model cases' for comparison purposes and I mentioned how such inquiries result in recommendations. I suggested that for our map purposes, an 'inquest' "would be an *example* of an 'inquiry' I guess." Then in the top right corner of the map I wrote **e.g. Inquiry into. . . (bus safety)** and invited my co-researchers to think of others that they might know about.

15. *Getting new information* Arachnid and Mariah had been concerned with who and how we can tell what information is true. However, when Whoopy worked with a similar example, she took *all* the information to be 'true'. In so doing she was able to advance our understanding of 'inquiry' by taking us away from interpreting 'inquiry' in true/false dichotomy terms and towards a more inclusive 'new/additional information' interpretation. Later she added a new **getting new information** bubble and linked it to the **asking for information** bubble on the map.

16. *Injunction?* In response to my call for examples of other kinds of 'inquiry', Whoopy brought up an example of a local episode which had occurred when parents had to line up overnight in mid-winter in order to register their children into a popular alternative school. However, her example was not of an 'inquiry' but of an 'injunction'. I treated this as a 'neighboring concept' which served a useful conceptual purpose in that it helped us to see that not all matters dealt with by a court would count as an 'inquiry'.

17. *"Inquiry about the justice?"* Daisy raised quite a different issue about an inquiry into the "law ... like asking information — about justice or something?" Not quite sure what she meant, I questioned her further about whether there was a connection with our philosophy discussions and she answered in the affirmative because "we're asking a question to find out the answer" though the answer may not be a fact. It's as if she was distinguishing between 'answers' in terms of 'facts' and 'answers' in terms of 'reasons'. Not able to really clarify things much further, I asked Daisy about adding a bubble from — looking for the truth to looking for the answer and she agreed.

Although Daisy was unsure of what she wanted to say, she did know what she did *not* want to say. In a demonstration of intuitive hunch-like thinking, she moved our inquiry beyond 'figuring things out' or 'asking for information' to more abstract and general — more philosophical — considerations. When asked explicitly about that, rather than deny the philosophical connection she embraced it while at the same time acknowledging the tentativeness of what she was trying to say. Also worth noting here is the ambiguity in Daisy's use of the term 'answers'. We get 'answers' when we ask for information and figure things out, but these did not seem to be the kind of 'answers' that Daisy meant. Although she did not reject such answers, when she said things like "Inquiry into justice" and "Inquiry into the law", it was as if she saw the first kind of answers as instrumental and useful for a wider purpose.

18. *'Inquiry' with yourself?* Mariah changed tack when she asked if "it's possible that you could inquire at yourself ... for example, 'Oh is this Monday?' 'Yeah. It is Monday'". I was amused and excited by this idea because of how it echoed and transposed the recurring issue of 'communication with oneself' (Cw1) to "inquiry at oneself". Then she asked if it would be like "asking — for information".

My excitement mounted as I came to see more connections with earlier lines of inquiry as represented on the research maps in front of us. It was “almost as if we’re doing the same thing to ‘inquiry’” as we had to ‘learning’ I said, as I pointed to the ‘Learning’ maps on the wall. Just as we added alterations and created additional ‘learning’ maps during our exploration of what counts as ‘learning’ from discussion, I began to think we might do something similar with our ‘inquiry’ map and I saw more connections I had not seen before.

When Mariah wondered further if it would count as ‘inquiry’ with yourself if you asked yourself such a question while consulting a source outside yourself such as a dictionary, this gave me yet another idea. This dialogue is an example of how a young co-researcher can stimulate the thinking of the adult co-researcher.

19. *Not necessarily ‘in many ways’.* Arachnid drew on his own life-experience from three to four years in the past when he made his observation that it is not *how many* people have an answer that makes that answer right — (or wrong as Daisy was quick to add). He went further when he considered the implication that, “No matter what you do — you might not be able to get the right answer.”

Using Arachnid’s points to think about ‘inquiry’, I [Alison] did not follow the trail in that direction. Rather than be concerned about *finding* answers (knowing), I concentrated on the *looking* part (not knowing) and, bringing Mariah’s dictionary example to bear, I came out with ‘inquiry’ as ‘wondering’ — much to my own surprise. And when Arachnid gently reminded me about dictionaries not necessarily being right, I was able to integrate that point by adding that *as long as one is not satisfied*, one can still be said to be inquiring. Arachnid was satisfied enough with that to add the fruit of this labour to our ‘Inquiry’ map.

20. *‘Inquiry’ ~ ‘wondering’?* Next, Daisy produced a question (“How do you recycle paper?”) which allows for a variety or a range of possible ways (to recycle paper). The ‘answer’ need *not* necessarily be a matter of which is ‘right’ or ‘wrong’. Different people could answer the question differently without necessarily being ‘right’ or ‘wrong’. Furthermore, it may not be a matter of ‘wondering’ either since all respondents might ‘answer’ the question without necessarily wondering at all. It could still count as ‘inquiry’ if questions are asked and (a range/variety of) answers given. So although ‘wondering’ might on occasion be part of ‘inquiry’, it need not be.

In this segment, following Daisy's lead but in a different direction, I went on my own thought trail without paying attention to Daisy's attempts to join in. I responded to Daisy's first point ("Let's say I would ask all you guys a question, and let's say I had an answer. But the answer was wrong.") without addressing her second point (that the answer might not be wrong but rather different). Taking her first point, I wanted to see how it fit (or not) with what I had said earlier about the importance of looking for an answer. Using Daisy's example, I worked out that as long as one thinks one has the answer, one is not (or no longer) inquiring. If someone else thinks the answer (I think I have) is wrong and keeps asking, they are inquiring. Inquiry stops, perhaps, when satisfaction that one has 'found' the answer sets in.

21. *Inquiring about 'inquiry'*. In this segment Daisy asked, "What about inquiring about 'inquiry'?" and in so doing she made the reflexive observation that we were doing what we were talking about. This is of particular interest because she had only just joined the group and had not been present when the point had come up previously. Her raising it at this moment prompted an arrow-adjustment on the map thereby recording a move that we had made but not represented on the map.

22. *'Inquiry' ~ looking for a reply*. Jaguar suggested that we use 'reply' instead of 'answer' and this was useful because it addressed the ambiguity of using the word 'answer'. He had obviously been listening closely to what we were saying and seeing the problem with using the word 'answer', he produced an alternative. He too had only been present for the discussion for the latter part of the time. On the map, Jaguar linked a **Looking for a reply** bubble to the **Looking for the answer?** bubble already there.

23. *'Inquiry' ~ knowing the answer*. Mariah was the last one on the list for this session. She began by taking issue with the points both Daisy and I had made with regard to 'inquiry' depending on whether or not someone knew the answer. By taking our examples and pointing out that there was a sense in which both protagonists knew (or at least thought they knew) the answer, she argued that neither was inquiring according to that reasoning. As a result of Mariah's intervention we added a new bubble to say that it is only 'inquiry' if/when someone does not know the answer.

However, Daisy soon found a flaw in that as well when she argued that, since someone could think they know the answer but the answer could be wrong, we would have to go a step further and say that it is only 'inquiry' when someone *knows that they don't know* the answer. Then, when Mariah objected that when you think that you know the answer, you don't know that it's wrong, Daisy adjusted further when she said that you could still be inquiring if *you think you know the answer but you are wondering whether you do or not*. And she even added another twist that an answer could be right while still having something wrong in it. So, with our time for the session expiring, we settled for, "Only when you think you don't know the answer" — only then are you 'inquiring'.

Sigma reflections. What amazed me when we were working in this session and when I worked with the video tape and transcript later, was how far we came with the concept of 'inquiry' in one session. From not knowing the meaning of the word beyond its existence in the title of *The National Inquirer* tabloid, to a basic-level beginning understanding in terms of questions and answers, we progressed to multiple layers of subtle and complex reasoning as we tried to sort out what might count or not count as 'inquiry' for purposes of this research. The session was not animated or dynamic. On the contrary it seemed plodding and pedantic. We had many distractions from within (co-researchers coming and going) and without (the cleaning lady and the Chess club in the library next door) — and still we advanced our mutual understanding to a profound level. We used our research map to document our progress and to situate this inquiry in relation to other work we had done as represented on our other research maps which were visible.

My co-researchers' lack of familiarity with the term 'inquiry' served as no impediment to their practice of 'inquiry'. Indeed they proved to be adept and demanding judges of whether or not something should count as 'inquiry'. Rarely satisfied with what we were coming up with and therefore constantly pushing our own envelope, we finished the discussion with much more textured concepts of inquiry than those with which we began. And although we only touched on whether discussion for learning should count as 'inquiry' and whether the term 'inquiry' belongs in 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' (my alternative expression for 'discussion for learning'), our exploration of its meaning in relation to our practice gave me no reason to consider removing it.

Stories 6

Collaborating Cooperatively

Like the word 'inquiry', the term 'collaborative' was not one which we used together. Rather these were two pedagogical concepts which I [Judy] used in the *implementation* of Philosophy for Children without necessarily talking *about* them in ways my students would remember or recognize. They were part of *how* we discussed without being *what* we discussed. In this sixth and final series of *Co-researching Stories* first I return to Session 2 to recall how we began by not using the term at all; how in Session 9b we gradually became interested in what it means, how in Session 21 we began to explore it tentatively; and then how, beginning in Session 38 and making use of our research mapping skills, we embarked on an intensive examination of its conceptual nooks and crannies as we tried to sort out whether it was a suitable adjective to characterize 'discussion' (for learning).

S02: 'Collaborative' Starting Point(s)

When I checked the data to see when we began to use the term 'collaborative', the first instance I found was on the Session 2 transparency on which we recorded our co-researcher questions [C-RQs]. Under the "Discussion for Learning" title of the transparency I had added "[Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry]" as a subtitle. The words "Learning" in the title and "Inquiry" in the subtitle are circled, indicating that we talked about the subtitle in spite of my [Sigma] resolution to use *only* the phrase "Discussion for Learning" with my young co-researchers. However, because we did not record the brainstorming which preceded our preliminary discussion of the co-research questions, I was not able to trace any uses of the term 'collaborative' during the first part of that session. On the rest of the transparency not one of the co-research questions contains any variation of the term 'collaboration'; and the verbatim transcript of the preliminary discussion

contains no reference to collaboration. It is not until Session 9 that the term 'collaborative' occurs again in the data.

[DT/S02/92.10.29Th/DRG/Sigma/D4I~CPI]

S09b: Back to the Subject(s)

On Tuesday, December 1, 1992 we were twelve co-researchers present and, after reflecting briefly on our interviewing practice in earlier sessions, I [Sigma] suggested that it was time to get back to the research subject(s). As reported earlier, it was at this point that I changed my mind about *not* using the phrase 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' and decided to see what would happen if we *did* pay explicit attention to it as a way of checking whether my co-researchers agreed with me that it was another way of referring to our philosophical discussions. As we reviewed our understanding of the five conceptual elements of our research topic ('Discussion', 'Learning', 'Collaborative', 'Philosophical' and 'Inquiry') we found that we had a limited mutual understanding of the term 'collaborative' and its derivatives.

In a teacherly move, I [Alison/Sigma] told my co-researchers what the 'C' in CPI stands for and asked if anyone could say what we *mean* by it.

- Allison** >>> C — the C stands for Collaborative. Does anybody know what that stands f- what that means?
- Einstein** Yeah. Working together.
- Allison** Working together. Would you agree that in our discussions we work together? [Several voices: Yes] Even when — you're two would you call that collaborative? [Chorus: Yes] Yes. When you're —
- Ferrari** When you're by yourself it's collaborative because you're working with yourself.
- Allison** 'Cuz you're working with you self [sic].
- Ferrari** Yeah.
- Allison** You, yourself and I. [Others comment too but unintelligible.]

[VT/S09/92.12.01Tu/DRG/Verbatim Transcript]

Although I was impressed with my co-researchers' definitive responses, nevertheless, at this relatively early stage of our research, I felt it was premature to describe our class philosophy discussions as 'collaborative' until we had worked

out in more detail what we meant by that term — work which we really only took up in Session 21.

S21: “What does ‘collaborative’ mean again?”

Between Sessions 9 and 21 we worked on the concept of ‘communication’ which underlies that of ‘discussion’ (S10). We had two sample research discussions (S11, S16). We examined similarities and differences between our concepts of class philosophy ‘discussion’ and other forms of discussion (S12). We engaged in independent research work using the computers (S11, S13, S14). We reviewed some of our own video tapes and worked on our camerawork techniques (S13, S15, S20). We began to think about how to “map” our discussions and explored a variety of ways to track our progress (S13, S14). We constructed our first research map (S17, S19) by beginning with the following:¹³²

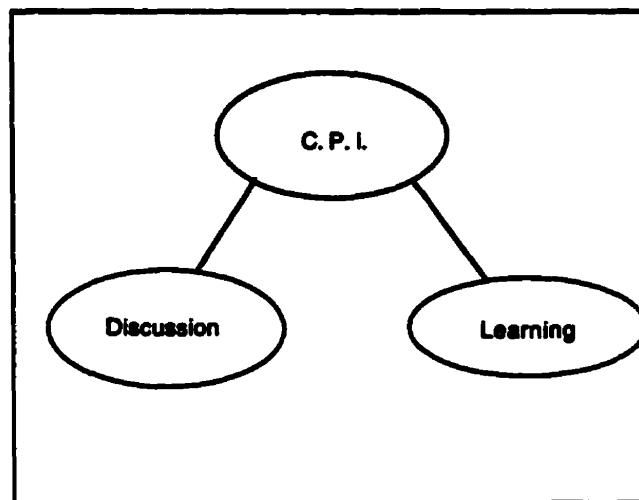


Figure 3. From Map 1: “CPI-D4L?”

We opened a Data File in which to put copies of our data documents (S18). And I taught my co-researchers the difference between ‘content’ and ‘process’ in our researching activities saying that both were important (S20).

As reported earlier, for Session 21 on Wednesday, February 10, 1993, the “lollipop session”, we were four co-researchers (Alison, Ferrari, Joey and Mariah) and we met in the library this time so that we could spread out our mapping chart

¹³² See Map 1: CPI-D4L in Appendix B: *Co-researching Stories Research Maps*.

paper on a library table. We sat on chairs around the table facing each other for discussion purposes and also so that we could easily add to Map 1: "CPI-Discussion for Learning" which we had started in Session 17 and continued in Session 19. In the process of deciding which new map to do, we touched on 'collaborative' briefly when we reminded ourselves of the five conceptual elements Map 1 represented ('collaborative', 'philosophical', 'inquiry', 'discussion' and 'learning').

- Joey** This is DRG — Session 21, February 10th.
- Alison** Alright. So let's >>> work on a *new* map today — and go back to our original question which is — Discussion — for Learning . . .
- Joey** Yeh. What does it stand for again?
- Alison** >>> the other name we have for it is, "Collaborative [*with Ferrari*] Philosophical Inquiry" . . .
- Now we could take just — we could do a map of just one of those *words* — like we could take — 'Discussion' and then we could put
- Ferrari** 'Discussion' — or 'Learning.'
- Alison** 'Discussion' — or 'Learning' or — and then we could put the maps all together — or 'Collaborative' or 'Philosophical'.
- Ferrari** Or 'Inquiry'.
- Alison** Or 'Inquiry'. We've got five.
- Joey** What does 'collaborative' mean? I forget.
- Alison** Well 'collaborative' — so far people have got the 'co-' part of it which means 'with other people'. And then we talked about >>> like we have co-operate, collaborate, communicate — and we were getting into — on that other map we did we were getting into that idea about >>> whether you could do it with yourself, you know? [*Joey and Ferrari chuckle in amused recollection.*] If you could have a discussion with yourself — or communicate with your self —
- Joey** Yeah. With the bear —

[VT/S21/93.02.10We/Verbatim Transcript]

My [Alison's] suggestion to my co-researchers that "we could do a map of just one of those *words*" was an invitation to engage in conceptual analysis. Joey asked for clarification of "discussion for learning" and when I [Alison] offered the alternate phrase, Ferrari answered Joey's question with me piggy-backing on everything I said. Sometimes he spoke for me or completed my thought — indicating that the term "collaborative philosophical inquiry" had become part of his research vocabulary. We were together on this. But then Joey asked for

clarification of “collaborative” too and in my response I said that “so far people have got the ‘co-’ part of it which means ‘with other people’”. I put it in the context of other co- words: *e.g.* “co-operate, collaborate, communicate” and I recalled how we were even getting into whether you could have a discussion or communicate with yourself. Joey’s response, “Yeah. With the bear—” was a reference to the Cotton Candy story and was an indication that he recognized what I meant .

What does ‘collaborative’ mean? Before deciding which of the conceptual elements to choose for this session, we needed to recall what they all were. When we tried to respond to Joey’s question about what ‘collaborative’ means in the next dialogue segment I [Alison] tried to zero in on the root word ‘labor’ in ‘collaborate’:

- Alison** >>> there's also, in 'collaborate' there's also 'labor.' Do you know what labour is?
- Joey** When you're in labour?
- Alison** [Chuckles and repeats.] There's when you're "in labour" — There's Labour Day. What does Labour Day celebrate?
- Joey** >>> it's >>> Monday — it's usually on a Monday.
- Alison** That's right. It's the first Monday — it's the first holiday you get when you get back to school.
- Ferrari** Oh yeah.
- Alison** And you don't know what it celebrates?
- Joey** >>> maybe it's for — it's for >>> Americans, right? — or something?
- Alison** No, it's for us too. — It's for "labourers."
- Joey** Hhm?
- Ferrari** [???People that are in labour?]

[VT/S21/93.02.10We/Verbatim Transcript]

In this segment I [Alison] used a conceptual analysis strategy when I broke the word into its parts (co+labour) as a way to make sense of the concept. In order to do *that*, Joey and I used *another* conceptual analysis strategy when we thought of everyday examples of uses of the component terms (*e.g.* being in labour, Labour Day) in order to bring to bear what we already knew to help us make sense of what we found to be puzzling. However, we were not getting anywhere with this. My co-researchers did not know what ‘labour’ was and I was not able to explain very well. And *none* of us seemed to know what Labour Day, the first school holiday of the year, was for! Back to square one, I thought.

So in a teacherly moment, I [Judy] decided to just tell them what I *did* know and we reached for more everyday examples to help us understand something we thought we already knew .

- Allison** *[Chuckles]* Oh isn't this interesting. It's *very* interesting. It means "work" — A "labourer" is a "worker."
- Ferrari** Oh! They come back to work or something!
- Allison** It's supposed — I don't even know the history of it but — it's about uh — it's a day off for people who — work.
- Ferrari** Oh!
- Joey** That's nice.

[VT/S21/93.02.10We/Verbatim Transcript]

'Co-researchers'. In the very next sequence, Ferrari made a connection between what we were talking about (co+labour) and 'co-researchers' (co+researchers) and this gave me [Sigma] an opportunity to explain my rationale for considering *them* to be co-researchers. Then, in a reflexive moment, we explored and clarified our co-researcher relationship.

- Ferrari** Co-researchers.
- Allison** Co- — That's right! — because — and — and the idea with the "co-" there — /put the "co" on there to put — to say that /wasn't researching *you* — you're — you're not the subjects of my research —
- Joey** Yeah, it's true —
- Allison** — we're wor-/researching together. So we're co-researchers.
- Ferrari** Well if you think about that co- — you're researching *us*, it almost makes sense because you're — you're — . . . wait — you're re- — when you're researching *us* it kind of means like — you're taking ideas from . . . — okay, nevermind — anyways. *[Joey chuckles]*
- Allison** Well, I — YES. Uhm- I'm finding out what you think.
- Ferrari** Yeah, so that's research.
- Allison** Yes. So in that sense — And, people when they research kids they find out what they think.
- But I'm also trying to do it in a way where — we think it through *together*. So that *we're* looking at what *we* do in the classroom *together*. But what I do and what you do can be different — in the discussions, I think — because I'm leading the discussion or I'm — monitoring it, you know, making sure it goes okay and that we actually do philosophy — but at the same time I *participate* in the discussions — too.
- Joey** [???

Allison Yeah. And uh what I wanted to get at — in the research project is — is there anything special about those discussions that would make them be — different from *other* discussions? Or are they just like every — any other discussion that you might have any other time — any other place?

And — so when I, I. — I devised the name for it, as uhm , “Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry” because that’s what it’s *trying* to be. But I don’t know whether you — whether the *students* in the class — uh — see it as- as if it’s anything different? — You might not because you’ve always had — philosophy in school so it might not seem like, “Oh my goodness! This is really different!”

Joey And “inquiry”? What’s ‘inquiry’?

Allison Inquiry is where you — sort of explore and ask questions and try to figure out.

Joey So that’s what we’re doing. We’re doing philosoph- — we’re doing —

Ferrari That’s why she gave us the name, “Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry”

Joey Yes. That’s right!

[VT/S21/93.02.10We/Verbatim Transcript]

In this sequence Ferrari used the conceptual analysis technique of taking what you think you have worked out so far (co+labour) and applying it to a related case under consideration (co+research). At first he questioned my claim that I was not researching them (“Well if you think about that co- — you’re researching *us*, it almost makes sense because you’re >>> when you’re researching us it kind of means like — you’re taking ideas from . . .”). However, seeming to think it was a false start, he backed away. Then, with some further explanation from me (during which I was exploring my own meaning as much as explaining), and a quick recall of the meaning of ‘inquiry’, Joey and Ferrari recognized what we were doing as both ‘philosophy’ *and* ‘research’. Next we decided to do a map of ‘philosophy’ for this session and we moved on to that (see Map 2).

After this initial encounter with the notion of ‘collaborative’ in Session 21, we did not return to it until Session 38 as part of a second round of theoretical sampling visits to each of our five conceptual elements.

S22-37: Varia (Maps 3-10)

Between Sessions 21 and 38 we spent the next two sessions exploring and mapping the concept of 'learning' (S22 & 23 — Maps 3, 4 & 5). We had a 'pot pourri' independent research session during which some co-researchers resumed interviewing each other (S24). We reviewed part of the video tape from Session 21 and had a follow-up discussion (S25). We continued our exploration of the concept of 'learning' (S26 — Map 6). We explored the concept of 'inquiry' for the first time (S27 — Map 7).

With Cotton Candy, Staci's stuffed bear in attendance, we began a second layer of mapping by focusing and expanding on the "Thoughts-Ideas-Blurbs-Essays" bubbles of Map 1 (S28). We had another independent research session in which we reviewed another video tape and worked on reproducing our maps on computers (S29). And we had two sessions in which we began with independent research activities and ended by continuing the Session 28 discussion on "Thoughts-Ideas-Blurbs-Essays" (S30, 31 — Map 8).

We (only four co-researchers) had an independent research / housekeeping session on April 1st while a major snowstorm raged outside (S32). And we had a session in which we tried played a word-association game around the idea of 'Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry' as a way of pulling together our ideas to this point (S33 — Map 9).

We tried to continue the "What is CPI?" discussion of the previous session (S34). We tried out a new form of dialogic research interviewing based on our insight from Session 26 (S35). We brainstormed questions and had a current events 'sample discussion' in a small group on the subject of the storming of the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas (S36). And we revisited the 'philosophical' dimension discussion (for learning) by asking ourselves what was *philosophical* about our class philosophy discussions (S37 — Map 10).

S38: Discussion as ‘Collaboration’? (Map 11)

By the time we reached Session 38 we were ready to revisit the question of whether we considered discussion (for learning) to be ‘collaborative’. In this session we concentrated on the ‘labor’ in ‘collaboration’ and we asked ourselves if we thought our class philosophy and DRG discussions counted as ‘work’ given that they involved mostly talking.

Session 38 • Wednesday, May 5, 1993 • 7 Co-researchers¹³³

The seven co-researchers present worked on Map 11: Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry. Staci, Tracy, Joey and Jaguar took twenty-minute shifts operating the video camera and Staci was the cartographer.

Is Discussion (for Learning) ‘Work’?

The question: In CPI are we ‘working’ together? After having worked on the ‘co-’ part of ‘collaborative’ last time, following my suggestion, this time we decided to revisit the ‘labor’ part of the word. In other words, did they see what we were doing as ‘work’ I wondered as I asked, “... are we *working* together? — Or are we just talking together but *not* working together? — Or are we talking *and* working together? ”

Staci remarked that this was “getting confusing” but her observation neither derailed the discussion nor prevented her from getting *thoroughly* involved in this exploration. (In class philosophy, as a matter of policy, I [Judy] had taught these students that confusion is not something to fear or avoid. Rather it is something with which to *engage* and it is often a sign that *now* we must be ‘doing philosophy’.)

Brainstorming ‘work’? From where she was working on the computer, Mariah was first to respond:

¹³³ Unless otherwise indicated, the data for this session are from the verbatim transcript for Session 38, Wednesday, May 5, 1993.

Mariah Well, yeah, we work together because "collaborative" — it means working together. And sometimes — like when we come here? — we like brainstorm? — and that's like working together? — so I think it's work.

Mariah's 'brainstorming' as an example of how we work together (and therefore collaborate) in DRG went unchallenged and was therefore tacitly accepted.

Can talking be work? I [Alison] responded to Mariah by saying that as a teacher, I always got. . . "the very clear impression from kids, from students that *writing* is work. . . And *talking isn't*". I mentioned that nobody in the group ever chose to write texts (such as blurbs) other than "doodle-y type" things. My observations were greeted with recognition and Staci began to think more about it.

Work is something you have to do? After two time outs, Staci reflected on whether writing is work in the context of class philosophy. She made a distinction between 'work' and 'not work' based on two different *ways* teachers 'make' students do things. One way was by *requiring* ('work') and the other was by *inspiring* ('not work'). When Staci said, "*we make them talk*" she might have been referring to how class philosophers engaged each other in dialogue thus 'making' each other talk. Or she may have been referring to our class philosophy practice of having students who take charge of discussions in class philosophy as discussion "moderators" to make sure we followed agreed procedures and kept moving. When she talked about what happened to her when I [Judy] talked in class philosophy, she was using quite a different sense of 'make'. Teachers 'make' students do work in the imperative sense that teachers' wishes are students' commands. But here Staci was suggesting that when I [Judy] talked in class philosophy, she felt *compelled* to write as if I were triggering something in *her* that 'makes' her *want* to write: "'Cuz when you're talking, I want to listen — but you make me want to write something *down*".

Then she went on to say that this was not 'work' in the sense of 'homework'. Using conceptual analysis techniques without their terminology, Staci thought of written philosophy as a contrary case of 'work'. That is, although writing in class philosophy may *look like* work, it is *not* work. Then she compared it to model cases of "homework and stuff you have to do for classes". And, instead of looking at *why* those were contrary or model cases, she tried to say why philosophy is *different*. She then produced an alternative interpretation when she

tried to say what *else* philosophy is: “But philosophy is sort of just like — like — organizing your brain.”

Next, building on Staci’s homework example, I [Alison] made it harder when I did a ‘what if’ move and took ‘something written’ that we do in class philosophy (‘blurbs’) and asked if it would *still* be ‘not work’ if I [Judy] assigned them for homework. (As a matter of policy, I did not assign class philosophy homework.)

Jaguar immediately responded, “Oh! That would be work” and Staci agreed. While I [Alison] repeated their words, Staci made another conceptual analysis move when she analyzed her own response and tried to say *why* ‘blurbs’ are not work in the context of class philosophy but *are* work if assigned for homework. In so doing, she invoked a philosophical notion of ‘free will’. That is, whether or not something counts as ‘work’ may have more to do with whether one does it of one’s own ‘free will’ than it does with the nature of the activity itself. This would also apply to the distinction Staci made earlier between two quite different ways a teacher can ‘make’ students do work. It *is* ‘work’ if it is not of your own free will; it is *not* ‘work’ if it *is* of your own free will — if you, *yourself*, feel compelled to do it.

Our philosophical discussions are not ‘collaborative’ because they are not ‘work’? Next I [Alison] related what we had just done to our research question when I wondered whether we should be using the term ‘collaborative’ to describe discussion for learning if we would not describe such activity as ‘work’. I [Alison] then asked whether we should reconsider using the word ‘collaborative’ to describe discussion for learning. Staci tried to define the word and, in yet another conceptual analysis move, she did so *in relation to* ‘cooperative’ a neighbouring concept and we almost settled on ‘*Cooperative Philosophical Inquiry*’ as an alternative descriptive phrase for discussion for learning. But then in another conceptual analysis move, Whoopy paid attention to her own feelings of underlying anxiety¹³⁴ and asked me why I had chosen the word ‘collaborative’ in the first place. I responded, “because I think you *are* working”. I explained my interest in

¹³⁴ For a summary of this and other conceptual analysis moves (Wilson 1963/1987), see Conceptual Analysis Questioning under 4.3 Idea Building Research Acts in Chapter 4. Surfacing Research Acts .

alternative explanations and raised a new question ("but maybe *you* don't think you're working. *Could* you be working but not *think* you are?").

Work and trying? While Whoopy started to get impatient, Staci continued by shifting the exploration away from an either/or dichotomy (either it's 'work' or it's not) to part/whole thinking when she said, "in some parts it's work and in some parts it isn't". Immediately elaborating on this point, she offered a reason for saying it *is* work ("— because we're working to find answers"). Then, keeping track of an earlier thread, she took our exploration *away* from the dichotomy into different conceptual territory when she considered the earlier established 'have to' criterion. 'Working to find answers' *is* work, 'but it's not like we *have* to' (*i.e.*, it *is* work if you *have* to do it, but may or may not be work if not). Then, continuing the exploration, she made yet another conceptual analysis move when she considered the practical results: "If we *don't*, then we'll just get a bad mark". That move led her to suggest that 'work' is not *only* about something we *have* to do, but 'work' is *also* about *how* we do *what* we do ("—we *try*"). That is, *trying* can itself make something be 'work'.

At this point Mariah interjected using the class philosophy interruption procedure of saying "point of information" and asked Staci to say whether she meant you *have* to find answers. In reply Staci explained her point about being 'made' to work by a teacher who *makes you want to* work even though you do not *have* to (unless you want a good mark or what to try and find out new things which amounts to making *yourself* work). Apparently satisfied with this, Mariah did not pursue her question further.

Talking and writing are both 'work'. Now, finally, Whoopy could have her say and she went back to an earlier question about whether *talk* is work. She made the point that talk is 'work' just like writing is 'work' and, elaborating on her point by comparing both talking and writing in relation to 'work', she determined that talking is *easier* work than writing and she provided reasons for what she said. When she said that they are both work but that one is harder than the other, she expressed the relationship as a matter of degree.

Work: wanting to? ~ enjoyment? ~ pay? Next, Staci provided another model case that we could readily recognize as work. Attributing the idea ("that it's 'work' when you *don't* want to? — but it *could* be work — when you want to —

sort of”) to someone else (Whoopy?) Staci then built on it by introducing a new model case (cleaning your room because your mum makes you) to test the theory we had generated so far (that work is what you *have* to do because you are *made* to do it). It was an example she could be confident that we would recognize and agree with. Then she adjusted this new example by considering the same example (cleaning your room) in a new way (*not* because your mum makes you but because “you want to clean your room *yourself*”). By replacing the “have to/made to” factor with “want to yourself”, she found that it *could* still be ‘work’ and so she adjusted the *theory* by adding, “it depends on how you look at it”. So even her model case was not cut and dried. “It depends” — but on what?

Next, I [Alison] continued the exploration with Staci by focusing on the *don’t* like factor. Staci introduced two new elements: ‘going to work’ and ‘enjoyment’ (“because people *go* to work and some people *enjoy* their work”). Acknowledging the new ‘opposite’ element (enjoyment of work), I realized that we could no longer make ‘wanting or not wanting to do the task’ a defining factor of ‘work’. Looking for another interpretation (“So then what *else* is work?”) I built on Staci’s element by adding another new element, (getting “*paid* for going to work”). However, when together we (Staci, Alison and Joey) related these new elements to the theory we were working on (“but you don’t get — paid — for cleaning — your room — too bad”), we realized that this criterion would not be useful if people do not get paid for cleaning their rooms.

While this exchange was happening, Tracy was listening and noted the following in her stenopad without saying it out loud:

*Some people clean their rooms and do not get paid.
But some people get paid.*

[D/S38/93.05.05We/DRG/Tracy/Research Notes/“Blurbs + Ideas”]

Who says I have to? Using Staci’s example of cleaning one’s room, Whoopy further adjusted the theory by proposing what else it might depend on. That is, she amended the ‘have to’ criterion to say in effect that if it does not depend on whether you *have* to or not, maybe it depends on *who says* you have to and she supported this interpretation with an example (If my mum says I have to, I consider it work; if I say I have to, I don’t consider that as work, “I just do it”). Joey, who

was operating the camera, related Whoopy's point to our earlier criterion ("You wanted to do it"). Then, as Whoopy continued, she generalized out from the example of herself and her mother to what "people" do. And she came back to Staci's original point about "free will" which Joey translated to, "If you *feel* like doing it".

When I checked my understanding of Whoopy's point by saying in effect, 'if free will, then not work?', Whoopy replied that it *is* work, but that there is a difference between work (that someone else tells you to do) and work (that you tell yourself to do). Then she stopped as if wondering if it makes sense to talk about 'telling oneself' what to do ("if you're the one who's telling yourself to do it, then you really can't tell yourself"). In response to this I [Alison] added that people even *make* themselves do all kinds of things.

On closer inspection it seems that Whoopy was saying that whether one *likes* doing something does not help us to decide whether it counts as 'work' or not. They are separate issues. Something can be work and we may or may not like it. Staci had made a similar point earlier when she said that something could be work even if you *do* want to do it: "It depends on how you look at it". I am not sure we caught this at the time.

Enjoying work and talking and writing as work. Next, in an example that had double relevance for the theory of 'work' we were building, Whoopy brought us back to the ideas of enjoying work and the differences between talking and writing as work. She told us about her mother who enjoyed her work as a day care teacher because "she works with kids and she likes kids" and "she doesn't really consider it work". On the other hand, Whoopy continued, there were parts of her job that her mother *did* consider work, namely parent-teacher meetings. And one of the reasons Whoopy gave for that was the distinction between *writing* and *saying* things to parents. Saying was better than writing it down and letting them read it because "they don't really take it the same way". This example had double relevance to the theory of what counts as 'work' that we were building. It was relevant to Staci's point about enjoyment and also to the issues regarding talking and writing as work.

Is meditation work? After two more time outs, Staci brought us back to the idea of 'work' with a new idea that our discussion had prompted her to wonder about.

Staci . . . But — my uncle meditates, okay? And I was wondering if that's really work. . . I think, yes. . . Cuz you have to sort of concentrate and I think you have to concentrate to work.

This was a borderline case for us to work on. Staci provided a reason (concentration) for saying meditation *is* work and then immediately related that reason to the concept of 'work' we were developing. Then, without skipping a beat, she added a model case of a teacher concentrating in order to be able to do her work thus providing another example in support of her notion of concentration as work.

Concentration ~ cleaning your room. Next, I [Alison] took Staci's new criterion of 'work' (concentration) and tested it by asking how it related to cases we had already considered. When we tried it out on the case of cleaning one's room, Staci thought that this chore *did* require concentration whereas Whoopy was not so sure. Moreover, Whoopy pointed out that in the example of her mother working at daycare, concentration "doesn't really show" because of her mother's sense of humour.

'Concentrative' Philosophical Inquiry? Despite the inconclusive results of this line of inquiry, now I [Alison] wondered if perhaps we should change the 'C' in Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry to an invented word: *Concentrative*. However, intertwined with my wonderings, Whoopy was still not happy with the criterion of concentration as work in relation to the example of cleaning up your room and her objections led us away from that line of inquiry. My reaction was to reach for a counter-example and I tried to start over by going back to what I thought we had established earlier.

'Work' depends on what you actually do? Undaunted, Whoopy followed up on her earlier remark that what counts as 'work' "depends actually what you *do*" rather than whether you concentrate. She returned to the example of cleaning up your room saying that it was work and agreeing with me that it involved "doing something".

Discussion is doing? This led us to consider the ‘doing’ aspects of ‘discussion’ to see if our discussions could count as ‘work’ according to this new criterion of ‘doing’. First Whoopy suggested ‘talking’ as something we *do* in a discussion and Staci joined in and suggested ‘thinking’. Then, after we paused to think about whether thinking counted as ‘doing’ something, Staci reminded us of the logic that Harry had discovered in the IAPC novel-*qua*-text, *Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery*. She tried to apply “Harry’s Rule” to what we were working on when she said, “If thinking is doing — then doing is thinking” and I [Alison] chuckled appreciatively at the carryover from class philosophy.

If it were Harry, he would have said something like the following: “All [instances of] *thinking* are [instances of] *doing*”. What Harry had ‘discovered’ was that if you reverse the subject and predicate phrases of such sentences, they become false such that Staci’s statement reversed would become: “All [instances of] *doing* are [instances of] *thinking*”. When at the end of this part of the exchange, I [Alison] said, “Doing is. . .not *necessarily* thinking. Not *all* doing is thinking”, I was trying to make Staci’s attempt resemble more closely the “All” format of Harry’s rule.

Thinking but not doing? This last move by Staci led me next to try a contrary case in which someone might be thinking but not doing.

Allison All thinking is doing? How ‘bout your coma?

My reference to “your coma” must have been a carryover from class philosophy and it reminded Staci of a book she had read in which the main character was “sort of in a coma and he went back and he was like in the future”.

Staci . . .So that’s what — like I was basically saying in my [reflection?] in class? — That — you can — like your brain is sort of traveling — to a different time.

By thinking of the storyline of the book, Staci considered the possibility that even in a coma, there is still brain activity. It was a possibility on which I [Alison] pounced with, “Oh. And is *that* work?” to see how it fit with our theory of ‘work’. Not able to answer my question, Staci said, “I don’t know—”. Then she took an epistemological turn when she tried to say what it would take to know such a thing: “I guess you can only really know if you’re sort of conscious — while you’re in a

coma". However, this was enough to lead me to make a distinction between two kinds of activity: doing and happening.

Next, Staci used the activity-distinction I made between 'doing' and 'happening' and transformed it into a distinction between two different kinds of 'working': in the coma, "*He* wasn't working? — but I think his *brain* was working". I then asked her to apply that to the 'working' that we do in our discussions. We arrived at the interpretation that in discussions, *we* (not just our brains) are 'working' "because we're *talking* and we're writing —" in a way that is not true of someone in a coma.

Meditation is not work. In our final three minutes of this session, Whoopy called our attention to a good point that Joey had made regarding whether meditation is work. He had tried 'making a living' as a minimum criterion for counting something as 'work' on the grounds that *wanting* to do something was not enough — or at least it was grounds for saying something is *not* work. However, someone said, "No!" to this and then, in a reflexive move, Joey provided an example from our mutual experience ("It's just like coming to DRG") to support the point saying that since we come to DRG *when* we want to and *because* we want to, it is not work either.

Meditation is work. Both Staci and Jaguar were eager to reply to Joey's point.

Jaguar [*Operating the camera.*] It's work — it's work of the — mind.
[Joey: Yeah.] — Cuz we're *deciding* if you want to go or not.

Contrary to the point he had just made, Joey *agreed* with Jaguar that meditation is "work of the *mind*" and Staci joined in with a story about her uncle's special form of meditation: astral projection. She told the group, "My uncle can do astral projection and he can like fly and stuff. It's really weird."

Joey He can fly?
Staci Yeah. He's going to teach me when I'm older — But >>> it has to be work to do astral projection because you have to like — you have to get yourself into a certain state of mind? — so you can go. . .

Not surprisingly this elicited lively reactions.

Staci >>> But — you >>> Actually, the thing that's strange about it is that — you *don't* concentrate. You concentrate but you *don't* concentrate. You're supposed to like — just like —

Joey Your mind is clear —

Staci Yeah.

Allison Well meditation is like that. You're supposed to just — let it *happen*.

Staci Yeah.

Staci thought about her point in relation to our earlier criterion of concentration and called our attention to the apparent contradiction that meditation could require and not require concentration at the same time. My observation that “you’re supposed to just — let it *happen*” put our earlier distinction between ‘doing’ and ‘happening’ in a different light. However with time running out in this session, we did not pursue these points.

Meanwhile, Joey still wanted to know how high Staci’s uncle could fly and how long he could stay in the air. Mariah, who was listening while she was finishing up the blurb on DRG she was writing for the class yearbook, said, “You shouldn’t stay for — too long, though”. Whoopy laughed and Jaguar said, “Splat”. Staci responded, “Oh! Not for like two seconds. You can stay for like >>> fifteen minutes,” and Jaguar was surprised. By this time I [Alison] announced that time was up for to-day and Staci asked if we could come back to this subject.

S39: What is a research map? (Map 12)

The next two DRG sessions were cancelled and when we met again a week and a day later, we decided to talk about our research maps, about how we would describe them and how they help our research (if they do).

What is a map?

A map is a series of questions put together to form an answer. When we get carried away it is very good. If we didn't get carried away the discussion we wouldn't get anywhere. Like in Seinfeld when we get carried away it can get confusing which leads to humour.

[D/S39/1993.05.13Tu/DRG/CoR/Daisy/What is a map?]

Session 39 • Tuesday, May 13, 1993 • 6 Co-researchers

During Startup we took some time to work on the text for the "Memories of DRG" Yearbook blurb we were preparing for *Stepping Out*, the class yearbook and we wanted to add a paragraph about our DRG map-making activities. However Mariah, who was working on revising the blurb text, said she was not sure what to write. So, after working out how many more meetings we could fit in before the end of the year, and after talking about whether and how we might continue to meet after they had 'graduated' in June, for this session, we turned our attention to our DRG map-making. Joey was the name recorder and Jaguar was the 'cartographer' for this session.¹³⁵

What is a research map? After getting out all our maps and putting them around the room, I invited my co-researchers to look at our own experience of making maps and see what we could say about them. Daisy suggested that we make a new map which we did, calling it a "Map Map". Consulting her 'What is a map?'

¹³⁵ This account is reconstructed from notes I [Sigma] wrote in the DRG Catalogue entry for this session.

research notes she had already written in her steno pad, Daisy began by saying that, "A map is a series of ideas put together".

"How did *you* explain it to us?" Joey asked me and in response I said that it is "a way of seeing the connections between our ideas — our ideas and the connections — to make our ideas visible". Then I asked, "Why do we do that? Do they help us?" I also added that they "help us to *come up with* ideas" and that they are "a way of *making* ideas, or making connections". And then I asked, "What if we didn't have maps?" Mariah replied that she thought we'd come up with the same ideas but that we wouldn't remember what other people said. When I asked if they thought we did maps in class philosophy some said yes, some said no, and others said all the time. That made us make a connection between the overhead transparencies that we did use all the time in class philosophy and our research maps.

Next I mentioned Daisy's map designs and the Step Chart they used in one of their discussions. However someone mentioned that it was hard to know when to change steps and that it might have been better to make the map *after* the discussion. Then, consulting her "What is a map?" notes again, Daisy said, "A map is a series of questions and answers put together to form one big idea" and then she changed it slightly when she added, "a series of questions put together to form an answer". And I [Alison] noted how "a research map grows with the discussion".

Getting carried away. With reference to Daisy's point in her research notes about getting carried away, Mariah commented that she that that it was good when Einstein got carried away (when we made our first research map in Session 17) and Daisy agreed noting how on the television situation comedy *Seinfeld* that "they get carried away" and that it is good.

Doing research without maps? It was at this point I asked, "What if we did the research without maps?" Joey replied that he thought we would "run out of topics or that we'd "forget everything we've done" and someone else said that it is "something to do", that it is "fun", that "we enjoy it" and that the maps help us get "more topics". Mariah said that she thought it "wouldn't make a difference because before we didn't". However, then she added, "But now it's even better". And, still thinking about getting carried away, Daisy admitted that, "There is a point when you can get too carried away".

What's bad about maps? I [Alison] also asked my co-researchers to see if they could think of what might be bad about making maps and I gave the example of how it happened that "we start[ed] out with a map but then we stop[ped]" and that sometimes it "can be too hard to make maps of some ideas"? Daisy said that they are not good when they "get too confusing" with "too many lines going round and round, like a labyrinth". I asked if that meant that it was "too confusing when we get carried away?" but Daisy replied that it "depends on how carried away you get" and then she added that "colour can help".

What makes a good map? Daisy said that a good map is "not boring to look at" and "you can follow it". I talked about how on a good map we can use "different colours to show different relationships like on a road map". And Mariah said that colours were good "not only to keep it from being boring to look at but also to separate certain things".

Maps and confusion. Returning to the points about confusion and getting carried away, Daisy related an example from *Seinfeld* pointing out that it was "so confusing it's funny" to which I commented, "So confusion can lead to humour". Then, using the road map analogy, Daisy remarked that it is "good to have colour but not good to have confusion".

At this point I turned to Mariah and asked if after our discussion she would now be able to write a paragraph about our map-making for the yearbook blurb and this is how it appeared in the final version:

In DRG we make maps to map our discussions and by March we had made six maps. A map is a series of questions put together to form an answer, and it grows with the discussion. We have maps to help us from getting too carried away, but it is also good to get carried away.

S40: Exploring Examples

'Collaborative' or 'Cooperative'? (Map 13)

Two more sessions were cancelled after Session 39 so by the time we reached Session 40 it was almost three weeks after the Session 38 'collaborative' discussion that captured Staci's interest and which she had requested that we continue.

Session 40 • Tuesday, May 25, 1993 • 7 Co-researchers¹³⁶

The same seven co-researchers who had worked on Map 11: Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry in Session 38 were back. During Startup time we talked about issues such as the lay-out for the "Memories of DRG" yearbook blurb and how to include a photograph of Map 12: "What is a research map?" and also about making sure that as many Researcher Profiles as possible were completed. Otherwise I had no Sigma plans for this session other than to spend time photographing all our maps. Staci (cartographer), Jaguar (video camera operator) Joey and I [Alison] began the discussion and as it progressed, others who were working on other research activities joined in at will. We recorded our deliberations on Map 13: 'Cooperative'~'Collaborative', the research map Staci was making.

When I [Alison] asked if anyone else had ideas of what to do, Staci suggested continuing the map about what a philosophical conversation is. I wasn't sure which one she meant and suggested that a few people have a discussion using the tape recorders as we had done before and that way she could have the discussion she suggested. She really wanted to continue the map, so I suggested that maybe Staci and I would have a discussion while others could do other things and join in, in the background.

At this point Whoopy wanted to say something about the meaning of 'philosophy' based on notes she had taken during class philosophy when I [Judy] had apparently said that "Philosophy is having a reason for things". I thought a little, then said that "I think I might have done a time out and said, 'It's not the *opinion* that's important, in philosophy, it's the *reasons* that you have — we look

¹³⁶ Unless otherwise indicated, the data for this session are from the verbatim transcript for Session 40 on Tuesday, May 25, 1993.

at the reasons''' and smiled at Whoopy in appreciation of her report that she was making DRG observations during class philosophy. Consulting her notebook., Whoopy added "then the second one was — 'If it's >>>'. It was getting confusing? So >>> "this must be philosophy". I laughed hearing Whoopy play back something I deliberately say in class philosophy. After saying to Whoopy that it was good she was keeping an eye on me, I replied that "... the next question is, Do you agree with that?" Finally Staci asked her question.

Staci	I know this is — this might be really dumb but >>> Did the person who invented philosophy, is his name Phil?
Allison	[<i>Chuckling</i>]. No. Do you want to know where the word 'philosophy' comes from? I never —
Jaguar	[<i>Inaudible</i>] I know—
Allison	Go on —
Jaguar	Plato
Staci	Play doh
Jaguar	The philosopher. Plato
Staci	Oh.
Allison	I'm not sure he invented the word. The word is Greek. 'Philosophy' is Greek — and >>> [<i>sighs</i>] — I always get them mixed up. <i>Philo</i> — means one thing and <i>sophia</i> [Staci: That's a name.] means another — and it means 'love of wisdom'. [<i>Others say "Oh" and "Hm"</i>]

Stacy continued with a statement about not having to love wisdom to do philosophy and a remark about some people in philosophy who don't really take part in class. Inspired by Whoopy's reference to ideas she had written in her class philosophy notebook, Staci put the camera on the tripod and went to retrieve her own class philosophy notebook in which she too had a collection of quotations and a cutting from *Seventeen* magazine concerning what philosophy is.

After this exchange, since I knew I could photograph the maps some other time, and for this session I decided it would be better to follow Staci's lead and have a discussion with her instead. Meanwhile, Whoopy and Mariah chose to work on finalizing the DRG blurb for the yearbook. Tracy and Jaguar worked on their researcher profiles on the computer. Staci, Joey and I [Alison] decided to have the discussion that Staci requested. At first, Staci did not want to start a new map so we searched through our research map collection and our catalogue of sessions and settled on putting up paper for a new map. Then we tried to refresh our memories by looking at Map 11 and Staci remembered that the session she wanted to continue

had been about 'collaborative'. After looking carefully at the map, I remembered, "It was the meditation one".

Staci was standing at the blank map taped to the white board ready to write and she suggested that we work on "'Collaborative?' What does it mean?". But I [Alison] was not so sure that was what she had been so interested in at the end of Session 38. We discussed several possibilities and then I said that I had an idea that came to mind while I was doing the transcript for this discussion.

Alison What's the difference between 'cooperative' — *cooperative* and collaborative. [Staci thinks.] — if any. . . . because at one point during here (*pointing to Map 11 off-camera*) we were saying well why don't we say that it's just a coop — it's a *cooperative* discussion instead of a *collaborative*. Well why would we use — or why would I choose to use 'collaborative'?

Now, I can *tell* you why (I can play teacher on you) —

Staci Okay.

Alison It's because the word 'labor' in there makes it sound like we're working. Okay . . . ? So that's why I wanted to see if *you* saw — the wor- — When we have discussions, do *you* consider that to be 'work'? Does it *feel* like work?

What does 'collaborative' mean?

In order to investigate whether we should use the term 'collaborative' in CPI, first we examined its close neighbour 'cooperative' and tried to say whether we thought that doing philosophy was a 'cooperative' activity. Then we went on to examine 'collaborative' to do the same thing.

'Cooperative': working properly; working well with others

'Cooperative'. Before we began, we turned our attention to Jaguar (who was operating the camera) to make sure he knew he could contribute too when he had something to say. He did — right away.

Jaguar Well >>> I don't want to interrupt or anything — [Alison: Yeah] — Well, what I wanted to say was that >>> sort of like what *you* said >>> "labour"? It's sort of like *work*. But 'cooperative' is — when — like you work *properly*. Like you're not —

Staci Sloppy?

Jaguar No! Not that! Like you work well with others.
Staci Oh that's good because —

Thinking about the word 'cooperative', Jaguar made a distinction between 'work' (labour) and 'working *properly*' or 'working *well with others*' (cooperatively) and when Staci understood what he meant, she expressed her appreciation for the point he was making.

Wondering how Jaguar came to make that distinction, and recalling the "Cooperative Learning" pedagogical strategy which I knew was being implemented by my co-researchers' English teacher that year, without using the technical term for it, I [Alison] said, "Yeah — you do cooperative >>> stuff with [your English teacher] don't you in class?" Eager to move on, Staci replied, "Okay now, wait, wait—". Then, not ignoring my remark entirely she added, " No, no, not really, but —".

Philosophy — is not 'cooperative'. Next Staci led us on a detailed exploration of distinctions between 'cooperative' and 'collaborative' in relation to our experience of doing philosophy.

Staci Okay. — You know in philosophy >>> you don't always agree, you have like different sides. So — it can't really be 'cooperative' because you don't cooperate together.

As soon as Staci said that, she and I [Alison] worked on how to represent this idea on Map 13, our research map for this session. Staci liked my suggestion that we start with the abbreviations 'Coop.' and 'Collab.' by placing them on the map separated from each other and then "see if they link up for some things and they go in different ways for other things".

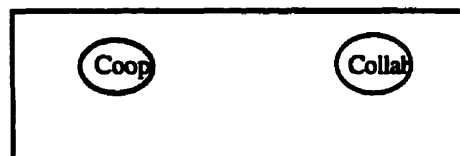


Figure 4. From Map 13: "Coop.-Collab."

After she had written the abbreviations, Staci wondered if she should have used different colours. I suggested that we "start out with them the same to begin with—" to which Staci added, "and then should I branch out in different colours?" We agreed that she could and, remembering Jaguar's work as cartographer on

Map 12: Map Map, I said that Jaguar, today's camera operator, "has wonderful ideas about colour schemes and how to arrange things so — use his expertise".

"Okay, wait," Staci said. "There's one thing that I wanted to say before. . . . What was it again? Oh yeah. If you cooperate — it's not — . . . Cooperation isn't philosophy".

Wondering what else Staci would say about this, I [Alison] replied tentatively, "Okay — uhm" and another co-researcher voice was heard saying, "It's true" .

Then, turning her attention to the map again, Staci suggested a way to do it by writing **philosophy** in a bubble joined by a line drawn from **coop.** on which she would write the word "not" to indicate the idea that 'cooperation' is not philosophy.

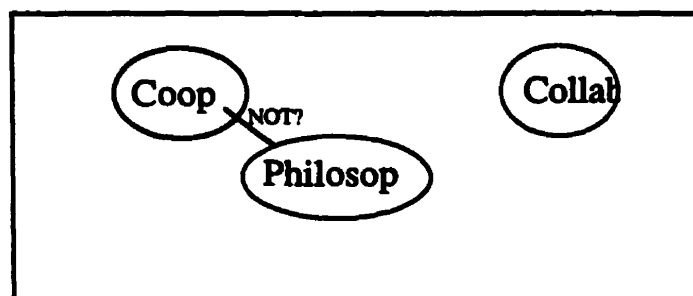


Figure 5. From Map 13: "Cooperation is not philosophy."

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Alison | Okay, "Not philosophy" why? |
| Staci | Uhm — |
| Alison | Because we disagree? Because — |
| Staci | Different opinions — different . . . Different points of view. |
| Alison | Okay. . . . and . . . You can't have different points of view and cooperate? |
| Staci | No, because cooperate . . . Okay. <i>[She writes straight onto the map and Alison chuckles appreciatively. Staci writes "Aggree" [sic] in a bubble joined to "Coop" by a line.]</i> Oh! I put it wrong. |

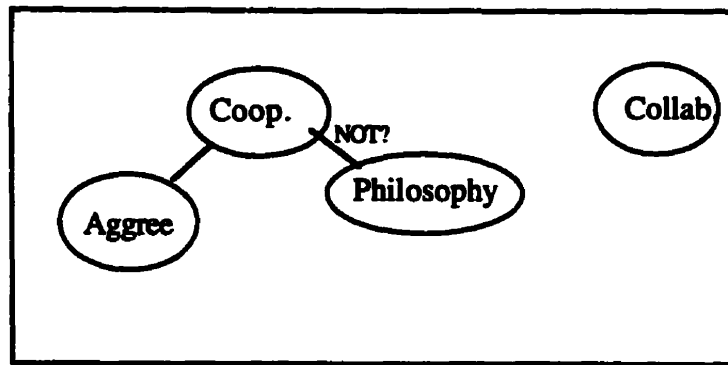


Figure 6. From Map 13: Staci adds "Aggree" (sic)

- Alison** It doesn't matter. It's the idea.
Staci That's what it's supposed to be.
Alison When cooperating we agree. Okay.
Staci Okay >>> That's what it means. — So >>> I think 'collaborative' means 'working *together*' but not necessarily *agreeing*'.

Philosophy — is 'cooperative'? At this point I [Alison] took the first part of what Staci said and tried substituting 'cooperative' for 'collaborative' to see if what she said might apply to both.

- Alison** Okay!... 'Cooperative' could *also* mean 'working together', right?
Staci Well >>> 'cooperate' means — doesn't mean 'working together' it just means like >>> workin— sort of *thinking* together.
Joey So that's philosophy. [Alison chuckles.]

This move on my [Alison's] part led Staci to make a work / *not* work distinction between 'collaboration' and 'cooperation' and to do that she described 'cooperative' as not *working* together but *thinking* together. However, Joey observed that 'thinking together' also describes 'philosophy' thereby pointing to how, contrary to her earlier view, Staci was now arguing that philosophy *is* cooperative (in that it involves 'thinking together').

Looking for alternatives. Next, drawing on 'cooperative'/'collaborative' distinctions I was working on outside of DRG,¹³⁷ I tried other possible interpretations of 'cooperative' for my co-researchers to consider.

¹³⁷ This refers to a project I was working on for concurrent doctoral work (Kyle 1993a; Kyle 1993b; Kyle 1994b).

"How about *being* together," I [Alison] suggested. Staci immediately said, "No because you could be together and *not* cooperate". So I [Alison] tried another: "*Doing* something together but it doesn't have to be philosophy".

Joey suggested, "*Working* together". But Staci replied, "No, that would be collaboration". Then, while Joey and I continued to wonder about 'working' together, Staci interjected, "Hold on, hold on" and Jaguar also noted that 'working' together is 'collaborating'.

"We're trying to see if they're the same or if they're different," I [Alison] recalled. "Well, okay," Staci replied and I [Alison] continued, "We started off saying they're different but now everybody seems to think they're the same".

'Collaborative': 'working together' but not necessarily agreeing

'Collaborative'. Next Staci turned our attention to 'collaborative' and she combined Jaguar's "collaborating is working together" with her own "without necessarily agreeing".

"Collaborating would be working together but not necessarily . . . thinking," Staci began, using her earlier distinction between 'working together' and 'thinking together'. Did she mean "Agreeing", I [Alison] asked. "Yeah, agreeing," Staci replied.

"Working together without necessarily agreeing," I repeated, just to be sure. "Is what?" Joey asked. "Collaborating," I [Alison] replied while Staci wrote on the map and others kept thinking.

Philosophy — is collaborative?

Just as he had done earlier Joey said, "I thought that's — that's *philosophy* — working together but not necessarily agreeing" and many voices said at once, "Yeah".

Mapping. Staci, who was working on Map 13, asked how to spell 'necessarily' and Jaguar and I [Alison] answered in unison. Then, when she finished writing, she looked at the map and realized that for 'Collab.' she had written working together without necessarily *cooperating* instead of *agreeing*. So she struck out 'cooperating' and added 'agreeing'.

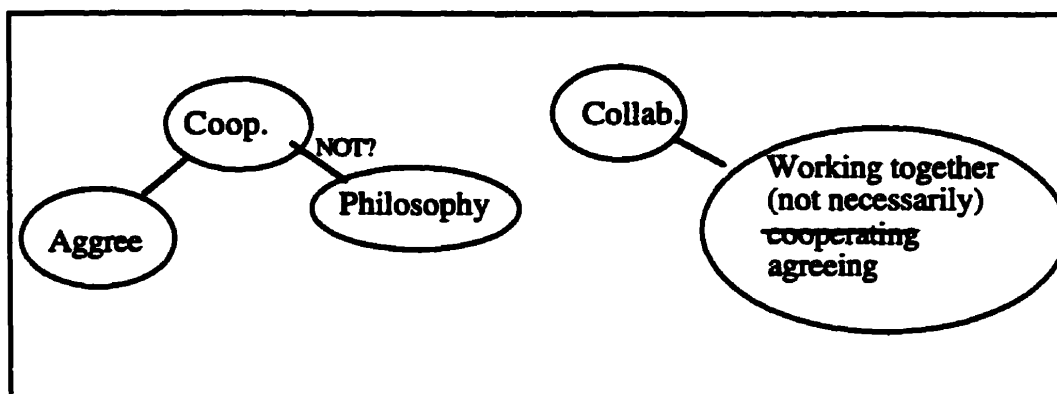


Figure 7. Staci changes 'cooperating' to 'agreeing'

Do we need 'philosophical'? Turning to Joey, I [Alison] said, "And what did you say a minute ago?" to which Joey replied, "I said, 'And >>> That's also philosophy, collaborating". "Yes," I responded, and thinking Joey may have been influenced by my CPI phrase I added, "Well that's because we call it, 'Collaborative Philosophical — Inquiry'." Still wanting to keep our options open I added, "But maybe we don't need the 'philosophical'?" There were several overlapping but unintelligible responses from others to this.

Mapping. At this point, Jaguar pointed out that Staci was writing "just a bit too tiny" for the writing to be picked up by the camera and Joey suggested a zoom in.

Collaborating is not necessarily philosophy

- Joey** Her definition of >>> 'collaborating' — is also the definition of 'philosophy' so but — does that also mean —
- Staci** No. — Wait! But *is* it? Because I mean CPI is not *necessarily* really — philosophy like they — they *are* but they aren't.
- Joey** Well — philosophy *is* in that word.

Here Joey might have been referring to the 'P' in the "word" 'CPI'.

- Staci** Huh? . . oh yeah. . . yeah but it might be — you're sort of —
- Allison** Well philosophy might be *more* than just — so it's inquiry too, it's asking questions too which might be —
- Staci** Okay.

Mapping. Joey asked how we should map the point he was trying to make.

- Joey** Should we attach 'philosophy' with 'working together but not necessarily agreeing'? Because it's almost the same thing.
- Allison** Yeah well that one says "NOT" on the line. Do you see it?
[Joey: Yeah. Oh, yeah]
- Staci** But cooperate — you can cooperate in philosophy but it can also *not* be philosophy.
- Joey** So it can be both.
- Staci** . . . So *that's* why I did it on the line.
- Allison** Oh! I see-ee. . . . I see.
- Staci** You know what I'm going to do? I'm going to write. . .

Time out: cartographer consultation. Mariah and Whoopy were having difficulty interpreting Map 12 for work they were doing and asked Jaguar (who was videotaping the dialogue between Joey, Alison and Staci) for help. This consultation at the computer became the foreground activity for a few moments.

What exactly does 'collaborate' mean?

Meanwhile, in the background Staci and Joey continued to work on how to represent the relationship between 'collaboration' and 'philosophy' on the map.

"So should we attach it or not? Should we attach it or not?" Joey persisted. "That's what we did before," Staci replied. Still not satisfied, Joey repeated, "So should be attach it or not?" Joey continued. "What exactly does 'collaborative mean—"? Then he added, "— like what does 'collaborate' — if we looked it up in the dictionary what would it say?"

Staci(?) replied, "It would say 'cooperate'," and I [Alison] chuckled.

Taking Staci's suggestion seriously, Joey said, "'Cooperating' — no but 'cooperating' is the same as 'collaborating'".

"No—," Staci replied and then, challenging the dictionary writers' authority she went on, "They might — they might think so but we might not think so".

"What's different?" I [Alison] wondered .

Time out: Alison's homework. This talk of consulting the dictionary reminded me of the work I [Sigma] had been doing on distinguishing between 'cooperative' and 'collaborative' for the doctoral work mentioned earlier and for which I *had* consulted the dictionary. I mentioned that I would put it on my "homework" list to bring in for us to use perhaps. We tried to remember what else I [Alison] had said I would do for DRG 'homework' and Joey, who remembered that I had to make a copy of something for Jaguar, joked, "— I'm your teacher, I assign your work —". "That's right. . . . You're a co-researcher," I [Alison] replied, enjoying the fact that he had noticed the apparent role reversal. And, continuing to pretend to be my teacher rather than my co-researcher, Joey replied saying, "— ten pages of math —" .

Dictionary does not help. Jaguar had switched the camera back to our discussion. I told the group that the dictionary did not help in distinguishing the two words and that we use them "as if they're the same most of the time" and added that I was "wondering if they *are* really the same". Then turning to the problem of the map I went on to suggest that "maybe we want to save 'philosophy' and put it in at the end" .

During this part of our exploration Staci argued that in both 'cooperation' and 'collaboration' people work together and she distinguished between the two in terms of agreeing and disagreeing. Thus, in 'cooperation' you work together and agree whereas in 'collaboration' you work together but you do not *necessarily* agree. By the time we reached this point, we were consulting dictionaries and deciding — again — that they did not offer much help.

'Cooperative'/'Collaborative': Exploring Five Examples

For the remainder of Session 40, we collaboratively built on each other's ideas as we continued to work on the difference between 'cooperative' and 'collaborative' by producing and interpreting five everyday examples from our surrounding culture. Other co-researchers joined in the interpretation of these examples and we also kept track of earlier points as we introduced new elements in our on-going quest to decide whether we should describe philosophical inquiry using the term 'cooperative' or 'collaborative'.

Example 1: Songwriter/lyricist collaboration

Staci We have to think of something cuz my mind is going blank.

Collaboration: You need two (or more) people to do one thing. Although eager to continue the discussion, Staci had trouble getting going again so I [Alison] produced a first example for us to consider. Saying that "I do research everywhere — you know — whenever I find somebody I think might know —", I told my co-researchers how a friend¹³⁸ had given me what I thought was a good example of 'collaborating' when we were having dinner one evening.

Alison >>> You know people write songs?
Joey Yeah.
Alison — and somebody writes the words —
Joey The Beatles —
Alison — and somebody else writes the music sometimes?
Staci/Joey Uh-hmm.
Alison They always talk about that as 'collaboration'.
Staci That's *good*.
Alison And what the person was saying to me was it's when two people (or more) come together with different expertises (sic).
Joey Two people do different stuff and — but it puts their >>> the same things together —
Alison That's right.
Joey — and it puts the [??] — But you need both people to do one thing.
Alison That's *right!* [Staci's voice in the background — unintelligible]
You're >>> on a roll today! This is great!

As soon as I produced the songwriter/lyricist example, without hesitation Joey derived a possible interpretation of 'collaboration' from it ("Two people do different stuff . . . but you need both people to do one thing"). Next, appreciating the example ("That's *good!*") and listening to Joey's interpretation, Staci produced a counter-argument.

¹³⁸ I am grateful to Marilyn Tobman, then Principal of Edinburgh School, for this example.

"Wait. Wait-wait," Staci said. "I think I have something that can prove that wrong".

"Uh oh. Heh," I [Alison] replied.

Meanwhile Whoopy, who had herself been 'on a roll' in class philosophy recently, asked who was on a roll to which I [Alison] replied, ">>> Joey. Joey. He's coming up with some good things!".

When Staci presented her counter-arguments in a way that addressed the *ideas* — but not the *person* (Joey), whose ideas they were — she made a move characteristic of class philosophy. She said she was "proving *that* wrong" not *Joey* wrong.

Staci Okay, because when we're in philosophy, we *might* have different *ideas*, but we're all — on the same subject. We all — we're all expertise (sic) on the same *thing*. [Mariah: Time out?] And we're — putting our ideas *together*. So—

Time out: Computer co-researchers. At this point we were interrupted by people working on the yearbook blurb at the computer who asked about printing it out.

Staci made a fine distinction with regard to the issue of 'expertise' when she said that in [class] philosophy, "we *might* have different *ideas*, but we're all — on the same subject — . . .we're all expertise (sic) on the same *thing*. And we're — putting our ideas *together*". In class philosophy our *ideas* might differ but our 'expertise' does not — at least not in the same way as the expertise of a songwriter and a lyricist who "come together with *different* expertise(s)" — one in writing music, the other in writing lyrics. In class philosophy we are all engaged in the common activity of producing *ideas* about *one thing* — even though the ideas we produce might differ. And this is in contrast to the songwriter and lyricist who may also be working on "the same subject" but who are engaged in *different* activities (one writing music; the other writing lyrics). And in class philosophy "we're — putting our ideas *together*" in a way that differs from how a songwriter and a lyricist "come together" with their notes and words for the song as well. Perhaps the songwriter and the lyricist are *too* different in what they bring to the enterprise to be comparable to how we do philosophical discussion and also it might have to depend on whether the music and the lyric writers do their songwriting work separately or together.

Two kinds of "different expertises". Continuing our exploration, we followed the 'expertise' trail and looked at different ways in which people might have and contribute their expertise(s).

I [Alison] responded to Staci's counter-argument by describing a variety of 'expertise(s)' that different people bring to a discussion.

Alison >>> I've thought about that too —although not quite the same way you put it and I like how you've put that because it's going to make me think some more —

But what I thought is that everybody in the classroom, [Staci: Yeah] — is a different person, with different life experience. They've read different books, they've watched different television, they have different tastes, and so in *that* sense, their expertises are different. But then I guess it would be true for 'cooperation' too, wouldn't it?

Next Joey built on and away from that idea first by tentatively agreeing with me [Alison] and then by adding that there were also expertise differences in terms of *how* people contribute to a discussion.

Joey I agree with Alison? Like >>> even though >>> when you do philosophy? — you still can be good in different parts of philosophy — like some people are good at expressing orally? — and some people are good at writing on books.

Alison Ooh! Oh! That's good. — and your ideas come out in different ways [Joey: Yeah] — just like in the music —

Staci, meanwhile, was thinking about *similarities*, not differences, and she argued that in the music example the 'subject' was the same for all participants.

Staci Yeah, but — same thing — like everybody's — doing the same *subject*. There are two people that came together. One would be on the subject of *writing* music, like writing the words, and the other one would be — writing the *notes*. — So it's like —

Two people might *bring* different expertise(s) and they might have different expertise(s) in *how they participate*, but they are all doing the *same* 'thing' — the 'subject' (of a discussion/song) is the same for all.

I [Alison] was not sure of Staci's interpretation of the 'subject' and so I tentatively suggested a different interpretation.

- Alison** No, becau-. No, you've got the wrong 'subject'.
I sound like I'm telling you but I'm really asking, okay? >>>
— the 'subject' is what the song is *about*. And the music
has to fit what the song is about and the words have to fit
what the song — What they want — do they want it to be a
sad song? a love song? a *rock* song? a song with a
beat? . . .
- Staci** Okay — I get it, I get that but >>> In class, its' sort of like if
you have different opinions, or — whatever because >>>
say there was a rock[?] song — and you wrote the words to
it and then somebody —
- Joey** — changed the beat —
- Staci** — wrote like — like — a romantic — tune or something —
That would be like our discussions because some people
agree and some people disagree.

Staci accepted my [Alison's] interpretation but only when she realized that it was *compatible with her theory* that in our discussions people agree and disagree.

Using this songwriter/lyricist example, we explored the issue of participant 'expertise(s)' in two different ways as we worked on whether difference in expertise is a way to distinguish 'collaboration' from 'cooperation'. Although we may not have settled the issue, we did reach a more complex understanding of the expertise(s) people bring to and exercise in relation to the whole whether it be a discussion or a 'song'.

'Cooperation' means helping each other. Next, still using this example, Whoopy made a new distinction between 'cooperative' and 'collaborative' — this time on the basis of 'helping'.

- Whoopy** Okay. >>> 'Co-operative' is when you're helping someone else. 'Collaborative' is not necessarily that you're helping anybody else. — like —
- Alison** Isn't it?
- Staci** No!
- Whoopy** Well you're not really >>> helping them — It's like — you're working together but it's not — like it's not really helping someone.
- Alison** Oh like 'I need your help' kind of help.
- Whoopy** Yeah. It's like you're talking — but you're not — [Alison: Aaah!]

Mariah Yeah, but you *are* working together, anyway.

Staci . . . Yeah!

Whoopy . . . Yeah, but. . . 'co-operative is like. . . you're helping —

Staci — like you're agreeing and like —

Whoopy — yeah, you're agreeing with everything but 'collaborative' — [*Staci talks excitedly at the same time.*]

Staci Oh! Oh! I've got a perfect — okay —

Whoopy — and 'collaborative' — is like — you don't necessarily *have* to agree but it's like you have more than >>>one person.

When Whoopy made this distinction, I remember being surprised because in all my thinking and reading and trying to sort out these two concepts, I had not thought of 'cooperation' in terms of *helping* in this way. Whoopy seemed to sense a difference here but she was also thinking on her feet. Keeping in mind that 'cooperation' is a term that children would be familiar with while 'collaboration' is not, based on the DRG work we had done on 'collaboration' so far, Whoopy seemed to be thinking of it strictly in terms of 'co-' (more than one person) '+labor' (working) together. There had been no hint of 'helping' in our deliberations to that point.

For the sake of argument, taking this to be a valid distinction, it is interesting to consider the Songwriter/Lyricist example in *these* terms. Does each 'help' the other? Not necessarily — in the sense that Whoopy means. To do that, the lyricist would have to engage in doing what the songwriter does and vice versa and the whole point of their collaboration is that their tasks are separable. They may 'help each other' to produce a song, but that is different, I think, from what Whoopy was onto here.

Example 2: Logic example
Cooperative: helping each other
Collaborative: working side by side

Whoopy's last intervention excited Staci and when it was her turn next, she presented us with an example which built on the 'helping' distinction that Whoopy had just made. I call this the "Logic" example because it is based on a class philosophy experience in which the students worked in pairs on a logic exercise. The activity involved categorization and the children had to think of instances to fit categories and category names to fit instances.

Staci I have a perfect example.

Okay, you know in Logic we have like those things where you — there's like a title and you have to name three things that go with it? [Alison: Yeah.]

Okay. You're working with your partner — and — okay. This does — 'cooperative'. Where you're helping — okay. Say the title was >>> "Furniture" and you're helping each other find — like — three things for furniture.

But, 'collaborative'. You can be sitting beside your friend or something and just be working and talking at the same time.

Alison So just the fact that you're sitting *beside* each other makes it 'collaborative'?

Staci Well, and doing work. You don't have to be like — like helping each other or whatever — you can just be —

Alison So what if — in 'collaborative' you could *each* do your list of furniture. And then — do you have to put the two lists together at the end to be —? 'Cuz otherwise what's the "co-"? The "co-" is just sitting side by side.

Staci Yeah, just like — not *alone* — it's like with somebody else.

Alison But then what's the 'labour'?... You're doing work —

Staci You're doing work!

Alison — *beside* somebody else —

Staci You're *with* somebody —

Alison Yeah —

Staci So it fits into the —

In class philosophy when the students were working in pairs, their instructions were that they each had to generate their own lists of instances although they could help each other. Thus, in order for each person to have three different instances on his/her list, as a pair they could work together and think up six. If they chose to work that way, Staci would say that they were 'cooperating' because they were 'helping each other' with their lists. If they chose instead each to work on his or her *own* list while sitting side by side, according to Staci this would count as 'collaboration' because they would be *working* — *with* each other. By producing this example, Staci intuitively had us exploring the term 'with' in our emerging theory of collaboration as 'working *with* other people'.

Whoopy, however, was not entirely happy with this. She sensed that something was wrong with this picture and, in what appeared to be a mix-up of the two terms, Whoopy nevertheless held her ground with Staci who was dying for her own interpretation to hold.

Whoopy Actually — I kind of disagree with >>> Staci? Well — cuz — 'cooperative' — Just because you're sitting beside someone — and — just because you have a partner —

Staci No, that's 'collaborative' —

Whoopy . . . Yeah, but I'm —

Staci You said 'cooperative'.

Whoopy *I know!*

Allison Okay, let her finish —

Whoopy Well — just because >>> like coop- >>> like cooperative (*giggles*) — just because like — The only way you could be cooperative is — when you're helping someone else — so if you're — If you have two lists and everything and you're like — just because you're like — with someone else and with a partner, if you're not talking to the partner in — furniture stuff, then — it's not cooperative.

Staci No but I was talking — That's what I said for 'collaborative' —

Whoopy It's not collaborative either. [*Staci laughs.*]

Staci Huh! [*She laughs.*] You're like — We're like an old couple or something.

In logic terms, Whoopy was saying that side-by-side is 'not sufficient' to count as either 'cooperative' or 'collaborative'. And when she said, "The only way you could be cooperative is — when you're helping someone else. . ." in logic terms she was suggesting that 'helping someone else' is an 'essential characteristic' of 'cooperation'. It would not be enough *just* to sit side-by-side. You would have to talk or *do* something and by extension the same would apply to 'collaboration'. Even though Staci may have thought she was catching Whoopy on mixing up the two terms, for Whoopy which term was which was irrelevant to the point she was making.

Example 3: Sesame Street ***Cooperation does not only mean helping***

Next, Staci thought more about Whoopy's point that 'cooperation' is helping somebody and just as Whoopy argued that side-by-side was not enough, so Staci argued that 'cooperation' is not *only* about helping. To think that through, she produced examples from the children's television program, *Sesame Street*.

Staci But >>> for 'cooperation', I don't think it's only helping them. You can be helping them but — It's like — Cuz you know on *Sesame Street*. I don't watch it anymore. But you know they're always — saying these little >>> skits or something about cooperation — and — they say it's like

>>> they're doing — Like say >>> you have >>> this younger sister — and you want to play with >>> this little toy house or something — and >>> you go, "No I want it!" — "No I want it!" — "No I want it!" — Then, if you both >>> share it — together — then that's 'cooperation'.

This is an example of a "retroactive television" reference whereby we explored ideas using examples from television. What makes it retroactive is that the thoughts we express when using these examples are here-and-now thoughts and not ideas that occurred to us while we were watching the show we refer to. It is an example of putting our television experience to use (just as we would any other life experience) as we work to make sense of the world.

Staci's reach for a *Sesame Street* example is a variation on the model case conceptual analysis technique. She thought of an example of *teaching* 'cooperation' to young children as if to say, if *this* isn't 'cooperation', then what is? Then, thinking on her feet, first she described what she considered to be a typical instance and then, interpreting her own example, she produced a new element ('sharing') for our theory. This fit with the theory she was working on that 'cooperation' is not *only* helping since it is possible to 'share' without 'helping'. In logic terms, by producing an example to show that 'helping' was neither necessary nor sufficient, Staci was challenging the point Whoopy made that 'helping' was a "necessary" characteristic of 'cooperation'.

Moving on, Whoopy seemed to think that there had to be an *instrumental* dimension to 'cooperation' and 'collaboration' — that it did not really count unless it was *to do* something.

Whoopy	... in doing <i>what</i> ?
Alison	That's cooperation but it's not helping someone.
Whoopy	Yeah, but what are you <i>doing</i> ?
Alison	It's being nice — or something.
Staci	That's what I said [<i>she looks at the map</i>] : 'cooperation' does not mean helping.
Alison	It doesn't <i>have</i> to mean 'helping' but it <i>could</i> mean helping, couldn't it?
Whoopy	Yeah, but —
Staci	Yeah because >>> 'cooperation' means — like —

When Whoopy challenged Staci's interpretation of 'cooperation' as *not* helping, her challenge was based on a need for more information. It was as if she was saying that in order to interpret an action, we need to know its purpose. The verb 'helping' was missing its object.

Example 4: Operation (medical)

Cooperation is working together to make [the operation] go well

While I [Alison] mulled over Staci's *Sesame Street* example, Whoopy still sensed its inadequacy. Staci, meanwhile, kept up her search for an even better example and she soon produced another one. This time she used the linguistic analysis technique of looking at the word 'cooperation' in the same way as we had for 'co-labor-ation'.

Staci Okay. Okay. I have a good example — It's like — in the word. "Co-" / "operation". Operation is like — when you're doing like — . . . Okay. Okay. There are these doctors, okay? And they have to do this operation. — And — they're all working together to make the operation go well. — If there is one doctor that says, "Okay, well he has appendicitis. I'm going to remove his appendix." — And then >>> the other doctor says, "Oh, well he has >>> appendicitis. I'm going to remove his brain." — or something like that, you know? They have to work together in removing the —

Whoopy Heh, heh. Poor guy —

Staci — appendix.

In conceptual analysis terms, Staci just produced an invented case, gave it a social context, and considered its practical results. By inventing the case she was able to build in the cooperation criterion of "all working together to make the operation go well". By putting it in the social context of a medical operation, she made it a case that mattered. Then she imagined what it would be like if the doctors *did not* cooperate. The practical result she imagined was clearly unacceptable: a patient whose brain is removed instead of his appendix. As Whoopy said, "Poor guy". If this wasn't a case for 'cooperation', what would be? Also worth noting here is the possibility that Whoopy's "for *what?*" insistence had an influence on Staci's new example which now had a purpose to it.

Next, I [Alison] was inspired by Staci's example and as I worked with her on it, trying to connect cooperation and collaboration, I transformed it into what I thought, at first, was an even better one.

Allison Ooh. I've got a good one. I've got a good one I think. [*To Whoopy who had looked frustrated at not having her turn earlier.*] But did you have something that you wanted to say that —?

Whoopy No, no, it's okay.

Allison Okay. Oooh. I want — this is a *good* example. >>> *Some* of the people — around — the patient — in that operating room — are — 'cooperating' — No. *Everybody's* cooperating, but only some of them are 'collaborating'.

. . . The people who are 'cooperating' might be — the — people who are not actually —

Staci — doing —

Allison — doctors?

Staci Yeah, they are handing the —

Allison Yeah. — And I — I don't want to get sexist about this and say it's only nurses or whatever but there might be technicians — like there could be somebody who's >>> monitoring the >>> equipment to make sure that it doesn't go off by mistake or something like that >>> [Staci: Yeah.] There might be somebody else who's making sure that all the instruments are sterile? There might be somebody else who's making sure that the blood pressure is — All those people are co-op-e-r-a-t-i-n-g?

Staci Yeah.

Allison They're help-ing it to go well. —

What I [Alison] thought was promising about this example was that it might help us to separate out cooperation from collaboration if we could say that one was a subset of the other or that they overlapped at some point but differed in other respects. While I [Alison] was having misgivings about my own refinements as soon as I had proposed them, Staci was getting ready with yet another example. Although my interpretation wasn't useful in the way I had anticipated, what it *did* offer at this point was a refinement of "*making*" something go well to *helping* it go well, thereby incorporating Whoopy's earlier helping criterion. Now we could say, "cooperation is working together to *help* [the operation] go well".

Staci I have another one.

Allison But — only the doctors are — collaborating. I'm not sure if — if it's right. Because the —

Staci That's good —

Alison —operation wouldn't be a success unless all those people did their jobs too, would it? — I mean they *need* all those people. They're not there just —

Staci — like — for fun.

Alison Yeah. — So it might not — Maybe everybody's collaborating.

Back to square one, were we? Undaunted, Staci charged on with her new example which was a variation on the earlier (Operation: Medical) one.

Example 5: Operation (plan)
One is more helping than the other?

Staci Okay. Well I have another one? — Another >>> for 'operation'? — You know, like, say you're >>> making a plan to get revenge on some boys in the school or something? Your plan is called an 'operation' sometimes? [Alison: Heh, yes.] And you need everybody in the gang to help you make the plan.

Alison . . . So that's [with Staci] both cooperation and collaboration.

Whoopy Yeah, you're helping — but —

Alison — collaborative —

Staci I think collaboration is more helping than cooperation is.

Whoopy Actually —

Staci Actually no I don't.

Using this negatively tinged example this time, we tried to look at whether it might be a question of degree whereby one was *more* something than the other. But we ended up on not very solid ground. In this segment Whoopy seemed to monitor the 'helping' criterion throughout while Staci was still intent on building a theory that would hold.

By this time it was about 3:45 p.m. almost time to give up for the day. Nevertheless we kept going on sheer momentum. From here we tried to map the two concepts using Venn diagrams and asking ourselves if you could do one without the other. We wondered if you could collaborate or cooperate with someone you despised (contrary case) and that led us into thinking about enemy 'collaborators'. We produced more examples from school (working together on school projects) and we drew a variety of diagrams on the research map. At one point Whoopy said, "It's so close! — It's *too* close". And yet we couldn't let go of it. We worked right up to the end of the session and by the end Staci thought she


had it when she said, "When you cooperate, you *have* to collaborate. But when you collaborate, you don't *have* to cooperate". Pleased with this progress, she asked if she could label it, "Staci's Theory" on the map.

Trying to make sure I understood what she was saying, I [Alison] tried to recapitulate what she had just said only I did it in the negative: "... you can't collaborate without cooperating, but you *could* cooperate without collaborating" to which Staci replied, "No! It's the other way around!". We kept going back and forth between the various possibilities, drawing and correcting our diagrams on the map each time. We were exhilarated by a sense of progress even though we were also thoroughly confused about what that progress was exactly.

S41: 'Invisible' Learning? (Map 14)

The next day, on Wednesday, May 26, 1993, we were six different co-researchers and, after going over final editing of the yearbook blurb, we took awhile to work out what to do next. We reviewed briefly what our research question was again and this time Tracy said, "What's CPI?". Whoopy said, "What we do in philosophy". I said, "And do we *learn* from what we do?" to which Whoopy replied, "Yeah". I continued, "And if we do, what *kinds* of stuff do we learn?" Meanwhile Whoopy and Tracy sorted out the maps we had made so far and checked their numbering. Then I asked, "What shall we discuss today?"

At first there were no responses. We agreed we should save the continuation of the 'collaborative' discussion for when Staci was there. Someone suggested that we discuss the ozone layer, a reference to something we had been doing in class philosophy. I said I really liked the 'Inquiry' discussion we had had in Session 27 and that maybe we could do another one about that and compare it to what we said the first time round. Or, I suggested, we could look at the big Map 1 and see if there is anything we should go back to.

Looking at the map I remarked that we hadn't done 'learning' for a long time and then, pointing to a bubble on the map that said learning without knowing  I said, "Could it be that when we're having philosophy discussions you could be learning without knowing it?" Someone said, "Let's ask that" and someone else asked if that would be the title. We agreed that it was a bit long and settled instead

on "Invisible Learning". That topic appealed to everyone and so, for the remainder of this session, we embarked on our last 'learning' discussion.

S42: Sorting out our Confusion (Maps 13 & 15)

This was our third consecutive meeting this week¹³⁹ and Staci was back so we decided to continue working on 'collaborative' as we had agreed at the end of Session 40. We had ended that session with a sense of accomplishment while at the same time feeling that we had confused ourselves with what we had just done. When we returned to our work on making distinctions between 'cooperation' and 'collaboration', using our research maps to record our progress and help us 'see' what we were trying to say, we tried to sort out our confusion.

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Since we had already decided to continue the discussion we had started on Tuesday, I had no written Sigma Plans. Of the co-researchers present only Daisy was new to these deliberations. We decided to work without a name recorder for this discussion and, as Staci suggested, only use it "if it gets out of hand".

"Cooperative ~ Collaborative?" (Map 13)

Mapping our Confusion

Since, as usual, we had already had class philosophy that day, and since many of us would be returning that evening to do a "Philo Demo" (a live class philosophy demonstration for parents), I suggested that if we found that our discussion "petered out" that we stop early. I should have known better. As it turned out this was one of our most intensive sessions in philosophical research terms. To recapitulate the work we had done so far in Session 40, Staci began by interpreting the diagrams we had done on Map 13 to help us work out the relationship between 'cooperation' and 'collaboration'.

¹³⁹ By this time, wanting to reach fifty research sessions, at my co-researchers' request we were working three times a week whenever possible.

Map as discussion record

Map 13: "Cooperative-Collaborative?"-1" is the research map we made at the end of Session 40 and it served as the point of departure for Session 42. A graphic record of a previous discussion, we used it to remind ourselves how far we had progressed and to help us decide where to go next.

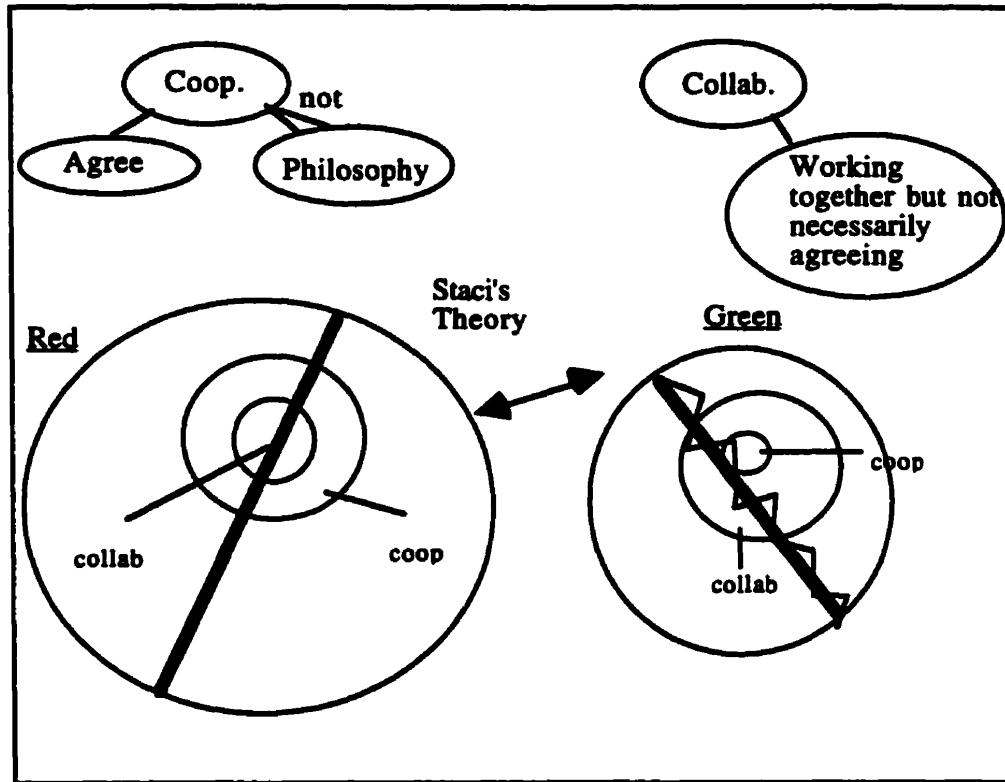


Figure 8. Map 13: "Cooperative-Collaborative" -1

This map was most meaningful for those who were present because of the process of its construction. For Daisy, who was not present for the discussions on which the map is based, it had its limitations since she was absent for the story it tells. For those who were present, it was an instrument for recall and reconstruction.

Map as research ownership document

Staci

Can I explain it 'cause it was my map? [Alison: Sure!] Okay.

Okay — What I wanted to do, is I wanted to explain, well I wanted to try and figure out — what was the difference between — cooperation and collaboration — and in the words CPI. Okay? So it's the C part.

And >>> I wanted to find out — what was the difference — well >>> if there was a difference — or if there *wasn't* a difference — and stuff like that.

So we started making a map — and — well, can I explain the map? [Alison: Hm-hm] [Staci gets up and moves to the concept map.]

Staci had now explicitly claimed ownership of this part of our DRG research. “Can I explain it 'cause it was *my* map?” she asked. “I wanted to find out . . . ” she said. But she also said, “So *we* started making a map . . . ” I [Sigma] can no longer legitimately call DRG *my* project any more than Staci can. These data provide an indication that it had become *ours*. The creation of research maps contributed to that process as was also indicated in the data for Session 38 when Staci spontaneously labeled her ‘solution’ “Staci’s Theory”. The maps were large documents which were visible to all and on which anyone who had an idea could write. As it happened, in the ‘cooperative~collaborative’ data sequences, Staci was very active producing examples and recording her ideas on research maps. Given these data, her claim that the map and the theory were hers is not without foundation.

Staci's recapitulation

Staci focused first on “Coop.”, the section of the map dealing with ‘cooperative’ which was where we had begun in Session 40. Then she turned her attention to the “Collab.”

Staci Here — okay. [She points to Figure 5.]

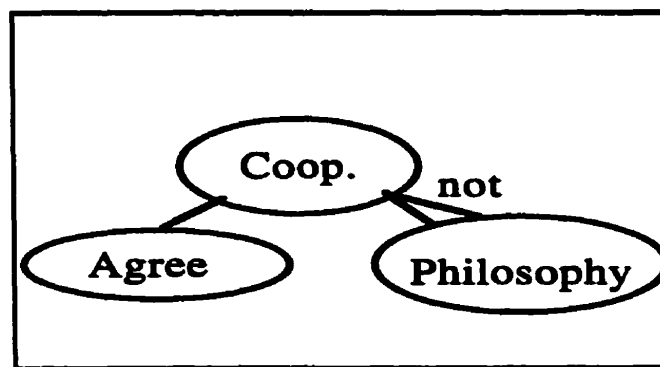


Figure 9. From Map 13: Staci interprets Figure 5.

In cooperation, I put — on the line I wrote “not” — is cooperation *not* philosophy or if you just go straight down,

is cooperation philosophy? But I don't think it is, so I put "not" here.

And, when you cooperate you agree —

[Pointing to Figure 7.]

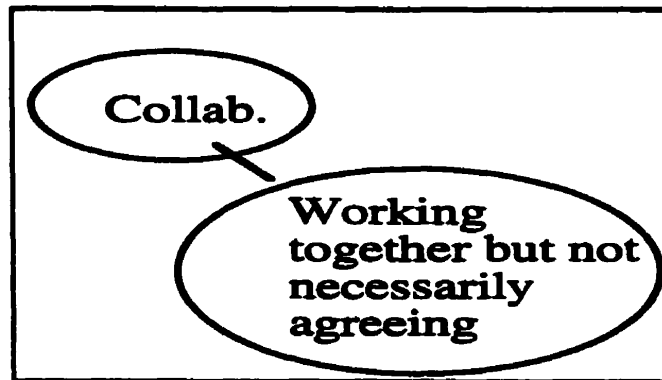


Figure 10. From Map 13: "*Working together but not necessarily agreeing.*"

And here — I put for collaboration — "*working together but not necessarily agreeing*".

These areas of the map are the graphic equivalent of the points Staci made then that in 'cooperation' you have to agree whereas in 'collaboration' you do not because it is understood that people come with *different* ideas and therefore may well *not* agree. It is for this reason that she stated at that time that "Cooperation isn't philosophy".¹⁴⁰

Map interpretation 1

When you collaborate you coop— . . .

Next Staci turned to the left part of the bottom half of the map which she had labeled "Staci's Theory". The circle on the left she had drawn in red and the one on the right in green.

Staci And — well — my theory — is that — you — When you collaborate — you coop? [Looks at Alison with a puzzled expression.] —

¹⁴⁰ See What does 'collaborative' mean? under S40: Exploring Examples — 'Collaborative' or 'Cooperative'? (Map 13) earlier in *Stories 6: Collaborating Cooperatively*.

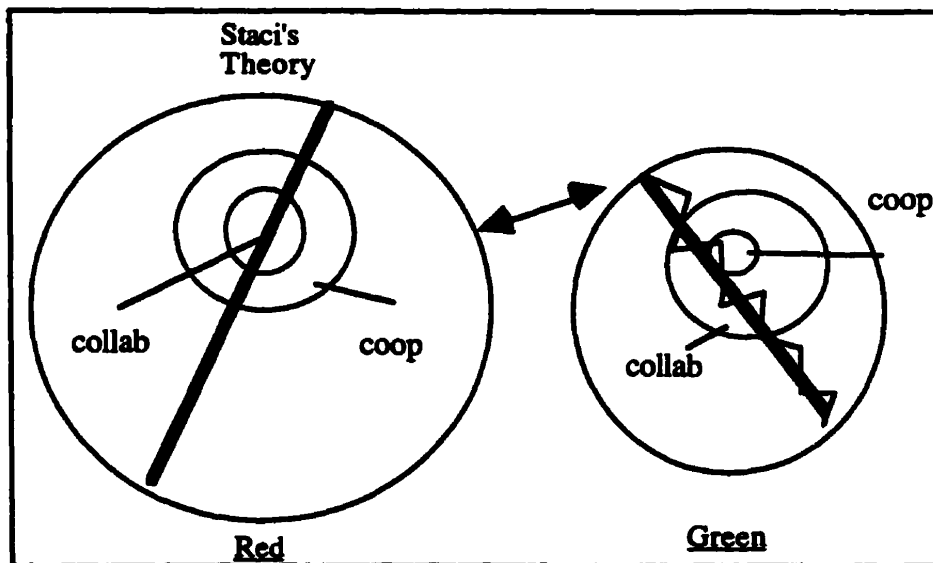


Figure 11. From Map 13: "Staci's Theory"

- Allison** We got mixed up at the end —
- Staci** Yeah. Okay.
- Allison** See if you can figure it out . . . Confusing, right Whoopy?
- Staci** When you collaborate — you coop- — No.
Wait! But then this one was the right one! . . .

Dealing with research map ambiguities. Our research maps were not only a record of our progress. Between the lines they also represented our confusion. At the end of Session 40, after several tries and cancellations which are reflected in the diagonal lines in both the red and green circles and the zig-zag line in the green circle, Staci had settled on the green one to express her idea that "when you collaborate you cooperate". However, when she tried to recapitulate her argument two days later, although she began with a sense of confidence, she became confused when she tried to explain the two diagrams again. My [Alison] response was just as confused and my comment to Whoopy was a reference to her observation in Session 40 that "It's so close! Too close". It felt as though we were back to square one again.

Map interpretation 2
All collaboration is cooperation
but not all cooperation is collaboration

Next, trying to help Staci out with this, I put my teacher hat on and as both [Alison] and [Judy] I offered an interpretation using a Venn diagram in which a circle 'A' (Collab.) entirely within a circle 'B' (Coop.) expresses the relation All A's are B's but not all B's are A's — hence All collaboration is cooperation but not all cooperation is collaboration.

Allison That >>> What the *green* one says — *All* collaboration is cooperation but *not* all cooperation is collaboration.

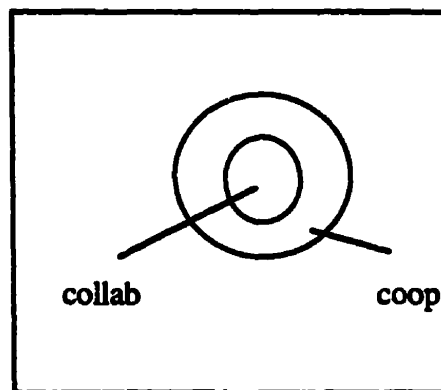


Figure 12. From Map 13: "What the green one says. . ."

Mapping to try an alternate interpretation. It seemed a straightforward matter to me at the time. Since I was not the math teacher for these students, I was not sure what exposure they had had to Venn diagrams and so here I just tried to *explain* the relation the way I understood it. We did have a slight exposure to it in our work with *Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery*, the Philosophy for Children novel-*qua*-text for this level when on p. 14 there are such diagrams to express the idea "All engineers are people who are good in math" but "Not all people who are good in math are engineers". Thus, using the same diagram, Staci and I were producing two entirely different interpretations. As the teacher, surely *I* know better? And it would be just a matter of getting Staci to see *my* interpretation. Right? Think again.

Map interpretation 3

In cooperation there is collaboration

Confident as can be, Staci immediately countered my interpretation by looking at the two parts of the map *in relation to each other*. And, since it was my policy when doing philosophy with children to *reverse* the assumption that teacher knows best and assume instead that the children are onto something that maybe *I* can't see, I followed with interest.

Staci [Pointing to one.] No because *in* cooperation there is collaboration.
[Pointing to the other.] But in *collaboration* there is *coop*—

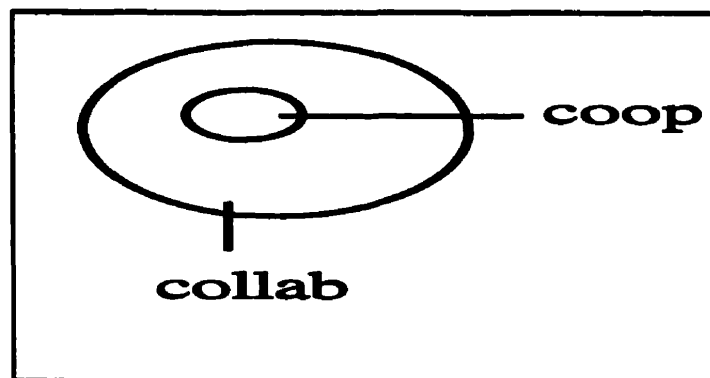


Figure 13. From Map 13: "No because *in* collaboration there is *coop*—"

Alison Yeah! So I was right *before*! You — you mixed me up.
Uhm — It means — It's not only *in* it — It means >>> the green — the green one — I don't know — Maybe I mixed — *myself* up. I don't want to say that I didn't — mix us both up —
Staci Okay wait, I need something to >>> change it because —

Mapping to justify an interpretation. By this time I was getting confused myself. It had not occurred to me that there could *be* an alternate explanation for the relation expressed in a Venn diagram and I was not thinking quickly enough to be able to see what was going on. Staci, meanwhile, quite unabashedly accused me of mixing her up in a tone which reflected the safety of our co-researcher relationship. I was no longer sure that the interpretation I had offered was 'right' and could see sense in what she was saying. So not only did I not deny mixing *her* up, I was also willing to allow that perhaps I had mixed myself up too. It was one of those moments teachers dread. But we were used to this. It is what happens when you

trust children's interpretations and in allowing for this possibility as a teacher you model for them what it is to allow that others' interpretations may be better than your own. Staci reacted not by saying, "I told you so" but rather by seeing something she needed to change on the diagram. That is, she too was allowing for the possibility that her interpretation may not be *entirely* 'right' and that there may be a way to make it better.

Map interpretation 4

In = all?

Still in teacher mode, I was not convinced that Staci was taking on board the interpretation that I had offered. Rather she seemed to be more intent on making the map representation of her theory hold and was making adjustments in it as I spoke. I pressed on — willing to consider her alternate interpretation but only if she did the same for the one I had put forward. Only then would we be collaborating in this effort I thought.

Allison But the diagram — what the diagram says — [*Staci scratches out the bidirectional arrow and the labels "Red" and "Green" on the map.*]

Since the whole circle of coop- — collaboration — are you following me? [Staci: Uh-hmm] — On the *green* one? — [Staci: Yeah]

Since the whole circle is inside 'cooperation' it means that >>> what that *diagram* is saying — is that All collaboration — you couldn't *collaborate* without cooperating. But you [Staci: No it's this.] *could* cooperate without collaborating. That's what the green one says.

Staci No. That's what the *red* one says.

Because look — okay. There's this circle. Okay, say >>> this is me and >>> Pixie or someone — And we're cooperating. — But while we *cooperate*, we're *collaborating*. So that's like inside, it's like a smaller thing than — cooperation. We're coop- No.

We're — Yeah, we're cooperating more than we're collaborating. But here — yeah!

Allison That means — that in the "more" part — that it's possible to cooperate without collaborating. — But because the collaboration is completely inside the cooperation circle, [Staci: Uh-hmm] it means that all the time you are collaborating, you are also cooperating.

Staci Yeah, that's this one. Because all the time you are collaborating, you're cooperating. . . . This is very confusing.

Allison No — that one says — No! Because — it's only the part in the circle [Alison gets up and moves to the map.]
Jaguar This is like a debate now — heh.

Mapping to sort out contesting interpretations. In a teacherly voice I [Alison/Judy] had said, “what the *diagram* says”, as if ‘the diagram’ were some ultimate authority, as if ‘the diagram’ could say anything, as if ‘the diagram’ could say *only one* thing. Because I [Alison/Judy] had confidence in Staci’s diagram interpretation ability, I [Alison] was beginning to have *my* doubts about this. I was beginning to see the importance not of the *diagram* but of its *interpretation*.

When Staci tried again she used a fictitious character [Pixie] and invented an example to help make her interpretation more intelligible. Staci was holding her ground, however, and that I saw that as a problem. Knowing her as I [Judy] did, I knew that it was often very important for her to be right, to prevail in an exchange such as this and I [Alison] was concerned that she might be bending her theory accordingly. At the same time I [Alison/Judy] was also holding *my* ground arguing only for what I took to be a standard Venn diagram interpretation. It was now becoming even more important that the conflicting theories stand or fall on their own merits (if that makes sense) and that we each pay more attention to the theories of the other.

To Jaguar who was listening to all this, it seemed like a debate in which there are clearly two different sides and neither gives in to the other but rather tries to score more points by presenting their own argument better and better in an effort to ‘win’ or at least to convince the other. If he was right, then in important respects we were no longer collaborating (although arguably we *were* cooperating, if only just barely)?

Different interpretations of the same map?

When I continued my interpretation up at the map now, Staci followed my line of argument closely.

Allison All this stuff in here [Alison points [mistakenly?] to the previously cancelled area [1] outside the collaboration circle.] — [Staci: Uh-huh] — is cooperation. [Staci: Yeah.]

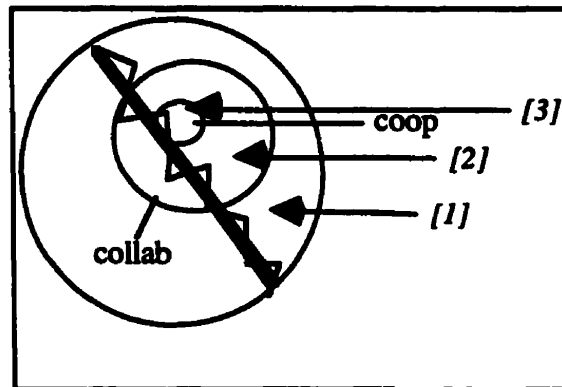


Figure 14. From Map 13: Alison interprets the red circle.

Allison Out here [2] — (This circle [3 coop] is inside this circle [2 collab]) [Staci: Yeah]— Out here [2] is collaboration but not cooperation. — Because if you're doing — whatever you're doing here [2] — you would be collaborating but not cooperating because otherwise you would be in here [1].

Allison And this one's [Pointing to the green circle] the opposite.

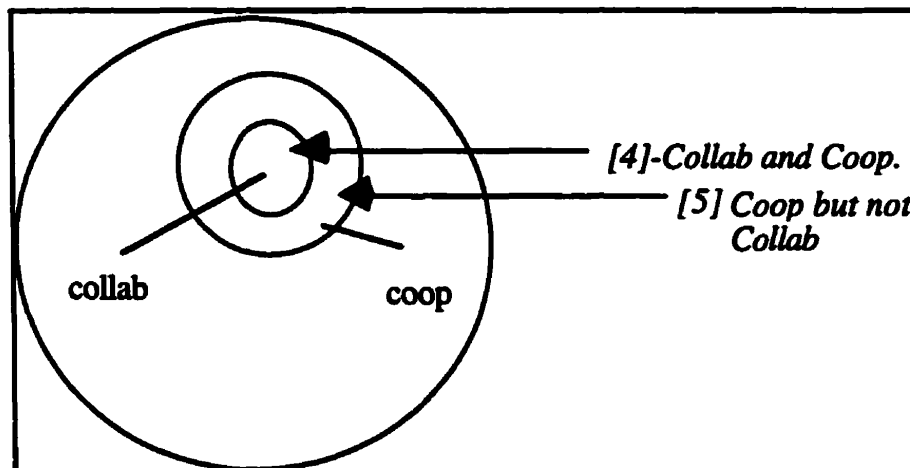


Figure 15. From Map 13: Alison interprets the green circle.

This one is — if you're doing an activity here [4 *collab*] — (we need examples that would help us sort this out) — then you would be collaborating *and* co-operating.

But if you're — if you're doing something *here* [5 *coop*] — you would be cooperating *but not* collaborating.

Staci

Oh! Because what I meant is like >>> this here [*Her back is to the camera obscuring the map.*] — is like one - big - circle — okay? [*When she moves aside she has drawn a red squiggly line inside the cooperation circle [5].*]

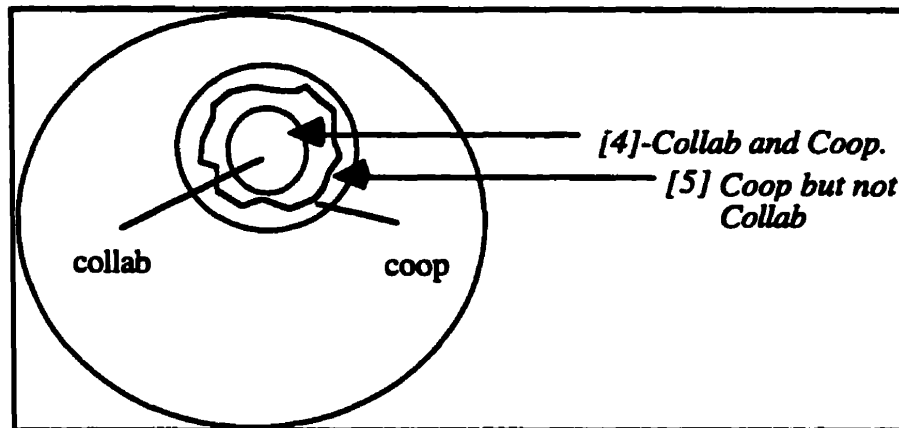


Figure 16. From Map 13: Staci draws a red squiggly line.

And in the middle of this circle — you have — cooperation — uh collaboration. [Alison: Uh huh.] So I see it from a different point of view than you do.

Alison

Yeah, well that — I'm just trying to interpret the diagram and whether the diagram could say *both* things. This could be a major finding — we've got here.

Far from giving up, we each tried to wrestle these differing interpretations to the ground by zeroing in on the red and green circles and trying to explain them to ourselves and to each other — again. After these run-throughs, my interpretation still made sense to me and Staci's interpretation still made sense to her too. Trying to come to terms with the apparent differences in interpretation, and still making reference to the 'diagram' as if it were an authority, I adjusted my earlier view when I wondered whether it made sense for the diagram to provide the basis for two quite different (mutually exclusive?) interpretations at the same time.

What is important here (in terms of this conceptual work as a way to do research) is not who or which interpretation was the 'right' one but rather the intensity of interest and determination we both demonstrated as we tried, together,

to find a way to 'get it right'. Staci settled for a kind of 'we agree to disagree' resolution while for me the jury was still out on this one.

"Staci's Formula"
Green — (Coop>Collab)
Red — (Coop<Collab)

Next, without skipping a beat and this time using mathematical symbols for 'greater than' and 'less than', Staci produced a "formula" to explain the interpretation that *she* was advancing. She labeled it "Staci's Formula" as she wrote it on the map.

Staci Uh hmm. — Okay — What — what — This is my >>> sort of formula — okay? >>> Here it's — [*Staci works at adding more labels to the map.*]

She went to the map and without explaining what she was doing she added more labels to the map. While she was doing that, Whoopy noted that we hadn't set the beeper for the change of camera operator shift and Daisy said that there were about four more minutes. When Staci was ready she turned around and said, "See? Here." And when we were ready to watch, she explained her formula.

Staci The *green* is this:

Green
coop > collab

While Staci was still busy, Whoopy was looking something up in the dictionary and I asked if anybody else wanted to say anything. Mariah said, "Not yet" and Staci continued adding labels to the map.

Staci's
Formula

Green
coop > collab
Red
coop < collat

Staci Okay. Does everybody see my formula that I made?

Alison Would you like to explain it?

Staci Okay. In the green circle, >>> the cooperation is greater than >>> collaboration.

And in the red circle, the cooperation is *less* than collaboration.

Do you get it?

Staci has found a way to express what both the green and the red circles represent using a simple mathematical 'formula'. She was proud of her accomplishment and stood at the map ready to defend it.

Challenging Staci's formula

As soon as Staci asked if we got her formula there was a little pause and then I said that I still wanted to ask some questions. Without hesitation, Staci said, "Okay".

Alison . . . *Even if* . . . heh, heh, heh, heh . . . cooperation is greater than collaboration, does it still mean — that — according to that theory — when you're collaborating, you *have* to be cooperating?

Staci No! That's the thing I said No to — the other day — remember?
[Alison: Uh-hmm]

I said>>> it's like the opposite. When >>> you're cooperating, you *are* collaborating, but when you're — collaborating — you don't *have* to be — See look, you don't have to be — cooperating.

Alison Okay. What if —

Take — just the green one 'cause it works >>> they're opposite of each other — right? [Staci: Yeah.] . . . Uhm — Show me somebody who's collaborating. >>> Which circle are they operating within when they are collaborating?

Staci Well okay no. — This is like one — like two people — that are — having a discussion. So that they're collaborating into the discussion. And then — say >>> I don't know — at one point in the discussion, they start — [*She is puzzled again.*] Wait —

At this point Daisy interrupted to say that there was one more minute left in her camera operator shift and Whoopy, who was still looking for something in the dictionary asked, "How come 'collaboration' is not in the dictionary?" When I

replied that “‘collaboration’ might not be but ‘collaborate’ might be” she continued looking.

Staci Okay so here — You’re having this >>> I don’t know, disagreement with your parents. But *then* you start to agree. — But even — before you started to agree on it — you were — *collaborating* — because you were sort of — like — doing something together.

So — here — [*She points to the red circle.*] — Wait. Hold on.

Okay. So in the middle — at the end — you end up — cooperating with your Mom or Dad [*She colours in the ‘coop’ circle on the red circle.*] But — the whole time you’ve been doing this [*She points to the collab circle in the center.*] — so it should be actually *this* one [*Pointing to the green circle.*].

Alison [*Laughs.*]

Staci I guess it could be both ways. I’m getting really mixed up.

Concerned that she might give up at this point, and seeing this as one of those moments of confusion that are a feature of what it is to do philosophy, I said, “Well — no because then we’re just throwing our hands up and giving up >>> when the — going gets rough. — And we need to hang on for dear life and go for the ride!” So Staci tried again.

Staci So shall I try — and figure it out? [*Alison: Uh-hmm!*]

Okay. [*Alison: chuckles*] What I was just explaining *then* was this — because — you’re collaborating — but *then* you cooperate. —

So I was wrong about this [the red circle] being wrong. — So, I can go like *this* — [*She crosses out the large circle.*]

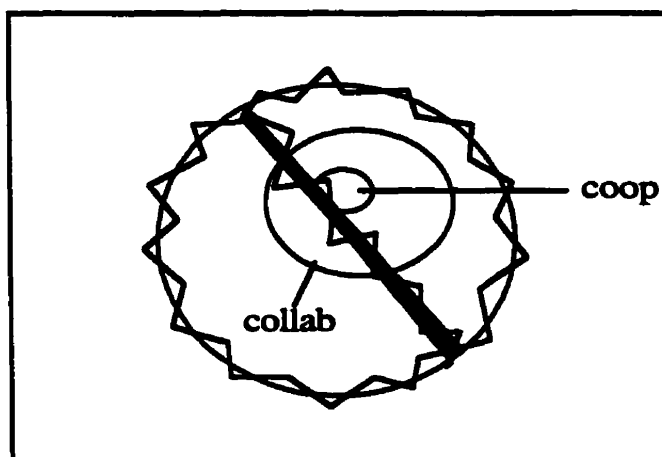


Figure 17. From Map 13: Staci crosses out the large circle.

Allison Yeah but you're — the more you do that the less we're going to understand what it was about.
Staci Well, can I make a good copy someday?
Allison You can do it right now — on a piece of paper if you like >>> you want a clean piece of paper?
Staci Where's my bear?

Laughing, Whoopy helped her try to find Cotton Candy just at the same time that the beeper went off signifying the end of Daisy's camera operator shift and the end of this part of the session.

Although we may seem to have been just as confused at the end of this segment as we were at the beginning, worth noting is the complexity of the exploration and the persistence with which we tried to resolve our confusion. Also, although it was primarily a dialogue between Staci and me [Alison], the others were participating with interest each in a different way. All were listening and observing, Daisy was operating the camera and Whoopy was looking to the dictionary for help.

“Cooperation + Collaboration” (Map 15) *A Research Discussion*

When we were ready to resume after changing camera operators, we started a new map, Map 15: “Cooperation + Collaboration” and began a research discussion involving everyone this time. Now that she was no longer camera operator, Daisy became more involved in expressing her ideas. Whoopy spent most of the time studying what the dictionary had to say and also some other material I had given her to look at. Although she did not ever cite any of this material directly, it was evident that she used it in formulating her own ideas when she did contribute to the discussion near the end. Staci and I maintained our active interest in wrestling with the fine distinction-making involved in sorting out the difference between ‘cooperation’ and ‘collaboration’. And Mariah and Jaguar shared cartographer duties.

Discussion overview. In this research discussion we approached the concepts of ‘cooperation’ and ‘collaboration’ from a variety of perspectives and we frequently got caught up in and by our own distinction-making. The headings I

used for the different dialogue segments when I chunked the transcript for this part of Session 42 provide a glimpse of the twists and turns we took.

- Cooperation is helping somebody; collaboration is talking with somebody
- Cooperating is having an understanding with someone — agreeing
- Cooperation is harder than collaboration
- Collaboration with the enemy
- Collaboration is participation
- Collaborating among friends
- Collaborating without knowing?
- Always collaborating (if collaboration is participation)?
- Have to collaborate to find out secrets?
- Try to collaborate but it doesn't work?
- Collaborating *because* talking?
- Have to be working together to collaborate?
- Can collaborating backfire?
- Collaborating (or cooperating) in silence? (*e.g.* writing)
- *Have* to work to collaborate?
- Cooperating/Collaborating at the same time?
- Cooperating/Collaborating with yourself? (cf. Cotton Candy)
- List of instances to see which are cooperation and which collaboration
- Rap as collaboration
- Collaboration and workers
- Collaborating (with yourself) when asleep
- Student / Teacher collaboration?
- Were we collaborating?

The discussion to this point was complex, confusing and sometimes also circular as we kept coming back to how similar these two concepts were while at the same time having important differences. Nevertheless it sustained everyone's interest throughout. Indeed the momentum accelerated as we neared the end of the session so much so that we did have to reach for a name recorder sheet to ensure that all who wanted to could have a say.

Were We collaborating?

In the last eight minutes of Session 42, I brought up one last example which we used to test the concept of 'collaboration' we were working on.

Allison A perfect one. — Mariah and Jaguar doing the map. [Voice: Yeah.] . . . Were they colla — cooperating? — or collaborating? — or — neither or both?

Cooperating (both writing the map). Mariah said "Neither" but Jaguar had a different view. ">>> No — that *is* 'cooperating', he said, "— because we're writing *together*. >>>". Then, after some dialogue with me he added a twist when said, "We're >>> *cooperating*. — Because we're both *writing* the map."

Not collaborating (because not working together)?

When Mariah and Jaguar were working on the map, they actually took turns. First one did it and then the other took over. They were, however, working on the same map.

Mariah Yeah but we're not *collaborating* because we're not — really working *together*.

Jaguar Yeah like we're not — telling each other, "Well you should write this" — because >>> cooperating is — that — idea.

Both working on one product?

Allison Now >>> how 'bout the fact though that you're both — working on — one — product? — That — at the end, we would say the cartographers were >>> Jaguar and Mariah? But we would say — they both did it — but they didn't collaborate when they were doing it — because they did it separately.

Jaguar No. They *cooperated*.

Not cooperating - not working together or agreeing?

Staci They — wait!

Whoopy They actually didn't cooperate either —

Staci Can I please say something?

Whoopy — cuz usually when you cooperate, you're working together.

Staci Yeah that's what I was going to say and you have to agree and — they might not be *agreeing*. — cuz >>> they both have diff-

Mariah — But —
Staci -erent ideas and they're — they might have differ—
Jaguar Yeah! That's what I *said*.
Staci No you said you wouldn't —
Mariah But Staci —
Whoopy Exactly — so they wouldn't be >>>
Mariah But Staci —
Staci I thought you said you *were* cooperating.

Cooperating but not collaborating
 (not telling each other things to write)?

Jaguar We are *cooperating* — But >>> we're *not* collaborating! —
 because! — because we're not — we're not like — telling
 — well — uhm — well — let's just say any word — well an
 apple is this —
Staci But you can't cooperate unless you collaborate.

Time out — mapping. At this point Daisy said, "Time out" and, referring to Jaguar's use of yellow on the map, she said, "It's too light. I object to this. I [Alison] agreed saying, "Yes. Absolutely". Then there was some confusion about who should speak next. Mariah wanted to answer Staci but Staci kept saying "Wait—" and Whoopy told Staci to put her name on the list because otherwise it was really confusing. We then established that it was Mariah's turn.

Cooperation and collaboration are not the same thing?

Mariah >>> but — I thought Staci >>> said that — cooperation and collaborating aren't the same thing. — Because you said cooperating — collaborating — was participation >>> Like *you said* >>> I thought you meant that — collaboration and cooperation >>> weren't the same thing.
Staci They're not.
Mariah So how come — you just said —
Allison Yeah I know —
Mariah It's confus- — like you just said — like you can't be — well —
Allison You can't do one without the — you just said —
Mariah Yeah —
Staci I kno- — I said — you can't cooperate unless you collaborate. And they're not collaborating so they can't be cooperating. — Because — how — wai- how do you know

that they are >>> cooperating >>> it's not like >>> Jaguar and Mariah's mind are — twins or something. So-

Jaguar *Exactly!*

Staci So you're *not* cooperating!

Are cooperating but not collaborating?

(taking turns)

Jaguar We're >>> cooperating but we're

Mariah We're not collaborating.

Jaguar — is the idea that you're saying.

Alison Why do you say 'cooperating'? Maybe *that'll* get us clearer.

Jaguar Coop — we *are* cooperating — because we're both *writing* >>> on the same *map!* We're both *doing it* — *together!*

Staci It doesn't matter.

Jaguar We're not >>> saying our *ideas* together. . . . We're — writing — a *map*.

Staci But —

Jaguar — like we're taking *turns*.

Cooperating is when you share the same idea?

Staci But that's not really cooperating. I think cooperating is when you share the same idea.

Alison Hey — that's a new one. We haven't had that one yet.

Jaguar Yeah — that's what I *said!* — It's when — like I say — "The apple — is —" and she goes, "Yes, that is right" and then we both write it in our — turn together.

>>>

Staci That's not what you're doing.

>>>

Jaguar Then we *are* cooperating. [*Alison chuckles.*]

Staci No, no look. Okay. Can I just say —

Jaguar We *are* cooperating

Staci You *aren't* cooperating because —

Time out. Worried that Staci was getting too much air time again and wanting her own turn, Whoopy said, "Hey—hey—hey! This is — This is supposed to be — Mariah's turn —". Daisy confirmed that was right and Staci said, "Well it's my turn next". Then I said, "It's dialogue".

Whoopy I know — I'm trying to get on the list also but she's talking and I can't get on —

Staci *Please!*

At this point I asked Daisy to read the list. Staci and Whoopy were next, she said.

Not cooperating unless both — ?

Staci Okay. So— what I was going to say is >>> Jaguar. — You — would not be — cooperating — with Mariah — unless — you were both saying, "Okay, well let's do this on the map" and she goes, "Okay, yeah, let's do that." — So —

Jaguar Exactly. That *is* cooperating.

Staci But that's n- — Yeah, but you're not *doing* that. . . . You're *not* — because you're — you're separated. She's doing the camera. You're doing that.

Cooperating because not collaborating?

Jaguar No. I know. What *you* said is *collaborating*. You *said* it's not cooperating. But *that* is collaborating. —

Staci I said, "You're not collaborating — "

Jaguar So we *are* cooperating.

Staci "— and you're not cooperating." Collaboration is when you're working together. You're not working together — now.

Jaguar Exactly. We're not doing that. So we're cooperating.

When you're not doing one thing you don't have to do the other?

Staci No! You don't hav- — If you're not doing one thing you don't *have* to do the other.

Jaguar [*And everyone else.*] *Silence.*

Staci Okay. No. [*Whoopy laughs.*] Do you get what I was saying?

Jaguar S-s-sort of —

Staci — Because — okay. — For you to be cooperating with Mariah, you would have to be — both on the map — writing on the map — and talking together — and having a dialogue — [*Beeper sounds three-minute warning to end of session.*]

Jaguar That's *collaborating*.

Staci That's *cooperating*.

Jaguar *Collaborating!*

Cooperation is an act of working together?

Alison Okay. Whoopy gets the *last* word.

Whoopy Okay. Cooperation — okay — is an act of working together. — People >>> as a team or something? — and agreeing together. — You guys never did talk about the map >>> I'm not trying to >>> put anything —

Jaguar Okay wait. What is that? What is that? What *word* is that?

Whoopy Cooperation! — And you're saying that you *did* that. — But — you — it's an act of working together. What are you doing together?

Mariah The map —

Whoopy Wait, wait — wait — [Jaguar: ???] — Yeah but — you're not working in the actual like — now — Mariah's on the camera. She's not working with you at this moment —

Mariah Yeah, but we *are* — cooperating because — because — because >>> because I was on

Staci That's cooperating. [Whoopy gestures to Staci that it's not her turn.]

Jaguar We're collaborating because — collaborating — is >>> we're together — right here >>> we're saying —

Whoopy No you're not!

Jaguar — apples — are — good —

Whoopy No you're not!

Jaguar — Yes! — They are good. — Now — I write it.

Staci That's *cooperating*!

Whoopy No, it isn't. It's cooperating. >>> If you're going to do that and —

You two — if you two were both there — writing — and you — You didn't *have* to necessarily be there but you have to be in the exact same time.

Jaguar Okay. You win.

Mariah Did you say we have to be in the exact same what?

Whoopy One moment — like time — like — cuz —

Staci? Now you're not doing either —

Whoopy Well they *were* both *there* but they weren't both *writing*

Mariah Yeah but sometimes —

Jaguar There was a time when [Staci], Mariah *and* I were —

Staci Staci! [She provides her pseudonym.]

No, but what I'm saying is — *now* — you're not doing *either*!

Working together at the same time?

Alison Well the question then becomes, Do you have to be doing something together — *at the same time* — or not.
Whoopy Exactly — you see — >>>
Staci Oh no! — Oh no!

Participation not a definition of collaboration?

Whoopy You see, remember when you said that participate is the exact same >>> Jaguar is participating in his writing — and so was Mariah. — But you see it can't — When you said that you had a definition? — It's not — because >>> well they're not either collaborating or cooperating. You're just participating.
Staci Scratch off 'participation'.

Don't think we didn't get anywhere.

We had come to the end of the session and after such an animated and intensive time I wanted to have a finishing word. Staci, meanwhile, was all set to keep going.

Staci Wait 'til next time!
Alison What — we did — I don't want you to go away thinking that — we just went round in circles and we didn't really get anywhere because —
Staci *We did!*
Mariah *We did!*
Staci We got a lot —
Alison — we got a lot of stuff — and — it's going >>> to happen that — the more we can stick at it — the more we're going to — you know — it's like building a house of cards — and it's all going to fall down — and we'll build it up again and we'll get a better house the second time because we'll know makes cards fall down.
Staci I think we're going to get somewhere at the end of this.
Alison I hope so! It's getting really good.
Staci It's so good!
Mariah Yeah.
Alison Okay, so. It's 'to be continued'? You like this topic.

S43: Boring Philosophy (Map 16)

The following Tuesday, June 1, 1993, we were six co-researchers and we were coming to the end quickly now. During Startup I mentioned "some of the things I'd like to think we would have done" by the time we reached the end. These included talking about our use of research pseudonyms, the pros and cons of using the name recorder and, at least once, I hoped, we would all write a research blurb together. At one point we talked a little about the "Philo Demo" evening the Grade Sixes had done for the parents and Whoopy said she thought it might have been boring because there was too much explanation and they were repeating themselves. That exchange led us into our discussion topic for this session which was, "Boring Philosophy". This turned into a review of the Philosophy for Children program as we used it in our philosophy classes. We ended the discussion a few minutes early and took care of some housekeeping matters before we stopped for today.

S44: What's the 'C' in CPI?

The next day one of my DRG wishes was granted. We all wrote research blurbs together.

Session 44 • Wednesday, June 2, 1993 • 6 Co-researchers

After a brief Startup during which we got to see the camera-ready version of the yearbook blurb we had worked on, we settled on the question, "What's the C?" Joey operated the camera and later Jaguar was the cartographer.

Research Blurb Writing

When I first expressed this DRG wish during Startup of Session 24, I explained it as a way to complement the research maps we had been making. By now, 20 sessions later, we had not done what I suggested which was to "pick one aspect — and *start* our DRG session with a one-minute, or two-minute. . .where we all do a blurb on one question". I had described how it would work this way:

Anyway, we could pick *one* question that we *all* did a blurb on — a *research* blurb — that would be *exploring* that question — only the *difference* would be — instead of trying to think as we're doing it and as we're *talking*, we could have a quiet time to actually follow our own ideas on paper and then put *those* in — to the discussion — and then see — what happens. So I'm hoping that that would be an idea that would appeal to you — at some point.

[VT/S24/1993.01.28Th/Verbatim Transcript]

We wrote for about twenty minutes and then took turns reading what we wrote. After some disagreement, we decided to each read our own with the exception of mine. Everyone took turns reading part of mine for me.

Mariah's blurb

Mariah had to struggle to write hers. In large writing she scrawled, "Well I don't really get what we're supposed to write cause I don't really get Staci's question". And after struggling for a page, she gave up, then tried again and then explained, "The only reason I'm not writing a lot is because I don't really get this subject and if I did I would have a lot more to write".

Staci's blurb

At first it seemed as if Staci was going to have a similar problem. However she managed to write about a page and a half and seemed to take pleasure in doing it.

What is the "C" in CPI?

by Staci

Hmm. . . . I think it means . . . Oh no! I've got a mental block, everything has left my mind. . . . or brain . . . or mind, oops, off the subject? I guess I got the mental block because we have the wrong title! It should be, "In philosophy, or out of it, what is the . . . " Oh let me just get started!

Ok. I think that cooperation is very different from collaboration. I also think that when you collaborate, you *can* cooperate, but when you are collaborating, oops, I mean cooperating, you *have* to be collaborating! Well, I think that's what I think!

Hold on! If you collaborate, you don't have to cooperate, right? You can disagree! But, if you are cooperating, you would have to be collaborating in the first place. Even if you were disagreeing, you would have to be collaborating, because collaborating means doing something together, doesn't it? I hope so, because this is hard work, or is it?

Hmm . . . right now, I am not collaborating with anyone but myself! Oh no! Can I be collaborating with myself? I don't think I can with myself, but I think I can with my brain. I think my brain and my physical *body* are two separate things . . . Well, if you can skip and think at the same time, then it might be possible. I think I am getting somewhere! I am (my physical body is) collaborating *and* cooperating with my brain right now, because I am saying the same thing on this paper that I am saying in my brain.

Hold on . . . Can I collaborate but not cooperate with my brain? My brain is thinking too fast. Overload. Well, the answer is yes! You know that voice in your head that bugs you (conscience?), you can get so frustrated! That is why the answer is yes! Sometimes your brain tells you to do something, but you choose to do something else? Is that like if you have a disease, and your brain tells part of your body to do something, but it doesn't? Well, I guess sort of except on the first one that I said you *can* control it, and on the second one you can't. Hmm . . . but also on the second one, I guess your physical body is not collaborating either, because it doesn't understand. But do you have to understand to collaborate? Hmm . . . I guess not in the case where you ignore your brain, but if you have a disease, then, you can't ever collaborate with your brain . . . but can they collaborate with their minds? Maybe so. I don't know a lot of answers to these strange questions but I hope to find some.

D/S44/93.06.02We/DRG/CoR/Staci /Blurb: What's the C in CPI?

Jaguar's blurb

Jaguar, who liked to take his time, wrote almost half a page and was interested in c-words: 'cooperate, collaborate, conceptual, conceited, complication. The last idea he wrote read, "C can also stand for made differentiation (a word Jaguar had invented while writing on a map one day) various ideas.

Alison's blurb

In my three-page blurb, not realizing what Jaguar was writing, I came up with another c-word — 'contributing' and wondered if CPI should stand for 'Contributive Philosophical Inquiry'.

Whoopy's blurb

In her blurb, Whoopy took quite a different view compared to Staci.

What is the "C" in CPI?

by Whoopy

I think the "C" can be both cooperation or collaborative. It just goes with the discussion that we have in classes. Both of them have something to do as a group (two or more people) but the other part of each means something else. Like, as an example: cooperation is working together and agreeing with each other; collaborative is working together and disagreeing and / or agreeing with each other or just a plain conversation. In collaboration you don't really help each other like in the same you help each other when we cooperate.

In philosophy we don't only do one or the other, we can do both but sometimes we might start up with a conversation with only cooperation and continue with collaboration because one conversation doesn't have to start and end with the same kind of conversation between them. Even in DRG we never start and end with the same thought about anything. Once we got in a conversation it is kind of funny when you think about it because even on the street if you were thinking of something and you met someone else and you started talking about it and they give you their opinion, your thoughts about the subject would never be the same because [you would] probably have more ideas or at least thoughts would be about the subject would for you amount. I better stop now because I don't know what [I] am talking about. Hey, this must be philosophy because it's confusing but my overall opinion is the two "C's" are not the same but we could still have both in a conversation.

D/S44/93.06.02We/DRG/CoR/Whoopy/Blurb: What's the C in CPI?

Staci's Conclusion

After we had all read our blurbs and discussed them a little, Staci announced that she had the answer for what the C should be.

Staci Okay >>> it's about — what's it about? — oh yeah — okay. — I think that you're right, that it *should* be 'collaboration' not 'cooperation' — because — you can't — *in* philosophy — we always collaborate, I think no matter what we're doing? — And — we don't always — >>> cooperate. — And — I think when we were doing the other discussions? — I don't think we were trying to find out what the 'C' was, I think we were trying to find out what the *difference* was.

Allison Okay.

Staci So I think that — it should still be >>> 'collaborative'.

Allison Okay. Neat.

What I found to be “neat” here was Staci’s distinction that we were not trying to find out what the *C* was but rather what the *difference* was (between cooperation and collaboration) because of how that might permit us to use both as in ‘Collaborating Cooperatively’.

S45-47: Finishing Up

In our last three sessions, we really did not advance the research beyond Staci’s ‘Conclusion’ the day before. In Session 45, our third session for that week, we were only four co-researchers because many were working on the haunted house they were running for the Spring Fair that evening. There was not much enthusiasm for any of the options we thought of so we spent a relaxed time together tying up loose ends. Another one of my DRG wishes did come true though. We did have a brief conversation about using research pseudonyms in this session. However, we did not make a map and I noted that not mapping “makes a difference”.

The next three DRG sessions were cancelled because the two Grade Sixes went on a ‘graduation’ field trip to Tadoussac to go whale watching. When we met again on June 15th for Session 46 we were five co-researchers and although I had a list of things to talk about, they were not in the mood and so we spent our time deciding how to celebrate our research accomplishments.

Two days later we had our last working session which, in a chorus of all nine voices present that day, we announced as “Last Session of DRG, June 17, 1993”. During this session we talked about what it had been like for them to be co-researchers on a project like this, I told them a little bit about what I had to do next with all our data, we finalized our plans for our celebration and we planned a reunion for the first year anniversary of the day we started DRG.

Stories

Epilogue

S48: Celebration

Session 48 • Friday, June 18, 1993 • 18 Co-researchers

Our final DRG session took the form of a lunch hour Pizza Party to celebrate the completion of the data production phase of the research. All eighteen co-researchers were in attendance and while we ate, we talked about our experiences as co-researchers. We did not record the session, preferring instead to reminisce informally and enjoy our well-deserved pizza lunch — after which we made plans to return in the fall for a DRG Reunion.

My co-researchers presented me with a miniature Cotton Candy — a little white bear wearing a graduation mortar board in a shiny pink bag marked, “Class of 93”. Attached to the bag were three colourful personalized pens which bore my three names: “Judy”, “Alison” and “Kyle”. In addition, they had written farewell notes of what it had been like for them to participate in DRG. And later, in a return thank you note, I provided my young co-researchers with final attendance statistics and a lapel pin bearing the McGill University crest.

Stories

Conclusion

These *Co-researching Stories* have been presented to demonstrate how seventeen children with philosophical experience engaged in research and used philosophical discussion as a way to research their own experience of philosophical discussion. The children worked as volunteer co-researchers with me [Judy], their class philosophy teacher, in an after-school setting. In keeping with confidentiality requirements, we all assumed research pseudonyms for this project such that I [Judy] appear in the *Stories* under the veil of co-researcher 'Alison'. In this version of the *Stories* I also appear as 'Sigma', the *adult* co-researcher with overall responsibility for this research. Stepping out from our Philosophy for Children home base, the research question we investigated was one I [Sigma] brought to my co-researchers as part of a methodological experiment to explore the possibilities of merging philosophical and qualitative research methodologies with children as co-researchers.

'Answering' the Co-research Question

These *Co-researching Stories* demonstrate how we researched the first part (only) of the question I [Judy/Sigma] brought to my co-researchers: *i.e.* "What is 'discussion for learning' . . .?" using both philosophical and qualitative research techniques. Mainly using our standard class philosophy discussion practices and inquiry moves, we are seen co-researching philosophical discussion in conceptual terms in relation to our mutual philosophical discussion experience, both of past and present class philosophy and in the Discussion Research Group. The *Stories* are written from my [Alison] perspective and I am seen most often engaged in philosophical discussion with some co-researchers, occasionally in experimenting or teaching a variety of research practices, and otherwise supervising research tasks done by other co-researchers.

The co-researchers are also seen using and adapting many qualitative and 'research from the margins' research practices. For example, we identify our 'conceptual baggage' by writing researcher profiles; we make IDEAS~INQUIRY co-decisions with regard to the content and process of the inquiry; we use and adapt interviewing techniques; we keep the equivalent of fieldnotes by keeping co-researcher notes; we explore our ideas on paper by writing memos or 'blurbs' — on and off-site; we make progress with our inquiry by making visual representations of our ideas in the form of concept maps; and we document our co-research process through the use of audio and video tape and data collection techniques.

Our use of philosophical discussion and the qualitative research techniques were both aimed at interpreting our experience of philosophical discussion in a continuous, progressive and self-corrective process with a view to producing a nuanced characterization of philosophical discussion as a contribution to both Philosophy for Children and other educational literature on the effective use of discussion. The recording of the philosophical discussions and the additional data produced using our adaptations of qualitative research techniques were engaged in to allow for further analysis and dissertation writing by Sigma.

*Philosophy for Children adaptation.*¹⁴¹ In these *Stories* we see overt reference to the personal life experience of the co-researchers — an aspect that is usually kept out of class philosophy discussion. For example, in our particular class philosophy experience this took the form of using fictitious characters. The rationale for this is that in a philosophical discussion we are interested in the *ideas* more than we are with *whose* ideas they are; and indeed it can happen that knowing the personal identities of the figures in an anecdote can be a distraction that prevents the philosophical work from being done. By contrast, qualitative research methodologies often *call for* researchers to provide relevant data regarding who they are to be doing this research as a way of providing readers with what they need to interpret the credibility of the research produced.

It should also be noted however that it *is* a central part of Philosophy for Children practice that participants draw from and reflect on their own personal life

¹⁴¹ For my account of how our research is also an adaptation of standard qualitative research practices, see 3.2 Characterizing this Research in Chapter 3. Methodology Matters.

experiences in a way that both advances the inquiry *and* renders it pertinent to their lives. Indeed, keeping the personal *out* of discussions in an overt way actually makes the personalization of the content of a discussion *more accessible* by providing a psychologically safe forum for the exploration of difficult issues. In these *Stories* we did both. We began the research by protecting our own identities by giving *ourselves* fictitious character names; we discussed the issue of confidentiality at regular intervals; and we took measures to protect the 'real' identities of the co-researchers. In our discussions and in actual instances throughout the *Stories* such as, the Philosophical 'Blossoming' interviews (S07, S08), the Cotton Candy 'communication with oneself' discussion (S10) and the Don't Talk Back! (S12) discussion, the co-researchers would often say that *because* we had given ourselves fictitious *co-researcher* pseudonyms, our 'real' identities remained masked and that as a result they felt free to discuss personal issues openly just as they might in a standard class philosophy session.¹⁴²

On this issue I would also note that the use of personal experience in these *Stories* was not aimed at *capturing* the personal experience aspect but rather at *drawing* on it for purposes of the inquiry itself. If we want to know how to characterize 'philosophical discussion', *one* of the ways and indeed a *good* way, is to ask those who have personal experience of it. The focus is on the characterization itself rather than on the personal experience — with the latter serving rather to add credibility to the resulting characterization. This drawing on life experience is consistent with Philosophy for Children practice and our use of it in a research context points towards a conception of philosophy as being not only 'pure' conceptual analysis and clarification. It points also to interpretation grounded in experience. That is, it points to doing philosophy as being also about the *use* of concepts to better understand, and direct, life experience.

'Answering' the co-research question. The *Co-researching Stories* emphasize the conceptual progress made through the identification and investigation of five conceptual elements involved in philosophical discussion (or 'discussion for learning'). They also demonstrate how by using a process of conceptual investigation, progress is made towards 'answers' to philosophical questions even

¹⁴² Without going into these issues in more detail here, I would add that these remain 'live' issues both with regard to Philosophy for Children practice and now also with regard to how necessary or even ethical it might be to *conceal* the identities of children who participate in research as *co-researchers*.

though the participants may not have built a consensus agreement on any one particular answer. This is quite typical of philosophical communities of inquiry. In an enterprise that remains ideologically open-ended and self-corrective, what is deemed important is not that participants come to an agreement on one definite answer to a question but rather that they maintain a commitment to the inquiry process itself. This was especially demonstrated in the *Stories* when, at the end of the series of sessions on making distinctions between 'cooperation' and 'collaboration', the co-researchers present did not give up. Nor did they consider their lack of a definitive answer to be a failure. On the contrary we were pleased with the progress that we had made and were eager to continue!

Answering the dissertation research question 'by demonstration'. Because these co-researchers were *children*, the question remains whether this was really a demonstration in answer to the dissertation research question (How do children who have experience doing philosophy use philosophical discussion *as a way of doing research?*). Was it perhaps rather a demonstration of children *trying* to do research? How well can they be judged to have succeeded and by what criteria?

As a preliminary response I submit that, in accordance with the Stenhouse description of 'research' as "systematic and sustained enquiry made public" which I adopted as a starting point in the Introduction,¹⁴³ the co-researchers *were* engaged in 'research' by virtue of the systematic and self-corrective progress we made with the co-research question I brought to them. Our inquiry was "made public" by its very communication within the Discussion Research Group and although the co-researchers did not produce a summative research report product (such as the book, the news conference or the documentary videos produced by the children in the three instances of children doing research summarized in the Introduction)¹⁴⁴ this need not mean that they *could* not have done so. The closest they came was to produce a report about the fact that we *did* this research for their *Stepping Out* yearbook. This was partly because of the time setting for the project and it was partly because of the co-decisions we made to keep inquiring. It was not an issue

143 See An Open and Systematic Approach under 1.6 'Answering' the Dissertation Research Question in Chapter 1. Introduction.

144 See 2.6 Instances of Children Doing Research in Chapter 2. Situating the Case Story.

for me at the time because my main [Sigma] interest was in documenting the *process* of using philosophical discussion as a way to do research with a view to our work being “made public” in the form of this dissertation (with, perhaps, other possibilities to follow).

In Part Three: Doing Philosophical Educative Research, as my [Sigma] contribution to a systematic and sustained inquiry among education researchers — especially those interested in ‘educative’ research and Philosophy for Children — I offer a more comprehensive response to *how* the children were using philosophical discussion as ‘a way to do research’. In Chapter 3. Methodology Matters, I describe and explain matters pertaining to our Discussion Research Group research practices. In Chapter 4. Surfacing Philosophical Inquiry Research Acts, I identify and make explicit (qualitative) ‘research acts’ in the (class philosophy) ‘inquiry moves’ (and *vice versa*) we made in the *Co-researching Stories*. In Chapter 5. Conceptual Investigations I recount how I made conceptual sense of our work *as* ‘co-researchers’. And in Chapter 6. ‘Tentative’ Conclusions I reflect on the achievements of this research, I make suggestions for further inquiry and I speculate on the wider implications of our interpretive case story and the contribution it can make to and beyond educational research.

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PART THREE
DOING PHILOSOPHICAL EDUCATIVE RESEARCH

Chapter 3

Methodology Matters

Choosing the method for a particular piece of research is a political process. Deciding how the research will be done and who or what will be studied entails making choices. These choices often incorporate assumptions which the researcher takes for granted, such as who is important to study, what context of research is identified, what data gathering method is best and who is most qualified to engage in research. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 41)

Having ‘answered’ the research question by *demonstrating* how children who are experienced in doing philosophy use philosophical discussion as a way of doing research, next I describe and comment on specific decisions and methods I used in designing and carrying out this research. In 3.1 Accounting for our Methodology, I describe and explain how I settled a dilemma when deciding how to report on a philosophical/qualitative research project. In 3.2 Characterizing this Research, I explain my characterization of this research as ‘an interpretive case story’; and I return to my decision to choose a qualitative approach to account for how our research fits that description with some adaptations. In 3.3 Obtaining Authorization, in keeping with qualitative methodological practice, I describe the steps that were taken in order to obtain authorization to conduct this research with young children in a public school. In 3.4 ‘Sigma’, I tell The ‘Sigma’ Story of how and why I came to use the term ‘Sigma’ to refer to my adult co-researcher role, I describe three initial decisions I [Sigma] made when planning this research; and I describe ‘Sigma Tensions’ I experienced while working with my co-researchers. In 3.5 ‘Sampling’, I explain my use of the term ‘sampling’ in relation to our co-research project. And in 3.6 Working with the Data, I describe and explain methods I used when working with the data.

3.1 Accounting for our Methodology

Two issues I faced when I set out to research my original idea that 'to do *philosophy* is to do *research*' was how to approach the project methodologically and how, *if at all*, to account for that methodology. Arising as it did out of practice, our research subject ("What is 'discussion for learning' and how do we learn from it?") was a philosophical question which had an empirical and social playground and our investigation would therefore have to draw on methodologies appropriate to the philosophical, empirical and social dimensions of the question.

On the basis of my own experience working on the IFS and MRG antecedent research projects (Kyle and Chervin 1993; Kyle and Portelli 1985), I had begun to question the appropriateness of quantitative research designs for philosophical research purposes and so I looked to the possibility of a qualitative research design for this study. However, having noticed that the *philosophical* dimensions of the qualitative studies I had read — although acknowledged — are rarely made visible,¹⁴⁵ I set out to do *philosophical* research using and adapting *qualitative* research methods such that *both* the qualitative and philosophical dimensions are integrated *and* explicit.

Once I had decided how to approach the project methodologically, whether and how to *account for* that methodology was what I had to decide next. Just as qualitative research features methodology and masks philosophy, so philosophical research does the reverse. David Bridges has noted, for example, that in reports on scientific and social scientific inquiry "we conventionally expect to find an account of and defense of the methodology employed" where we "know, or at least have a report of, the approach taken, the research questions which were posed and in some conventions . . . the relationship of the researcher to the research project" (Bridges 1996, p. 2). Philosophical research reports, however, are different. As Bridges also pointed out, "Some philosophical writing describes or represents a

¹⁴⁵ One notable exception is the book by Pamela Maykut and Richard Morehouse, *Beginning Qualitative Research: A Philosophic and Practical Guide* in which in "Part I, Building a Philosophic Foundation for Qualitative Research" the authors deal explicitly with the relationship between philosophy and qualitative research (Maykut and Morehouse 1994).

particular methodology — Socratic questioning, Cartesian doubting¹⁴⁶ or linguistic analysis, for example, — but a great deal more leaves it implicit or even invisible". And he went on to say that, "It is certainly not a standard requirement . . . that the author explains and defends his or her methodology" (p. 2).

To help me decide what to do, I took a closer look at what counts as 'methodology' in general terms, in philosophical terms, in qualitative research terms, and in relation to what we actually tried to do. In general terms, my dictionary defines 'methodology' as, "The principles, practices, etc. of orderly thought or procedure applied to a particular branch of learning and arrived at by systematic analysis and application of the techniques of logic" (Avis 1982, p. 853).

In philosophical terms, *A Dictionary of Philosophy* states that 'methodology' is itself a study: "Literally 'methodology' means 'study of method'; a method is not itself a methodology" (Lacey 1986, p. 215). And in the *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* 'methodology' is "The general study of method in particular fields of enquiry: science, history, mathematics, psychology, philosophy, ethics" (Blackburn 1994, p. 242). This dictionary also offered a political/historical account of how it used to be that, "The task of the philosopher of a discipline would then be to reveal the correct method and to unmask counterfeits". Dismissing this view as "a fantasy" Blackburn offered this instead: "The more modest task of 'methodology' is to investigate the methods that are actually adopted at various historical stages of investigation into different areas, with the aim not so much of criticizing but more of systematizing the presuppositions of a particular field at a particular time . . ." (Blackburn 1994, p. 242). Consistent with David Bridges' observation, no mention is made of any requirement for the philosopher to account for the methodology s/he uses to accomplish that task.

146 For example, Descartes' method had four rules: (1) "never to accept anything as true that I did not know evidently to be so . . ."; (2) "to divide each of the difficulties I was examining into as many parts as possible and as is required to solve them best"; (3) "to conduct my thoughts in an orderly fashion, commencing with the simplest and easiest to know objects, to rise gradually, as by degrees, to the knowledge of the most composite things, and even supposing an order among those things that do not naturally precede one another"; and (4) "everywhere to make enumerations so complete and reviews so general that I would be sure of having omitted nothing" (Descartes 1637/1993, p. 11).

And in social research terms, the foregoing is an account of 'methodology' that contrasts with the following definition from a practical guide to doing (qualitative) *social* research:

Methodology is the gathering of data and the making sense of it [sic] in an orderly way, as well as the study of methods. Methodology, theory and ideology are intertwined. How you go about doing your research is inextricably linked with how you see the world. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 63)

In our Discussion Research Group, as co-researchers we were involved in producing and gathering data in a particular *social* setting; and we engaged in *philosophical* practices of conceptual analysis and exploration as we "tried to make sense" of and with our data "in an orderly way" (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 63).

Although from a philosophical perspective it is "certainly not a standard requirement" to account for our methodology (Bridges 1996, p. 2), nevertheless I decided to account for our philosophical qualitative research methodology as a way of accounting for what we did and also to make explicit our use of 'philosophy in qualitative research' in a way which would be appropriate for other investigations whether in Philosophy for Children settings or elsewhere.

3.2 Characterizing this Research

Next I turn to how I came to characterize this research as a qualitative research 'interpretive case story' — both in general terms and in relation to specific characteristics of its design — paying particular attention to its philosophical dimensions.

'An Interpretive Case Story'

At first I was attracted to a qualitative approach for our research because it "gives the best data" (Gitlin, Siegel, and others 1989/1993, p. 205). Later however, recognizing the "political moment" of my social change purpose of "contributing to the emancipation of children", I came to see our research method(s) as following *from* that purpose.

In the same way that Shor (1980) argues that liberatory teaching cannot occur without the withering away of the traditional authority relationship between teacher and student, so too must the alienating relationship between researcher and researched wither if emancipatory aims are to be achieved. (Gitlin, Siegel, and others 1989/1993, p. 205).

My emancipatory purpose therefore *ruled out* an objective, positivistic approach and it *required* an adaptation of qualitative research methods in relation to that purpose.

To adapt a phrase from James Britton, in this 'interpretive case story' I tell a story which "is, in fact, an example of itself" — a story which '(re)presents' itself in a way which Britton suggests when speaking of visual images, drawings and maps.

In suggesting that a visual image . . . *represents* a face I know, or a kind of face I know; that the drawing *represented* something in the landscape, and that the map *represented* an area of the countryside; further, that we habitually create representations of one kind or another of the things we meet in the actual world in order to use them in making sense of fresh encounters — . . . The view or the theory is, in fact, an example of itself. (Britton 1970, pp. 12-13, author's italics.)

In characterizing our investigation as 'research' I refer to it as a 'co-research story', intending the *co-* to represent the collaboration among philosophically experienced children and their philosophy teacher, intending *research* to describe our purpose and practices, and intending *story* to reflect my use of narrative for this account. Further, I classify our research as an "interpretive case *story*" within the broader category of qualitative case *studies*.

A qualitative case study is an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon such as a program, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit.

. . . Irrespective of disciplinary orientation, case studies can also be described in terms of the end product — a descriptive narrative, an interpretive account, or an evaluation. (Merriam 1988/1990, p. xiv)

Because our research is an intensive, holistic description and analysis of the process of philosophical discussion (for learning) and has an end-product which is a descriptive, narrative and interpretive account, consistent with the above criteria, I place it within the broad non-positivist research category of a 'qualitative case study'. However, as a *philosophical* case study, it differs from other types of qualitative research and case studies (Merriam 1988/1990; Strauss 1987) — enough

to require its own sub-category of qualitative case study: *i.e.* an “interpretive case story”.

Why ‘interpretive’. I characterize our research as an *interpretive* case story to place it within the broad category of non-positivist qualitative research [QLR] , and to this I add the *philosophical* meaning-making [Ph] which was integral to our research practices in ways which differ from and are additional to the interpretive acts of qualitative research procedures.

As dissertation storyteller, I [Sigma] characterize our research as ‘interpretive’ rather than ‘analytic’ because our co-research story is about how we were involved in philosophical meaning-making interpretive acts during our data production/interpretation activities and because our approach to data ‘production’ and ‘interpretation’ differed from other approaches of data ‘collection’ and data ‘analysis’ as described, for example, by Bogdan and Biklen as follows:

Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others. Analysis involves working with data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesizing them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others. (Bogdan and Biklen 1992, p. 153)

Bogdan and Biklen have suggested that within the many different styles of qualitative research there are a variety of ways of handling and analyzing data and that it is useful to think of approaches to analysis falling into two modes: one is data analysis concurrent with data collection and the other is data analysis *after* data collection. Concurrent analysis is “more or less completed by the time the data are gathered”; but it is an approach that is “more commonly practiced by experienced fieldworkers” and “if you know what you are doing it is most efficient and effective”. With regard to data analysis *after* data collection, they pointed out that researchers can never follow this method “in its pure form” because “reflecting about what you are finding while in the field is part of every qualitative study” (Bogdan and Biklen 1992, p. 153-4).

Our data *interpretation* differs in that it is *not* useful to think of it as separable into “two modes” of analysis, one “concurrent” . . . and the other *after* data collection but *before* data analysis. Although analysis plays a role in our interpretation (as, for example, in our use of the philosophical techniques of

conceptual analysis) neither I nor my co-researchers “analyzed” our data as in other “styles” of qualitative research in which interpretation is seen sometimes as *part of* data analysis both in the field and after data collection (Bogdan and Biklen 1992, p. 153) — or sometimes as dependent on and therefore *following from* data analysis as when, for example, data are divided into small bits and assigned to conceptual categories which, when ‘saturated’ are *then* ‘constructed’ into theories by means of ‘interpretation’.¹⁴⁷

In our *Co-researching Stories*, we did not produce or collect data *before* “organizing them, breaking them into manageable units” and “synthesizing them”. Rather our data interpretation was an integral part of our data *production* process on site and on-the-fly such that it does not make sense to think of data production as separate from data interpretation. We engaged in philosophical interpretation of our ‘bits’ of data *as we produced them* and as we deemed appropriate. That interpretive activity is in the verbatim transcripts and my role as Sigma storyteller has been to select and present representative examples of the interactive interpretive activity of all the co-researchers. Interpretation in our case story is rather *embedded in the data* and this is in contrast to other studies in which data are produced primarily to support a *post-facto* Sigma interpretation of the co-researchers’ interpretation. To that end, my [Sigma] post-DRG data interpretation has consisted in identifying and presenting *co-researcher* acts of philosophical interpretation in their *verbatim* form.

In the preparation of this report, *after* our forty-eight co-researching sessions and *without* the participation of my co-researchers, for storytelling purposes, I [Sigma] engaged in further “handling” of our data, “searching for patterns” and deciding “what is important” enough “to tell others”. However, this is *not* to suggest that these were research activities which I could do and my co-researchers could not. Rather it was a practical limitation of our project having to do with the departure of my co-researchers at the end of the school year. And it *is* to suggest that how children co-researchers might participate in the concluding phases of philosophical qualitative research is a matter for further research.

¹⁴⁷ See for example Bogdan and Biklen 1992; Kirby and McKenna 1989; Maykut and Morehouse 1994; and Strauss 1987.

Why a 'case story'. Although I characterize our research as a "case" as in 'case history' or 'case study', it is neither of these in any straightforward sense since there are features of both that it does not have. Following distinctions between case studies and case histories made by Anselm Strauss (Strauss 1987, pp. 218–224), I call our research a 'case' because it is about a particular social unit (the eighteen co-researchers of "DRG") and it covers a particular temporal span (from October 1992 to June 1993). However it is *not* my purpose to present a study of DRG *as* either a social unit or *as* a history of that unit. Also, our co-research story is comprised of many stories told "with a focus on analytic abstractions for purposes of presenting theory" (p. 218) — and that, according to Strauss, is more like a case *study*. Only again, ours is not a case study either since the focus is not *only* on the theory for its own sake. Rather it is the 'story' of the 'case' of a Philosophy for Children teacher and her students who conducted research together for a year after school; and it tells stories of how we generated theory as we discussed how our philosophical way of working together is a way of learning, a way of knowing and a way of conducting research. Intertwining content and process (*i.e.* IDEAS-INQUIRY), I [Sigma] present our idea-building in all its complexity as a way of giving substance to the children's co-researching activity. And at the same time the demonstration story of the co-researchers working gives substance to the theories we were generating.

Qualitative / Interpretive Characteristics

... various brands of qualitative research, all share to some degree this goal of understanding the subjects from their own point of view. (Bogdan and Biklen 1992, p.34)

In social science research there is an assumption that "the subjects" are *people*. And even *with* the qualitative social science emphasis on the role of the researcher, the assumption is still that the researchers are *researching* people. If this is a *defining* characteristic of qualitative social research, then our project was something *else* for our "goal" was *not* to "understand the subjects" but to understand and describe the *process* of 'discussion' (for learning).

Our co-research story *is* social research (in that it is conducted by people with people and about something that people can do); but it is not *about* people in the same way as other social research studies. And the very idea that our research does differ from other genres of qualitative research in these respects is important

and warrants the call to be “self-conscious in regard to the [‘point of view’] theoretical and methodological issue” (Bogdan and Biklen 1992, p.35).

In our co-research story the role of the co-researchers as ‘subjects’ is ambiguous such that in some respects issues regarding the subjects’ own points of view do not apply. On the other hand, because all but one of the co-researchers were children, “their point[s] of view” are of interest and in the *Co-researching Stories* they are in evidence in the co-researchers’ own words. As ‘co-researchers,’ we were functioning as research *instruments*; and having and expressing points of view is part of the function of a qualitative research instrument *qua* instrument. The co-researchers’ points of view are therefore important because of how they contributed to the theory we were generating. However, we were *not* interested in *which person’s* points of view they were and as a result in *this* research, the co-researchers serve as representatives of what, under the right circumstances, other children and teachers could also do in the service of educational research.

The methodology for this study is qualitative by emergence and also by design. On the basis of transitions I was making while involved in one of the antecedent research projects (Chervin and Kyle 1993) and on the basis of my subsequent initiation to qualitative research methodologies (Bogdan and Biklen 1992; Burgess 1985; Hammersley and Atkinson 1983), I looked to qualitative methodologies for this research as an alternative for the positivist and quantitative frameworks which were dominant in Philosophy for Children research.¹⁴⁸ In what follows I make brief comments on our research design in relation to standard qualitative research characteristics making terminology adjustments as necessary the better to characterize our qualitative research as philosophical.

1. *Exploratory/descriptive*. Our co-research is both methodologically and conceptually ‘exploratory’ and it is ‘descriptive’ in the sense of the data being in words rather than numbers — although not in the sense of ethnographic ‘thick description’. We explored both the ‘what’ (discussion for learning) and the ‘how’ (using philosophical discussion) at the same time and our focus was on ideas and the process of idea generation rather than on specific people or places.

148 See 2.5 Philosophy for Children Research Context in Chapter 2. Situating the Case Story.

2. *Emergent design.* The design was 'emergent' in that we worked without a blueprint. It was part of my plan that research decisions be made as much as possible by the research participants. And it began as a general qualitative study which subsequently became a *philosophical* qualitative study.

3. *Purposive sample.* In our co-research story, 'sample' refers to people, discussions and ideas. With regard to the people involved in the study, we (eighteen co-researchers) were our own sample and it was 'purposive' in that by design it included children and a teacher who had concurrent experience (at least) of 'doing philosophy'. This sample was also 'emergent' in the sense that it was not fixed. It changed during the course of the study in ways which could not be anticipated. For instance, although no new members could join, the student co-researchers decided whether or not to participate on a session-by-session basis. With regard to discussions, 'sample' also refers to any discussions which were the 'object' of our study. Some of these were 'purposive' in that we conducted them specifically for research purposes. Other discussions from our class philosophy or other out-of-school experience were not purposive since they were not planned as part of the research and we reflected on them retroactively. And with regard to ideas, 'sample' refers to our process of conceptual "sampling" — a way we had of directing our inquiry which was analogous to the process of "theoretical sampling" as described by Anselm Strauss (1987, pp. 38-39).¹⁴⁹

4. *Data production.* We *produced* our own data during our discussions and other research activities in our DRG research sessions and therefore in this report I use the phrase "data production" (rather than 'data collection' or 'data gathering') to refer to this process.

5. *Natural setting.* Since we did not have a specific room for class philosophy, we did not have a 'natural setting' in a strict sense. However, the room we did use for our research was a half-classroom in our school so, although our setting was not 'natural' to our class philosophy deliberations, it *was* within our 'natural' school setting.

¹⁴⁹ For more on 'sampling' in our case story see 3.5 'Sampling' later in this chapter.

6. *Emphasis on 'researcher-as-instrument'.* The children in our study and I were research 'instruments' in that we *produced* data and engaged in *interpretation* of our own data. However, because they moved on to secondary school, the children were not available to contribute to the post 'fieldwork' phase and the writing of this report.

7. *Qualitative methods of data production.* Our methods of data production were in keeping with our qualitative design. We made research 'field' notes, we audio and/or video-taped our sessions in order to make verbatim transcripts, we conducted interviews and we generated documents to produce data and to follow up on issues arising out of our data.

8. *Early and on-going inductive data interpretation.* Because of the philosophical character of our inquiry, our early and on-going data interpretation was implicit in our research discussions and I refer to this work as data 'interpretation' (rather than data 'analysis'). We also documented our deliberations by making what we referred to as "research maps" and our mapping provided us with leads to further inquiry. Although I provided the initial topic ("Discussion for Learning?") and although I also proposed its more technical synonym ("Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry?"), the persistent presence of the question mark and the philosophical doubting disposition of the co-researchers meant that we treated these terms not as givens but as conceptual data interpretation tools.

9. *Case study approach to reporting research outcomes.* As the study of a 'case in point', I present our research as a series of narrative *Co-researching Stories* which, demonstrating itself, features the co-researchers at work. This report is therefore a 'case story' of a philosophy teacher and her students conducting philosophical educational research together.

10. *Concerned with process and meaning.* Our co-research story is about how we negotiated the meaning of the *process* of 'discussion for learning'. It is about how, by means of conceptual analysis and theoretical sampling we worked on whether and how to apply the terms 'discussion', 'collaborative', 'philosophical', 'inquiry' and 'learning' in relation to the particular kind of discussion we were researching. On one level we were concerned with just how we do discussion for learning, and with just how we learn from it. And on a meta level, our research was also about just how we conducted our research, just how

we produced our data, and just how we interpreted our ideas and our inquiry. This is consistent with the questions of "how people negotiate meaning" and "how certain terms and labels come to be applied" that Bogdan and Biklen used to explain the qualitative characteristic of emphasis on process (Bogdan and Biklen 1992, p. 31).

In our co-research story "meaning" was also an "essential concern" in a *philosophical* sense as we thought about 'discussion', 'learning', 'collaboration', 'philosophy' and 'inquiry' separately, in different combinations, from different angles. Using a spiral approach consistent with interpretive research whereby we revisited each of these content issues repeatedly and with different constellations of co-researchers we provided a variety of 'takes' on these issues. Further, we worked on the meanings not only of these terms but also of our experiences of engaging in CPI discussion for learning both in our philosophy classes and in the research group.

11. *Reflexive character*. And finally, as co-researchers exploring our own practice, we were part of the process we were investigating in a project which is an example of itself. We worked with what knowledge we had "while recognizing that it may be erroneous and subjecting it to systematic inquiry where doubt seems justified". We used our everyday common-sense knowledge as we reflected on our own discussion experiences. We engaged in "participant observation" as we reflected on the "products" of our participation in our own philosophical discussions. And we tried to be our own "research instruments *par excellence*" (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983, p. 15-17).

3.3 Obtaining Authorization

As a “requirement for methodological rigour,” Stephen J. Ball has argued for the inclusion of a “*research biography*” or “a reflexive account of the conduct of the research which, by drawing on field notes and reflections, recounts the processes, problems, choices, and errors which describe the fieldwork upon which the substantive account is based” (Ball 1993, p. 46).

The basis of this rigour is the conscious and deliberate linking of the social process of engagement in the field with the technical processes of data collection and the decisions that that linking involves. I call that linking *reflexivity* [. . .]. (Ball 1993, p. 33)

He included in his description of such an account the “negotiation of entry” procedures “usually conducted through formal channels” (p. 34) since such procedures form part of the social context within which the research is conducted, within which the researchers construct their research roles (p. 33) which, whatever they are, “will influence the kinds of data elicited in the research setting” (p. 35). In this section, I tell how we completed the authorization procedures for conducting this research.

Even though I [Judy] was the regular philosophy teacher for the students who might volunteer to participate in this study, in order to be able to embark on this project, I [Sigma] had to (a) enlist the support of the school principal and regional director; (b) invite my students to volunteer; (c) follow procedures set out by the school board Research Committee by submitting a research proposal; (d) inform relevant school committees; (e) obtain the consent of the parent(s) of student co-researcher volunteers; (f) present the research proposal to the school board Research Committee, (g) obtain research proposal authorization and a “Certificate of Ethical Acceptability for Research Involving Human Subjects” from McGill University;¹⁵⁰ and (i) submit a research completion report.

¹⁵⁰ See Appendix A. Certificate of Ethical Acceptability for Research Involving Human Subjects, Faculty of Education, McGill University.

(a) *Principal / Regional Director support.* Our story began when, with the support of the school principal, I initiated procedures to secure authorization to conduct research with my students. On July 17, 1992, I met with the school board Regional Director who was responsible for our school and who was also the chairperson of the Research Committee from which I would be expected to seek authorization for my project.

One of the questions I was wondering about had to do with the degree to which the Research Committee was familiar with "qualitative research". I wanted to know how much to explain in the proposal and I wanted to anticipate any objections I might encounter.

[The chairperson] was very forthcoming and acknowledged that her position as head of the Research Committee did not necessarily mean that she knew a lot about qualitative research. Her reaction to my on-the-spot characterization of it led me to believe that indeed this might have been her first encounter with it and that I could not anticipate any different level of familiarity from other members of the Research Committee.

Her advice (as I remember it now) was: (1) to submit the proposal as early as possible and that she would usher it through the necessary channels at the board; (2) to initiate the necessary information and consent procedures at school in preparation for beginning the research; and (3) to bring the proposal to the School Council of my school for its information only (approval not necessary since no use of school time was required).

[D/93.01.08Fr/School Board/E&F Committee Presentation Notes]

She gave me the deadline for the next Research Committee meeting and advised me to apply using an existing form. She assured me that the school board procedures could happen simultaneously with the early stages of the project and she also suggested that I arrange an information meeting for the parents of prospective volunteer co-researchers.

[D/92.07.17Fr/School Board/Regional Director Meeting Notes]

(b) *Inviting student volunteers.* Next, to see if any of my students would be interested in this project, I [Judy] broached the subject of a "Discussion Research Group" in my two Grade Six philosophy classes and invited anyone interested to come to a lunch hour "Information Meeting" on September 24, 1992. I circulated a sign-up sheet in the two classes and 27 students indicated that they were interested.

From the agenda for that meeting, I reconstruct what happened at that first meeting. With regard to *who* this project was for, I said that it would be for "volunteers" from Grade Six only unless I found that we needed more people. In deference to their busy lives, I suggested that there could be two categories of participants: "Regulars" who came every time and "Irregulars" who would come some times. The only qualifications they needed were "to be a participant in Philosophy for Children class" and I said that I was looking for co-researchers with "different thinking/talking styles".

With regard to *what* we would do, I said that the topic for our research would be "Discussion for Learning" and that we could make up [our] own activities (discussions) to explore this topic; and, drawing on my McGill research proposal, I mentioned that I had already thought of some "Data-gathering Activities". With regard to *where* we would meet, I said that I was hoping we would be able to use "Room 10" which was a half-classroom adjacent to the school library and which was used during the day for the school's "Explorateurs" program for 'gifted' children. Other classrooms which I normally used for their philosophy classes were also mentioned as possibilities. I told them that this was a project I wanted to do as part of my work for my Ph.D. at McGill University and I mentioned that I wanted to see if children could use their philosophy skills to do 'real' research. With regard to *when*, I suggested that we meet from 2:32-4:00?pm on Tuesdays until Christmas and pick another day after Christmas (when I knew their school play rehearsals would become an issue). With regard to frequency, I proposed that we meet either every week or every second week.

And finally with regard to *what happens next*, first I mentioned that we had to determine who the co-researchers would be. I explained the permission procedures we would have to follow before we could officially begin by saying that once I knew some people were interested, that I had to inform the Principal and School Council (Teachers), that Parents had to be informed and give consent for any official participants, and that there were School Board procedures which I had to follow. I suggested that we think in terms of "Planning Sessions" for September and October and be ready to begin officially in November. I sent around another sign-up page at the Information Meeting and this time 17 students indicated they were interested.

[D/92.09.24Th/DRG/Info Meeting Agenda]

[D/92.09.24Th/DRG/Info Meeting Sign-up]

(c) *Submitting a proposal to the research committee.* In September 1992, following the "Research Projects and Action Research" guidelines of the school board, I submitted a 22-page research proposal titled, "Discussion for Learning: From the Perspective of Student Co-researchers" to the school board Research Committee together with a cover letter outlining some of the preliminary measures I had taken with regard to inviting students to participate and including copies of letters to inform and obtain consent from parents.

[D/87.01.06/School Board/Research Guidelines/Memo #61]

[D/92.09.29Tu/School Board-Proposal]

[D/92.10.07/PSBGM/Research Committee.let.01]

(d) *Informing relevant school committees and (e) parental consent.* The principal submitted the proposal to the Regional Director "after consultation with the School Council and, when appropriate, with other staff members, with the School Committee and with the Student Council". Because this project called for volunteer student participation on an after-school basis with no implications for the students' timetable, the consultation with the relevant groups consisted of notification only while approval for the participation of individual co-researcher volunteers was obtained on parental consent forms.

[D/87.01.06/School Board/Research Guidelines/Memo #61]

(e) *Preliminary permission.* On October 21st, prior to an all-day workshop at our school, the Regional Director let me know that I could proceed with the co-researching phase of the project since there were only a few financial details to settle.

[D/93.01.08Fr/School Board/E&F Committee Presentation Notes]

Our first of forty-eight Discussion Research Group sessions took place on October 27, 1992 and the thirteen student co-researchers who had returned their signed parental consent forms were present.

(f) *Research Proposal Presentation.* On December 15, 1992 I received a telephone call from the Research Consultant at the school board and I recorded it this way.

"Ten minutes" before she was to "speak to" my project at a Research Committee meeting, [the Research Consultant called and] asked me to tell her about the project and she asked me what she should say! She had apparently read the project but wasn't sure how to approach it. We talked for awhile and she seemed to be enthusiastic and supportive

at the end of the conversation. I mentioned that I would be prepared to speak to the project myself should that be necessary.

[D/93.01.08Fr/School Board/E&F Committee Presentation Notes, p. 2]

Then, on January 6, 1993:

While teaching this afternoon, [the Principal] arrived at the door with a handwritten note telling me that I was expected at the Education and Facilities Committee meeting the following day at 5 pm >>> Talk about advance notice!

[D/93.01.08Fr/School Board/E&F Committee Presentation Notes, p. 2]

I kept the appointment and I tell this story within a story as recorded in my notes as a way of explaining "how you gained access to these people or settings, including problems you may have encountered in building your sample" (Maykut and Morehouse 1994, p. 154).

After a full day of teaching followed by an hour and a half of work with the DRG co-researchers, I drove over to the school board building and arrived a little early. While waiting for the meeting to begin I had an encounter with one of the school board commissioners who "seemed very pleased to meet me and was very excited about the project". Soon the chairperson of the Research Committee appeared and I took the opportunity to ask her if the committee was to know that the project had already begun. She responded that she would let them know that and that she would field any questions along that vein. She clearly had gone out on a limb for this project. Then she left for a moment and returned with the commissioner I had met earlier who had a little book in her hand about which she was very enthusiastic.

She explained that it was about a major conference on teaching thinking to children and that Philosophy for Children was cited as the only program that was supported by proper research which taught conceptual thinking to children. Then she and [the Research Committee chairperson] went in to the meeting leaving me in the Planning Officers' room with the little book. I wrote down the particulars, recognized the event it described and reported, and spent the remaining minutes putting together a few "brief" thoughts with which to open my "presentation".

When the meeting began, the research committee chairperson introduced the project making references to both our meeting in the summer and her having given me the go-ahead in the fall. In response to an early question, she assured the committee that no school board money was involved and that the delay in

convening the committee was attributable to her successful efforts to get funding for this project from an outside source.

[D/93.01.08Fr/School Board/E&F Committee Presentation Notes, p. 2]

Anticipating that this audience might not be familiar with qualitative research methodology, first I introduced our project in qualitative research terms. In particular I described it as a “detailed look at a research subject from the point of view of those doing the research”. I introduced the subject as “Discussion for Learning” and explained it in terms of “collaborative philosophical inquiry”. I indicated that this project would feature seventeen self-selected young students as “co-researchers” with participation open to others as “student participants”. And I described the variety of data production and data analysis activities as set out in the project proposal.

[D/93.01.07Th/School Board/Research Presentation Notes]

After my brief outline, there were questions which I reconstructed from memory in my notes the next day and which I report here in the order in which I recorded them. The first question, was anticipated and answered by the Research Committee chairperson: Are we being asked to give permission for a project which had already started? Someone wanted to know if the ‘research participants’ would receive the same letter as the ‘co-researchers’. Another asked whether children were going to research other children through the use of video-tape? Someone else wondered why this was a ‘philosophy’ project and why I didn’t call it psychology or sociology? Someone else picked up on my statement in the proposal that “*children* can engage in ‘conceptual analysis’ and asked if I could explain more about what I meant by that. There was a question about the “central and reflexive role of the researchers” on page 4 of the proposal. And someone else asked, “Is the population of your school culturally varied?” and “Wouldn’t it be better to have a study that serves the whole system; one which has a larger sample of subjects and control groups?” There was a question about whether I saw a wider applicability for the results of my study and another about whether my study was part of my work for a Ph.D. Near the end, one of the members of the committee made a comment which I recorded from memory as follows:

There’s nothing new in this study. In the Jewish sector, at least, students have been involved in discussions in which they state their own opinions for a long time.

[D/93.01.08Fr/School Board/E&F Committee Presentation Notes, p. 3]

As I was leaving, [the Research Committee chairperson] “was reassuring when she said she thought they would pass it. . .” I left the committee to their deliberations noting that my project was apparently the only item on their agenda.

[D/93.01.08Fr/School Board/E&F Committee Presentation Notes, p. 3]
[D/93.01.27We/School Board/Board Notes]

(g) Research proposal authorization and (h) McGill Ethics Certificate. On January 27, 1993 according to the report of the school board public meeting of that date, “Authorization was given to conduct a research project entitled “Discussion for Learning from the Perspective of Student Co-researchers” to be undertaken by Judy A. Kyle . . . at no cost to the board.”

(h) McGill ethics certificate. In accordance with McGill University policies regarding research involving human subjects, in April 1993 I was granted the McGill University Faculty of Education “Certificate of Ethical Acceptability for Research Involving Human Subjects” on the basis of having submitted supporting documents in compliance with the procedures of the Research Ethics Committee, a sub-committee of the Academic Policy Committee of the Faculty of Education, McGill University.

[D/93.04.23Fr/McG-Ethics Certif.]

(i) Research completion report. Finally, in fulfillment of the school board Research Committee’s requirement, upon completion of the three phases of Data Collection as outlined in the Research Project Proposal submitted in October, 1992, I submitted a “Research Completion Report” dated June 29, 1993.

[D/93.06.29Tu/School Board/Completion Report]

3.4 'Sigma'

Next, to explain how I came to recognize my multiple researcher identities in this project and why I created the term 'Sigma' to refer a role which resembles but is different from that of principal researcher, I begin by telling The 'Sigma' Story. Then I outline three Sigma decisions I made before I invited my co-researchers to participate in this project. And I end by describing moments I thought of as 'Sigma tension' — occasions when I had to work out just what my co-research role(s) ought to be in a project with children as co-researchers.

The 'Sigma' Story

In keeping with the social change purpose of this research to make a contribution to the emancipation of children by showing how their philosophical capabilities can be put to work in the service of educational research, I acted on an assumption that there is not a difference of *kind* between the research capabilities of children and those of adults. And when the research began, I set out to see how I could do co-research *with* my students while also acting as a research guide who was herself learning on the job. As we went along however, I recognized that there were times when it was necessary to distinguish my 'Alison' co-researcher role from the researcher roles of the other co-researchers. As I reflected on our proceedings, I searched for a term to express the co-researcher roles I had that my co-researchers did not. I resisted the term 'principal' researcher because it would mask our *co-researcher* relationship by implying that the children's contributions were in some ways secondary. Deciding that I needed to create a term which was not in current use, I constructed the term "Sigma Co-researcher" [SCoR] and what follows is the story of how that happened.

Transcript interpretation: SR and YCor. While doing a verbatim transcript of one of our early sessions, in a separate column for **verbatim transcript interpretation** and other notations, I began to use the codes [SR] to refer to my role as 'Senior Researcher' and [YCoRs] to refer to the 'Young Co-researchers.' However, neither was satisfactory. Even if my role *was* different, 'Senior' was too hierarchical while 'Young' emphasized unduly the children's youth and might also

suggest their immaturity or childishness by calling attention to the difference in chronological age. In a -jkmemo I wrote:

{Still not happy with 'Senior' researcher for Allison's role because don't want age/experience to be salient. If not, then what? Describe instead by function?-jkmemo94.12.16}

I thought of other candidates for the S: "S=Synthesizing; scholar; starter; scribe; situated; skilled; salient?" Since my project was to push the egalitarian envelope, as I continued transcribing, I kept looking for some other way to refer to our respective roles. However, the longer it took, and the more data I coded with "SCoR," the more I became committed to the code — although not its signification. I needed a new S-word.

Dictionary Search. Still looking, I did a dictionary search of the "S" section to see if I could find another word I could use that would convey difference without hierarchy. When I checked "senior" first I became even more determined to find something else. It said, "older in years or rank", "opposed to *junior*", and "belonging to maturity or later in life" (Avis 1982). Although each of these could apply in this case, to use this term would be to *build in* a hierarchical relationship between us — just what I wanted to *collapse*. Using 'senior' was not the way to do it. Next I looked up "salient" and read, "standing out prominently" — I did not want to suggest *that* — and "striking", "conspicuous", "extending beyond the general line, projecting" — I did not want those either — and certainly not this *military* reference: "The part of a fortification, trench, etc. that most protrudes towards the enemy"!

When I tried again I found "Sigma": "The 18th letter of the Greek alphabet." We were eighteen co-researchers. Then I read on and found this: "The symbol Σ , signifying that the sum is to be taken of a series or sequence following". This could describe *not* my status (as in older and wiser) but my research *function*: that of putting it all together (Avis 1982, p. 1248). In the same -jkmemo I made the decision:

go for: Sigma Researcher — obscure enough not to have immediate meaning impact; also suggests "one who 'adds things up' [careful- too quantitative?]" or "puts it all together" — use the Sigma Greek symbol Σ to avoid SR (senior) connotation. {-jkmemo: 94.12.16}

I could use 'Sigma' to refer to any of my research roles which differed from those of the co-researcher children in a way which was not *necessarily* hierarchical and it could also resolve the "S" problem. To underline the subtlety of the issue, I also had to think about the "R" since a Sigma *researcher* working with Co-researchers is still hierarchical in a way that I wanted to downplay. In a later -jkmemo, I came to consider "Sigma" to be a *co-research* concept.

{Even now I had to change Sigma Researcher into Sigma Co-researcher as I note that one is only a Sigma in a co-research situation. ?? Think more about that?-jk95.12.22Fr}

So I decided to use "SCoR" for my Sigma Co-researcher role and "YCoR" to refer to those of my Young Co-researchers thereby retaining their youth and masking my seniority.

Colleague consultation. That was not all. In an email message in which I described my Sigma move to Pieter Mostert (a friend and former Philosophy for Children colleague) in the Netherlands, I wrote:

The term "Sigma" is an invention of mine and represents my struggle to work out the relationship between the 'principal researcher' (me) and my co-researchers. I went looking for a 'new' term which might not already be meaning-laden, which wasn't 'linear' and 'hierarchical' in suggestion, but which I could use to differentiate my role from theirs while still retaining the collaborative notions of our participating in the research together at least in some respects on comparable footing. I chose Sigma (a) because I needed an S-word to replace "Senior" Researcher which I had already been using in coding (too linear and hierarchical); (b) because it was a word but not a too-familiar one; (c) and entirely by coincidence it is the eighteenth letter of the Greek alphabet and we were eighteen co-researchers ☺. I now can invest it with the meanings that I need.

[JK email to Pieter Mostert -Fri, 02 Jun 1995 -Dissertation 10+ lines]

In response, Pieter checked *his* dictionaries and much to my delight reported that he found the following additional meanings for 'sigma':

- originally a porch in the shape of a crescent moon (a big 'C')
- later the name of a large dining table + bench;
- sigma means: semi-circular, which suggests openness

[PM-Sat, 03 Jun 95 17:29:34 EDT-Dissertation response]

Referring to the Philosophy for Children practice of doing community of inquiry discussions in circle formation, Pieter noted that "in a C-shape everybody can

notice each other and still pay attention to what is outside the circle". Amazed at this twist I asked him where he had found that information and he replied with citations from a Greek-English dictionary, a Latin dictionary and a German lexicon!¹⁵¹

So it was that, by an on-going process of reflection, by consulting a dictionary and a colleague, and by adapting the existing term 'sigma' that I constructed the term 'Sigma co-researcher' to refer to research functions which I performed but which my co-researchers did not and thereby to point to nuanced aspects of our co-researcher relationship.

Three Initial Planning Decisions

As Sigma co-researcher, in my early decision-making, I made no distinction between the process in which we would engage as co-researchers and class philosophy process which was the subject of our research. As co-researchers we were at once both agents and consumers of the process. Side by side, we sought to increase our separate and common understandings of a process of which we had 'inside' knowledge and in search of 'outcomes' which are "grounded in the actual experience which students [have]" (Finch 1988, p. 189). My student co-researchers were therefore social actors who received, processed and evaluated the experiences offered to them in an active way (p. 189).

Before I issued the invitation to my students, I made three early Sigma decisions. The first was that DRG would be an open and flexible volunteer project offered to anyone in Grade Six. The second was that DRG would be an after-school project. And the third was that my co-researchers would participate as fully as possible in DRG decision-making. In what follows I give my reasons for these decisions.

¹⁵¹ Pieter's response: "Well, in the Greek-English Dictionary of Little & Scott, exactly in the New (9th) Edition by Jones & McKenzie (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1940), it says under 'sigma' on p. 1596: "a C shaped portico. Latin: sigma =crescent-shaped dining-table"; reference is Martialis. This is also said in Lewis & Short's A Latin Dictionary, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1879, p. 1696: "A semicircular couch for reclining at meals." More about this in the German lexicon Der Kleine Pauly Lexikon der Antike; Munich, DTV, 1979, vol. 5, p. 182 (what follows is my translation): "According to the crescent shaped letter the semicircular roman dining-table was called 'sigma'. The 'sigma' was made of wood or stone. At one 'sigma' there was room for 5-8 people, but larger ones have been found. The prestigious places were the ones at the right and left end."

Open and flexible volunteer project. In deciding who to invite to be a co-researcher, I had to take my students' availability into account. My decision to draw from my most experienced philosophy students (Grade Six) meant that all the candidates would be in their final year in elementary school and I knew that realities of their busy lives would impinge on their availability for such a project. Second, I knew I could not ethically make demands on my students' time for my research purposes. Third, since I wanted to maximize my own *co-researcher* role and minimize my *teacher* role, it was important that I work only with co-researchers who were interested in participating. I was not interested in disciplining or checking up on my co-researchers' whereabouts (other than for safety reasons) and I did not want anyone to feel guilty for choosing to do something else. For these practical and ethical reasons, I decided to make their participation entirely voluntary and to build in a flexibility that would enable them to participate according to their interests and availability.

After-school project. My decision to conduct the research after school was also for availability reasons. Since I wanted to offer this opportunity to all students in two different philosophy classes, using school time was not an option and that left only lunch hour and after school from which to choose. In addition, I knew that I wanted to avoid the time problems of our regular class philosophy sessions which were frustratingly short and plagued by frequent interruptions. Lunch hours were too short and already congested with other options and both my students and I needed the break for which it was designed. For these reasons I proposed that we meet for around ninety minutes after school so that we could have enough uninterrupted time for each session.

Co-researcher decision-making. My decision that co-researchers would participate as fully as possible in research decision-making was in keeping with the collaborative and qualitative research design. And it was important since my students were going to do research *with* me rather than be researched *by* me. Assuming them to be capable of such decision-making, I wanted to see how far we could go in that direction and what limitations, if any, there might be if we started from the assumption that this was something they *could* do.

Sigma Tensions

"Sigma tension" is the term I used to refer to dilemmas I faced when trying to work out what my co-researcher roles ought to be relative to those of the children. Some Sigma tension moments stemmed from the fact that I [Judy] was my co-researchers' class philosophy teacher and that sometimes imported and made salient our existing teacher-pupil relationship. At the same time however, I also recognized that the collegial way in which we worked in our class philosophy communities of inquiry also carried over and contributed positively to our co-researcher relationships.

In some Sigma tension moments I [Sigma] wondered if I [Alison] was being more of a research *teacher* than a *co-researcher*. In view of my assertion that children can do research by virtue of their *existing* abilities to do philosophy, I wondered if we should restrict our research practices to *only* those which arose out of our common class philosophy practice. For example, I resisted teaching my co-researchers how to do research-related activities which fall *outside* of what it is to do philosophy while at the same time wondering whether perhaps I *could* teach them without denying that children who can do philosophy can do research. Paying attention to such Sigma tension moments helped me to think about (a) what it is about doing philosophy that is consistent with doing research; (b) what it is about doing research that has little if anything to do with doing philosophy; and (c) what it is that falls ambiguously in between.

In what follows, I reflect on three examples of Sigma tension. A first had to do with our respective co-researcher roles and taking responsibility for the research. A second had to do with whether I ought to make advance Sigma plans for our research sessions or whether, as *co-researchers*, we should make *all* research decisions together. And a third had to do with how much (if at all) to teach research skills such as how to conduct research interviews.

Sigma Tensions 1: Co-researcher Roles

It was very early that I experienced my earliest moments of Sigma tension when, in an attempt to establish a co-research relationship, I invited my co-researchers to assume responsibilities for documenting our research activities. The data file for our first session includes documents related to three co-researcher

roles: "logger", "secretary" and "name recorder". However, my co-researchers were not sure how to carry out two of these roles and my dilemma was whether or not to teach them how.

Loggers. Looking for ways for my co-researchers to contribute to the written record of our research, I proposed a co-researcher role of *Logger* for this project:

"Loggers". Wanting them to participate as much as possible as co-researchers, I suggested that we keep a Log of our proceedings and asked who would be interested in doing that job. There were eight volunteers and the first one tried it right away.

[D/S01/92.10.27Tu/Sigma Notes]

Children love to have jobs to do and this one appealed to the eight co-researchers who put their names on the "Loggers" sign-up page. For Session 1 the "Log" was kept by Yasmin and it read as follows:

Log

Started at 2:40

- Ate apples*
- Organized notebooks*
- Gave out McGill pads, pens and pocket folders*
- Pseudonyms*

[D/S01/92.10.27Tu/DRG/Yasmin/Log]

However, it wasn't so easy and her time was consumed with "then what did we do?" I decided it wasn't worth the effort and that since I would be keeping this [Sigma Notes] log anyway, that the co-researchers' time would be better spent in other ways.

[D/S01/92.10.27Tu/Sigma Notes]

We did not return to this practice and as it happened, my co-researchers did not ask for it again.

Although my young co-researchers were ready and willing to assume this role and responsibility, I was not sure how *able* they were to do so. When Yasmin kept asking, "Then what did we do?" she seemed to be really asking how to keep a log — that is, what kinds of things should go into it. It did not seem to me that she did not remember what we did; rather she was asking for help with what to write. I had three concerns about this. One was that in order for our co-researching not to be interrupted in this way, I would have to *teach* my co-researchers how to "log" in

the background. Second, if I took time to teach them, then I would mask that which they *could* already do, and the enterprise would shift from one of *co-researching* to one of my teaching them how to do research. And my third concern was that our co-researching talk would be more about how to make a log than about the substantive issues of our research. Since I was attempting to do qualitative research for the first time myself, I was not always sure what the rules ought to be. Indeed, in a sense we were making our own rules since we were not aware that *anyone* had tried to do what we were doing before.

Secretaries. Another co-researcher role data document was a list of six volunteers who were willing to be *secretary*.

"Secretaries". I also circulated a "secretaries" list but can't remember what it was for now. I'll keep it handy in case I remember.

[D/S01/92.10.27Tu/Sigma Notes]

We did not use this one either.

While writing my Sigma Notes after this first session, I reflected on what seemed to be a false start. Wondering whether I was right about my "anything I can do, they can do too" strategy, I recorded the following alternative as a possible way to accomplish the same thing by making use of what I knew we *could* already do:

Afterthought: Just as I am keeping this log after the fact, I think I will propose to them that they also do reflective "blurbs" on what we did that day in their steno books to be added to our "Data Collection".

[S01/92.10.27Tu/Sigma Notes]

Still, I was reluctant to pursue this since my co-researchers would have had to spend time outside of our research sessions and our co-researching agreement did not include 'homework' such as this unless they did it on their own initiative.

"Name Recorders". Acting as **name recorder** was a research role which was assumed entirely by the young co-researchers. This was a class philosophy procedure with which we were already familiar and we integrated it into our research proceedings as a matter of course. It has its advantages and disadvantages and in class philosophy the students sometimes resisted its use because of the constraints it put on some people's opportunities to speak in favour of those who might not otherwise manage to have a say. At times when we dispensed with its use, the discussion became *too* spontaneous and free-wheeling, and my

co-researchers would be the ones to call for its use as they valued the order it provided.

In DRG we negotiated whether we would have a name recorder or not depending on what we were doing and how many co-researchers were there. The data shows that we used the name recorder procedure in 34 (or 70%) of the 48 sessions and in most of those sessions we began by using the procedure in "Startup" and continued using it only if the activity and the number of co-researchers warranted. In general we did not use it if there were fewer than 6 participants. We also did not use it in computer work or "pot pourri" sessions in which co-researchers chose their own research activity and in one sample discussion session (S11) we did not use it by co-researcher request.

The Sigma tension I experienced with regard to the research role of name recorder was to wonder whether we needed to use this procedure at all since in DRG the group was often small. Sometimes I wondered whether importing it from class philosophy was an instance of my imposing my teacher agenda. To resolve this issue I decided to count on my students to let me know if they did not think we should be using it; and in general we *did* use it unless someone suggested otherwise.

On not using the name recorder procedure. With regard to our not having used the name recorder procedure during the Session 11 discussion, I wrote the following in my Sigma Research Notes:

Observations. It seemed to me that their voices increased in volume, speed and intensity as the discussion progressed. The greater the intensity, the greater the competition to get in on the 'action'. At the same time, the possibility existed that some tried without success to have their say and then chose not to try. It was a discussion which was more dynamic in some ways but less civilized than with the name recorder procedure and it appears to me (before transcribing the tape) that less 'progress' was made.

A second observation is that the discussion also moved from topic to topic more quickly than it would have otherwise. How to show that, I wonder.

A third observation is that although there was 'some good stuff', that really it was more of an 'opinion exchange' than it was a 'discussion' or an instance of 'collaborative philosophical inquiry'. . . .

[D/S11/92.12.09We/DRG/Sigma Research Notes]

Sigma Tensions 2: "Sigma Plans"

The Philosophy for Children principle that 'the agenda must be seen by the children to be their own' is consistent with the qualitative research principle of 'emergent' research design whereby research decisions are made as much as possible by the research participants. Accordingly, my [Judy's] class philosophy teacher practice of making skeletal and negotiable 'lesson plans' became my DRG research practice of making skeletal and negotiable "Sigma Plans". However, when and whether to make Sigma Plans for our research sessions was an issue that frequently produced moments of Sigma tension. In what follows, using the data documents stored in my three Sigma data binders, I interpret Sigma Plans data to provide an overview of how this practice changed over the course of the project.

To interpret Sigma Plans data, I examined the Sigma Plans pages in the three session document binders. First, I tabulated the number and sequence of sessions for which I did and did not make Sigma plans and I looked for patterns worth noting. For some sessions I had written detailed and numbered items in a list which I marked with a '✓' or an 'x' to indicate whether we had dealt with those items; and for other sessions I had written only a very general single-line item. I counted both as sessions for which I *had* made Sigma plans and there were 22 such sessions out of 48 (or 46%). Pages for sessions for which I had *not* made plans were either entirely blank or were pages on which I had written, "No plans". There were 26 such sessions (or 54%). Then, to interpret our planning and agenda-setting for the forty-eight sessions, I examined the pattern generated by these tabulated Sigma plans data.¹⁵²

Sigma Plans overview. For the first five sessions I made Sigma Plans. When Monica came to visit in S06, I made no plans and the same for the next two sessions (S07 & S08) during which we did 'independent research' activities and practised research interviewing. Then, after three consecutive sessions devoted to interviewing, I made a Sigma decision that we needed to get "back to the subject" and so I made detailed plans for S09 (although none for S10 during which we carried on with business begun in S09). For S11 & S12 my plans took the form of mini lists of "options" from which co-researchers could choose and for S13 (the

¹⁵² The graphs and other data mentioned here are on file in the DRG Research Files and available on request.

final session in December) and S14 (the first session in January) I made no plans because I was not sure how many co-researchers would be there.

In Session 15 my plan was for us to watch and evaluate one of our video tapes we had made and for Session 16 I again made no plans. (The record shows that we had a research discussion on a topic we chose together.) By the time we reached Session 17, I decided we needed another course correction and my one-line Sigma Plan was: "Try mapping our research as we go".

After that session, on the reverse side of the Session 17 plans page, I noted the following indicating that this was an occasion on which my not making Sigma plans had more to do with pressures from my regular teaching responsibilities and completing progress report cards for the five classes of philosophy students I was teaching concurrently with this project:

- *feeling unprepared*
- *too busy with reports etc.*
- *not enough time to write up sessions and really think things through*

[D/S17/93.01.20We/DRG Sigma Notes]

My lack of preparation notwithstanding, in Session 17 we went into the library, spread out a huge sheet of paper and made our first research map in what turned out to be a pivotal DRG session — this in spite of technical difficulties which prevented us from recording this session at all. On the reverse side of the same plans page I wrote the following:

- *co-researchers are delicious!*
- *so serious, engaged*
- *so much unsaid, they give a sense of knowing what they're doing and getting on with it.*

[D/S17/93.01.20We/DRG Sigma Notes]

For this and the next five sessions (S17 to S22) my Sigma plans varied as we continued our explorations of 'discussion (for learning)' by having research discussions and working on accompanying research maps (Maps 1 to 5). By this time our co-researching had its own momentum and my Sigma plans began to take the form of reminders and small points to raise as if to fine-tune our proceedings rather than to set the agenda. In S23 that momentum continued without a Sigma

plan and by S24, sensing that we needed a change, I suggested we have a “Pot Pourri” session in which everyone could choose his/her own research activity.

On my Sigma Plans page for S25 is my first recorded use of the word “Startup”, a computer-inspired metaphor I used to refer to agenda-setting time at the beginning of a session. We had a name recorder for Startup and anyone who had anything to say would “get on the list”. Often I waited until the end to add my name thereby maximizing co-researcher opportunities to influence the research agenda. Sometimes they brought carry-over afterthoughts or ideas they had from earlier sessions. Sometimes they brought ideas for the future both *of* DRG and also *beyond* DRG. And sometimes they made specific requests/suggestions about what to do in the current session. One of my Sigma tensions was how to ensure that we did not spend too much time in Startup. It was tempting to take all the time we wanted and indeed in one session we actually spent the entire session in such meta-talk. However, as soon as someone became concerned about that, s/he raised the matter and we dealt with it.

From S26 to the end (S48) we set our agendas together and the record shows that I noted Sigma items to bring to Startup for Sessions 29, 30, 31, 33 and 38 but not for any of the others. By this time we had found our own way of co-researching using research maps to chart our progress and these gave us a sense of where we were and what we needed to do next. From April to June (S32 to S48) play rehearsals and other year-end activities interfered with our DRG sessions. However when the play was over, aiming for the magic number of 50 sessions at my co-researchers request, we met *three* times a week until the very end of the year.

This interpretation of the Sigma plans data shows how I adjusted my ‘Sigma Plans’ practice in response to our on-going co-researching experience. And it shows how we set our research agenda session by session using our own ‘Startup’ ritual and guided by our research mapping practice. Although I made detailed Sigma plans at the beginning and, in response to my Sigma tension moments, at various ‘course correction’ points along the way, I also made “No plans” for reasons such as continuations of earlier sessions, co-researcher time and availability constraints and to maximize co-researcher opportunities to set the research agenda.

Sigma Tensions 3: Research Interviewing Tensions

As indicated in the *Co-researching Stories*, from the early stages of our DRG research, Sigma tensions arose around the activity of research interviewing — an activity which appealed to many of the co-researchers and which I [Sigma] resisted thinking it was a skill that we (all) needed to learn how to do.

During the interviewing practice of Sessions 7 and 8, I spent most of my time in Room 10 with the co-researchers who were working on computers. From time to time I went into the library to check on the interview practice and judging by their giggling, it was my [Sigma] perception at the time that they were *playing at* interviewing. I attributed their merriment to their general enthusiasm, to it being their first time using a tape recorder, their first time interviewing and having had minimal instruction on how to proceed.

Meanwhile, as part of my concurrent doctoral work, I was reading about the complexities of research interviewing and I thought that if we were going to use this as a research procedure, that I would have to learn more about it myself and *teach* my co-researchers how — precisely what I did *not* want to do if I was going to claim that doing research is something that these students can already do by virtue of their ability to do philosophy. This produced a Sigma tension undercurrent which I felt throughout the project as my co-researchers kept wanting to do more interviewing and I kept resisting their enthusiasm while also searching for ways to accommodate it in accordance with the principle of co-researcher participation in the construction of the research agenda.

In this section I have given early examples of Sigma tensions which arose in relation to the setting of our research agenda for each session, to our co-researcher roles, and to our research interviewing. I [Alison] did not use the expression 'Sigma tension' *with* my co-researchers; however it was one which I [Sigma] often thought about both during the course of our researching together and later in my work with the data.

3.5 'Sampling'

We conducted our DRG research in our own school but not in our regular classroom; on school days but not during school hours. And in many ways it was like an after-school club and that had implications for our co-researching.

According to Stephen J. Ball, "in the language of qualitative research, 'sampling' normally is a dirty word". He went on to say however, that in educational research, "sampling is inevitable and necessary, but too often is ignored by fieldworkers". Ball was talking from a social science ethnographic perspective and he referred to 'naturalistic sampling' which is concerned with "*places, persons, and times*" (Ball 1993, pp. 37-38). Keeping in mind that this is not an ethnographic study of the DRG co-researchers as a social group, nevertheless we *were* 'social actors'. In this section, in order to "alert readers to the limits within which the portrayal and analysis should be read" (p.38), I give an account of where and under what time conditions we were operating. In addition, specific to this research, I account for three other types of 'sampling' which I refer to as 'discussion sampling', 'theoretical sampling' and 'co-researcher sampling'.

Place Setting

If we accept the imperatives of symbolic interactionism, then we must expect that settings affect and influence social action. Social actors will 'present' themselves differently in different settings. There are a multiplicity of settings in schools, although some ethnographies are written as if schools were 'setless.' (Ball 1993, p. 38)

We had our own special place to conduct our research — a room which we did not use together at any other time. As I describe the place setting for our story, I provide the rationale for choosing to work there and I comment on its impact on our data production and interpretation.

Description. The physical setting for our study was "Room 10" — a small room on the second floor that was originally a part of the school library and which was especially created to make space for a pull-out program for gifted children. Room 10 had two doors, one leading in from the corridor and the other leading into the library. The library door was in a wall that was erected when the room was created. Most of the rest of that (north) wall consisted of large (interior) windows

which were there to provide visual access between the two rooms as well as to maximize the visual space in each room. There were pastel blue and pink striped drapes which could be pulled across these interior windows. The south side of the room consisted of three large exterior windows covered by venetian blinds. Along the west wall was a large "white board" on which we could write with coloured markers. And at the east end of that wall there was a sink with a drinking fountain and cupboards above and below it as well as a long, narrow coat cupboard to the right.

The walls were pale yellow and there was a gray carpet on the floor. Along the east (school corridor) wall between the two doors were bookcases holding gifted program materials and on top of which we stored our DRG materials in magazine file boxes. In front of these bookcases I parked my trolleys of Philosophy for Children materials since I was a nomad specialist without a room of my own and I used Room 10 for overnight storage. Along the wall with the interior windows were four computer stations. Near the library door was a (black and white) Macintosh Classic and beside that to the right was an Apple Iigs which we did not use. To the right of that was another (black and white) Macintosh Classic and to its right was a (colour) Macintosh LCII connected to a laser printer. In the northwest corner in front of the exterior windows stood a wooden cabinet on wheels which held removable pink plastic storage buckets and to its right, also in front of the outside windows was a small turquoise free-standing room divider used as a moveable bulletin board. In the south west corner of the room, standing kitty-corner was a teacher's desk. At the end of the west wall to the right of the white board and next to the sink was another colour Apple Macintosh LCII computer. My trademark overhead projector which was on a specially cut-down children's desk on wheels was usually parked in front of the long, narrow coat cupboard. In the centre of the room a couple of long, narrow tables put side by side formed a large working surface with room for at least ten chairs around it.

Rationale. Since I was a roving philosophy specialist teacher without a classroom of my own, I had to find a space for our research and I negotiated to have the use of Room 10 for the following reasons. Unlike other rooms which were regularly used for the Home and School After-School Activity program, Room 10 was available *every* day after school and that meant we could be flexible about our choices of DRG days and we could have the consistency that goes with having the same location every time. Its small size was appealing and more

conducive to philosophical discussion than a large classroom — although with eighteen co-researchers I wondered if it would be big enough. The availability of four functioning computers for our use was an asset and the furniture arrangement with the tables in the middle and computers around the periphery made Room 10 well-suited to the co-researchers being able to decide to do different activities while still being present for discussions. And finally, its proximity to the library was a happy arrangement because it enabled us to spread out when it was important that we *not* all be together in the same room such as when doing interviews on tape. On days when there were after-school activities in the library it was a disadvantage, however, not only because we could not use it, but also because of noise coming from raucous children who were supposed to be playing chess!

Metaphorically our room for DRG was almost what Stephen Ball calls a “backstage arena” for us all. Room 10 was about a third of the size of a regular classroom, it had equipment and resources we needed and the rug on the floor and the furniture arrangement gave it a special atmosphere. Although we were not exactly our “private selves” with each other in this setting, we were not quite our regular classroom selves either. The place setting seemed to contribute positively to our becoming “co-researcher” selves together (Ball 1993, p. 38).

Discussion Sampling

Discussion for Learning. ‘Discussion sampling’ refers to how I account for which discussions to consider for DRG research purposes. One source of discussions was our common experience of class philosophy discussions (as we remembered and reconstructed them). A second source consisted of any discussions which we thought relevant from our outside-class experience such as family discussions or discussions seen/heard on television or elsewhere. And since we were using philosophical discussion “as a way to do research”, the ‘research discussions’ we conducted as part of our research process constituted a third source. No types or sources of discussions were ruled out in advance.

Theoretical Sampling

Exploration of Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry. 'Theoretical sampling' is how I refer to an approach we used to guide our exploration. At first, I did not want to influence the direction of our theoretical deliberations so that we could make such decisions together. That was why, trying to keep things simple, I began with the three-word title, "Discussion for Learning" and suggested that we proceed by brainstorming further questions as we did for any topic in our class philosophy discussions so that the exploration could be as far-reaching as possible. However, as already mentioned, when I wrote "Discussion for Learning" on the transparency as we began to brainstorm, not hiding my more technical phrase, I also wrote "[Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry]" in the subtitle position without elaborating on it. And after our ninth session at which point I changed my mind and decided to use the phrase 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' as a way of bringing us back to our research subject, we began to use all five terms ('discussion', 'learning', 'collaborative', 'philosophical' and 'inquiry') as conceptual tools with which to conduct our research more systematically. It was much later, when I read about the research strategy Anselm Strauss referred to as "theoretical sampling", that I was struck by how closely our procedures resembled those which Strauss was teaching to his university research students (Strauss 1987) and that was when I began to think of our procedures in these terms.

Co-researcher Sampling

With Children as Co-researchers. 'Co-researcher sampling' refers to how I account for the initial selection criteria and sample variation for the co-researchers involved in conducting the study. With regard to which children to work with as co-researchers, in what follows I elaborate on my rationale for working with volunteers from Grade Six and I comment on the variation within the sample that this decision yielded.

Volunteers. My co-researchers *had* to be volunteers because the scope and purpose of the project meant that it had to take place outside of our regular school timetable. For both ethical and practical reasons, I could not make any demands on my co-researchers for a time commitment (see "Time Setting" below). They also

had to be volunteers because I wanted them to be self-selected. I could have issued special invitations to students who, in my estimation, would have been prime candidates; but I decided instead to open it up to anyone who was interested because I wanted to see who and how many would be interested in such a project and how long it could sustain their interest. I wanted to find out if *anyone who wanted to* (who does philosophy) could do research. Also, part of what I wanted to find out was whether doing *research* was something young philosophy students would *want* to do.

Grade Six. I decided to offer this opportunity to *Grade Six only* as a way of reaching for a 'sample' from among my most-experienced philosophy students. I would start with Grade Six, not in any belief that younger students could not handle such a project but because I did not know how many students would volunteer. I did not have in mind any minimum requirement of background in philosophy since this research is based on an assumption that children are natural philosophers and I did not want to rule out students who were doing philosophy in school for the first time. Also, I invited students from my Grade Six classes in order to ensure that there would be at least some common *class philosophy* experience from which to draw.

Sample variation. Because the co-researchers were self-selected, they varied in terms of experience doing philosophy, participation styles and degrees of commitment (as represented by their frequency and consistency of attendance). In class philosophy experience the children varied from six years to only some weeks. With regard to our participation styles, some of us were talkative and had to restrain ourselves in order to provide others with opportunities to contribute while others preferred to listen and spoke mostly if/when addressed. And the degrees of commitment as represented by the children's attendance records also varied from less than six sessions to a maximum of forty-one. I [Alison] was the most philosophically experienced, I [Judy] had to constantly monitor my teacherly participation style and I [Sigma] was present for every session.

Time Setting

Time is probably the most neglected dimension in ethnographic research... And yet in all educational establishments time is a complex, often overbearing, and a frequently referred to fact of life. But time is not just a matter of data in its own right; it also bears on the interpretation of other data. (Ball 1993, p. 38-39)

We conducted our research in the time context of a French Immersion school which has a "double program" for both teachers and students. Time issues present daily challenges and we often feel as though we are playing 'Beat the Clock'. Spending half a day learning in a second language is taxing for the children — as is the double workload for teachers. It is a school where time *is* "overbearing, and a frequently referred to fact of life", and this had a direct bearing on our project in terms of the availability and motivation for co-researchers to come to DRG. It influenced who and how many co-researchers chose to come to each session, the state of mind of those who did come, and participation consistency. In what follows, I talk about the "external frameworks and responsibilities" (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 157) that had time implications for our participation in this research. I describe our time and timing arrangements. And I conclude by reflecting on the impact our time setting had on what we were trying to do.

Co-research Time Arrangements. To express their interest in volunteering my students put their names on a sign-up sheet on which they also indicated the days they were available. As expected, there was no day or time that suited everyone. Here is how we worked it out.

Time. Three co-decisions we made during the course of the project were how long to spend on each session, how often to meet and when to stop the project. With regard to the first, the suggestion I had made at the Information Meeting that our sessions last for ninety minutes was accepted without much discussion. Although some co-researchers occasionally arrived late (after gymnastics) and some left early, in general we began right after school and ended promptly at four. With regard to how often to meet, we decided that once a week would not be fair to people who might want to come on the day we chose but had other commitments. So we decided to meet twice a week starting with Tuesdays and Thursdays. It was an arrangement that added flexibility by giving everyone two choices. And with regard to when to stop, although I had not originally intended the

project to last a whole year, I did want it to be open-ended and for us to work out the time and timing together. Despite considerable pressure from competing activities, there was no expressed desire to stop until the year ended.

Timing. The timing and consistency of our research sessions was influenced by factors external to DRG. In general our sessions occurred once or twice weekly and interruptions or low attendance were for reasons such as school play and choir rehearsals and performances, the science fair, once it was due to a major snowstorm on April Fool's Day, and for the entire week the students went on their year-end graduation Whale Watching trip. Other sessions were cancelled in order to permit me to attend to other teacherly commitments. No session was ever cancelled due to lack of interest and even on very busy days some students made time to come before or after their other activities.

Young co-researchers' external frameworks. In addition to their demanding two-language school program, my co-researchers had "external frameworks and responsibilities" which also affected our research as individual co-researchers' personal schedules changed from term to term. For safety reasons we developed a system of circulating a "Where are you?" notebook during class philosophy on DRG days and in it co-researchers indicated whether they planned to come that day, and if not, where they were likely to be in case someone was looking for them. Among the reasons given for co-researchers to *not* attend DRG were the following: other extra-curricular activities after school such as gymnastics or chess, library work with colleagues for school project deadlines, and family responsibilities such as walking the dog. Some did not specify and just wrote "going home".

Sigma co-researcher's external framework. During the year of the study, in addition to my doctoral course work, my own external framework included the following: teaching Philosophy for Children classes two days a week, teaching a graduate-level course at McGill University for teachers who were implementing Philosophy for Children for the first time, preparing two doctoral comprehensive examination papers and working on MRG research. My regular teaching assignment consisted of doing philosophy with ten classes in two days and that meant that by the time I met with my DRG co-researchers after school, I had already taught five consecutive philosophy classes without a break. Although it was helpful to be working with teachers, doing philosophy with *their* classes, seeing

what it was like to work with beginner philosopher teachers and children, preparing the seminar sessions and reading and responding to the teachers' journals, it was also very time-consuming and severely limited the attention I could give to the DRG study. Occasionally we had to cancel sessions for reasons such as my having to attend school or McGill meetings, Professional days, or Parent Interview days. And writing the MRG research article was influential in shaping my DRG interpretations as I carried over to DRG the important transitions from a quantitative to a qualitative methodology that we made within the MRG research.

Impact of time constraints. Not to be underestimated, time issues had a lot to do with who could participate in the project and on what basis. To the extent that they affected continuity, time constraints had implications for the quantity and quality of the work we were able to do. The voluntary/flexibility features were a strength because those who were present were always there by choice not obligation; but they were also a weakness because they mitigated possibilities for continuity. Conducting the research after school also had its advantages and disadvantages. Because it was after school, it ensured that only people who wanted to be there came; but there was also severe competition from the co-researchers' 'external frameworks'. The decision to meet at the end of the day suited our purposes well; but it too had drawbacks. We all had to decompress from the intensity of our days so we took fifteen minutes or so just to relax, have a snack, be silly sometimes and get ourselves organized. Sometimes it would be difficult to gear up again and to sustain our concentration. However, because we had so many sessions and because each session was of suitable duration, interruptions and cancellations were not a serious problem and sometimes provided needed breaks.

The most serious drawback of our time arrangements was how they compromised continuity. Each session had to be complete in itself since there was no guarantee that the co-researchers who were present in one session would be there the next. Building on previous work was difficult and even though we recorded our sessions, we were not able to make effective use of the tapes and transcripts for continuity purposes. Although we were able to accomplish an impressive amount under the circumstances, and although we enjoyed our participation in the project, the time conditions were far from ideal.

3.6 Working with the Data

Research from the margins involves more than just learning and then using a set of mechanical skills.... While some researchers may argue that research methodologies are like a set of tools from which you can pick and choose depending on the circumstances, we believe that different methodologies carry with them specific underlying assumptions which will shape the way information is gathered and the kind of knowledge created. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 26)

To describe how I worked with our DRG data, first I explain what I took to be 'data' for this research and my use of a 'data trajectory' metaphor in relation to my IDEAS-INQUIRY interpretive framework; and second I identify and categorize different kinds of methods (or 'research practices') we actually used in carrying out this research.

The Data and 'Data Trajectories'

The data. For this study I took to be 'data' anything that we [co-researchers] produced and documented as well as anything else that I drew on in order to "think out" (Ryle 1979) subsequent interpretations. Some data pre-dated the research with my co-researchers; some were produced in the course of our co-researching activities; some were concurrent but separate from our research; and some I produced during the post-fieldwork writing phase for this report. For sources of data for this study, therefore, I have reached beyond "facts or figures from which conclusions may be drawn" (Avis 1982, p. 340) and have included documents, reflections and materials which I drew on from my teaching practice, my research experience, my reading of relevant educational literature and my DRG co-researching experience. In addition, I also drew on my everyday experience by tuning in to contemporary uses of words and concepts in print and electronic media and in conversations with friends and colleagues.

'Data trajectories'. It was while I was looking for the "core category" in our DRG co-researching data that I was first attracted to the metaphor of a 'trajectory' as used by Strauss to refer to the core category of a health study he was describing: "Recall that trajectory pertains to the course of an illness, and to the work done to control it" (Strauss 1987, p. 189). In a [Sigma] memo I wondered:

*What is DRG "core category" ?
(equivalent of "trajectory" for Strauss).*

- *could it be CPI?*
- *or is that a triple category?*
- *what about D4L?*
- *what about "Research"?*
- *keep looking? . . .*

[Sigma Memo/95.05.08-9/Strauss, A. (1987), p. 189/
Core Category]

In a subsequent Sigma memo, while wrestling with whether and how to use the terms 'sequence' and 'episode', I considered the possibility of using the term 'trajectory' to refer to "the threads that I am following" through the data and that led me to consider also its application of 'trajectory' to discussions.

"Trajectory"

- *the CPI/D4L "trajectory"*
- *unlike Strauss, ours would not be a "trajectory" of a disease
(i.e. research content)*
- *but*
- *of the research process*
- *or both?*

Hmm. Trajectory of what?

Aha?! Discussions also have "trajectories"

*good word for 'progress' / 'productivity' which can otherwise be too
positively charged?*

[Sigma Memo/95.05.12-1/Strauss, A. (1987), p. 196/
Code words: 'sequence'; 'trajectory']

What was useful about the trajectory metaphor was its implied notion of progression over time. In a later Sigma memo on the same day, I continued to explore its usefulness by examining the notion of trajectory "phases" (Strauss 1987, p. 199) as they might relate to Discussion/Dialogue trajectories or to the CPI/D4L Research Trajectory I was considering at the time. "When is a phase a phase?" I wondered, and "how different from a 'sequence'?" As I tried out the possibility of a 'sequence' consisting of a series of 'phases' in a graphic Sigma memo, I wondered if the trajectory metaphor might be "too linear?" or if somehow it "could be multi-dimensional".

Months later I looked up the term 'trajectory' in a dictionary in my efforts to think out the usefulness of the 'trajectory' metaphor and found relevance in the two meanings given (Avis 1982, p. 1420). With regard to the first, "1. The path described by an object moving in space; especially, the path of a projectile after being fired," in my dictionary memo I drew parallels as follows:

For my purposes here:

- 'path' described in mental 'space'
- 'object' is the subject or topic or idea?
- notion of projectile being 'fired'
- relate to points raised

[M/95.09.06We-1/Dict Memos/Trajectory Metaphor]

Around the same time while transcribing the audio tape for Session 8 I was reminded of a comment Jennifer made and I noted,

- cf Jennifer's comment in [S08T] about waiting for a discussion to "rise up" before she gets her ideas.

[M/95.09.06We-1/Dictionary Memos/Trajectory Metaphor]

With regard to the second 'trajectory' meaning given, "2. *Geom.* . . . (b) A curve or surface that passes through a given set of points", I underscored the phrase "passes through" and noted with a smile the play on words in "a given set of 'points'" when transposed to discussions; and in addition I drew a parallel with the geometrical aspects of a research activity Strauss referred to as 'diagramming' (Strauss 1987, p. 199, Chapter 8) and which took the form of conceptual research 'mapping' in DRG.

Discussion trajectories. In the same Sigma 'dictionary memo' I also explored the use of 'trajectory' in relation to Lipman's notion of "progress" in community of inquiry discussions (Lipman, Sharp, and others 1980b, p. 111). However, remembering that someone had once asked, "Progress in whose terms?" I considered the possibility of 'trajectory' as an *alternative* to 'progress' for reasons I noted as follows:

- removes the positive connotation of "progress" (is that good?) while retaining the notion of movement — progression — gets around this problem? / or does it?

[M/95.09.06We-1/Dict Memos/Trajectory Metaphor]

DRG data trajectories. My selection of *Co-researching Stories* sections in Part Two are taken from the five 'data trajectories' which emerged from our combined use of "conceptual analysis" (Wilson 1963/1987) and "theoretical sampling" (Strauss 1987). The *Co-researching Stories* and the conceptual data trajectories from which they are selected are as follows:

Stories 2	<i>Philosophical "Blossoming"</i>	'Philosophical' Data Trajectory
Stories 3	<i>Discussion as 'Communication'</i>	'Discussion' Data Trajectory
Stories 4	<i>Living and Learning</i>	'Learning' Data Trajectory
Stories 5	<i>Making 'Inquiry' Progress</i>	'Inquiry' Data Trajectory
Stories 6	<i>Collaborating Cooperatively</i>	'Collaborative' Data Trajectory

Starting in Session 9 we began to work explicitly with these five concepts when we began to explore 'discussion (for learning)' in terms of 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' as a way of testing my [Sigma] suggested expression for the kind of discussion which is characteristic of a community of inquiry. Using the conceptual analysis strategy of "isolating questions of concept from [our] other questions" (Wilson 1963/1987, p. 23), I began by checking my co-researchers' understanding of the five conceptual terms: 'discussion', 'learning', 'collaborative', 'philosophical' and 'inquiry'.¹⁵³ And from that point on we used these five concepts as a theoretical sampling "means whereby the analyst decides *on analytic grounds* what data to collect and where to find them", a process of data collection which is "*controlled by the emerging theory*", a process we used to make decisions about "*what ... to turn to next in data collection*" and "*for what theoretical purpose*" (Strauss 1987, pp. 38-39, author's italics). The presentation of the *Co-researching Stories* are therefore in keeping with our research process and my [Sigma] way of working with the data later.

IDEAS-INQUIRY interpretive framework. While selecting and interpreting verbatim data for each of the five data trajectories I used the IDEAS-INQUIRY interpretive framework described earlier.¹⁵⁴ For example, when I read the data for

¹⁵³ See Back to the Subject(s) under S09b: From Back to the Subject(s) to Discussion as 'Communication' in *Stories 3: Discussion as 'Communication'*.

¹⁵⁴ See 1.4 IDEAS-INQUIRY: An Interpretive Framework in Chapter 1. Introduction.

IDEAS for the 'Discussion' trajectory, I looked for the ideas we had and the theory we were generating regarding the concept of 'discussion'. And when I read the same data for INQUIRY, I read for *how* we were *discussing*. Similarly for the 'Philosophical' trajectory I read the data for IDEAS (of 'philosophy') in relation to (~) INQUIRY (*how* we were *doing* philosophy). For the 'Inquiry' trajectory I read the data for our IDEAS (of 'inquiry') in relation to (~) INQUIRY (*how* we were *inquiring*). For the 'Collaborative' trajectory I read the data for our IDEAS (of 'collaboration') in relation to (~) INQUIRY (*how* we were *collaborating*). And for the 'Learning' trajectory I read the data for IDEAS (of 'Learning') in relation to (~) INQUIRY (*how* we were *learning*).

Research Practices

Our 'research practices' — specific co-research activities which I extracted from working with the data — were influenced *not* by any particular methodological set(s) of "mechanical skills" or "tools" but rather by our common class philosophy *experience* (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 26). The closest we came to consulting a list of any kind was the early and brief look we had at my doctoral proposal list of possible research activities — itself derived from our class philosophy practice. In addition, our research practices were influenced by my [Sigma] awareness of methods from a variety of genres of qualitative research. They were influenced by assumptions from Philosophy for Children methodological literature that I [Judy] brought from my experience training teachers and their classes of children to do Philosophy for Children. And they were influenced by my experience of Philosophy for Children verbatim transcript analysis (Kyle, Morehouse, and others 1985; Matthews 1984; Pritchard 1985).

In keeping with the emergent design of our project, our co-research practices consisted primarily of adaptations of our class philosophy practices to serve research purposes. Working with our data, I [Sigma] have identified three different (but not necessarily distinct) categories of co-research practices to account for how we produced, managed and interpreted our data. The terms I have chosen for these categories signal subtle but important adaptations. For example, I refer to data "production" (rather than data 'gathering' or 'collection'). I refer to data "management" rather than data 'treatment'. And I refer to data "interpretation"

(rather than data 'analysis'). In what follows, I provide an overview of these three categories of research practices as extracted from the data.

Data production practices. I use the expression 'data production' rather than 'data gathering' or 'data collection' in order to emphasize how we *produced* our data in the course of our researching. We did not gather data in other places, from other people or in different contexts (although we could have). Rather, our "observations, conversations, maps, plans, reflections, memos, preliminary analysis, etc." all originated with us. They were the 'products' of our co-researching activity and "are, in effect, the 'data' on which a substantial part of the analysis and interpretation of the study is based" (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 32). While documenting our process, we created a data trail and the data we produced guided our further explorations. In addition, I refer to data 'production' in order to feature notions of progress and *productivity* as represented in Matthew Lipman's characterization of a 'good' discussion (Lipman, Sharp, and others 1980b, p. 111).¹⁵⁵

To 'produce' data, we approached our research topic "Discussion for Learning" in the same way as we would any other subject in class philosophy. We began in Session 2 by listing, as quickly as they came, questions which we derived from the topic itself. Those questions provided an initial agenda for our subsequent discussion investigations during which we reflected on what might count as 'discussion for learning' using as food for our deliberations our own (prior and current) experiences of discussions. We then, also as usual, blazed our own research trail, keeping an eye on both the point of departure and anticipated destinations in order to stay on track.

Data management practices. I classify as 'data management practices' anything we did *with* data items we produced ranging from how we organized and kept track of them (*e.g.* dating, folders, computer files, photocopies), how we generated new data products from them (*e.g.* verbatim transcriptions out of audio tapes), and any technical methods we used in the process of data interpretation (*e.g.* map making, 'chunking' verbatim transcriptions). However, just as Kirby and McKenna have pointed out that "the analysis and data collection continually overlap

¹⁵⁵ See also "Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry" under 1.4 Research Interest in Chapter 1. Introduction.

(i.e., whenever the researcher records reflections on either the content or the process of the research, analysis is taking place)", so the distinction between our data production, data management and data interpretation practices is blurred (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 130). The same practice can serve multiple purposes such as when in managing data products, we produced another data product while simultaneously engaging in data interpretation.

Data interpretation practices.

The act of interpretation underlies the entire research process. The act of interpretation is not something which occurs only at one specific point in the research after the data has been gathered; rather, interpretation exists at the beginning and continues throughout the entire process. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 23)

I classify as 'data interpretation practices' any acts of meaning-making both by the co-researchers 'live' and 'on the job' as it were and by me [Sigma] outside our DRG co-researching venue. I use the terms 'interpret' and 'interpretation'¹⁵⁶ because their references to meaning-making and concepts are closer to what I mean by to 'do philosophy' than the term 'analysis' which puts more emphasis than I want on separation into parts and elements.¹⁵⁷ I do not reject the term 'analysis', but when I do use it, it is more in the sense of "to examine critically or minutely" which does describe our practice.

It was by making this distinction that I decided to systematically and rigorously 'interpret' our data *without* using methods of data analysis which involve making sense of the data by breaking them down into bits and "bibbits"¹⁵⁸ and categories and elements and then putting them back together as in the following:

156 'Interpret': "to give the meaning of; explain or make clear; especially, to restate in clear language; construe" and 'Interpretation': "the sense arrived at in interpreting; the explanation given; meaning" and "one's concept of a work of art or subject as expressed in performance, criticism, or artistic representation" (Avis 1982, p. 706-7).

157 'Analysis': "separation of a whole into its parts or elements" (Avis 1982, p. 53).

158 "Bibbits — loose bits of data, sections of data. . . .a passage from a transcript, a piece of information from field notes, a section of a document or snippet of conversation recorded on a scrap of paper that can stand on its own but, when necessary, can be relocated in its original context." (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 135)

The general analytical design consists of examining how data items and groupings of data items generate specific and general patterns. This is done primarily through the constant comparison of data items with other data items until sections that "go together with" or "seem to help describe something" can be identified and located together in a category file. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 130)

Initially I was attracted to such methods because I recognized that *philosophical* interpretation is required for their execution.

Therefore I was more interested in the philosophical thinking that goes on *during* the processes of pattern generation and of the identification of items that "go together with" or "seem to help describe something" as mentioned in this example:

... in the process of data analysis you pulled apart the data like the bellows of an accordion, identifying each salient category contained within it. For each category you formulated a propositional statement, a factual statement conveying the meaning of the data cards comprising each category. Next, you engaged in a kind of synthesis as you studied your propositions for possible connections to each other, finding patterns and relationships across propositions, bringing the meaning in the data into closer harmony. The result of this synthesis is a set of outcome propositions to be communicated in your report. (Maykut and Morehouse 1994, p. 157-58)

My interest was in making visible the meaning-making process which is embedded in "identifying each salient category", formulating propositional statements, "conveying the meaning of the data cards comprising each category", "making possible connections to each other, finding patterns and relationships across propositions" and "finding patterns and relationships across propositions"; and this calls for a different approach to data interpretation. And my question was rather, *How* do they do *that*? To this end, together with my [Sigma] interpretations which precede and post-date our DRG co-researching, I present the co-researchers interpreting "throughout the entire process" of data production as a way of demonstrating how children with philosophical experience use philosophical discussion as a way of doing research.

Chapter 4

Surfacing Research Acts

How do children who are experienced in doing philosophy use philosophical discussion as a way of doing research?

In Part Two: *Co-researching Stories*, I answered the dissertation research question by *demonstration* — that is, *by showing the co-researchers at work* using philosophical discussion as a way of doing research. Now I take a closer look at *how* the children's use of philosophical discussion is a way of doing research. That is, in this chapter I answer this research question a second way — by *surfacing* the 'research acts' in the philosophical 'inquiry moves' the children make while using philosophical discussion in a research context.

Surfacing 'by surfacing'. Like the *Co-researching Stories* in Part Two, the *by surfacing* argument I make in this chapter is also in a state of transition. As mentioned earlier¹⁵⁹ this is the *current* version of my search for a way to answer the dissertation research question directly and in its own terms.

The version of this argument from which *by surfacing* is a transition from an earlier argument I referred to as 'by transposition': that is, that children who are experienced in doing philosophy use philosophical discussion as a way of doing research *by transposing* class philosophy 'inquiry moves' into 'research acts' when they use philosophical discussion in a research context. For that version of the argument I used the musical metaphor of 'transposition':

TRANSPOSITION. The changing of the pitch of a composition without change otherwise. For instance, a song may, for the convenience of the singer, be 'transposed' into a higher or lower key. (Scholes 1938/1974, p. 1039)

¹⁵⁹ See An Open and Systematic Approach in 1.6 'Answering' the Dissertation Research Question in Chapter 1. Introduction.

Thinking about how children use philosophical discussion as a way of doing research in musical terms, I set out to argue that the philosophical discussion 'inquiry moves' which children use in the 'key' of class philosophy change "pitch" and become 'research acts' when 'transposed' to the 'key of a research context'. The "composition" of these 'inquiry moves' is "without change otherwise" when so transposed. What appealed about this interpretation was that as in music, there need be no hierarchical value judgement made in the distinction between "higher" and "lower" keys. They are just different — "for the convenience of the singer".

However, there were problems with this interpretation. For one thing, I was concerned about the *possibility* of making a hierarchical judgment between doing philosophy and doing research and the necessity to express this relation with a denial. But more than that, an important problem is the idea that the act of transposition is a deliberate act for a specific purpose. For this to work in the present instance, the children would have had to be knowingly and deliberately 'transposing' philosophical inquiry moves into research acts and that was something I could not claim. Rather, I wanted to argue that when they 'do philosophy' in a research context, they 'do research'. The argument is therefore not about a deliberate act on the part of the children. It is something that happens — more like the singer who sings in two different keys without being the one who *does* the 'transposing'. It is the key that is transposed rather than the singer who transposes.

By similar reasoning I had already rejected the notion of the children 'transferring' philosophical inquiry moves to a research context as if they knew that that is what they were doing, as if they were knowingly *applying* a skill. Perhaps these occurrences would better be expressed in a passive voice saying that when the children use philosophical discussion the inquiry moves 'get transposed' or 'get transferred' into 'research acts' in a research context. That interpretation was not better for it masked the agency which is embedded in the notions of both 'transposition' and 'transfer'. Although I was prepared to argue that the children *are* 'doing research' when they 'do philosophy', I was *not* prepared to argue that they do so intentionally with regard to any given 'research act'. Time for me to make a new self-corrective move.

The term 'surfacing' was lurking between the lines and under the surface as I wrote this dissertation and consulted with others as I worked on how to argue compellingly that these children *are* doing research. I had said it and written it here and there without using it in this context. It was only when facing up to the agency issue that I realized that by using the term 'surfacing' I could shift the agency from the children to me [Sigma]. In this chapter, therefore, it is not the *children* who are surfacing the philosophical in the research and the research in the philosophical. It is me! And I use the data the children produced to argue the case: an instance of *co-research*.

Another advantage of the 'by surfacing' interpretation over the earlier 'by transposition' one is that it is even *more* "direct and in its own terms". By this account, 'doing philosophy' is *in* 'doing research' and *vice versa*. Or, returning to my interpretation of the coin analogy which I transformed into my IDEAS-INQUIRY interpretive framework, we could also say here that 'doing philosophy' and 'doing research' are two sides (two *surfaces!*) of the same coin. Although we may only see one side at a time, they are inseparable and to repeat Lipman's observation, it is the entire coin that has purchase power.

Chapter overview. In this chapter I [Sigma] *surface* the philosophical in the research (and *vice versa*) by identifying class philosophy 'inquiry moves' which in a research context are 'research acts'. In 4.1 *Co-researching Stories* Research Acts, I begin by presenting an overview of the range and variety of 'philosophical inquiry moves' which, in my interpretation, surface as 'research acts' in each of the six sets of *Co-researching Stories*. Then in subsequent sections, from this range I select four categories of philosophical inquiry research acts for a closer look and I present these with reference to relevant literature and illustrative verbatim data from the *Stories*. In 4.2 Research Actors, I portray the children co-researchers as reflexively 'self-corrective' and 'educative' research actors by identifying and providing examples from the data of philosophical inquiry moves they make. In 4.3 Idea Building Research Acts I surface philosophical inquiry research acts of generative questioning, conceptual analysis questioning and building on and with each others' ideas. In 4.4 Philosophical Interviewing Research Acts, this time I reverse the process and surface the *philosophical* in the research act of interviewing. And in 4.5 Advancing the Inquiry Research Acts, I surface the philosophical inquiry research acts that serve to advance an inquiry

namely the writing of research 'blurbs' (or 'theoretical memos') and 'concept mapping' (or 'using operational visual devices').

4.1 Co-researching Stories Research Acts

In this first section I present an overview of the range and variety of (class philosophy) 'inquiry moves' which, I argue, surface as 'research acts' when performed in a research context.

Stories: Introduction — 'Self-corrective' Research Acts. As research 'agents', children with experience in doing philosophy make reflexive philosophical inquiry moves of 'self-correction' as featured in community of inquiry dialogue and discussion and these, I argue, surface as self-corrective and educative research acts. (*Stories Introduction: Introducing the Co-researchers*).

Stories 1: Self-empowerment and idea building research acts. The co-researchers' community of inquiry moves of 'participating in the setting of the discussion agenda' surface as self-empowerment research acts of 'taking ownership of the research process'. Their class philosophy inquiry moves of 'raising questions after reading a text' surface as 'generating research questions from a research topic'. And, when addressing the questions raised, class philosophical discussion moves of 'building on each others ideas' surface as research acts of 'generative questioning', thereby producing new ideas and fresh insights as the co-researchers build theories together. (*Stories 1: Starting Up*).

Stories 2: Philosophical interviewing research acts. The co-researchers' experience with 'philosophical dialogue' (in which everyone who has something to say has an equitable opportunity to contribute ideas) surfaces as research acts of 'dialogic interviewing' (in which the interviewer/interviewee distinction dissolves in favour of an engagement in exploratory dialogue and which also includes the 'invention of systematic arrangements for interviewing several people at a time) thereby producing cumulative information and insights (*Stories 2: Philosophical "Blossoming"*).

Stories 3: Internal dialogue research acts. The co-researchers' philosophical inquiry habits of 'concern for relevance', of 'systematic conceptual distinction-making', of 'exploration of alternative possibilities' and of 'evaluation of appropriate authorities' (in this case dictionary writers) surface as research acts of 'keeping an investigation on course, conceptually coherent, exploratory of new ideas (however absurd they might seem at first) and referenced to appropriate 'authorities' (*Stories 3: Communicating with "Cotton Candy"*).

Stories 4: Educative research acts. The co-researchers' philosophical inquiry 'interests in their own everyday life questions' (S11: "Is there a God?") surface as reflexive research acts of 'bringing to bear the researchers' own everyday life experience'. Their philosophical inquiry 'interests in their own social issues' (S12: "Don't Talk Back!") surface as critical research acts of 'challenging social injustices'. And their 'interests in extreme possibilities' (S16: "Can you learn if you're dead?") surface as creative research acts of 'not ruling out any possibility no matter how absurd it may seem at first' (*Stories 4: Living and Learning*).

Stories 5: Making inquiry progress research acts. The co-researchers' philosophical inquiry moves of making ideas visible by 'writing blurbs, writing notes, and making diagrams and charts' surface as research acts of 'making "operational visual devices" such as writing "theoretical memos", keeping fieldnotes and making research maps' as a way of tracking the progress of the researching process. And their philosophical inquiry moves of 'conceptual investigation' surface as research acts of 'developing new concepts'. (*Stories 5: Making Inquiry Progress*).

Stories 6: Collaborative research acts. The co-researchers' philosophical inquiry moves of 'examining the linguistic root of a word in relation to their own everyday life experiences and observations' surface as research acts of 'adding depth and texture to one's understanding of an everyday life phenomenon otherwise taken for granted'. Their philosophical inquiry moves of 'thinking *up*, thinking *about* and thinking *through* examples' surface as interpretive research acts of 'grounding the investigation'. Their philosophical inquiry abilities 'to entertain (and be entertained by) conceptual confusion' surface as research acts of 'working through confusion to produce fresh or alternative understandings based on the making of subtle and fine conceptual distinctions'. Their philosophical inquiry

abilities to 'use themselves and what they are doing right now as examples' surface as research acts of 'reflexively acknowledging and interpreting their own experience as an integral part of an investigation'. Their philosophical inquiry moves of 'coming to tentative conclusions which are always subject to re-evaluation' surface as research acts of 'treating research outcomes, results and conclusions as inherently unstable while still making an important contribution to what is fundamentally an on-going and ever-changing enterprise'. And their *collaborative* philosophical inquiry abilities 'to *work with* and on *each others*' ideas in a helpful and constructive manner' surface as research acts of 'helping to make a unique contribution and of knowing how to build on and with the unique contributions of others in a given research enterprise' (*Stories 6: Collaborating Cooperatively*).

4.2 Research Actors

...children are naturally philosophical, with a passion for abstract investigation of ideas. They are also, when properly led, drawn to and capable of *reflexive investigation of their own behavior*; of talking about and questioning their own view of the world. Children can reason and reason well about their own experience. (Slade 1997, p. 2, my italics)

The children research actors in the *Co-researching Stories* ("naturally philosophical" children with their teacher) demonstrate a passion for abstract investigation of ideas. "Properly led" by their own prior and concurrent experience in doing philosophy together, as research actors in this story, they demonstrate how they are "capable of reflexive investigation of their own behaviour", "of talking about and questioning their own view[s] of the world", and how they "can reason and reason well about their own experience". Furthermore, they are *reflexive* research actors when they pay attention to their own and each others' words and ideas in a 'self-corrective' *procedural* manner. In this section I identify philosophical inquiry research acts which serve to portray the co-researchers as reflexive 'self-corrective' and 'educative' research actors.

'Self-corrective' Research Actors

. . .the knower and the known are interdependent . . . and *events are mutually shaped* . . . In addition, a key characteristic of qualitative inquiry is that the researcher functions as the data collection instrument, the human-as-instrument, to use Lincoln and Guba's (1985) term. Thus, it is imperative that qualitative researchers include themselves in a discussion of the data collection procedures. (Maykut and Morehouse 1994, p. 155, my italics)

With regard to the co-researchers as 'knowers', the *Co-researching Stories* began by Introducing the Co-researchers to provide background information pertaining to who the children (and adult) co-researchers were to be conducting this research. However, in a project which is a methodological experiment in the merging of 'self-corrective' elements of Philosophy for Children communities of inquiry with reflexive elements from qualitative research, it is all the more "imperative" that the research actors be included in a discussion of research acts. The emphasis is not *only* or *primarily* on who they are but rather on the mutual shaping that occurs in what they do and how they do it.

The seventeen children co-researchers in the *Co-researching Stories* participated in this research as 'research actors' and as such they represent philosophically experienced children who use philosophical discussion as a way of doing research. They did this by drawing on *both* their *procedural* experience of doing philosophy *and* their own *personal* life-experience. Before taking a closer look at a selection of specific research acts, first I characterize such children research actors as *self-corrective reflexive* research actors by virtue of their engagement in a 'self-corrective' process of philosophical inquiry and by how they draw on their own life experiences including the here and now.

Philosophical discussion as 'self-corrective' research acts

The most characteristic feature of inquiry, according to C. S. Peirce, is that it aims to discover its own weaknesses and rectify what is at fault in its own procedures. Inquiry, then is *self-correcting*. (Lipman 1991b, p. 121)

'Self-corrective' inquiry. There are two very important points to make about the expression 'self-corrective' as it is used in the context of the Philosophy for Children community of inquiry. The first is that the term 'self' refers not *only* or

even *primarily* to the personal 'self' but rather to the inquiry it'self'. And the second is that the term 'corrective' does *not* imply ultimate, ideal or absolute 'correctness', but rather a constant and shifting sense of 'change for the better' or 'improvement' or 'progression' as in a course correction. The discussion is 'moving' in some direction or another and the term 'correction' implies simply a shift to a 'better' direction as a sailboat might tack to stay on a particular course or indeed to change course. Like any research act, the philosophical discussion enterprise is one of critical exploration. However, having said that, the course *correcting* is put into effect by social selves in a social context. The inquiry is 'self-correcting' as Lipman puts it, by virtue of the human selves, the 'research actors' who make inquiry moves and of others who listen and respond to the moves made in such a way as to keep the inquiry moving in one direction or another.

Self-correction is/is not. Matthew Lipman described "self-correction" as the last of four "steps to be taken to make normal practice critical . . . (1) criticism of the practice of one's colleagues, (2) self-criticism, (3) correction of the practice of others, and (4) *self-correction*" (Lipman 1991b, p. 12, my italics).

Self-correction. Individuals and groups seeking to strengthen their judgment making should practice questioning others and themselves, offering counterexamples and counterarguments and looking for disconfirming evidences or testimonies. They should recognize the potential value of dissent in the community as a possible basis for correction of errors as well as the value of falsification as a method of identifying vacuous truths. (Lipman 1991b, p. 64)

Lipman distinguished "self-correction" from "self-regulation" which, he said, is closer to "self-monitoring"; and he went on to say that, "Inquiry is not merely self-regulating practice; it is self-correcting practice" (Lipman 1991b, p. 72). He listed self-correction as an attribute of 'critical thinking' which, he argued, is "*thinking that (1) facilitates judgment because it (2) relies on criteria, (3) is self-correcting, and (4) is sensitive to context*" (Lipman 1991b, p. 116, italics in original); and elsewhere he stated that "both critical and creative thinking . . . are fundamentally *self-corrective*" (Lipman 1991b, p. 72). However, citing a notion of progression which he derived from a paper by Charles S. Peirce, Lipman also distinguished 'self-correction' from 'criticism' and 'self-criticism' when he said that "members of a community that practices criticism will be able to internalize that practice as self-criticism and will *then* be in a position to move from self-criticism to self-correction" (Lipman 1991b, p. 72, Note 4, my italics).

Self-corrective research acts. In addition, Lipman listed the following as examples of “behaviours” associated with self-correction exhibited by students in a self-corrective community of inquiry — behaviours which, when exhibited in a research context, I surface as ‘research acts’:

- a. Students point out errors in each other’s thinking
- b. Students acknowledge errors in their own thinking
- c. Students disentangle ambiguous expressions in texts
- d. Students clarify vague expressions in texts
- e. Students demand reasons and criteria where none have been provided
- f. Students contend that it is wrong to take some matters for granted
- g. Students identify inconsistencies in discussions
- h. Students point out fallacious assumptions or invalid inferences in texts
- i. Students identify the commission of fallacies in formal or informal reasoning
- j. Students question whether inquiry procedures have been correctly applied.

(Lipman 1991b, p. 150)

By portraying philosophical discussion as a ‘self-corrective’ inquiry way of doing ‘research’, and by focusing on the philosophical methodology of “questioning and discussion” which is “built into the very nature of philosophy” (Lipman, Sharp, and others 1980b, p.102), I seek to encourage others to surface the philosophical in other qualitative research methodologies thereby reaching beyond Philosophy for Children communities of inquiry.

Co-researching Stories **‘Self-corrective’ Research Acts**

Interpreting the data for the *Co-researching Stories* I have identified many moments when the co-researchers were making ‘self-corrective’ inquiry moves. To illustrate what I mean by the ‘inquiry’ being the ‘self’ that is ‘corrected’ by the co-researchers, I reproduce two typical examples from our Preliminary Discussion of our Co-researcher Questions in Session 2.

Example 1.. Or as when Mariah said, “I want to bring back the point, I think it was [Yasmin] . . . ” and, thinking on her feet, she made a self-corrective discussion move by producing a counter-argument, by raising an epistemological issue, and by making two further distinctions.

Example 2.. >>> I [Alison] built on Yasmin’s baby instance by introducing a criterion of *minimum age* to which Yasmin replied, “probably under two years”. Associating this age with a baby’s *ability to talk*, I suggested this as a third criterion.

Yasmin Yeah — but it would sort of depend on the subject. Like you could talk about something like >>> yeah — something that they like and they know a lot — well, they wouldn’t know a lot about it — they’d just know . . .

Here Yasmin tentatively agreed and then continued to build on this idea by adding the qualifier that “it would sort of depend on the subject” — a fourth criterion. She tried to think of an example but had trouble thinking of something specific and instead produced another qualifier (“something that they . . . know a lot”). Then she immediately self-corrected when she qualified her own qualifier: “well, they wouldn’t know a *lot* about it, they’d just know . . . ” thereby providing a fifth criterion, *the ability to know*.

In the data there are countless other examples of ‘self-corrective’ inquiry research acts by many (if not all) of the children research actors — from as early as the very first discussion. I take this to be evidence of Lipman’s observation about children with philosophical community of inquiry experience.

... the members of the community begin looking for and correcting each other’s methods and procedures. Consequently, insofar as each participant is able to internalize the methodology of the community as a whole, each is able to become self-correcting in his or her own thinking. (Lipman 1991b, p. 121)

It is internalized dialogue in this procedural sense and as demonstrated by the children in the *Co-researching Stories* which I surface as self-corrective research acts.

'Educative' Research Actors

In calling for educative research, we propose two things: first, that the research fosters the establishment of a dialogical community, which we see as intimately tied to democratic and egalitarian interests, and, second, that it contribute to rather than stand outside of these interests. (Gitlin, Siegel, and others 1989/1993, p. 203)

"Educative" Research. Having articulated the ways in which engaging in philosophical discussion is a 'self-corrective' and 'reflexive' way of doing research, next I turn my attention outward to emancipatory considerations of how children who engage in co-research using philosophical discussion are engaged in acts of "educative" research.

Our research has both a kinship with and a contribution to make to what Gitlin, Siegel and Boru referred to as "educative research" — the term they used for *their* contribution to a reconceptualization of research "so that those connected to schools can begin to change schooling in emancipatory ways" (Gitlin, Siegel, and others 1989/1993, p. 192). Arguing that "methodological issues are substantive as well" (p. 193), they emphasized "the relation between method and what the researcher is trying to achieve through the method — its political moment" (p. 192). In proposing "educative research", these researchers' intention was "to build on an emerging body of work . . . [that] is historically rooted in the concept of action research, first articulated by Kurt Lewin in the 1940s, further developed by Lawrence Stenhouse in the 1970s, and currently being addressed by such scholars as Wilfred Carr and Stephen Kemmis" (p. 192).

Co-researching Stories

Educative Research Acts

The method of researching from the margins involves two interrelated processes which connect the personal and political. First, research from the margins requires intersubjectivity: an *authentic dialogue between all participants in the research process* in which *all are respected as equally knowing subjects*. And second it requires *critical reflection* . . . (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 28, my italics)

In the Session 12 "Don't Talk Back!" segment of *Stories 4 – Living and Learning*, the co-researchers carried on an emancipatory agenda throughout an

otherwise conceptual investigation. In so doing they provided an example of what it can mean for children to be involved in "two interrelated processes which connect the personal and political". One was the critical and theoretical process of making conceptual distinctions between different kinds of talk using the list of different forms of group talk that I had provided ("Same/Different. . .?"). The other was a personal and political process of critically reflecting on a social talk situation which, from the children's perspective, is unfair and ought to change. The data from the verbatim transcript of this session also provide a representative example of co-researcher "intersubjectivity", of "authentic dialogue between all participants", and of "a research process in which all are respected as equally knowing subjects" who are engaged in "critical reflection" from the margins (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 28).

Talking Back!

In Session 12 my co-researchers were very animated in their exploration of the phenomenon whereby adults (often for no apparent reason from the children's perspective) control children with the use of the phrases like, "Don't talk back!" and "Don't interrupt!" They objected repeatedly that it was a one-way phrase which children could not use when equally warranted without negative consequences (such as being sent to their rooms). Although their life-experience with this phenomenon fueled the animation with which they discussed the issues, and although many complaints of injustice were expressed, this discussion was much more than a beef session. It was also an inquiry which led to observations regarding the unjustified use of language (by adults) for the express purpose of controlling (children's) behaviour.

What I found intriguing when I worked with the data for this session was how, despite their complaints that they could *not* talk back, this was an instance of the *children* talking back while *at the same time* working on making distinctions between different forms of group talk in an effort to say whether and how they resemble class philosophy discussion. Consider, for example, the following list of statements and observations which I extracted from the data and grouped under the two headings.

Under 1—"Don't talk back!" I list the observations the co-researchers made with regard to the injustices that bothered them.

1—"Don't Talk Back!"

1. *Talking back/'Discussion'*. When parents say, "Don't talk back!" to a child, they also do not allow 'discussion' [Amber]
2. When a child 'talks back' to a parent it is *not* a 'discussion'. [Chorus]
3. *Talking back — to children*. When parents "think that they can talk whenever they want" [Staci], "It's sort of talking back *to children*" [Staci].
4. *Not interrupting*. When I was "just expressing my opinion or comment", I was "not really interrupting cuz they stopped" — "I was sort of asking them" [Staci].
5. *Speaking procedures*. If somebody "*does that*" [speaks out] in philosophy [class], someone says that it's not your turn and you have to get on the list [Staci].
6. *Speaking opportunities*. People (adults/children) have different opportunities to speak [Alison] — "but I don't think they *should*" [Staci].
7. *Talking back to parents only*. "the reason why >>> Staci was saying that she doesn't talk back to anybody else apart from her parents is because — she's used to her parents — I mean, she's known her parents ever since when she was born" and "—some people she might feel a bit more shy—" [Daisy]. "So the more >>> familiar you are with somebody, the more likely you are to —" [Alison].
8. *Not knowing the difference between two kinds of 'talking back'*. But >>> I don't think my mother knows the difference [between two kinds of 'talking back']. It seems like — when I'm just trying to — tell her, "Well that's not fair" — and she says, "Don't talk back to me." >>> I don't know >>> when's the difference — like — when should I and when shouldn't I? [Amber].

Then under the second heading, 2 – "Same/Different. . .?", while still keeping the "Don't Talk Back!" theme going, I list conceptual distinctions they made between different kinds of talk. This list is further grouped under two subheadings: 2.1 Making Distinctions, and 2.2 It Depends Who You Talk To. Unlike other discussions in which we thought up different examples with which to think, in this discussion the "Don't Talk Back!" example kept drawing the co-researchers to it and lurks throughout whether on or between the lines.

2 – "Same/Different. . .?"

2.1 - Making Distinctions

9. *'Getting point across' / 'Argument' / 'Quarrel'*. Talking back' is rather "Trying to get your point across" [Whoopy]; "an argument" [Amber?]; or "a quarrel" [Daisy].

10. *CPI [D4L]. Collaborative philosophical inquiry is "what we do in philosophy class — when it's — at its best?" [Alison]*
11. *'Conversation' / 'Fight' / 'Argument'. What happens around a dinner table is a 'conversation' [Alison] which can sometimes turn into a 'fight' or an 'argument' [Staci].*
12. *Communication. "What's the difference between 'conversation', 'chat', 'quarrel', 'argument' , >>> 'debate', 'gossip', >>> 'dialogue', 'talking', 'discussion' and 'communication'?" [Daisy]. "They're all communication" [Daisy].*
13. *Brainstorming is not communication? 'Brainstorming' is not communication because "usually — you do that — in your head" . . . "—it's thinking—" [Daisy]. "The kind of thing that we do — in 'Questions Arising' in class is also 'brainstorming' — where you try to get as many ideas as you can as fast as you can" (out loud) [Alison].*
14. *Two kinds of 'talking back'. "Is there such thing as 'talking back'? >>> Doesn't everybody talk back [as when] I say "Hi" and then you say, "Hi >>> " [Amber]. "One's an expression and one's not" [Alison]. "Don't talk to me" means "keep going and you're in trouble, right?" [Alison]. "But the other kind of 'talking back' >>> doesn't mean *that*" [Alison].*
15. *Small talk. Also there's 'small talk' [Amber]. An example is >>> boyfriend/girlfriend when >>> they're very shy — and they go 'Hi' and the other friend goes, 'Hi' — [Alison chuckles.] >>> 'How—Weather's nice eh?' 'Yeah.' Like — just little things like that [Amber]. "Right. When you don't know what else to say but you need to say something" [Alison].*

2.2 – It Depends Who You Talk To

16. *Who you talk to makes a difference. "There's a difference when you talk to different people" [Staci].*
17. *Family or Not Family? Who you might talk back to in a 'fight' or 'argument' depends *not* on whether they are 'family' or 'not family' members, but rather on "who the people are you are talking to" [Alison; Staci]. Example: grandparents who are "still family" [Staci].*
18. *Parents/Children ~ Classmates. "It has more to do with the fact that it's a parents and children situation" — "whereas in a CPI discussion [the participants are] all your classmates and me" — "It's not a similar situation" [Alison]. Between classmates there is "probably" not as much yelling and hostility because they are *friends* who *like* each other [Staci].*
19. *Respect. There is "more respect" [in a CPI disagreement] among classmates [Alison; Staci]; while [in a similar conversation with parents] they would say, "Well you should have more respect for your elders" [Staci].*
20. *'Parents' with 'Classmates'. If parents came to a philosophy class, like on the Oprah show they would start going Boo or Yeah at the good and bad points [Staci]; or nobody would talk [Whoopy]; if I was saying something about parents that wasn't exactly in their favour they might*

not be happy and would say, "Well, kids have no respect for adults" [Staci].

21. *"Adults are not more special than kids just because they're older"* [Staci]. "They're just taller" [Whoopy] and "they've lived longer" [Staci].
22. *How long you've known someone.* It's not how long you've known someone that counts ("I've known my grandparents as long as my parents" [Staci]; and "I might not have known [my classmates] as long as I've known my parents [Staci]. Rather "I have a better relationship with the people I *don't* see that much [Staci , my italics].
23. *Discussion subjects.* The subjects of conversations between children and their parents are different from those between children and their friends: "usually when I'm with my friends we talk about different subjects than when I'm with my dad" [Staci]. The subjects of both are important: "The stuff I talk about is important too but — with my dad it's sort of like >>> it's not like I'm talking with a *friend*" [Staci]. The "subjects of the conversations would be different" >>> "in family conversations compared to conversations you would have with a friend" [Alison]. "— with my best friend" [Staci].
24. *To whom you would say what.* "I wouldn't say really personal stuff to my teacher [than] I would say to my parents" [Daisy]; "There are *some* things that you would say to *some* people and not others [Alison]; and "I wouldn't say 'I hate everyone in the world and I want to kill myself' to my teacher >>> I wouldn't say that to my mom either — but I'd say 'I'm really depressed' [to my mom]. You wouldn't say 'I'm depressed' to your *teacher* really." [Daisy].
25. *Talking to a teacher.* You *could* talk to a teacher [about being depressed] [Arachnid]. The teacher might be your parent; you wouldn't *have* to talk *in* school; or the teacher might also be a social worker to whom you *would* talk "like *that*".

Sigma research notes reflections. When I wrote up my Sigma research notes for this session, my primary [Sigma] concern was for the productivity of the discussion in terms of the "Same/Different. . .?" list.

It was a good productive session which stayed pretty much on a meta-level. From time to time they would put two kinds together and see if they could say was the same or different but they did not do so in any methodical way such that all the options got dealt with. On the other hand, they did come up with new ones to add to the list and they seemed to be quite into it although there were moments when there was no one waiting to speak.

[D/S12/92.12.10Th/DRG/Sigma Research Notes]

Although sympathetic to my co-researchers' complaints about adult injustices, as 'Sigma', the *adult* co-researcher, they were secondary issues. When I *did* write about the personal/political aspects of the discussion, I described it as "a problem for me".

Personal discussion. *It seemed to me that some of this touched a nerve with them in very personal terms. Their frame of reference, without any prodding, was so-called 'discussions' at home and the double standard that parents often seem to resort to using. As such, many of their examples were personal — problematically so for me although not so for them. It was almost a revelation for some to see that their problems with discussions at home were not unique. At the same time, it seems to me that at least one was out to sabotage the discussions at home whenever she could. What to do with this?*

[D/S12/92.12.10Th/DRG/Sigma Research Notes]

Then I wrote some observations about how, by Session 12, "they don't really use CPI as a point of reference".

It is as if it represents to them nothing clearly distinguishable from other kinds of discussions they have. This could be because they have been involved in this kind of discussion since their early days in school and it is so much part of their understanding of what it is to discuss that the relationship to other kinds is seamless?

[D/S12/92.12.10Th/DRG/Sigma Research Notes]

I made a note to come back to this issue after analyzing the transcript. However, unable to wait, I speculated further. Writing that "I'm not sure they see what's different at all", I went on to speculate that maybe a reason why they *don't* pick up on "CPI" or "D4L" might be a *language* issue.

... perhaps it has to do with the absence of meta-language with respect to the form. They are not familiar with the expression "community of inquiry" because we just do it, we don't name it. In fact, it was interesting to me that they didn't seem to know, either from our [class philosophy] work or from their own life-experience, the meaning of the term 'inquiry'...

[D/S12/92.12.10Th/DRG/Sigma Research Notes]

Only as an "afterthought" did I return to the *personal* dimension of this discussion and even then it had nothing to do with the actual *issues* they were discussing. Rather it seems that I was concerned with *procedural* and *research* issues in a way that would be protective of the *parents*.

Afterthoughts.

Use of the personal. *Dilemma. Should I remind them to use fictitious characters in the research discussions or should I rather observe what they do? The fact that they themselves have pseudonyms should at least put a buffer in between as if automatic fictitious characters? If I were to remind them, would that be being inappropriately interventionist in the research? But these are co-researchers not research subjects. On those grounds, I think I will. It can take the form of helping them to generalize by simply replacing "my" parents with "some" parents — rather than "fictitious character's" parents. There, that should do it. See what happens, if it 'takes'.*

[D/S12/92.12.10Th/DRG/Sigma Research Notes]

That interpretation would not tell the whole story, however. For the *point* of using fictitious characters is to protect *everyone's* privacy, not just the parents — and this to *free up* the participants to be able to say what is *really* on their minds by expressing it as a larger, more general issue — not *just* a personal issue. Now, having spent time with the transcript I see this discussion as representative of a whole range of *possible* discussions *about* the personal and political matters that impact the lives of children — a kind of discussion that is still all too rare in children's experience.

Educative research from the margins. It could be argued that this "Don't Talk Back!" episode from the Session 12 data is a "political moment" missed — an instance of how schools "reproduce inequalities". Despite all my efforts to act as *co-researcher with* my students, to work *for* emancipatory change, even *I* missed this political moment. However, that need not change my purpose to work for emancipatory change from (and for) the margins. Rather it underlines it. And I take as a positive sign the way the children managed to make their voices heard throughout what was otherwise a conceptual investigation. That speaks loudly *for* philosophical discussion as a way of doing research, as a way of doing *educative* research. And it also speaks to the need "to build on an emerging body of work that is attempting to reconceptualize research. . .so that those connected to schools can begin to change schooling in emancipatory ways (Gitlin, Siegel, and others 1989/1993, p. 192)

4.3 Idea Building Research Acts

In the *Co-researching Stories* the co-researchers' philosophical inquiry moves of 'raising questions', 'building on each others' ideas' and 'thinking with concepts', from the very beginning and throughout the project, I surface as research acts of 'generative questioning' and 'conceptual analysis questioning'.

Generative Questioning

In *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists* Strauss advocated "a particular style of qualitative analysis of data (*grounded theory*), a mode of analysis which is "designed especially for *generating and testing theory*" (Strauss 1987,

p. xi, author's italics). Stating that he had tried "to address the issues of *how* one does theoretically informed interpretations of materials, and does them efficiently and effectively", Strauss pointed out that "traditionally researchers learn such analysis by trial and error, or by working with more experienced people on research projects" (p. xi). He wrote this handbook, he said, to provide "detailed discussions of basic analytic procedures" and "rules of thumb for proceeding with them" (p. xi). He went on to say that this mode of analysis is "perfectly learnable by any competent social researcher who wishes to interpret data using this mode", and that "it takes no special genius to do that analysis effectively" (p. xiii).

At the same time, Strauss also added that "when students are first learning it, they often listen in awe to their teacher-researcher and mutter about his or her genius at this kind of work, but despair of their own capacities for doing it. They never could!" (p. xiii). Then he reassured his readers that "learning this mode of qualitative analysis is entirely feasible. Like any set of skills, the learning involves hard work, persistence, and some not always entirely pleasurable experience" (p. xiii). Raising generative questions is the skill Strauss put first on his list of "things especially worth noting about the basic research work processes . . ." (Strauss 1987, p. 17):

First, the raising of generative questions is essential to making distinctions and comparisons; thinking about possible hypotheses, concepts, and their relationships; sampling, and the like. These come from examination and thinking about the data, often in conjunction with experiential data. The original generative question may come from insight, which actually sparks interest in an aspect of some phenomenon and thus challenges the researchers to study "it". But these insights occur along the course of the study (although perhaps especially in the earlier phases), and open up questions about other phenomena or other aspects of the same phenomena. (Strauss 1987, p. 17, author's italics)

According to Strauss, generative questions "open up whole avenues of inquiry — over the next minutes, hours, even days" and are "not identical with" very good analytic questions which "most novices can learn fairly quickly to ask . . . of their own and other persons' data" (Strauss 1987, p. 272).

Generative questions. questions that stimulate the line of investigation to profitable directions; they lead to hypotheses, useful comparisons, the collection of certain classes of data, even to general lines of attack on potentially important problems. (Strauss 1987, p. 22)

"The key element" in "the generation of far-reaching analytic questions", Strauss explained, is "facility in thinking *comparatively* (whether with examples drawn from the scholarly literature, from one's data, or from personal experience) . . . " (Strauss 1987, p. 272, author's italics).

Said another way, it is a skill at thinking in terms of variations, that never settles for one answer, but always presses on with the query of "under what specific (and different) conditions?" (Strauss 1987, pp. 272-3)

The raising of generative questions, Strauss pointed out, is at one extreme "a consequence of much experience" and at the other a "gift" (p. 271). It is something "most novices can learn fairly quickly" although some are "slow to learn" (p. 272).

Some students quickly display the ability to raise questions that precipitate fertile discussion. Some never seem to learn how to do this. (Strauss 1987, p. 272)

Sometimes, he wrote, "it is a psychological matter: basically, encouraging the uncertain and the shy to try their wings, and then pointing out how successful their query has been in laying the groundwork for succeeding analytic discussion" (p. 272). Others, he thought, "have an instinct for the analytic jugular":

They ask the right questions at the right times; and they usually know both that they can do this, having done it often before, and are doing it right now in all probability. (Strauss 1987, p. 272)

According to Strauss, the skill of generative questioning can be learned and improved although, "As teachers, we do not really yet know how to develop this ability in persons slow to learn, or how to improve the abilities of those who speedily begin to ask generative questions" (Strauss 1987, p. 272). He did, however, have suggestions for what research instructors could do which included psychological encouragement, pointing out the success of particular questions, rephrasing questions to make them "more striking or attackable" or bringing participants back to a potentially generative query and ask them to "think about that and its implications" or retracing a discussion "pointing out the role of the initial query and how it was formulated" (p. 272).

Strauss also indicated that generative questioning was a skill for which one could train oneself:

In this regard, young analysts should train themselves to think analytically about what they see, hear, experience, read about in the course of their daily lives. This is an indispensable training for raising generative questions when doing explicit analysis — with emphasis on variation — of data. (Strauss 1987, p. 272-3)

He thought reading or “being bathed in the technical literature” could help although he conceded that “certainly not everyone who is well read is an exceptional, let alone even a competent analyst” (Strauss 1987, p. 272).

Sigma reflections. As mentioned in the Introduction,¹⁶⁰ while reading this book I was surprised by how often Strauss described as *difficult*, research skills which, as demonstrated in the *Co-researching Stories*, children with philosophical discussion experience execute with ease. I attribute this to the fact that the kind of training that Strauss said is needed closely resembles the training that the Philosophy for Children program provides. This point makes sense given that Strauss acknowledged as his sources of inspiration, John Dewey and Charles S. Peirce “whose thinking pervades the grounded theory approach to qualitative analysis”(p. 110) — the two American Pragmatist philosophers who have also been the sources of inspiration for Matthew Lipman and therefore Philosophy for Children.

¹⁶⁰ See Three Ways of ‘Answering’ the Dissertation Research Question under 1.6 ‘Answering’ the Dissertation Research Question’ in Chapter 1. Introduction.

Conceptual Analysis Questioning

In addition to 'generative questioning', we also explored our research questions using conceptual analysis techniques which were a philosophical component of the conceptual baggage that I brought to this project. I first learned about these techniques during my own initiation to philosophy in a summer course in moral education taught by John Wilson, the author of *Thinking with Concepts* (Wilson 1963/1987) — a book written for use by British "sixth form" (senior secondary) students and which is still in use as a primary text in introductory philosophy courses (Miller 1996, p. 55) . Although I had *not* taught these techniques to my co-researchers, in my Sigma interpretation of our verbatim data I have identified many instances of their use in the *Co-researching Stories*. In what follows, I summarize eleven techniques Wilson described and which, in my interpretation of the data, I surface as research acts.

Conceptual analysis techniques

In the preface to *Thinking with Concepts*, Wilson described the technique he called "the analysis of concepts" as "a coherent technique of thought" which could be applied over a wide field (p. vii). He presented conceptual analysis as "a specialised subject in its own right, with its own techniques" and said that they are techniques that "can in fact be taught and learned quite easily" (p. viii). He described the individual conceptual analysis techniques this way:

They are not like 'subjects' such as Latin or mathematics, which have clear-cut and well-defined rules, and in which answers are indisputably right or wrong. They are rather more like specific skills such as the ability to swim well or play a good game of football. But they are most of all like general skills which have wide application, such as the skills we refer to when we talk of 'seamanship', or 'having a good eye', or 'being able to express oneself'. (Wilson 1963/1987, pp. 1-2)

Wilson described the techniques of conceptual analysis under eleven headings. He began with the importance of (1) "*Isolating questions of concept*" and dealing with them first (pp. 23-24). Then under (2) "*Right answers*" he talked about how questions of concept "do not have any single, clear-cut solutions" and often have "the opening move 'It depends what you mean by . . . '" (pp. 24-27).

Next Wilson described the conceptual analysis techniques of imagining five kinds of "cases" of a concept:

- (3) *Model cases* — (also referred to as "classic cases") — "an instance which we are absolutely sure is an instance of the concept, something of which we could say 'Well, if *that* isn't an example of so-and-so, then nothing is.' . . . We can then look at the features of the case and try and see which are the essential [or typical] features in virtue of which we can and do correctly use the word ['x'] to describe it" (pp. 28-29);
- (4) *Contrary cases* — "an opposite method, taking cases of which we can say 'Well, whatever so-and-so is, *that* certainly isn't an instance of it.' They are classic cases of the *opposite* of the concept being analyzed and we look at them in the same way, to see what makes them *not* a case of x. (pp. 29-30);
- (5) *Related cases* — "other concepts which are related to it, similar to it, or in some way importantly connected with it . . . it is difficult to grasp one concept without seeing how it fits into the network or constellation of concepts of which it is a part" (pp. 30-31);
- (6) *Borderline cases* — "those cases where we are *not* sure, and see what we would say about them" . . . "The point of all these cases is to elucidate the nature of the concept by continually facing ourselves with different cases which lie on the borderline of the concept: what we might call *odd* or *queer* cases. By seeing what makes them odd or queer, we come to see why the true cases are not odd or queer, and hence what makes them true cases — what the central criteria of the concept really are." (p. 31); and
- (7) *Invented cases* — "Sometimes it is necessary to invent cases which are in practice quite outside our ordinary experience, simply because our ordinary experience does not provide us with enough different instances to clarify the concept . . . if we want to find out the essential criteria for the concept, we have to face ourselves with other cases, which will necessarily be imaginary and remind us more of science-fiction than real life. . . . but the exercise in imagination is useful for understanding our actual experience. For the analysis of concepts is essentially an imaginative process: certainly it is more of an art than a science." (pp. 32-33).

On a more general level, Wilson also talked about the importance of taking into account the following:

- (8) the *Social context* within which the question arose — "Since language is not used in a vacuum, we must beware of thinking and talking as if questions involving general concepts were usually asked in papers set for examinations: in fact they are usually asked in everyday life, under the pressure of particular circumstances. The nature of these circumstances is very important to understanding the concepts. Hence we need to imagine, in the case of any statement, *who* would be likely to make such a statement, *why* he would want to make it, *when* he would most naturally make it, and so forth." (p. 33);

- (9) the *Underlying anxiety* that is often generated by conceptual questions — “Closely connected with the importance of looking at the social context of a question or statement is the importance of considering the mood or feelings of the person who makes it. Conceptual or philosophical questions often arise because of some underlying anxiety: certain features of life seem somehow to threaten the way in which we had always thought, and hence give us a feeling of insecurity.” (p. 34);
- (10) *Practical results* in everyday life of answering the question in one way or another — “Since conceptual questions are often misleading, in the sense that we cannot say without qualification that they have ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers, we may often wonder whether perhaps some such questions have any point or meaning at all. . . . sometimes we can only make a guess at the point and meaning: and one of the ways in which we can make our guesses intelligent rather than wild is to see what the practical results, in everyday life, would be if we answered ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ to the question.” (pp. 34-36); and
- (11) *Results in language* — “ Since words are not used without ambiguity, and it is not always possible to say what ‘*the*’ meaning of a word is, we may often be left with . . . a situation in which we have to say ‘Well, if you mean *abc* by so-and-so, then the answer is this: but if you mean *xyz*, then the answer is that’. We can, in fact, go further than this. For even where words are so vague that they cannot be said to have a central meaning, it is still possible to say that it is more sensible or useful to adopt some meanings rather than others. [It is also possible to] have tied down the word so tightly and restricted it so severely that it does no work for us . . . we have to look at the ‘results in language’ when choosing meanings for words or delimiting areas for concepts: we have to pick the most *useful* criteria for the concept.” (pp. 36-37). (Wilson 1963/1987, pp. 23-39)

Building On and With Each Other’s Ideas

In class philosophy and research discussions which go well, there is an energetic movement of ideas which, in my recent practice, I have come to characterize as a kite in flight. In teaching young children how to have productive philosophical discussions, I have encouraged them to recognize that it takes work to get a kite to fly and once in the air it is subject both to air currents (IDEAS) and to our own string pulling (INQUIRY) in order to achieve glorious flight. When there are interruptions to the flow of thought we say, “the kite isn’t getting off the ground” or, if airborne, “the kite is (falling) down”. In the *Co-researching Stories* the kite flew frequently. Sometimes, as in the Cotton Candy Story sequence, its flight was energetic and lively. Sometimes, as in *Stories 5 – Session 27: Mapping ‘Inquiry’*, it was steady and determined. And there were also times when we flew several different kites at once both separately and in tandem as in *Stories 1 – Session 2*. In what follows I take a closer look at Matthew Lipman’s interpretation of how

schema theory can help to explain the energy and 'requiredness' of the dialogical creative thinking which goes into philosophical kite flying.

Like each tug on a kite string, according to Lipman, "the source of the schema's energy lies in the fact that every new detail that it incorporates has an impact and effect upon every other element" (p. 220).

Whatever happens anywhere affects what happens everywhere, in contrast to a mechanical organization of inert particles, such as a bucket of sawdust, where the addition of a particle has virtually no effect on the rest. In a story, which is in many ways the idea form of schema, every detail counts and adds to the quality of the whole. (Lipman 1991b, p. 220)

Relating notions of "requiredness" in schema theory to thinking skills curricula, Lipman observed that ". . . classroom dialogue evokes inventive thinking from the participants. Indeed, it has a Gestalt character that *requires* their participation and their creative contributions. (The educational power of this demand character should not be overlooked.)" (Lipman 1991b, p. 90, author's italics)

When children together build a house of blocks, there is a recognition that as the house begins to take shape it begins to lead a kind of life of its own to which some construction ideas are appropriate and others are inappropriate. Each added block restructures the developing house and slightly alters its demand character. New ideas are thereby evoked, which the house may or may not tolerate. What is important, in any case, is that the children are building with ideas as well as with blocks, they are *building on each other's ideas* as well as on each other's blocks, and they are together learning to take into account the creative requiredness of schemata they themselves create. (Lipman 1991b, p. 90, my italics)

In terms of our kite analogy these same points can be made by thinking in terms not of a house beginning to take shape but of a kite beginning to take flight. It too "begins to lead a kind of life of its own to which some [string manoeuvres] are appropriate and others are inappropriate"; and the children holding the strings influence the flight path of the kite with their ideas as they too learn take into account each the consequences of their moves on the kite's course. In dialogical terms we would have to imagine two people at the strings helping the kite/ideas to soar in new and interesting directions which are the result of both their actions cumulatively and in sequence.

Co-researching Stories

Idea Building Research Acts

As already indicated, one of the defining characteristics of a philosophical discussion according to Matthew Lipman is that it be 'productive' in the sense of 'making progress' — a sense of progress which should be recognizable to the participants.¹⁶¹ Similarly in research we expect there to be 'discoveries', 'breakthroughs', 'findings', 'outcomes' or 'results'. In what follows, I provide *Co-researching Stories* examples of generative questioning, conceptual analysis questioning and building on each others' ideas research acts and also examples of the kinds of 'progress' or 'outcomes' which they can yield.

Building on each other's ideas & questions from questions

In Session 2 we generated fourteen Co-researcher Questions from the research topic, "Discussion for Learning". Then in the preliminary discussion of those questions and using philosophical discussion, we generated further questions and built on each other's ideas. In so doing we demonstrated many of the complexities of what counts as participating in a discussion (for learning) — as indicated by the "multiple parallel discussions" and "multiple points of entry" to a discussion patterns of engagement with the questions which I also identified. These data also demonstrated how our class *philosophy* practices of building on and with each other's ideas can serve the generative questioning *research* purposes of leading to new questions and how they help to generate theory — in this instance to account for who can be said to be capable of participating in a discussion (for learning).

As an example of the kind of progress these research acts can yield, in my interpretation of data for this session I identified sixteen possible criteria for determining whether it matters who you talk to in a conversation for it to count as a discussion (for learning) that we explored. Using the data regarding whether you can have a discussion with a *baby* in dialogue segments 5 and 9A, I identified eight possible criteria for saying whether it matters who you talk to in a discussion (for learning). Then, as a result of a question Whoopy generated out of our discussion to

¹⁶¹ See "Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry" under 1.4 Research Interest in Chapter 1. Introduction.

this point, in our further explorations of whether you could have a discussion with a *plant* (in dialogue segments 9B, 10, 13, 17, 19, 21 and 22), our exploration opened up new directions of inquiry and yielded eight more possible criteria.

Sixteen Possible Criteria

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1. Ability to <i>understand</i>
(whether or not one could talk
or indicate understanding in other ways). | [Yasmin] |
| 2. Minimum/maximum <i>age</i> . (baby / elderly person) | [Yasmin] |
| 3. Ability to <i>talk</i> . | [Alison] |
| 4. The <i>subject</i> (what to talk about). | [Yasmin] |
| 5. Ability to <i>know</i> (something to talk about). | [Yasmin] |
| 6. Ability to <i>know</i> (what the other knows). | [Arachnid] |
| 7. <i>How smart</i> you are. | [Arachnid] |
| 8. <i>Who</i> you are. | [Arachnid] |
| 9. Expectation of response. | [Voice] |
| 10. Must respond in some way (need not be spoken). | [Whoopy] |
| 11. Two or more participants. | [Yasmin] |
| 12. Participants are people. | [Yasmin] |
| 13. Participants are talking not only to themselves. | [Whoopy] |
| 14. Talker's ability to figure something out for
him/herself by talking. | [Jennifer] |
| 15. Ability to respond by <i>talking</i> back. | [Kirby] |
| 16. Ability to know if the other "could kinda put it in
their head what you're saying". | [Mariah] |

In philosophical terms our considerations of whether a baby could participate in such a discussion led us to explore epistemological issues of what it is to know and to understand. And our considerations of whether you could have a discussion with plants led us to make subtle conceptual distinctions between 'understanding' and 'responding' thereby enabling us to appreciate that 'responding' *may or may not* be an indication of 'understanding'.

Conceptual analysis questioning

My own initiation to conceptual analysis techniques was a matter of recognizing that they were already a part of my thinking — a recognition that made it possible for me to use them purposefully. In class philosophy sessions there was a time when I [Judy] used to provide my young Philosophy for Children students with explicit instruction in both the techniques and the terminology of conceptual analysis using “What is a chair?” lessons I devised myself. However, I had *not* taught them to the students who were my DRG co-researchers although in DRG I did try at least twice — once in Session 9 and again in Session 23 — and I gave up both times realizing that such instruction was not needed. Using my conceptual analysis “good eye” (Wilson 1963/1987, p. 1-2), through my Sigma interpretations of our verbatim data, I have identified instances of their use by my co-researchers’ uses of conceptual analysis techniques — an indication that such techniques were an integral part not only of *my* own thinking, but of *our* thinking *together* as well.

For an example of how my co-researchers made early use of conceptual analysis techniques, I revisit Yasmin’s first intervention in *Stories 1* — Session 2:

Yasmin >>> Does it matter who you talk to? I think it does because — I mean — if you were to talk to a baby — they wouldn’t understand. Or even if you were to talk to an elderly person — you know they couldn’t under-, they wouldn’t understand either. It depends.
[VT/S02/92.10.29Th/DRG/Verbatim Transcript]

Yasmin’s baby is an example of what Wilson called a “model case”:

One of the best ways to start . . . is to pick a model case: that is, an instance which we are absolutely sure is an instance of the concept, something of which we could say ‘Well, if *that* isn’t an example of so-and-so, then nothing is’. (Wilson 1963/1987, p. 28)

In addition, when she said, “they wouldn’t understand”, Yasmin did what Wilson described next: “We can then look at the features of the case and try and see which are the essential features in virtue of which we can and do correctly use the word . . . to describe it (p. 28). In so doing, she produced our first candidate criterion for whether it matters who you talk to in a discussion (for learning): understanding. What is more, when she then talked about “an elderly person” Yasmin did next what Wilson described next!

Then we could take other model cases . . . and see if all the features we noticed in the first case are also present in the second. If they are not, it might look as if the absent features are not essential: for if they were essential, they would perhaps be present in *all* model cases. Thus we can narrow down our search for the essential features by eliminating the inessential ones. (Wilson 1963/1987, pp. 28-29)

Although I doubt that Yasmin could have articulated that she was looking for “essential” features of a “concept”, I do *not* doubt that this was what she was doing. What is more, in this her first intervention, she used other conceptual analysis techniques as well. She self-corrected when, speaking of the elderly, first she said, “you know they *couldn’t* under-, they *wouldn’t* understand either” and then added, “It depends.” It was a move that illustrates what Wilson said about “(2) ‘Right answers’”:

... questions of concept often do not have any single, clear-cut solution. We are by now used to the opening move ‘It depends what you mean by . . .’ (Wilson 1963/1987, pp. 24)

Yasmin’s “It depends” was a *closing* move and it was an “it depends *on* . . .” not the “it depends *what you mean by* . . .” to which Wilson was referring. Nevertheless, both her self-correction and her “it depends” are indications that she was working in an exploratory mode of *inquiry*. Her initial “I think it does [matter] . . .” was therefore a starting point for the exploration rather than a statement of a fixed opinion.

Example 2. Data from Session 21 during which we were reviewing the meanings of the five conceptual elements before deciding which to choose for making a second map show how, even from conceptual ground zero, we were able to make research-relevant meanings. For example in answer to the question, “What does ‘collaborative’ mean again?”, philosophical (conceptual analysis) moves which we were making without there having been any explicit DRG or class philosophy instruction on how to do this included (1) isolating and analyzing concepts in our research question by exploring its single word components one at a time; (2) breaking individual words into their component parts as a way of exploring everyday meaning; (3) using examples as a way of using the known to construct new knowledge; and (4) projecting new ‘knows’ onto related cases. Although we did not identify these as philosophical research moves at the time, they were part of the co-researchers’ philosophy repertoire and, without needing encouragement to do so, they put them to use for research purposes.

Example 3. One of the most memorable examples for me was our exploration of the concept of 'inquiry' in Session 27. This was an exploration which, as for the term 'collaboration' in Session 21, began at 'ground zero'. This time it was an entire discussion which we began with precious little mutual knowledge of the concept in question and these data show the process of knowledge construction through conceptual analysis questioning as it happened. This discussion resulted in the development of a rich and textured *concept* where there was not even a *word* at the beginning.

Our implicit uses of conceptual analysis techniques influenced our research in at least three different ways. They influenced the *what* [IDEAS] of our inquiry when (in *Stories 3* – Session 9) we began to organize our research around the five concepts of 'discussion', 'learning', 'collaboration', 'philosophy' and 'inquiry'. They influenced the *how* [INQUIRY] of our questioning and interpretation activities on a micro level. And they influenced my Sigma selection, interpretation and presentation of our data which I present in *Co-researching Stories* corresponding to our explorations of five conceptual aspects of discussion for learning as collaborative philosophical inquiry.

Ideas building — discussion (for learning)

There are countless examples of generative questioning, building on each other's ideas and thinking with concepts research acts in the *Co-researching Stories* data. To investigate the progress these idea building research acts can yield, I examined 'discussion' trajectory data from *Stories 2* – Session 5 and *Stories 3* – Session 9 and I extracted eighty-four statements, observations and distinctions we made as we were working on what counts as a 'discussion' for learning before I stopped counting, satisfied that the yield was high and that the progress we made was evident.¹⁶²

¹⁶² This list is on file in the DRG Research Files and is available on request.

4.4 Philosophical Interviewing Research Acts

In the *Co-researching Stories* some co-researchers took to the research practice of interviewing in a way that points to the surfacing of dialogical philosophical inquiry moves as research acts of interviewing. From the very beginning, even *before* Monica did a research interviewing demonstration, some co-researchers showed a high interest in and an intuitive sense of how to conduct interviews. Two of the early practice interviews had a philosophical character. One was when Yasmin tried to interview Monica in Session 6. This 'interview' started out as an information-seeking question and answer session and soon turned into a dialogue *with* Monica on teaching and learning. The other was when Einstein conducted a rather odd 'interview' with Jennifer in Session 8 and then explained to us in Session 9 that he had a hidden *philosophical* agenda for the interview he was conducting. The co-researchers' eagerness to do research interviews was a source of Sigma tension for me until the point where our work on research interviewing led to an insight which points in the direction of a *philosophically* dialogical form of research interviewing which differs from standard research interviewing practice.

Using Interview Guides & Schedules

At first I was attracted to the use of interview guides and schedules because of how, according to Bogdan and Biklen, it is "in keeping with the qualitative tradition of attempting to capture the subjects' own words and letting the analysis emerge. . ." and especially for how they "generally allow for open-ended responses and are flexible enough for the [interviewer] to note and collect data on unexpected dimensions of the topic" (Bogdan and Biklen 1992, p. 77). However, Bogdan and Biklen also expressed caution regarding the use of interview schedules and guides in qualitative research saying that they are most commonly used to gather comparable data in multisubject studies and across multiple sites in team research work. With each subject, similar data are collected such that you can "make some statements concerning the distribution of facts that you gather (Bogdan and Biklen 1992, p. 77).

While this is important in certain studies, concern with following a schedule rather than with understanding the data can undermine the major strength of the qualitative approach. Qualitative studies that report how many people do this and how many people do that, rather than generating concepts and understanding are not highly regarded by qualitative researchers. (Bogdan and Biklen 1992, p. 77-78)

Mindful of the possibility that my co-researchers might collect different opinions about philosophy rather than generate questions and concepts through their interviewing, I was reluctant to encourage them to pursue their intense interest in interviewing until I was in a better position to guide them.

My co-researchers did not wait for me, however, and I now see the work they did on making their own interview guides as important *not* so much in terms of data gathering instruments but rather as a further indication of how children with a philosophical background use philosophical discussion inquiry moves in research acts of research interviewing. In what follows, in order to provide a context for my [Sigma] hesitations, and in order to interpret the interviewing work my co-researchers did, I describe three ways of conducting interviews as presented in the qualitative literature that was influencing my response to my co-researchers at the time.

Three interview formats

Maykut and Morehouse talked about the use of interview guides and schedules as a way of influencing the "shape that an interview can take" (Maykut and Morehouse 1994, p. 81). In particular they noted that there are a variety of interview formats ranging in degree of structure depending on "the extent to which the questions to be asked of the interviewee are developed prior to the interview" (Maykut and Morehouse 1994, p. 81) and they described three main interview formats which all share the "critical commonality" of open-ended questions (p. 81): the unstructured interview, the interview guide, and the interview schedule.

Unstructured interviews are "informal conversations initiated and guided by the researcher while in the field" during which, with the focus of inquiry clearly in mind, the researcher "tactfully asks and actively listens in order to understand what is important to know about the setting and the experiences of the people in that setting"(p. 81). Since these "purposeful conversations" are "not scripted ahead of time", the inquiry they represent is made visible (a) through notes

taken during the interview, (b) by being written down and reconstructed in the interviewer's field notes, or (c) by producing verbatim transcripts of audio tape-recordings.

Whether unstructured interviews are conducted in the field or arranged, the contents of the interviews must be written down. Informal interviews in the field are reconstructed and entered into the researcher's field notes. Arranged interviews are frequently audio tape-recorded and if tape-recording is not desirable or possible, the researcher may take some notes during the interview and then reconstruct the interview afterwards. . . . (Maykut and Morehouse 1994, p. 83)

In the *Co-researching Stories* the practice interviews the co-researchers conducted with each other in Sessions 7 and 8 resembled 'unstructured interviews' and the inquiry they represent was made visible in all three ways.

Interview guides and schedules may be used when "there is more than one key question that a researcher wants to pursue in a qualitative interview" (Maykut and Morehouse 1994, p. 83). These *are* prepared in advance and Maykut and Morehouse recommended team involvement in interview development since that "can yield more interesting ideas than one might think of alone". And they suggested further that such developmental inquiry work should be made visible *during* the process:

We recommend that interview development work done with others be recorded as it happens on large pieces of easel or banner paper. Individual researchers will also benefit from putting their thinking on paper. This kind of graphic approach to interview development fosters idea-generating, synthesis and problem solving, and provides a reusable record of the individual or team work. (Sibbet 1981)(Maykut and Morehouse 1994, p. 83-5)

Keeping such a visual record of interview development, they pointed out, forms part of the "audit trail" — the cumulative and visible record of the inquiry (pp. 84-85).

Interview guides are less structured than interview schedules and, with reference to M. Q. Patton (1990), Maykut and Morehouse described them as "a relatively short set of topics (categories of inquiry) or a short set of broad open-ended questions" (Maykut and Morehouse 1994, p. 97). They described how to draft such a guide as follows:

... we suggest you develop a short set of questions for your guide. Select four to six categories of inquiry on which to base your interview questions. For each selected category of inquiry, develop one or two broad open-ended questions. Then sequence all the questions, taking into consideration the information provided above on sequencing, and your own sense of the possible. Be sure to include a personal introduction, a statement of purpose, assurances of confidentiality, etc., at the beginning of your interview guide. Draft a complete interview guide. (Maykut and Morehouse 1994, p. 97)

In the *Co-researching Stories* the sets of interview questions that the DRG co-researchers produced on their own initiative most resembled 'interview guides' in that they consisted of a series of questions related to our inquiry some of which were open-ended. In addition, without prompting, they were careful to include assurances of confidentiality at the beginning and to thank the interviewee at the end. These also served to make our inquiry visible in that they revealed the lines of questioning which the interviewers thought it important to pursue.

Interview schedules are the most structured interview format and consist of "many carefully constructed questions, follow-up questions or probes, and possibly other information for the interviewer. It is substantially longer than an interview guide and is an especially useful method of data collection for beginning researchers and research teams, to achieve some consistency in the topics of information pursued" (Maykut and Morehouse 1994, p. 97). The following are instructions Maykut and Morehouse provided for the drafting of interview schedules:

...select several categories of inquiry on which to base your interview questions. These categories will provide an overall framework for your interview schedule. For each selected category, develop several open-ended questions. Depending on your focus of inquiry, these questions may cover some or all of the types of interview questions described by Patton (1990) and one or all three time frames. It is helpful to prepare a large pool of possible questions from which to select the most promising ones for the interview schedule. Once you have selected the best questions, sequence them within their respective categories of inquiry, and sequence the categories themselves. You may need to eliminate some questions or categories of the interview because of its unwieldy length. Recall that you are trying to design an interview that will last about one-and-a-half- to two hours. After you have settled on the final items, be sure to add a personal introduction, a statement of purpose, assurances of confidentiality etc., at the beginning. Prepare a complete draft of your interview schedule. (Maykut and Morehouse 1994, p. 97)

Maykut and Morehouse included their own operational visual device to summarize their recommended procedures for drafting interview guides and schedules (Maykut and Morehouse 1994, p. 84).

For my co-researchers to be able to produce such structured and comprehensive interview schedules would have required instruction which I was reluctant to provide for two reasons. One was my own inexperience with this practice; and the second was that I was more interested in what my co-researchers could do on the basis of the skills they already had or could transfer or transform by virtue of what they could already do. Our *Co-researching Stories* interviewing was therefore limited to the use of unstructured interviews and interview guides.

Co-researching Stories

Philosophical Interviewing Research Acts

During their early attempts to conduct research interviews, two occurrences are important. One is the way in which the co-researchers invented efficient and productive interview procedures, and another is the *philosophical* agenda Einstein had for his interview with Jennifer in Session 8. The content of these interviews complements the Researcher Profiles by revealing more about who the co-researchers were to be doing this research expressed *in their own words*. Of particular interest is the reflexive awareness on the part of many of the co-researchers of when and how they “blossomed” philosophically.

Philosophical research interviewing

Einstein’s interview with Jennifer provides a striking example of what *philosophical* interviewing might look like in terms of both IDEAS and INQUIRY. It is interesting in IDEAS terms because of how, with his hidden philosophical agenda, *he* sought to ‘surface the philosophical’ in his interview with Jennifer. And it is interesting in terms of INQUIRY because of its *dialogical* characteristics.

Einstein’s philosophical interview with Jennifer

IDEAS: Recognizing the ‘philosophical’. The philosophical content in this interview can be seen in the kind of questions Einstein asked and the ways in which

Jennifer responded. In Round 3 when he asked Jennifer, "What does 'cool' mean?" Einstein was not asking her for information or for her ready-made opinion; rather he was inviting her to explore the meaning of an everyday word ('cool') by drawing on her own experience ("in your terms?"). And, despite her playful mood, in her responses Jennifer showed a concern for relevance, a willingness to try, a reflex to self-correct and a readiness to admit that she did not know ("I have no idea. I mean once —") without letting that stop her from carrying on.

In Round 5 when Einstein asked Jennifer whether she could turn ordinary questions into philosophical discussions, he provided her with what he considered to be a characteristic of what it is to do philosophy and Jennifer recognized that when she responded, "That's what >>> philosophy is. . ." before she went on to give another example of the same thing from our mutual experience ("those — condom ones").

And in Round 6 when Einstein asked Jennifer to give an explanation of "How you do philosophy" he was asking her to reflect on what he knew that she already knew how to do. Although she had some difficulty providing a cogent explanation, she did begin to answer by reflecting on her own experience. Thus, in all three rounds they were attempting to 'do philosophy' about what it is to do philosophy.

INQUIRY: Dialogic interviewing. The dialogic characteristics in these three rounds can be seen in *how Einstein questioned Jennifer* as well as in *how she responded*.

In Round 3, when Einstein asked Jennifer what she thought 'cool' is, although he framed the question in personal terms ("Do you consider yourself cool?"), he immediately rephrased the question in philosophical terms indicating that he was not asking her for an evaluation of herself. He was asking her to consult her own experience as a way of articulating the meaning of what was an everyday term for them. That is, rather than asking for information, he was inviting her to engage in a philosophical dialogue with herself about what counts as 'cool'.

Jennifer and other co-researchers responded to Einstein's question not just by answering but by dialogically questioning *him* about its relevance in a way that required him to reassure them that he had a purpose ("I have my link cut up . . ."). Then, in another move characteristic of class philosophy dialogue,

when Jennifer was having trouble articulating the meaning of 'cool', rather than state his own views, Einstein provided Jennifer with some examples-to-think-with; and he paraphrased what she said as a way of verifying his understanding while encouraging her to continue. What is important here is the way Einstein was using dialogical techniques to provoke Jennifer's *thinking* as opposed to finding out her *opinion*. And when his line of questioning did not produce the results he might have hoped for, he accepted Jennifer's response without trying to influence it unduly before terminating the round of questioning.

In Round 5, when Einstein asked Jennifer about turning ordinary questions into philosophical discussions, he again provided her with an example to think with ("Kraft Cheese and Macaroni or is it Kraft Macaroni and Cheese?") and Jennifer responded not with a 'yes' or 'no' answer and then took his example a step further (That's what philosophy is") while at the same time producing an example of her own.

And in Round 6, when Einstein asked Jennifer if she could explain how to do philosophy, after listening to her tentative responses, he dialogically pushed her to explore her own thinking further ("Is that how you do it?"). He was not judging her responses to be right or wrong; rather he was encouraging her to go further with her explanation.

What makes Einstein's questioning *philosophically* dialogical is his quest for *meaning* rather than information or 'answers'. Also worth noting is his interest in *Jennifer's* reflections on these matters using his own ideas as prompts for *her* thinking. He was not trying to 'find out' and record her opinion as he might in a survey interview. There was more purpose to his questioning than there would if they were having a 'conversation'. And he was not interested in 'debating' these issues with her. His questions came from their mutual experience of doing philosophy together and he was trying to engage her in an exploration that might lead to *additional* insights and understanding.

4.5 Advancing the Inquiry Research Acts

It is one thing to identify the progress being made in a research enterprise by analyzing the data after the fact. It is quite another to see that progress in the making. In addition to three ways I [Alison/Sigma] had suggested for making our progress visible so that we could see our own progress (*i.e.*, recording and reviewing video tapes; having and transcribing discussions of our research questions, and making conceptual research maps), another way was to think about our ideas in writing. In class philosophy I [Judy] referred to this practice as “thinking-in-writing” and in this particular year with my students we called the products of such activity “blurbs” — named after the enticing invitations to read on the backs of books.¹⁶³ A corresponding qualitative research method as described by Anselm Strauss is that of “memo” writing (Strauss 1987, p. 18). In the *Co-researching Stories* some co-researchers wrote ‘blurbs’ as a way to advance their inquiry into a particular issue or problem and these ‘blurbs’ I surface as research acts akin to the writing of ‘memos’.

Writing Research ‘Blurbs’ or ‘Theoretical Memos’

When written specifically for research purposes, our class philosophy practice of ‘blurb’ writing is analogous to what Anselm Strauss referred to as writing “theoretical memos”.

‘Blurbs’ as ‘memos’

Theoretical memos. Strauss described the writing of ‘theoretical memos’ as a way of keeping track of and continually linking and building up of theoretical ideas” (Strauss 1987, p. 18). He also explained such memos as “writing in which

¹⁶³ In my current class philosophy practice we now refer to such thinking-in-writing as “Meditations”. I changed the term from ‘blurbs’ after noticing striking similarities between our ‘blurbs’ and excerpts from *Meditations* by René Descartes as cited in an article by Anthony Kenny in *The Oxford Illustrated History of Western Philosophy* (Kenny 1994, pp. 114-15). Not only is the term ‘meditation’ more suggestive of philosophy, but it had the added advantage in a French Immersion school of being bilingual.

the researcher puts down theoretical questions, hypotheses, summary of codes, etc., — a method of keeping track of coding results and stimulating further coding and also a major means for integrating the theory” (p. 22). He identified eight different kinds of theoretical memos each of which had different features and functions.¹⁶⁴ He then added that memos vary considerably

... by phase of research project and given additional variety by the personal styles of the researcher's thought, as well as by his or her experience with the phenomena under study and with the research itself; also, by whether the researcher is working alone or with a partner or teammates. (Strauss 1987, p. 110)

After providing examples of many different kinds of memos, Strauss added, “Of course this does not exhaust the entire range of memo types, but it suggests something of *how* and *when* varieties of memos are written, as well as how they function in research projects” (p. 129).

How memos are written. The description Strauss gave of *how* memos are written reminded me of the “thinking-in-writing” blurbs I had taught my philosophy students to do (Kyle 1983b). For example, when Strauss said, “recollect that waiting for the muse to appear is not the model here” (Strauss 1987, p. 109), it reminded me of my instructions to my students *not* to think *before* they write, but to record their thoughts *as they occur*. And when Strauss talked about how “one can frequently sense the hovering presence of memos which arise out of codes and ideas generated in seminar, consultation, and team sessions”, when he wrote that “such sessions must soon be followed by a jotting down or typing out of the summary or the thoughts stimulated, just as individual researchers need to interrupt their data collecting and coding to write memos” (p. 109), and when he described memo-writing as “scattered ‘bright ideas’ . . . or just thinking aloud on paper for purposes of stimulation in order to see where that thinking will lead. . .”, I was reminded of my instructions to my students to be ready, willing and able at any time to write a blurb whenever they were inspired by an idea worth

¹⁶⁴ For more on the different kinds of memos Strauss identified, see Strauss 1987, Chapter 5. They included the following: initial, orienting memos; preliminary memos; memo sparks; memos that open attacks on new phenomena; memos on new categories; initial discovery memos; memos distinguishing between two or more categories; and memos extending the implications of a borrowed concept; additional thoughts memos; taking off from previous memos; the integrative memo; and the organizing, summary memo presented at team meetings to prompt discussion.

exploring. Just as, according to Strauss, “grounded theorists are trained to write memos regularly — often from the first days of a research project — and in close conjunction with the data collecting and coding” (p. 109), so my students had had regular class philosophy experience with blurb-writing from the time they were able to write.

Blurbs and memos as internal dialogue. Noting that memo-writers are engaged in a “continual internal dialogue”, Strauss recommended that researchers engage in memo-writing whether they work alone or with others.

Even when a researcher is working alone on a project, he or she is engaged in continual internal dialogue — for that is, after all, what thinking is. When two or more researchers are working together, however, the dialogue is overt. In any event, the memos are an essential part of those dialogues, a running record of insights, hunches, hypotheses, discussions about the implications of codes, additional thoughts, whatnot. Cumulatively, the memos add up to and feed into the final integrative statements and the writing for publications. (Strauss 1987, p. 110)

Linking ‘memo-writing’ with internal and external ‘dialogue’ and ‘discussion’, Strauss paid particular attention to “this kind of highly co-operative, even closely collaborative dialogue” as “emphasized by the American Pragmatists (especially Dewey and Peirce), whose thinking pervades the grounded theory approach to qualitative analysis” (p. 110).

Of course, this working together, discussing continually together, does not at all preclude disagreement, sharp debate, even full-fledged argument. It does put a premium, however, on the ultimate faith in the working agreements to result in “payoffs” for all the partners. (This is true even when the partners are all in one researcher’s head, as he or she works alone.) (Strauss 1987, p. 110)

Since the thinking of Peirce and Dewey also “pervades” Philosophy for Children, it is hardly surprising that children experienced in that program would take readily to the internal dialogue of memo writing in their research practice.

Research functions of blurbs/memos. Where the description of memo-writing for research purposes differs from that of blurb-writing in class philosophy is in the research orientation of the twelve “rules of thumb” for writing research memos Strauss has provided (Strauss 1987, pp. 127—128) and in the comprehensive uses of memo-writing in relation to working with data. For example, Strauss talked in general terms about writing many memos during all phases of the research.

From time to time they are taken out of the file and examined and sorted, which results in new ideas thus new memos. As research proceeds to later phases, memo writing becomes more intense, more focused, and memos are even more frequently sparked by previous memos or sum up and add to previous research. Both examination and sorting produces memos of greater scope and conceptual density. (Strauss 1987, p. 18)

And he talked about the role of memo-writing in later stages of the research process as follows:

Later memos will incorporate the results of the (early, frequent and later, occasional) microcoding; focus on emerging major categories and their relationships with each other and the minor categories; struggle with whether to choose one or more core categories; integratively summarize previous memos and coding' suggest pinpointing bits of data to fill out last points in the analysis; and so on. (Strauss 1987, pp. 109-110)

In the *Co-researching Stories* we did not use our blurb-writing in such an intensive research-oriented way. Although I was well aware of the potential of blurb-writing for research purposes, one of my Sigma tension issues was to what extent I should make this link *with* or *for* my co-researchers. I knew that blurb-writing was a class philosophy activity which they enjoyed and found to be useful for discussion purposes. However, both in class philosophy and in our research sessions I was also wary of imposing written activities on the children given my perception that students tend to consider them — negatively — to be 'work'. For the most part, therefore, I settled for light-handed prompts and encouragements and preferred to see what, if anything, they would produce — preferably on their own initiative.

Team meetings as memos. Strauss also wrote about "a special kind of memo writing which can occur when two or more researchers are discussing either data or just ideas that pertain to joint research".(Strauss 1987, p. 130)

Team meetings as memos. There is a special kind of memo writing which can occur when two or more researchers are discussing either data or just ideas that pertain to joint research. In effect their exchange can result in coding (new categories discovered, relationship among categories discussed), or a number of generative questions are raised, hypotheses are suggested, comparisons are made and perhaps explored. This kind of discussion can even occur between a solo researcher and an understanding colleague, but usually it has more focus and thrust if it occurs repeatedly between or among research teammates. Thereafter, one of the participants often will write a memo based on notes or memories of the session. . . (Strauss 1987, p. 130)

Although we were not concerned with 'coding' our data in the way in which Strauss advocated, in the *Co-researching Stories* there is a sense in which Staci's talking bear, Cotton Candy, can be seen as a form of 'coding' for the idea of 'communication with one' person. And just as Strauss described, our Cotton Candy code was the result of intensive discussion between two or more co-researchers which in turn resulted in at least two co-researchers taking the initiative to write "thereafter" blurbs (theoretical memos) based on their memories of the discussions and in attempts to sort out the issues discussed.

Co-researching Stories

Theoretical Memoing Research Acts

Although blurb/memo writing was not a regular feature of our co-researching, there were other examples almost all of which were done on the children's own initiative. Only on one occasion (*Stories 6: Collaborating Cooperatively* – Session 44) did we all sit down and write blurbs together in an effort to come to terms, finally, with the question of whether we should use 'collaborative' or 'cooperative' for the 'C' in CPI. On their own initiative Staci and Ferrari produced additional examples of doing philosophy (in writing) which I surface here as research acts of theoretical memo writing.

Example 1: Staci's "Talking Bears!" (revisited)

The 'blurb' in the Prologue which Staci wrote beginning in Session 12 (and continuing over five non-consecutive sessions) is an example of how children with philosophical experience explore ideas in writing as a way of doing research — and also how such inquiry can sustain a co-researcher's interest over time.

Two sessions after our "Cotton Candy [Cw1]" discussion in Session 10, using a computer, Staci began to type "Talking Bears!" as a way to explain to others (and to think more herself) about Cotton Candy and 'communication with one' issues.¹⁶⁵ On her own initiative each time, Staci worked on this written version of her argument until she felt it was ready for the Data File. The data she recorded on her computer log card indicate that she worked on it during five

¹⁶⁵ See the Prologue, p. 1.

non-consecutive sessions spending a total of two hours (120 minutes) on it beginning in December and ending in March.

Date	Time (Cumulative)	Time Started	Time Finished
92.12.10Th	10	3:50	4:00
93.01.21Th	40	3:25	3:55
93.03.10We	60	3:25	3:45
93.03.11Th	95	2:55	3:30
93.03.18Th	120	3:00	3:25

Figure 18. Staci's computer time log card

These data indicate that Staci began her blurb in the last ten minutes of Session 12 on Thursday, December 10, 1992. Six sessions later (Session 18) she worked on it for thirty more minutes in the last half hour of the session. Then it was not until March that she worked on it again. In Session 26 she worked on it for twenty minutes, in Session 27 she worked on it for thirty-five minutes, and in Session 28 she spent twenty-five minutes finishing it and making a print-out for the Data File.

"Talking Bears!"

In her four-paragraph blurb Staci began by addressing the reader directly. Then, in a narrative voice, she told the story of when and how her bear began to talk. Next, still addressing the reader and still in a narrative voice, she told the *research* story of how Cotton Candy came *up in* (and later came *to*) DRG. In the third paragraph she used the Cotton Candy story to theorize about 'talking to yourself' and 'communication'. And in the fourth she stated her conclusion.

In "Talking Bears!", Staci articulated a position which she had already worked out. Unlike other blurbs in which one works out one's ideas for *oneself*, she wrote this for *others* who might be skeptical about the position she was taking when, in Session 10, she kept insisting that Cotton Candy had a mind of her own and really *could* talk. At the same time, however, *by* writing a blurb for others, she still had to account for possible objections to her theory and provide plausible explanations.

When she introduced Cotton Candy in the first paragraph for example, to account for skeptical readers' probable doubts that there could be such a thing as a talking bear, she took care to say that this bear is "a very special bear" and that she is "very intelligent". So that there be no misunderstanding, addressing the reader directly, she put those doubts into the reader's mouth so that she could then insist that her bear is "an exception", that she *is* "a stuffed, talking bear", and that, "No, she does not have a talk button!".

In the second paragraph, as if to authenticate her bear further, she provided the date and circumstances of Cotton Candy's arrival and told the improbable story of how "just like that" Cotton Candy started to talk to her. Again, however, Staci recognized that the skeptical reader might not believe that and so she accounted for possible objections again by explaining that at first Cotton Candy "wasn't that great at talking". This permitted Staci to admit that "I helped her with her voice". Even after two years of "talking more and more", she admitted further that Cotton Candy had "developed a very selective vocabulary" as if to allow for the condition that there are some things that Cotton Candy can *not* say.

In the third paragraph Staci was ready to explain what all this has to do with our DRG research. Again she put doubts on the table when she told how everyone started to laugh when she brought up the subject of her bear. Then, again, she addressed those doubts and revealed the research relevance by identifying the research question that she and Ferrari had discussed in relation to Cotton Candy: "Is it communication if you are making the voice?" Then, continuing the story of how Cotton Candy actually came to DRG one day, she said, "Everyone saw that I talked to her", and then added, "but they could *also* see how I carried on a *conversation* with my bear" (my italics).

At this point she came clean and admitted that to speak to a stuffed bear is to speak to "yourself" when, again acknowledging possible doubts, she wrote, "I guess that some people don't think that having a conversation with a stuffed bear (yourself) is communication". That was the first time Staci equated talking to your stuffed bear with talking to yourself. However, when she finished that sentence, she *also* related talking to your stuffed bear with talking to someone else: "but it's *like* your having a conversation with someone *else*" (my italics). Then, recognizing that the same applies to talking to yourself *without* a bear, she articulated the theory

that was driving her whole argument: "Even if you're just talking to yourself, you are communicating to yourself, and making thoughts fit into place. . ."

Finally, she concluded her blurb by upholding her original view when she wrote, "Bear, or no bear" (*i.e.* talking to a stuffed bear *or* talking to yourself), "I still believe that talking to yourself is communication".

Although Staci may appear in this blurb to be simply defending her ready-made opinion, from an 'inquiry' perspective, by doing so in writing she has taken care to include and account for doubts and possible objections at each step of the way. Writing the blurb helped her to *confirm* the view she had been championing by laying out her argument for all to see (including herself, presumably). What I found particularly interesting was how writing the blurb also enabled her to 'admit' for the first time that when talking to her bear she was talking to herself while at the same time integrating this point into a wider theory of doing so *as if* she were talking to someone else.

Example 2: Ferrari's homework (revisited)

Other examples. The three blurbs that Ferrari did for homework¹⁶⁶ have many of the characteristics of theoretical memos as described by Strauss. He wrote them as a way of keeping track of, linking and building up theoretical ideas. He wrote as a researcher, about theoretical issues arising out of our research, and for the purpose of advancing our inquiry. They were a way for him to integrate the theory pertaining to whether and how CPI might be considered to be applicable to a person thinking by and for him/herself. They were written following DRG team meetings as a way of making sense of and furthering the work we were doing together. And they show three *different* ways in which Ferrari worked on the ideas we had discussed regarding discussion as communication (with one or more) in relation to our research questions.

¹⁶⁶ See Session 19: Making Progress — 'Homework', *Impromptu Interviews & a "Maxi-Map"* in *Stories 5: Making 'Inquiry' Progress*.

‘Concept Mapping’ or ‘Using Operational Visual Devices’

In addition to writing *words* in *blurbs* as a way of seeing and *making* progress, in the *Co-researching Stories* we also used graphic means. Much later, again while reading *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists* (Strauss 1987), I was struck by parallels I recognized between our DRG practice of making research maps and guidance Anselm Strauss provided regarding the use of “operational visual devices”. I am thinking of the “Step Chart” Daisy made and used as a way to help a discussion make progress, the seventeen research maps we made which were an outgrowth of my previous experience with concept mapping, the research notes and diagrams that individual co-researchers made in their steno pads on their own initiative. Next I outline some of those parallels from both a philosophical and a qualitative research perspective.

Before beginning, however, one important difference to note is that Strauss was writing from the perspective of a research *teacher*. It was *he* who made the diagrams and other visual devices during research seminars and individual consulting sessions as a way of helping his graduate students advance their early attempts to analyze their data and also to show them *how* to use such visual devices. In the *Co-researching Stories*, acting more as *co-researcher* [Alison] than as principal researcher [Sigma] or teacher [Judy], I did *not* make research maps *for* my students and I spent little time showing *how* to do them. When I [Judy] brought my prior experience with ‘mapping thinking’ to the project, Daisy showed particular interest in it and over the course of the project we all worked out our research mapping method together by *doing* it.

Concept mapping

Early in my first year of implementing Philosophy for Children with Grade Five children (1981), I recognized that we needed not only to say but also to ‘see’ our ideas. This is consistent with the first step of the Philosophy for Children methodology which is to make visible the ideas children raise after reading the philosophical children’s novel by writing them on a blackboard and schematizing them in some way by linking ideas that go together with lines, arrows and circles. The Philosophy for Children materials for teachers include a variety of ways to

represent ideas schematically. In my early classes we wrote our ideas on large sheets of flip-chart paper commonly used in elementary schools while more recently I do this on overhead projector transparencies.

"Mapping thinking". It was when I conducted a workshop in Lacrosse, Wisconsin with Philosophy for Children colleagues Richard Morehouse and Pieter Mostert that I learned of a specific technique Pieter referred to as "mapping thinking". As part of that workshop, participants viewed a video-taped discussion by one of my own Grade Six classes on the topic of "Children's Rights" and afterwards Pieter led us through an exercise of 'mapping' the thinking that we perceived in the video tape. In his article titled "Mapping Thinking" which formed part of the special feature we did for *Analytic Teaching* (Kyle, Morehouse, and others 1985), Pieter Mostert reproduced the introductory material which he provided for this session (Mostert 1985). Later I read more about concept mapping in *Learning How to Learn* (Novak and Gowin 1984), a classic reference in this area; and still later I learned of an extensive literature associated with concept mapping in science education.¹⁶⁷

'Mapping' metaphor

The metaphor of 'mapping' has been used by analytic educational philosophers working with concepts and also by researchers characterizing 'research'.

Philosophical concept mapping. My first encounter with the metaphor of 'mapping' with regard to concepts I can trace back to my initiation to 'doing philosophy' and my reading of John Wilson's *Thinking with Concepts*:

Questions of concept seem queer, because it is not clear how we should set about answering such questions. 'Are all men equal?' How *could* one answer this? How does one start? What would count as a proper answer? The whole thing is mysterious. 'Equal?' What do you mean, equal? Equal to what? Equal in what? What would be the point of saying that all men were equal, or that they weren't? Under what circumstances would one want to say either of these? What practical consequences would follow if one did? . . . We get the impression of a tangled ball of string which has to be carefully unwound, of a great pile of different objects which have to be sorted, or of a large area of country which we have to map. (Wilson 1963/1987, pp. 14-15)

¹⁶⁷ I am grateful to research colleagues at the National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales for providing me with a science education list of 165 references related to concept mapping.

Wilson found the simile of a map to be particularly pertinent saying that, "Making a map of a piece of country, like learning to deal with concepts, is essentially a process of becoming more self-conscious in relation to one's normal environment". Even though "we may have *used* the country for some time, in the sense that we have passed through it, and got to know our way around in it", Wilson went on, we have not become conscious of it "in the way that one needs to if one is going to make a map of it". Although "we can find our way from one town to another, and we may know that some parts of the country are hilly, others wooded, and so on", he noted, "...we cannot sketch it out on paper with any accuracy, because we do not know the country *in that particular way*". Then, "Similarly," he said, "we have all our lives worked with words, used words successfully to communicate with our fellows; but we have not become conscious of the meanings of words" (p. 15).

A few years later, Richard Peters, noted British analytic philosopher of education used the same metaphor in the very first line of his classic book, *The Concept of Education*.

In exploring the concept of education a territory is being entered where there are few signposts. To use Ryle's phrase, the 'logical geography' of concepts in the area of education has not yet been mapped . . . It is not surprising, therefore, that in presenting . . . what amounts to a bird's eye view of the contours of this territory, I have to rely mainly on my own previous attempt to map it. (Peters 1967, p. 1)

Judging by the presentation of these ideas in their respective books, the 'concept maps' both Wilson and Peters had in mind were themselves metaphors in a different sense in that, unlike geographical maps which are schematic and consist of lines and shapes and words, the *idea* of a 'concept map' was presented in *words only* by these two educational philosophers.

Mapping as a metaphor for 'research'. In a section titled "What is research?" in their self-described "How To Research" guide, *Experience, Research, Social Change: Methods from the Margins*, Sandra Kirby and Kate McKenna used the metaphor of mapping to describe what researchers *do* in exploratory research:

Researching is like embarking on a voyage of discovery. As the voyage takes place, the researcher maps or charts the process of exploration. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 43)

Using the example of exploring Canada, they said that if you were to create your own maps as you went, you would be doing research. Kirby and McKenna went *beyond* Wilson's analogy of becoming conscious of your normal environment however, when they used the metaphor of mapping to refer to the necessity to make choices during the *process* of exploratory map-making that they saw as 'research'.

How can this territory be best explored? You might choose to use only public roads. You would then limit your exploration to those areas where roads have been established. You would not be able to access many remote communities. Given these restraints, you might choose to explore the country in different ways. Choices must be made about what parts of the country are more important to explore than others and how you can record what you are observing on your explorations. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 43)

Noting that, "Good research includes making observations, recording them fully, reporting on them in an understandable way and distributing the information to others", Kirby and McKenna used the metaphor of drawing a map to spell out the characteristics of what they saw as 'good research':

Suppose you record your observations by drawing a map. There are many different ways of drawing observational maps . . . as many ways as there are ways of observing. A map with clear descriptions and conclusions would be better than one that consists of speculations. Good maps provide enough information to adequately describe, explain and generate further questions about the mapped areas. Poor maps are those which are decipherable by only a few people and which do not describe the terrain clearly enough to be of easy use. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 43)

Then, drawing the parallel between a researcher and an explorer even more tightly, they noted that the same skills are needed by both: "A researcher needs the skills of an explorer: good eyes, good ears, a clear mind and a vision of the land to be explored. The researcher also needs a method for recording her/his observations and a facility for constructing good "maps" (Kirby and McKenna 1989, pp. 43-44).

Map as metaphor for our own thinking/minds. Unlike the philosophers and researchers just cited who considered the map to be a metaphor for some *external* territory to be explored and articulated, Mostert conceived of the map as a metaphor for *our own thinking* and *our own minds*.

As we use maps to find our ways in the empirical world, we also — metaphorically — design and use maps for our mental world. (Mostert 1985, p. 14)

"In order to understand our thinking, we use all kinds of metaphors", he explained adding that, "One of the metaphors is the idea of a 'map': the mind is conceived of as something spatial in which our thoughts are located and where connections of all different kinds are established. The process of thinking is conceived of as the travelling along these connections from one thought to another" (Mostert 1985, p. 14).

By this account the metaphor of a map is a *mental* device that we *use* in order to help us *understand*. This could explain why Peters and Wilson settled for verbal 'maps' of concepts. However, elaborating on the point that we conceive of our minds as something spatial, Mostert pointed out that when we want to think constructively "we have to map our thoughts out and visualize the connections between them" and he went on to cite some expressions we use in language which testify to this:

Expressions like "On the one hand . . .", "On the other hand . . .", "From this perspective . . .", and "Look at it a bit more closely" or ". . . from a different angle" all suggest that a main part of our thinking is the struggle for a spatial organization of our thoughts. One way of representing this organization is a map. (Mostert 1985, p. 14)

Further, Mostert pointed out how maps can have a "double function" in relation to our thinking: "We can use a map, but we can also make a new one — for ourselves or for others, in daily life or in school teaching" (p. 14). And he made a move away from verbal only maps when he said that, "Pictures, diagrams, schemas or flowcharts can function as such maps" (p. 14).

It is this *generative* function of maps that makes the metaphor especially interesting for *research* purposes.

The function of maps is neither illustration nor the addition of new information. They provide us with a "leader" with which we can organize numerous bits of information. They enable us to keep our minds organized, not only as far as new information is concerned, but also in the integration of new knowledge (facts, concepts, rules, methods, etc.) into the previously acquired knowledge. Because thinking involves a permanent process of reconstructing the old mind in the light of new contributions, maps that guide and lead us in this task are indispensable. (Mostert 1985, p. 14)

We do not only use maps to reproduce, to describe, to report; but we also need them to help us to *generate* ideas, thoughts, connections — to construct 'new' knowledge.

The 'mapping' that we did in the *Co-researching Stories* was a combination of both *concept* and *research* mapping as described here. The conceptual 'territory' we were mapping was 'discussion for learning' and as part of our exploratory research process we created our own maps. In our many research discussions we created verbal maps of discussion for learning concepts we explored; and in that process we also created schematic research maps.¹⁶⁸

Map Characteristics

Map characteristics. Five characteristics of mapping that Mostert mentioned are worth keeping in mind with regard to mapping thinking for research purposes. First, he stated that mapping is an *indirect and partial representation of reality*.

In an indirect, metaphorical sense, the line on the map "is" the road that has been mapped. But the road can be mapped in several ways and what counts as a road depends on the chosen approach. (Mostert 1985, p. 14)

Second, he pointed out that *as* representations of reality, there are differences between the map and the reality it represents since not *everything* is mapped and even though "it guides us by means of what is left out", at the same time it can only give us a partial view of that of which it is a map.

That becomes clear when we compare different maps of the same area. All may be correct maps, but nevertheless they show different structures. This depends on the elements that are selected (waterways or roads), the purpose they are supposed to serve (for driving or walking), and the perspective from which they have been designed (what is on top, what at the bottom). These characteristics are also true for mental maps. (Mostert 1985, p. 14)

A third characteristic is that "unlike writing, mapping proceeds in a non-linear fashion" and that "all kinds of spatial relations are allowed with only a few words. Moreover, one can look at a map as a whole and see many relations at a time (p. 14). Fourth, Mostert noted that different maps can be drawn of the same area.

Therefore it is important to compare them and see what they add to each other so that we can achieve a more complete map — one that does not at the same time confuse the structure of the mapped area. Fortunately, it is quite easy to compare different maps (in contrast to comparing different writings) because we can look at them from some distance and view them as a whole. (Mostert 1985, p. 14)

¹⁶⁸ See Appendix B: *Co-researching Stories* Research Maps.

Fifth, cautioning that “there is a serious danger of misunderstanding the metaphor of a map”, Mostert noted that it represents *both* content *and* process — or in my terms, IDEAS *and* INQUIRY.

It is [a] misconception that a map only represents knowledge, not (mental) acts. A map also contains decisions of how to proceed: how to continue the investigation; where to search for more clarity, evidence, or arguments; how to distinguish the essential from the accidental etc. A map makes visible both our thinking results and our thinking processes. (Mostert 1985, p. 14)

And he concluded by saying, “It is important to recognize both functions — especially in the analysis of classroom discussion” (p. 14).

In the *Co-researching Stories*, the ‘research maps’ we constructed also have these five characteristics: (1) They are indirect and partial representations of the ‘reality’ of our investigation; (2) we did not map everything and they are only partial views of that which we did map; (3) when we made them we proceeded in a non-linear fashion, they represent our inquiry spatially with few words, and one can look at them and see many relations at a time; (4) sometimes we drew different maps of the same area, we compared the different maps in an effort to achieve more complete maps, and we viewed them from a distance in an effort to view them as a whole; and (5) we used our maps to make decisions regarding how to continue our investigation, and therefore they represented “both our thinking results and our thinking process” (p. 14).

“Operational visual devices”

In *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists*, Anselm Strauss “present[ed] students and researchers with a systematic method for interpreting ‘qualitative data’...” with “special emphasis...on how to develop theory through qualitative analysis” (Strauss 1987, p. i). An important part of this method involved the use of “operational visual devices” such as diagrams, matrixes, tables and graphs — some standardized and “part of the repertoire taught in graduate school or absorbed while reading technical literature” — and others “invented while struggling with how to give specific data a *greater conceptual order*” (Strauss 1987, p. 143, my italics).

While acknowledging that, "Whether one uses them or not undoubtedly reflects personal thought styles and predilections for various types of imagery", Strauss pointed out that "they are designed to handle, or at least to get more understanding of, a particular problem" (p. 143). He described some of the "working functions" of such operational visualizations as follows:

Even as spontaneous scribbles, they can suggest ways to get off the ground during various stages of the research. They can give visualizations of what's going on with the phenomena under scrutiny. They can yield rough working models in visual form. And they can jog faded memories about "Where was I?" after several days away from one's desk. Also, these operational visualizations can sum up the gist of a given work session, so that later one can more easily start from there. . . . Still others suggest new concepts and holes in conceptualization, just because the researcher is able to stare at and be stimulated by a diagram, a matrix, a table of items. These all help our thinking about comparisons and theoretical samples. (Strauss 1987, p. 143)

Such graphic means were useful to researchers who used them, Strauss said, because of how they "allow[ed] their analysis of data to call out in themselves diagrams, etc., which 'fit' the particular bit of datum under current scrutiny" (p. 143) and also for how they can "help researchers to visualize quickly, and suggest 'next thoughts'" (p. 144).

Strauss cautioned against overuse of such devices, however, saying that, "To employ them too often must surely reduce the potential flexibility of thought processes, and so of the analytic process" (p. 148). And he added that there is "some danger that . . . valuable data can be lost in the transfer into graphic representations"; and also that, "This is an additional reason why such representations cannot function in analysis as the sole carriers of information but must be supplemented by theoretical memos" (p. 148). He therefore recommended the use of (a) different kinds of visualizations for different kinds of problems; and (b) a variety of visual means to ensure analyses and presentations which are "more imaginative, more freely engaged with the data themselves (p. 148). Summarizing, Strauss provided six "*rules of thumb* pertaining to this combination of memo writing and graphic representation" and he advocated that, "Since these representations can measurably help analytic operations, researchers should attempt to develop skills using them" (p. 150).

Making reference to Strauss in their introductory text for qualitative researchers, Bogdan and Biklen also included the use of visual devices on their list of ten suggestions of ways to "make analysis an ongoing part of data collection" and as a way "to leave you in good stead to do the final analysis after you leave the field" (Bogdan and Biklen 1992, p. 154).

Graphics and charts such as diagrams, continua, tables, matrices, and graphs can be employed in all stages of analysis from the planning to the finished product. They vary in sophistication from rough stick figures drawn on a piece of scrap paper to very carefully drawn professional models. Some visual devices are mere scribbles in fieldnotes that express relationships or arrange insights you are gleaning. (Bogdan and Biklen 1992, p. 163)

They referred to such visual representations as "primitive doodling" and acknowledged that their use "often helps you to visualize complexities that are difficult to grasp with words". Furthermore, "They can help summarize your thinking for presenting findings to others. . ." and, also recognizing that some researchers never use such devices, Bogdan and Biklen nevertheless recommended their use for both ongoing and final analyses (p. 164).

Research maps as visual theoretical memos

In research seminars >>> visual elements can further analysis and function as a type of theoretical memo. (Strauss 1987, p. 149)

Next, following Strauss, I portray our DRG research maps as *visual* theoretical memos. Drawing parallels between our research map-making and the qualitative research practice of making 'operational visual devices' (Strauss 1987), I consider first how our research maps were "operational" visual devices; second, how we were "dimensionalizing" when we were making them; and third, how they fit the description and served the purposes of "integrative diagrams".

Operational: moving inquiry forward

Operational visual devices. When Strauss referred to visual representations as "operational" visual devices, it was to convey that they advance the inquiry both in general and specific ways. For example he wrote of "using graphic representations, especially diagrams, to clarify for myself what can be done analytically with the presented data". He would "sketch diagrams of what seems salient. . . usually elaborating or modifying the diagram when classroom

discussion brings out additional features". Sometimes he put his diagram on the blackboard, "intending it to function as a summary of the total discussion; or to show some steps that have been missed in the discussion". Or he would put the diagram up earlier "when a discussion is floundering" in hopes of giving "a more useful direction to the discussion". Other times a diagram "can function to set the initial direction of the seminar discussion". Or, midway through a discussion a visual representation could "show the students that they have concentrated only on certain features of the data" and could generate questions about what next to explore (Strauss 1987, p. 149).

In short, the teaching diagrams . . . function as operational ones, since they serve to move the collective analysis along. (Strauss 1987, p. 149)

The maps in our *Co-researching Stories* were also 'operational' in this sense. Although we were not working with "presented data" in a research seminar situation, in our philosophical deliberations our maps also helped us to clarify concepts (and relationships between them) for ourselves. They helped us to see what "seems salient" and we made and modified our maps as appropriate during the course of our discussions. At the end of a mapping session our maps too functioned as summaries of our discussion. And sometimes we used them in the initial stages of subsequent sessions to identify what we had missed and to decide what next to explore.¹⁶⁹

Dimensionalizing

The achievement of "conceptually dense theory" is one of the main objectives of the "grounded theory" style of qualitative analysis which Strauss was teaching; and "dimensionalizing" is a "work process" he taught as a way to further that end. There is a parallel to be drawn between the process Strauss referred to as 'dimensionalizing' and the philosophical practice of 'making conceptual distinctions'. Indeed, in a glossary of major terms, Strauss referred to "dimensionalizing" as "making distinctions":

¹⁶⁹ See especially our use of research maps to sort out similarities and differences between 'cooperation' and 'collaboration' in S40: Exploring Examples — 'Collaborative' or 'Cooperative'? (Map 13) and S42: Sorting out our Confusion (Maps 13 & 15) in *Stories 6: Collaborating Cooperatively*.

Dimensionalizing. a basic operation of making distinctions, whose products are *dimensions and subdimensions*. (Strauss 1987, p. 21)

Although in the *Co-researching Stories* we did not use such technical terms, we did engage in distinction-making *activity* which corresponds to what Strauss calls “dimensionalizing”.¹⁷⁰

In drawing parallels between ‘dimensionalizing’ while generating grounded theory and the ‘distinction-making’ which is involved in making operative visual devices such as our research maps, Strauss described at least five common points: first, both depend on “generative questioning” (Strauss 1987, p. 17); second, the distinctions made are “provisional” (pp. 14-15); third, the provisional distinctions lead to “directed inquiry” (pp. 15-16); fourth, both involve “making comparisons” (p. 16); fifth, “personal experience” is considered to be an important source of ideas and comparisons in making the distinctions (p. 15); and sixth, both “stimulate theoretical sensitivity in the service of generating theory” (p. 17).

Generative questioning. With regard to the importance of “generative questioning” for both ‘dimensionalizing’ and ‘research map-making’, I was reminded of Philosophy for Children community of inquiry practices when Strauss wrote about: (a) the raising of generative questions as “essential to making distinctions and comparisons” and to “thinking about possible hypotheses, concepts, and their relationships” (Strauss 1987, p. 17); (b) how generative questions “stimulate the line of investigation to profitable directions”, how they “lead to hypotheses” and “useful comparisons” (p. 22); and (c) generative questioning as “a skill at thinking in terms of variations, that never settles for one answer, but always presses on. . .” (pp. 272-273). In our class philosophy experience these corresponded to our practices of generating questions which capture our attention as the first step after each new reading. They corresponded to “Questions Arising”, a class philosophy practice whereby we often began a new discussion topic by brainstorming as many questions from the topic as possible as a way to interpret the meaning of the question, to explore its possibilities and to use as points of entry into the discussion. And it is similar to the questioning which occurs as an integral part of our dialogic philosophical discussions.

¹⁷⁰ See *Co-researching Stories: Making Progress Research Acts* later in this section.

Provisional distinctions. Strauss wrote about how 'dimensionalizing' distinctions are "provisional" as follows:

Our observations lead us to make a provisional distinction (which may or may not turn out to be significant after further research)... The basic operation of making those distinctions is *dimensionalizing*. But since further distinctions can be made – either by thinking about previous observations or making new ones – the process of dimensionalizing will continue. That is termed subdimensionalizing. Subdimensions may also be generated analytically by questions that sooner or later will occur to us about some of those distinctions. (Strauss 1987, p. 14-15)

In class philosophy and DRG terms this is analogous to the "self-corrective" aspects of community of inquiry discussions (for learning) and to the "tentative conclusions" we reach in our inquiries, always willing to revise them in the light of further deliberations.

Directed inquiry. According to Strauss, *provisional* answers (or in our terms 'tentative conclusions') to questions generated are what give an inquiry direction by in turn generating new questions.

Those questions are given provisional answers – that is, they have the status of hypotheses. Some may be checked out by further observations or interviews. But now the researcher can be more directed than previously in making observations and doing interviews. He or she is likely to realize (recognizing when observing) that >>> and so will interview around that hypothesis. Or thinking about >>> , the researcher may either ask >>> for examples of when >>> – thus eliciting relevant data – or be on the lookout for >>> in terms of further conditions >>> . (p. 15)

The "directed inquiry" Strauss had in mind here is empirical as indicated by his reference to the researchers being "more directed than previously in making observations and doing interviews". However, he was also interested in achieving "conceptual density" in data analysis, and his remarks also apply to *conceptually* directed inquiries.

This line of reasoning can lead to further subdimensionalizing and further questions and provisional hypotheses. Thus, for connections that become disconnected more or less easily: >>> . (p. 15) >>> These questions and hypotheses and distinctions may not turn out to be "realistic"; but if they are, then further *directed inquiry* will tell the researcher: yes – no – maybe; as well as, *why*. (p. 16)

It is in the *conceptual* sense that our class philosophy and DRG inquiry "observations", "hypotheses" and "interviews" were directed by virtue of our

self-corrective procedures and our tentative conclusions. In particular, from the point in Session 9 when I made the Sigma decision to make explicit use of my phrase 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' as a possible description of 'discussion for learning', we began to direct our inquiry towards the five conceptual elements of 'discussion', 'learning', 'collaborative', 'philosophical' and 'inquiry'.

Making comparisons. For Strauss there was a tight relationship between the empirical and the conceptual in his "grounded theory" style of data analysis and this was manifested in the systematic method of "constant comparison" which he advocated.

"Grounded theory is based on a *concept-indicator* model, which directs the *conceptual* coding of a set of *empirical indicators*. The latter are actual data, such as behavioural actions and events, observed or described in documents and in the words of interviewees and informants. These data are indicators of a concept the analyst derives from them, at first provisionally but later with more certainty."
(Barney Glaser as quoted in Strauss 1987, p. 25, author's italics) 171

Compared to the grounded theory method which features making *empirical* comparisons (by "*conceptual* coding of a set of *empirical indicators*"), our 'discussion for learning' or 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' method involved making *conceptual* comparisons based on empirical observations from our own experience. For example, when Strauss wrote that, "The directed inquiry will also very naturally and easily lead the researcher to ask: Where can I find instances of 'x' or 'y'?" he was referring to researchers going out into the field to collect more relevant empirical data.

The technical term for this is *theoretical sampling* – for the researcher, after previous analysis, is seeking samples of >>> guided by his or her emerging (if still primitive) theory. This sampling is harnessed at least implicitly (explicitly by the experienced researchers) to *making comparisons* according to various subdimensions. Thus, the researchers may compare, either "in imagination" or through their own experiential data... (Strauss 1987, p. 16)

In the *Co-researching Stories*, guided by our "emerging (if still primitive) theory" which we represented symbolically as "D4L=CPI?", we made comparisons both "in imagination" and "through our own experiential data" by thinking about our class philosophy and DRG discussions in relation to our emerging theory as we worked on how to understand each of the five conceptual elements ('discussion',

171 Quoted by Anselm Strauss from Barney Glaser's *Theoretical Sensitivity*, 1978.

'learning', 'collaborative', 'philosophical' and 'inquiry'). As I explained earlier, this was our *conceptual* form of what Strauss referred to as 'theoretical sampling'.¹⁷² In 'dimensionalizing' terms, for our research purposes we subdimensionalized 'discussion for learning' into three subdimensions when we inquired as to whether we considered each of the terms of 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' to be appropriate descriptors for 'discussion for learning'.

Our method also differed from the empirical approach Strauss was teaching, however. Whereas Strauss wrote that having already thought about their emerging theory and seeking instances of it, researchers "can go further afield and say, make (or discover) comparisons between what happens when. . ." (p. 16), in DRG we did not "go further afield" to find instances of discussion for learning/collaborative philosophical inquiry. Rather we looked for them and made our comparisons by reflecting on our own common class philosophy experiences *of* discussions for learning and we *produced* new instances of discussion for learning when we reflected reflexively on the discussions we were having in DRG.

Personal experience. Strauss emphasized the importance of researchers reflecting on their personal experience, or as he put it, "our experiential data" while dimensionalizing or making distinctions:

All of these subdimensions, subcategories, and questions come not only from inspection of field/interview data but, understandably from our experiential data. . . (Strauss 1987, p. 15)

Examples of personal experiences Strauss provided included "from watching others", or "reading novels or autobiographies or nonfictional literature" (p. 17). In our DRG case, I would add from watching television or what I [Sigma] coded as "retroactive television watching [RETROTV]" when interpreting our data.

Theoretical sensitivity. Finally with regard to dimensionalizing, Strauss made the points that when "directed by his or her theorizing" a researcher samples widely by dimensionalizing and making comparisons beyond the immediate focus of the research, and that "The purpose of thinking about those comparisons is not to pursue a more encompassing theory. . .in general, but to *stimulate theoretical sensitivity in the service of generating theory . . .*" (Strauss 1987, pp. 16-17, my italics). As our DRG data show, my co-researchers did not make distinctions

¹⁷² See 3.5 'Sampling' in Chapter 3. Methodology Matters.

for their own sakes or to see how many they could do. Rather, as an indication of their understanding that we were doing 'research', they demonstrated a sensitivity to the theory we were generating throughout — during the course of discussions¹⁷³ and in the "operational" process of making research maps.

Integrating

Of the eight steps of the grounded theory "research process" which Strauss described, the fifth one he mentioned was "integration":

Which dimensions, distinctions, categories, linkages are "most important", most salient — which, in short, are the *core* of the evolving theory? (Strauss 1987, p. 18)

Strauss noted that "this issue becomes solved during the course of the inquiry", that it "actually begins primitively and provisionally with the first linking up of dimensions, categories, etc.", and that it "becomes increasingly more certain and "tighter" as the research continues" (p. 18). And in a glossary of major terms he provided the following definition:

Integration. the ever-increasing organization (or articulation) of the components of the theory. (Strauss 1987, p. 21)

At the same time Strauss also said that "conveying how integration happens is not easy" and settling on "the *core category or categories* that will best hold together (link up with) all the other categories — as they are related to it and to each other — will take hard work and perhaps special techniques to put together in a convincing fashion. . ." (p. 18).

Our *Co-researching Stories* equivalents of 'core categories' were not established *inductively* from empirical data as in grounded theory. Rather they 'emerged' *conceptually* when (in Session 9) we agreed to work with my alternative phrase 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' and see if we thought it to be an appropriate way to describe our common experience of 'discussion for learning'. We then had two 'core categories': 'discussion for learning' (D4L) and 'collaborative philosophical inquiry (CPI). Then, by "isolating questions of concept", the first technique of conceptual analysis which Wilson described, we identified five conceptual component 'categories' ('discussion', 'learning',

¹⁷³ See especially Session 11: "Is this philosophy we're doing right now?" in *Stories 4: Living and Learning*.

'collaborative', 'philosophical', and 'inquiry') each of which we "dimensionalized" to see if our D4L=CPI theory would "hold together".

Integrative diagrams. One of the "special techniques" in the integrating process Strauss wrote about is that of making one particular kind of "operational visualization" or "graphic representation" (p. 149) which he called "integrative diagrams". And he listed some of the research functions that integrative diagrams serve as follows:

They include at least:

- helping to pull together what you think you already know;
- thereby contributing to analytic and psychological security;
- stimulating you to follow through with the implications of the diagram;
- clarifying what you do not know (i.e., gaps in your knowledge or understanding), and so stimulating the next steps in filling gaps;
- acting as a touchstone that allows you to relate new analytic advances to the main line of your previous analysis. (Strauss 1987, p. 171)

When I read the "rules of thumb" Strauss provided for the making of integrative diagrams, I recognized some of our research maps to be "integrative diagrams" and to have served many of the same functions. For example, Strauss noted how an integrative diagram "*helps to give a clearer picture of where you have come from in the research. . .*", how it "puts together into a larger pattern, however provisional, a lot of otherwise scattered materials – or scattered sense of those materials – into a sense that this project 'has really gone somewhere' or that 'We really have something here that makes the total study important or at least interesting'" (Strauss 1987, p. 185, my italics).

Second, an integrative diagram "*gives direction to the forward thrust of the research. . . not only for psychological reasons but also for analytic reasons*". And "examined carefully, but sometimes even casually, the diagram *helps you to see what is lacking* in your previous data collecting, coding, and memoing" (p. 185, my italics).

And third, Strauss recommended that there should be a *succession of integrative diagrams* over the course of the project: "Each diagram should incorporate not only the preceding one, but also the new analyses done since the latter was drawn" (p. 185). At the same time, however, he counseled that, "The number of such diagrams should not be numerous: You must not be obsessive about 'keeping the analysis all together' every minute or at every point in the project" (p. 185).

When Strauss articulated the steps in integrative diagramming by describing an actual work session with a student, following the student's lead, he made frequent use of the 'map' metaphor — particularly in describing the initial phases of this work. He began by saying, "The purpose of this session as enunciated by the student was to *map* out salient areas in the data, to get an overview, before going into greater depth later. . ." (Strauss 1987, p. 172).

During the conference, the analysis turns largely around the unforeseen evolution of an integrative diagram. Its initial version emerges quickly, during the first minutes of the session, and gradually becomes revised and more elaborate as the analysis fills in possible relationships among the main diagrammatic elements, and adds new elements and relationships. The diagram provided visual stimulation, too, which helped visualization of some of those possible relationships. All that amounts to saying is that the total analysis got systematically furthered, that integrative steps were taken, and categories were rendered more precise and analytically powerful. The session is notable also for the speed and cumulative development of its analytic evolution. Of course, this first productive integrative session was followed by the student's further analytic struggle, leading to new diagrams throughout the course of her investigation. (Strauss 1987, p. 172, *my italics*)

This description could have referred to our first map. Since we did not know about 'integrative diagrams' when we conducted our research, our production of Map 1 was also an "unforeseen evolution". Ours too emerged quickly — too quickly for some of the co-researchers who made a point of saying so on several occasions. Ours too was subject to revision and became more elaborate during the course of the mapping as we considered possible relationships among the main diagrammatic elements. Ours too provided visual stimulation and our systematically furthered our interpretation. And ours too led to new diagrams throughout the course of our investigation — some of which also served integrative functions.

Black boxes. When writing about making operational diagrams Strauss used the term “black boxes” (in both noun and verb form) to refer to concepts or diagram elements which were in need of “opening up”.

And occasionally, midway or so during the two-hour session, I put a diagram on the blackboard to show the students that they have concentrated only on certain features of the data, asking them: “What would you like next to explore?” Or, “This relationship is left unexplored, so wouldn’t you like to tackle that?” Or, “You have developed terms for these concepts now, but *this* one is just a name, you have **blackboxed** its contents — how about focusing on that next?” (Strauss 1987, p. 149, my boldface)

Sometimes he used these terms to refer to what *needed* to be done to further an analysis and other times he would instruct a student to “black box” a relationship in order to concentrate on a different aspect before returning to the blackboxed concept later.

Let’s put that aside for a minute, **black box** that relationship and go on and talk about this . . . work and what was involved in the other kinds of work. . . and did it feed the mapping enterprise? If so, How? (Strauss 1987, pp. 174-75, my boldface)

Either way, “Just as with the operational diagrams, black boxes will need to be opened up, relationships between them specified, clarified, and supplemented” he wrote (p. 185). Although we did not use the term ‘black box’ in our work, Ferrari’s questioning of Einstein is one of our own equivalents of black boxes which became ‘operational’ issues in our research.

Multiple integrative diagrams. On the issue of what to do with many different diagrams or maps, Strauss had this to say:

There should not be an aggregate of multiple diagrams but *successive* ones. Each later one should incorporate elements of earlier ones; or alternatively, the larger, more summarizing diagrams should encompass most of what is sketched in the earlier diagrams. . . In short, the diagrams should *cumulate* in snowball fashion . . . [and] past diagrams should either be integrated immediately into the next ones, or reexamined periodically for inclusion into the next “big” one. (Strauss 1987, p. 278-9)

Our biggest *Co-researching Stories* map was our first one and from it we generated other maps based on our theoretical sampling and black boxing decisions. This yielded a cumulative collection of maps which was not quite an “aggregate of multiple diagrams”. However they were not “*successive* ones” either for they were not in any particular order. Indeed one of our ‘integrative’ tasks was to *assign* a

sequence to them as we worked on identifying what to do next or what needed more attention. Sometimes that order was chronological (which maps did we do before which other maps) and other times it followed a conceptual logic.

When, I read the above advice Strauss gave (several years after we had completed our DRG research), in a Sigma memo I noted that one “big difference” between our research maps and the approach Strauss was recommending was that our maps were done “as ‘objects-to-think-with’ on the fly as opposed to later and in-retrospect”. Then in the same memo I noted that “Strauss advocated just this” when he added the following:

Furthermore, the making of such diagrams should become a regular feature of the research. Beginners especially need to force themselves to diagram >>>. Although some researchers are more visually minded than others, it is a good idea, anyhow, to get into the routine of trying to cumulate successive memos early. (p. 279)

And I went on to reflect that “I would now see this as not a ‘feature of’ but as part of ‘what it is to *do* research’ — a subtle, fine distinction – but an important one?” — another moment that contributed to my growing sense of a more explicit role for philosophy *in* qualitative research [PhQLR]. If such diagrams require dimensionalizing (distinction-making) and serve conceptual meaning-making purposes, then philosophy has a contribution to make. For example, in response to the remark Strauss made that, “Beginners especially need to force themselves to diagram. . .”, in another Sigma memo I registered my surprise when I noted how, by contrast, my young co-researchers had taken to mapping “easily and with little training”. And in the same memo I noted further how we did not have to “get into the routine” of making such diagrams but rather that it “*became* a regular research activity” because “we *needed* to ‘see’ our progress”. At the very least it is conceivable that it was our philosophy experience with the distinction-making that is involved in making diagrams that accounts for the relative ease with which we took to research mapping and adopted it as a research practice.

Research functions served by integrative diagrams. With regard to how useful diagramming can be *as* a research practice, I recognized some of the research functions our maps had for our research in retrospective notes by Leigh Star, a student of Anselm Strauss.

The diagrams have functioned in two ways: first as sort of resting places in the process, places to tie up loose ends, take a deep breath, and feel (at least for a while) that some order had been brought to the chaos in the mountains of data; second, as ways of ferreting out unseen connections, unthought-of-relationships. It's this second function I want to talk about here. (Strauss 1987, p. 179)

Just as we began each of our maps with a single word or phrase followed by questions and comments by one or more co-researchers, so Star described her diagramming process as beginning "with a phrase of single code. . ." from which "several kinds of questions would come from Anselm. . .or from students at that point" (p. 179). Then she went on to say that these questions "formed the 'tendrils' out from the original idea — arrows and boxes showing connections. . ." (p. 179) just as our dialogic discussions during map-making led us to explore connections using "bubbles" linked by lines and arrows. She also wrote about how the diagrams made over the course of the research "appear as records of questions, blind spots, and gaps. . ." and she referred to the collection of diagrams as a "visual 'story' of the thesis process", one which served as "a useful organizational tool" as she began "the final write-up of this material" as it helped to keep her "close to the data" (p. 179). So too our research maps have served as a visual short-hand for the conceptual 'territory' we covered and they were very useful 'road-maps' to and from the data on the video-tapes of the mapping sessions.

How difficult to learn. To return to the point about how difficult it is to learn how to make integrative diagrams, Strauss described the skill of integrating or "how to make everything come together" as a "complex process" and "*the* most difficult to learn"; and he stated further that "the inexperienced researcher will never feel secure in how to complete an entire integration until he or she has struggled with the process, beginning early and ending only with the final write-up" (Strauss 1987, p. 170). It was when I read what Strauss wrote next that I [Sigma] realized that although in the *Co-researching Stories* we were making 'integrative diagrams' in which we worked on making everything come together, we were doing this in a different way from what Strauss was talking about relative to his 'grounded theory' method.

Perhaps the integration is more difficult for grounded theorists because they cannot integrate their research by opting for "story lines," resting only on a conceptual framework, or on several themes or on a few concepts, or on concepts that are not carefully related to each other in the total analysis. (Strauss 1987, p. 170)

While writing about our co-researching *stories*, in my Sigma interpretation I *did* opt for “story lines” as I selected and interpreted data following a chronological order within each data trajectory and over the report as a whole. Also I *have* rested primarily on “a conceptual framework” [D4L=CPI?] consisting of “a few [five] concepts”. Although both methods have an emphasis on *conceptual* work in common, that need not mean that they are congruent.

“Am I doing ‘grounded theory’?” I asked myself in a memo I wrote at the time. “If not, what other kinds of QLR [qualitative research] *are* there?” Then, in the same memo I wrote, “Is this what Bronwyn Davies did?” thinking about her ‘ethogenic’ account of “The research act” in *Life in the Classroom and Playground: The Accounts of Primary School Children* (Davies 1982b). For various reasons, I decided it was not. And so it was in moments such as these that I realized that the kind of integrative diagramming we were doing *without difficulty* had so much in common with other forms of qualitative research without being a separate form of it.

Finally, Strauss noted that the integrative features of *memo writing* are “correspondingly, the most difficult to convey” saying that these include “how the important categories are kept doggedly in analytic focus, and how that focus is embodied in a sequence of memos” (Strauss 1987, p. 170). And he advocated the use of both “memo sequences and a succession of operational integrative diagrams, together, can help to keep the cumulative analysis much more orderly – and more clear, in the researcher’s head” (p. 170). Because of my [Sigma/Judy] reluctance to require or expect my co-researchers to write in our after-school research setting unless they chose to do so themselves, we produced more operational diagrams (research maps) than we did memos (blurbs). However, we did enough to satisfy me that my young co-researchers were capable of both.

Co-researching Stories

Making Progress Research Acts

It was in Session 13 when Daisy and I started to try out different graphic ways to represent what we were trying to do that we began to consider using the “operational visual device” of concept mapping for such research purposes such as working out our IDEAS (content), deciding which ideas to work with next (theoretical sampling) and keeping track of our progress. In Session 17 we made Map 1 — CPI, our “maxi map”. However, due to complete audio-visual equipment failure in that session, in Sessions 18 and 19 we reconstructed what we had done in Session 17 ‘for the record’.

“Dimensionalizing”, “integrating” and “black boxing”

To show how closely our research map-making corresponded to making “operational visual devices” — both in how we constructed them and in the research purposes they served — I interpret selected data from our reconstructions of Map 1 in Sessions 18 and 19 (*Stories 5: Making ‘Inquiry’ Progress*). In particular I identify inquiry moves we were making which are analogous to research acts which Strauss referred to as “dimensionalizing” and “integrating”. In Session 18 it was I [Alison] who made those moves (with interventions by Whoopy and Staci) when I tried to recapture what we had done when we made our first map. In Session 19, however, it was primarily Einstein and Ferrari who were ‘dimensionalizing’ and ‘integrating’ — entirely on their own initiative. It was only near the end of Session 19 that I [Alison] joined their discussion which was already in progress in the library.

Alison’s inarticulate interpretation of Map 1 (S18)

After Arachnid and Ferrari had done their ‘imaginary friend’ and ‘having a discussion with your good side, your bad side and your mind’ explanations of our first map, I was not satisfied that we had described Map 1 - CPI well enough for those who had not attended DRG in Session 17. So when it was my [Alison’s] turn on the Startup list, in rather inarticulate fashion, I tried to explain what we had tried to do myself since no one else was offering to do so.

I just want to add one more thing about this is >>> What we're trying to do is — what we started out >>> the day before [???]. . . figure out how to do — so we just made a start, okay? So this [CPI] is >>> the kind of discussion that we do in philosophy class and we're trying to figure out >>> and we took 'Discussion for Learning' and we started off with two circles and we just went from there. We had a discussion and we tried to draw — what we were saying. So — when we talked about 'Discussion' we — we figured out that there were three kinds of discussion: one-person discussions, small-group discussions, large-group discussions. Then, DRG counted as a small-group discussion, okay? And one-person discussions we had two examples of that. Over there we talked about Learning —

Dimensionalizing and subdimensionalizing. This is as good an example as any of how *inarticulate* a teacher can seem to be when her words are recorded 'live' (Walker and Adelman 1972, as cited in Hammersley, 1983, p. 160.). At the same time, however, it is also an early attempt at "integration" — of trying to take stock of where we were; at "provisional" and tentative "dimensionalizing" ("We took 'Discussion for Learning' and we started off with two circles and just went from there") and "subdimensionalizing" ("and we figured out that there are three kinds of discussion: >>> ") at this relatively early stage.¹⁷⁴

"Black Boxing". When at this point Whoopy voiced people's objections to how Einstein had done the **Learning** side of the map — too quickly and without consulting anyone else — and when Staci asked if "CPT" is "Discussion for Learning", they were both pointing to what Strauss referred to as diagram "black boxes" — concepts or diagram elements which are in need of being opened up.¹⁷⁵ These are examples of how my co-researchers did not accept Einstein's or my interpretations at face value. Rather, they were showing concern for the integrity of the diagram and their own interpretations of it; they were demonstrating their 'sensitivity to the theory' we were generating.¹⁷⁶

174 See "Provisional distinctions" in Research Maps as Visual Theoretical Memos in the preceding section.

175 See "Black boxes" under "Integration" in Research Maps as Visual Theoretical Memos above.

176 See Theoretical sensitivity" under "Dimensionalizing" in Research Maps as Visual Theoretical Memos above.

Opening a black box.. When I responded by reminding us about what the letters of 'CPI' stand for, I opened up the black box Staci had asked about — but only provisionally.

"Okay," I continued, "well that's what we want to >>> sort out the difference >>>. This [CPI] is the name that I have given to what — I am trying to get you to do — in class — ." [Staci: Yeah.] "— Okay? — It's 'collaborative' because we work together; it's 'philosophical' because it's about philosophy; and it's 'inquiry' because we question. We question. We don't assume that we know [*unintelligible*]. [Staci: I guess it is.] >>> 'Discussion for Learning' is my simpler >>> I thought that [CPI] was a bit of a mouthful so I thought it's a simpler way. But my question, my research question for you, for us is: Do we learn from those discussions, and if so >>> what do we learn? And what — are there different kinds of discussions only *one* kind of which is >>> like that? Or are *all* kinds of discussions — like that — that you learn from. [*Voices overlap*].

Directing the inquiry. After giving this as one *possible* interpretation, in a continuing attempt to "direct" our inquiry, I generated questions from it by inviting my co-researchers to make comparisons based on their own experience.¹⁷⁷

Provisional and tentative dimensionalizing. Finally when next I encouraged my co-researchers to make their *own* maps and talked about how we might revise them repeatedly, it was in recognition of the provisional and tentative status of our dimensionalizing.

Einstein reconstructs Map 1 — CPI (S19)

"Multiple integrative diagrams". When I talked to my co-researchers at the end of Startup about the value of map-making in general and suggested that we work on maps on a regular basis and that we use colour coding to distinguish the dates on which we made additions, here is what I said.

I would really like if once a week — or maybe once in two weeks — we get the map out and we >>> see if we can make *progress* — on it. The one that we started? Last week? >>> And what I'm suggesting is that

each time we add to it, we add in a different colour and we date the colours so that we can see how the map changes over time. And there may come a time when we want to change it altogether. But when we do *that*, that's when we really get a sense of where we're going — and how — and we get inspiration? (*Looks at Ferrari*) — and how what we're doing — feeds into the bigger picture.

Without realizing it at the time, and before we had made more than this one map, after reading Strauss I recognized that what I [Alison] was suggesting with these words was that we use our mapping in a way which comes close to what he recommended with regard to making “multiple integrative diagrams”: that “there should not be an aggregate of multiple diagrams but *successive* ones”; that “each later one should incorporate elements of earlier ones”; that “alternatively, the larger more summarizing diagrams should encompass most of what is sketched in the earlier diagrams”; that “the diagrams should *cumulate* in snowball fashion . . . [and] past diagrams should either be integrated immediately into the next ones, or reexamined periodically for inclusion into the next ‘big’ one” (Strauss 1987, p. 278-9, author's italics).¹⁷⁸

Einstein's integrative reconstruction of Map 1. When Einstein and Ferrari went into the library to video record Einstein's reconstruction of Map 1 for the record, Einstein provided an “integrative” reconstruction. Although he was at ease with the “dimensionalizing” and the “sub-dimensionalizing” that the map represented, there were also unrecognized ‘black boxes’ in his explanations as, for example, when he explained the connecting lines by using the phrase “from. . . we get. . .” repeatedly and without going into a more subtle interpretation of the relationships the lines represent.

(*Standing up and pointing to the map.*) From **ONE PERSON** we can get **DIALOGUE WITH A BEAR** which was brought up by Staci, and **IMAGINAIRY FRIEND (sic) OR ANIMALS**.

177 See “Generative questioning”, “Provisional distinctions”, “Directed inquiry”, “Making comparisons” and “Personal experience” under “Dimensionalizing” in Research Maps as Visual Theoretical Memos above.

178 See “Multiple integrative diagrams” under “Integrating” in Research Maps as Visual Theoretical Memos above.

And from **ONE PERSON** you can also get **HAVING A DISCUSSION WITH YOUR GOOD SIDE OF YOU AND THE BAD SIDE OF YOU AND YOUR MIND. THAT'S THREE (THINGS)** — So you know like *conscience*.

And **ONE PERSON** also leads up to CPI (*Turning to look into the camera again.*) Well that's what we're trying to figure out. Like, is it 'collaborative' talking to yourself? Because you are only one person.

As he continued, Einstein made 'integrative' connections when he followed the direction of the connecting lines in two directions as when he noted that **ONE PERSON** leads up to **CPI**. And he made a "directed inquiry" move¹⁷⁹ when he again said, "Well that's what we're trying to figure out" i.e. "Like, is it 'collaborative' talking to yourself? Because you are only one person". Einstein covered this part of the map so quickly and in such a free-association manner that his interpretation consisted of nothing but 'black boxes'. To his credit, Ferrari was not satisfied with this and he pressed Einstein to open some of them up.

Ferrari questions Einstein's mapping (S19)

When Einstein reached this part of his reconstruction he was at the part that Ferrari (and Whoopy earlier) had said that other co-researchers present had trouble understanding. So, still operating the video camera, Ferrari took this opportunity to ask him about it. "Einstein", he interjected politely, "I have a question for you." Einstein stopped and said, "Sure".

Ferrari You had **PROCESS** leading to **ESSAYS**. When you do an essay, what is it — (*He adjusts the position of the camera so he can see Einstein while he talks to him.*) What does it mean — by having an **ESSAY** going — I don't understand what you mean by **PROCESS** going to **ESSAYS**. When you write an essay, what kind of process are you getting — by *doing* that?

Black box and subdimensionalizing. When Ferrari asked Einstein about the "**PROCESS** leading to **ESSAYS**" he was pointing to another "black box" because the two bubbles Einstein had picked were on opposite sides of the **LEARNING** side of the map such that the "leading to" relationship between

¹⁷⁹ See "Directed inquiry" under "Dimensionalizing" in Research Maps as Visual Theoretical Memos above.

PROCESS and **ESSAYS** was based on a daisy-chain of links to and through other bubbles. Although Einstein's response to Ferrari's question had a quality of 'thinking on your feet' to it, undaunted by the question, he responded with confidence and as he did so, he "subdimensionalized" when he played with subtle shades of what it might mean to 'learn' (*i.e.*, you learn *in* essays; you learn *how to do* essays; you learn *it*, you learn *from* an essay, and because 'essay' means try, you also learn to *try* or you learn *by* trying). Then Einstein turned back to the map to resume his reconstruction.

Summary

In this chapter I argue that when children use philosophical discussion in a research context, the 'inquiry moves' they are accustomed to make in class philosophy discussions *surface* as 'research acts'. By this argument, 'to do philosophy' in a research context is 'to do research' directly and on its own terms (in addition to by analogy and by comparison to other ways of doing research). In making this argument I note the close relationship between doing philosophy (in the sense of doing conceptual analysis) and doing qualitative research (in the sense of grounded theory). This is not to say that there is a one-to-one correspondence but rather that there are important areas of overlap.

In sections which draw on the *Co-researching Stories* I have identified discrete philosophical inquiry moves / research acts and presented them in groups. In 4.1 *Co-researching Stories* Research Acts, following the sequence of the sets of *Stories* as presented in Part Two, I surveyed the range and variety of class philosophy inquiry moves that I identified as surfacing as research acts and presented them in six groups accordingly: *i.e.* 'Self-corrective' Research Acts (*Stories-Introduction*), Self-empowerment and Idea-building Research Acts (*Stories 1*), Philosophical Interviewing Research Acts (*Stories 2*), Internal Dialogue Research Acts (*Stories 3*), Educative Research Acts (*Stories 4*), Making Inquiry Progress Research Acts (*Stories 5*), and Collaborative Research Acts (*Stories 6*).

Then, in sections 4.2 to 4.5, reflecting on the above research acts in different categories, I took a closer look at how when executed in a research context (class philosophy) inquiry moves surface as (qualitative) research acts. For each of these clusters of philosophical inquiry moves/research acts, with reference to relevant literature, I commented on examples from the data of what it was that the children were already capable of doing as a way of surfacing the identified 'research acts'. At first I was primarily interested in looking at these surfacings as a 'one-way-street' from class philosophy practice to the research context. However, it was also the case that some (such as interviewing and mapping) did not originate in class philosophy practice but came from a 'research' tradition. In such cases I argue that when children with philosophical experience engage in research acts such as interviewing and mapping those 'research acts' surface as *philosophical* 'research acts'.

In 4.2 Research Actors I surfaced 'self-corrective' and 'educative' inquiry moves as research acts. In 4.3 Idea Building Research Acts, I surfaced 'generative questioning', 'conceptual analysis questioning' and 'building on each other's ideas' philosophical inquiry moves as research acts. In 4.4 Philosophical Interviewing Research Acts, I surfaced dialogical philosophical inquiry moves as research acts. And in 4.5 Advancing the Inquiry Research Acts I identified 'writing blurbs' and 'concept mapping' philosophical inquiry moves as research acts. Although I have dealt with these philosophical inquiry 'research acts' as if they were discrete moves, that is not necessarily how they occurred in the data. They were not like tools in a toolbox that the co-researchers selected and used or applied. The music metaphor of transposition is useful here for how it can suggest that in each context (class philosophy or DRG) the co-researchers play the same (class philosophy) melody in a new (research) key and all its complexity. However, they do not only play one note at a time but rather chords and progressions. It is the key that has changed in and for a changed enterprise. As children might say, It is the same only different.

Chapter 5

Conceptual Investigations

To indwell means to exist as an interactive spirit, force or principle — to exist within an activating spirit, force or principle. It literally means to live within. . .

This indwelling . . . is also reflective. To reflect is to pause and think; to process what has gone before. The qualitative researcher or naturalistic inquirer is a part of the investigation. . .but also removes him/herself from the situation to rethink the meanings of the experience. (Maykut and Morehouse 1994, p. 25)

One of the consequences of “indwelling” in a project that involves doing philosophy as a way of doing empirical research is that one reflects continually in philosophical terms about what counts as ‘research’. As indweller Alison/Judy co-researcher within the *Co-researching Stories*, I was constantly pausing and thinking about how and why we were doing what we were doing and whether what we were trying to do really counts as doing ‘research’. At the same time, as indweller Sigma I was forever “process(ing) what has gone before” not only in the DRG project but also by reflecting on this project in relation to its two antecedent research projects (IFS and MRG) in my search for a compelling way to argue that our DRG work was indeed ‘research’ and that the children really were acting as co-researchers.

By conceptual investigation. As my third way of ‘answering’ the question of how young children who are experienced in doing philosophy use philosophical discussion as a way of doing research, next I present examples of Sigma reflections in which I produced refined conceptual interpretations of a variety of research roles. In this chapter I replay, in chronological order, reflections I engaged in during and subsequent to working with our co-research story data. Unlike the previous chapter in which I draw explicitly on the *Co-researching Stories* data presented in Part Two, this time, stepping back, I present my [Sigma] investigations into conceptual issues which arose out of and were inspired and influenced by our Discussion Research Group work.

In 5.1 On 'Co-research Participation', I play out my recursive deliberations as I worked on whether and how the children in our story can be said to be participating as 'co-researchers'. In 5.2 On 'Research Collaboration', building on the work I had done on 'co-research participation', I replay my further reflections on the 'collaborative' aspects of our co-researching relationship while working with the data for the 'collaborative' data trajectory. In 5.3 On 'Transformative Co-learning', I present reflections which I wrote as a way to think out and better characterize what I [Judy/Alison/Sigma], the adult co-researcher, was gaining from doing this research with children. And In 5.4 On 'Research' I present 'by analogy' philosophical work I did when I turned to Ludwig Wittgenstein for inspiration while writing preliminary drafts of this dissertation — that is, *after* coming to see that the claim that the children are doing 'research' by virtue of fitting a description of what others do (grounded theory) did not go far enough and *before* coming to the further '*by surfacing*' position that this is research directly and on its own terms.

5.1 On 'Co-research Participation'

... when researching from the margins it is important to clearly account for *how and why* the research is being done, and *who* is being researched. ... In this way, the researcher is incorporated into the research and is not left hidden from the process. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 41-2, authors' emphasis)

Our co-research story included children not as researched 'subjects' but as 'human research instruments' and this raises methodological questions regarding children's roles as 'researchers' and also about similarities or differences between their research roles and those of adult co-researchers. To account for "*how and why* [our] research [was] being done", and to provide a rationale for including children as researchers, in this section I explain how I used the IFS and MRG antecedent research projects and the philosophical notion of 'agency' to think out the issue of co-research participation. *What* was being researched was the *process* of 'discussion for learning'; and the "*who*" of our co-research story, the DRG co-researchers, were "incorporated into the research" as *processors* if you will. The question for *our* research, therefore, was not, "Who was *being* researched?" but rather "Who was *doing* the research?"

To support my identification of the teacher and student research participants as 'co-researchers', I tried to make sense of our co-research participation by examining the roles of the participants in the IFS and MRG antecedent research projects in relation to our present project. In order to make distinctions regarding the contributions of the participants in each study, I had to think recursively. For example, when I described the research roles in the earlier IFS study I found that I used the terms 'researched' and 'researcher' in one way; but when I moved to the later studies I saw nuances in researcher activity that I had not seen before and that prompted me to revise my description of the IFS roles. This is therefore both an in-retrospect *and* a recursive account. It is "in retrospect" because I made these decisions after-the-fact using my rear-view mirror with 20-20 hindsight; and it is "recursive" because decisions I made with regard to the later studies caused me to revise those for the earlier which in turn prompted me to revisit those for the later again until I found a resting point. Engaging in this reflection led to a re-interpretation of the participants' contributions to all three studies in terms of the ways in which they may or may not have acted as researchers and it also yielded a discernible progression from the first study (IFS) to the most recent (DRG).

Research Agency

Since the term 'research participant' could refer to *everyone* involved in a study, I looked for a way to distinguish researchers from researched in a way that would avoid the "separation of researcher and researched" (Gitlin, Siegel, and others 1989/1993, p. 200). One that would not mask the variety, complexity and importance of what different research participants *did* and of how what they *did* served our research purposes.

While re-interpreting the roles of the research participants in the antecedent IFS and MRG projects, I used a criterion of research 'agency' — a conception which, according to Hospers, fits what we take ourselves to be (Hospers 1953/1967, p. 345), "namely, beings who act, or who are agents, rather than things that are merely acted upon . . .".¹⁸⁰ And I began by examining the *active* contribution that *all* research participants made by asking what each did in relation to the research purposes of each project. This led me to recognize that some

¹⁸⁰ Taylor 1963 as quoted in Hospers 1953/1967, p. 345.

'researched' participants were actually co-research 'agents' in the minimal sense of "people who act", "doers", "people who are capable of causing change, of getting something done" (Avis 1982, p. 27).

Next I further distinguished 'researched' (participants who were 'active' but *not* research 'agents') from 'researchers' (participants who were 'active' and who *were* research 'agents') by classifying their research activities as those of either 'data providers' ('researched') or of 'data producers/interpreters' ('researchers').

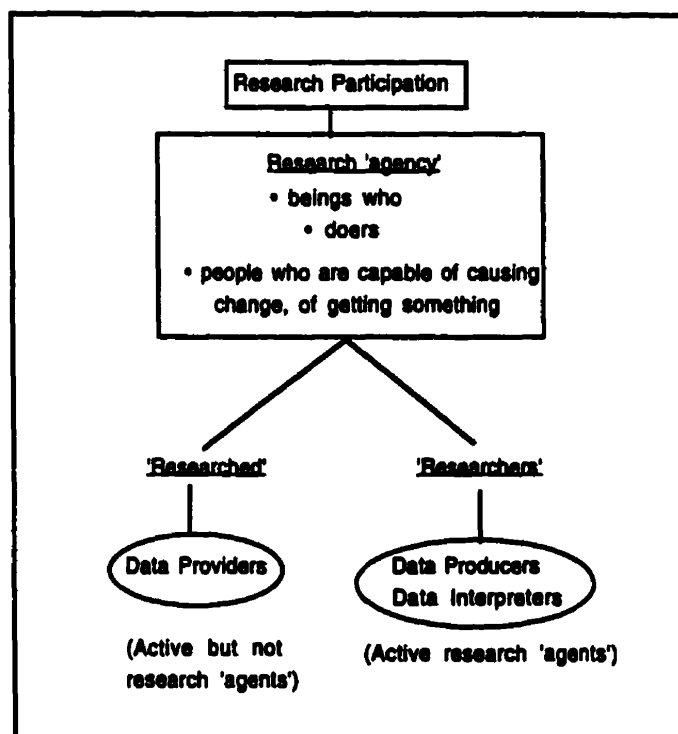


Figure 19. Research Participation

'Researched' as Data Providers

While constructing the category of 'researched', I asked of the data for each of the three studies, 'What or who was *being researched* here?' and I looked separately at the children, the teachers and the process. I categorized as 'researched' those who *provided* data by participating in the implementation of the research design (by engaging in designated research activities such as completing paper and pencil tests, being observed in a discussion, or being interviewed, for example). Although the 'researched' may have been 'active' research participants, I did *not* count their acts of *providing* data to be exercising research 'agency'. Re-examining

the antecedent IFS and MRG projects, I built on the notions of students and teachers as 'researched' to the point where in DRG I expanded the category of 'researched' (student and teacher participants) to include a *process* ('discussion for learning') of which the participants were the *producers*.

In the IFS project, the 'researched' were the students, their philosophy teachers (indirectly) and the process of 'doing philosophy' in which they were learning to engage together. Both children and teachers provided (but did *not produce* and/or *interpret*) data for this project. In the MRG project, the 'researched' were the students (but this time *not* their teachers) — and, indirectly, the process of 'doing philosophy' in which they were engaged. The MRG project built on the IFS study in that, as data providers, the students were even *more* researched than in the IFS study: that is, they provided *more* data (three multiple-choice tests instead of one), more *detailed* data (classroom observations) and *different kinds* of data (individual interviews). It was during our MRG explorations of the complexities of children's philosophical reasoning that, for both practical and ethical reasons, we began to take seriously the idea that children could and should participate more actively in research on their own reasoning (Chervin and Kyle 1993); and that became a point of departure for the DRG study.¹⁸¹

'Researchers' as Data Producers/Interpreters

While investigating the category of 'researcher', I asked of the IFS, MRG and DRG data, 'Who was *doing* this research?' and I reflected on how *what the research participants did* contributed to the research purposes in each project. I categorized as 'researchers' those who *produced* or *interpreted* data as they participated in the implementation of the research design. For example, participants who were interviewed and provided data in their responses I classified as 'researched' (only) whereas I classified as 'researchers' those participants who acted as both interviewer and interviewee or who participated in 'dialogic interviews' in which both interviewer and interviewee provided and produced

¹⁸¹ Detailed documents I produced while making the distinctions regarding the *students*, the *teachers* and the *process* as 'researched' in the three studies are on file in the DRG Research Files.

data.¹⁸² Unlike ('researched') 'data providers' who may or may not have known that they were making an active contribution to research, data producer/interpreters ('researchers') engaged in reflective research acts.

Using this concept of 'research participation' as I re-examined the antecedent IFS and MRG projects, I expanded my category of 'researchers' from one which initially included only adults with academic credentials (in IFS and MRG) to one (in DRG) which recognized *teachers* as researchers, *children* as researchers, and *teachers and children* as co-researchers. In addition, I built on notions of students and teachers as 'researchers' to the point where in the DRG project I identified individual participants as sometimes researched, sometimes researchers and sometimes both as they used philosophical discussion as a way of doing research.

Even though not designed as such, all three studies had a lot in common with 'teacher-as-researcher' research¹⁸³ which has been described as research conducted (a) by practising teachers, (b) on questions of their own choosing, and (c) in relation to work with their own students (Wells 1993a). In the IFS study, I was the practising teacher who had responsibility for the project with researcher assistance from two then doctoral candidates ('John' and 'Wikke') who helped with project design, classroom observations and data analysis. Two of the other practising teachers ('Debby' and 'Rhona') were not recognized as 'researchers' at all and it did not occur to anyone that the Grades Four and Three children could participate as anything other than researched 'subjects'. When I examined the roles of each of the adult participants in relation to my emerging concept of research agency, I recognized both Debby and Rhona to be 'researchers' because their participation in the training program and their implementation of the Philosophy for Children program and associated research tasks served the purposes of this research such that the research 'agency' of these teachers was a *sine qua non* of this project.

In the MRG project all four MRG researchers were practising philosophy teachers who together pursued research questions of their/our own choosing —

¹⁸² See S06: Introduction to Research Interviewing — A Visit from an Educational Researcher in *Stories 2: Philosophical "Blossoming"*.

¹⁸³ Elliott (1988) traces the development and definition of the "teachers as researchers movement" from its origins in the British "Humanities Project" (1967-72, L. Stenhouse, director).

questions which had arisen in part from Elizabeth's and my teaching practice and the antecedent IFS research — even though at the time we were not aware of the teacher-as-researcher literature, accounts of which were at that time “few and far between” (Ball 1985, p. 38). At first I thought that the only ‘researchers’ in the MRG project were adults and, with the exception of ‘Elizabeth’ who was one of the four MRG researchers, I failed to recognize the children’s teachers as ‘researchers’. However, when I re-examined the roles of each of the adult participants using my concept of research agency, I decided that *two* ‘researcher’ categories were called for: ‘researchers’ for the three class philosophy teachers of the children in the study (Debby, Rhona and Elizabeth) because of the ‘researcher’ functions they performed when they implemented the MRG research design; and ‘*principal* researchers’ for the four MRG researchers (Elizabeth, Judy, Michael and Stan) because of the ‘principal researcher’ functions they performed and the responsibilities for the research they shared. Elizabeth, therefore, counted as both ‘researcher’ and ‘principal researcher’.

The MRG research raised two issues which led to the design of the DRG study. One was Elizabeth's teacher *and* researcher role which prompted us to reflect on the distanced, ‘objective’ role of teachers in our MRG research and to endorse the participation of teachers *as researchers* in projects involving their own students (Chervin and Kyle 1993, p. 28). The other issue arose when, while listening to and attempting to interpret the children’s philosophical reasoning by listening to their explanations on tape, we realized that we needed to have the *children* present to help us to ‘read’ their responses thereby raising the *ethical* issue of *not* consulting the children directly during our data interpretation (p. 29). We tried to imagine what our MRG research would have looked like if the children *had* been involved in determining its focus and in playing a more active part in *our* collaborative inquiry? (p. 29) and that is when we came to the position that for ethical, political and epistemological reasons, we now would no longer exclude children from participating as research partners in future research related to them (p. 30).

It is for these reasons that our DRG project was *designed* to be a ‘teacher/children-as-co-researchers’ study conducted by a practising teacher in collaboration *with* her students, on questions of *their* own choosing, and in relation to *their* class philosophy work together. As the practising teacher, the *only* adult, and the participant with academic credentials and a doctoral purpose, I [‘Judy’/‘Sigma’] had obvious ‘researcher’ and ‘principal researcher’ status.

However, in order to recognize our participation as that of *co-researchers*, I re-examined the roles of the research participants in all three studies using the research agency criteria of *data production and interpretation* and decided that two *additional* categories of researchers were called for: '*co-researchers*' (for the teacher and children) because of the research functions we performed in common; and '*Sigma Co-researcher*' for the '*principal researcher*' functions that I performed with and without my co-researchers.

'Researcher' Distinctions

While making distinctions regarding the research functions of the participants in the three studies, I identified four sub-categories of '*researchers*' as represented by participant functions in the data: '*Researchers*', '*Principal Researchers*', '*Co-researchers*' and '*Sigma Co-researcher*'. In what follows, to describe how the DRG co-researchers participated in the analysis (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 157), I make subtle distinctions between our respective research roles (how the research is being done and by whom).

'*Researchers*'. To count as '*researchers*', participants had to meet '*agency*' criteria by *participating* in one or more of the following research functions:

- project implementation
- data collection, production, or interpretation

In the two antecedent projects, I classified six participants as '*researchers*': Wikke, John, Debby, Rhona, Elizabeth and Vivian.¹⁸⁴

'*Principal researchers*'. To count as a '*principal researcher*', a participant had to *be responsible for* one or more of the following:

- project design and planning
- securing research funding
- access arrangements
- overseeing implementation
- data collection, production, or interpretation
- research reports, publications

In the IFS project the '*principal researcher*' responsibilities were mine with assistance from two academic '*researchers*' (Wikke and John). And in the MRG project, we began with one '*Principal Researcher*' (Stan), a funded research

¹⁸⁴ Descriptions of the kinds of researcher functions these participants performed in the three studies are on file in the DRG Research Files.

assistant (Michael), and two practising Philosophy for Children teachers (Elizabeth and Judy) who acted as *unfunded* 'consultants'. However, my re-interpretation of our roles in that project according to the above criteria of research agency led me to recognize *all four* as 'Principal Researchers' among whom the responsibilities for the project were distributed.¹⁸⁵

'Co-researchers'. To count as a 'co-researcher', one had to *collaborate with other 'researchers' in the performance of one or more of the following research functions:*

- project design and planning
- project implementation
- data production
- data interpretation

I assigned all four members of the MRG research group and all eighteen participants in the DRG study to the category of 'co-researcher'. In our DRG research, all eighteen participants performed all four 'co-researcher' functions. The seventeen DRG children performed 'co-researcher' functions when they collaborated in (a) project design and planning — by helping to make decisions during DRG Startup sessions; (b) project implementation; (c) data production — by participating in audio and video-taped research discussions, creating research documents and mapping the progress of our research; (d) data management — by helping to organize a data file and managing co-researcher responsibility rotations; and (e) data interpretation — during the course of data production activities. And I [Alison/Judy] performed 'co-researcher' functions when I too collaborated in the same research activities. It must be noted however that I was not a co-researcher *in the same way* as the children were since I was also 'Judy' (their class philosophy teacher) and 'Sigma' (the researcher responsible for the research) and that coloured our relationship without mitigating our acting as co-researchers.

'Sigma' *Co-researcher* was the term I coined to account for my DRG role which was a combination of 'Co-researcher' with my students and 'Principal Researcher' with responsibility for the project. Sigma co-researcher functions included *participation in and responsibility for* the following:

- project design and planning
- access and funding arrangements

¹⁸⁵ Descriptions of the principal researcher functions these participants performed are also on file in the DRG Research Files.

- overseeing project implementation
- data production, management, interpretation
- research reports or publications

Like Elizabeth who acted as both 'Researcher' and 'Principal Researcher' in the MRG study, as 'Alison' I functioned as 'Co-researcher' as well as 'Sigma' Co-researcher in our DRG project.

Since this was my doctoral research project, I was necessarily the DRG 'principal' researcher for the following reasons: (a) the ultimate responsibility for completion of the research and submission of the report was mine; (b) since my co-researchers were volunteers, and since I had decided that I could not make commitment demands on them, we were *not* participating on an equal footing; and (c) as a doctoral candidate, I was more likely to know more about what counts as doing 'research' than my co-researchers.

However, wanting to explore my co-researchers' capabilities to do research in the fullest possible sense, I resisted such hierarchical designations of my research role relative to theirs as 'principal' or 'senior' researcher. Although responsibility for the finished product was mine, I considered that to be as much a function of time and purpose than it was of the students' capabilities. It might not be that they were *unable* to do it, but rather that we did not have the conditions under which to find out if they could or not. Given the practicalities of the time-line and the availability of my co-researchers, their roles were necessarily limited to the data production and interpretive activities that occurred during the course of data production. Post production data interpretation has been solely my [Sigma] responsibility since my co-researchers 'graduated' from elementary school and were no longer available.

With regard to (b) above, if we were to have made DRG be an in-school project and if we had had access to the resources of an academic research project (both human and material), who knows how far we could have gone? Perhaps then my co-researchers would have been in a position to make the commitment necessary and in that sense we would have been on a more equal (?) footing.

And with regard to (c), I considered the point about what it is to 'do research' to be as much a philosophical one as it is a matter of prior education for there is an important everyday sense in which 'to learn' is 'to research'. I take the

assumption that I would necessarily know more than my co-researchers in this regard to be just that, an assumption — a *questionable* assumption — one that is a product of the hierarchical organization of education which is predicated on the notion that older is necessarily wiser.

Testing my Co-research Participation Interpretation

To test my theory of co-research participation, I compare it to a contrasting interpretation of research roles by Kirby and McKenna in which they made distinctions between 'the researcher' and 'the participants'.

The voices of the researcher and the participants usually differ in two main ways. The first is that the researcher is interested in expressing what a number of people think about a particular experience or topic, rather than concentrating on one individual description. The second is that the researcher is likely to be concerned with discussing how those ideas fit together and how well such patterns explain the topic being researched. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 162)

My interpretation of my students' participation as that of 'co-researchers' *collapses* the distinction Kirby and McKenna made between 'researcher' and 'participants'. All DRG co-researchers were involved in "expressing what a number of people think about a particular experience or topic" and although sometimes we concentrated "on one individual description", we were not *limited* to just one; and we were *all* "concerned with discussing how those ideas fit together and how well such patterns explain the topic being researched" (p. 162).

Although there were some research functions which I [Sigma] performed that the children did *not*, they were still 'co-researchers' by virtue of what they *did* do. When I did have to make a distinction between my participation and that of my students, in order to *minimize* the distinction between our researcher functions and to avoid masking the researcher ways we worked *together*, I used the term 'Sigma' rather than hierarchical terms such as 'Senior' or 'Principal' researcher to describe my role. Although we may not have been researchers *in the same way*, we were still all 'researchers' and 'co-researchers'.

Kirby and McKenna made further distinctions between 'participants' and 'researcher' saying that, "While participants may be interested in describing and explaining their experience to the researcher, there may be no corresponding willingness or sense of obligation to become an active seeker of social change"

(Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 162). In our DRG project, *all* co-researcher 'participants' were "interested in describing and explaining their experience" to *all the other researchers* during our research discussions; and by willingly engaging in teacher-student co-research, we were not "seeking" but *initiating* social change.

In addition, according to Kirby and McKenna, "Most participants will not initiate their own research, but will be more aware of the research process and the construction of knowledge *after* their involvement" (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 162, my italics). Although strictly speaking the DRG project was initiated by me and not my co-researchers, that does not make them 'participants' but *not* 'researchers' any more than that would be the case for researchers who collaborated on other projects which someone else initiated. As co-researchers we were all aware of both the research process and our construction of knowledge *during* our involvement as our data show.

And finally, Kirby and McKenna also distinguished *among* participants when they stated the following: "Many will influence knowledge creation primarily as participant-collaborators, consumers and interpreters. Others will involve themselves in acting to create change" (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 162). This prompted me to consider describing the children's roles as those of "participant-collaborators" rather than 'co-researchers' since they *did* participate in a collaborative way; and, although I would *not* describe them as "consumers", they *were* "interpreters" throughout. However, they did more than "influence" our "knowledge creation"; they made it *possible*. Our DRG project was not (only) *about* the children as co-researchers, it was about our *co*-creation of knowledge. And the children's designation as 'co-researchers' was to capture the collaborative aspects of our work while at the same time featuring their participation as 'researchers'.

Co-researchers as 'Formants' or Knowledge Producers

In DRG we researched our *own* experience of "discussion for learning" from the perspectives of both the "researcher" *and* the "researched" (Cole and Knowles 1994, p. 2); and our co-researcher functions included and went beyond providing 'accounts' and 'narratives' of our experience of the process. Although the DRG co-researcher children did not perform *all* the 'researcher' functions that

the Sigma co-researcher did, the functions they *did* perform were 'researcher' functions in a central sense because they were as fully involved as the Sigma researcher in the philosophical *work* which constituted this research. That is, it was by virtue of their abilities to 'do philosophy' that the DRG children co-researchers participated as research 'agents' *beyond* research 'subjects' or 'key informants' in a research process which involved conceptual analysis and theory generation. The only restriction on their 'researcher' participation was that they were involved as *co-researchers with* a Sigma researcher. Rather than describe the children's research roles as those of 'key' or 'empowered' *informants*, therefore, I note that the philosophical knowledge-*producing* aspect of their work prompts me to coin a new, if somewhat awkward, term to express their researcher participation as that of *formants*¹⁸⁶ rather than *informants* — "formants" who were, by definition, 'key' 'empowered' and 'subjects' in the sense of being "those who know and act" (Anderson 1989, p. 260). This is not to claim, however, that as 'researchers' the children could have done this research on their own for that would be to go beyond the scope of this project.

Summary. To come to this concept of 'co-research participation' I categorized as 'researched' those participants who *provided* data. Then, reflecting on the IFS, MRG and DRG projects, I identified certain participants as 'co-researchers' using 'agency' criteria of *producing* and/or *interpreting* data as well as participation in data collection and project implementation. In so doing I made distinctions which resulted in four 'researcher' categories: "researcher", "principal researcher", "co-researcher" and "Sigma co-researcher". Further, I identified as 'principal' and 'Sigma' researchers those who had *responsibility* for the research. Since what the participants *did* could fit into more than one category, it was not the *people* I categorized but rather the research functions they performed. Next I tested my interpretation that the DRG children were co-researchers against an alternative description of researcher/researched participation and I noted that although, the *researched* and *researchers* are distinguishable, they are not separable; and that is consistent with qualitative research reflexivity which recognizes the researcher *in* the research in a way that takes researcher subjectivity into account.

¹⁸⁶ Although the term 'formant' appears in my dictionary, it does not carry quite the meaning I need here — "Formant: In acoustics and phonetics, any of various frequency ranges in which the partials of a vowel sound, etc., are strongest and determine the acoustic quality or tone color of the sound" (Avis 1982, p. 523).

And finally, coining a new term, I concluded that the role of the co-researchers in this study was one of 'key' and 'empowered' knowledge-producing 'formants' rather than *informants*.

5.2 On 'Research Collaboration'

Just as the term 'research participant' could refer to everyone involved in a study, so it might be tempting to describe research involving more than one person or more than one team of researchers as 'collaborative' when in fact distinctions are warranted. In the foregoing section, with reference to the IFS and MRG antecedent research projects and using a concept of research 'agency', I made distinctions between the research roles of different research participants and argued that the young children in our co-research project acted not as 'informants' but as (self) 'empowered' research 'formants' who were at once *researchers* and *researched*.

Now, reflecting on our DRG conceptual work regarding the concept and practice of 'collaboration' in relation to 'cooperation',¹⁸⁷ and again using the IFS and MRG antecedent research projects in relation to DRG, I explain how I made further distinctions— this time between *research* 'cooperation' and *research* 'collaboration' in order to support my designation of the DRG teacher and student participants as *collaborative* 'co-researchers'. This time I looked beyond our research participant *roles* to our *relationships*, and beyond our researcher *functions* to how we researched *in relation to each other* as I examined collaborative-research-as-empowerment aspects of our research. In what follows, first I describe the elements of my refined understanding of 'research collaboration'; second, with reference to the IFS and MRG antecedent studies, I make distinctions between research 'cooperation' and research 'collaboration'; third, I test this interpretation of 'research collaboration' by contrasting it to two alternative interpretations; and I conclude by bringing these distinctions to bear on how we were 'collaborating' in our co-research project.

187 See *Stories 6: Collaborating Cooperatively*.

'Research Collaboration'

This interpretation of 'research collaboration' has two elements: one is the notion of 'work' which I take to be embedded in the term 'col-labor-ation'; and the other is the idea of two or more 'different areas of expertise' being contributed by different research agents. When I formulated the phrase 'collaborative philosophical inquiry' to describe our class philosophy genre of discussion, I deliberately chose the term 'collaborative' because of its root —'labor'; and in our co-researching we looked at whether and how the notion of *collaborative* philosophical inquiry might feature people *working* together in a sense more rigorous than that suggested by, say, Cooperative Learning. And with regard to 'collaboration' as the combining of *different* areas of expertise (in particular between students and their teacher), I consider Kirby and McKenna's observation regarding about how this issue can be seen to be problematic when they wrote about challenges to *their* collaboration on their book, *Experience, Research, Social Change: Methods from the Margins*.

... we found some academic colleagues questioning our collaboration as authors ... and collaboration between a professor and a student is viewed with suspicion. When the idea of the book was first conceived, there was no question that it needed to be written by two authors, one who was more of an academic and the other who was more of an activist. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 28)

In terms of the 'work' element, it is conceivable that the questioning of the 'collaboration' between Kirby and McKenna was based on status by ascribing more value to the 'work' of a *professor* relative to that of a *student* as if to assume the first to be more rigorous than the second. Similarly, with respect to the 'different areas of expertise' element, in addition to differences of *expertise* entailed by one being a professor and the other a student, it is conceivable that the questioning of the 'collaboration' between Kirby and McKenna was based on ascribing more value to the 'expertise' of an "academic" relative to that of an "activist". By contrast, my interpretation of 'research collaboration' recognizes the differing contributions of professor and student, of academic and activist, to be 'work' *and* 'expertise'. And it is the combining of their different strengths which gives such collaboration added value.

'Research Collaboration' Distinctions

For the interpretation of 'co-research *participation*' as described in the previous section, I counted all involved in a research project as 'research participants'. And, using a theory of 'agency', I distinguished between co-research participants who were 'researched' (data providers) and those who 'researchers' (data producers /interpreters). Within the latter group I distinguished between four categories of *researchers* based on the research functions they perform.

For this further interpretation of 'research *collaboration*', to distinguish between research 'cooperation' and 'collaboration' *among* participants, I made distinctions by thinking in terms of three concentric categories of co-research participants: (1) 'research participants'; (2) 'research assistants' and (3) 'co-researchers'.

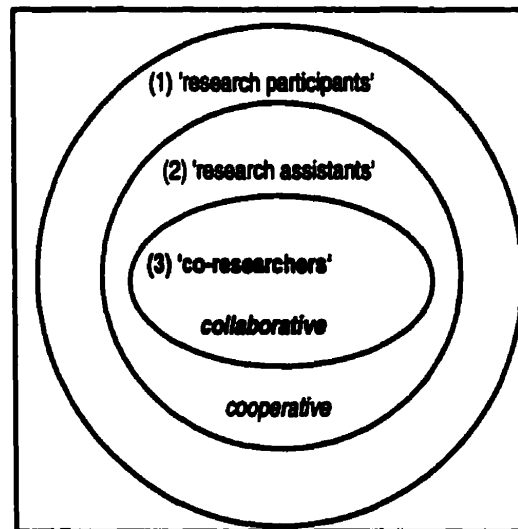


Figure 20. Concentric categories of research participant relationships

I interpreted research relationships as *cooperative* and/or *collaborative* from the perspective of the principal/Sigma researcher(s) and the categories of 'research participants', 'research assistants', and 'co-researchers' served to account for differences in the roles and relationships of all the participants. It should be noted, however, that although these categories were useful, they were not necessarily mutually exclusive since some participants sometimes *cooperated* as 'research assistants' and at other times they *collaborated* as 'co-researchers' depending on the research tasks they performed. In what follows, I explain how, as with my

interpretation of 'research participation' I made these classifications by re-examining the research roles and relationships of all the research participants in the three (IFS, MRG and DRG) studies.

Research cooperation

I classified as *cooperative* the roles and relationships of all 'research participants' whom I classified in subcategories of 'research participants' and 'research assistants' as follows:

Research participants. In this category I included everyone involved in all three studies since I considered all the participants (children and adults, researched and researchers) to be in a 'co-' relationship with the 'Principal' or 'Sigma' researcher(s) by virtue of having consented to participate in the project and also by virtue of the research tasks they performed. The principal /Sigma researchers' relationships with the children research participants were 'cooperative' although in the IFS and MRG studies some were only so 'at arm's length' given that they had little or no contact with each other. The children 'cooperated' when they agreed to participate in the research, when they asked for and received their parents' permission, and when they participated in the pre- and post- testing and other research activities which were otherwise not required of them. And the adult participants 'cooperated' when they agreed to participate in various aspects of the projects and when they volunteered their time, energy and expertise.

Research assistants. The designation of 'research assistant' as a category of research participation is a familiar one — especially for undergraduate and graduate students who are learning how to do research. Such research assistants *help* principal researchers by carrying out assigned research tasks. The research assistant relationship is portrayed metaphorically in an illustration bearing the caption "Aristotle's research assistants" in which Alexander the Great is portrayed exploring the sea bed in a glass diving bell searching for specimens of rare organisms to send to Aristotle, his former tutor and founder of scientific biology. In this illustration Alexander is conducting the research and his research assistants are 'helping' from the boat and together they are *all* Aristotle's research assistants on location (Clark 1994, p. 31). I also classified some IFS and MRG researcher participants as research assistants — namely those who contributed cooperatively to the project by virtue of research tasks they performed not only *for* but also *with* the

principal researcher(s); and/or by virtue of research tasks they performed which made the project possible.

In the IFS project, as principal researcher I was assisted by two of my teacher-colleagues ('Debby' and 'Rhona') who 'cooperated' by carrying out research assistant tasks by participating in the Philosophy for Children training, by introducing the program to the students in their classes, and by administering the pre- and post-tests. I was assisted by a then doctoral student in epidemiology ('Wikke'), who 'cooperated' by doing the statistical analysis of the data *for* me and who helped with the interpretation of the results. And I was also assisted by a then doctoral student in philosophy ('John') who 'cooperated' by helping with the research design and by carrying out external observations in Debby and Rhona's philosophy classes. Our research relationships in the IFS project were also 'cooperative' in that, for the most part, we performed our different research functions independently of each other. Although we worked 'together' on the same project, we did so differently such that we never actually worked *with* each other or met as a team.

In the MRG project, Debby and Rhona were again research assistants (to the four co-researchers) only this time they had an expertise to contribute by virtue of the training they had received for the IFS project and their subsequent experience teaching Philosophy for Children. Again they 'cooperated' by administering the pencil and paper tests, by providing the class philosophy context for classroom observations and by agreeing to release the children selected to be interviewed during class time. However, I do not classify them as 'co-researchers' because they did not contribute to the design of the study or to the interpretation of the data. In addition, in the MRG project we were also assisted by a graduate student with a background in Philosophy for Children ('Vivian') who, after suitable research training, 'cooperated' by conducting the interviews and classroom observations in the post-test phase of the research.

Although research assistants might carry out assigned researcher functions such as collecting and tabulating data, they are usually in an apprenticeship relationship to principal researchers who have control over the range and scope of research activities they perform. Also, even though research assistants might complete those tasks with as much competence as a professional researcher, they are often (though not always) considered to be researchers-in-training with the

power differential that implies. On the other hand, unlike the research work of others such as teacher/researchers, the research work that research assistants do *is* acknowledged in financial terms. Indeed many research projects are funded partly *because* of the contribution they make to the training of student researchers. Therefore, for purposes of my interpretation of 'research collaboration', I categorize research assistants as cooperative (but *not* collaborative) researchers since their 'work', although often funded, is recognized as *assistance* or *help* and their 'expertise' as under construction.

Research collaboration

Next, using the *additional* criteria of research 'work' *and* 'expertise', I classified as *collaborative* the research roles and relationships of those in the 'co-researchers' sub-group only.

Co-researchers. The designation of 'co-researcher' as a category of research participation is becoming more common given an increasing emphasis on collaborative research. 'Co-researchers' can refer to 'principal researchers' working on a common project and who have (student) 'research assistants' who learn how to do research by carrying out tasks assigned by the principal co-researchers and whose research 'work' and 'expertise' may not be recognized as 'collaboration'. Or, the designation of 'co-researchers' can refer to both the principal researchers *and* the research assistants on a project with the 'work' and 'expertise' of everyone being valued for the contribution it makes to the project and with corresponding implications for power relations between co-researchers — even though the overall responsibility for the research may rest with some more than others.

In the IFS project, as principal researcher, my relationship with John, a doctoral candidate with IAPC Philosophy for Children training, was 'cooperative' and 'collaborative' in restricted senses of both. Our relationship was 'cooperative' when we fulfilled similar research functions (*e.g.* as internal and external observers) which contributed to the same research and which, by design and in the interests of preserving external observer 'objectivity', we carried out independently of each other. Our relationship was 'collaborative' to the limited extent that the design of the project, its teacher-training component and the final report were the products of our research discussions. However, also by design and in the interests of external observer 'objectivity', we did *not* collaborate on the implementation of the training

or on data collection or interpretation from the testing of the children. I characterized John's contributions as those of a 'co-researcher' rather than a 'research assistant' because he was involved in sustained research 'work' relating to the project as a whole and his philosophical expertise was essential to the design of the project and to the *philosophical* interpretation of the classroom observation data.

In the MRG project which was expressly 'collaborative', we were four 'co-researchers' all of whom contributed to the design of the project as a whole, to the research instruments we created and to the interpretation of interview data. We 'worked' together in regularly scheduled research meetings and from our various perspectives we each contributed different and overlapping relevant expertise. Stan and Michael contributed philosophical and research methodology expertise while Judy and Elizabeth provided Philosophy for Children classroom teaching expertise. Although we each carried out research tasks independently of each other, during our many research meetings we 'collaborated' on the design, methodological and interpretive aspects of the project from its inception.

In my re-examination of the roles and relationships in the IFS and MRG studies, I classified as 'co-researchers' only those whose sustained contributions I considered to be substantive research 'work' (as distinct from specified research 'tasks') and whose contributions I recognized as research 'expertise'. And it is this strict *collaborative* interpretation of 'co-researcher' that I attribute to the DRG children who made sustained and substantive research 'work' contributions by virtue of their '*collaborative* philosophical inquiry' expertise.

According to this interpretation of 'research collaboration', then, in general terms I characterized the research relationships in the IFS project as cooperative; those in the MRG project as a transition from cooperative to collaborative and a mixture of both; and in the DRG project as primarily cooperative collaboration.

Testing my 'Research Collaboration' Interpretation

To 'test' this interpretation of 'research collaboration', next I comment on two contrasting interpretations of who count as research collaborators.

Research collaborators as 'assistants'. According to Kirby and McKenna, a research collaborator is, "A person who does not necessarily have

research experience per se but who has a wealth of experience in relation to the research question — one who can greatly assist the researcher”. Research collaborators are “people who help us focus and assist in keeping various stages of data gathering in order . . . [and who] can also help us avoid pitfalls and keep us honest in the face of amassing data” (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 31, Glossary of Terms). A difficulty with this description, as with Mac an Ghaill’s “collaborative model” below, is that the role(s) attributed to research collaborators are seen as *secondary* to the role(s) of the principal researcher. As if sensitive to this difficulty, although without elaborating further, Kirby and McKenna also added that, “Some feminist researchers have suggested that research participants need to become *full collaborators* in the research process” (p. 31, my italics).

Research collaborators as ‘constructive contributors’. Máirtín Mac an Ghaill went a little further when he described as “research collaboration” a relationship with his *students* which developed during the course of an ethnographic study he conducted which looked at a group of black female students who were responding positively to education (Mac an Ghaill 1991, p. 102). Reflecting on his experience in this and another study, Mac an Ghaill acknowledged more of an active role for research collaborators when he characterized his teacher/researcher relationship with his students as “a collaborative model” (pp. 109, 113).

As my research developed, I moved to a collaborative model that involved the students, their parents and other members of the black community, in generating empirical data and formulating and validating theory. Our continuing critical discussion was vital to my attempt to ground the theory in the data collected. . . . Furthermore they were not mere objects of my research but rather they were actively involved in its construction. (Mac an Ghaill 1991, p. 113)

According to my interpretation of ‘co-research participation’, “the students, their parents and other members of the black community” could count as researchers (data producers/interpreters) by virtue of their having been “involved” . . . “in generating empirical data and formulating and validating theory”. This therefore comes very close to the kind of collaborating I had in mind for my co-researchers and I note especially Mac an Ghaill’s recognition that their “continuing critical *discussion* was vital” to the grounding in the data of the theory they generated (my italics). And also, just as I acknowledge the importance of my class philosophy pedagogical approach to my collaboration with my students, so Mac an Ghaill acknowledged that, “An important factor that underpinned my collaboration with

the students was my general pedagogical approach" — an approach which he attributed to the work of Freire (p. 113).

There the similarities end, however. Although Mac an Ghaill stated that his students were not "mere objects" of his research, they were, nonetheless the research subjects of his ethnographic study in a way that my students were not. Our research subject was rather the "continuing critical discussion" Mac an Ghaill described as "vital". Although we *were* 'subjects' in and of our research, we were *more* than subjects in the sense of 'objects' of study. And we were subjects in a *different* sense from that of Mac an Gaill's students as we investigated whether we could go *beyond* students-and-teachers as researched to students-and-teachers *together* as co-researchers and co-researched.

DRG co-researchers as 'collaborative' researchers. According to this interpretation of 'research collaboration', then, as portrayed in the *Co-researching Stories*, the children were (a) research participants who *cooperated* as (b) research assistants. Their research functions were dependent on those of the Sigma co-researcher and they saw their own research roles as "helping Judy get her Ph.D". At the same time, they also *collaborated* as (c) co-researchers whose sustained generation of first-order ideas I counted as research 'work'; and each also contributed 'different' and relevant philosophical 'expertise'. Similarly, as 'Alison' I was (a) a research participant who *cooperated* as (b) a research assistant to my co-researchers by virtue of my own research apprenticeship and the assistance functions I provided them. And at the same time, I also *collaborated* as (c) co-researcher with them according to the same criteria of research 'work' and contribution of 'different' philosophical research 'expertise'.

5.3 On 'Transformative Co-learning'

Reflecting on what it has been like for a teacher to do co-research with her students, in this section I explain how, inspired by and adapting Louise Rosenblatt's transactional theory of the literary work (Rosenblatt 1938/1983; Rosenblatt 1978), I settled on the phrase "Transformative Co-learning" to describe *how* teachers and children learn together ("co-learn") when they engage in the IDEAS ~INQUIRY process of CPI discussion (for learning) whether in a classroom or a research context.

'Transformative Co-learning'

Based on my interpretation of our DRG data, I have come to view 'learning' (from discussion) as a *process* which is at once 'interactive', 'transactive', 'formative' and '*transformative*'.

Interactive. The process of CPI learning (from discussion) is 'interactive' in the minimal sense of learners' ideas being 'in motion' and coming in contact with each other — their own or those of other participants. However, as a full description of what is going on, 'interactive' does not go far enough and is subject to the same objection which Rosenblatt attributed to John Dewey and Arthur F. Bentley when she was interpreting the dynamics of the reading process:

Dewey and Bentley sought to counteract the dualistic phrasing of phenomena as an "interaction" between different factors, because it implies separate, self-contained, and already defined entities acting on one another — in the manner, if one may use a homely example, of billiard balls colliding. (Rosenblatt 1978, p. 17)

'Dual monologues' and 'opinion exchange' discussions in which participants' ideas remain "separate, self-contained and already defined entities acting on one another" may be 'interactive' in this minimal sense. However, just as Rosenblatt went beyond 'interactive' to describe the reading process, so the dynamics of the process of CPI/D4L (Collaborative Philosophical Inquiry / Discussion for Learning) call for a description which includes and goes beyond 'interactive'. In the following, to show how closely CPI discussion for learning parallels Rosenblatt's account of the reading process, I substitute [CPI/D4L] for Rosenblatt's "reading", [discussant] for her "reader" and [IDEAS] for her "text":

In discussion of the [CPI/D4L] process . . . we need to free ourselves from unscrutinized assumptions implicit in the usual terminology and in the very structure of our language. The usual phrasing makes it difficult to attempt to do justice to the nature of the actual [CPI/D4L] event. The [discussant], we can say, interprets the [IDEAS]. (The [discussant] acts on the [IDEAS].) Or we can say, the [IDEAS] produce a response in the [discussant]. (The [IDEAS] act on the [discussant].) Each of these phrasings, because it implies a single line of action by one separate element on another separate element, distorts the actual [CPI/D4L] process. The relation between [discussant] and [IDEAS] is not linear. It is a situation, an event at a particular time and place in which each element conditions the other. (Rosenblatt 1978, p. 16)

Like reading, CPI/D4L is 'interactive' in the minimal billiard ball sense of discussants IDEAS being in motion and contact without necessarily implying

change. Or, to put it another way, CPI/D4L is 'interactive' in the sense of video game players who are involved in a dynamic process in which they can affect what happens without what happens necessarily affecting them or the nature of the game. However, we need a different term to account for the reciprocal change and 'learning' that occurs in the processes of both reading and CPI/D4L.

Transactional. To refer to what happens when readers read texts (literary works) Rosenblatt preferred the term "transactional" in the sense of a 'transaction' as something that is accomplished as a result of the interactivity between reader and text. If we take 'discussant' and 'discussion' to be analogous to Rosenblatt's 'reader' and 'text', then CPI discussion for learning too is "transactional" and this is hardly surprising since, judging by her references to the thinking of John Dewey and Charles S. Peirce, the philosophical roots of Rosenblatt's theory are also those of Philosophy for Children:

The "transactional" terminology developed by John Dewey and Arthur F. Bentley seems most appropriate for the view of the dynamics of the reading process that I have attempted to suggest. This philosophic approach, which has its roots in William James and Charles Sanders Peirce, and for which Dewey used various phrasings during his long career, has had repercussions in many areas of twentieth-century thought. (Rosenblatt 1978, p. 16)

Thus, something 'transactional' is the product of engaging in CPI discussion and that something is a *sine qua non* such that it is not an instance of discussion for learning *unless* there is a 'transaction' in this sense. However, this too does not go far enough.

Formative. Interpreting Bentley's account of James' theory, Rosenblatt used the term 'conditioned' to say that both the text and the reader are changed by the transactional process.

Transaction' designates, then, an ongoing process in which the elements or factors are, one might say, aspects of a total situation, each conditioned by and conditioning the other. (Rosenblatt 1978, p. 17)

However, to describe the analogous process in CPI discussion for learning, I prefer the term 'formative' for unlike readers and texts, inquirers in a CPI discussion for learning context have a kind of 'power to change' — themselves and each other — which is not implied by Rosenblatt's 'conditioning'. As with the 'reader' and the 'text', both 'discussant' and 'discussion' are changed by the CPI discussion for learning process. Just as when we speak of young children in their

'formative' years there is a suggestion of coming into being — of formation — of development, so in 'formative' CPI discussion for learning participants' ideas 'come into being' as they 'form' and 'formulate' their thoughts and responses. However, *unlike* readers and text who cannot change the (reading) process by which they change, in CPI discussion for learning participants can shape the inquiry process itself in ways which are also 'formative' of the participants. Thus CPI discussions can be 'formative' in a triple sense: *ideas* change, *the ways ideas change* change and *participants* change — themselves and each other. However, this still does not go far enough.

Transformative. Inspired in part by 'transformers' — children's toys which change from one object into another very *different* object by a series of manipulations of its original 'pieces' — I settle on the term '*transformative*' to characterize what happens in CPI discussion for learning. During the course of such discussion it is not at all uncommon, for example, for participants to radically change their ideas since, through its self-corrective procedures of inquiry (Lipman 1991b; Sharp 1987), they form, re-form and *transform* their ideas, themselves and each other.

Moreover, just as with toy transformers, it is also not at all uncommon for participants to express delight when they emerge from a transformative discussion with ideas that are entirely different from those with which they began.

Seldom have I seen children dissatisfied with the product they took from a philosophical discussion, even if it is only some modest philosophical distinction, for they recognize how before that acquisition they had even less. Children, unlike adults, do not look insistently for answers or conclusions. They look rather for the kind of transformation that philosophy provides — not giving a new answer to an old question, but transforming all the questions.¹⁸⁸ (Lipman 1991b, p. 231)

To take an example from our DRG co-research, we began with little or no idea of what we meant by 'collaborative' and ended up making complex and fine distinctions between 'collaboration' and 'cooperation'. Mid-way through our exploration, just as with toy transformers which are neither fish nor fowl in mid-transformation, we went through a phase in which making the distinctions between

¹⁸⁸ Lipman included the following footnote in the text: "This is a paraphrase of a remark by Gilbert Ryle in his essay "Hume," *Collected Papers*, vol. 1 (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1971), p. 160."

'collaboration' and 'cooperation' was so challenging as to have us thinking their meanings were synonymous. Yet we also had a sense that they were not. In order to deal with this situation, we rode through a phase of confusion until we emerged with distinctions that enabled us to understand these two terms as very different in ways which we were unable to do at the outset.

Finally, not only is CPI discussion for learning (as practised within the Philosophy for Children tradition) transformative of ideas, inquiry and individuals *within* the context of the discussions themselves, it can also be transformative in an *outreach* sense. Just as Matthew Lipman talked in transformative terms about "a philosophy redesigned and reconstructed so as to make it available and acceptable and enticing to children" (Lipman 1991b, p. 262), and just as Gareth Matthews has argued about how doing philosophy with children contributes to a transformation of how we understand 'children' and 'childhood' (Matthews 1987/1989, June; Matthews 1988; Matthews 1994), so I argue here that children who do philosophy as a way of doing research contribute to further transformations in the concepts of 'children' *and* 'research'. It is this nuance that makes CPI discussion for learning consistent with genres of research which have 'transformative' social change agendas such as critical pedagogy, feminist research and action research.

5.4 On 'Research'

In this dissertation I have explained how I invited my students to engage in this project as co-researchers based on the Lawrence Stenhouse description of 'research' as "*systematic and sustained enquiry made public*" (Bridges 1996, p. 2), and based also on my assumption that my students' existing abilities to 'do philosophy' would qualify them to act as 'real' researchers. I accounted for our project as 'research' in methodological terms by explaining the origin of the research ideas, by providing a research context for this project, by recounting how we obtained authorization to conduct this research and by accounting for our research methodology and methods. I have addressed the issue of "Why 'research'?" in conceptual and emancipatory terms by examining contrasting interpretations of 'research' (as culturally defined and as an everyday activity); by linking the activities of 'doing philosophy' and 'doing research'; by contrasting the "*real* research" I was proposing to do with my co-researchers with the 'research'

that children do for school projects; and by comparing it to three examples of children doing 'real' research in other contexts. And I have described how we were conducting our research first by articulating an IDEAS~INQUIRY theoretical framework and also in terms of generative and conceptual analysis questioning. Still, questions remain about whether such inquiry is *really* 'research'. For me to say that our DRG inquiry counts as 'research' is not enough to make it so. There is still room for doubt for, as Staci pointed out, someone can always disagree with me because they have "a different point of view".

If 'inquiry', then 'research'? When, like Ferrari and Arachnid, I looked to my dictionary for help, I realized that although the terms 'inquiry' and 'research' appear in each others' definitions, that need not mean they are synonymous.

inquiry: investigation; *research*, especially by questioning

research: diligent, protracted investigation; studious *inquiry*¹⁸⁹

Therefore, in addition to the 'conceptual' and 'emancipatory' reasons already given for *wanting* to call this work 'research', my use of that term still requires further articulation.

One approach might be to examine what 'research' commonly consists of or what it *looks* like and to argue that if children can do *that* or what *looks like* that, then they must be able to do 'research'. However, that would also be to describe what children do in their school 'research' projects and we resist referring to *that* as 'real' research saying that it is not 'research' in the same sense as for adult academic 'research'. If it looks like a duck and walks like a duck and talks like a duck, that need not mean that it *is* a duck. Reasonable facsimiles need not count.

By contrast, a "different point of view" might be one that is politically motivated in such a way as to mitigate any arguments I might bring forward. For example, if we take 'research' to be something that *only* adults can do (by virtue of being adults), or that children can *not* do (by virtue of being children), then no argument will suffice unless in some way the adult/child distinction with regard to our use of the term 'research' can be dissolved. If it cannot, then the most we could say is that the children with whom I worked only counted as 'co-researchers' because they were working *with* an adult academic researcher. However, even if it

¹⁸⁹ Avis 1982, pp. 696, 1143, my italics.

looks *with* a duck, walks *with* a duck and talks *with* a duck, that need not mean that it *is* a duck either.

For emancipatory purposes, I chose to refer to our DRG work as *real* 'research' as one way to *give voice* to children in educational research and as if to say look how these young children can speak and act *as if* they are adults. However, now I see that it may not be that children act *as if* they are *adults* but rather that the activities in which *both* engage and which we recognize as 'research' can be shown to be 'doable' by both adults and children. In this section, reflecting further on my argument that philosophical discussion 'inquiry' *can* be seen as a way to do 'research', I tell how *I* came to see that if *CPI discussion for learning* can be *seen as* 'inquiry', then it can also be *seen as* 'research' — research that both adults and children can do — separately and with each other.

The Same Only Different:

Seeing an 'Inquiry' Duck as a 'Research' Rabbit

To counter possible objections to the idea of referring to our work as 'research', for this section I drew on Ludwig Wittgenstein's "duck-rabbit" philosophical investigations regarding the experience of "seeing-as" or "aspect-seeing" (Monk 1991; Wittgenstein 1953/1972). It was while reading Ray Monk's account of Wittgenstein's preoccupation with issues of "aspect-seeing", that it dawned on me that rather than argue that our discussion for learning 'inquiry' *is* 'research', it would be better to argue for *seeing* discussion-for-learning 'inquiry' *as* 'research' — an argument that can retain congruency between CPI discussion-for-learning 'inquiry' and 'research' while at the same time allowing for a perception shift such that each can also be 'seen' separately.

The duck-rabbit figure

My moment of 'dawning' occurred as I was looking at the ambiguous figure of the duck-rabbit¹⁹⁰ that Wittgenstein used while investigating the experience of "aspect-seeing".

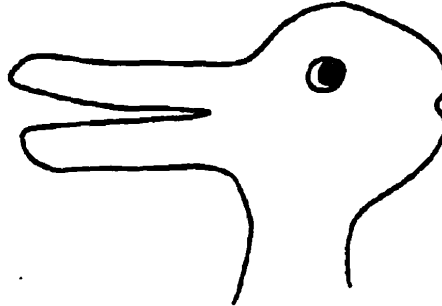


Figure 21. The ambiguous duck-rabbit figure¹⁹¹

"Suppose I show it to a child," Wittgenstein is reported to have said when he discussed it in a lecture, "[The child] says 'It's a duck' and then suddenly 'Oh, it's a rabbit.' So it recognizes it as a rabbit. — This is an experience of recognition. . . . But you haven't an experience of recognition all the time. — The experience only comes at the moment of change from duck to rabbit and back. In between, the aspect is as it were dispositional" (quoted in Monk 1991, pp. 507–8).

It was while looking at the duck-rabbit and having *my* perception shift back and forth between the picture-duck and the picture-rabbit that it occurred to me that 'discussion-for-learning' could be 'seen as' an 'inquiry-research' duck-rabbit the perception of which could shift back and forth between discussion for learning as 'inquiry' and discussion for learning as 'research'. As with most analogies the fit is imperfect, however, since 'inquiry' and 'research' are not 'pictures' or 'drawings';

¹⁹⁰ "As he acknowledges in the *Investigations*, Wittgenstein took the duck-rabbit figure from Joseph Jastrow's *Fact and Fable in Psychology* (1900), but his discussion of aspect-seeing owes far more to Wolfgang Köhler than it does to Jastrow. It is Köhler's *Gestalt Psychology* (1929), and especially the chapter on 'Sensory Organization', that Wittgenstein has in mind in much of his discussion. Many of the lectures began with Wittgenstein reading a short passage from the book" (Monk 1991, pp. 508-509).

¹⁹¹ The figure of the duck-rabbit reproduced here is from Monk 1991, p. 507 and is slightly different from the one in Wittgenstein 1953/1972, p. 194e.

and they are more akin to each other than ducks are to rabbits. Still, it is a useful analogy for the way it portrays the idea of there being one 'thing' ('discussion-for-learning') which can be "seen as" *both* 'inquiry' and 'research' by the same 'viewer'. And *because* of the overlap between 'inquiry' and 'research', unlike the duck-rabbit, 'discussion-for-learning' can also be "seen as" both 'inquiry' and 'research' at once. Or if not, at least as *more* one than the other. This, it seemed to me, offered the promise of a way out of the straight-jacket claim that 'inquiry' *is* (necessarily or always) 'research'.

"Seeing-as" or "aspect-seeing"

Wittgenstein used the term "duck-rabbit" to refer to the ambiguous figure or drawing. And, introducing the idea of a "picture-object", he used the terms "picture-duck" to refer to the perception of the duck-rabbit as a duck and "picture-rabbit" to refer to its perception as a rabbit (Wittgenstein 1953/1972, p. 194e).

The point about the figure is that it can be seen under more than one aspect: the same drawing can be seen as a duck and as a rabbit. And it is this phenomenon of *seeing-as* that interested Wittgenstein. (Monk 1991, p. 508)

Two uses of 'see'. Wittgenstein began his discussion of aspect-seeing with what Monk characterized as "a masterfully clear statement of the distinction" between two uses of the word 'see' (Monk 1991, p. 511).

The one: 'What do you see there?' — 'I see this' (and then a description, a drawing, a copy). The other: 'I see a likeness between these two faces' . . .

The importance of this is the difference of category between the two 'objects' of sight. (Wittgenstein 1953/1972, p. 193e)

While thinking about these two "objects of sight", I wondered which I would use with regard to *seeing* 'discussion-for-learning' — an 'object of sight' for me and for my co-researchers but perhaps *not* for those not acquainted with Philosophy for Children CPI discussion for learning.

With regard to the first ("I see this"), since 'discussion for learning' is neither a drawing nor a copy, the best I can offer is a description. But — a description of *what*? There is a sense in which 'discussion for learning' cannot be 'seen' at all. While working with the data, how do *I* know 'discussion for learning'

when I 'see' it? What is it that makes me say, "Oh it's 'discussion for learning'?" in a way analogous to Wittgenstein saying, "Oh it's a duck-rabbit"?

With regard to the second ("I see a likeness between two . . ."), it occurs to me now that this second sense is the one to which I have recourse in the absence of the first. That is, in the *absence* of a fixed drawing or copy, the best I can *do* is describe 'discussion for learning' *in relation to* the 'cousins' to which it stands in likeness. However, those who do not 'know' (have experience of/with) 'discussion for learning' can all too easily *mistake* it for one of its cousins (*e.g.* opinion exchange, debate, argument) by virtue of 'seeing' the likeness(es) but not the difference(s).

For our purposes, 'discussion for learning' was the name *I* [Sigma] gave to *something* recognizable — an activity, a process, a way of communicating, an experience — and even though at the beginning my students were *not* familiar with my newly formulated phrase 'discussion for learning', when I invited them to research it *with* me, they *did* recognize it (if only intuitively). It was enough for me to 'point to' the thing itself as when I said it was, "our own experience of philosophical discussions". Just because we had not *yet* tried to describe it, that did not mean that there was not an 'it' to describe.

"*Objects of sight*". As Monk pointed out, by "'objects' of sight" Wittgenstein did *not* mean "the phenomenalist notion that the objects of our immediate experience are the private, shadowy entities that empiricists call sense-data as if they were *objects* of some kind" as if we were to say, for example, "that when we see it now as a duck, now as a rabbit, the external figure — the drawing — has not changed; what has changed is our internal picture — our sense datum" (Monk 1991, p. 508, my italics). Rather, according to Monk, such an interpretation was "the *target* of Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology". And, he went on, "It is for fear of this kind of generalization that one of the first points Wittgenstein makes about aspect-seeing . . . is that it is not typical; we do not see everything as something" (Monk 1991, p. 508, my italics).

More pertinent for my purposes is Wittgenstein's point about the importance of the distinction between two uses of the word 'see' being "the difference in *category* between the two 'objects' of sight" noting in particular how one person might notice in a drawing, a *likeness* that another might not see (Wittgenstein 1953/1972, p. 193e, my italics).

I contemplate a face, and then suddenly notice its likeness to another. I *see* that it has not changed; and yet I see it differently. I call this experience "noticing an aspect". (Wittgenstein 1953/1972, p. 193e)

He then went on to say that unlike psychologists whom he took to be interested in the *causes* of this experience, "We are interested in the *concept* and its place among the concepts of *experience*" (Wittgenstein 1953/1972, p. 193e, my italics).

Assuming that there *is* a recognizable discussion for learning 'it' that was not a figment of my own private sense data, next I wondered about ways in which it could be 'seen differently' by others. Three 'aspects' of discussion for learning that interested me in ascending order of importance were those of 'classroom talk', 'inquiry' and 'research'. From my Philosophy for Children practical experience, I saw 'discussion for learning' as a specific form of 'classroom talk'. In the Philosophy for Children literature it was already *seen as* 'inquiry'. And in the MRG project described earlier, we (Michael Chervin and I) began to see it as 'research'. Second, I wondered if, by virtue of their school experience with Philosophy for Children, my *student co-researchers* also would see discussion for learning as different from other kinds of talk. I wondered if *they* would characterize it as 'inquiry'. And I wondered if they would be able to put it to use for 'research' purposes. And third, I wondered if *readers of our co-research story* would come to see discussion for learning not only as classroom talk, but also as 'inquiry' *and* as a way to do 'research'.

Talking about seeing something as something. Monk pointed out that Wittgenstein did not . . . find it very easy to say what is involved in seeing something as something. "It is not easy", Monk quoted Wittgenstein as having said. "These thoughts I am now working on are as hard as granite." Then Monk went on to say that, "This strain perhaps shows in the paradoxical, and even contradictory, descriptions that were finally published in the *Investigations*:" (Monk 1991, p. 514).

The expression of a change of aspect is the expression of a new perception and at the same time of the perception's being unchanged.

'Seeing as . . . ' is not part of perception. And for that reason it is like seeing and again not like. (Quoted in Monk 1991, p. 514)

"On one thing he *was* clear," Monk stated, and that is that "however it is described, it must not be by recourse to a 'private object'" (p. 514).

. . . above all do not say 'After all my visual impression isn't the drawing: it is this which I can't show to anyone.' — Of course it is not the drawing, but neither is it anything of the same category, which I carry within myself. (Quoted in Monk 1991, p. 514–15)

In another example, Wittgenstein talked about the interactive relationship between 'seeing as', 'seeing' and 'interpreting' when he talked about imagining an illustration such as the following cube appearing in several places in a book such as a textbook.¹⁹²

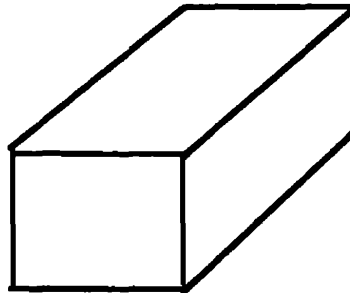


Figure 22. Imagining a cube appearing in several places

In the relevant text something different is in question every time: here a glass cube, there an inverted open box, there a wire frame of that shape, there three boards forming a solid angle. Each time the text supplies the interpretation of the illustration.

But we can also *see* the illustration now as one thing now as another. — So we interpret it, and *see* it as we *interpret* it. (Wittgenstein 1953/1972, p. 193e)

Reading of Wittgenstein's difficulties with saying what is involved in seeing something as something underlined for me the philosophical complexity of what we were trying to do in this research. One problem in particular that it addressed is the phenomenon I have encountered repeatedly of other people *not* seeing (at first glance at any rate) what I see in the data. "You will have to walk us through it," some have said, "— and even then we might not see". Or, "You might have to

¹⁹² Cube reproduced from Wittgenstein 1953/1972, p. 193e.

show us again and again". "*How did you see that in the data?*". And, "How did you know what to *look for?*"

My response has been to say, "I have an eye for this sort of thing," attributing it to my experience with Philosophy for Children. It was as if there were something special about my *eyes* — as if to say that I had developed some sort of philosophical x-ray vision. Although this is a common way to talk, it feels less than satisfactory as a response. And it feels as though people are humoring me when I say what I see — as if to say, "We'll take your word for it". Unlike the duck-rabbit or the cube, discussion for learning does not have a visual representation that I can point to, and therefore it is much more dependent on "relevant text" I can provide in which something different is in question every time, as Wittgenstein put it above. I have to *talk* the reader through it, and *that too* might not be enough.

Aiming to change the aspect seen

Wittgenstein also had a *transformative* interest in aspect-seeing — an interest which Monk described as the aim of his philosophical method.

It could be said of his philosophical method that its aim is to change the aspect under which certain things are seen — for example, to see a mathematical proof not as a sequence of propositions but as a picture, to see a mathematical formula not as a proposition but as a rule, to see first-person reports of psychological states ('I am in pain' etc.) not as descriptions but as expressions, and so on. The 'understanding that consists in seeing connections', one might say, is the understanding that results from a change of aspect. (Monk 1991, p. 508)

What changes? Reflecting on "these cases of ambiguous figures (where we first see a duck and then a rabbit . . .)" Monk raised the question of what it *is* that changes when one sees a different aspect.

... if we are not to say that our visual reality has changed, or that the organization of the figure has changed, then what are we to say? What *has* changed? (Monk 1991, p. 514)

He described Wittgenstein's response this way: "Typically Wittgenstein wants to describe the process in such a way that this question does not arise" and he pointed out further that the question itself is the problem: "Like all cases of philosophical confusion, it is the question itself that misleads" (p. 514).

'It makes no sense to ask: "What has changed"', Wittgenstein told his class. 'And the answer: "the organisation has changed" makes no sense either.' (Monk 1991, p. 514)

What difference? Monk went on to say that Wittgenstein “was also emphatic that the question to ask about changes of aspect was not: ‘*What* changes?’ but: ‘*What difference* does the change make?’” and he noted that Wittgenstein “replaces talk of a ‘transformation of visual reality’ with talk of the consequences of seeing the figure differently”:

In the case of a drawing, the consequence of seeing it differently might be that it is copied differently. . . ; in the case of a piece of music, hearing it differently might result in its being sung, played or whistled differently; in the case of a poem, it might be read differently. (Monk 1991, p. 515)

In Wittgenstein’s case, according to Monk, “. . . the consequence of a ‘change of aspect’ might be a change of *life*” such that what [Wittgenstein] “earnestly hoped for was a culture which treated music, poetry, art and religion with the same respect and seriousness with which our present society treats science” (p. 516).

What point? On whether there was any point in urging such a change of aspect, Monk quoted Wittgenstein as follows:

A philosopher says ‘Look at things like this!’ — but in the first place that doesn’t ensure that people will look at things like that, and in the second place his admonition may come altogether too late; it’s possible, moreover, that such an admonition can achieve nothing in any case and that the impetus for such a change in the way things are perceived has to originate somewhere else entirely. (Quoted in Monk 1991, p. 516)

Elsewhere, noting that “Seeing an aspect and imagining are subject to the will,” Wittgenstein went further still when he puzzled about whether there could be such a thing as “aspect-blindness”, whether there could be “human beings lacking in the capacity to see something *as something*— and what would that be like?” Further, he wondered, “What sort of consequences would it have?” and, “Would this defect be comparable to colour-blindness or to not having absolute pitch?—” (Wittgenstein 1953/1972, p. 213e). “But,” Monk observed, “that this ‘change in the way things are perceived’ should happen somehow was crucially important to [Wittgenstein],” and, he added, “somehow, one had to try and change things.” (Monk 1991, p. 516).

"To change the aspect under which certain things are seen" has also been my [Sigma] aim for this research. To see classroom talk not as talk in a classroom but as an important medium for learning, to see dialogue and discussion not as mere talk 'sharing' activities but as forms of action for social change, and to see children not as receptive learners but as active inquirers capable of making important contributions to research into matters pertaining to them — these are some of the transformative aspect-change understandings I am targeting as consequences of our research. Initially misled by the question of whether 'discussion for learning' *is* 'inquiry' *is* 'research', I tried to show the congruency of each to the other.

By framing the issue differently, and by considering the consequences of that change, I came to see that the issue is not only about how 'discussion for learning' compares to 'research', but also it is about the ways in which it could be *perceived* depending on its context and the purposes to which it is put. With this research I have tried to change — somehow — the way things [children and philosophical discussion] are perceived: such that children can be perceived as co-researchers and philosophical discussion can be perceived as a way of doing research. These are perception changes the consequences of which have implications for social change.

Chapter 6

‘Tentative Conclusions’

To conclude this dissertation, first I return to the two research questions it addresses. Second, I make some concluding remarks about the process of designing and carrying out the research project. Third, I identify research achievements with regard to both the dissertation research question and the question we explored in the Discussion Research Group. Fourth, I make suggestions for further research and I conclude with reflections on possible implications of this work.

In keeping with the “open and systematic” approach I have taken throughout this dissertation, an approach which is also manifested in the work of the children, and in keeping with Philosophy for Children practice, I title this chapter “Tentative” Conclusions since, even *after* all the work that is represented here, as in any project of research worthy of the name, the ‘conclusions’ are only as good as the next question, indeed as the next *person’s* question. I submit that if the work represented here does not definitively ‘answer’ the questions, it goes a good distance from their points of departure. In what follows I conclude by continuing to reflect — this time on what has been gained by having undertaken this project.

6.1 Research Questions

This exploratory project had two interdependent research questions: one for the Co-research Group and the other for the dissertation.

‘Answering’ the Co-research Group Research Question

The co-research group research question. In order to answer the co-research group question by demonstration I needed some philosophically experienced children and a place to do the research. The question I chose had to be

one which was of mutual interest, derived from common experience and compelling enough to sustain everyone's interest in what was to be a volunteer after-school research group. The question I offered to the children was: "What counts as 'discussion for learning' and how do we learn from it?"

'Discussion for learning', the phrase I coined for purposes of this project, referred to 'the kind of discussions we have in our philosophy classes'. This question was compelling to me because as a teacher I had long been concerned about how underestimated and taken for granted the practice of 'discussion' is and I was interested in doing research which would enable us to make distinctions between different forms of group talk but also to feature philosophical discussion as a vehicle for learning. I was interested in finding out how children who have experience in this form of discussion would interpret it given a research context. Were they aware of its features and attributes or was it to them the same as any other form of group talk? How compelling such a question would be for the students I had no way of knowing beforehand. I was banking on the fact that it was derived from our common and concurrent experiences of it in our ongoing philosophy classes and I was not disappointed.

'Answering' the Dissertation Research Question

This dissertation is in answer to the *further* research question, "How do children who are experienced in doing philosophy use philosophical discussion as a way of doing research?" On the basis of *many* years of doing philosophy with children in classroom communities of inquiry, I wanted to research an idea I had been harbouring that 'to do philosophy' is 'to do research'. The children in my Philosophy for Children classes could 'do philosophy'. Did that mean that *they* could also 'do research'? On the basis of two prior research projects I had been involved in, I also wanted to do further research on the possibility of using philosophical discussion as a way to do research. Could children who do philosophy do that? And on the basis of the educational reform and liberation of children agenda of Philosophy for Children, I wanted to do research with children as co-researchers as a way of contributing to the emancipation of children. If children who are experienced in doing philosophy can use philosophical discussion as a way of doing research, what implications might that have for children, for education and indeed also for research?

In this dissertation I have answered the research question in three different ways: by demonstration, by surfacing philosophical inquiry research acts in the data, and by conceptual investigation. First, in Part Two: *Co-researching Stories* the co-researchers *demonstrated* how children who are experienced in doing philosophy use philosophical discussion as a way of doing research.

Second, in Chapter 4. Surfacing Philosophical Inquiry Research Acts, using data from the demonstrations in the *Co-researching Stories*, I identified philosophical inquiry moves the children made on the basis of their class philosophy experience. Then, to argue that such children use philosophical discussion as a way of doing research, with reference to relevant literature and using verbatim data from the children co-researchers, I argued that the philosophical inquiry moves they were making 'surface' as corresponding research acts.

And third, in Chapter 5. Conceptual Investigations, in answer to whether this is 'research' that the children are doing, reflecting on my work on this project and two other projects which preceded it, I produced refined reconceptualizations of key terms such as the following: 'research', 'researcher', 'researched', 'co-researcher', 'research assistant' and 'principal researcher' and 'collaborative researcher'. I described what it is like for a teacher to engage in co-research with her own philosophy students as 'transformative co-learning'. And, with reference to Ludwig Wittgenstein's philosophical investigations of 'seeing as' or 'aspect-seeing' I argued that the inquiry moves that the children used in philosophical discussion can be 'seen as' a way of doing research.

6.2 Research Process

With regard to our DRG research process, next I make concluding comments on designing this research, on producing data for the demonstration of the children working as co-researchers using philosophical discussion, on working with the data and on presenting the case story.

The research design. When designing this project, I was interested in combining philosophical and qualitative research methodologies. From philosophy I decided to draw on my many years of experience doing philosophy with children

and use the 'community of inquiry' methodology with which we would all be familiar only this time transposing it from a *pedagogical* methodology to a *research* methodology. From qualitative research I was in the process of acquiring experience to draw on and my co-researchers had none. However, on the basis of my previous experience trying to use *quantitative* methods for Philosophy for Children research, and on the basis of the brief exposure I did have to qualitative research when we began, I had become very interested in doing philosophical research using qualitative methodologies. My approach was necessarily exploratory, however, since very little research related to Philosophy for Children had been done using qualitative methods at that time.

Producing demonstration data. In order to produce data for the demonstration I [Sigma] sought out volunteer children with philosophical experience, I decided on a DRG research question, and I arranged for a time and a place to engage in philosophical discussion together in response to our question. By documenting our co-researching experience (on audio and video tape and by 'producing' data in a variety of ways for a Data File) I sought to present *how* children with philosophical experience use philosophical discussion as a way of doing research. In keeping with my decision to use our *Philosophy for Children* methodology as a way of doing research, we began the way we would begin investigating any topic in a philosophy class. In this case we added a question mark to the phrase 'Discussion for Learning' and we brainstormed fourteen further co-researcher questions which arose from the DRG research question I brought to them. Then, as in a philosophy class, we were unable to resist discussing most (if not all) of the questions in the time remaining of the same session in which we asked them. From that point on I decided to follow qualitative research guidelines with which I was familiarizing myself as we went along. For example, one feature of qualitative research design that I was attracted to was that of the project having an 'emergent' research design because this was consistent with both the Philosophy for Children credo that "the agenda must be seen by the children to be their own" and also with my (and Philosophy for Children's) liberation of children agenda. In producing the demonstration data, therefore, I sought to engage with the children as co-researchers in as egalitarian a way as possible thereby giving *them* maximum say in how our research design and therefore data 'emerged'.

Working with the data. Living the demonstration of the answer to the research question is one thing. Presenting the demonstration in the form of a dissertation is quite another. Since we audio and video taped most of the sessions, I then had to make verbatim transcripts which then had to be rendered readable for dissertation purposes. In addition, we produced many documents on paper. I kept interpretive 'Sigma' research notes and also transcribing notes in which I kept track of what I was thinking and remembering while making the verbatim transcripts. The children wrote in their steno pads and these were photocopied for our Data File. We invented devices (such as the DRG Catalogue, the computer log cards, the 'Where are you?' attendance book) for keeping track of administrative details. We made seventeen concept maps. Then all of this had to somehow be presented in the form of a 'demonstration' that would portray children with experience doing philosophy *at work* using philosophical discussion as a way of doing research.

Presenting the case story. To tell the story of how children with philosophical experience use philosophical discussion as a way to do research in the form of a dissertation, I decided to take a combined narrative and research report approach. My choice of narrative for both the *Co-researching Stories* and for the 'voice' of the research report, was inspired by both the Philosophy for Children novel-*qua*-text approach and by the use of narrative as a way of knowing in qualitative research methodologies. The entire dissertation is the story of how I [Sigma] came to do this research, what we did, what I did while we were doing it and the sense I made of it all afterwards — all roughly in chronological order. The *Co-researching Stories* are stories within stories within stories. They too are presented roughly in chronological order with a beginning, middle and end and they tell the parts of the enterprise in which the children co-researchers were on stage. For the 'research report' part of the dissertation, I have selected those aspects of doing a research 'write-up' that support and situate the argument that I am making *with* this research. The dissertation *as* a dissertation is therefore necessarily complex because of how it presents the demonstration of how children use philosophical discussion to do research *and* discusses that demonstration on a meta-level.

This way of presenting the demonstration has its limitations, however, not only in terms of the final form it takes but also because of the work it takes to produce the demonstration in this form. Much is lost in the multiple transfers from live co-researching discussions to audio then video tape, to verbatim transcripts, and finally to a narrative presentation on paper. With the advent of multi-media technology, a much better way would be to find a way to replace the verbatim portions of the co-researching discussions with video clips perhaps using CD-ROM technology so that at a click of a mouse the children's faces and demeanor could also be part of the presentation. This is not a cosmetic issue for much meaning is registered in body language which does not transfer easily to the printed page. This is not the time or place for a detailed discussion of these issues. I raise them more to say why I did *not* choose that route. One reason is that the quality of the video-taping was not of a standard that would provide an adequate presentation; and the other is that the technology was not then and is still not up to the task. It is however, moving rapidly in that direction.

6.3 Research Achievements

Since this was a two-in-one research project, there are two sets of achievements to report.

Discussion Research Group Achievements

Discussion Research Group achievements. For practical reasons, our co-researching was limited to the interpretive *production* of data during the research process and the co-researchers were not available to participate in any data interpretation outside of the context of the forty-eight co-researching sessions. My comments on the research achievements for co-research group project are therefore based entirely on my [Sigma] interpretation of having lived through this experience with my co-researchers and subsequently having worked with the data. They therefore refer to *all* the work we did, including the detailed work on 'learning' which has not been featured in this dissertation version of the *Co-researching Stories*, but which was an important part of the work we did. Therefore, as results

of the work we did on the question “What is philosophical discussion (“Discussion for Learning”) and how do we learn from it?” I include the following:

- demonstration examples of ‘philosophical discussion’;
- detailed and nuanced explorations which confirmed that philosophical discussion *is* a ‘collaborative’ and ‘philosophical’ form of ‘inquiry’;
- textured, complex and subtle understandings of what counts as ‘discussion’ (relative to other forms of group talk), ‘learning’ (in a wide variety of contexts and under varying conditions), ‘collaboration’ (relative to ‘cooperation’), ‘philosophical’ (how it is “a family of its own”) and the development of a concept (‘inquiry’) from ground zero;
- confirmation that we *do* learn from discussion and a deeper understanding not only of how we learn from *discussion* but also of how we *learn*; and
- confirmation that children *can* do research using philosophical discussion and that it sustains their interest and engagement over a long period of time — outside of school time.

Dissertation Achievements

With regard to the dissertation, there are three sets of achievements to describe corresponding to the three ways in which I answered the research question: by demonstration, by surfacing philosophical inquiry research acts and by conceptual investigation .

Demonstration achievements. Among the achievements of the demonstration of the co-researchers at work in the *Co-researching Stories* I include the following:

- that children with philosophical experience can and do use philosophical discussion as a way to do research in a project where they work as co-researchers with a teacher;
- that given a research context, such children use inquiry moves derived from their class philosophy experience as a way of doing research;
- that in so *doing*, such children do *act* as co-researchers;
- that the research design which merged philosophical and qualitative inquiry methodologies is a useful one that is worth exploring further for use with other philosophically experienced children and teachers in other settings to do educational research into matters which are of interest to them and

- that this is an example of what is meant by ‘research from the margins’ and ‘educative research’ — one that could be applicable in other situations with other groups.

Surfacing achievements. The “surfacing” achievements of this research are a direct result of my interpretation of the *Co-researching Stories* data. In general these achievements include a perception of philosophical discussion inquiry moves *as* corresponding research acts. Among the ‘surfacing’ achievements of my interpretation of the data I count the following:

- that philosophical discussion inquiry moves can be interpreted as research acts when used in a research context;
- that it is possible to surface such research acts in the philosophical inquiry moves made by philosophically experienced children;
- that there are many examples and a wide range of philosophical inquiry moves that surface as research acts when children use philosophical inquiry as a way to do research; and
- that in this context ‘to do philosophy’ is ‘to do research’.

Conceptual achievements. My conceptual investigations regarding whether *conceptually* what these children do really counts as ‘research’ not only confirmed that it does, but further these investigations yielded nuanced and reconceptualized interpretations of a variety of terms associated with what it is to do research with particular attention to *collaborative* research. These reconceptualizations can make a practical difference by opening up the research enterprise to people normally excluded or limited to research ‘subject’ roles and by altering what they actually do and how what they do is perceived *as* ‘research’.

6.4 Further Research

This *Co-researching Stories* demonstration of children and a teacher engaging in co-research using philosophical discussion as a way to do research is but a first step. However, I submit that it is one which has the potential to open the research door to other Philosophy for Children teachers and students engaging in research of their own into subjects which matter to children. Examples of subjects that come to mind on the basis of my current experience as a teacher might be the issues such as the following (not in any order of priority): mandatory wearing of

dress code, boredom in school, the organization of the school timetable, homework, violence and harassment in the school setting, children's involvement in fund-raising, children's rights in the school context. Of course there could be other examples beyond the school setting. My interest here is in having children's involvement as 'research actors' be a way for them both to learn and to teach; for them to have a voice and a new more proactive way to participate in their own every day and especially school lives. The 'further research' I have in mind therefore is research *with* children *about* matters which children identify as having an impact on their lives.

The surfacing achievements of this research point to further research which could also be undertaken by others into the possibilities and limitations of surfacing research acts out of the existing abilities of other people 'from the margins'. Here I have in mind the work that goes on in community groups and non-governmental organizations. In our research we focused on what we could already do well and put that to work in a research context. What other skills (that we can already do well) might surface in a similar way?

Our research was limited to children and a teacher *with* philosophical experience doing research. Another direction for further research might be to see if children *without* or without as much philosophical experience could also participate in research as 'research actors'. If it is the case, as many in Philosophy for Children maintain, that children (and therefore people) are *naturally* philosophical, then what about younger children or other groups of adults becoming 'research actors' too? Or, might there also be *other* ways for other people to engage in research as 'research actors' — other than with an emphasis on the use of philosophical discussion as *the* way to do research? The possibilities are infinite.

6.5 Implications

It is important that the process of investigating the world not remain a specialized activity. Our everyday lives teach us skills which we use to observe and reflect on our experience. We focus on problems, ask questions, collect information and analyze and interpret "data." We already "do research" as we interact with the everyday world. (Kirby and McKenna 1989, p. 17)

Returning to the 'research from the margins' quotation with which I began this dissertation, as a way of considering possible implications for our research, I try to imagine a world in which the process of investigating the world does *not* remain "a specialized activity". Or, put another way, that if it does, that more people be recognized as able "to observe and reflect on [their] experience", "to focus on problems, ask questions, collect information and analyze and interpret 'data'" — as able to "do research". I try to imagine a world in which more people would *want* to engage in such research both for its own sake (what is it that kept my co-researchers coming for a whole year?), for the voice it would give them in matters which matter, and for the impact such 'popular' research might have.

Childhood implications. In my personal sphere of being in close contact with other people's children on a daily basis, I imagine a world in which children can speak their minds without being told not to talk back. I imagine a world in which children are recognized for so much more than "saying the darndest things". I imagine a world in which children's views are taken as seriously as anyone else's and that it is considered to be at least *possible* that what they have to say is taken into account and can have an important impact on social change. I imagine a world in which children are *honoured* for the subtlety and complexity of their thinking. And, perhaps most importantly of all, I imagine a world in which children value and honour their *own* thinking for its subtleties and complexities — as opposed to for their abilities to 'talk back' to adults. It is in this sense that I work for the 'emancipation' of children — not only from the constraints of others but also from those they put on themselves. In short I imagine a world in which the very notion of 'childhood' itself is transformed such that children can participate more meaningfully in the world they too inhabit.

Educational implications. In my own professional sphere of elementary education, I imagine a world in which we no longer ask ourselves whether or when to include children in the decision and policy making that pertains to them in a school setting. I hasten to add that this is not to say that what they say should go, that they are 'right' about everything. That is the fear. Rather I say that if we are serious about the 'rights' children (and people in other marginal groups) have to speak and be heard, then it is incumbent on us to find ways to make that happen. Based on my experience working with *these* children, we the adults are the losers when we keep children "in their places" in schools and so are the children. It is a lose-lose situation. The personal, professional and *philosophical* benefits I have derived out of working as a co-researcher with these children are powerful and a privilege. If our work inspires others to engage in research in such a way as to give meaning to the notion of 'research' as an 'everyday' activity which mobilizes those whom it may concern, then my hopes for this project will have been realized. Judging by my own educational context, we have a long way to go. What we have demonstrated in our case story is *a good way to go* in order to realize its promising implications.

Research implications. In the sphere of educational research in particular and qualitative research in general, I imagine a world in which we come to appreciate the contribution that 'doing philosophy' can make to 'doing research'. Philosophy's 'bad name' is legendary with the result that it is more common to deny or mask its importance than it is to embrace it for the contribution it can make not only to our 'everyday' lives but also to what it can help us to accomplish *in* those lives. The children in this project demonstrate what it is to have a *passion* for doing philosophy (as Christina Slade put it). And now they have had an opportunity to demonstrate what can happen when that passion is put to work in a research context. I imagine a research world in which philosophy comes *up* from the underworld of philosophical 'underpinnings', in which the philosophy that we already do and do well in research is named and claimed so that we can do it even better. It is for that reason that I was haunted throughout this project with the idea of 'merging' the philosophical with the qualitative, or of 'surfacing' the philosophical *in* the qualitative — of doing *something* to benefit both.

Philosophy for Children implications. With regard to my Philosophy for Children sphere of activity, I imagine a world in which the collaborative philosophical inquiry that is its hallmark can emanate *from* school classroom communities of inquiry *out* to *community* communities of inquiry at all levels of society. I imagine a world in which we open the door from places where we learn how to do philosophy out to a world in which we do philosophy as a way of learning. I imagine a world in which we no longer do research *about* Philosophy for Children but we do research *with* children and philosophy *about* anything and everything else I can imagine.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

**Certificate of Ethical Acceptability
for Research Involving Human Subjects
Faculty of Education
McGill University**

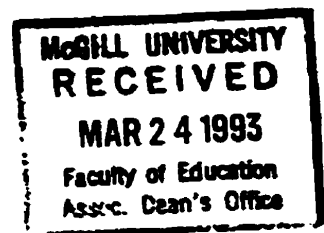
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MCGILL UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
CERTIFICATE OF ETHICAL ACCEPTABILITY FOR RESEARCH
INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

A review committee consisting of:

- a) Professor H. Perrault
- b) Professor J. Derevensky
- c) Professor S. Nemiroff

has examined the application for certification of the ethical acceptability of the project titled:

DISCUSSION FOR LEARNING: FROM THE PERSPECTIVE
OF STUDENT CO-RESEARCHERS

as proposed by:

Applicant's Name Judy A. Kyle Supervisor's Name Nancy S. Jackson
Applicant's Signature Judy A. Kyle Supervisor's Signature Nancy S. Jackson
Granting Agency _____

The review committee considers the research procedures, as explained by the applicant in this application, to be acceptable on ethical grounds.

a) Tiffany H. Derevensky (Signed)
b) Jake Burch
c) HELENE PERRAULT

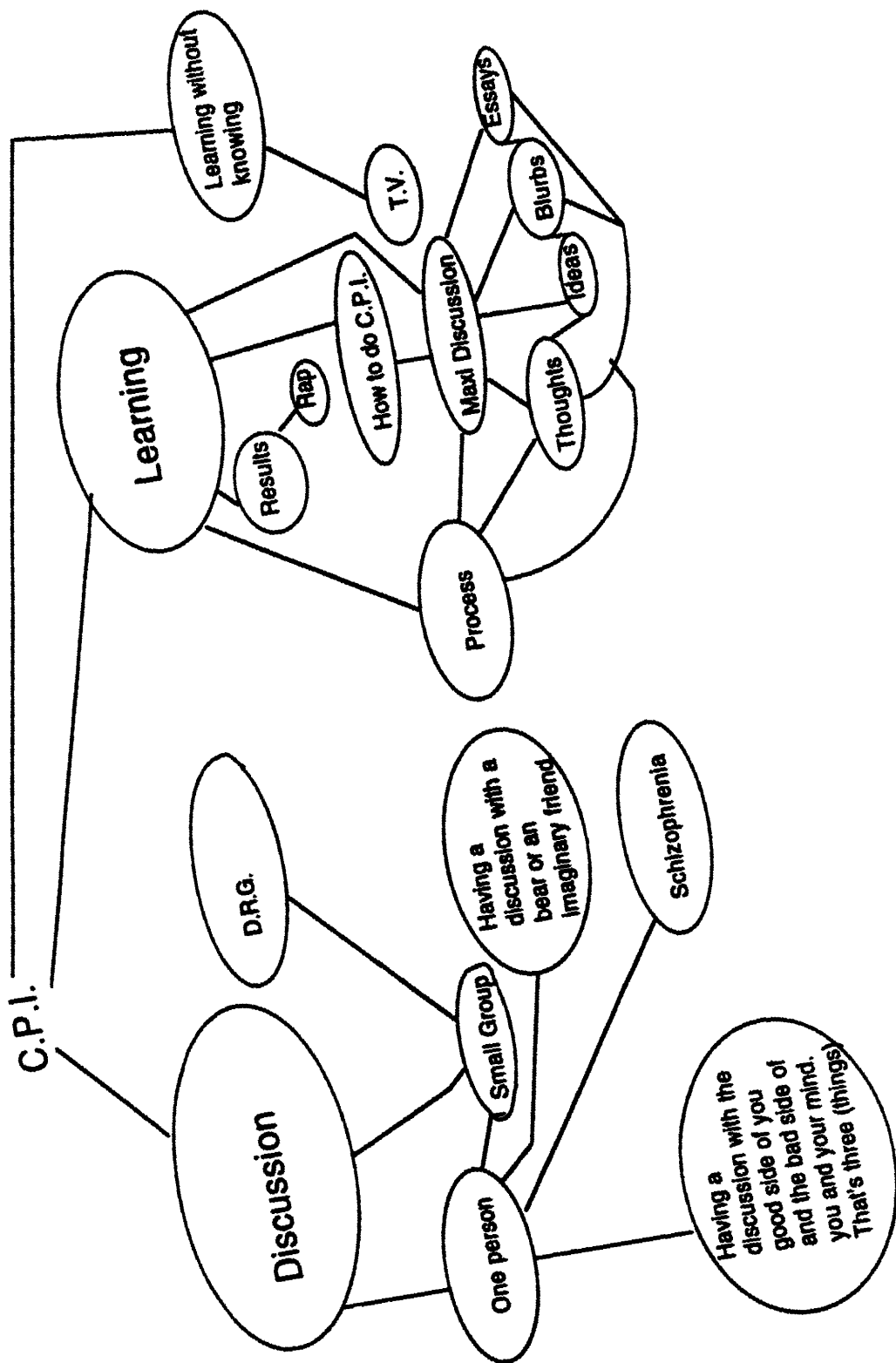
Associate Dean (Academic) Cynthia B. Turner Date April 23, 1993

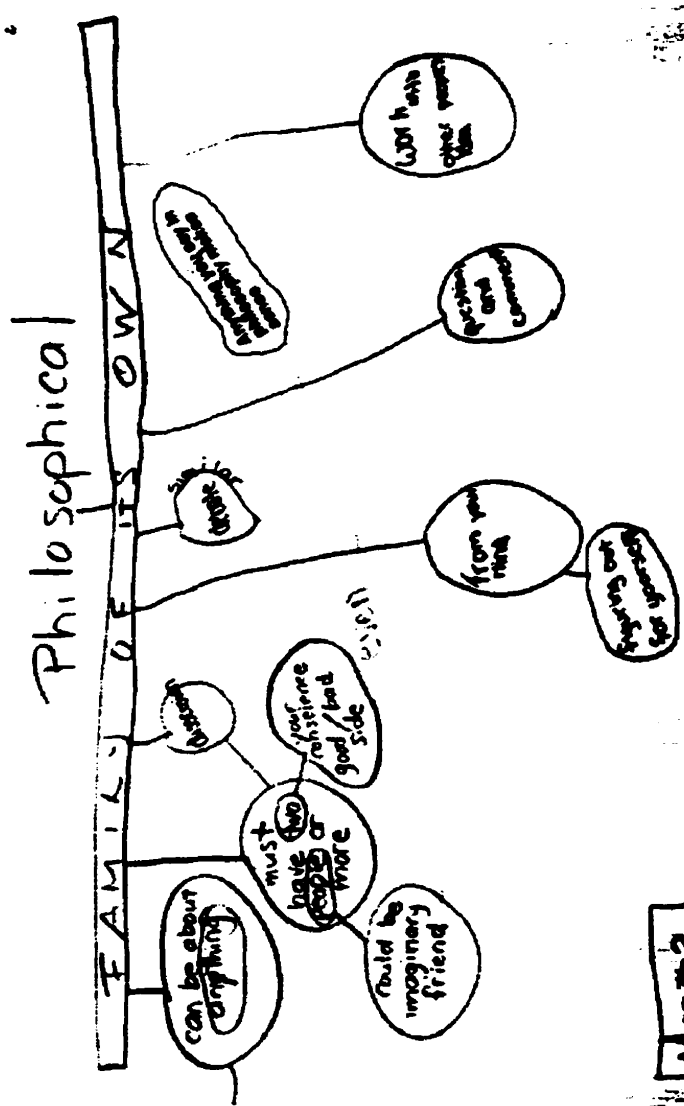
Appendix B

Co-researching Stories

Research Maps

MAP 1





examples

you're on the good/bad side

you're on the good/bad side

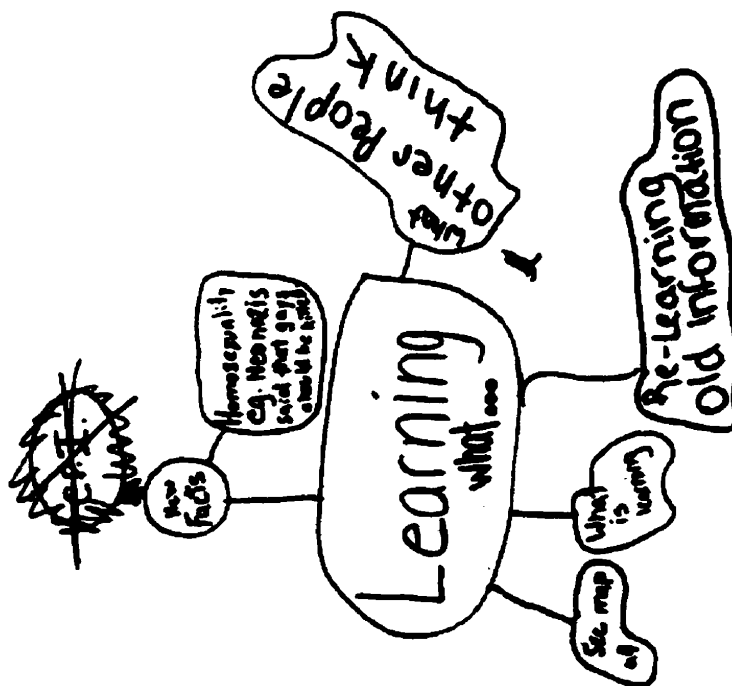
you're on the good/bad side

you're on the good/bad side

you're on the good/bad side

you're on the good/bad side

Map #2



MAP 4

MAP # 4

Learning is....

finding something
out
what it
means

intaking new information

re-learning
old information

information
that you
remembered

... for the first
time

re-learning
old information

LEARNING

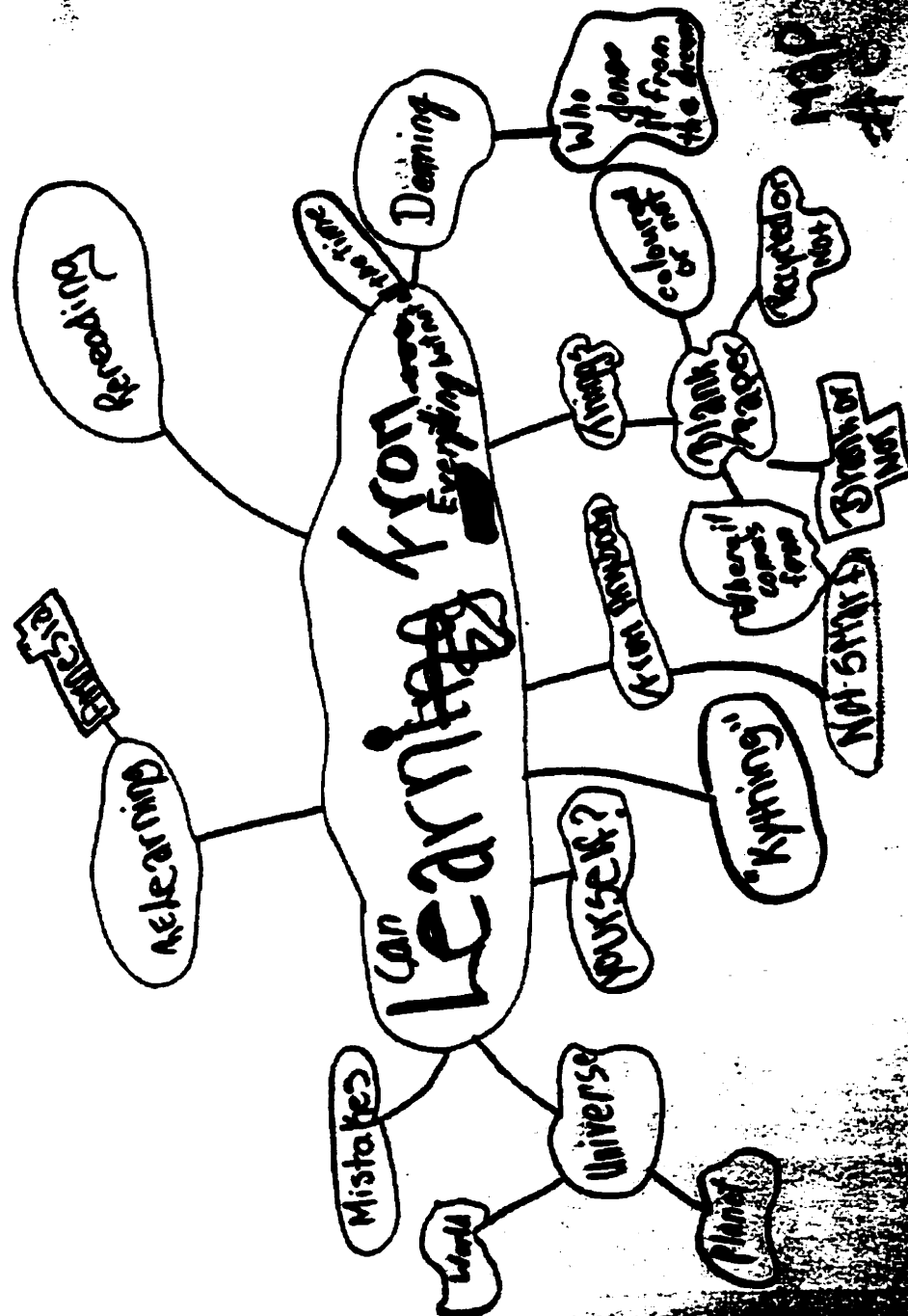
MODEL CASE
Times tables

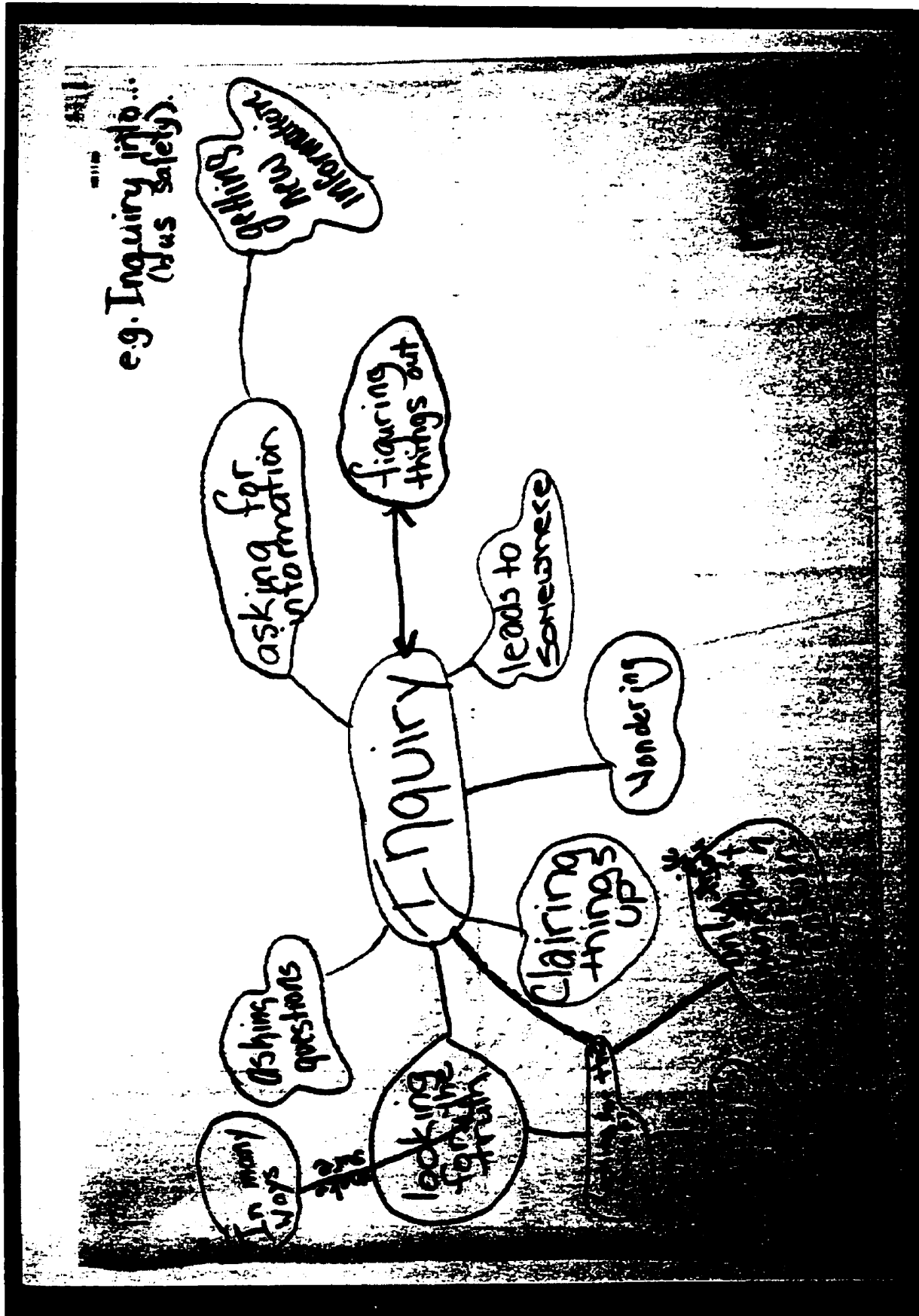
BORDERLINE
CASES :

- Following is sometimes footsteps
- Playing music by ear

CONTRARY CASES
Re-Learning (Piano)

Map

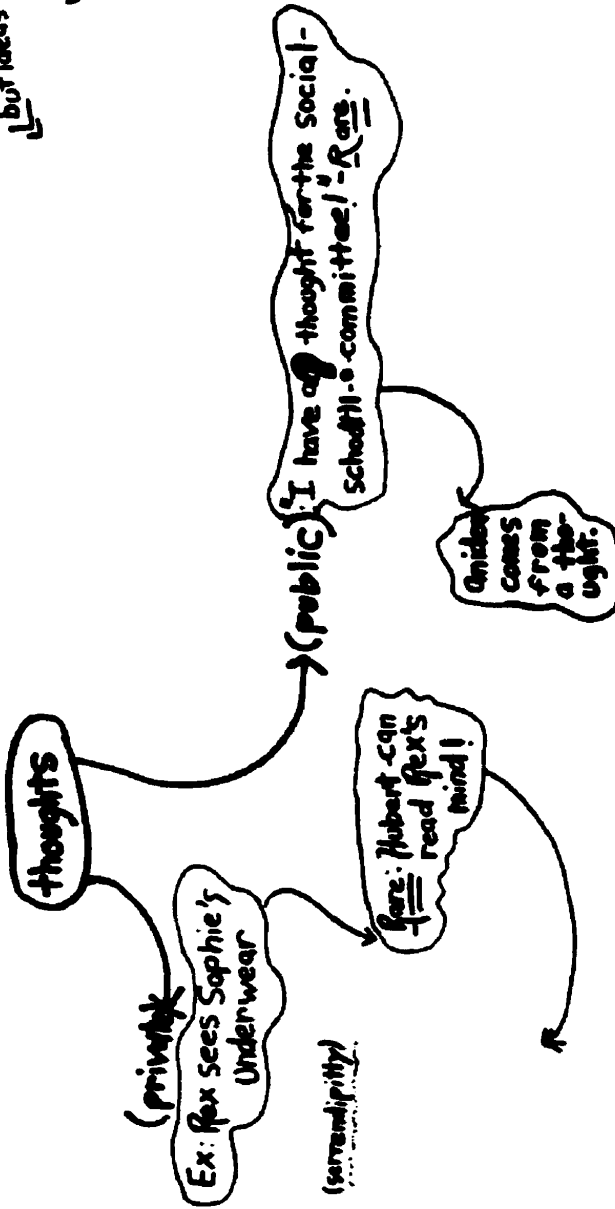




Date: ()

THOUGHTS SHOULD COME FIRST. - (proposed theory) (Thoughts come by themselves; but ideas come from thinking.)

↓
vice-versa (necessity)



WHAT IS CPI?

No foul language in order to offend
 NEEDS ALL 3, Grand I.

Blurbs
 No Speaker
 2 sides and 130s the truth
 Talk

Discussion
 We should be careful
 Adding to other people's ideas
 Commenting

Explore ideas instead of understanding them before hand like debating
 unless foul language is discussion

Philosophy is philosophical
 looking for arguments

Dialogue
 Questions

Ideas Not small talk
 at a time
 We look for possibilities
 Arguing
 Make points but we don't keep score

Less is wisdom: wisdom
 more/smart

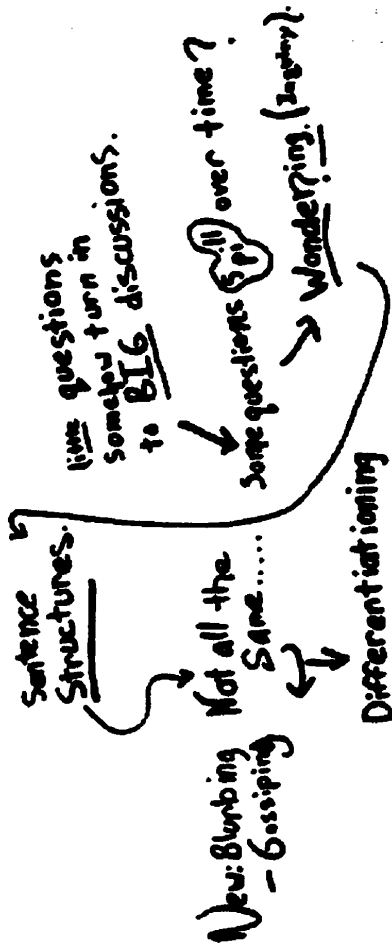
Philosophical

calabrative

Inquiry

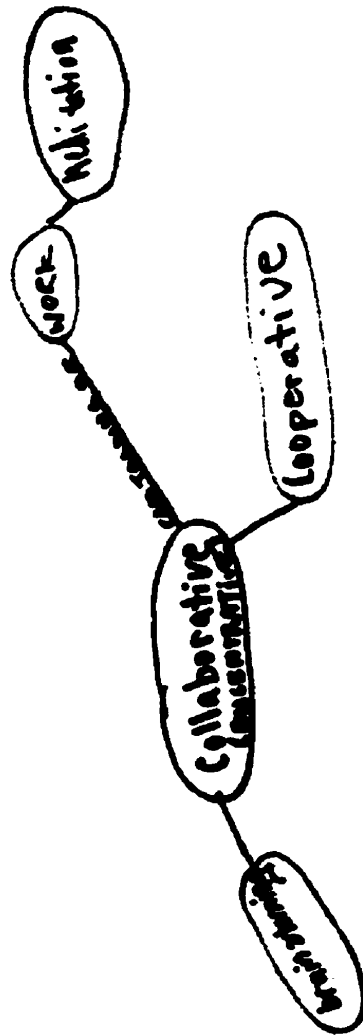
confuse - smarter? trying
to understand
thinking a lot

expand your ansaia and ideas
more than just facts

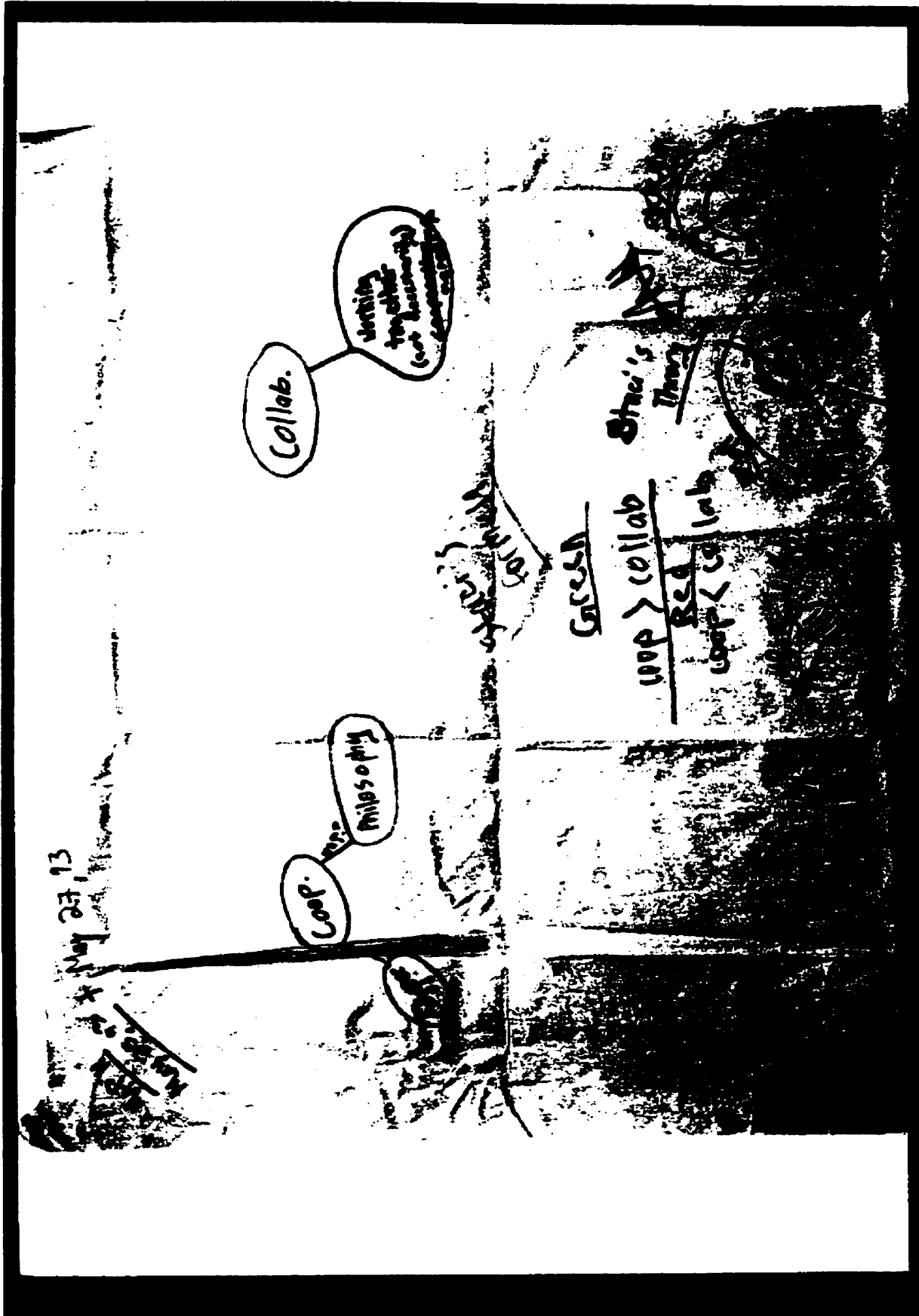


Map 8

MAP II



MAP 13



Invisible Learning in G.I.L.?

Map 14

May 26, 93

TALKING...

Learning without realizing (unconscious)

Instant realization after a short period of time!

Remembering
Finding out.

Only learning when things are new.

when your parents ask you about new inquiries; you never answer. Because you don't personally admire them seeing if you know your (Ex. Math) arithmetical abilities...

Cooperation + Collaboration.

Thursday, May 27, 1993.

Cooperating

Have to coll-
aborate to
cooperate-
(vice versa.)

Helping the
enemy by being
a spy and finding
out secrets
Cooperating

Cooperating
(collaborating)
in silence. Secrets

Cannot
Cooperate

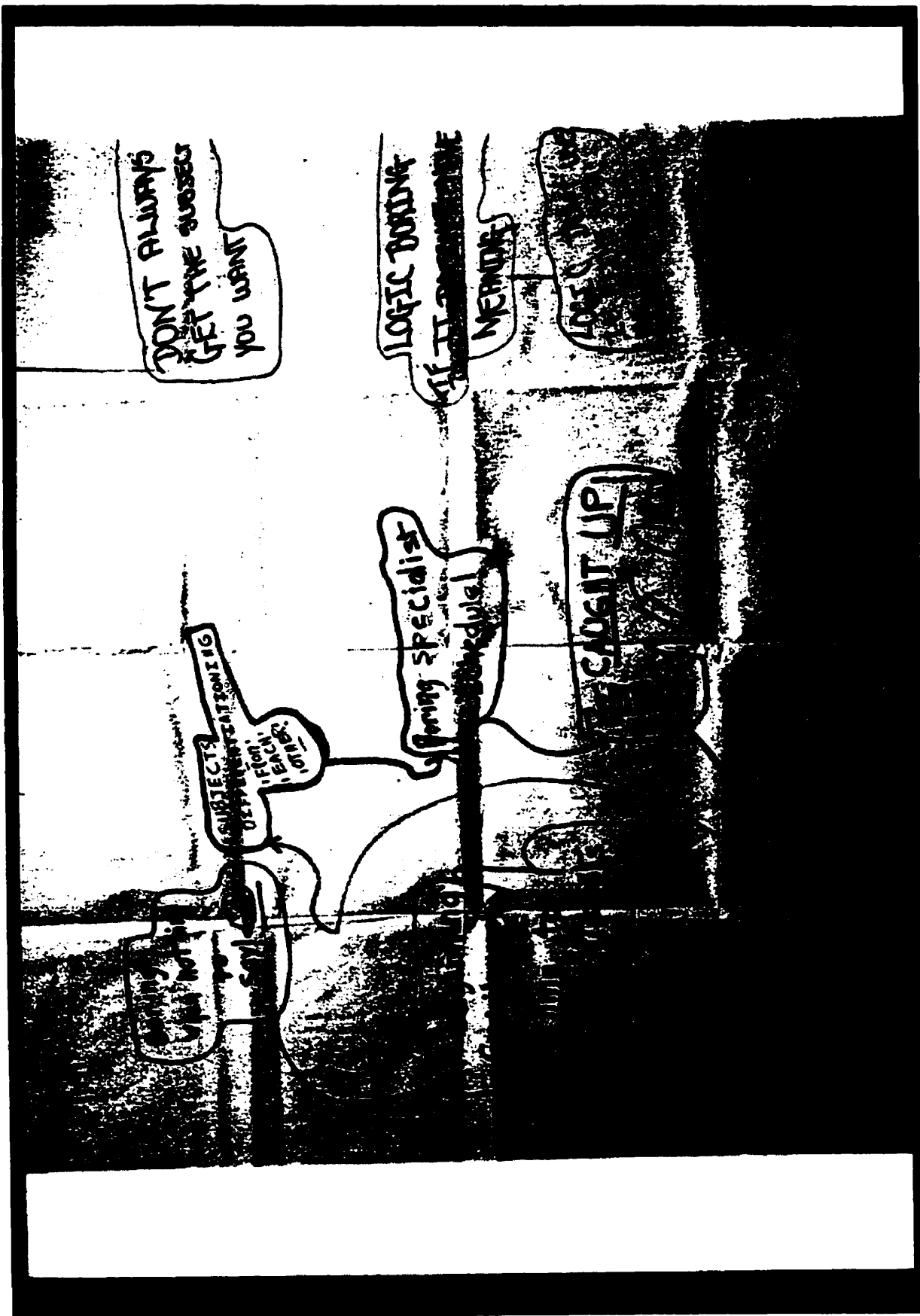
Physical
and mental
collaboration

Cooperating
with someone
who is helping
the enemy

Cooperating
with someone
who is helping
the enemy

Cooperating
with someone
who is helping
the enemy

Cooperating
with someone
who is helping
the enemy



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