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1995

Transfer of embedded symbolic information between home and school: a grounded theory of how young children develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom

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Huber, Adrienne Shane, Transfer of embedded symbolic information between home and school: a grounded theory of how young children develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom, Doctor of Philosophy thesis, Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong, 1995. <http://ro.uow.edu.au/theses/1812>

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**TRANSFER OF EMBEDDED SYMBOLIC
INFORMATION BETWEEN HOME AND
SCHOOL:**

**A GROUNDED THEORY
OF
HOW YOUNG CHILDREN
DEVELOP IDIOSYNCRATIC RESPONSES
DURING THE
CONSTRUCTION OF LITERACY IN THE
CLASSROOM**

**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of
the requirements for the award of the degree**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

from

THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

**ADRIENNE SHANE HUBER
BSc(Psych)(Hons) (Newcastle)**



**Faculty of Education
1995**

Dedicated to:

Bert,
my person for all seasons

Suzanne and Michelle,
two of my best reasons for being

and

Brian,
"a person without equal"
in encouraging me in making connections

Acknowledgments

It goes almost without saying: This thesis has been a work of sustained and deep collaboration in the sense that many people have supported me during the time it has taken me to complete the study. It would not have happened without unfailing support from my family, my friends, my participants in the study, colleagues and my supervisor.

No research is possible without participants and my participants have been particularly generous and enduring for which I am eternally grateful. I do hope my representation of you in this thesis does you the justice you deserve. Thankyou.

Brian Cambourne provided me with optimal levels and combinations of support, advice, admonition and encouragement to allow me to make the connections I needed to make so I could say "I did it my way" and, I did it "his way", too, as he encouraged me to find a "sufficiently satisfying" way of presenting and sharing what I knew. Thankyou, Brian, I could not have done it without you!

Bert, Michelle and Suzanne, yes, I do still exist, and yes, I am coming home. Thankyou for your enduring unconditional love and support. I couldn't have done it without you, either!

My friends will now see a different me as I emerge from my thesis cocoon, my domicile for such a long time. I look forward to catching up before my next venture (well almost): I'm sure I can think of another project to keep me going into the Twenty First Century... A special thankyou to Maleeka Salih who unwittingly crossed my path at the eleventh hour providing much needed sane interludes at an insane time.

At a crisis point in my brief thesis writing career, Jan Turbill's invaluable audit of my work helped me to articulate my thesis and to keep me focused on what I was trying to achieve. Thanks Jan.

Bottom line support from Kylie Pickford, Lois Leitch and Debbie McGavin have filled many functional gaps among others! Thanks folks.

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ABSTRACT

This study describes how three young children use their knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom. The connections between young children's experiences at home and how they construct literacy in the classroom has received much attention in recent years. However, most research has focused on literacy-specific behaviours. This study provides a shift in this focus. Insights are offered into how deep level (i.e., embedded symbolic) information is transferred between home and school. A futurologist's conceptual framework and a cross disciplinary theoretical base have been used to provide access to a broader range of discourses for the purposes of understanding issues raised by the research question: How do young children use their knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom?

The term literacy has not yet been clearly defined. The issue of understanding the nature of and defining literacy for a Super-symbolic Information Age is discussed. For the purposes of this study literacy was defined as a transient, idiosyncratic Gestalt, which is a by product of constructions of meaning from symbolic and embedded symbolic information in textual data.

The primary aim of the study was to develop a grounded theory of acculturated meaning making in the development of idiosyncratic literacy practices. This was achieved through three sub aims: Describing one school's culture; describing three individual families' intergenerational family acculturation; and ascribing acculturated patterns of responses to the making of meaning in the classroom by three young children, during their first three years of school, when they construct literacy. Acculturation may be defined as the means by which beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices are willingly and unwillingly, overtly and covertly, verbally and non-verbally, communicated, negotiated and mutated (i.e., altered) from one generation to another and within generations of a family, community and culture (Ref.: Kingson, Hirshorn, Cornman & Cabin, 1986; Guerin, Fay, Burden & Kautto, 1987; Guerin & Pendagast, 1976; Minuchin, 1974).

Longitudinal Case Study data were collected over three years. During this time three children, their families and one of their teachers from the one school participated. Parents completed a questionnaire about their intergenerational family acculturation (i.e., their beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices over three or more generations). Additional questions addressed parents' own experiences as learners and their beliefs, attitudes, values and practices with regard to their child's language, literacy and learning. The teacher and the three children were observed and video taped in the classroom over a three year period (1991-1993). One parent of each child and the teacher participated in individual focus interviews. These interviews acted as memberchecks whereby interpretations of observations were assessed, corroborated, errors corrected and new information added.

The school culture was derived from document analysis and classroom observations.

Naturalistic Inquiry methods were used to collect data for three main data pools: Intergenerational family acculturation data; document analysis; data and classroom observation data. Each data pool was subsequently collapsed to produce other data pools and provide additional information about embedded symbolic knowledge (Ref: Wurman, 1989).

A process for analyzing embedded symbolic information was developed and described. This process was developed in response to predictions of futurologists such as Reich (1993), Toffler (1990) and Wurman (1989) and specifically, Toffler's (1990) notion of a Super-symbolic Information Age and embedded symbolism in which symbols "represent nothing more than other symbols inside the memories and thoughtware of people and computers" (Toffler, 1990:62). Accordingly, data pools were analyzed for embedded information, then embedded knowledge and lastly, embedded beliefs.

A grounded theory is presented of how young children use their knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom. Young children come to school already knowing how to use their knowledge of the world to make meaning. They learn how to make meaning through intergenerational acculturation processes which are fundamental to all family units. Intergenerational family acculturation provides a ready meaning making template system. It is through this

meaning making template system that young children pattern their experiences and specifically, textual data, when constructing in the classroom. Intergenerational family acculturation appears to construct meaning at a deep level of embedded symbolic information. Implications of the results of this study are discussed, including implications for how we understand individual children's responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom; the role of contexts in the meaning making process; the intimate acculturation processes inherent in school culture and teaching and learning processes.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

[E]xpanding literacy correlates with expanding schooling. This suggests a causal relation, but the history of efforts by outsiders to acquire literacy suggests the relevance of the family and group values (Kaestle, 1991:30).

The purpose of this chapter is to provide access to the construction of meaning and "stream of thinking" applied in this thesis. In order to achieve this, the chapter has been structured as in Table 1.1¹. This table has been designed to give an integrated visual overview of the whole chapter.

PREAMBLE

This preamble introduces the various concepts and ideas inherent in the research question and underpinning the conceptual and theoretical orientations of this thesis.

FOCUS OF THE STUDY

How do young children use their knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom? It may not be sufficient to provide a child with access to literacy. We need to give them control over their construction of literacy if it is as Kaestle (1991:30) suggests:

literacy is discriminatory with regard to both access and content. Problems of discrimination are not resolved just because access is achieved; there is a cultural price tag to literacy. Thus whether literacy is liberating or constraining depends in part on whether it is used as an instrument of conformity or creativity.

1 All Tables and Figures constructed for this thesis have been drawn in a way that hopefully provides a sense of a sensorial fugue in a system of multidimensional flow and circularity: Information Bases or Units (IU) are derived from the data (i.e., the Information System) and thus are said to be embedded in the data. IUs are the result of purposive accession and meaningful patterning of that data. IUs are embedded within other IUs. Embedded within each IU are bodies of knowledge and embedded within these bodies of knowledge are systems of beliefs. Systems of beliefs have other bodies of knowledge embedded within them. Each layer of embedded data moves from the abstract to the functional, to the abstract, to the functional and so on. In this process the degree of functionality or abstraction is relative to the point at which the data are accessed. The point of accession is arbitrary, is dependent on the purpose of that accession and connects with an Information System that provides the means by which the data may be meaningfully patterned and applied (i.e., the processes of analysis and synthesis of the information derived from the meaningful patterning of the data). This thesis is an example of a two dimensional representation of what appears to be an infinite, dynamic, multidimensional, circular, reversible process which may be visualized something like the reversible figure in Figure 3.1.

In order to bring together complex, disparate and potentially difficult value-laden notions inherent in the research question it is necessary to access information and the discourses of futurologists such as Reich (1993), Toffler (1990) and Wurman (1989) and intergenerational family acculturation theorists such as Roberto (1992), Kingson, Hirshorn, Comman & Cabin (1986), Guerin (e.g., Guerin, Fay, Burden & Kautto, 1987; Guerin & Pendagast, 1976) and Minuchin (1974).

Table 1.1: Structure of Chapter 1

ISSUES ADDRESSED & PURPOSE	INFORMATION BASE		CATEGORY OF KNOWLEDGE
PREAMBLE Introduces concepts and ideas fundamental to the study	->	->	i. Research Question: <i>How do young children use knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their families of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy?</i>
	->	->	ii. Global village
	->	->	iii. Powershift
	->	->	iii. Information Systems
	->	->	i. Intergenerational Family Acculturation
	->	->	ii. School Culture
	->	->	i. A working definition of literacy
AIM OF THE STUDY Presents the general goal of the study	->	->	Three sub aims: i. Describe one school's culture ii. Describe the intergenerational family acculturations for each of three Case Study Children iii. Ascribe idiosyncratic acculturated patterns of responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom for each of the three Case Study Children

(cont.)

Table 1.1 (cont.)

ISSUES ADDRESSED & PURPOSE	INFORMATION BASE	CATEGORY OF KNOWLEDGE
RATIONALE OF THE STUDY Provides substantive reasons why the study should have been done	f. Timeliness g. Professional needs h. Theoretical needs	i. Changes in nature, type & amount of information ii. Onset of a Super-symbolic Information Age iii. Need for symbolic-analytic information processing skills i. Add depth to Heath's (1983) work ii. Extend Cambourne's (1988) approach to literacy iii. National curriculum issues iv. Standardized testing i. To re-orient the home-school-literacy connection ii. Embedded symbolic information in families & schools iii. Embedded symbolic information in the construction of literacy in the classroom
SOCIO-HISTORICAL-POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE STUDY Places the study in its real world context	i. Problems currently associated with defining literacy j. Current approaches to literacy teaching & learning in Australia k. Approaches to assessing and evaluating literacy	i. Functional role of definitions ii. Descriptive definitions iii. Evaluative definitions i. An Interactive-compensatory approach to literacy ii. A Genre approach to literacy iii. A Whole Language approach to literacy i. Standardized Testing ii. Responsive Evaluation

(cont.)

Table 1.1 (cont.)

ISSUES ADDRESSED & PURPOSE	INFORMATION BASE		CATEGORY OF KNOWLEDGE
THEORETICAL ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY Places the study in its theoretical context	-> ->	l. Rationale for the multi-theoretical approach to this study m. Major theoretical contributions to the study	i. Access a broader range of discourses ii. An applied example of symbolic-analytic processes i. Communication Theory ii. Social semiotic Theory iii. Acculturation Theory iv. Psychological Theory v. Whole Language Theory vi. Psycholinguistic Theory
RESEARCH DESIGN	-> ->	n. <i>Longitudinal Case Studies</i>	i. <i>Human-as instrument data</i> ii. <i>Life history data</i> iii. <i>Field data</i>
METHODOLOGY	-> ->	o. <i>Naturalistic Inquiry</i>	i. <i>Qualitative methodology</i>
OUTCOME OF THE STUDY	-> ->	p. <i>Reconceptualize individual children's responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom</i>	i. <i>A grounded theory of acculturated meaning making in the development of idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom</i>
OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AS PRESENTED IN THIS THESIS	-> ->	q. Accessing and patterning the data	i. <i>Chapter 1: Introduction</i> ii. <i>Chapter 2: Review of Literature</i> iii. <i>Chapter 3: The research process</i>
	-> ->	r. Analysing, synthesizing, and evaluating the results	i. <i>Chapter 4: Processes of analysis</i> ii. <i>Chapter 5: Results of analysis</i> iii. <i>Chapter 6: Discussion</i>

FUTUROLOGISTS' CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

At the onset of the Twenty First Century, futurologists predict radical changes in our ways of being, thinking, doing, living and working (e.g., Reich, 1993; Toffler, 1990 & Wurman, 1989). Together they present a picture which has far reaching implications for our understanding, teaching, learning and use of literacy well into the Twenty First Century. As the world grows closer and

information amasses and becomes more complex, they predict power will reside with those who are flexible, dynamic and able to meaningfully access, pattern and apply information as required and when required to meet highly specific demands. They argue that we will no longer be able to be hesitant about the connection between literacy and individual and cultural demands as these will form the basis for the construction of meanings in relationships, in schools and at work. Furthermore, they argue that symbolic-analytic skills will be essential for functioning in such a world. These skills require an individual to be highly flexible, able to conceptualize a problem, rapidly access relevant information pertaining to the problem, derive meaningful patterns from the relevant information for the resolution of the problem, promote the resolution to others and readily respond to consequences of that resolution (Ref.: also Pfeffer, 1992, re successful international organizations and the use of this *modus operandi*).

Global village

Reich (1993) predicts the onset of the "global village" in which there is "one world" for trade, migration, education and employment. He claims that the needs of such a world will be for a deeper understanding of individuals within their culture and in the culture of the "global village" in which nationalism will not have a place. He goes on to claim that international relations, the nature of work and communication needs are changing rapidly as the world becomes "one world". It is this shift in emphasis that Toffler (1990) says is creating a "powershift".

Powershift

Toffler (1990:17) defines a "powershift" as a deep-level change in the very nature of power which, he says, is already underway. Whereas muscle and money have meant power in the past, Toffler (1990) predicts real power will "reside in the mind" with information or knowledge² (i.e., "knowledge capital") being the most versatile of all power. Specifically he suggests:

This new system for making wealth is totally dependent on the instant communication and dissemination of data, ideas, symbols, and symbolism. It is

² Toffler (1990:18) defines *data* as "more or less unconnected 'facts'"; *information* as "data that have been fitted into categories and classification schemes or other patterns" and *knowledge* as "information that has been further refined into more general statements"

... a super-symbolic economy ... This new system takes us a giant step beyond mass production toward increasing customization, beyond mass marketing and distribution toward niches and micro-marketing, ... to a new "cognitariat" (pp25-26).

He further suggests that "if the shift toward knowledge-capital is real, the capital itself is increasingly 'unreal'" (pp61-62) describing information as consisting of layers of embedded symbolism (i.e., super-symbolism or abstraction) in which symbols "represent nothing more than other symbols inside the memories and thoughtware of people and computers" (Toffler, 1990:62). This is what Toffler (1990) says signals the onset of a Super-Symbolic Information Age. Symbolic-analytic or super-symbolic information skills which are essential for functioning in a Super-symbolic Information Age include being able to readily access, meaningfully pattern, use and evaluate massive volumes of information across disciplines over time and through space at very short notice to meet specific needs and purposes at that time in that place. According to Toffler (1990), as work becomes more abstract and information is overwhelmingly in abundance, "inherently inexhaustive and non exclusive" (p61), embedded symbolic information inherent in this evolution to "knowledge capital" will make obsolete our current concepts of unemployment and work which are rooted in functionality rather than symbolism. Wurman (1989) makes similar observations about the increasing importance of information. He specifically suggests that understanding our individual Information Systems, the nature of information, how we store it and our idiosyncratic use of it will be vital to a fulfilling participation in the new Age.

Information Systems

It is from our individual Information System which, Wurman (1989) suggests, "meaningful new patterns of knowledge" (p42) can be derived to provide the individual with enlightenment. Wurman (1989) has identified and ordered five Information Rings of an individual's Information System. According to Wurman (1989), the individual accesses and uses information contained in these rings in the idiosyncratic construction of reality at any given moment in time and space.

He claims an Information System consists of five rings, differing in their availability, interpretation, use and immediate impact on the life of each

individual (See Figure 1.1). He describes how the most immediate, the Internal Information Ring, is at the centre of an Information System and includes intrapsychical information for the individual. Internal information, he claims, shapes our perspective on each of the other types of information and is reciprocally affected by the other rings notably the Cultural Information Ring.

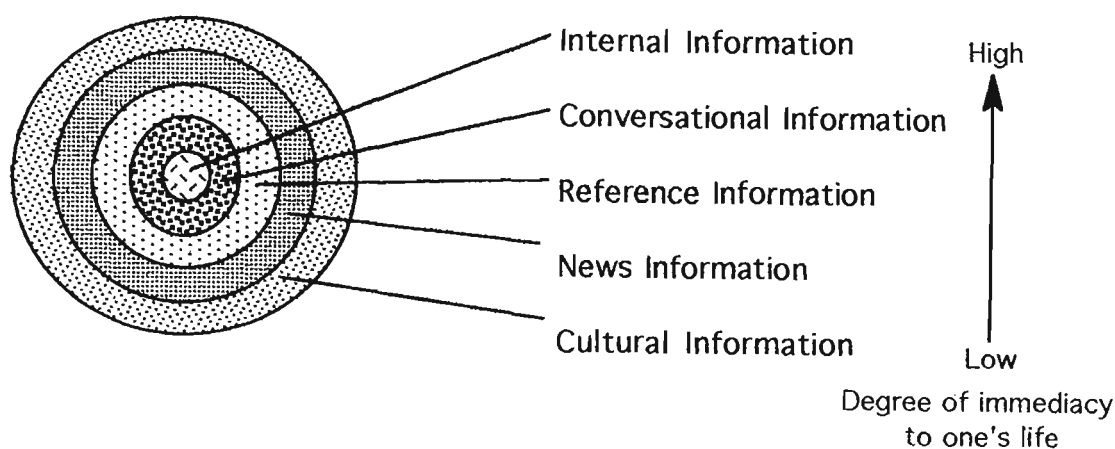


Figure 1.1: An Information System consists of five Information Rings which an individual accesses during the construction of idiosyncratic meanings (Wurman, 1989:43).

ACCULTURATION THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Acculturation may be defined as the means by which beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices are willingly and unwillingly, overtly and covertly, verbally and non-verbally, communicated, negotiated and mutated (i.e., altered) from one generation to another and within generations of a family, community and culture (Ref.: Kingson, *et al*, 1986; Guerin *et al*, 1987; Guerin & Pendagast, 1976). This is not a transmission process but rather one of proximity and probabilities in which significant others with whom we spend most of our early childhood years provide idiosyncratic models of how to think, feel and act in the world. Acculturation theory offers a conceptual framework for understanding how an individual learns to make sense of their experiences and thus develops a body of knowledge about how the world works.

Acculturation theory can be applied to intergenerational family units and also to communities, such as corporations and schools, and cultures. Intergenerational acculturation involves a well accepted and well grounded process within the field of family therapy (Ref.: Gerwartzman, 1988; Stagoll &

Lang, 1980; Imber-Black, 1988; Lieberman, 1979; Minuchin, 1974). Boszormenyi-Nagy (1985) believes intergenerational family acculturation theory is such an important theory that clinicians who use the therapy derived from it have an ethical responsibility to educate others about the practical significance of the theory. In organizational theory and practice, organizational acculturation is usually studied and understood in terms of *organizational culture* (Daniels & Spiker, 1994; Eisenberg & Goodall, 1993; Haviland, 1993).

Rokeach's (1972) definitions of beliefs, attitudes and values do not fit well within a symbolic framework although his definitions do provide a starting point for defining them within a symbolic framework. I have redefined each of these terms as well as patterns and practices using a symbolic framework in Table 1.2. These definitions may be considered as working definitions for the purpose of this study.

Table 1.2: Beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices defined using a symbolic framework

BELIEFS:

Knowledge one holds to be "true" about people, things, actions and events.

ATTITUDES:

Belief knowledge consisting of an enduring arrangement (i.e., coding) of information *about a particular person, thing, action or event which is used to interpret interactions with and experiences related to that person, thing, action or event.*

VALUES:

Attitudinal knowledge consisting of an enduring arrangement (i.e., coding) of information *about particular persons, things, actions or events which is used to judge the worth of those persons, things, actions or events.*

PRACTICES:

A practice is an identifiable, recurrent and enduring set of actions, in which knowledge is arranged (i.e., coded) according to one's beliefs about the world and how it works.

PATTERNS:

Recurring practices over time and across space are evident as recurring patterns in actions and activities.

One means of accessing and identifying patterning of acculturation is the genogram (Kingson *et al*, 1986; Richardson, 1987; Stagoll & Lang, 1980). A genogram is "a structural diagram of a family's three-generational relationship system" (Guerin and Pendagast, 1976:452) through which "issues ... and recurrent patterns are explored" (Gerwirtzman, 1988:37). A

series of questions pertaining to patterns and practices within the family allows recurring intergenerational beliefs, attitudes and values to be identified by the family and the therapist. The key, here, is the accessing and patterning of acculturated data in a way which is meaningful to the individual and family collectively and which helps with further instances of meaning making within their future experiences both within and outside the family (Roberto, 1992; Imber-Black, 1988; Richardson, 1987; Stagoll & Lang, 1980).

Intergenerational Family Acculturation

The theory of acculturation is borrowed from intergenerational family therapy theory. It is referred to here as intergenerational family acculturation theory to set it apart from the related family therapy which uses a systemic approach to apply the theory of intergenerational acculturation in the therapeutic context. Intergenerational family therapy theory describes patterns and practices which are seen as manifestations of underlying intergenerational family beliefs, attitudes and values (Gerwirtzman, 1988; Lieberman, 1979). Together with members of the family this information is used to construct shared understandings of systemic supports for disruptive and maladaptive behaviours over time (i.e., over the generations) and across space (within a generation) (Guerin *et al*, 1987; Guerin & Pendagast, 1976). "Problems" are seen as artefacts of the dynamic intergenerational family system, not the individual, although they may appear to be manifested in only one member of the family. Individuals are perceived to develop idiosyncratic maladaptive and disruptive behaviours as a result of their experiences within their family of origin. These experiences constitute part of the intergenerational family code (i.e., acculturation) for relating, for understanding how the world works, and for acting in that world (Minuchin, 1974).

Intergenerational family therapy is primarily interested in pathologies within families. This emphasis within intergenerational family therapy has resulted in a strong focus on life crises and other negative events which appear to be responded to in an acculturated way by family members (Roberto, 1992; Guerin *et al*, 1987; Lieberman, 1979; Guerin & Pendagast, 1976; Minuchin, 1974). By this I mean members of an intergenerational family unit know what is acceptable behaviour and thinking and what is not. Work by Killinger

(1991), Beattie (1989a, 1989b), Miller (1990a) and Leehan and Wilson (1985) show how workaholism, alcoholism, child rearing practices and the abuse of children, respectively, are accompanied by intergenerationally acculturated sets of beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices about relating, for understanding how the world works, and for acting in that world.

These processes of intergenerational therapy theory are adapted for use in this study to describe individual children's intergenerational family acculturations. This information is then used to describe how three young children developed idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy using their knowledge of the world based on their acculturations within their families of origin and their school. Unlike the application of the theory within the family therapy context, the emphasis here is on functional idiosyncratic responsiveness to the construction of literacy in the classroom not disruptive and maladaptive behaviours.

School Culture

Studies of organizational culture (e.g., Eisenberg & Goodall, 1993; Haviland, 1993; Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1984, 1982) can be readily applied to the school setting. While differences exist about what constitutes an organizational culture, it is generally agreed to have a similar definition to intergenerational family acculturation and includes the communication and mutation of beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices within an organization (Daniels & Spiker, 1994; Eisenberg & Goodall, 1993; Haviland, 1993). Information about organizational culture is used to assist members of an organization to better understand the dynamics of their workplace and to effect any necessary changes (Daniels & Spiker, 1994).

In this study, the school culture is described in terms of how it facilitates meaning making and specifically how it promotes the construction of literacy in the classroom (i.e., the school's acculturation).

APPLICATION OF THE FUTUROLOGIST AND ACCULTURATION FRAMEWORKS TO THE STUDY OF LITERACY

(Reich, 1993), Toffler, (1990), Wurman's (1989) futurological framework and intergenerational family acculturation theory are especially useful in

providing an understanding of how young children access their Information Systems. These Systems contain acculturated knowledge of the world derived from the child's primary experiences in their family of origin and their school (i.e., their acculturations). The order in which information is stored in a child's individual Information System predisposes the child to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy (Ref.: Wurman, 1989). This study constructs three "realities" of the accession of embedded symbolic information from idiosyncratic Information Systems, application of that information to the task of making meaning during the construction of literacy in the classroom and evaluation of the efficacy of that application. Literacy needs to be clearly defined to meet these demands within a symbolic framework.

A working definition of literacy

This study's symbolic conceptualization also requires a definition of literacy which fits comfortably within that framework. Given the diversity in the field of literacy, any thesis, such as this, must define its own parameters of the phenomena associated with literacy. For the purposes of this thesis, literacy is viewed as a transient, idiosyncratic Gestalt, which is a by product of constructions of meaning from symbolic and embedded symbolic information in textual data. A basic tenet of Gestalt theory is that the whole is more than the sum of the parts and while the parts are functional components of the whole, the whole cannot be arrived at by adding all the component parts together (Ref.: Polanyi, 1966). Polanyi (1966:6) defines a Gestalt as

the outcome of an active shaping of experience performed in pursuit of knowledge.

A Gestalt occurs when we construct a meaningful whole where there is no complete whole in our data. In the case of literacy, it could be said that literacy requires us "to read between the lines" in order to achieve a sufficiently satisfying meaning, that is, our Gestalt.

AIM OF THE STUDY

The primary aim of the study was to develop a grounded theory of acculturated meaning making in the development of idiosyncratic literacy practices. By this I mean how young children use of their knowledge of the

world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom. In attempting to meet this aim, this study describes the process by which three young children accessed their acculturally derived Information Systems to develop “meaningful new patterns” when constructing literacy in the classroom. Specifically, the study aimed to provide a rationale for considering the construction of literacy as a contextually derived, socially and culturally defined unified set of practices involving the idiosyncratic development of meaningful patterns across space and over time. These practices require embedded symbolic information accession and meaningful pattern generation, application and Responsive Evaluation rather than static literacy-specific skills acquisition and knowledge accumulation. The study does this by:

- a. Describing one school's culture: Beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices over the time from when the establishment of the school was first conceived in the late 1960s to 1993 when this study concluded (i.e., the school's acculturation);
- b. Describing three individual families' intergenerational family acculturation: Beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices (i.e., intergenerational family acculturation); and
- c. Ascribing acculturated patterns of responses to the making of meaning in the classroom by three young children, during their first three years of school, when they construct literacy.

The process of enquiry used to elicit initial responses regarding intergenerational family acculturations (see discussion of data collection in Chapter 3) involved the parents answering relevant questions based on work by Richardson (1987) and Guerin & Pendagast (1976). This was followed by prolonged and sustained observation in the classroom. Data from parents' responses and classroom observations were used to develop indepth interview questions to assist in the construction of mutual understandings of the acculturative dynamics at work. The intention here was to attempt to connect acculturally derived understandings of the world to actions in the classroom.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The rationale sets out to provide substantive reasons why the study should have been conducted including:

- Timeliness;
- Professional needs and
- Theoretical needs.

This study can be justified on the following grounds:

TIMELINESS

According to Toffler (1990) and Wurman, (1989) there is little doubt the nature and amount of information available is increasing exponentially every year. As we enter the Super-symbolic Information Age stakeholders will be required to know how to rapidly access, "meaningfully pattern" (Ref.: Toffler, 1990), use, evaluate and respond to immense amounts of information across disciplines over time and through space. I intend to deal with this issue in two main stages. Initially, embedded symbolic processes inherent in acculturation are described. Next, an understanding is developed of how initial literacy practices in children can be understood in terms of transferable processes of symbolic thought and meaning making both of which are fundamental requirements for the new Age (Reich, 1993; Toffler, 1990; Wurman, 1989). These processes seem to have been ignored in the current push for Standardized Testing of literacy skills across Australia and in the development of profiles for the National Curriculum (Marsh, 1994).

PROFESSIONAL NEEDS

The need exists for a broader and deeper understanding of the nature of the development, in young children, of idiosyncratic literacy practices. This study aims to provide a depth to the breadth of work done by Heath (1983) by looking deeply and in a sustained way, at individual children and their families from one social group rather than several from different social groups. By looking beyond surface features of readability, directionality, book orientation and so on (Ref.: Clay, 1979), Cambourne (1988) showed the importance of the classroom environment in assisting young children in

developing literacy. This study extends Cambourne's (1988) understanding to include broader aspects of the child's whole experience of meaning making in the family as it is applied to their attempts at meaning making in the school environment. This is particularly topical in terms of the impending National Curriculum (Marsh, 1994) for which teachers need tools to avoid discrimination pertaining to access, content and creativity of the local curriculum.

THEORETICAL NEEDS

Most research on the home-school connection has been oriented towards literacy-specific features of overt "literacy-promoting" behaviours (e.g., Cairney, 1992, 1990; Toomey & Allen, 1991; Stevenson & Baker, 1987; Snowball, 1985). This study describes aspects of embedded symbolic child-family-school interactions of acculturation which are spontaneously applied to the construction of literacy in the classroom.

In essence this study takes an embedded symbolic information approach to literacy practices for the Twenty First Century. It is, therefore, not focused on the surface features as such, although these are included as evidence of developing literacy practices in each of the young children but rather the patterning of their responses during their constructions of literacy in the classroom.

SOCIO-HISTORICAL-POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

There is so much noise, so much informational cacophony that no one is going to hear you (Wurman, 1989:51)

This section positions the study in its current real world context and includes:

- Problems currently associated with defining "literacy";
- Approaches to literacy teaching and learning; and
- Approaches to assessing and evaluating literacy.

The current real world context of literacy is one of diversity in beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices as the following discussion illustrates.

PROBLEMS CURRENTLY ASSOCIATED WITH DEFINING "LITERACY"

Literacy may be described as a set of practices (Cambourne, 1988; Scribner & Cole, 1981). Scribner and Cole (1981:235) define a *practice* as "a goal recurrent, goal directed sequence of activities using a particular technology and particular systems of knowledge ... [a set of] socially developed and patterned ways of using technology and knowledge to accomplish tasks". Their use of "systems of knowledge" fits well with Wurman's (1989) idea of an Information System with its information rings. Scribner and Cole (1981:236) define literacy as:

a set of socially organized practices which make use of a symbol system and a technology for producing and disseminating it. Literacy is not simply knowing how to read and write a particular script but applying this knowledge for specific purposes in specific contexts of use. The nature of these practices, including, of course, their technological aspects, will determine the kinds of skills ("consequences") associated with literacy.

Scribner and Cole's (1981) definition of literacy connotes a "reading of the world" (Freire, 1970). If this is the case, then it accords with Street's (1992) definition. Street (1992) claims there is no point at which literacy does not exist either in the present, past or in the future for all people because the whole environment (i.e., world) is a functional and defining feature of the literacy text (Hodge & Kress, 1988). However, not everyone would willingly accept Scribner and Cole's (1981) definition of literacy nor Street's (1992), or Hodge and Kress' (1988) elaborations. Stanovich (1993/1994, 1990, 1980) and Beck (1990) firmly believe the text consists of letters and words written on a page. There are almost as many opinions on literacy as there are teachers and learners. As Smith (1985) suggests, all methods of teaching literacy work. If it is not because of the method which is used, as many children seem to develop literacy despite the way they are taught, there must be some other dynamics at work. In order to identify possible dynamics, what constitutes "literacy" needs to be explored.

Scribner and Cole (1988) suggest the problems experienced in making literacy tangible in order to define it, stem from the different orientations (i.e., description and evaluation) used to define the term "literacy". In the current climate definitions primarily serve a functional role as politicians and researchers alike frequently attempt to connect literacy with empowerment and a satisfying lifestyle which includes employment.

Functional role of definitions

A salient example of this situation is the problem the Australian Education Council (AEC) (1990a:11, in Marsh, 1994) had in defining literacy for the purposes of developing a national curriculum, opting, instead, to list the key elements of literacy (Marsh, 1994). These key elements, as listed by Marsh (1994:65-66), are:

- Social, cultural and functional elements;
- The integration of reading, writing, speaking, listening and critical thinking skills;
- Skills in using the conventions of language (such as grammar and spelling);
- Skills in handwriting and keyboard use;
- The notion that literacy is developed through both composition and comprehension of a wide range of texts;
- The recognition that learners come from a wide range of language backgrounds;
- It is a relative concept - literacy development cannot be measured by arbitrary means or described in terms of numbers;
- All teachers can, and should, contribute to the development of literacy for all students;
- As society changes, so do the literacy needs of its citizens; and
- Literacy is a means of empowering students.

The elements identified by the AEC (1990, in Marsh, 1994) suggest literacy may not be a static entity or set of skills, rather it may be something that, as Gough (1988) believes, is adapted to the society which uses it. Embedded in these elements are some of the current orientations to literacy in Australia. Scribner and Cole (1988:xiv) identify meanings applied to literacy as frequently belonging to one or other side of a dichotomy but rarely fully considered together:

- Description which refers to the succession of abilities (signature stage, recitation stage, comprehension stage, analysis stage); and
- Evaluation which assesses the possession of a body of knowledge, usually of literature or the "rules" of accepted usage.

The inability of the AEC to arrive at a specific definition at least for the purposes of producing a national profile for Literacy/English could be seen as evidence of a descriptive meaning being applied to literacy. Whereas an evaluative meaning may be applied to literacy when levels of literacy are tied closely to that of national economic success by the Government, employer bodies and workers' unions (Ref.: Marsh, 1994, Dawkins, 1988 and Australian Council of Trade Unions, ACTU, 1987, in Marsh, 1994).

Descriptive definitions

A descriptive orientation focuses the user on successive stages of abilities related to the development of literacy such as being able to write one's name, to recite a passage from a familiar story, comprehension of a passage and the ability to analyse what is read (Scribner & Cole, 1988). Description of literacy practices provides a picture of what is happening. Evidence for the development of literacy is seen in the individual's ability to move through the various stages.

Evaluative definitions

An evaluative orientation focuses the user on establishing whether or not an individual possesses a body of knowledge, usually of literature or the "rules" of accepted usage (Kaestle, 1991:3) up to the point of evaluation. It is particularly open to Standardized Testing for the purposes of accountability such as that emphasised by the Federal Government in its haste to firmly bind together employment, education and training (Ref.: Bouffler, 1992). Education with economically focused employment and social outcomes is favoured by the Federal Government (Dawkins, 1988).

The dichotomous use of these two orientations to literacy is reflected in the different approaches to literacy teaching and learning depending on the stakeholders' definitions of literacy and these are discussed in the next section.

CURRENT APPROACHES TO LITERACY TEACHING AND LEARNING IN AUSTRALIA

Approaches to literacy in the classroom have been directed by underlying beliefs, attitudes and values about the nature of literacy, how it develops and how it can be developed in an individual. I am able to identify three theoretical approaches to literacy currently vying for a place in language teaching and learning in Australian schools during the 1990s:

- Interactive-compensatory Theory;
- Genre Theory; and
- Whole Language Theory.

Some have interpreted the autonomistic genre approach as merely an extension of the Interactive-compensatory approach (e.g., Street, 1984). Both may be considered more functional in nature in that they provide tools for children to access literacy through the development of a set of sub-skills of literacy such as phonics and understanding how different types of texts work. While advocates of the genre approach would deny any comparison with an Interactive-compensatory approach it is a real danger that the former could be considered simply as a skills aggregation process which results in access to literacy as both approaches suggest that once certain skills and sub-skills are learned and developed sufficiently one can become literate (Bull & Anstey, 1991; Christie, 1990; Stanovich, 1980). The third approach may be considered a symbolic approach as it stresses contextualization and the "whole" or "big" picture from which the child can access and construct literacy. Whereas the functional approaches to literacy strive to develop literacy skills, which can be subsequently applied in real contexts, in order for the child to become literate, the symbolic approach of Whole Language believes the whole environment is the literacy text and to be literate the child needs to learn how that environment works. Unlike the written text of the functionalists, the written text in Whole Language cannot be separated from the environmental text (Ref.: Rosser & Albion, 1992).

An Interactive-compensatory approach to literacy

Advocates of this approach believe that literacy is purely functional and is best taught through graded exercises which develop sub-skills of literacy

such as phonics and decoding skills (Stanovich, 1980; Ref.: also de Castell & Luke, 1988:161, re the *technocratic* approach). Once learned, literacy can then be applied to a social context (Stanovich, 1980). This attitude to literacy and style of learning is described by Kale and Luke (1991:3) as

the accumulation of skills quite separate from the meaningful contexts where literacy is actually put to work for significant social purposes (Ref.: also Stanovich, 1980).

According to Stanovich (1980) the underlying assumptions of this approach are:

- Written language learning is different from oral language learning and the two be cannot compared for learning purposes;
- The skills of written language (e.g., decoding, phonemic awareness, sound-symbol associations, word recognition, automation of sub-skills) are "most efficiently instilled by explicit instruction" (Andrews, 1992:86; Ref.: also Cambourne, 1988);
- Semantic processes and lower-level processes interact with each other to constrain available options at both higher and lower levels of processing in order to synthesize the stimulus;
- Higher level processes can operate without lower-level processes as processes at any level can compensate for deficiencies in processes of component sub-skills of reading at another level; and
- Failure to become literate is attributed to a deficit in the child.

A Genre approach to literacy

Advocates of this approach believe literacy involves control over different types of text or genres (Christie, 1990). Explicit teaching of how different types of texts function as expressed by (Christie, 1990:3) is the central tenet of this approach:

To be literate in the contemporary world is to understand the very large range of written forms, text types or - as I shall call them here, *genres* - which we all need for both the reading and the writing essential to participation in the community.

The key assumptions of this model (Ref.: Bull & Anstey, 1991; Christie, 1990; Gilbert, 1990; Collerson, 1988a, 1988b, 1988c; Street, 1984) are:

- Being able to understand the very large range of written forms, text types (i.e., genres) is what constitutes literacy;
- Language models must be made explicit for children;
- Parents actively provide models of appropriate language by actively scaffolding (i.e., joint construction of texts from shared experience) which assists the child by controlling the flow and input of language. This is based on Bruner's (1983) theory of how children learn to use language; and
- Access to literacy leads to participation in the community and to autonomy of power over one's life and in society.

Perhaps, it is because of the directness of the teaching used in this approach, that some have interpreted it as an application of a functional approach to literacy akin to the functional elements of the interactive-compensatory approach advocated by Stanovich (1980) and Andrews (1992) (Ref.: Bull & Anstey, 1991; Sawyer & Watson, 1987). While advocates of the genre approach would deny this claim (e.g., Derewianka, 1990), the acquisition of control over different genres could be taught in a mechanistic way similar to the way sub-skills of literacy are taught by adherents to Stanovich's (1980) interactive-compensatory approach (Albion & Rosser, 1990; Bull & Anstey, 1991).

A Whole Language approach to literacy

This approach focuses on the importance of context and the integration of meanings. Language learning (and therefore literacy) is seen as a natural and functional process for both written and oral language development. Literacy spontaneously occurs with immersion in a "meaningful functionally literate environment" (Andrews, 1992:85). The word literacy "describes a whole collection of behaviours, skills, knowledge, processes and attitudes" (Cambourne, 1988:3).

A Whole Language approach to language learning has formed the basis of the New South Wales Department of Education K-12 curriculum policy statement for the past twenty four years (Andrews, 1992).

Strickland (1991:3) lists the major assumptions of this approach as:

- Students learn by constructing meaning from the world around them;
- Language learning is not sequential, but reading and writing skills develop simultaneously along with oral language skills;
- Curriculum in a Whole Language classroom is not a prescribed course of study; instead learning occurs when students are engaged and teachers are demonstrating;
- Language and language learning are learned best in an environment encouraging risk-taking; error is inherent in the process;
- Reading and writing are context-specific and are reflections of the situation in which learning is taking place; and
- Whole Language includes all aspects of language learning - students learn to read while they are writing and they learn about writing by reading.

Inherent in the approach to literacy teaching and learning is the method of assessment and evaluation. Bouffler (1992:1) distinguishes between assessment and evaluation on the bases that "assessment is the process by which information is gathered" while "evaluation is the process of interpreting that information". Assessment incorporates description as a means of data gathering. Bouffler's (1992) definitions of assessment and evaluation imply the actions of purposively accessing and meaningfully patterning data (i.e., assessment) in order to *inform* (i.e., evaluate) as in providing *inform* ation. When applied as if a dichotomy exists, these two orientations of description and evaluation, produce different meanings for literacy because they address different purposes. While the approach to literacy teaching and learning can often determine the method of assessment and evaluation of literacy, outcomes of assessment and evaluation can, and often do have an impact on teaching and learning of literacy (Ref.: Bouffler, 1992; Hancock, 1992; Cambourne & Turbill, 1994; Cambourne, Turbill & Dal Santo, 1994). The relationship is not a linear one. Effective literacy teaching and learning responds to effective assessment and evaluation. Effective assessment and evaluation acts as the impetus for further teaching, learning, assessment and evaluation in a never-ending process (Cambourne & Turbill, 1994; Crebbin, 1992; Hancock, 1992). This process of evaluation is, by nature,

synonymous with learning (Crebbin, 1992; Freppon, 1992). However, in the current political climate, it is important to understand the roles of Standardized Testing and Responsive Evaluation which offer two vastly different ways of assessing and evaluating literacy. Accordingly, Standardized Testing and Responsive Evaluation are discussed in the next section.

APPROACHES TO ASSESSING AND EVALUATING LITERACY

Two approaches to assessing and evaluating literacy which are currently under consideration in Australian schools are Standardized Testing and Responsive Evaluation. These are examples of two different paradigms. The former, operates from a deductive, positivist paradigm and attempts to define literacy as a body of held knowledge regarding literature or accepted usage "rules" of written language (Kintgen, Kroll & Rose 1988). The latter, operating from an inductive, constructivist paradigm, seeks to assess the development of a succession of abilities such as the ability to write one's name, to recite a passage from a familiar story, comprehension of a passage and the ability to analyse what is read (Scribner & Cole, 1988). The assumptions underlying these two paradigms as articulated by Guba and Lincoln (1989:84) are presented in Table 1.3.

The final decision of which approach to assessment and evaluation is used is heavily dependant on what purpose the successful agenda setter perceives is central to their needs. For politicians, Standardized Testing offers readily available information regarding their "accountability" to the Australian public (Cambourne & Turbill, 1991). Teachers, concerned with optimal learning conditions for their students, are more likely to find Responsive Evaluation is better able to meet their needs (Cambourne & Turbill, 1994).

Standardized Testing

The underlying assumptions of this approach fit best with functional approaches to literacy teaching and learning. Cambourne (1988:3) identifies some basic assumptions underlying the standardized measurement view of assessment and evaluation which also apply to concerns expressed by employers (Ref.: ACTU, 1987, in Marsh, 1994):

-
- It is assumed that all children see the need, are capable of becoming and are expected to become literate (to meet all their future needs) before the end of their schooling;
 - Literacy is a single, static, tangible, correct, measurable entity;
 - It is actually possible to derive some static, tangible objective measure by which to rate one's level of literacy; and
 - There exists some criterion, or signal which when detected, assures us that an adequate level of literacy has been attained and below which the level is deemed inadequate.

Cohen (1988) includes another commonly held assumption about standardized tests:

- They test what is taught and what is learned.

Marsh (1994), however, suggests teachers are inclined to "teach to the test" thus reducing the curriculum focus for literacy in order to appear accountable. The push for Standardized Testing (Ref.: Marsh, 1994; Cohen, 1988) emphasises a functional (*cp* interactive-compensatory and genre approaches) approach to literacy (de Castell & Luke, 1988). According to de Castell and Luke (1988:168) a functional approach to literacy, such as the key competencies, proposed in the Mayer Report (1992), targets "[d]e-contextualised sub-skills of literate competence".

The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) is presently the only one of six states and two territories within Australia not to have some form of systematic Standardized Testing of literacy levels for primary aged children. An underlying assumption of the standardized test movement is that "objective" assessment will provide firm evidence as to whether or not taxpayers' education dollars are being efficiently expended (Cambourne & Turbill, 1991). However, there is evidence that children may not always give the right answer to questions in the classroom for the reasons adults believe (Pratt, 1985). Children need to negotiate the meaning of the questions which is strictly forbidden in Standardized Testing (Erickson, 1988). Further, these issues could be exacerbated by linguistic diversity which is truly beginning to impact on multicultural Australian society (Bryant, 1989). An example of this dilemma is the 1990 ACT green paper on literacy

(Humphries, 1990) which used unfamiliar language. Children were unable to understand several questions let alone answer them correctly (Perrett, 1990).

Table 1.3: Underlying assumptions of the positivist and constructivist paradigms (from Guba & Lincoln, 1989:84)

Ontology: A REALIST ONTOLOGY asserts that there exists a single reality that is independent of any observer's interest in it and which operates according to immutable natural laws, many of which take cause-effect form. Truth is defined as that set of statements that is isomorphic to reality.	 A RELATIVIST ONTOLOGY asserts that there exist multiple, socially constructed realities ungoverned by natural laws, causal or otherwise. "Truth" is defined as the best informed (amount and quality of information) and most sophisticated (power with which the information is understood and used) construction on which there is consensus (although there may be several constructions extant that simultaneously meet that criterion).
Epistemology: A DUALIST OBJECTIVIST EPISTEMOLOGY asserts that it is possible (indeed mandatory) for an observer to exteriorize the phenomenon studied, remaining detached and distant from it (a state often called "subject-object dualism"), and excluding any value considerations from influencing it.	 A MONISTIC, SUBJECTIVIST EPISTEMOLOGY asserts that an inquirer and the inquired-into are interlocked in such a way that the findings of an investigation are the literal creation of the inquiry process. Note that this posture effectively destroys the classical ontology-epistemology distinction.
Methodology AN INTERVENTIONIST METHODOLOGY strips context of its contaminating (confounding) influences (variables) so that the inquiry can converge on truth and explain nature as it really is and really works, leading to the capability to predict and to control.	 A HERMENEUTIC METHODOLOGY involves a continuing dialectic of iteration, analysis, critique, reiteration, reanalysis, and so on, leading to the emergence of a joint (among all the inquirers and respondents, or among etic and emic views) construction of a case.

The underlying assumptions of Standardized Testing, as presented above, are at odds with Scribner and Cole's (1988) definition of literacy as contextually based, socially derived, patterns and set of practices. Young people are now strongly encouraged to complete a tertiary education usually after completing thirteen years of schooling (Dawkins, 1988). Media reports abound of employers' complaints that recruits from the ranks of school leavers cannot spell, do not know how to construct letters using appropriate language, syntax and grammar and so on (Ref.: Marsh, 1994 and Dwyer, 1992). Perhaps employers have inappropriate expectations of school leavers because workplace demands on recruits are changing almost daily (Cross, Feather, & Lynch, 1994; Hammer, & Champy, 1993; Senge, 1990). The most likely explanation may be the onset of symbolic work practices

which require highly flexible skills of accessing, meaningfully patterning, using and evaluating applications of vast amounts of highly fluid, maybe even volatile information on a global scale (Reich, 1993). This type of situation requires a more flexible approach to assessment and evaluation such as that afforded by Responsive Evaluation.

Responsive Evaluation

Unlike Standardized Testing, a Responsive Evaluation approach to assessment and evaluation does not tolerate decontextualized measuring of discrete sub-skills of literacy (Cambourne, 1994). The reason for this is that Responsive Evaluation views literacy as "a whole collection of behaviours, skills, knowledge, processes and attitudes" (Cambourne, 1988:3) which cannot exist alone but which, together constitute literacy.

The underlying assumptions of Responsive Evaluation are (Cambourne, 1994:5; Cambourne & Turbill, 1994:16, 18-19):

- Objectivity is not achievable;
- Responsive Evaluation consists of a number of stages interlinked by several basic processes (Ref.: Figure 1.2);
- There are subsystems of language which work together to create meaning;
- Meaning is socially constructed;
- Literacy is best acquired holistically;
- The primary purpose for teaching literacy includes communication, as well as helping learners gain control of language for purposes of critique, access to power, social equity and social change;
- Reading is one of many parallel forms of language and has a strong symbiotic relationship with writing, speaking, listening and other forms of language;
- Assessment and evaluation must inform, support and justify teacher decision-making;
- Assessment and evaluation practices must reflect the theories of language learning and literacy which guide teaching; and
- The findings which result from assessment and evaluation practices must be accurate, valid, reliable, and perceived to be rigorous by all who use them.

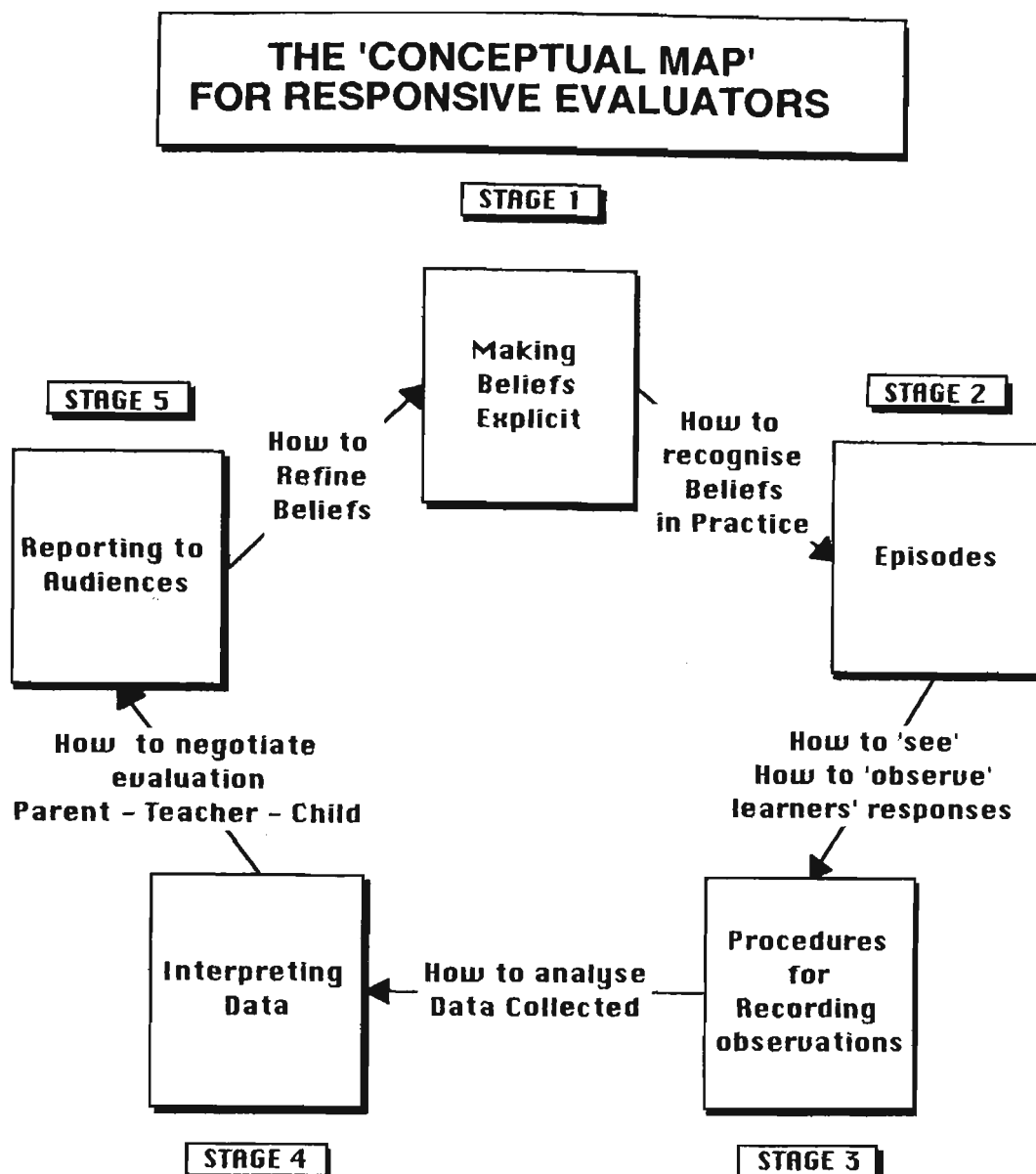


Figure 1.2: The processes and stages of Responsive Evaluation (Reproduced from Cambourne & Turbill, 1994:19, with permission).

If a "powershift" is underway as Toffler (1990) suggests, and, if as Gough (1988) believes, literacy is adapted to the society which uses it, then literacy practices must also change as the nature of power changes from a basis of manual labour and economics to that of embedded symbolic information (i.e., "knowledge capital"). According to Toffler (1990), symbolic-analytic processing practices predispose one to pattern responses to environmental stimuli such as literacy and are not defined by subject boundaries but rather are embedded across disciplines. On the basis of Toffler's (1990) assertions, diverse areas of expression such as language, mathematics, music, biology and genetics could be viewed as avenues of articulating embedded symbolic knowledge via the application of symbolic-analytic

processing skills. If Toffler (1990) is correct, then literacy must become an embedded symbolic practice requiring intellectual processes which synchronize with this new function. Theoretical implications of such a shift in literacy requirements demand a multi-theoretical approach to further our understanding of the phenomena involved. With this in mind the next section offers one such multi-theoretical approach to the study of literacy.

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

The overall defining conceptual framework for this study is that of embedded symbolic information (see discussion of this on pages 1-7 of this chapter) as proposed by Toffler (1990). Toffler's (1990) Super-symbolic Information Age presupposes a new mega theory for understanding and using embedded symbolic information. As such, this mega theory needs to draw on a range of extant established theories across discipline boundaries. Like all new conceptual theories, this new mega theory needs to look for patterns among the range of theoretical orientations already available to do what Toffler (1990) says involves the development of a primitive set of principles based on current theories. From this primitive set of principles a theory of embedded symbolic information processing can be derived and applied to a set of data such as Case Studies of idiosyncratic literacy development. The next step in this ever evolving process is then to reground the theory and the patterns derived from the data such as presented here in this thesis. Hence, no single contribution from any one conceptual or theoretical perspective (see Table 1.4) can be said to stand alone in this study. This is congruent with the thesis offered by futurologists other than Toffler (1990), such as Reich (1993) and Wurman (1989) and demonstrates what I am describing in this thesis.

RATIONALE FOR THE MULTI-THEORETICAL APPROACH TO THIS STUDY

To be able to access the literature for a study such as this some assumptions must be made:

- There are multiple realities;
- Multiple realities result in different ways of conceiving a problem and thus of conducting research;

-
- It is the manifestation of a reality (i.e., the "fact" that it is someone's reality) that is central to an embedded symbolic information conceptual framework, not whether it was divined via a positivist or constructivist paradigm for the research; and
 - Given the above assumptions it is possible to meaningfully access readily available data on the basis that it exists as someone's reality, regardless of the method by which it was manifested.

The multi-theoretical approach of this study can be justified on bases of:

- It provides access to a broad range of discourses; and
- It provides an applied example of symbolic-analytic skills discussed in the study.

The role of each of these is discussed below.

Access to a broader range of discourses

This study, which aims to provide a more inclusive and theoretically meaningful way of looking at literacy, could not have happened within only one field of endeavour. Accordingly, the study brings together knowledge from a number of areas of endeavour with the aim of re-examining "literacy" in terms of communication and meaning making in the family and in the school during the early childhood years. Different theoretical models are interpreted using a transactional view of communication (see Figure 1.3 below). A transactional view of communication is concerned with how information is sent (structured, evaluated and transmitted) and received (reconstructed, evaluated and responded to).

Figure 1.3 displays only some of the possible inter-relationships between the theories contributing to this study. For the sake of clarity, several inter-relationships have been left implicit (e.g., the relationship between early learning sets and acculturation and cognitive development and associative cognitive processing). Potentially relevant contributions and connections between various aspects of the different theories are not limited to those included in this Figure. It is beyond the scope of this study to explore all possible connections.

Table 1.4: Conceptual and theoretical contributions to the study

CONCEPTUAL-THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS STUDY	SAMPLE SOURCES
FUTUROLOGISTS	Changing international relations Changing nature of work Changing communication needs Changing nature of power Embedded symbolism and information Symbolic-analytic Information skills Changing nature of information Organization of information Information Systems	Reich Toffler Wurman
COMMUNICATION THEORY	Transactional model of communication in an open system Organizational culture: Beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices Intercultural differences and commonalities in beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices	Mohan, MacGregor & Strano Smircich & Calás Pacanowsky Eunson; Kress
SOCIAL SEMIOTIC THEORY	Nature of symbolic communication: Signs, symbols, signals and indices	Halliday; Leech; Hodge & Kress
INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY ACCULTURATION THEORY	Intergenerational family beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices Ritualization of family practices	Guerin; Lieberman; Minuchin, Roberto; Imber-Black; Roberts
PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY	Neuropsychological structures and processes Associative cognitive processing Gestalt: Contextual dependence in interpretation of symbols, signs, signals and indices Intergenerational family psychopathologies Beliefs, attitudes and Values Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Early Learning Sets Primary Developmental Context Rational-emotive therapy	Luria; Lezak, Walsh Wyer & Srull Goldstein; Polanyi Killinger; Beattie Minuchin Rokeach Bryant Erickson, M. Bronfenbrenner Ellis & Harper
WHOLE LANGUAGE THEORY	Naturalistic paradigm Negotiation and integration of meanings in context Importance of child's existing knowledge Cambourne's (1988) Conditions for Learning Language as a natural and functional process Responsive Evaluation	Goodman, Y. Cambourne Cambourne & Turbill
PSYCHOLINGUISTIC THEORY	How to accurately describe language Methodological approaches for studying language	Goodman, K.

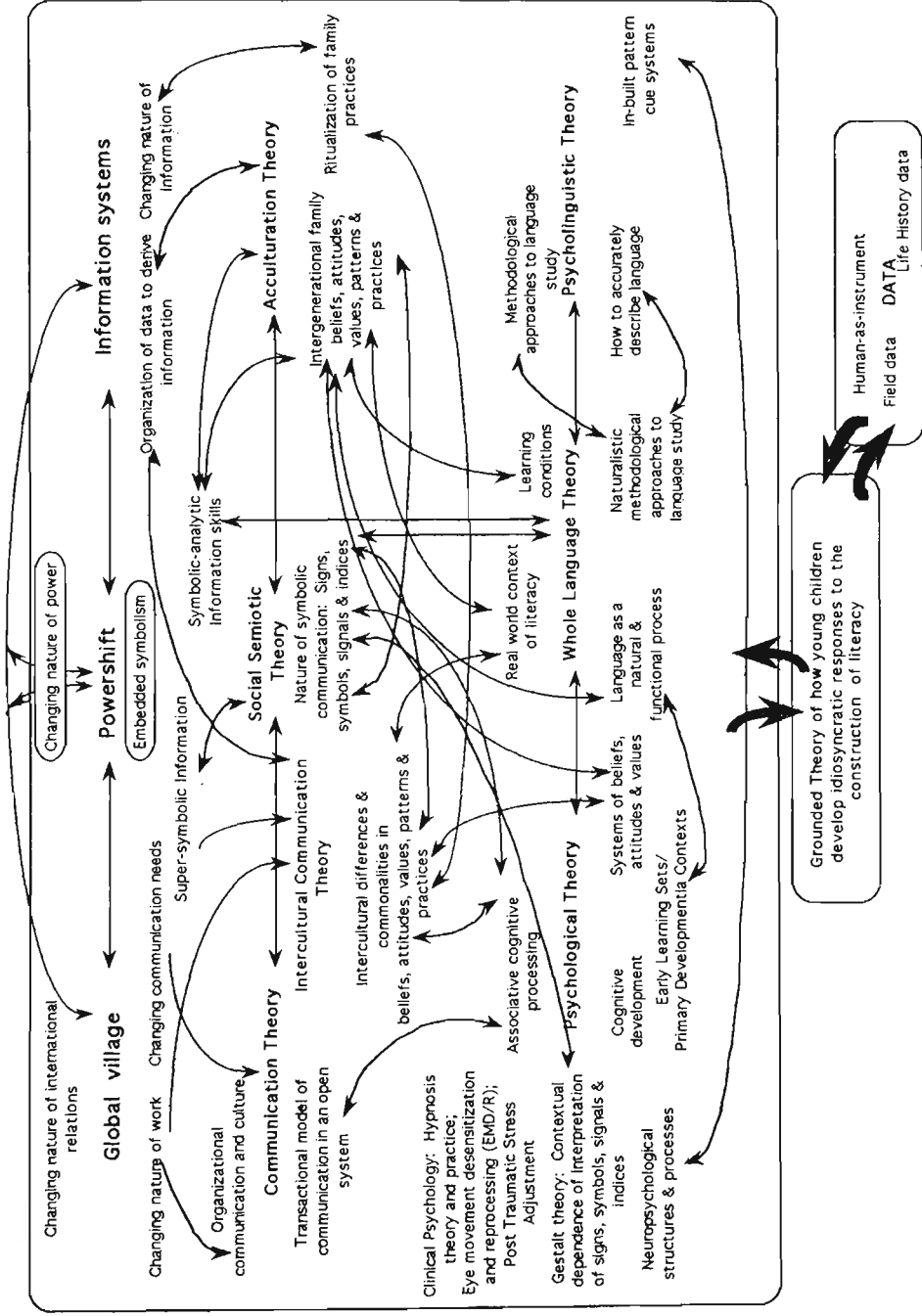


Figure 1.3: Some inter-relationships between the multiple conceptual and theoretical contributions to this study

An applied example of symbolic-analytic skills

This study employs a subjective view of reality in which patterns of realities from different theoretical orientations are integrated to create a new, thick description for the construction of literacy during the first three years of formal schooling. To have used only one theoretical orientation would have undermined the whole rigour of the study by not allowing such diverse realities to be examined, drawn upon and integrated into a new Gestalt. To be able to draw together the various strands it was necessary to examine theoretical orientations from several different disciplines, as mentioned above, in order to create a more informed way of viewing the phenomenon of emergent literacy practices (i.e., the construction of negotiated realities of literacy). A good analogy of the construction of realities of literacy practices is that of perspective taking akin to Piaget's "My side of the mountain test" in which children are asked to say what another person would see from the other side (of the mountain). While the development of an appreciation for others' perspectives is something to be encouraged, experience shows that few of us ever really manage to do this to a great degree as evidenced by some well meaning but narrow scoped theories.

There is always the risk any endeavour to broaden and deepen current frameworks will be too broad and too deep to be functional. To overcome this in the current study, an integrated framework is generated by connecting recurring patterns in various theories, detecting meaningful patterns in the data and applying that information to Case Studies as a "test" of transferability.

MAJOR THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE STUDY

Consistent with the naturalistic paradigm employed in this study, the notion of negotiated realities and therefore negotiated meanings in communication underpin the application of these theories. The grounded theory of the construction of literacy, as presented here, has evolved from my reading, integration, reinterpretation, application and Responsive Evaluation of several theoretical perspectives using the conceptual framework of the futurologists (i.e., Reich, 1993; Toffler, 1990 & Wurman, 1989). The process has been one in which the use of symbolic-analytic skills has been essential as each theoretical perspective in itself consists of vast amounts of multi-

layered data (i.e., embedded symbolism of embedded symbolic information). This data needed to be purposively accessed, meaningfully patterned (as presented in Chapter 2 of this thesis), purposively applied to this study (as presented in Chapters 4 and 5) and that application responsively evaluated (as presented in Chapter 6). It would not be possible for me, at this time and in this place, to access every extant theoretical perspective no matter how able I was.

Purposive accession implies entry to what is significant, useful and likely to have a relatively immediate impact on one's being, thinking, feeling, doing, living and working (Ref.: Reich, 1993; Toffler, 1990 & Wurman, 1989). Those theoretical perspectives accessed, patterned applied and responsively evaluated in this study are those with which I am most familiar, and which, in Wurman's (1989) terms, are most readily available and for me, have some immediate impact professionally and personally. The major theoretical perspectives used in this study are:

- Communication Theory;
- Social semiotic Theory;
- Acculturation Theory;
- Psychological Theory;
- Whole Language Theory; and
- Psycholinguistic Theory.

Communication Theory

The transactional model of communication in Figure 1.4, suggests interactions between the originator of the message, the message and the receiver of the message. These processes of communication are seen as involving the active construction and reconstruction of meaning through sharing, participating, associating and communing via systems of symbols and codes. Specifically, the ritual or dramaturgical view of communication aims to maintain the shared beliefs of society in time (Carey, 1988). This view, which encompasses the understanding of transmission of information and attitude change in terms of cultural rituals and social order, according to Carey (1988:18-19)

sees the original and highest manifestation of communication not in the transmission of intelligent information but in the construction and maintenance

of an ordered, meaningful cultural world that can serve as a control and container for human action

That literacy practices such as reading, writing, drawing, speaking and listening involve ritualistic and dyadic communication of shared beliefs of a sender, a message and a receiver is not an issue. Even the personal message which is sent and received by the same person involves a sender, message and receiver constructing (and maintaining) an ordered, meaningful cultural world. At different times in a different context, the message may be interpreted differently by the same person. For example a person may write something then put it aside for weeks, months or years before reading it again. The piece may then be interpreted by the author in ways he or she had never intended or even considered previously. The reconstruction of the messages (symbols and coding) from the piece may be forever changed. This complex social process of meaning making involves the construction of realities which are "shared, modified, and preserved" (Carey, 1988:33) through the use of culturally derived symbols and codes (Eunson, 1994; Hodge & Kress, 1988; Kress, 1988). An inability to create and describe a shared reality through symbols and codes, means we do not connect with others (Carey, 1988; Kress, 1993) as is the case with chronic schizophrenics (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: DSM-IV).

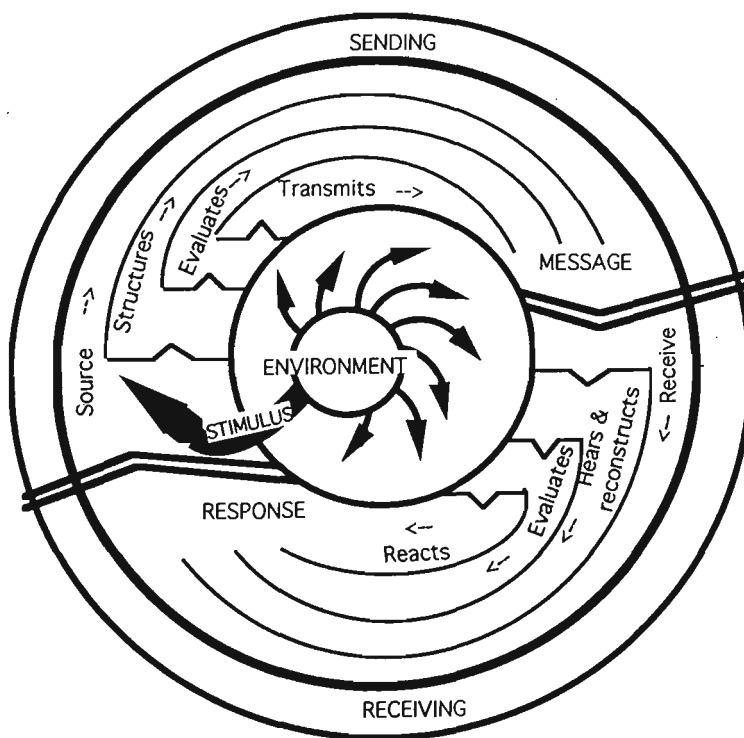


Figure 1.4: A transactional model of communication (redrawn from Mohan, McGregor & Strano, 1992:42).

Social semiotic Theory

The study of sign and code negotiation and construction to produce meaning is called social semiotics. Fiske (1982:3) defines social semiotics as the "constructions of signs which, through interacting with the receivers produce meaning". Codes act as organizing systems for signs determining their relationships to each other (Hodge & Kress, 1988; Halliday & Hasan, 1985). They are devised to facilitate meaning making using sign conventions. An example of a code is the sign *apple* which signifies *the fruit*. Similarly, the sign *A* signifies the word, *apple*. According to Leech (1976), it is the code which organizes the signs (i.e., the letters) that determines the relationships from which we can then derive the meaning of the sign *apple*. In this study the concepts derived from social semiotics include signs and codes from the whole environment as the text. That is, the text itself consists of signs and codes. Signs refer to something other than themselves. Icons are visual signs which are readily recognized (e.g., photographs, road signs including *STOP* signs, etc.). Signals or indices are signs which are causally connected to the objects signified by them (e.g., smoke indicates fire) while symbols such as logos are arbitrary signs which are conventionally related to what they signify (Mohan et al, 1989). Codes within families dictate who can do what, where, when, how, to whom and with whom (Minuchin, 1974). Individuals within families readily detect intergenerational family-specific symbols and codes and idiosyncratically interpret them using embedded symbolic information throughout their lifespan (Ref.: Biddulph, 1993; Boszormenyi-Nagi, 1985; Bloomfield, 1983).

It is the constructive and symbolic communication aspects of social semiotics which are of particular interest to this study. These provide a framework for understanding many subtle negotiations and constructions of meanings from (symbolic) information embedded in symbols and codes within individual intergenerational family units and schools throughout the acculturation process. Meaningful patterning practices inherent in interpretations of symbols and codes are fundamental in the meaning making process of "decoding" (written) language as required in literacy. Strano (1993) explored information implicit in one such code within and between families. She explored the negotiation of power between parents and children during the reading of bedtime stories. Different "readings" of a piece of written language may be seen as resulting from differences in the readers' knowledge and cultural background. These differences promote

idiosyncratic interpretations (i.e., individual meaning making) of symbolic information embedded in the symbols and codes over time and across space. Also related to this phenomenon is the degree to which the information contained therein is of immediate consequence to the constructor of that meaning (Ref.: Wurman's, 1989, theory of degrees of immediacy for different Information Rings as shown in Figure 1.1).

Acculturation Theory

The negotiation and meaning making processes involving codes and symbols within an intergenerational family unit are used to facilitate functional family relationships by intergenerational family therapists. While family therapy by definition focuses on pathology within the family unit, its theoretical derivations for intergenerational family acculturation theory have much broader and more critical implications for everyday processes and interactions for individuals outside their intergenerational family unit. For example, we know there are strong intergenerational familial dynamics which, while not unique to certain pathologies (e.g., alcoholism, workaholism, child abuse, anorexia nervosa, etc.) do appear to present like genetic DNA in various combinations or "codes" and manifest themselves according to those "codes" in individual families (Beattie, 1989a, 1989b; Killinger, 1991; Leehan & Wilson, 1985; Palazzoli, 1974; Palazzoli, Boscolo, Cecchin & Prata, 1974). These combinations, or at least their arrangement, are attributable to a number of factors which may be considered as codes, function as organizers of the relevant symbols in intergenerational family relationships and ritualizers of symbolic intergenerational family practices (Roberto, 1992; Imber-Black, 1988; Roberts, 1988). Roberts (1988:8) defines rituals as:

coevolved symbolic acts that include not only the ceremonial aspects of the actual presentation of the ritual, but the process of preparing for it as well. It may or may not include words, but does have both open and closed parts which are "held" together by a guiding metaphor. Repetition can be a part of rituals through either the content, the form, or the occasion.

Rituals, the code carriers of intergenerational family acculturation, are infinitely vulnerable to mutation because of their open-ended nature. Mutations allow for intergenerational changes to occur. These changes allow families to interpret rituals within their own experiences and needs (Davis, 1988). In this sense, they provide the means of maintaining and

creating structure and making meaning from experiences for individuals, families and communities (Roberts, 1988; Davis, 1988). This is best expressed by Munn (no date, in Doty, 1986:72):

Looked at from the symbolic "inside out" (rather than the functionalist "outside in"), ritual can be seen as a symbolic intercom between the level of cultural thought and complex cultural meanings on the one hand, and that of social action and immediate event, on the other.

Psychological Theory

Psychology offers perspectives on how we deal with the world at a intrapsychical level. Meaning making involves intra- and interpersonal communication. During this communication an individual has to access readily available information, what Wurman (1989) would term accessing their Information System. How we might access that Information System is well described within the psychological literature. Contributions from psychology include an understanding of intellectual processes, such as information processing, which enable the construction of literacy. Wyer & Srull's (1985) model of associative processing is accessed to demonstrate how long term memory can facilitate meaning making. Associative learning is a process in which items from memory are recalled when we are able to associate them with something else. For example, we are more likely to recall having purchased an item if it was a birthday present because we associate it with the person's birthday and gift giving. Gestalt theory is accessed to demonstrate contextual dependence in the interpretation of symbols, signs and indices. It is a visual equivalent of Wyer and Srull's (1985) cognitive associative processing model. The strength and duration of association are also important as reported in clinical findings in post traumatic stress disorder (e.g., Bryant, 1994, Shapiro, 1989a, 1989b).

Language and thought are frequently related in the literature (e.g., Brodkey, 1992; Cambourne, 1988; Vygotsky, 1986; Goodman, 1985, 1967; Whorf, 1956; Sapir, 1949). My professional knowledge, practice and experience of Rational Emotive Therapy (Kidman, 1988, 1986; Ellis & Harper, 1979), Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (Shapiro, 1989a, 1989b) and hypnotic phenomena (e.g., Rossi, 1986) demonstrate an intimate relationship between thought, language and emotion (affect).

Whole Language Theory

Whole Language offers an "inside out" perspective of literacy teaching and learning which, like rituals, can be "[l]ooked at from the symbolic 'inside out' (rather than the functionalist 'outside in')" (Munn, no date, in Doty, 1986:72). It is an open-ended approach with no preconceived outcomes which allows for the construction of multiple meanings on cognitive, behavioural and affective levels peculiar to the individual. Literacy, as approached by Whole Language practitioners, again like rituals,

can be seen as a symbolic intercom between the level of cultural thought and complex cultural meanings on the one hand, and that of social action and immediate event [such as reading and writing], on the other (Munn, no date, in Doty, 1986:72).

Psycholinguistic Theory

From psycholinguistics we now understand literacy practices in terms of how to accurately describe language, readability, methodological approaches to studying language, and linguistic sensitizing. In-built cue systems detect patterns in language, among other features, assisting children to develop language which is adequate for their needs insofar as expressing their thoughts and making meaning (e.g., Smith, 1973; Goodman, 1967).

RESEARCH DESIGN

By longitudinally examining the naturally occurring acculturation processes within a defined community and in individual families, within that community, it may be possible to begin to better understand some of the complex dynamics associated with the construction of literacy in the classroom during the first three years of schooling. The purpose of the research demands human-as-instrument using qualitative methods and building on tacit knowledge to develop a grounded theory involving negotiated outcomes leading to case reports which are both idiographically interpreted and tentatively applied (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

METHODOLOGY

Naturalistic methodology is often incorrectly criticized by experimentalists for its lack of rigour. This is not surprising as experimentalists break one of their

fundamental rules of research when pronouncing such judgements on naturalistic methodology by attempting to observe one phenomenon (i.e., naturalistic methodology) and then using a measure appropriate to a different set of phenomena (e.g., quantitative/experimental methodology) to judge what they have observed (Ref.: Anastasi, 1988).

In practice, naturalistic methodology allows all participants the flexibility to be themselves and to mutually relate without a significant imposition of expectations from either the researcher or the other participants. This is a critical consideration when one is interested in real dynamics in real situations such as in a classroom. It is possible that the manipulative approaches to research are essentially relics of former generations' need to control and manipulate an apparently confusing world and are inconsistent with the demands of a Super-symbolic Information Age and a predicted powershift (Toffler, 1990). This need to control and manipulate one's existence and those around them is consistent with calls for Standardized Testing of literacy skills and is a common human tendency when chaos reigns (cp Miller, 1981, 1985, 1987, 1990a, 1990b; Beattie, 1989a, 1989b; Killinger, 1991). Pusey (1991) believes that inevitably such desire to control and manipulate, results in the breakdown of the fabric of our society. Economic rationalism fails to consider all issues in full context, instead it focuses on a limited range of issues. Pusey (1991) demonstrates this destructive process with the breakdown of the social fabric in Australia following economic rationalism in Australian politics in the 1980s. Pusey's (1991) insights raise ethical issues regarding control and maintenance of the social fabric in the educational setting, coupled with stakeholders' demands it would have hardly been appropriate for this study to attempt to use an imposed methodology on participants. To this end a naturalistic paradigm using an inferential constructivist approach was the only acceptable methodology (Ref.: Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

A major paradigm shift is occurring in the late Twentieth Century (McGartland & Polgar, 1994a, 1994b; Guba, 1990; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Glaser & Stauss, 1967). Previously, stakeholders were never consulted. They were expected generally to participate only as required by the researcher. Conventional methodology has reflected these attitudes. As with large successful organizations (Ref.: Cross, et al, 1994; Hammer & Champy, 1993; Pfeffer, 1992), stakeholders in research and,

more specifically, in any consumable process, such as education, deserve and are now demanding their right to participate in any decision making or evaluation processes which will affect them. Stakeholders are demanding decisions be made and evaluations conducted in full context on a situation-by-situation basis and judgements are expected to be made relevant to everyday practice. Conventional methodology cannot meet these demands (Ref.: McGartland & Polgar, 1994a, 1994b). Objectivity is being questioned on two levels: Is it really attainable and is it really desirable or even useful if it is attainable? A more dynamic paradigm is being sought. One which is inclusive and not intrusive and manipulative. One that is determined by the stakeholders co-operatively using a constructivist paradigm: Naturalistic Inquiry (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Naturalistic research in the classroom needs to be as minimally disruptive as possible. In other words the researcher needs to actively become part of the classroom scene in the eyes of the children and the teachers. Classroom observations need to be corroborated (triangulated) with those of the teachers and parents and, where appropriate, with those of the children.

OUTCOME OF THE STUDY

A grounded theory is developed (and presented in this thesis) of how young children use their acculturated knowledge of the world to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom. This study posits classroom literacy practices in young children involve the meaningful patterning of complex data into useful information. Triangulating embedded symbolic patterns inherent in acculturations, children's responses during the construction of literacy (including the teacher's and my observations) are used to provide an understanding of how young children's literacy practices in the classroom are developed from the cross-situational (i.e., intercontextual) transfer of embedded symbolic information between home and school.

In summary, this study was devised to explore a more theoretically useful way of considering young children's literacy practices in the classroom that ultimately benefits the child. The focus being somewhat broadened from short sightedness of the classroom and what happens in it to how young

children use their acculturated (i.e., derived from their intergenerational family and school acculturations) knowledge of the world during the construction of literacy in the classroom.

With this in mind, this study describes the role of the family and school acculturations in developing highly transferable symbolic-analytic skills within the individual child. These information skills provide the means for the child to approach, pattern and respond to literacy related activities in the classroom during the first three years of school. Specifically, this study defines literacy as a transient, idiosyncratic Gestalt, which is a by product of constructions of meaning from symbolic and embedded symbolic information in textual data. This definition encompasses a broader perspective of how intimately, at an embedded symbolic level, home and school may be linked when a child approaches the construction of literacy at school.

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AS PRESENTED IN THIS THESIS

The study, as presented in this thesis, may be viewed as consisting of two sections (see Table 1.5). This presentation is consistent with the way in which information is organized and presented throughout this thesis. The two sections are:

- The Accession and Patterning of the Data; and
- The Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation of the Results.

Table 1.5: Contents of the two sections which comprise this thesis

<div>>>>></div> <div>ACCESSION AND PATTERNING THE DATA</div> <div>>>>></div>	<div>>>>></div> <div>Chapter 1: Introduction</div> <div>Chapter 2: A review of literature</div> <div>Chapter 3: The research process</div> <div>>>>></div>
<div>>>>></div> <div>ANALYSIS, SYNTHESIS AND EVALUATION OF THE RESULTS</div> <div>>>>></div>	<div>>>>></div> <div>Chapter 4: The processes of analysis</div> <div>Chapter 5: Analysis of results</div> <div>Chapter 6: Discussion</div> <div>>>>></div>

ACCESSING AND PATTERNING THE DATA

The first section I have called the *Accessing and Patterning the Data* because in it I present information which was derived from purposively accessing and meaningfully patterning the vast interrelated data base (see Figure 1.3) of the study which connected me with another data base (via Whole Language Theory) in the area of methodology. This methodology data base was then purposively accessed and meaningfully patterned to operationalize and monitor the study using the techniques and processes of Naturalistic Inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The *Accessing and Patterning the Data* section includes the background, rationale, aim, conceptual and theoretical articulation and methodological considerations for the study.

Within the *Accessing and Patterning the Data* section there are three chapters. These chapters, Chapters One, Two and Three, provide the background, conceptual, theoretical and methodological bases for the study. Chapter One presents an overview of the breadth and depth of issues relevant to the study. These are discussed in terms of the embedded symbolic nature of our experiences and the information we use to order those experiences and to make meaning. In Chapter Two aspects of the relevant theoretical perspectives are connected to show consistent and meaningful patterns which are useful for our understanding of literacy for the 1990s and the Twenty First Century.

Arguments for highly transferable symbolic-analytic skills relevant to literacy presented in Chapters One and Two are brought together in Chapter Three where congruence between theory and practice is translated into justification of the methodological approach used. Underlying assumptions and the implementation of a naturalistic paradigm are considered in response to the onset of a Super-symbolic Information Age. This Age requires flexibility, purposive accession, meaningful patterning, use and Responsive Evaluation that use of information and communication skills of a high order for all participants.

ANALYSIS, SYNTHESIS AND EVALUATION OF RESULTS

The second section I have called the *Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation of the Results* because in it I present the processes of analysing, sythesizing the results of my research and evaluating the efficacy of my analysis and synthesis within the framework provided in the first three chapters.

The *Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation of the Results* section includes Chapters Four, Five and Six. These chapters include my processes of analysis of information provided for the three Case Studies (Chapter Four) and the results of that analysis (Chapter Five) and concludes with a discussion of those results in terms of the research question, stated aim and theoretical orientations of the study within the futurologists' conceptual framework relevant to the understanding of literacy at the onset of the Twenty First Century (Chapter Six).

The embedded symbolic nature of acculturations of the individual intergenerational family units and the school is described. Acculturated patterns of responses are ascribed to the making of meaning in the classroom, by three young children during their first three years of school, when they are constructing literacy. As with the theoretical derivations of the study, each unit of analysis is connected with the others to create a new, thick description for the construction of literacy in the classroom during the first three years of formal schooling.

Chapter Six concludes the study with a full discussion of the conceptual and theoretical issues raised about the nature of literacy and literacy practices, their assessment and evaluation, the efficacy of the study and suggestions for future research. In essence it is a record of a Responsive Evaluation of the research as this chapter evolved as other chapters were being written (rather than after the earlier chapters).

The thesis in its entirety is an answer to my research question: How do young children use knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses to the construction of literacy? However, it is this chapter which synergizes or crystallizes that answer. In the process, a grounded theory is presented of acculturated meaning making in the development of idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy. In true

methodological congruence, a circular position is established as further questions are raised about the implications of these findings for the construction and practice of literacy in the classroom and future research.

CHAPTER 2: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In a Super-symbolic era the same knowledge can be used by many different users at the same time and it can generate more knowledge. "It is inherently inexhaustible and non-exclusive ... if the shift toward knowledge-capital is real, the capital itself is increasingly 'unreal' - it consists largely of symbols that represent nothing more than other symbols inside the memories and thoughtware of people and computers" (Toffler, 1990:61-62).

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I provide a synthesis of different approaches to literacy within the context of the onset of a Super-symbolic Information Age (Toffler, 1990) in which knowledge derived from embedded symbolic information will be the currency of power. I explain how to recognize embedded symbolic information which is of specific importance to the construction of literacy and broach the need to redefine literacy within a symbolic framework. Relevant theoretical perspectives in the literature are connected and synthesised to show consistent and meaningful patterns in the child's experience. Recognition of embedded symbolic information and how young children use this type of information in different contexts may be useful for understanding the dynamics of embedded symbolic information inherent in the construction of literacy in the 1990s and the Twenty First Century.

How do young children use knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom? Several major theoretical perspectives form the literature data base of this study, and specifically this chapter (see Table 2.1). Together, they provide an understanding of literacy development in young children. Current issues addressed include the teaching, learning, assessment, evaluation and long term applications of literacy in the context of predictions of the onset of a Super-symbolic Information Age.

Table 2.1: An outline of my latest synthesis of the literature and the order in which it is presented in this chapter

DATA POOL	INFORMATION BASE	CATEGORY OF KNOWLEDGE
INTRODUCTION	a. Purpose of this chapter	i. To provide a synthesis of different approaches to literacy ii. To describe the onset of a Super-symbolic Information Age in which knowledge derived from embedded symbolic information will be the currency of power
LITERATURE BASE	b. Theories of initial development of literacy	i. An overview of theoretical approaches to the study of literacy ii. Interactive-compensatory Theory iii. Genre Theory iv. Whole Language Theory
	c. Current issues in literacy in Australia	i. Accountability in teaching and learning of literacy ii. Literacy and work iii. Literacy assessment & evaluation iv. Predictions of future literacy needs
RECOGNIZING EMBEDDED SYMBOLIC INFORMATION	d. Nature of symbolism	i. Embedded symbolic information inherent in acculturation processes ii. Embedded symbolic information inherent in the construction of literacy
SYMBOLIC- ANALYTIC SKILLS AND LITERACY	e. Nature of symbolic-analytic skills	i. Immersion ii. Demonstration iii. Expectation iv. Responsibility v. Approximation vi. Employment vii. Feedback

(cont.)

Table 2.1 (cont.)

DATA POOL		INFORMATION BASE		CATEGORY OF KNOWLEDGE
DEFINING LITERACY FOR A SUPER-SYMBOLIC INFORMATION AGE	-> ->	f. Problems with current definitions	-> ->	i. Foci of current definitions ii. Need for literacy to be redefined for a Super-symbolic Information Age
	-> ->	g. Towards redefining literacy for a Super-symbolic Information Age	-> ->	i. The role of context in defining literacy ii. An omnibus definition of literacy for a Super-symbolic Information Age
SUMMARY OF MY REVIEW OF LITERATURE	->		-> ->	

LITERATURE BASE

The diverse and ultimately futuristic literature base of this study is specifically applied to the Australian context. The status of extant theories of literacy and current issues are brought together in light of future predictions for literacy requirements. Future predictions regarding literacy needs are closely tied to the nature of work which is rapidly changing (Reich, 1993; Dawkins, 1988, 1990a, 1990b, 1991, 1992). On each reading of the literature I arrived at a different interpretation and hence a new understanding. The "final" illumination of the literature has resulted in another way of describing the idiosyncratic construction of literacy in young children within the classroom context. As it is presented, the literature forms part of the evolving data for the study. It has a purposive and interactive relationship with the data from each of the Case Studies. Initially, the literature provided a framework for conceptualizing the study. Subsequently, the data provided a framework and purpose for interpreting the literature which further assisted in conceptualizing and interpreting the data and so on. In many ways these words on paper are a two dimensional (symbolic) representation of a dynamic multifaceted multidimensional phenomenon.

As stated above, the literature which informs this study derives from several sources. Some of these form the foundation for a review of the literature

while others are interwoven into a resynthesis of the literature. Those which form the foundation are discussed below. They are:

- Theories of the development of literacy;
- Current issues in literacy in Australia; and
- Predictions of future literacy needs.

THEORIES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF LITERACY

Different theoretical approaches are based on different assumptions of what constitutes the “starting point”, the process of and preferred outcomes for the teaching and learning of literacy. However, the arbitrary nature of this division is evident with the Whole Language approach advocated by Cambourne (1988). In this section I present relevant theoretical approaches to the development of literacy in Australia.

An overview of theoretical approaches to the development of literacy

Theories of literacy development currently relevant in Australia can be arbitrarily divided into three main theoretical approaches: Interactive-compensatory Theory (e.g., Coltheart, 1990, 1979; Stanovich, 1980); Genre Theory (e.g., Weightman, 1991; Christie, 1990) and Whole Language Theory (e.g., Cambourne, 1988; Smith, 1988, 1978).

Proponents of the Interactive-compensatory approach argue that higher order functioning will compensate for deficiencies in lower order functioning. This is the compensatory aspect of this theory (Beck, 1990; Stanovich, 1980). According to Stanovich (1993/1994, 1980), a child needs to be able to sound out phonemes and graphemes and build up a word bank. He claims this process enables the child to develop word recognition and word decoding skills for use during the reading of written text. This approach favours, a close “exegesis” of the text letter by letter, matching and blending graphemes and phonemes to produce the correct word from which meaning is then derived. Stanovich (1993/1994) further claims this model of literacy development demonstrates that children who are good readers develop efficient outside-in skills which then require little attention during the process of reading written text. As a result, according to Stanovich (1993/1994, 1980) attention can be given to thinking and comprehension.

The genre group, advocates for social justice in autonomous literacy through access and equity to the commodity of literacy. Genrists specifically target accession skills (e.g., Weightman, 1991; Christie, 1990) in the belief that access means power (Christie, 1990). The underlying assumptions of this group are that "[t]o learn to use the language of one's culture is to learn a basic resource both for functioning within it and for changing it" (Christie, 1990:19). Access to literacy is seen as the key to developing higher order functioning and thus intellectual, social and economic autonomy. Street (1984) and Kaestle (1991) challenge the truth of this notion on the basis that access does not mean power, rather, they suggest, it is what one is permitted and able to do with literacy, once achieved, that brings power.

The Whole Language approach argues that critical to the development of literacy are the child's experience of the world, their intuitions about literacy and predictions, based on expectations during, literacy practices (e.g., Cambourne, 1988; Goodman, 1985, 1967; Walshe, 1981). From this base a child can move through selective aspects of print to derive meaning while sounding out and evaluating pronunciation of words in a whole sentence within a meaningful story.

From each of the above approaches emerges a common finding: The consistent difference between effective and ineffective users of literacy (usually stated as "readers") is the accession and application of appropriate strategies for the task (see Christie, 1990; Gillet & Bernard, 1989; Cambourne, 1988; Webster, 1986; Stanovich, 1980).

If language is an individual, a social, and a communal possession as suggested by Halliday (1978) it follows that literacy, an aspect of language, is also individual, social and communal. The various theories of initial literacy development place different emphasises on the individual, social and communal aspects of literacy. These emphases vary according to how the phenomena associated with literacy development are viewed. The relative contributions to literacy of each of the three broad approaches to language study, shown in Figure 2.1, are discussed.

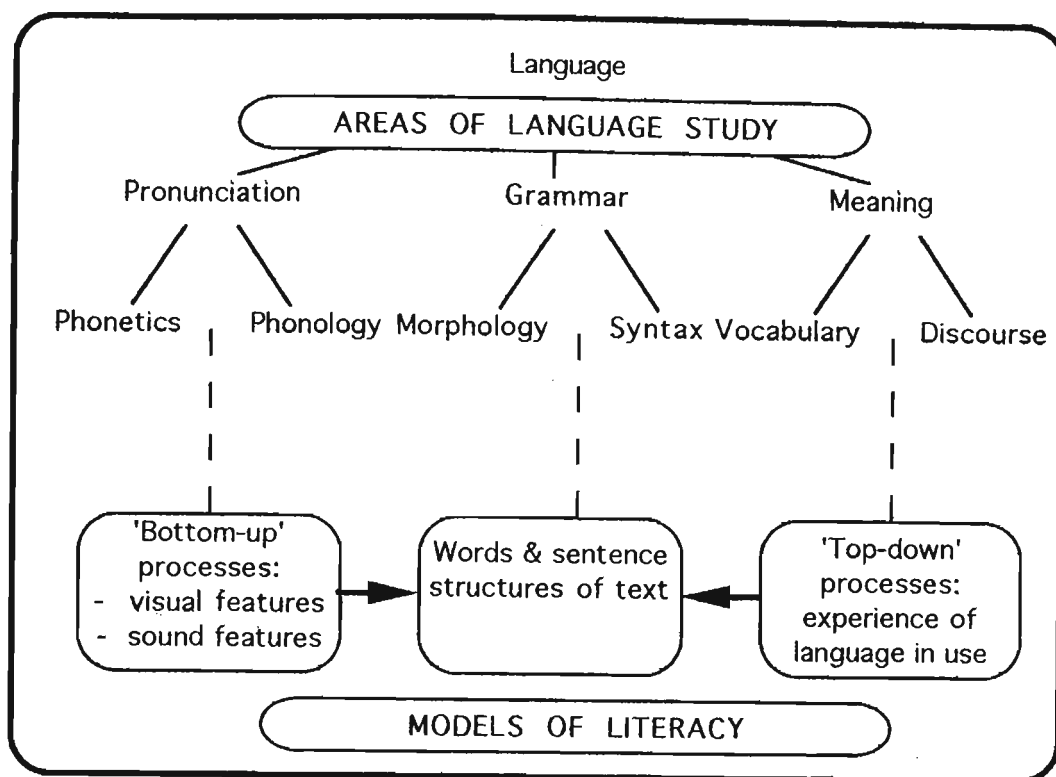
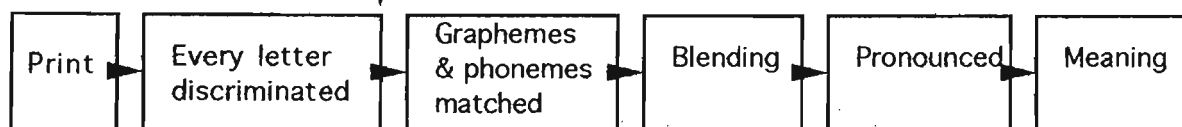


Figure 2.1: Three areas of language study in relation to models of literacy (adapted from Webster, 1986:108)

Cambourne's (1979:82) diagrammatic representation of two models of reading in Figure 2.2 demonstrates the differences between extreme approaches to literacy which expect the child to work from their own Information System (inside-out/top-down) and those which do not (outside-in/bottom-up). If we are entering a Super-symbolic Information Age then, it seems, we cannot afford to separate the individual from their most potent resource: Their Information System.

Outside-in model of reading



Inside-out model of reading

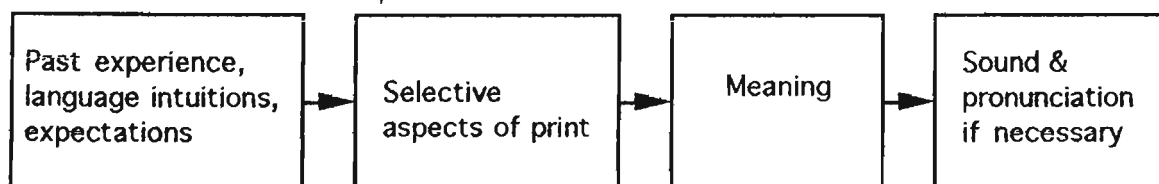


Figure 2.2: Two approaches to reading (redrawn from Cambourne, 1979:82).

Culture is primarily communicated at a symbolic level (Carey, 1988; Leech, 1976). If this is so, then the symbolic relevance of the Whole Language approach may provide a means of achieving a literacy which is personally relevant and globally useful in a Super-symbolic Information Age. A Whole Language approach encourages the individual child to access and use their acculturated knowledge of the world during the construction of literacy in the classroom (Webster, 1986; Winch, 1985). How this works is that, in a Whole Language classroom, the child uses real language in real situations (Cambourne, 1988). If real language is culturally bound (e.g., Baker & Davies, 1993; Freebody, 1993, 1992; Harste, Woodward & Burke, 1988; Harste, Burke & Woodward, 1983) then real language used in real situations in Whole Language classrooms must also be culturally bound. As we enter a Super-symbolic Information Age, Toffler (1990) predicts greater communication will occur at symbolic and embedded symbolic levels. Already questions are being asked about whose culture and whose literacy is to be taught and learned (e.g., Connor, 1992a, 1992b; Edwards, 1992). This thesis heavily favours a Whole Language approach to literacy as it offers access to embedded symbolic information not readily available in either of the other two approaches (i.e., Interactive-compensatory approach and the genre approach).

Interactive-compensatory Theory

An extreme form of the outside-in/bottom-up approach is no longer used in Australian schools during the 1990s. However, the Interactive-compensatory approach advocated by Stanovich (1980) frequently underpins literacy teaching and learning in Australia and especially in the field of special education (Ref.: the 1990 N.S.W. Conference on Learning Disabilities all key speakers and all but two presenters, were all proponents of an Interactive-compensatory approach to literacy). Stanovich (1990) suggests that of three generic areas of psychological processing during the acquisition of literacy, (i.e., use of context cues, visual processing and phonological processing) phonological processing is the one which requires most attention as differences in phonological awareness distinguish good readers from poor readers (Stanovich, 1993/1994; 1980). This orientation separates oral and spoken language on the basis that oral language is embedded in context but there is no external referent, beyond the text on the page, in written language (Jardine, 1990; Stanovich, 1990, 1980). For written language the focus, in

this approach to literacy, is on the surface features of word structure and letter sound. A perception of the "differences" between the two modes of language is understandable given these authors' assumptions about what constitutes literacy and literacy learning. There is no apparent means or even any perceived need for the child to access embedded symbolic information to derive or construct meaning from the text. The required information is supposedly inherent in the written word on the page (Beck, 1990) and through the internal process of "automatic spreading activation" (Stanovich (1980). Beck (1990) claims learning does occur in context for only 3-5% of children and that 25% of children do not benefit at all from the use of contextual information when learning to read. Despite refuting the need for a child to access meaning beyond the text (Beck, 1990), in the Interactive-compensatory approach to literacy, meaning is achieved through an unconscious process of "automatic-spreading activation" through which memories of information related to material being read are automatically accessed to make meaning (Stanovich, 1980). Stanovich (1980) specifically describes "automatic-spreading activation" as a process by which the individual makes connections, at an unconscious level, within their memory store, to construct meaning in the text which is being read. It is this process, Stanovich (1980) maintains, that makes the need for external context cues during reading unnecessary.

Genre Theory

According to the Genrists perspective, personal autonomy is acquired through the teaching of

functionally relevant grammar ... where the object [is] primarily to focus on the ways in which linguistic terms are used to build up meaning (Christie, 1990:19).

Access to and learning to control different genres is believed by Genrists such as Hammond (1990) to be the means to school success and subsequent success and autonomy throughout one's life. However, Fingeret (1990) suggests access to power through literacy does not equate with a redistribution of that power to the poor and disenfranchised. Street (1992, 1985) provides evidence that this is not the case and accuses "autonomists" of socially engineering who has access to what and when and of not producing progress, individual liberty, social mobility or wealth which they claim to do. This approach appears to focus strongly on the development of

a repertoire of "how tos" for the different genres one is likely to encounter (Rosser & Albion, 1992; Bull & Anstey, 1991). Toffler (1990) cautions that with the onset of the Super-symbolic Information Age no repertoire of information will be sufficient for our needs. Reich (1993) suggests symbolic-analytic skills which are highly transferable from one situation to the next over time will be essential to achieving a satisfactory level of participation and hence power in the new Age.

Whole Language Theory

It seems that the Whole Language approach to literacy promises a more flexible, empowering approach to teaching and learning literacy for a Super-symbolic Information Age. It may have the ability to avoid inequitable approaches to teaching literacy such as those raised by Connor (1992a, 1992b) and Edwards (1992). The core aspect of Whole Language theory as posited by Cambourne (1988) describes eight essential conditions for learning relevant to the "acquisition of literacy" in the Whole Language classroom context (see Figure 2.3). According to Cambourne (1988) engagement is essential for learning as embedded in the child's notion and practice of engagement with a demonstration are the following beliefs:

- I am a potential 'doer' or 'performer' of these demonstrations I'm observing;
- Engaging with these demonstrations will further the purposes of my life; and
- I can engage and try to emulate without fear of physical or psychological hurt if my attempt is not fully 'correct' (p33).

Cambourne (1988) further posits that children need to be immersed in textual materials and have demonstrated to them how they may be constructed and used within a natural holistic context. Adults should expect children to become competent readers and writers who are able to take responsibility for what they learn, how they learn and when. Further, his model suggests literacy should occur in practical, useful ways to which children are able to relate to and use (including their "approximations") in their daily lives. The process is enhanced, according to Cambourne (1988:33) through "relevant, appropriate, timely, readily available, non-threatening" and unconditional "'feedback' from exchanges with more knowledgeable 'others'".

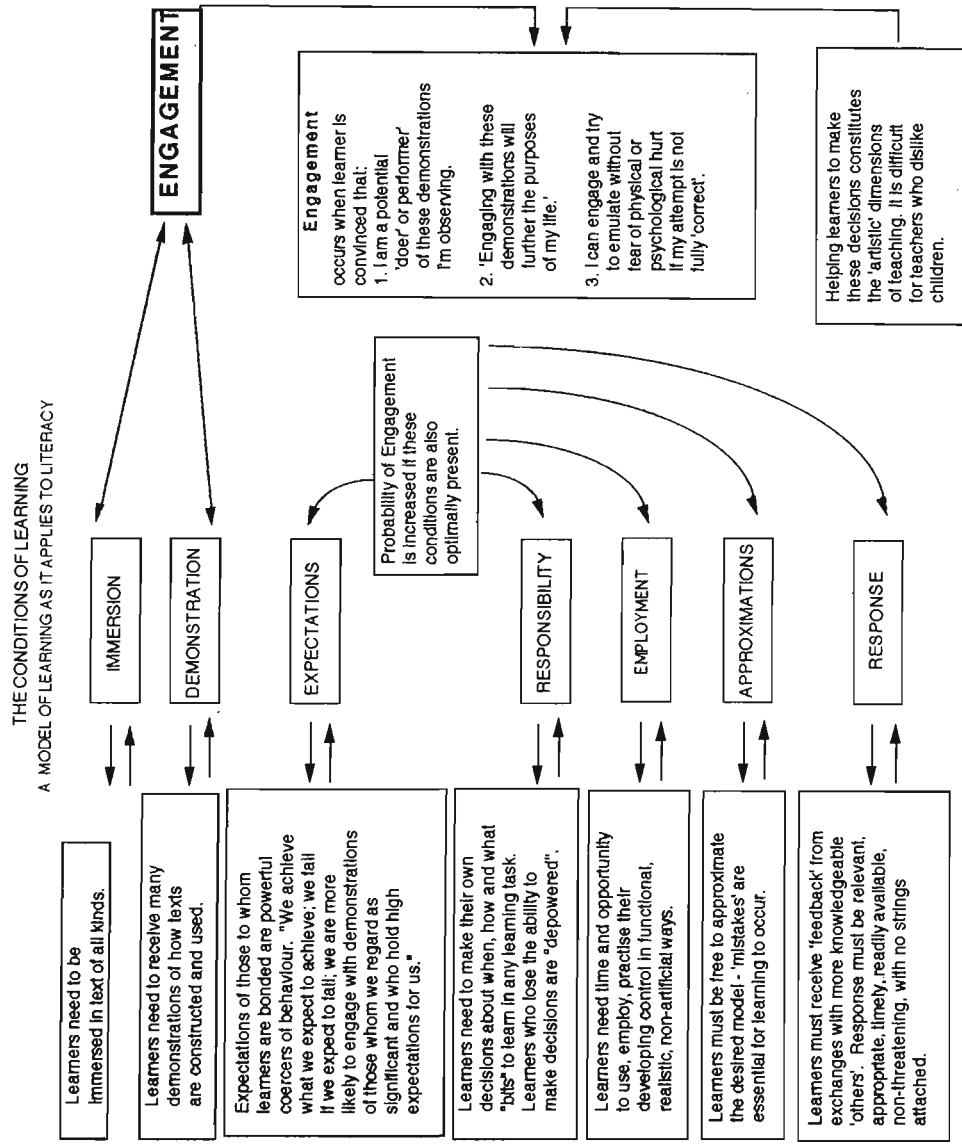


Figure2.3: Cambourne's (1988) Conditions of Learning relevant to the "acquisition of literacy" in the context of the Whole Language classroom

CURRENT ISSUES IN LITERACY IN AUSTRALIA

The above theories of literacy originate from different ideologies. The different ideologies produce different definitions of literacy (Ref.: Scribner & Cole, 1988). A politically driven debate over what constitutes an adequate level of literacy has produced some insightful shifts in emphasis in the teaching and purposes of literacy.

A series of papers released by the then Federal Minister for Education, Employment and Training, and more recently, Federal Treasurer, John Dawkins between 1988 and 1992 (e.g., Dawkins, 1988, 1990a, 1990b, 1991, 1992) demonstrate the emphasis placed on connecting what happens in schools to what happens post school. The Employment, Education and Training Act of 1988 enshrined these connections between school and post school education in Law. Literacy was central to Dawkins' plans for an integration of school-post school training-industry as a force of economic power for Australia as a nation. This connection has led to pressure for a parallel emphasis on what constitutes value in literacy teaching and learning in Australian schools (Marsh, 1994). Christie (1990) provides an example of such a fear driven emphasis:

Literacy in today's world is a very different thing from what it was either at the turn of the Century or even mid-Century. The contemporary world demands a level of sophistication in literacy greater than at any time in the past. ...

To leave school today without an appropriate level of literacy is to be impoverished indeed, for those without the capacity to go on and secure some kind of additional education or training will be competing for a rapidly diminishing pool of unskilled jobs, and in other ways effectively disempowered and prevented from participating fully in community life. It is in this sense, I suggest, that illiterate persons will be 'shut out'. The relationship between illiteracy, social alienation, failure and poverty is too acute to ignore (p21)

Accountability in teaching and learning of literacy

The teaching and learning of literacy is one of the most politically sensitive educational issues on the Australian community's agenda in the mid 1990s. Debates rage about accountability of teaching methods used in schools complete with highly vocal catch cries such as "Back to Basics" from parents and teachers. The "Back to Basics" proponents are advocating a return to more decontextualized phonics or functional systemic linguistics approaches to literacy teaching and learning (Ref.: Marsh, 1994; Warren, 1994). Such an emphasis supports the call for *en masse* Standardized Testing of literacy

skills. Meanwhile, advocates of contextualized Whole Language learning have been researching ways in which accountability can be demonstrated as appropriate for a Whole Language approach to literacy and useful in the classroom as well as scientific (Cambourne & Turbill, 1994; Cambourne, Turbill & Dal Santo, 1994). These ways of understanding literacy teaching and learning arise out of the nature of their ideologically different beliefs about literacy.

Nature of beliefs about literacy

There are five frequently stated beliefs about the nature of literacy and its role in society and social change (Kaestle, 1991)

- Literacy is uniformly and unequivocally tied to progress;
- Literacy for good, or ill, is always expanding;
- Changes in literacy principally causes other social changes;
- Changes in literacy are principally effects of other social changes; and
- Expanding schooling correlates with expanding literacy.

Kaestle (1991) challenges these beliefs on the basis that such generalizations do not describe the local situation within single communities and says

the history of efforts by outsiders to acquire literacy suggests the relevance of family and group values (p30)

Historically, according to Kaestle (1991), literacy has not always accompanied progress. At times literacy has been seen as not being necessary such as during the Industrial Revolution when literate workers were definitely not necessary. At other times during the course of human history literacy has been facilitated by progress such as with the invention of the printing press, workplace demands during the Twentieth Century, and the Church. The advent of the 1662 Prayer Book in the Church of England would have had a similar effect to today's workplace demands for literacy (Kaestle, 1991).

Literacy and work

Toffler (1990) and Reich (1993) both predict a change in the nature of work which will become increasingly symbolic as we enter the Twenty First Century. Following from the Dawkins reforms in the late 1980s and early 1990s, issues of access to and equity in employment are currently viewed in terms of functional literacy that allows the individual to participate (i.e., function) in work (Marsh, 1994).

Access and equity

Clearly the drive behind Christie's (1990) genre theory of literacy is one of access to satisfying work and equity in work practices for students who will be entering the workforce in the early part of the Twenty First Century. However, in doing so, she also touches on one significant point at issue for literacy in the next Century, that of the dynamic nature of textual data:

[T]he volume of print materials increases year by year.

But the issue is not merely one of the increasing volume of publications produced over the years. It is also, and perhaps more importantly, a matter of both the increasing range of written genres a complex culture such as ours produces, and the increasingly varied uses of written language through those genres. ...

As, yet, no reliable data have been amassed about the range of written genres people are required to write to participate in the modern world, and major research work is needed here. As our culture evolves, so too do the many forms of language within which its ways of thinking, of working, and of negotiating and dealing with experience are encoded (p22)

It is this very aspect of the changing nature of literacy that makes a purely genre approach to literacy teaching and learning unlikely to achieve its stated aims and goals. Put briefly, in the coming decades, the types and number of genres may vary moment by moment according to specific contexts (Ref.: Toffler, 1990; Reich, 1993, and Wurman, 1989). It seems inconceivable that any amount of "direct instruction" (Christie, 1990) about genres extant in the 1990s is going to prepare a person for this highly dynamic situation predicted in the years ahead. The prospect of such a fluid society has important ramifications for a minimal of functional level of literacy that will permit full participation in all society has to offer.

Functional literacy

Functional literacy is difficult to define as what one person considers functional another does not. Different situations require different levels and perhaps types of literacy. Similarly, different times also have different literacy demands.

According to Christie (1990), rather than achieving a minimal level of literacy, we need to excel in literacy if we are to be independent and participate effectively in a democratic society. However, if the futurologists are correct in their predictions, the level of literacy skills required for functional literacy today will certainly not be adequate in the Twenty First Century. Well before the onset of the Twenty First Century and the new Age, Stanovich (1980) and Cambourne (1988) both report the phenomenon of the "richer get richer and the poorer get poorer" in their literacy skills. Functional literacy may also be considered on another level. The gap between the haves and the have nots is not only in terms of an operating level of literacy skills. Cambourne (1992) believes those with quite advanced literacy skills are choosing not to use them chiefly because they abhor the whole process of constructing literacy. They avoid it whenever possible. He calls such reluctant highly literate individuals "a-literate". Again, given the predicted acceleration in the dynamic nature of literacy these people, to whom Cambourne (1992) is referring, will soon be classified as 'shut outs' in Christie's (1990) terms and the "have nots" by Stanovich (1993/1994, 1980) and Cambourne (1992) among others.

It seems almost inconceivable that a person could choose to be 'shut out' and I'm sure no amount of "direct instruction" advocated by both Christie (1990) and Stanovich (1993/1994, 1980) will correct such a pervasive negative attitude to literacy. Cambourne (1992), and others from a Whole Language perspective, suggest people do not see the need to use literacy and actively choose to be involved in things (probably including work) which requires a minimal amount of applying literacy-related skills. Clearly, the effort does not warrant the minimal satisfaction. These people, according to Cambourne (1988, 1992) have not learned the intimate role of literacy in enriching their lives because they have never had literacy constructed in a holistic, purposeful, meaningful way for them. If having skills and knowledge yet choosing not to use them despite the social and personal benefits to be gained from their application then we must ask: What is the point of having

such skills and knowledge? Relevant and useful assessment and evaluation of literacy-related skills is needed to address this issue.

Literacy assessment and evaluation

In the mid 1990s it seems the most frequently assumed and practiced way of assessing and evaluating literacy is through administering standardized tests (Marsh, 1994). However, as mentioned above, there are also attempts to provide assessment and evaluation of literacy which is sympathetic and supportive of a Whole Language perspective on literacy teaching and learning (e.g., Cambourne & Turbill, 1994).

Objective assessment and evaluation

The 1992 Literacy report to the International Education Association (IEA) cited Finland as the country with "the world's most literate students" (Richardson, 1992:181). Literacy was defined in terms of being able to "understand and use" various written *genres*. The (statistical) method by which students' literacy was assessed and evaluated was, we are assured rigorous:

The final testing which took place three or four months before the end of the school year in each country, was carried out after extensive trials of all items and questions in the participating countries. The survey was carried out in the period 1989-92.

Reading literacy was defined as the ability to understand and use those written language forms required by society and/or valued by the individual.

Children were tested on three aspects of literacy: narrative, expository, and documents.

Narrative was defined as continuous texts in which the writer's aim is to tell a story, whether fact or fiction; expository as continuous texts designed to describe, explain, or otherwise convey factual information or opinion to the reader; and documents as structured information displays presented in the form of charts, tables, maps, graphs, lists or sets of instructions (Richardson, 1992:181-182)

At present in Australia, there is pressure for governments to demonstrate accountability in literacy education. To this end, most States and Territories have adopted Standardized Testing for one or more years of primary school students. Cambourne and Turbill (1991) argue that this approach to literacy assessment and evaluation clearly takes the control of the curriculum out of the hands of the learners and teachers and places it firmly in the politicians'

arena.

Standardized Testing is assumed by some, such as Stanovich (1993/1994), to provide public domain knowledge which results in

a more humanized understanding of another individual, the intellectual motivation must be that by doing so I may gain a better (i.e., more accurate) view of the world (p289)

Stanovich (1993/1994) disputes the usefulness of any knowledge that is subjective or personalized which he claims

degrade the human intellect by creating conditions in which it is inevitably subjugated to an elite whose "personal" knowledge is not accessible to all (p287)

He objects strongly to "objective" assessment being labelled "dehumanized". Superficially, objectivity does not appear to "dehumanize", however, at an embedded symbolic level this is not the case. Objectivity by definition attempts to remove the humanness from observation in a manner not unlike some recently coined phrases such as "collateral damage" during a "conflict" which effectively lock out from society those who do not understand the deep social and cultural nuances of such profound words and phrases.

Objective assessment and evaluation used in Standardized Testing, according to Dilena & Leaker (1991:36), is likely to produce invalid or suspect information for the following reasons:

- Its very small sample size for a complex range of competencies;
- Background knowledge of the world is tested, as well as school learning; and
- Often test-taking skills are required as much as authentic reading and writing skills.

Dilena & Leaker (1991) and Cambourne and Turbill (1991, 1994), have strongly advocated for literacy assessment and evaluation to match the teaching-learning process in the classroom rather than consist of decontextualized materials, analyses and interpretations of results. Support for this approach to literacy assessment and evaluation is expressed by

Dilena & Leaker (1991:36) as follows:

We aim to teach the range of understandings and strategies that students need to succeed in a variety of different reading and writing. With such a complex curriculum we need assessment which goes beyond a narrow sampling of competencies. We need a complex monitoring of the complex achievements that students make in reading and writing (p36)

Responsive Evaluation

Responsive Evaluation as presented by Cambourne and colleagues (Ref.: Cambourne & Turbill, 1994) offers an integrated approach to literacy assessment, teaching, learning and evaluation. Cambourne & Turbill's (1994) model (see Figure 1.3) is based on teachers recognizing and articulating their beliefs in practice, observing learners' responses during the construction of literacy (among other classroom learning), analyzing and interpreting their data and negotiating an evaluation with the stakeholders (e.g., parents, child, teacher). This evaluation then drives the next teaching-learning-assessment-evaluation cycle.

Responsive Evaluation offers a dynamic approach to literacy assessment and evaluation which may be most suited to our future literacy needs.

Predictions of future literacy needs

Reich (1993) clearly predicts the world is rapidly becoming a "global village" in which nationalism will have no role. Participants will need to be able to move freely through world cultures. This will mean they will not be able to know or even understand the various differences in and between cultures but rather will need highly transferable skills which can be rapidly accessed to construct meaning at such high speeds they are barely noticed by the individual and may even occur automatically at a subconscious level. Reich (1993), Toffler (1990) and Wurman (1989) predict the nature of society, work and power will change more and more rapidly as we enter this new world. Toffler (1990:62) describes this new Age as an Age in which symbols "represent nothing more than other symbols inside the memories and thoughtware of people and computers": A Super-symbolic Information Age.

Super-symbolic Information Age

This new system for making wealth is totally dependent on the instant communication & dissemination of data, ideas, symbols, & symbolism. It is ... a super-symbolic economy ... (Toffler, 1990:25)

That literacy involves codes and symbols is not challenged. The order of letters in words are codes and the words are symbols of the thing or concept for which they stand. This thesis describes how young children use knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom. This involves intercontextual transference and subsequent accession of embedded symbolic knowledge of the world, learned as a result of their experiences as members of an intergenerational family unit (i.e., embedded symbolic information inherent in acculturation processes), during the construction of literacy in the classroom. Acculturation is symbol laden (i.e., rich in embedded symbolic information) and occurs at covert, overt, willing and unwilling levels during prolonged day to day interactions between members of the intergenerational family unit (Roberto, 1992; Guerin *et al*, 1987; Richardson, 1987; Hartman, 1979; Lieberman, 1979; Guerin, & Pendagast, 1976).

Toffler (1990) suggests our entire wealth will be built on our ability to use and manipulate symbols. Embedded symbolic information, which consists of knowledge conveyed by symbols that represent other symbols (Toffler, 1990), conveys cultural information that modifies Internal Information system of the individual (Wurman, 1989). Leech (1976) defines a symbol as something which stands for something by arbitrary association derived from cultural experiences and values. Literacy is a system of symbols arbitrarily assigned and ordered into coded information. Codes refer to the order in which something is presented and determine the symbolism involved. To some extent literacy has become synonymous with being able to read, write and understand those "static, passive ... symbols on a page" (Toffler, 1980:193) producing what Toffler calls a "frozen social memory" (Toffler, 1980:193) This "frozen social memory" is evidenced in the "Back to Basics" push for literacy which assumes a static manifestation of literacy (Ref.: Marsh, 1994; Graham & Tytler, 1993; Dawkins, 1990b). However, literacy requires the manipulation of symbols (words) of dynamic embedded symbols (arbitrary culturally imputed associations). Additionally, various codes (i.e., spellings; sentence structures; text structures) have to be deciphered and

double entendres and puns appreciated and interpreted (Wurman, 1989). This view of literacy clearly embeds it *within* the realm of the social and cultural fabric of society not as a controlling, manipulating tool but an integral social and cultural practice.

Society and literacy needs

Christie's (1990:21) claim that "illiteracy" is intimately related to "social alienation, failure and poverty" in such a way that is "too acute to be ignored" is not entirely supported historically in the literature:

The relation between literacy and economic success, straightforward as it may seem, is ... extremely complex, depending more on the social structure than on the acquisition of a particular skill that confers universal economic benefit (Kintgen *et al*, 1988:xiii).

However, what the literature (e.g., Reich, 1993; Cambourne, 1992; Toffler, 1990; Wurman, 1989; Kintgen *et al*, 1988; K. Goodman, 1985; Y. Goodman, 1988) does suggest is that the literate individual will be able to actively participate in society, not because they are literate *per se* but because they understand the deep social and cultural nuances of the society in which they live, work and play (i.e., socialize, see discussion on acculturation and socialization later in this chapter) as literate human beings. To suggest a literacy that allows an individual to control society and experience, as suggested by Christie (1990), is both dangerous and misleading. Literacy is not *the* tool to manipulate experience and society. It is a by product manifested during the process of living one's experience deeply embedded in the social and cultural nuances of the times. This is supported in the following quote from Cherry (1978:np, in Wurman, 1989:113).

The suggestion that words are symbols for things, actions, qualities, relationships, et cetera, is naive, a gross simplification. Words are slippery customers. The full meaning of a word does not appear until it is placed in its context, and the context may serve an extremely subtle function - as with puns or double entendre. And even then the 'meaning' will depend on the listener, upon the speaker, upon their entire experience of the language, upon their knowledge of one another, and upon the whole situation. Words do not 'mean things' in a one-to-one relation like a code.

To present and teach literacy as a code breaking exercise is to give a false impression of what it means to be literate. Perhaps this is what happens to a-literates (Ref.: Cambourne, 1992). The construction of literacy clearly involves, at the minimum, accessing and interpreting embedded symbolic

information based on one's knowledge of how the world works (Cherry, 1978 in Wurman, 1989).

The current dilemma is one in which all those involved feel pressure to demonstrate the efficacy of what they are doing now. However, what has been the future is rapidly becoming the "now" as we enter the latter half of the 1990s. Children entering school in the 1990s will enter the workforce in the next Century by which time our current notions of work will be well and truly redundant (Reich, 1993). We need to ensure our children do not end up the "shut outs" (Christie, 1990) or the "have nots" (Stanovich, 1993/1994, 1980; Cambourne, 1992, 1988) of the Twenty First Century. How we currently think about, teach and how we expect children to learn (and embrace) literacy will affect our nation for many decades to come. If we are to keep pace with our rapidly changing world we need to look ahead and be prepared to meet the literacy demands of a Super-symbolic Age now.

RECOGNIZING EMBEDDED SYMBOLIC INFORMATION

Embedded symbolic information is information which exists within other symbolic information. This information is socially and culturally defined (Toffler, 1990; Wurman, 1989) such as in acculturation (Minuchin, 1974). To some degree, and especially in a Super-symbolic Information Age, every unit of information carries information about social and cultural nuances of society. According to Reich (1993:229) "discovering patterns and meanings - is ... the very essence of symbolic analysis". To discover patterns and meanings in symbolic information, Reich (1993) suggests, one must be able to think abstractly (i.e., symbolically) using systems thinking, experimentation and collaboration.

NATURE OF SYMBOLISM

Leech (1976:9) distinguishes between three non-discrete "aspects of human behaviour":

- *natural biological activities of the human body* - breathing, heartbeat, metabolic process and so on;
- *technical actions*, which serve to alter the physical state of the world out there - digging a hole in the ground, boiling an egg;
- *expressive actions*, which either simply say something about the state of the world as it is, or else purport to alter it by metaphysical means

Like all human communication, literacy involves "expressive actions which operate as *signals, signs* and *symbols*" (Leech, 1976:9). Leech's model of communication is shown in Figure 2.4. A communication event is defined by Leech (1976:11) as any unit of communication". A communication unit is

[D]yadic (two-faced) in at least two senses:

- (i) There must always be two individuals: X, the 'sender', the originator of the expressive action, and Y, the 'receiver', the interpreter of the product of the expressive action. X and Y may be in the same place at the same time or they may not.
- (ii) The expressive action itself always has two aspects, simply because it transmits a message. On the one hand there is the action itself or the product of the action, the nodding of the head or the written letter, on the other there is the message which is encoded by the sender and decoded by the receiver.

Coded information can be arranged in one of five ways (Wurman, 1989) according to the information being sought:

- *Category*: The category to which it belongs (e.g., animal, mineral, vegetable);
- *Time*: Relative or real time (e.g., before, after, morning, evening);
- *Location*: Its location (e.g., north, south, above, below, first, last);
- *Alphabet*: Where it comes in the alphabet (e.g., A to Z; K-E); and
- *Continuum*: A continuum (e.g., shortest to tallest, oldest to youngest).

For example, the codes "d-o-g" becomes the symbol (dog) for a four legged creature which barks and when reordered becomes "g-o-d", the symbol (god) for a deity. The embedded symbolic information contained within even these simple arrangements of codes is enormous. The symbol of a dog encompasses symbols of different types, orders, colours, personalities, among others, of dogs. The task is to determine which symbol within a symbol, within a symbol ... is the most appropriate, useful and most likely intended. There is no systematic means of accessing these associations as this information is culturally defined by arbitrary association (Leech, 1976). This is one of the difficulties faced by the young child who is attempting to construct literacy for the first time. The question is, how do young children use knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their

family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom?

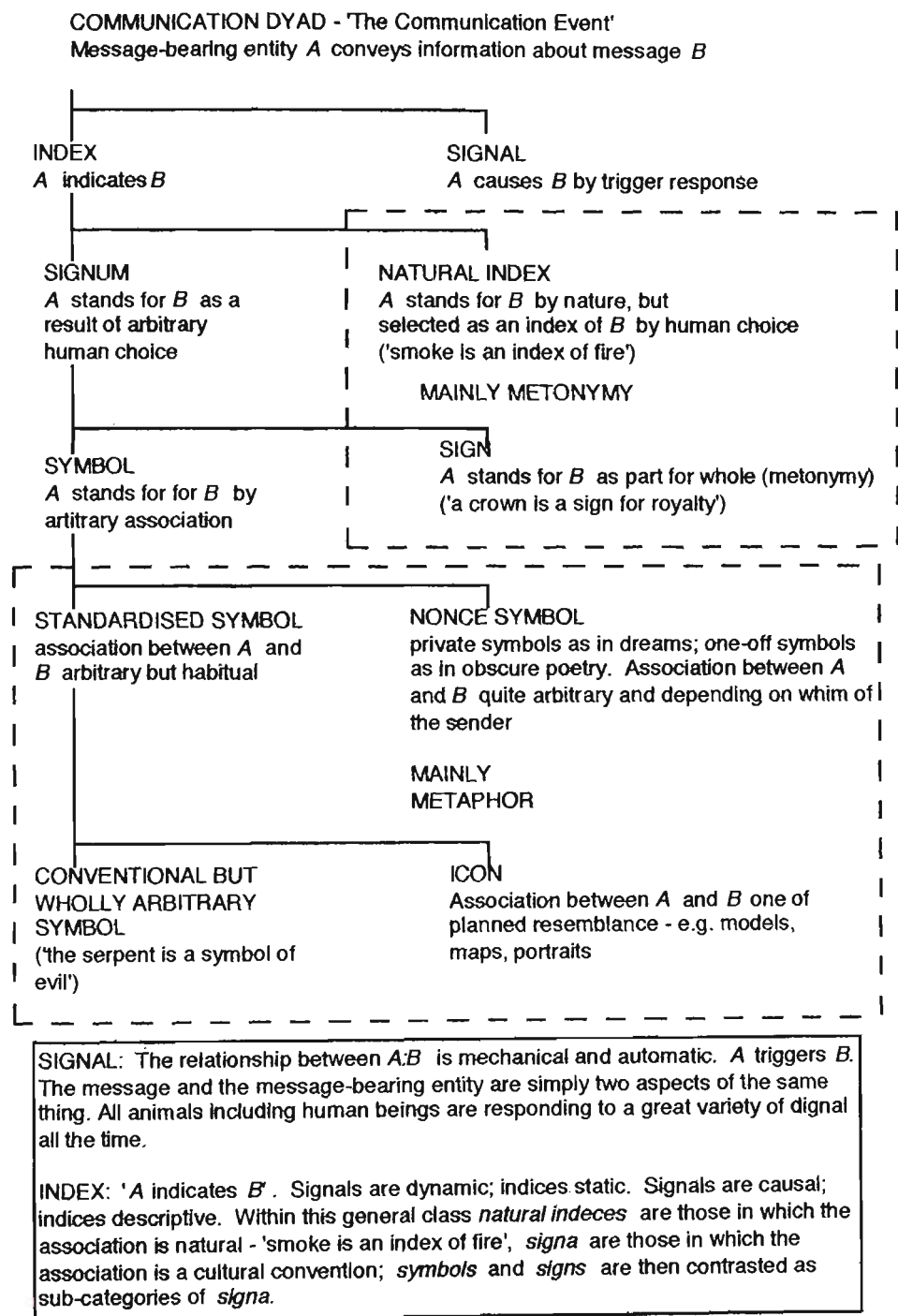


Figure 2.4: The communication process according to Leech (1976:12)

At birth, a child is completely ego-centric (Illingworth, 1983) and relies entirely on what Wurman (1989) terms Internal Information to make meaning of sensory input. This is manifested in the baby's basic activities of feeding, sleeping, excreting, comfort and stimulation. As the child grows, access to Conversational Information is gained through social interaction, usually with significant others. In traditional child development theory (cp Illingworth,

1983; Lezak, 1983), Conversational Information is heightened at about five or six weeks of age when a baby begins to smile and others respond accordingly encouraging further interaction which accesses the Conversational Information system. This system of information includes social rules and taboos regarding one's behaviour and interactions. Reference Information is accessible to the developing child only when they are becoming proficient in reading and writing. News Information can be accessed before Reference Information by listening to the television or radio and does not necessarily require skills in reading and writing. Access to the print media may be denied or limited if reading and writing skills are limited or absent altogether. Cultural Information may be imparted to each of the other Information systems and accessed through the process of acculturation. This will include some degree of embedded symbolic information.

Intergenerational family acculturation offers strong support for the notion of embedded symbolism in communication. Within families the same surface message will be given similar meanings (i.e., the family shares meanings) but to an outsider a different message may be derived (Roberto, 1992; Lieberman, 1979; Guerin & Pendagast, 1976; Minuchin, 1974). This concurs with Kaestle's (1991) observation (mentioned above) about the difficulties experienced by outsiders to develop literacy skills:

the history of efforts by outsiders to acquire literacy suggests the relevance of family and group values (p30)

Embedded symbolic information inherent in acculturation processes

An understanding of the dynamics of acculturation processes may offer insights into the current dilemma being experienced in Australia and elsewhere. Smith (1985:1-2) noted:

Researchers are discovering that in order to understand reading they must consider not just the eyes but also mechanisms of memory and attention, anxiety, risk-taking, the nature and uses of language, the comprehension of speech, interpersonal relations, sociocultural differences, learning in general and the learning of young children in particular

Acculturation processes involve the use and generation of embedded information in the form of beliefs, attitudes and values which underpin practices. Given that processing of embedded symbolic information will be of critical importance for operating in the new Age (Toffler, 1990), research into acculturation processes may become fundamental in facilitating our

understanding of how we come to use embedded symbolic information processes. Furthermore, given the increased global nature of our interactions (Reich, 1993), it seems we will need to be able to interact with individuals from many cultures within very short time frames in many different contexts. For this kind of world we need to encourage in our young children the relevant highly transferable symbolic-analytic skills of flexibility, accession, meaningful patterning, use and evaluation of information and communication skills of a high order inherent in their acculturated learning prior to school. The importance of the early childhood years has been the focus of Erickson's (1985) Early Learning Sets and Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Primary Developmental Context theories of child development. During these early years, children are believed to establish the basis for their life-long learning (Erickson, 1985; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). I suspect they offer a sound starting place for our literacy education because present in them (through acculturation processes) are the mandatory highly transferable symbolic-analytic skills for the new Age. However, to do this we firstly need to know how young children use their knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses to the construction of literacy in the classroom.

Intergenerational family acculturation provides us with a ready knowledge of how the world works (Minuchin, 1974). How this knowledge provides us with the means of interpreting our experiences at a deep level in a non-linear way is not well understood. Acculturation is a complex process of knowledge transmission within families and organizations. It is defined as the means by which beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices are willingly and unwillingly, overtly and covertly, verbally and non-verbally, communicated from one generation to another within families, communities and cultures. Acculturation includes the biological, intrapsychical and psychosocial aspects of an individual's experience thereby providing a rich source of meaning making for understanding of how the world works (Roberto, 1992; Lieberman, 1979; Minuchin, 1974).

Intergenerational family acculturation

Acculturation is used in this study as a microecological means of studying individuals in relation to literacy rather than using the more general terms of culture or class, etc. The genogram (family tree) provides a means of making explicit the intergenerational family acculturation process (Kingson *et*

al, 1986; Richardson, 1987). A genogram is "a structural diagram of a family's three-generational relationship system" (Guerin and Pendagast, 1976:452) through which "issues ... and recurrent patterns are explored" (Gerwartzman, 1988:37). The process involves more than just drawing up a diagram of people in one's family. It includes questions about various issues such as births, deaths, marriages, relocations, education, occupations, proximity to relatives, family myths and ethics, religious practices, crisis events and celebrations. An example of a genogram is shown in Figure 2.5.

Acculturation provides parameters for and models of behaviour, thinking, feeling and making sense of one's experience. It includes the intergenerational family's demographic history, religious tendencies, esteemed individuals, practices and ethics, connectedness within and outside the family, myths and the system of rewards and punishments dealt out to individual and cluster members. Acculturation provides membership of a social group (the family, the community, the culture) and is communicated through signs, symbols, signals, interpretation of experience and construction of meaning (Roberto, 1992; Gerwartzman, 1988; Stagoll & Lang, 1980). According to Maslow belonging is an essential ingredient in an individual's development without which self-esteem and self-actualization cannot occur (Thomas, 1985).

Acculturation and socialization

Vygotsky (1986, 1978) suggested psychological development of the child is socially derived and observed ontogenetic development of self-regulatory behaviour in children's social problem solving. While some regard acculturation as socialization this study distinguishes between the two processes. Socialization is learning how to live, work and play with others in the here and now whereas acculturation is a process which is context dependent over time and space and is therefore dynamic and longitudinal in nature. Acculturation defines how one is or is not socialized. This study in no way attempts to develop a causal relationship between acculturation, socialization and literacy development unlike many researchers who attempt to link school performance causally to the family of origin. For instance, Garton (1984:269) uses the term "socialization" and claims agents of socialization include: "parents, peers, school, or more globally, society itself".

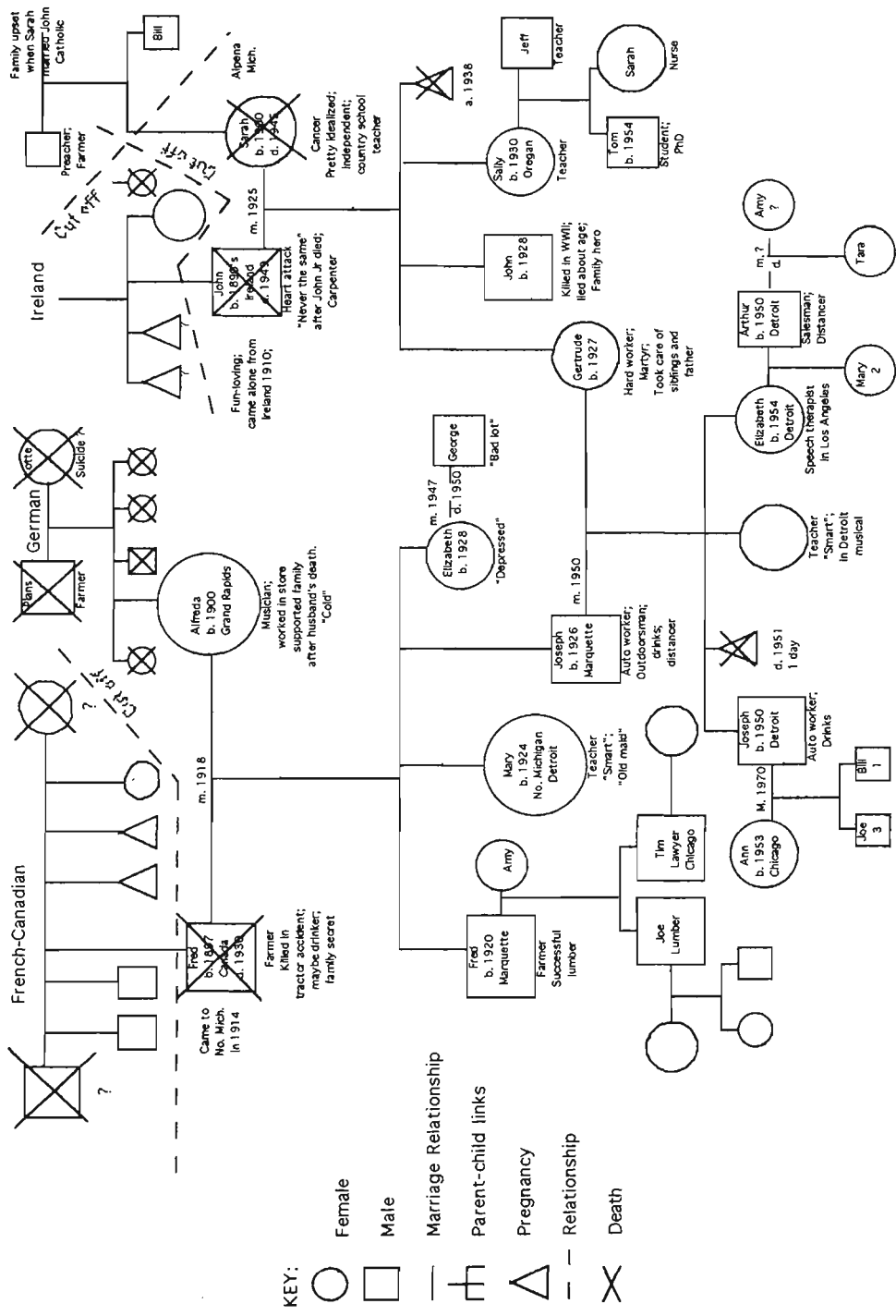


Figure2.5: A sample genogram (redrawn from Hartman, 1979:307)

He then suggests a "profound" causal link between cognitive development, cognitive growth and socialization.

Organizational culture provides a parallel to intergenerational family acculturation. Similar findings to those in intergenerational family acculturation have been reported arising from studies of organizational culture (e.g., Eisenberg & Goodall, 1993; Haviland, 1993; Smircich & Calás, 1987; Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1984, 1982). The school culture may also be important (Toomey, 1975), and from Cambourne's (e.g., 1988) work would certainly seem to be, in how young children develop idiosyncratic responses to the construction of literacy in the classroom.

School Culture: Beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices

If the construction of literacy involves an indepth understanding of deep social and cultural nuances, then the school context also needs to be understood by the child in these terms. This means the school cannot function as a social and cultural island but needs to be able to be seen how it fits with the child's everyday experiences of deep social and cultural nuances. That is, the school context needs to be embedded in the deep social and cultural nuances of the child's broader experiences. If the school is not embedded in those deep nuances it is likely the child will take a view shared by many adults to such "rule exceptions" and treat them as aberrations. Treating the school experience as a social and cultural aberration hardly invites engagement (in school acculturation processes including the construction of literacy in the classroom) a necessary activity for learning to occur (Cambourne, 1992, 1988).

Research and practice have found children develop literacy when certain conditions are present in the school setting (Cambourne, 1988). These conditions allow children to become deeply involved in and aware of their environment (i.e., the sum total of messages in the setting). Pratt (1985) found children were better able to think about and successfully monitor their thought processes when the processes involved in formal learning were openly discussed in the class. He also found small group work encouraged children to see broader perspectives by observing how other children performed a task or solved a problem. These findings suggest a parallel between acculturative processes within the home and what happens at

school. Additionally, Pratt's (1985) findings suggest more emphasis on the actual process such as suggested by Turbill (1991, 1983, 1982) and Cambourne (1988) would significantly enhance the Genrists' aim of social justice.

If literacy is examined in terms of acculturation and communication theories then the issue of culture is immediately brought into focus. The question which arises is how do we communicate within and across cultures, time and space? Moreover there are micro and macro cultures to be considered. This study explores the micro cultures of individual children within their families and their school. Intergenerational family acculturation research informs us there are clear differences (as well as similarities) not only within families but also between families living with the same broad macro culture, not to mention the numerous studies which have examined differences between social classes (e.g., Freebody, 1993; Heath, 1983). These differences can be interpreted using psychoanalytic theory which shows that there exists strong fields of affective communication (e.g., bonding, feuding, etc.) between individuals within families which support, encourage and influence current and subsequent behaviours in response to the individual's and family's environment over time and space (Richardson, 1987; Kingson *et al*, 1986; Lieberman, 1979; Hartman, 1979; Guerin & Pendagast, 1976; Minuchin, 1974).

Heath's (1983) study of two American communities demonstrated the impact of the two subcultures on children's literacy development. My study extends Heath's (1983) initiative by going deeper to study the microcosmic world of individual children and their families' intergenerational acculturation processes. These processes may be their entry to understanding and responding to the world at all levels including during the construction of literacy in the classroom.

Most (up to ninety percent) of our communication is non-verbal (Bolton, 1987; Eunson, 1994; Kress, 1988) and this may be a channel through which embedded symbolic information is transferred between home and school during the construction of literacy in the classroom. To understand how the human mind works with symbolic and embedded symbolic information it is useful to look at theories in the literature of how we make meaning from our experiences of the world in a broad sense.

The human mind and symbolic and embedded symbolic information

At a biological level, our body operates according to circadian rhythms, ultradian rhythms (Rossi, 1986), patterns of blood flow or electrical activity in our stimulated brains (as electroencephalogram printouts, tomographic and magnetic resonance imaging plates), our hearts beat to the "rhythm of life", our endocrine system manages our hormonal body clock. Much of our physiological functioning such as breathing and circulation is moderated at an unconscious level by our autonomic nervous system which usually ensures perfect synchronicity to keep us functioning at the very basic level. At a psychological level we prefer to be able to categorize, interpret, predict, evaluate and respond to the internal and external world in which we reside. Stereotyping is a classical manifestation of this psychological need for certainty and predictability. Our willingness and ability to sense (e.g., "see", "hear") whole patterns where there are none or to "fill in the gaps" where the pattern is incomplete or confusing is outstanding. The Pointillist movement late last Century played on this ability with outstanding results. Examples of impossible figures (e.g., the Necker cube) also support this argument.

Visual and auditory perception (and most likely all human perception) appear to depend on one's ability to pattern complex phenomena before them. Babies, for example, appear to be able to discern their mothers by about five or six months of age based on perception of facial patterns and readily exhibit "fear of strangers" at that time (Haith, 1980). Marr's (Marr & Vaika, 1980) seminal work on visual perception provided a much needed impetus for a theoretical shift in thinking in the field of perception. Previously, much research had focused on development of schematic representations of the external world. Thinking in this approach is not dissimilar to that of the phonics based approach to literacy in which young children are expected to build up a repertoire of phonics in order to be able to read. Criticism of both approaches is that they involve an amazingly cumbersome and inefficient means of dealing with a vast amount of highly complex phenomena.

At about the same time as visual discrimination develops, babies cease to babble and no longer include infrequent sounds and speech patterns in their repertoire (Webster, 1986; Illingworth, 1983). Instead, they focus almost solely on sounds and speech patterns heard in the language familiar to them (usually that in their home). Sex roling also seems to follow a patterning of complex phenomena theory with young children having consciously

developed behaviour consistent with being either a "boy" or a "girl" usually by about age two or three (Illingworth, 1983). Next comes the patterning of acceptable behaviours in the child. These often largely depend on what the child has been directed in, again mostly by their parents or other significant care givers. By the time children attend Preschool and certainly by the time they begin "Big School" in Kindergarten, they are expected to know the patterns of behaviour required for toileting, generally functioning independently and to have picked up on some social subtleties or patterning of socially acceptable behaviours across situations. One such expectation is the ability to function as part of a large group (in some cases with 30 or more children aged between four years and nine months and five years and nine months).

In 1980 Marr suggested visual perception may not occur in a way consistent with Piagetian theory of schema (Marr & Vaika 1980). Instead he suggested the visual cortex was structured to recognise edges and contrast and thus perception of whole and actual objects accordingly. Familiar objects remained constant despite a different presentation. An example of this is the open and shut door which is simultaneously a trapezoid (when open) and a rectangle (when closed). An open door presents a quite different shape to the perceiver compared to the rectangular shape of the closed door. Yet we still see the door as rectangular because our prior experience and expectations and beliefs about the shape of doors interact with what we perceive and meaning is constructed by putting all this together, not in a linear, logical fashion, but in a cohesive, continuous highly contextualized and creative way. Marr's (Marr & Vaika 1980) theory may partly explain how we are able to perceive the same object in different ways according to the Gestalt "Law of Proxemics" where an interpretation of an image is dependent upon information closest to it at the time it is perceived (i.e., according to our expectations) (Ref.: Goldstein, 1984). Bradford (no date, in Wurman, 1989:106) suggests we do this when we process any type of information:

We do not think in a linear sequential way, yet every body of information that is given to use is given to us in a linear manner. Even language structure is basically linear. We communicate in a linear way; we do not communicate the way we think. The point is we are taught to communicate in a way that is actually constricting our ability to think, because we think in an associative way. When we read a sentence we do not limit our intake of information to what we see in that sentence. We actually make innumerable associations with our own experience. We read in ways we do not write

Bradford's (no date, in Wurman, 1989) observations suggest the construction

of literacy involves the idiosyncratic processing of symbolic information. The constructor of literacy accesses embedded symbolic information which they find meaningful based on their knowledge of how the world works.

Embedded symbolic information inherent in the construction of literacy

The framework of the acculturation process is a dynamic one. It is specific to individual entities such as an individual, a family, a community and a culture. Language is but one vehicle for describing and it is important not to neglect what some have suggested is our main way of communicating: Non-verbally. For that reason a social semiotic perspective, which describes culturally derived meanings (Ref.: Halliday & Hasan, 1985), is useful when attempting to understand metamessages or covert signs and codes within an entity. There is evidence that these metamessages are coded in terms of idiosyncratic and complex patterns within our experience (Ref.: Hodge & Kress, 1988; Kress, 1988; Laycoff & Johnson, 1985; Sontag, 1978; Leech, 1976). These patterns then suggest further evidence for the development of beliefs about life generally and more specifically, about life functions such as constructing literacy.

Baker and Davies (1993) connect gender and generational aspects of acculturation (although they do not label it as such) and literacy rather succinctly:

Reading, in our view, is other and more than a means of connection to a written cultural heritage; it is a means of connection to and (potential) intervention in a lived, gendered social order. Ways of reading are ways of organizing and (re) producing social knowledge and social practice, and ways of constituting oneself and being constituted as a particular kind of being. ... These gendered practices and interpretations are further tied up with the presentation and interpretation of age and generational relations. Age/generational relations and gender relations are two interlocking, mutually reinforcing social axes which permeate childrens books, conventional readings of those books, and the social institutions in which the books are read, including families and classrooms ... social relations are heavily coded by gender and generation in beginning school readers (pp55, 56).

Being able to appreciate and use embedded symbolic information, if and when required, is what permits an individual to participate in a sufficiently satisfying way in society. Being able to perceive, read, write, speak and listen for embedded symbolic information is not sufficient, the individual needs to know how to interpret puns and double entendres as well as socially and culturally coded ways of how to frame and interpret one's

experience. This constitutes one's knowledge of how the world works.

SYMBOLIC-ANALYTIC SKILLS AND LITERACY

The ability to rapidly access, meaningfully pattern, apply and evaluate textual information for a Super-symbolic Information Age will involve generic skills of abstraction, systems thinking, experimentation and collaboration (Ref.: Reich, 1993). Whole language theory and practice as advocated by Cambourne (1988; 1992) clearly offers a path to the appropriate development of these skills.

Cambourne's (1988) Conditions for learning broadened the emphasis in the literacy field from orientation and convention (although did not dismiss their importance) to include the classroom environment. This shift has had profound ramifications in regard to the accessibility of literacy for many children. It seems to have provided a much needed "power to the people" push by giving children responsibility in their own learning. Access is now (in Whole Language classrooms, at least) at child level, not adult level where it was previously. Children are able to access their Information Systems in order to make "meaningful new patterns" during the construction of literacy. Cambourne's Conditions (1988) mirror those conditions present in embedded symbolic information processing inherent in acculturation processes. These are:

Immersion

Children are immersed in the acculturation of the intergenerational family unit by virtue of their inability to help themselves. Significant others from the intergenerational family unit interact with the infant in intergenerationally acculturated ways. This is evidenced in how basic survival, safety and membership issues are addressed for the infant (cp Biddulph, 1993; Lieberman, 1979). Infants are immersed in experiences of significant others speaking, touching, reading, writing, arguing, walking, running, discussing and laughing. One of the most accepted roles of immersion is that of discrimination of speech sounds. Prior to six months of age infants babble indiscriminately. At about six months of age, babies start to produce only those sounds present in the first language of significant others around them (Illingworth, 1983).

Demonstration

In providing the basic survival, safety and membership needs for the infant, the significant others demonstrate what it means to be a member of that particular family and what to expect (or otherwise) from the world and how to respond to it (cf Biddulph, 1993).

Expectation

Expectations are beliefs about future events (Rokeach, 1972). They are derived from prior experiences (coded within our Information Systems) during which consistent and meaningful patterns of events and practices have led the individual to predict future events.

Responsibility

This engenders ownership over one's actions and is manifested in the infant's smiling behaviour, self feeding with rusks and other foods. Later bowel and bladder continence are ultimately the responsibility of the individual child. My work (Huber, 1991) and Maria Palazzoli's (Palazzoli *et al* 1974) in this area clearly demonstrate how even the psychogenically "incontinent" (usually male) child is responsible for their actions.

Approximation

Babies usually get plenty of opportunities at approximating more mature behaviour. Babbling and early attempts at crawling and walking are obvious examples of approximations of more mature behaviours.

Employment

Once a child learns to talk, walk or hold a pencil most of them will practice their new skill *ad nauseam*.

Feedback

As a young child "perfects" new skills their obvious delight is shared by

significant others in the family unit. In this sharing the child learns what it means to be a member of the family including what is valued and expected and what is not (cf Biddulph, 1993).

Such congruence between home and school is important in the development of an understanding of how young children use knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom. If there are obvious parallels at this level and we seek meaningful patterns in information then it follows that young children will recognize the familiarity of Cambourne's (1988) learning Conditions in the classroom.

In this study I am suggesting an extension of Cambourne's (1988) approach to include the child's broader experience in their world outside the classroom including those prior to school entry. Vygotsky's (1978) sociohistorical political theory of human cognition emphasizes the need for a broader consideration of the child in the classroom but stops short of specifically including subtleties of specific intergenerational family patterns for individual children. This study describes children's behaviours in a way that negates the position which suggests they are attributable to a generic learning experience of childhood. Instead it is suggested they arise from idiosyncratic early childhood experiences which results in idiosyncratic interpretations of and response to those experiences based on intergenerational patterns of behaviour peculiar to the individual child's intergenerational family unit. While some patterns may be in evidence across families their particular patterning will be different across time and space (and hence context & situation) within and between families with no two families demonstrating exactly the same matrix of responses or codes. Chaos theory (Gleick, 1987) provides the analogy for this statement. Chaos theory shows how an apparently highly nonsignificant difference in an open system (which a child and family are) creates highly significant changes in the dynamics of that system. Embedded symbolic information within the intergenerational family system is highly volatile and small changes in it from either idiosyncratic interpretations or life crises result in mutations of family acculturations. Such mutations may include what and who are valued and what and who are not and possibly why that is so (Roberto, 1992; Lieberman, 1979; Minuchin, 1974).

DEFINING LITERACY FOR A SUPER-SYMBOLIC INFORMATION AGE

Typically, defining literacy is an emotive, agenda-laden activity. No one definition has received outright acceptance from all stakeholders. I believe the reason for this is what I call the "syndrome syndrome". Literacy is indeed a collection, cluster or pattern of behaviours and practices which consistently co-occur about which there is much to learn (i.e., a syndrome according to the psychiatric Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, fourth edition!). The current frameworks used to define literacy are frequently not productive. With the onset of the Super-symbolic Information Age we need an effective definition of literacy appropriate to the needs of such an Age.

PROBLEMS WITH CURRENT DEFINITIONS

Literacy has been seen as the acquisition of phonic, book- and genre-control skills such as orientation (left-right, top-bottom, front-back, letters), spelling, syntactical and text conventions (e.g., Stanovich, 1993/1994, 1980; Christie, 1990; Derewianka, 1990; Jardine, 1990; Clay, 1982). Definitions have often been confined to elements of literacy such as reading, writing or to language as a whole, all with justifiable reason (e.g., Baker & Davies, 1993; Clay, 1985; Butler & Turbill, 1984; Bettelheim & Zelan, 1982; Halliday, 1978).

Foci of current definitions

During their years prior to school very young children have been exposed to modelling of "literacy-promoting" behaviours in their homes, such as the presence of books, book reading and bedtime stories (e.g., Nicoll, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c, 1991d, 1991e, 1991f; Fields, 1989; Butler, 1980). While unlikely to be conducted in isolation, they focus on the functional, doing, performing, end-point behaviours of "literacy-promoting" activities (e.g., Toomey & Allen, 1991; Stevenson & Baker, 1987). References to potentially equally powerful, but non-specific to literacy, behaviours and activities are only marginally mentioned, usually in some fuzzy way (e.g., Baker & Davies, 1993; Clay, 1985; Butler & Turbill, 1984). These foci have evolved from the definitions of language, literacy and literacy related activities such as reading and writing which, like their manifestations, have also been largely "functional" in nature. Functional approaches to literacy focus on providing

children with explicit "literacy" skills and/or an understanding of how language works in order that they may make informed choices about texts they come across or may choose to produce (e.g., Stanovich, 1993/1994, 1980; Christie, 1990; Derewianka, 1990; Jardine, 1990). Functional definitions suggest literacy has an external focus. This is only partly true as observed by Mikulecky (1990:25):

More than a decade of examining the purposes and uses of literacy has demonstrated the following points:

- Literacy processes vary widely to reflect the pluralism of social contexts in which literacy is used.
- Transfer of literacy abilities is severely limited by differences in format, social support networks, and required background information as one moves from context to context.

Venezky (1990:10) suggests literacy is as much "an aspiration as ... a reality." Internal Information resources brought to literacy are usually reported in terms of expectations and prior knowledge, usually about literacy or literacy related activities and how they affect children's approaches to reading and writing (e.g., Clay, 1985; Butler & Turbill, 1984; Brearley, 1973). Bettelheim & Zelan (1982) found reading errors were meaningful in terms of the child's experience in addition to their expectations and prior knowledge. Goodman (1967) found children's miscues during reading were based on expectations related to the context of what they were reading. He called this phenomenon a "guessing game".

More recently Baker & Davies (1993, see above) have provided a perspective on cultural aspects of literacy. Their definition of reading echoes Wurman's (1989) creation of "meaningful new patterns" from incoming information based on our own Information Systems (see Figure 1.1). While their thesis is in the direction of acculturated meaning making discussed in this thesis, Baker and Davies (1993) fail to recognise gender (and age) as only two of many channels of acculturated meaningful pattern making and thus have already begun to decontextualize their data by separating it from the Gestalt that is acculturation. In addition to decontextualizing their data they have looked at the obvious but not the underlying embedded symbolic support network that manifests itself as "the obvious" surface codes we most readily recognize: The words, syntax and so on. These surface codes signify embedded symbolic nature of the acculturations from which young children access knowledge of the world to create and organize information for intra- and interpersonal communication.

Need for literacy to be redefined for a super-symbolic information age

There is no theoretically useful definition of literacy which covers the scope of this study. To be consistent with the methodology used in this study, it is essential my underlying assumptions are made explicit to avoid trustworthiness problems with my data. My assumptions about literacy are changing constantly as I discover new situations to which my assumptions do not apply. This is a transferability problem which requires much ongoing work. Literacy does not "just occur", it not a commodity, it cannot be purchased, although some would dispute this. Given this, my above definition of literacy needs some elaboration.

TOWARDS REDEFINING LITERACY FOR A SUPER-SYMBOLIC INFORMATION AGE

Earlier, in Chapter 1, I defined literacy as a transient, idiosyncratic Gestalt, which is a by product of constructions of meaning from symbolic and embedded symbolic information in textual data. A definition of literacy for a Super-symbolic Information Age must address the issues of how and why we access, pattern and use embedded symbolic information. To define literacy in terms of the four language modes (i.e., speaking, listening, reading, writing) is to avoid the embedded social and cultural symbolism intrinsic to the process of constructing literacy. Within our current understanding of literacy context appears to be central to how we define literacy.

The role of context in defining literacy

The problem remains: What is literacy? As might be expected from the above discussion, most current definitions of literacy are functional in nature. Depending on the context, literacy is defined in terms of "being able to read and write" to some extent, usually in order to perform some function such as to participate actively and effectively in society (Ref.: Venezky, 1990). Access to literacy is viewed in a number of ways. For some it is just something that must be done if one is to get a job at the end of school. It is seen by others within the context of social justice requiring specific structures to be taught (e.g., Christie, 1990, Hammond, 1990; Jardine, 1990). For others it comes after years of drilling of phonics and other discrete activities (e.g., Stanovich, 1993/1994, 1980). Still others see literacy as potentially

providing immediate and enduring personal fulfilment and satisfaction otherwise known as intrinsic rewards (Turbill, 1991; Cambourne, 1992). These ways of approaching literacy have engendered much emotional debate. By introducing a broader theoretical perspective, as does this study, it is hoped that each of these approaches can have a place in a less emotive way of addressing literacy learning at least in the early childhood years and maybe beyond.

An omnibus definition of literacy

I have used the following omnibus definition to integrate the study's theoretical underpinnings. It is a creative, critical, receptive and expressive act (of communication) in which signs and codes from the whole environment are the text. As such, it involves the meaningful patterning of embedded symbolic information, the negotiation of meanings for oral, verbal and non-verbal (sensory and affective) communication including the ability to retrieve (with understanding and appreciation) and compose written communication. This is always a dyadic event in which there is always a sender and a receiver (these can be one and the same or different) between whom a message is relayed. It is context specific across space and over time.

SUMMARY OF MY REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter I have presented a resynthesis of a broad range of literature which forms the basis of the issues and concepts in this study. Literacy as a construct is not easy to understand and probably wisely, most researchers have preferred to focus on modes of literacy such as reading and writing. However, I believe it is time to explore what it means to be literate into the next Century as the boundaries between concepts, constructs and disciplines become increasingly blurred. This study does not pretend to offer a definitive statement on what it will mean to be literate in the Twenty First Century. This study does, however, represent one small step towards a deeper understanding of what it means for young children constructing literacy in the classroom with the aim of better understanding the process of constructing literacy from a symbolic perspective.

CHAPTER 3: THE RESEARCH PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

This study sought to develop a grounded theory of acculturated meaning making in the development of idiosyncratic literacy practices. To do this it was necessary to firstly identify acculturated patterns of responses used by young children when constructing literacy during the first three years of compulsory education (i.e., K-2). The study extends the focus of research in the area to include the influences from intergenerational family acculturation and school culture which consist of beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices within the young person's global life experience.

The choice of methodology was determined by the non-causal, non-manipulative, descriptive nature of the study which sought to deepen understanding of the literacy construction process for young children in their first three years of formal school. The naturalistic paradigm was further demanded by the natural setting and the data to be collected to investigate the phenomena of acculturated responses used by young children in the early childhood classroom. The phenomena under consideration are objectively observable, subjectively reportable and experiential (sensory and emotional) in nature. Influences in naturalistic research are perceived to occur simultaneously. This is consistent with the underlying assumptions of intergenerational family acculturation theory which views dynamics or influences within the intergenerational family system as agents maintaining "equilibrium" (or disequilibrium) within the family unit. The phenomena are such that more than one observer, experiencer and thus knower, attests to their existence. This is essential in the presence of idiosyncratic constructions of realities which must be sufficiently similar to reach a negotiated reality as presented here. Lastly, and fundamental to this study, the naturalistic paradigm allows values to emerge.

Previous research has frequently focused on specific "observable" and "measurable" "literacy-promoting" behaviours in the home and/or school (e.g., Ollila & Mayfield, 1992; Toomey & Allen, 1991; Cutting, 1990; Stevenson. & Baker, 1987). Little effort has been focused on the more subtle and broader aspects of acculturation in the home and school. Reasons for this possibly include fears of:

-
- a. Intruding into the "behind closed doors" area of family life and existence thereby invading the ultimate privacy taboo;
 - b. Finding what is not to be known (i.e., "skeletons in the closet" syndrome);
 - c. Not knowing what to do with what is found once it is "brought to light". This begs the question of whether or not educators would require further training in such matters; and
 - d. Ultimately, acting in a manner more becoming to George Orwell's Big Brother than as a caring, nurturing society.

These fears may be allayed and even overcome, however, if we were to act:

- a. In a child-focused, responsive way at all times in our interactions with the young people in our care;
- b. Gathered the information in a completely confidential manner, and only as required. In addition to this, possibly giving the adults concerned the right of veto on any information considered too difficult to divulge;
- c. Used the information as a backdrop to perceiving and understanding patterns, practices, expectations and so on, of how and why individual children think and behave the way they do (i.e., as having a dynamic role in helping the young person to make sense out of their experiences) at a systemic embedded symbolic level. This would contrast strongly with many educators' current ways of perceiving such information (i.e., as causal in nature);
- d. Expected to function in the capacity of "human as instrument" whereby we make overt and can confront, if necessary, our biases and prejudices instead of denying they exist or trying to fight them, using contrived policies of equity and differential gender treatment; and
- e. Used the perspective presented here to change our perceptions of

children's motivations for responding the way they do, especially when it's not the way we expect.

SITE SELECTION

The school was known to me. Some of the most suitable attributes of the school with regard to this study included:

- a. The school's child-centred (Rogerian-modified), responsive educational philosophy and practices;
- b. The absence of a set agenda for the formal teaching of reading to all children from school entry;
- c. A rich literacy-promoting environment with a strong tradition of reading and telling stories to children and children creating their own stories in written and oral form on a daily basis;
- d. An apparently homogeneous population of middle class professional families who had chosen the school specifically because of the type of education it offered;
- e. The welcoming, informal and congenial nature of the school. The children were used to visitors making themselves at home (often with the children's naturally active assistance) whenever they came to the school and certainly when parents, siblings, extended family members, friends and others came into the classroom;
- f. The well established, strong home-school connection. This included families being at the school both during and out of school hours. Parents were encouraged to offer their practical and intellectual skills to further the children's educational experiences. The parents often conducted or participated in whole sessions or classes on a term or semester basis. Subjects covered by parents mostly with professional qualifications included creative work such as dressmaking, pottery, cooking, and lino printing; academic subjects including, for Secondary, introductory psychology and law; personal care such as dental hygiene; general medical health and knowledge

and marshal arts such as I chi do; interpersonal skills included negotiation and conflict management. Sessions for parents to run such courses were comfortably part of the day to day curriculum with parents wanting and expecting to be able to offer their skills and expertise at some time;

- g. The classroom and school environments' natural siting and setting in bushland with native animals and birds in abundance; and
- h. The emphasis on the students' socialization as an equally important part, along with the academic side of school, of formal education from Kindergarten to Year 10. Students from Kindergarten to Year 6 participated in "choosing time" or, for later Primary School Years to Year 10, in self-initiated activities (SIAs) in negotiation with their teacher.

Overall, the Banksia Grove School provided an opportunity for rich data gathering on children's "natural" inclinations rather than teacher impositions on their behaviour. I saw this as fundamental to the type of research I wanted to conduct.

ENTRY TO SITE

In addition to my original negotiations with the Principal during 1990, the process of gaining entry to the school took the first month of the first term of 1991. Initially, I presented my research design and intentions to all parents who attended a general class parent meeting (this is the usual practice across the school). Some discussion ensued with some parents supportive, some declining to participate but still happy to let the study progress and one parent who doubted greatly my educational and research motives and what I would do with the electronically gathered information on their child.

The dissenting parent agreed to meet with me to attempt to negotiate shared meanings for the purpose of allowing my research to progress. After discussions on our educational philosophies, our understanding of children, child development, our reasons for being at the school and my reasons for wanting to do this research and especially my reasons for wanting to do it at Banksia Grove, we concluded that we in fact concurred on many of our

beliefs, attitudes, values, ideas, concerns and interests. Need I say the study went ahead and that parent has often enquired how the research is going - over 4 years!

During the course of the study there were no concerns expressed by parents or staff and the data were gathered without any great traumas (apart from having to replace an expensive video camera lens!) along the way. Data were collected during one or more sessions mostly every two weeks for the twelve terms (four per year over three years between the beginning of the school year in February, 1991 and December, 1993) except when I was still negotiating with one parent, the class was away on outings, the camera lens was being replaced, work commitments, illness or exhaustion (on my part). There is a total of approximately ninety to one hundred hours of video taped data on 70 90-minute video 8 tapes (and a similar number of audio support tapes) of varying length from a few minutes (mostly the result of battery problems) to the full ninety minutes.

PARTICIPANTS AND SAMPLING

Naturalistic design uses purposive sampling and in this study all families with children commencing Kindergarten at the Banksia Grove School in 1991 were invited to participate. This process included continuous adjustment of the sample (responsive sampling). Of the seventeen who started at that time, fourteen agreed to participate, four returned responses to the questionnaire and three of those remained a sufficient length of time to be included in the study as Case Studies.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research topic in itself was a sensitive one and Banksia Grove School was appropriately cautious about permitting the research to be conducted. Hence several standard ethical safeguards (see Guba & Lincoln, 1989) were overtly in place to the satisfaction of both the school and the parents of children in the Kindergarten class before the commencement of the study. These ethical safeguards included:

- a. *A research proposal* (see Appendix I). The research proposal consisted of:

-
- A statement of my intentions, expectations, aim of my research, method and methodology to be used, implications for all stakeholders (i.e., the school, the parents, the children and myself);
 - Papers explaining Naturalistic Inquiry (Curtis, 1988; Cambourne & Curtis, 1988); and
 - A research agreement and consent forms.

b. *Parent, school and teacher consultation.* Issues were raised at a parent meeting prior to the commencement of my research, during which the possibility of me conducting research. Each of these issues was addressed at the parent meeting with the issue of the storage and use of electronically recorded data being negotiated over the next four weeks. Success in arriving at a shared meaning of intent and use, meant the study was allowed to go ahead. The issues raised at the initial parent meeting were:

- Need for congruency between my research method and methodology and school philosophy and practice. This included a need for the research to be non-comparative and non-interventionist. This need was eminently met by using the naturalistic paradigm;
- Confidentiality. This included specific concerns about the storage and use of electronically recorded data;
- Grievances and what the arrangements were for dealing with concerns about the conduct of the research should they arise; and
- Concerns regarding withdrawal from the study highlighted issues of burden such a study might entail and how to exit the study without prejudice.

In addition to these considerations, I have used pseudonyms for the school (Banksia Grove School), the teacher (Hilary) and the three children (Christine, Liam and Casey). Further, three sources of data which constitute what I have called "Unauthorised Documents" would normally be clearly identified as they are substantial pieces of work by three different authors. As such they are stakeholders along with the families, the teacher, the school and myself in the study. However, to identify those authors and their

works would immediately identify the school, the teacher, the children and their families. I am unwilling to overtly identify them at this time (although I do acknowledge their substantial contribution to this study)¹ This places me in an invidious situation of ethically needing to protect all stakeholders in my study in a way which is fair to all. I have chosen to give ethical priority to ensuring the confidentiality of personal information over the public information provided by the three authors. This is obviously a circular problem for which I do not have any other answer.

DATA COLLECTION PROCESSES

The human-as-instrument quality of naturalistic methodology enhances the transactional nature of research by the researcher's responsiveness to the data being collected which enables them to adapt to how, why, when and which data are collected and which sample used. This process of research which involved purposively accessing the data, meaningfully patterning it, using the information derived from patterning the data and responsively evaluating it, is called an emergent design. The holistic emphasis of the data collection process endeavours to tell the "whole" story of the data (i.e., of the participants, site, researcher etc). It provides a means of expanding our data and subsequently, our information base to include "the felt, ... the silent sympathies, ... the unconscious wishes, ... and the daily unexamined usages" and insodoing, enhances "our understanding of social and organizational settings" (Guba & Lincoln, 1989:135-136).

ACCESSING THE DATA

The nature of the information derived from the data reflects the degree of sophistication at which the data were accessed (Guba & Lincoln, 1989:143). In this study I have accessed the data at an embedded symbolic level. At this level I was able to meaningfully pattern the data to make connections between the data and otherwise disparate conceptual and theoretical bases of the study to develop a grounded theory of embedded symbolic information transfer between home and school during the construction of literacy in the classroom. Data sources included several life history and field data. Table

¹ Full bibliographic details of the three books used can be obtained by formally writing to me with a request which can be justified c/- Brian Cambourne, Faculty of Education, University of Wollongong, Northfields Avenue, Wollongong, N.S.W. 2520, Australia.

3.1 provides a diagrammatic representation showing the holistic and transactional nature of these data sources. Data were gathered to the point of redundancy which occurs when no new information is provided by the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

TRUSTWORTHINESS








Trustworthiness relates to whether one's data are of sufficient rigour, quality and volume to enable the interpretations and inferences which are made about it. Specific aspects of trustworthiness (i.e., credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability) are discussed in relation to this study. Evidence in support of the trustworthiness of this study is provided in Table 3.2 at the end of this chapter and in the Appendices.

Credibility

As with quantitative paradigms, qualitative data gathering techniques need to be rigorous. Credibility of one's data can be enhanced in a number of ways including prolonged engagement, persistent observation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, progressive subjectivity and member checks. Prolonged engagement and persistent observation over three years provides a solid basis for my study as do my extensive observation, interpretive and inferential skills as an experienced Clinical Psychologist². Peer debriefing and member checking (discussions with other researchers and the teacher and parents, presentations of work in progress at three conferences and presentations at postgraduate seminars and colloquia) occurred regularly. Negative case analysis and progressive subjectivity have been an ongoing process assisted very much by peer debriefings in addition to the sustained engagement and observations of the participants. Reflections on readings, presentations and so on have also assisted my progressive subjectivity. Member checking by stakeholders of drafts of Chapter 5 (see Appendix II) enhanced the credibility of the study, facts and interpretations (i.e., reconstructions of participants' realities) were negotiated and subsequently checked with the participants for accuracy and omissions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Additionally, a colleague conducted audit of my work was carried

² My colleagues have recognized my expertise by unanimously electing me a Fellow of the Australian College of Clinical Psychologists. I also hold a postgraduate Diploma in Hypnosis, am a member of the International Society of Hypnosis and am a Level 2 trained Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMD/R) practitioner.

Table 3.1: Data types, recording methods and operationalizations used in the data collection process for this study

DATA TYPE	RECORDING METHOD		INFORMATION BASE
HUMAN-AS-INSTRUMENT (Ongoing throughout duration of the study)	-> ->	a. Journal/memos	-> ->
			i. Accessing tacit knowledge by stating relevant: Beliefs, Attitudes, Values ii. Responsive evaluation of: aims of the study research question emergent research design purposive sampling the literature the data
LIFE HISTORY DATA	-> ->	b. Written materials	-> ->
			i. Public documents on the school * Authorized * Unauthorized ii. Parent questionnaire: responses re intergenerational family acculturations iii. Teacher records and assessments
FIELD DATA (Time frame for collection of field data: 1991-1993 inclusive)	-> ->	c. Video tapes 100 hours approx.	-> ->
			i. Classroom observations over three years ii. Transcripts of tapes
	->	d. Audio tapes	-> ->
			i. Focus interviews of parents & teacher ii. Transcripts of interviews iii. Audio backup of Video tapes iv. Children's comments
	->	e. Field notes (running records)	-> ->
			i. Classroom observations
	->	f. Anecdotal records	-> ->
			i. Classroom observations
	->	g. Artefacts	-> ->
			i. Other teacher materials: * Children's work books * Classroom literacy aids ii. Children's work iii. Parent meeting notes

out during the later stages. Given the temporal delay involved in this process, a degree of intrinsic dependability is essential for participants to be able to confirm credibility.

Dependability

According Guba and Lincoln (1989), the dependability (i.e., stability over time) of the data is enhanced by the keeping of an audit trail. They describe an audit trail in naturalistic research as the researcher's record of the path of the process followed during the conduct of the research. They further maintain that structure (i.e., the "bookkeeping system") and the substance (i.e., physical evidence of the "bookkeeping system") must be confirmable to ensure trustworthiness. An audit trail for this study is discussed on pages 20 and 23 and details are presented in Table 3.2.

Confirmability

This aspect of the audit trail provides the tangible evidence that the study was actually conducted, data gathered in an ethical and substantive manner. In terms of the conceptual framework of this study, confirmability would refer to the initially available data (i.e., tacit, propositional and theoretical knowledge) being purposively accessed, meaningfully patterned, appropriately analysed, interpreted, synthesized, applied, responsively evaluated and confirmed over time. The compilation of this thesis adds another dimension to the confirmability of my audit trail.

The following data gathering techniques have each served a purpose for enhancing credibility. Underlying value structures within the families and the school are fundamental to this study and as such were actively sought through the questionnaire and focus interviews with families and through content analysis of archival material and a focus interview with the teacher (who participated for the entire study) from the school. Analysis was on the basis of available data in this regard as some participants were able to provide great detail while others provided less. The nature of the study precluded interference as a negotiated agreement with the participants stated I would accept what they provided and those who did provide were very generous and open. Group constructions of reality were not necessary as the study consists of Case Studies of three individual children and their

families and no between family comparisons have been made as originally negotiated. Responsiveness, adaptability and expanded knowledge base, along with processual immediacy, provided opportunities for clarification, summarization, exploration of atypical and idiosyncratic responses and ultimately, the development of a grounded theory of acculturated embedded symbolic meaning making in the development of idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom.

Transferability

Transferability in this process is "tested" by applying an embedded symbolic information processing framework to purposively accessing and meaningfully patterning the data in my Case Studies.

A grounded theory, according to Glaser and Strauss (1967) is derived from ready and meaningfully relevant categories in the data being considered. Furthermore, these categories are able to explain the observed phenomena. A grounded theory provides a Pattern Model which connects network themes or patterns (Diesing, no date, in Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study the Pattern Model is extended to include the conceptual frameworks of Wurman's (1989) Information Systems and Toffler's (1990) embedded symbolic information processing.

DATA GATHERING TECHNIQUES

The data were collected over a three year period with an average of one morning every two weeks spent in the classroom on a participant-observer or observer only basis depending on the demands and opportunities within the classroom on each occasion. Days of my presence in the classroom varied with a part each week day being observed on more than one occasion (for a breakup of the days and sessions attended see Appendix III). The children were also used to my frequent presence, for reasons other than research, in their classroom and the school at other times during the three years of the study.

The primary source of data was the parents' responses to a questionnaire eliciting intergenerational acculturation processes, patterns and practices. Secondary data were gathered in the forms of field notes, teachers' notes and other materials used in the classroom, descriptive school reports,

focused teacher and parent interviews, video and audio tapes of classroom (and related) activities and last but hardly least, children's comments and work. Figure 3.1 graphically shows the additive role of each source of data to the rich connectedness of the study.

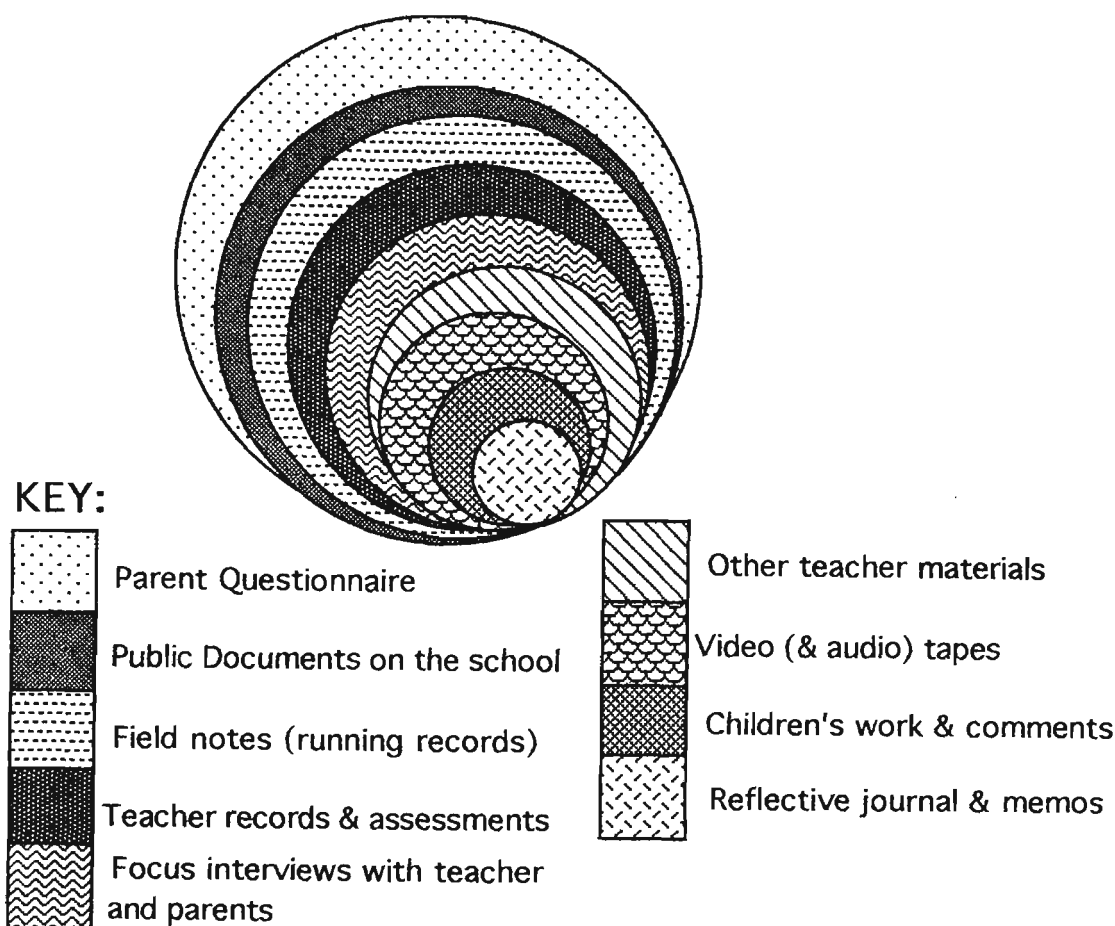


Figure 3.1: Data sources for the study. Each circle adds another layer of data thereby providing a thick description and potentially more interconnections.

The reversible figure in Figure 3.1 emphasizes the iterative nature of the naturalistic paradigm: Inductive analysis generates material for a grounded theory which drives the next phase of the research in which more data are gathered, inductively analysed, evaluated, synthesized and the grounded theory revisited and so on. Several data sources were accessed more than once while others were accessed only once (e.g., 70 times for video tapes; Public documentation once). Reflective journaling in the form of anecdotal records assisted in the development of my thinking during the research process and thus often determined how, when and why I accessed the data.

Each of the data sources is described in detail below:

Parent Questionnaire

This was of considerable length and time consuming (two to six hours) to complete (see Appendix IV). The parent questionnaire contained a total of forty-six questions (mostly open ended) derived from the literature and experience and consisted of three main parts:

- a. Genogram. Constructing and annotating a genogram (six questions, Guerin & Pendagast, 1976; Hartman, 1979);
- b. Intergenerational family acculturation. Parental perceptions of intergenerational family acculturation events and processes (eight questions, Guerin & Pendagast, 1976); and
- c. Current generation. Parental beliefs and expectations (thirty-two questions). The aim of these questions was to uncover immediate parental beliefs, attitudes and values, patterns and practices relating directly to issues of literacy and to education generally. Included in this part were questions about:
 - Their beliefs about and experience of literacy (numeracy, reading, writing, drawing), child development, socialization, creativity, learning, education, school and how their child (and sometimes the parents themselves) fared in relation to each of these issues; and
 - Their understanding of the Banksia Grove School philosophy and practices and their reasons for enrolling their child at the school.

Public documentation on the school

Several documents were used to describe the school's acculturation processes. These included "authorized documents" and "unauthorized documents":

- School registration documents, the weekly school bulletin, teacher's records including school reports; and
- Two books documenting historical events of the school and a former teacher's experience and an unpublished masters

essay which reviewed the school.

Descriptive school reports

In 1992 the school changed from providing descriptive reports at mid year and the end of the year to providing a parent/teacher (and student for older children) verbal report (compiled from parents, teacher and student input) at mid year and a written descriptive report at the end of each year. Available reports (see sample in Appendix V) were analysed to provide supportive evidence of the interview data from the teacher and interpretations of the video data.

Field notes (running records)

These were recorded during observation sessions and periodically reviewed to assist with the direction of subsequent observations and data analyses, evaluations and syntheses. They were chiefly used as an *aide de memoir* and for running comments based on activities being video and audio taped;

Teachers' records and assessments

These were readily available to me and provided the teacher's perspective on each of the children. Teacher assessments (see Appendix VI) mostly consisted of running records, event schedules (records of activities in which children participated, whom they worked or played with) and anecdotal insights.

Other teacher materials

These included work booklets with open ended exercises in them for the children to personalize. Examples of such materials included a story/writing book following a visit to an orchard and the initial site of the Banksia Grove School at Medlow and "Caterpillars" science workbook (see Appendix VII).

Focus interviews with teacher and parents

Focus interviews were used to elicit further data to assist my

understanding of each child's acculturated responses in the classroom. They were derived from emerging data and were the result of my need for elaboration on information previously provided in responses to the questionnaire. These interviews acted as member checks whereby interpretations of observations were assessed, corroborated, errors corrected and new information added. A sample of focus interview questions is included in Appendix VIII.

Video tapes

Data were collected on Video-8 video tapes to substantiate patterns evident in the school's acculturation processes and each family's acculturation processes by providing visual examples of patterning in the students' idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy. Seventy tapes of data ranging from a few minutes (due mostly to technical problems) to ninety minutes were recorded over the twelve terms (3 years) during the data collection phase of the study.

Audio tapes

Apart from recorded focus interviews, audio tapes mostly provided backup for the video tapes and only occasionally provided data in their own right. Examples of audio tape data standing alone include times when sensitive, non-intrusive data gathering was required and some outdoor activities where it was impractical to take the video camera.

Children's work and comments

Samples of the students' work (writings, drawings, etc.) were gathered to provide further supporting data as required. Examples of children's work are included in Appendix IX.

All data used have been corroborated by the adults concerned and, where appropriate, by the students via member checking procedures. Peer debriefing provided a much needed bouncing board which enabled me to clarify my values and goals as well as significantly refine what is clearly a vast topic and research question into something which is eminently

manageable and manifested as this thesis.

ARTICULATING THE FLOW OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS OF NATURALISTIC INQUIRY

To fully appreciate the nature of the flow of naturalistic enquiry a flow diagram is needed. The flow chart (see Figure 3.2) provided by Lincoln and Guba (1985) seems the most useful here and in terms of my study, this can be redrawn as in Figure 3.3. The iterative processes of negotiating outcomes, writing drafts of the thesis in terms of interpretations of the three children's idiosyncratic responses to the construction of literacy, as well as tentative applications of those interpretations have been confirmed or not confirmed by the stakeholders, have formed a more significant part of the creation of what I call a sufficiently satisfying Gestalt, my thesis. Accordingly, the post grounded theory process has been emphasized by being highlighted.

THE AUDIT TRAIL

An audit trail provides evidence of the trustworthiness of the research by identifying and substantiating the process of the research from the beginning, through to the endpoint. More importantly, it provides the study with measures of dependability and credibility by showing how the researcher has arrived at the endpoint given the starting point and the process used.

The role of an audit trail

The audit trail demonstrates the isomorphic relationship between participants' constructed realities and interpretations or reconstructions of those realities (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). The role of the audit trail is consistent with that of internal validity in quantitative methodology. In an effort to ensure rigour in the naturalistic paradigm Guba & Lincoln (1989:382-383) have provided an extensive list of audit trail classifications (i.e., raw data, data reduction and analysis, data reconstruction and synthesis, process notes, intentions and dispositions and instrument development), file types for each audit trail classification (e.g., field notes, summaries, findings and conclusions, audit trail notes, personal notes and surveys), and types of

evidence relevant to each file type (e.g., summarized transcripts, explanations of concepts, daily activities, bibliography and rough drafts).

Providing an audit trail for my study

Table 3.2, adapted from Halpern's (1983, in Guba & Lincoln, 1989:382-392) audit trail, displays the information for this aspect of my study. All audit trail classifications are supported by multiple file types and evidence.

SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS

The purpose of the study and the natural setting demanded human-as-instrument enquiry which accessed my tacit knowledge using a qualitative methodology. Purposive sampling followed the demands of the emergent design suiting the nature of the agreement with participants of the study and data were gathered from a number of sources and inductively analysed. Facts and interpretations were submitted for negotiation, corroboration, error correction and the gathering of further information. In terms of the original agreement with potential participants, noncomparative, idiographic Case Studies of three separate children and their intergenerational families' acculturations are reported and are presented herewith for the explicit purpose of developing a grounded theory of how young children use their knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their families of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses to the construction of literacy.

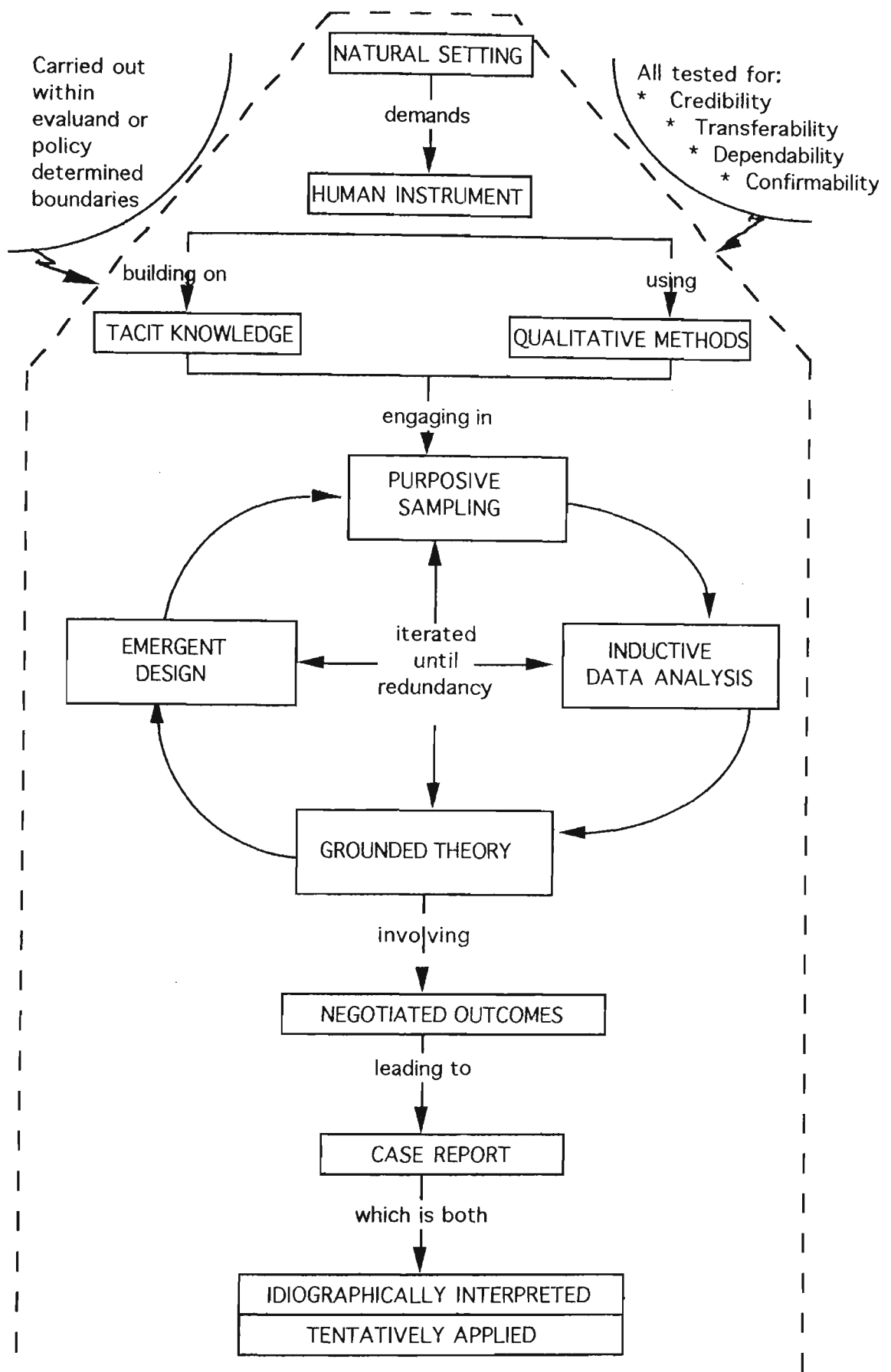


Figure 3.2: The flow of naturalistic enquiry from Lincoln & Guba (1985:188)

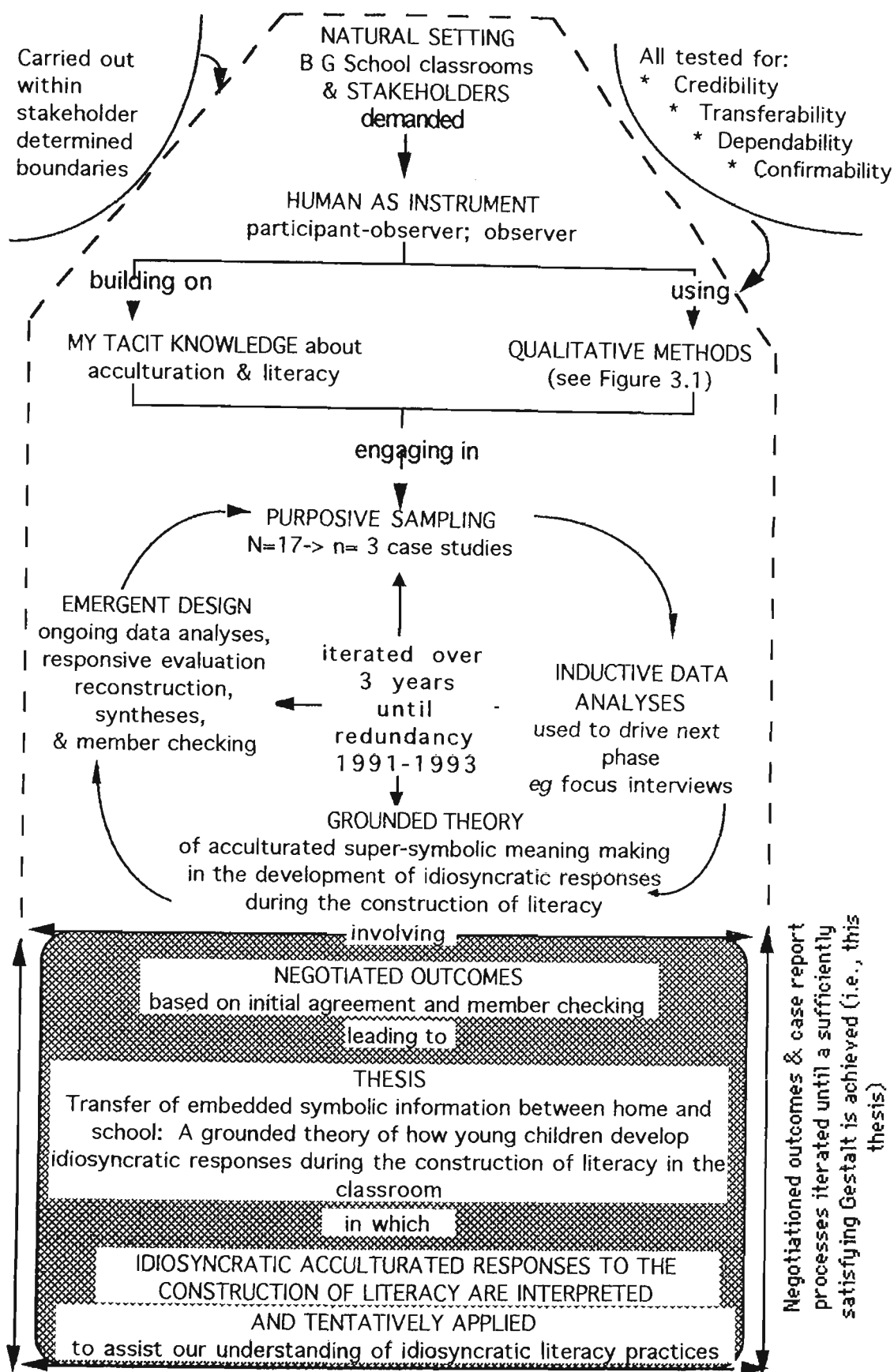


Figure 3.3: The flow of naturalistic enquiry from Lincoln & Guba (1985:188) redrawn to apply to this study

Table 3.2: Audit trail classifications, file types and evidence for this study (adapted from Halpern, 1983, in Lincoln & Guba, 1985:382-392)

Audit Trail Classification	File types	Evidence
(1) Raw Data	<p>(A) Electronically recorded materials</p> <p>(1) 70 Video 8 tapes (& transcripts)</p> <p>(2) Audio tapes (transcripts, as required usually to add sound information to video tape; Focus interviews);</p> <p>(B) Field notes</p> <p>(1) Focus interview records for each family & the teacher</p> <p>(2) Observational records from classroom</p> <p>(C) Unobtrusive measures</p> <p>(1) Public documents: Registration documents, weekly school bulletin; One published history of the school, a former teacher's experiences (published books); one Masters Degree essay evaluating the school</p> <p>(2) Private records: Teacher's records & school reports</p> <p>(3) Physical traces: Artefacts from children & teacher</p> <p>(D) Questionnaire results from parents</p>	<p>(a) Classroom dialogue; social interactions (& tapes)</p> <p>(b) Descriptions of classroom activities, literacy practices & children's responses, events, feelings of & by participants where available & appropriate</p> <p>(c) Descriptions of events, characteristics of environment, & behaviours of participants by researcher</p> <p>(d) Records, flow of operations on a day to day basis in classroom</p> <p>(e) Completed questionnaires from parents</p> <p>(f) Expert testimony: Teacher's notes and school reports</p>
(2) Data patterning & analysis	<p>(A) Writeups of field notes</p> <p>(1) Descriptions</p> <p>(B) Summaries</p> <p>(1) Condensed notes</p> <p>(a) Events: Recurring and single spontaneous events</p> <p>(b) Behaviours as meaningful patterns of responses during the construction of literacy by the children in the case studies</p> <p>(2) Units of information</p> <p>(a) Themes or patterns of embedded symbolic acculturation processes - life history data (b) Behaviours as meaningful patterns of responses to the construction of literacy by the children in the case studies Ideas from patterns discerned. Concerns about use of findings in the classroom & limitations of the study</p> <p>(C) Theoretical notes</p> <p>(1) Research question: How do young children use knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom?</p>	<p>(a) Summarized transcripts</p> <p>(b) Category sheets with referent index; lists of units of information</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(cont.)</p>

Table 3.2 (cont.)

(2) Data patterning & analysis (cont.)	(C) Theoretical notes (cont.) (2) Concepts: (a) Acculturation processes (b) Global village (c) Embedded symbolic information (d) Symbolic-analytic skills (3) Hunches: Anecdotal records written on odd numbered pages in data transcription and comments attributed to "ASH" amongst summaries of the literature	
(3) Data repatterning & synthesis	(A) Categorical structure (1) Themes based on meaningful patterns (2) Definitions: (a) Literacy (b) Acculturation (c) Powershift (d) Global village (e) Embedded symbolism (f) Super-symbolic Information Age (g) Data, information, knowledge (h) Beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns, practices (i) Operational definitions for patterns in data (3) Relationships between embedded symbolic Information derived from acculturations & patterning of idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom (B) Findings and conclusions (1) Interpretations: Embedded knowledge & beliefs (2) Inferences: Transfer of embedded symbolic information between home & school (C) Final report (1) Connections to existing literature (2) Integration of concepts, relationships, & interpretations	(a) Concepts & categories (b) Explanations of concepts (a) Explanations of patternings and structures (a) Completed and published documents: Presentations at three conferences, numerous postgraduate seminars, colloquia in the Graduate School, academic lecturing
(4) Process notes	(A) Methodological notes (1) Procedures: Emergent design using qualitative methodologies (see Figure 3.1) (2) Decisions: Focus interviews to clarify issues arising from data collected; memberchecks (including Chapter 5: Results of analysis); negotiated outcomes as to what could or could not be included in the Case Report (3) Strategies: Initial questionnaire to parents; Classroom observations (video & audio tapes; field notes: running & anecdotal records); Focus interviews with parents & teacher; Teacher and children's comments & artefacts; Teacher records, reports (4) Rationale: Timeliness, Professional need, Theoretical need	(a) Daily activities (b) Decision-making rules and procedures (c) Sampling techniques (d) Descriptions of emerging design (e) Explication of analytic strategy in Chapter 4 (f) Instrument developed from literature & experience (cont.)

Table 3.2(cont.)

(4) Process notes (cont.)	<p>(B) Trustworthiness notes</p> <p>(1) Credibility: Prolonged engagement, persistent observation, over 3 years; peer debriefing, negative case analysis, progressive subjectivity & member checks.</p> <p>(2) Dependability:</p> <p>(3) Confirmability:</p> <p>(C) Audit trail notes</p> <p>(1) Substance of trail: Physical records triangulated from several sources (i.e., classroom observations, questionnaire & focus interview data, field notes, public & private records; teacher & child comments & artefacts)</p> <p>(2) Structure of trail: As described here</p>	<p>(a) Peer debriefing interactions</p> <p>(b) Member checks, interactions</p> <p>(c) Triangulation reactions</p> <p>(d) Prolonged engagement and role</p> <p>(e) Process for selection of peer debriefers & member checks (See Chapter 3 & Appendix I)</p> <p>(a) Indices</p> <p>(b) Dates</p> <p>(c) Cross references</p> <p>(d) Linkages</p>
(5) Intentions & disposition	<p>(A) Proposal</p> <p>(1) Goals, objectives, and enquiry questions</p> <p>(2) Intended methodology</p> <p>(3) Relevant literature</p> <p>(4) Information on current theory</p> <p>(B) Personal notes</p> <p>(1) Reflexive notes</p> <p>(2) Motivations</p> <p>(C) Expectations</p> <p>(1) Intentions</p>	<p>(a) Written document</p> <p>(b) Bibliography</p> <p>(a) Self evaluation and criticism</p> <p>(b) Theoretical preferences</p> <p>(c) Methodological preferences</p> <p>(d) Doubts</p>
(6) Instrument development	<p>(A) Pilot/preliminary schedules of questions presented at Postgraduate seminars</p> <p>(B) Observation formats</p> <p>(C) Questionnaires</p>	<p>(a) Rough drafts</p> <p>(b) Final Product</p>

CHAPTER 4: PROCESSES OF ANALYSIS

New constructions are, quite literally, *created realities*. They do not exist outside of the persons who create & hold them; they are not part of some "objective" world that exists apart from their constructors. They consist of certain available information configured into some integrated, systematic, "sense-making" formulation whose character depends on the level of information and sophistication (in the sense of ability to appreciate/understand/apply the information) of the constructors (Guba & Lincoln, 1989:143).

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to describe how I collated and analysed my data. I do this by describing the processes of analysis as they apply to my study. These processes are:

- a. Recognizing and accessing my data;
- b. Meaningfully patterning my data to derive useful information for the purposes of answering my research question;
- c. Tentatively applying that information in a purposive reaccession of the data to check for confirmability of my patterning (i.e., meaning making processes) of that data;
- d. Evaluating the efficacy of that application to build a body of knowledge about how young children use their knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy; and
- e. Iterating this process until redundancy (Ref.: Lincoln & Guba, 1985) in order to develop a grounded theory.

Information presented in this chapter has been organized in a manner which is consistent with the presentation of information in the other chapters (see Table 4.1). This method of presentation exposes knowledge and beliefs embedded in the data.

Table 4.1: Structure of Chapter 4

KNOWLEDGE BASE	KNOWLEDGE TYPE	PROCESSES OF ANALYSIS
<div>-> -></div> <div>INTRODUCTION</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>a. Purpose of this chapter</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>i. To describe the processes I used to collect, collate and analyse my data</div>
<div>-> -></div> <div>MY ANALYTIC PROCESS</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>b. My experience as human-as-instrument</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>i. Recognizing & purposively accessing my data</div> <div>ii. Deriving information: Meaningfully patterning the data in my study</div> <div>* The process of patterning and coding my data</div> <div>iii. Recognizing embedded layers of data</div> <div>* Intergenerational family acculturation data</div> <div>* Document analysis data</div> <div>* Classroom observation data</div> <div>iv. Building a Knowledge Base</div>
<div>-> -></div> <div>SUMMARY OF MY ANALYTIC PROCESS</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>c. An overview of Symbolic-analytic information processing</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>i. Recognizing and processing layers of embedded data:</div> <div>* Raw data</div> <div>* Embedded information</div> <div>* Embedded knowledge</div> <div>* Practices</div> <div>* Iterated patterns of practice</div> <div>* Embedded belief systems</div>

MY ANALYTIC PROCESS

This chapter is literally a "next chapter" in a new construction of meaning which is "integrated, systematic [and] 'sense-making'" (Ref.: Guba & Lincoln, 1989:143) and essential in developing a grounded theory of acculturated meaning making in the development of idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom. As Guba and Lincoln (1989:143) suggest, different points of access to data reflect different levels of

information and sophistication (in the sense of ability to appreciate/ understand/apply the information)

and define the constructed reality derived from those data. As a construction, a reality constitutes a Gestalt which Polanyi (1966:6) defines as

the outcome of an active shaping [meaningful patterning] of experience performed in pursuit of knowledge.

Knowledge is "information that has been ... refined into more general statements" (Toffler, 1990:18) concerning relational attributes of the data. In this sense knowledge itself is a Gestalt. A Gestalt is a complex whole which is more than the sum of its component parts and consists of those component parts which we can articulate and those which we cannot even though we "know" them (Polanyi, 1966). Those component parts of the Gestalt which we know but cannot articulate, according to Polanyi (1966), form part of our tacit knowledge (i.e., that which we know but cannot tell). In the context of this study, the knowledge which is pursued in the construction of a Gestalt, is the making of meaning during the construction of a Gestalt that is literacy. Polanyi (1966:6) goes on to say that

This shaping or integrating [is] the great and indispensable tacit power by which all knowledge is discovered and, once discovered, is held to be true [i.e., becomes a 'belief']. The structure of Gestalt is then recast into a logic of tacit thought, and this changes the range and perspective of the whole subject. The highest forms of integration [i.e., connection] loom largest now.

What Polanyi (1966) is describing is analogous to a symbolic-analytic information process alluded to by Toffler (1990). Polanyi (1966) argues that tacit knowledge is accessed and brought into the propositional arena through a process similar to that described by Toffler (1990). This process occurs at very high speeds and is most closely aligned with the processes of Naturalistic Inquiry (see Figure 3.3) in that it involves, among others, tacit knowledge, human-as-instrument, natural setting, qualitative methods in an iterative and recurrent process.

The process of this study is

hermeneutic because it is interpretative in character, and *dialectic* because it represents a comparison and contrast of divergent views with a view to achieving a higher-level synthesis of them all, in the Hegelian sense. Nevertheless, the major purpose of this process is not to justify one's own construction or to attack the weaknesses of constructions offered by others, but to *form a connection* between them that allows their mutual exploration by all parties (Guba & Lincoln, 1989:149).

By applying this hermeneutic dialectic process to the analysis of apparently

divergent data, I hoped to be able to synthesize the information in a way that will permit me to develop a grounded theory of how young children use their knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom. This meant looking beyond the surface or more superficial features of the child-home-school-literacy connection to a more abstract level of acculturation. As discussed in Chapter 2, previous studies of the child-home-school connection in the development of literacy have attempted to make meaningful connections relevant to the development of literacy within the child based on the presence and promotion of "literacy-promoting" practices in the home (e.g., Cairney, 1990, 1992; Toomey & Allen, 1991; Stevenson & Baker, 1987; Snowball, 1985). However, they may have failed to use a sufficiently broad and deep conceptual framework. A possible reason for this is that while they may be working at one level of abstraction that level was not sufficiently abstract (i.e., did not include highly transferable psychologically, deeply embedded, symbolic information common to the child, home and school).

The process described here did not happen in a linear, discrete or sequential fashion and neither can it be reported in a linear, discrete or sequential fashion. This thesis is about making meaning through seeking out similarities, recurring patterns, making connections, tentatively applying information and responsively evaluating that application to build a body of knowledge from which an understanding of how "the world works" can be derived and applied (in this case, to the question of how young children use their knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom). It is a process of connecting (i.e., looking for similarities, "flows" in the data) as opposed to disconnecting (i.e., looking for "significant differences" in the data). By "connecting", I mean finding paths of continuity where the data flows into each other (i.e., where the relationships between the data are intuitively obvious). By "disconnecting" I mean places where the relational aspects of the immediate data are not intuitively obvious. A "disconnection" at one point in the data may, in fact, lead to connections in another part of the data so is not an end in itself but more likely a "different" path or orientation. The psychological impact of connecting is one of an energizing, a rapid moving with the "flow" rather than fighting against it (Ref.: Adler, 1927, about going with the "flow" of energy in conflicts) as has been my experience when trying to

"disconnect" the data. I sought to achieve a sufficiently satisfying Gestalt which was able to describe the transfer of embedded information from intergenerational family acculturation to the construction of literacy in the classroom. The nature of the research process in this study was such that there is no beginning point and no clear end point which makes a two dimensional presentation of the study difficult and, while elements of the study are presented in this thesis, they do not collectively create the Gestalt that is this study (Ref.: Polanyi, 1966) or fully describe my role as human-as-instrument.

MY EXPERIENCE AS HUMAN-AS-INSTRUMENT

Once I had experienced a Gestalt in the research process documented here, I found the process "inherently inexhaustive and non exclusive" (Toffler, 1990:61) and intellectually, highly stimulating, sometimes leading to "Information Anxiety" (Ref.: Wurman, 1989) as ideas and concepts took flight until I was able to carefully reconnect them with my process of making meaning for my research. While the flights were an important part of the process, real progress was made when I was able to reconnect with the data to tentatively apply new arrangements of information from which I then formed my knowledge base of how the data were related and subsequently, my beliefs about the data and what I did with them.

This meant I coded the data several times, each time I evaluated my coding (i.e., during my application of information derived the time before when I last purposively accessed the data) and responded by changing my beliefs about the relational (i.e., connecting) aspects of the data. As my ability to make the connections increased my ability to move rapidly through the data also increased. Connections only increased when I was able to fully reimmerge myself in *all* the data many times. My immersions required me to physically handle the data, to sort through, read and reread documents, rewatch videos, relisten to tapes. This reminded me of Piaget's stage theory of child development, although my interpretation of the data would be somewhat different.

Firstly, I felt I was in the sensorimotor stage of infant development in that I had to physically connect with my data, just as a baby physically connects with everything (e.g., sucking, chewing), develops a sense of consistency

which Piaget called "object permanence" and the "concept of causality" and which I would call the beginnings of meaningful patterning of the data. My experience also coincides with what Piaget termed "Intentionality". The phases of "Intentionality" in my case were those times when I tentatively applied information derived from the data in an attempt to achieve a sufficiently satisfying Gestalt about how my data, which while "seemingly unrelated facts", were, in fact, related. As I moved through this process I began to more and more purposively reaccess my data as I was able to move from surface features of my data (i.e., words and phrases) to more abstract concepts related to my purpose for accessing the data. These surface features acted as access codes for embedded symbolic concepts of acculturation and literacy. This is analogous to the child's progress from the sensorimotor to the preoperational stage of development at which time spoken language is beginning with all its embedded symbolism. Slowly but surely, my conceptualization of the data became more and more logical and I was able to begin to articulate it, but I could not, yet, articulate it to my satisfaction (just as Piaget suggested happened during the concrete operational stage of development). However, contrary to Piaget's belief that formal operational thinking is no longer qualitative but moves to quantitative, I found my thinking richly embedded in qualitative knowledge which was inclusive, inexhaustive in its potential connections, capable of profound articulation and definitely unquantifiable. To quantify it would have severely detracted from the process, my findings and their applications. The implications of this paradox are exemplified by Kuhn's (1977:226-267) statement about the present "essential tension" of the research process:

Contrary to a prevalent impression, most new discoveries and theories in the sciences are not merely additions to the existing knowledge. To assimilate them the scientist must usually rearrange the intellectual and manipulative equipment he [sic] has previously relied upon, discarding some elements of his [sic] prior belief and practice while finding new significances in and new relationships between many others. Because the old must be revalued and reordered when assimilating the new, discovery and invention in the sciences are usually intrinsically revolutionary. Therefore, they do demand just that flexibility and open-mindedness that characterize, or indeed define, the divergent thinker. Let us henceforth take for granted the need for these characteristics. Unless many scientists possessed them to a marked degree, there would be no scientific revolutions and very little scientific advance.

Yet flexibility is not enough, and what remains is not obviously compatible with it. ... [O]nly investigations firmly rooted in the contemporary scientific tradition are likely to break that tradition and give rise to a new one. ... To do his [sic] job the scientist must undertake a complex set of intellectual and manipulative commitments. ... [He must be able] to abandon this net of commitments in favour of another of his [sic] own invention. Very often the successful scientist must simultaneously display the characteristics of the traditionalist and of the iconoclast.

The processes of science education (i.e., acculturation into science as a meaning making system) which develop what Kuhn (1977:227) describes as "convergence" in "contemporary scientific tradition" resemble a well maintained mechanism for controlling information ensuring where the knowledge-capital resides (Ref.: Toffler, 1990:61-62). What Kuhn (1977) is describing here is the tension between convergence and divergence and echoes the dilemma in literacy education mooted by Kaestle (1991:30), that is,

the history of efforts by outsiders to acquire literacy suggests the relevance of the family and group values. ... [W]hether literacy is liberating or constraining depends in part on whether it is used as an instrument of conformity or creativity

This is congruent with the tensions which I experienced and because of those tensions the paradigm of Naturalistic Inquiry was the most appropriate one for me to use. Processes inherent in Naturalistic Inquiry arrive at a negotiated meaning in which the knowledge-capital is shared among all the stakeholders (Ref.: Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Recognizing and purposively accessing my data

It is unlikely that any two people at any point in time and space will access the same data at precisely the same point at the same time in the same place. It is physically impossible. However, one can access the data from their own perspective to construct a transient, idiosyncratic (subjective) reality (Guba & Lincoln, 1989) to meet a particular need for a particular purpose at some point in time and space. Therefore, I needed to provide an anchor which would be resistant to what I might describe as constantly "shifting sands" of reality that constituted the study's pools of data to allow me to meaningfully pattern those data according their relational attributes for the purposes of this study.

Recognizing embedded layers of data

My data consisted of three main pools which were purposively accessed and reaccessed according to my analytic needs. By collapsing two or more pools of data into one pool the total number of data pools were seven (see Figure 4.1).

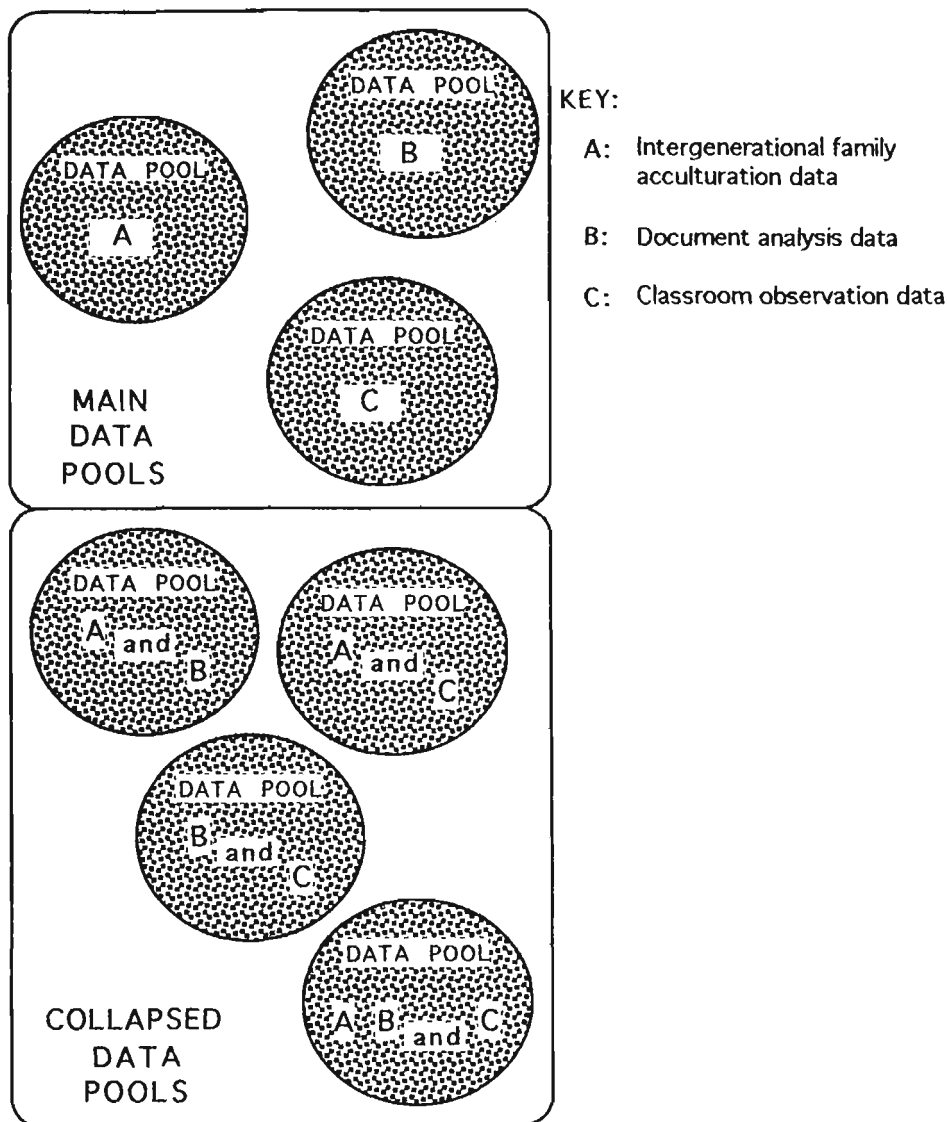


Figure 4.1: The main data pools used in this study and possible data pools derived from collapsing the main data pools

The three main data pools were:

- Intergenerational family acculturation data;
- Document analysis data; and
- Classroom observational data.

Intergenerational family acculturation data

Initially, parents completed a questionnaire (based on work by Richardson, 1987 and Guerin & Pendagast; 1976) which elicited information about their intergenerational acculturations. Additional questions specifically addressed issues about their beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices as they applied to their child from the parent's perspective. Data from parents'

responses to the questionnaire, document analysis and classroom observations were used to develop indepth interview questions to assist in the construction of mutual understandings of the acculturative dynamics at work. The intention here was to attempt to connect children's acculturally derived knowledge of the world to their actions in the classroom. These actions were seen as access codes to an underlying acculturated system of meaning making (see my discussion of this in Chapter 2) within the individual child. This is similar to the process used during family therapy using intergenerational acculturation theory whereby recurring patterns and practices are seen as manifestations of underlying beliefs, attitudes and values (Ref.: Gerwartzman, 1988; Lieberman, 1979; Guerin & Pendagast, 1976; Minuchin, 1974).

Document analysis data

This consisted of accessing six documents, three authorised by the school:

- School registration document and Information handouts about the school;
- Weekly school bulletin; and
- Teacher's notes and school reports.

Three unauthorized documents were accessed. These have not been identified in this thesis for ethical reasons (see Chapter 3).

With each of these documents the data were patterned according to practices pertaining to the school's acculturation processes. The teacher's notes and school reports were also used to provide evidence from an additional source about the nature of the child's classroom experiences and their responses to those experiences.

Classroom observational data

My engagement at the school was prolonged and sustained (for three years) and included observation in the classroom and collection of various artefacts from the children and the teacher. On occasions when I observed the children, they were participating in "free play", "choosing time", art and so on. Frequently during their non-literacy specific times, the children would

spontaneously construct literacy as part of an integrated activity at that time.

In Table 4.2 I present data accessed at the level of evidence of the data's existence such as in my reflective journal, written documents, video tapes and artefacts. In Table 4.3 I have provided a template for accessing, meaningfully patterning and analysing embedded information in the data. This process may be continued *ad infinitum* and appears to reflect the iterative processes of Naturalistic Inquiry human-as-instrument I have described above. When considered together, Tables 4.2 and 4.3 provide a model of the sensorial fugue required to appreciate the mutlidimensional dynamic nature and sheer volume of the data analysed in this study.

Deriving information: Meaningfully patterning the data in my study

Information was derived by purposively accessing and meaningfully patterning my data using the operational definitions in Table 4.4 and coding process.

The process of patterning and coding my data

Initially, I attempted to pattern all my data using only access codes (i.e., key words and phrases). This resulted in information overload, confusion and Information Anxiety as I attempted to process immense volumes of data using a procedure which was ineffective for my purposes. This led me to reassess my approach and purpose for coding the data.

Table 4.2: Data accessed for this study at the level of evidence of the data's existence

DATA TYPE	DATA SOURCE	INFORMATION TYPE	REALIZATION/ ARTICULATION
<div>-> -></div> <div>REFLECTIVE JOURNAL & MEMOS</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>a. Myself</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>i. Tacit knowledge</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>Realized by purposively stating my:</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Beliefs* Attitudes* Values* Practices</div>
		<div>-> -></div> <div>ii. Evaluative decisions</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>Realized by constantly revising my:</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Aim for the study* Research question* Research design* Sampling* Literature base* Data</div>
		<div>-> -></div> <div>iii. Reflective comments & memos</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>Realized by constantly revising my:</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Classroom observations* Research process</div>
<div>-> -></div> <div>FIELD NOTES (Running records)</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>b. Myself</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>i. Classroom observations</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>Articulated as:</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* The school's culture* Children's responses to classroom events</div>
<div>-> -></div> <div>WRITTEN DOCUMENTS</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>c. Authorized documents<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Information packages* Registration documents* Teacher records</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>i. School culture</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>Articulated as:</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Background to the school* How the school culture operates to make meaning</div>
	<div>-> -></div> <div>d. Unauthorized documents (sources not disclosed for ethical reasons - see Chapter 3)</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>i. School culture</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>Articulated as:</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Background to the school* How the school culture operates to make meaning</div>

(cont.)

Table 4.2 (cont.)

DATA TYPE	DATA SOURCE	INFORMATION TYPE	REALIZATION/ ARTICULATION
<div>-> -></div> <div>WRITTEN DOCUMENTS</div> <div>(cont.)</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>e. Parent Questionnaire</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>i. Intergenerational family acculturations</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>Articulated in the Case Studies as:</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Background to the Case Study Child* The Case Study Child as a meaning maker* The Case Study Child as a constructor of literacy</div>
<div>-> -></div> <div>VIDEO TAPES</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>f. Classroom observations</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>i. School culture</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>Articulated as:</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* How one teacher facilitates meaning making during the construction of literacy in the classroom</div>
		<div>-> -></div> <div>ii. Children's responses to school culture</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>Articulated in the Case Studies as:</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Background to the Case Study Child* The Case Study Child as a meaning maker* The Case Study Child as a constructor of literacy</div>
<div>-> -></div> <div>AUDIO TAPES</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>g. Focus interviews</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>i. Intergenerational family acculturation</div>	<div>-> -></div> <div>Articulated in the Case Studies as:</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">* Background to the Case Study Child* The Case Study Child as a meaning maker* The Case Study Child as a constructor of literacy</div>
		<div>-> -></div> <div>ii. Teacher's beliefs, attitudes, values and practices</div>	

(cont.)

Table 4.2 (cont.)

DATA TYPE	DATA SOURCE	INFORMATION TYPE	REALIZATION/ ARTICULATION
<div>-> -></div> ARTEFACTS	<div>-></div> h. Classroom products from the teacher	<div>-> -></div> i. School culture	<div>-> -></div> Articulated as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Background to the school* How the school culture operates to make meaning* How one teacher facilitates meaning making during the construction of literacy in the classroom
	<div>-> -></div> i. Classroom products from the children	<div>-> -></div> ii. Children's responses to school culture	<div>-> -></div> Articulated in the Case Studies as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Background to the Case Study Child* The Case Study Child as a meaning maker* The Case Study Child as a constructor of literacy* How the Case Study uses their knowledge of the world during the construction of literacy in the classroom

Table 4.3: My template for patterning and coding my data

DATA POOL	DATA TYPE	DATA SOURCES	DATA SUB-TYPE	ACCESS DATA SOURCE AT
ALL DATA AS PER TABLE 4.2 (already accessed several times during the course of the study)	→ → a. Written Documents	→ → i. Authorized Documents (AD)	→ → i. Registration Documents (AD1) → → ii. Information Package (AD2) → → iii. Teacher's Records (AD3) → → iv. Home-School Communications (AD4): • School Bulletins (AD4.1) • News from Infants (AD4.2) • Reminder Notes (AD4.3)	→ →
		→ → ii. Unauthorized Documents ϕ (UD) ϕ See section 3.3.1 re the reason these documents are not explicitly identified here	→ → i. Unauthorized Document 1 (UD1) → → ii. Unauthorized Document 2 (UD2) → → iii. Unauthorized Document 3 (UD3)	→ → i. Unauthorized Document 2 Purpose: To meaningfully pattern the data in terms of acculturation processes (cont.)

Table 4.3 (cont.)

PATTERN DATA	REACCESS DATA SOURCE AT	REPATTERN DATA	REACCESS DATA SOURCE AT
→ → i. Response: A meaningful patterning of the data achieved: • Key words & phrases (See Appendix IX for a full list of these)	→ → i. Unauthorized Document 3 (Using Key words & phrases as "access codes". See full list in Appendix IX) (= continued immersion in & engagement with the relevant data)	→ → i. Response: A more meaningful patterning of the data: Key Concepts • Historical • Political • Physical • Social • Educational	→ → i. Unauthorized Document 2 (= continued immersion in & engagement with the relevant data) Purpose: To apply most recent repatterning of the data & evaluate the efficacy of my patterning of it. (cont.)

Table 4.4: Operational definitions for patterns and categories used in this study

Appearances	External physical features of individuals, groups and things
Architecture	Physical and psychological (e.g., ambience) attributes of buildings, rooms
Audience	Those who * come to listen, watch, appreciate class constructions * members of the class as a group & as individuals
Case Study Child	Individual child studied in this research
Co-operation	Working together with one or more persons
Community	A sense of unity, in living, working and playing together
Curriculum	Course of study
Dealing with difficulties	Moving on from destructive or unco-operative activities or times
Definitions	Meanings of words as applied to specific settings
Education	Formal learning in schools and Tertiary institutions
Educational Context	A description of the learning environment provided by * the intergenerational family unit * the school/classroom
Efficacy	Individual efficacy: Sense of self value, self-determination, self-respect Group efficacy: Sense of group value, group-determination, group-respect
Equality of opportunity	Open to all who would like to participate
Ethic	guiding values
Ethnicity	Country, culture of origin
Events	Identifiable happenings e.g., Visit to the Orchard, <i>Peter & the Wolf</i>
Expectations	Beliefs about what is likely to happen in the future
Financial viability	Beliefs about liquidity
Grounds	Outdoor physical surrounds
Historical Political Context	A description of the background in terms of its relationships and power structures over time for * the intergenerational family unit * the school
Home-school continuum	Smooth flow in behaviour, values, beliefs, attitudes, etc. from home to school to home
Humour	Sense of amusement, ridiculousness
Interdependence	Reliance on each other without being dependent
Interpersonal relations	How individuals relate to each other
Interrelatedness	How events, actions and people are related across time and space
Learning environment	The context in which learning occurs
Learning	Process of repatterning information to create new knowledge
Meaning making	Making sense of one's experiences
Member roles	Assigned ways of behaving and relating
Modes of expression	Applying the same knowledge base to different contexts (e.g., to drama, make & build, writing)
Morality	Value judgements of what is good and bad
Motivation	Immediate reason for making meaning, constructing literacy e.g., label something
Need to control the process	Individual's need to decide when, what, how, with whom they participate in meaning making, construction of literacy
Outcomes	Products of a process
Parents	Mother and father
Persistence	Staying with, revisiting a topic, task, process over several days, weeks, months
Personality	One's general persona and approach to life
Philosophy	Statement of beliefs about education in theory and in practice at Banksia Grove School
Physical Context	A description of the physical characteristics of * the intergenerational family unit * the school/classroom
Process	the way in which something is carried out, completed, done
Proximity	Physical distances between people, things, action and events
Reliability	A quality of being highly consistent

Table 4.4 (cont.)

Respect	Self-respect: Belief in one's own worth as a human being Mutual respect: Two or more people believe in the worth of each as human beings Communal respect: Belief in the worth of a community (see above) as a dynamic system of interrelated human beings
Respectability	Appearance of "rightness"
Responsibility	Duty of care for someone or something
Rights	Something one unconditionally deserves
School	Institutionalized place of education
School reform	Changing schools from a teacher-centred focus to a child-centred focus
Self-determination	Having the ability to decide one's course
Sense of purpose	Having personally derived direction when going about things
Shared experiences	Events which are experienced by two or more people
Size	As in number or measure
Social Context	The setting within which two or more people interact
Social environment	How the classroom/school is structured to facilitate social development
Social needs	Perceived or real need to be with and share with others
Socialization	Learning to live, work and play with others
Space	Area in which interactions occur
Staffing	How employees are managed
Stakeholders	Those with vested interests
Strategies	Recurring patterns of practice in the classroom
Structure	Physical layout
Teacher attributes	Personal, professional, etc. qualities of teachers
Work	Gainful employment to provide a living
Work history	A record of types of gainful employment in which one has been involved

I realized as I was attempting to make sense out of the authorized and unauthorized school documents by coding the data using access codes that the school data could be readily sorted (i.e., patterned) into four mega categories of within an even broader category of "Context": Historical-Political, Physical, Social and Educational. I arrived at these initial categories after having immersed myself in all my data many times, each time attempting to develop an understanding that would provide me with an "honest" description of Banskia Grove School. As a means of accessing the data I believed that many of the words and phrases used in the documents were repetitive and that these were possibly indicators (i.e., access codes) of underlying concepts of what the school was really like. This is similar to the process in which acculturation theory is used in family therapy. Therapists access coded meaning making in recurring patterns and practices from the family history to uncover embedded beliefs, attitudes, values. To further appreciate the role of these "indicators" (i.e., the words and phrases) I listed what I believed were the key words and phrases from one of the documents (i.e., Unauthorized Document 2). This one off listing produced 414 key words and 307 key phrases (see Appendix X). While these lists assisted with patterning, to some degree, their assistance was limited. I was still unable to pattern the data in a way that was useful to me for the purposes of this study. An attempt at coding these data according to whether they

related to "Parent", "Child", "Teacher" or "Programme" was unsuccessful as it did not pattern the data in a way that was sufficiently meaningful for me to use either. I began a similar exercise of listing what I believed were key words and phrases with Unauthorised Document 3. I did not complete this exercise in the sense that I did not generate a full list of key words and phrases for this document. During an "initial" rereading for the express purpose of coding the data, the early discussion in this document seemed to fall into a pattern the historical and political origins of the school interspersed with comments about its physical, social and educational attributes. These patterns connected with what had been "seemingly unconnected facts" that were embedded in my key words and phrases but not obvious at a surface level. These key words and phrases had enabled me to focus on the data in a purposive manner. The outcome was a Gestalt which allowed me to repattern my data into four broad patterns within the mega category of "School Context". These broad patterns were:

- Historical-Political;
- Physical;
- Social; and
- Education.

Further refining of my patterning allowed me to include coding relating to the subject, author and stakeholders within each element of a given pattern. I then used this coding as a template for successfully coding all other data. I have attempted to illustrate this rather simple yet complex process in Table 4.3. The technique seems to sort the data loosely first (rather than very tightly, word by word) into 3 or 4 mega patterns using simple codes (e.g., 1 to 4) that do not require much effort. The next step was to add simple, or combinations of, binary codes (e.g., Code for subject of the Information Unit: 0 = Banksia Grove - BG, 9 = Not BG, 09 = BG & Not BG - when discussion includes comments about BG specifically and more general comments related to, but not directly to, BG). Other codes (e.g., applications, motivation, stakeholders, etc.) were derived from a similar process.

I applied this template to the intergenerational family acculturation data at a whole family level (i.e., not specifically focussing on the child in the Case Study), then to the authorized documents about the school and finally, to the classroom observational data at a whole class level. The order of this

process was based on what I perceived as accessibility with each data pool providing me with more confidence to attempt to pattern other less accessible data pools. The results of my analysis using this process are presented in Table 4.6¹. The analysis was complex and likewise with the results of that analysis. Hence, while this Table is rather long I felt it was important to include it at this point.

Included in Table 4.6 are embedded patterns for the broad "Context" patterns in the:

- Intergenerational family acculturation data pool;
- Document Analysis data pool; and
- Classroom observational data pool.

This process cannot happen unless all data are available and have been accessed numerous times to establish a familiar relationship with the data. I would not have particularly patterned the data using the four Context patterns until I saw how the data actually fitted.

Constructions of reality

The phenomenon of a transient idiosyncratic reality highlights one of the inherent risks of data analysis: Misrepresentation of the data. Misrepresentation can occur because "[t]he same information is subject to many equally plausible interpretations" (Guba & Lincoln, 1989:144). For this reason it is vital to a naturalistic study to include member checking as a means of negotiating a reality that is acceptable and meaningful to the stakeholders. In this thesis, it is my interpretations, in association with those of the stakeholders, that are presented. All data or interpretations of information and knowledge derived from those data presented in this thesis have been agreed to by the stakeholders. This includes those parts of this chapter in which sample analyses are presented. Like Toffler's (1990:25-26) "super-symbolic economy", my interpretations have been dependent on "the instant communication & dissemination of data, ideas, symbols, & symbolism" between myself and the other stakeholders, to permit what Guba and Lincoln (1989:149) call a *hermeneutic dialectic* to be set *en train*.

¹ This Table is presented after the text which describes it. However, some readers may find they prefer to read the Table first and then the text.

Recognizing meaningful patterns in the data

How the transfer of embedded symbolic information may occur between home and school is best understood within the context of symbolic-analytic information processes of purposive accession and meaningful patterning of data, a "real life" application of information derived from that meaningful patterning and an evaluation of the efficacy of that application which drives the next more purposive accession of the data, more meaningful patterning and so on.

Table 4.5 offers a suggestion as to how this process may operate at a general level of symbolic-analytic information processing with data, information, knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and values within an individual's Information System (Ref.: Wurman, 1989). However, for the purposes of recording the process (and outcome as a two dimensional thesis), information has been organized to provide access to the whole process by applying various definitions and understandings at the different stages of the process to reach a sufficiently satisfying Gestalt which permits another researcher to follow the process for their own purposes or to audit my work. Initially, it is essential that operational definitions for all categories in the study be stated. These are listed in Table 4.4 above. These definitions are generic to this study and more specific applications of them are given for each Case Study in the next Chapter.

My patterning and coding of the intergenerational family acculturation data for my Case Study of Christine produced three broad patterns:

- Background to the Case Study: This pattern provided information about the historical-political context in which Christine finds herself;
- Christine as a meaning maker: This pattern provided information about how Christine makes sense of her world socially, physically and educationally; and
- Christine as a constructor of literacy: This pattern provides information about how Christine constructs literacy.

Embedded within each of these broader patterns were other patterns which described the relational aspects of data in the broader patterns in some way.

The patterning of the embedded data was a process which involved a purposive accession of the data contained in the three broad patterns and meaningfully patterning them.

Table 4.5: My analytic process

COLLECTING DATA:

Purposive accession of seemingly "unconnected 'facts'" (Ref.: Toffler, 1990:18) leads to the development of Information about how the world works.

DERIVING INFORMATION:

By fitting data "into categories and classification schemes or other patterns" (Toffler, 1990:18). Application of information adds to an individual's knowledge base about how the world works.

BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE BASE:

Through further refining information "into more general statements" (Toffler, 1990:18) about how the world works. The arrangement of information in an individual's knowledge base is reflected in the way they apply their knowledge of how the world works

EVOLVING PRACTICE:

Practices reflect their derivation in the organization of information in the underlying knowledge base within the individual (i.e., their template for meaning making). Practices involve the application of an individual's knowledge of how the world works leads to the development of beliefs about the world.

BUILDING A BELIEF SYSTEM:

Refining knowledge into more general statements one holds to be "true" about people, things, actions and events. An application of beliefs leads to the development of attitudes about the world and how and why it works the way it does.

DEVELOPING AN ATTITUDE:

By organizing belief knowledge into an enduring arrangement (i.e., coding) of information *about a particular person, thing, action or event which is used to interpret interactions with and experiences related to that person, thing, action or event.* Application of attitudes leads to the development of values about what is worthwhile about how and why the world works the way it does.

DERIVING A VALUE:

By organizing attitudinal knowledge into an enduring arrangement (i.e., coding) of information *about particular persons, things, actions or events which is used to judge the worth of those persons, things, actions or events.* Values determine how we purposively access and process the data the next time round leading to patterns and practices of experiences.

ITERATING PATTERNS OF PRACTICE:

An identifiable, recurrent and enduring set of actions, in which knowledge is arranged (i.e., coded) according to one's beliefs about the world and how it works in a specific application, used to achieve a specific goal related to that application which results in a sufficiently satisfying Gestalt. Repetition of practices over time and space result in enduring patterns of practice.

Then I started on Liam's intergenerational family acculturation data. While I was attempting to pattern this data similar patterns to those in Christine's data began to emerge. On comparing the evolving patterns, it seemed to

me that both Case Studies could be patterned using the same categories. This seemed to hold true for Christine and Liam so I began to scan the data for Casey. The patterns held for Casey's intergenerational family acculturation data, too. Next, I examined the teacher's records, including school reports, and classroom observation data for similar patterns for all three children. Again these patterns were repeated. Glaser and Strauss' (1967) constant comparative analysis method, described by them as "a strategic method for *generating theory*" (p21), most closely resembles this process. However, my understanding of a symbolic analytic approach to patterning data is not one of comparison in which comparisons and contrasts are fundamental but one of effortlessly moving through the data seeking out "flows" and similarities, a much more rapid process, I think, than seeking to compare and contrast.

Bias could be seen as a potential problem for a symbolic analysis (i.e., finding only what is sought and missing or ignoring negative cases). However, it seems that the four criteria for trustworthiness are inherent in the processes of accessing and reaccessing multiple data pools, applying and reapplying patternings to multiple contexts (i.e., transferability criterion), such as different Case Studies, and evaluating and re-evaluating the efficacy of those applications. Data which do not fit the patterning template are not discarded but the template itself is reviewed until it is able to include all cases in the data (i.e., credibility criterion). The assumption here, is that all data are somehow related and any patterning of that data will accommodate this. This concurs with Toffler's (1990) notion that within an embedded symbolic information framework all data are derived from other data (i.e., they have already been meaningfully patterned to derive "information" - see the definition for information in Chapter 2). It also follows, within this framework, that patterns will be mutually supportive of one another (i.e., confirming) in the sense that embedded patterns within one broad pattern will reflect embedded patterns in the other broad patterns (i.e., confirmability criterion). Stability over time of my patterning of the data will offer a "test" of dependability (i.e., dependability criterion). How trustworthiness is established in this process is discussed in Chapter 3.

Table 4.6: Results of my analysis of the data

DATA POOL A: INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY ACCULTURATION DATA									
INFORMATION THEMES			CATEGORIES OF KNOWLEDGE		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA		CATEGORIES OF BELIEFS		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA
->->-	->->-	->->-	->->-	->->-	->->-	->->-	->->-	->->-	->->-
->->-	I. Historical-Political Context	->->-	->->-	Ethnicity	->->-	@ Originally from England "Yoeman stock" @ Originally from Wales and North Ireland - all small farmers @ English - came from "eccentric" English family with connections to the Danish Diplomatic Corps @ Originally from Wales/Western England - farm labourers /craftsmen	->->-	->->-	
->->-		->->-	->->-	Proximity	->->-	@ in Australia for at least four generations @ lived in and around Western Queensland @ arrived in Australia between 1850s and 1880s @ pioneer selectors around the Sunshine Coast of Queensland - north of Brisbane @ [PGF] came to Australia during WWII to marry @ arrived in Australia in the early part of this century @ Deaths of 2 sons in WWII	->->-	->->-	@ there is also a theme of melancholy which still exists and may be related to the premature deaths of two out of four sons during the Second World War @ many fears of death/illness/expectation of things "going wrong" @ some superstition @ belief in E.S.P. and fortune telling @ some mental instability with at least one suicide two generations ago @ preoccupation with physical illness
->->-		->->-	->->-	Events	->->-	@ suicide two generations ago @ stress related illnesses @ high use of sedatives; sleeping tablets @ Basically men and women relate superficially @ strong women networks @ emphasis on men and women as partners	->->-	->->-	@ emphasis on lots of women talk and gossip @ men tolerated as providers on money and children! @ some incidents of sexual abuse - outside perpetrators, not incest - discussed freely among the women @ some domestic violence and divorce in the extended family (cont.)
->->-		->->-	->->-	Interpersonal Relationships	->->-		->->-	Motivation	

Table 4.6 (cont.)

DATA POOL A: INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY ACCULTURATION DATA

INFORMATION THEMES		CATEGORIES OF KNOWLEDGE		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA		CATEGORIES OF BELIEFS		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA	
(cont.)	-> ->	-> ->	-> ->	(cont.)	-> ->	-> ->	-> ->	(cont.)	-> ->
i. Historical-Political Context (cont.)	-> ->	Interpersonal Relationships (cont.)	-> ->	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> @ relate on a superficial basis @ some family feuding @ much feuding, infighting and alliance forming between various members of the family @ sibling rivalry carried on throughout lives @ avoid difficult emotional issues 	-> ->	Motivation (cont.)	-> ->	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> @ all very self-centred - uninterested in others' lives @ alliances continually shift @ huge family feud three generations ago when all land left to favoured son - resentment of this continues almost to present generation @ embarrassed by sexuality, overt displays of affection other than to children 	-> ->
	-> ->		-> ->	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> @ lots of humour at their own & others' expenses @ lots of bawdy humour; @ excellent at sewing, cooking, running a clean house 	-> ->		-> ->	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> @ the "wag" is very much valued @ excessive drinking TUTI TUTI and self indulgence @ pride in traditional women's skills 	-> ->
	-> ->		-> ->	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> @ women good homemakers. @ great love of babies and children @ children really considered a "nuisance" @ produce very few [children] @ love of dancing of all types @ large social networks 	-> ->		-> ->	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> @ [re housework] (not in the present generation! - just guilt about it!) @ pride in children @ children ... to be "seen but not heard" @ sentimental about children 	-> ->
	-> ->	Education	-> ->	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> @ no emphasis on the importance of education for women, although changing slightly in the present generation 	-> ->	Learning	-> ->	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> @ interested in people @ Rose [Case Study's mother] only female in family (immediate and extended) to be tertiary educated 	-> ->
	-> ->		-> ->	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> @ Evidence of some learning disabilities @ a great deal of emphasis on education for both men and women 	-> ->		-> ->	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> @ believed strongly in the importance of education @ very wide general knowledge 	-> ->
	-> ->	Work History	-> ->	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> @ well educated and talented - great interest in writing; current affairs; politics @ worked mainly as station employees i.e., stockmen or station managers @ also occupations such as barbers, mechanics @ had been farm labourers in the UK - became successful and well-off land owners in Australia @ the music hall and stage; salesmen 	-> ->	Work	-> ->		-> ->

(cont.)

Table 4.6 (cont.)

DATA POOL A: INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY ACCULTURATION DATA

INFORMATION THEMES		CATEGORIES OF KNOWLEDGE		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA		CATEGORIES OF BELIEFS		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA	
-> ->	i. Historical-Political Context (cont.)	-> ->	Work History (cont.)	(cont.)	@ mostly worked in building industry; clerical jobs	-> ->	Work (cont.)	-> ->	@ not wealthy, but always in employment
-> ->		-> ->	Ethic	@ "Respectable"	@ other labouring	-> ->	Respectability	-> ->	@ not religious although nominally C of E
-> ->		-> ->		@ No great emphasis on material wealth	@ very "up right" and religious	-> ->		-> ->	@ Emphasis on being well dressed / "good looking"
-> ->		-> ->		@ all fairly healthy farm stock, no great physical illnesses - very large families	@ very "up right" and religious	-> ->		-> ->	@ Physical appearance important
-> ->		-> ->		@ staunch "old" labour supporters	@ all fairly healthy farm stock, no great physical illnesses - very large families	-> ->	Reliability	-> ->	@ emphasis on Protestant respectability
-> ->		-> ->		@ fairly rigid and intolerant of those who fell by the wayside	@ all fairly healthy farm stock, no great physical illnesses - very large families	-> ->		-> ->	@ Emphasis on ... the work ethic
-> ->		-> ->			@ staunch "old" labour supporters	-> ->		-> ->	@ belief in being reliable, hard working and giving service to the community
-> ->		-> ->			@ fairly rigid and intolerant of those who fell by the wayside	-> ->		-> ->	@ belief in unions and the rights of the working man to better himself
-> ->		-> ->			@ fairly rigid and intolerant of those who fell by the wayside	-> ->		-> ->	@ such a rigid family has produced some notable black sheep such as alcoholics psychotics and the occasional criminal (also occasional Catholic marrier!)
-> ->		-> ->			@ high moral standards	-> ->	Morality	-> ->	@ the worst sins in the family were to "drink" and marry a Catholic!
-> ->		-> ->			@ "down to earth"	-> ->	Appearances	-> ->	@ some mental instability with at least one suicide two generations ago
-> ->		-> ->			@ material wealth and appearance of wealth important	-> ->		-> ->	@ reputation for being "hard" on their children and expecting them to work on the farms
-> ->		-> ->			@ Very profligate	-> ->		-> ->	@ some community leaders such as magistrates, local government representatives
-> ->		-> ->			@ "avant garde" interests	-> ->		-> ->	@ very tight with money
-> ->		-> ->				-> ->		-> ->	@ all family money spent on entertainment and having a good time
-> ->		-> ->				-> ->		-> ->	@ a sense that this was really a very important family who weren't really occupying their rightful place in the world
-> ->		-> ->				-> ->		-> ->	@ living for the "good old days"
-> ->		-> ->				-> ->		-> ->	@ always blaming others for their misfortunes
-> ->		-> ->				-> ->		-> ->	@ impressed by "famous people"
-> ->		-> ->				-> ->		-> ->	@ impressed ... by vulgar displays of wealth
-> ->		-> ->				-> ->		-> ->	@ art; aboriginal cause; theatre - important to stand up and be counted

DATA POOL A: INTERGENERATIONAL FAMILY ACCULTURATION DATA

$$\begin{matrix} \wedge, \\ \wedge, \\ \wedge, \end{matrix}$$

INFORMATION THEMES		CATEGORIES OF KNOWLEDGE		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA		CATEGORIES OF BELIEFS		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA	
->	i. Historical-Political Context (cont.)	-> -> Ethic (cont.)	-> ->	@ protestant/Methodist at first, later to become champions of the working class @ opiated	-> -> Rights	-> ->	@ suspicious of the "bosses"	-> ->	@ rigid and very strong system of belief in the rights of working class @ not afraid to speak up
->	ii. Educational Context	-> -> Definitions	-> ->	@ Literacy - making meaning of the various symbols and concepts of our culture	-> ->	-> ->	@ hence basic literacy is the ability to read and write our language to a degree which allows one to function in society ...	-> ->	@ The best way recognizes the uniqueness of the child and strikes a balance between providing guidance, provoking challenge and
		-> -> Processes	-> ->	@ How is a child best educated? - By recognizing that there is no one way to best accomplish this	-> ->	-> ->	@ Both were regarded as 'good' readers and writers both in primary and secondary school and both read and wrote for recreation	-> ->	@ there was never, for instance, an insistence that we read rather than watch television. However, books were always available and it was always regarded as a 'good' thing that we were interested in reading
		-> -> Parents	-> ->	@ Both parents read from an early age (6-7) and experienced no difficulties with literacy @ Neither famli made a deliberate effort to encourage literacy	-> -> Expectations	-> ->	@ In many ways she resembles [male sibling]. She likes to have considerable control over the process ...	-> ->	@ Beyond this it is probably futile
		-> -> Case Study	-> ->	@ I'm very conscious of how she learns compared with [siblings' names].	-> ->	-> ->	@ [she recognizes] words mainly in context like the video label	-> ->	@ no concerns about this
		-> -> Child	-> ->	@ We hope she leads a happy, fulfilling and healthy life @ Reading the labels on video tapes @ [she's] not really [writing any words], apart from her name	-> -> Learning -> -> Learning (cont.)	-> ->	@ Probably [her] sense of humour and her persistence are two striking features	-> ->	@ She saw the decision of a playmate to play with someone else as a shift in allegiance
		-> -> School	-> ->	@ There are lots of adjectives which spring to mind @ This [getting on with her peers] is one of her central concerns about school @ It worked for [siblings] @ Ideas are drawn from the children and form the basis for many school activities @ Compared with the second semester the first was definitely shakier @ work out an approach for home and school which was consistent and mutually supportive	-> -> Socialization -> -> Expectations -> -> Learning environment -> -> Outcomes -> -> Dealing with difficulties	-> ->	@ Hilary provides an excellent model of co-operation, tolerance and respect for the individual. @ We're delighted with [Case Study child's name]'s year	-> ->	@ talk with Hilary to see whether we had the same view on [her] learning

(cont.)

DATA POOL B: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

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Table 4.6 (cont.)

DATA POOL B: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

CATEGORIES OF KNOWLEDGE			CATEGORIES OF BELIEFS			EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA		
INFORMATION THEMES	OF KNOWLEDGE	EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA	OF BELIEFS			EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA		
-> ii. Physical Context (cont.)	-> Grounds	-> @ We stood on the oval, looking down at the herd of kangaroos grazing near one of the small dams. As we approached, the roos moved quietly towards the shade of the pine forest some fifty metres away to our left. ... the greys and browns of the thirty or so tree trunks and the dappled olive greens of the foliage set against a sea of knee-deep yellow-brown summer grass. There'd be snakes in there, we knew, and we were glad that during the weekend parents had mown around the school (UD3:1)	-> Learning environment	-> @ Respect for the environment (AD1:48)	-> @ Humankind must learn to live in a finite natural environment, and an understanding of the natural world will aid it in doing so (AD1:30)			
	-> Proximity	-> @ The school sat in a small hollow in some six or seven hectares of undulating bushland (UD2:1)	-> Home-school continuum	-> @ Banksia Grove as a total concept (UD3:20)				
	-> Size	-> @ We could hear the distant hum of the morning traffic, but otherwise there was no hint that Cherrybrook's suburbs were just over the rise beyond the dam (UD2:1)	-> Interdependence	-> @ AT BANKSIA GROVE WE EXPECT THE HOME ENVIRONMENT TO BE SOMEWHERE NEAR THE SCHOOL'S ENVIRONMENT IN TERMS OF THE ATTITUDES AND APPROACHES TO READING ACQUISITION (AD1:65)				
	-> Space	-> @ We set a maximum of 25 children in each class, and provide age groupings of 3-4 years span to allow closer reflection of family structure (AD1:45)	-> Interdependence	-> @ to the group it immediately serves, it is not a school in essence, it is a continuation from home (UD3:1)				
	-> Structure	-> @ The architecture is open-plan, interrelated and interconnected in construction and function (UD3:7)	-> Equality of opportunity	-> @ The quality of education is influenced by the relationships between home, school and community (AD1:30)				
		-> @ Council is the School's Policy Making body. It brings together recommendations from its two major advisory committees (Education and Finance), and is	-> Interdependence	-> @ given the opportunity to plan a building to suit one's own educational methods means that the building can become a teaching aid in itself. ... The buildings can be designed so that educational links are topographically expressed (UD 1:41).	-> @ Rules of the Banksia Grove School Incorporated Part 3 - Clause 12(4) (AD1:157).			(cont.)

Table 4.6 (cont.)

DATA POOL B: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

INFORMATION		CATEGORIES		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA		CATEGORIES		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA	
THEMES	OF KNOWLEDGE	OF BELIEFS							
-> ii. Physical Context (cont.)	-> Structure (cont.)	-> Interdependence (cont.)	-> @	(cont.) responsible for the Association and the Working Groups, and other items as laid down in the Constitution. Within the Council there would be an Executive, or Management Group, as at present (UD1:219)	-> @	-> Community	-> @	This is a pleasant occasion in which old parents welcome the new (AD2:42)	
-> iii. Social Context	-> Events	-> Financial Viability	-> @	WELCOME BBQ 6.00-9.00PM SATURDAY 16 FEBRUARY [...] PENINSULAR	-> @	-> Community	-> @	MEDIEVAL NIGHT	
-> iv. Educational Context	-> Curriculum	-> Shared experiences	-> @	This fundraising event is being assisted by [Parent...] and [Parent...], members of The Society for Creative Anachronism (AD2:147)	-> @	-> Interdependence	-> @	This event was a great success with over 100 people attending. After paying for the Mediaeval Society, Banksia Grove made over \$150. It was great seeing the Kindies really enjoying themselves, dancing and playing games. Thank you Hilary [Infants teacher], for engendering a great deal of enthusiasm for this occasion. Some people put a lot of effort into their costumes, especially M[student] and J[parent] H[surname], who came as Court Jesters and looked wonderful. L[Secondary student] and G[Secondary teacher] both looked very eastern in their outfits. Photos are on display in the School Office if anyone wants to order copies (AD2:147)	
-> v. Responsibilities	-> Responsibilities	-> Responsibilities	-> @	BANKSIA GROVE SCHOOL INCORPORATED NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	-> @	-> Responsibilities	-> @	Powers of Council - Rules of the Banksia Grove School Incorporated - Part 3 Clause 12 (AD1:157).	
-> vi. Learning	-> Learning	-> Learning	-> @	Notice is hereby given that- Annual General Meeting of Banksia Grove School will be held at the School at 8pm on Tuesday, 15 June 1993. All members of the Association are encouraged to attend (AD2:125)	-> @	-> Learning	-> @	The inter-connectedness of all knowledge is natural, and we aim to maintain that and not artificially compartmentalise learning. Themes provide an excellent way of combining different "subject areas" (AD1:37).	
-> vii. Shared experiences	-> Shared experiences	-> Shared experiences	-> @	Setting up an animal farm, for example, involves natural science, maths, art, craft, some construction work and language. We take care, however not to impose themes on the children, but often to take a lead from their current interests; on the other hand, new and fascinating topics can be introduced to the children and	-> @	-> Shared experiences	-> @		(cont.)

DATA POOL B: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

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Table 4.6 (cont.)

DATA POOL B: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

(cont.)

INFORMATION		CATEGORIES		CATEGORIES		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA	
THEMES	OF KNOWLEDGE	OF BELIEFS	OF BELIEFS	OF BELIEFS	OF BELIEFS	OF BELIEFS	OF BELIEFS	OF BELIEFS	OF BELIEFS
-> -> Iv Educational Context (cont.)	-> -> Philosophy (cont.)	-> -> Interdependence (cont.)	-> -> Equality of opportunity	-> -> Interdependence	-> -> Learning	-> -> Individual efficacy	-> -> @	completely to themselves, perhaps some children wouldn't have the courage to attempt what is hard, challenging, a bit frightening. Perhaps we, as adults, wouldn't either. But surrounded by other people (adults and, very importantly, other children) who are helpful, understanding and trusted, or who are models, children will venture out into the unknown, and will tackle what doesn't come easily (UD2:2)	-> -> @ Children, from the earliest years, are capable of thinking and understanding; and are capable, with appropriate guidance, of making choices and decisions and accepting responsibility for their actions (AD1:29).
-> -> Stakeholders	-> -> @	-> -> @	-> -> @	-> -> @	-> -> @	-> -> @	-> -> @	This year the primary school tried a new way of presenting mid-year reports. "Formal" interviews between teachers and parents replaced the usual prose style written reports. The teachers have discussed the process and before it is decided whether or not to adopt something similar in the future, we would like to have some feedback from parents (AD2:86)	-> -> @ We intend that parents shall take some interest in the teaching, and that their representatives shall keep in touch with the teachers. The head teacher will play an important part in maintaining this liaison (UD1:19)
-> -> Strategies	-> -> @	-> -> @	-> -> @	-> -> @	-> -> @	-> -> @	-> -> @	This is often achieved by making decisions about the general principles or concepts to be learned and finding specific examples which are relevant to the children. So, for example, a lesson in using source documents for historical method might focus on contemporary politics, bushrangers, the first fleet, family records or recent school publications. The historical method can be the	-> -> @ This is often achieved by making decisions about the general principles or concepts to be learned and finding specific examples which are relevant to the children. So, for example, a lesson in using source documents for historical method might focus on contemporary politics, bushrangers, the first fleet, family records or recent school publications. The historical method can be the

(cont.)

DATA POOL B: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

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Table 4.6 (cont.)

DATA POOL C: CLASSROOM OBSERVATION DATA

INFORMATION		CATEGORIES OF KNOWLEDGE		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA OF SCHOOL'S/TEACHER'S ARTICULATION OF THE SCHOOL'S PHILOSOPHY		CATEGORIES OF SCHOOL/TEACHER BELIEFS		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA OF CHILDREN'S RESPONSES TO THE SCHOOL'S PHILOSOPHY	
THEMES									
i. Physical Context	-> ->	-> -> Architecture	-> ->	@ Cathedral ceilings; two irregular angular shaped rooms with quiet room, windows, French doors on three sides to (paved, grassed) outdoor area covered pergolas, log style-seats, native gardens, climbing and shade trees, bushes; sandpit; climbing equipment, swing	-> ->	-> -> Learning environment	-> ->		
		-> -> Grounds	-> ->	@ Separate Kindergarten (intake) area	-> ->	-> -> Home-school continuum	-> ->		
		-> -> Proximity	-> ->	@ Connected rooms in infants area	-> ->		-> ->		
		-> -> Size	-> ->	@ Kindergarten = 17	-> ->		-> ->		
		-> -> Space	-> ->	@ Infants group ≈ 32 children in two groups	-> ->		-> ->	@ Self-determination	-> -> @ Children move freely between the two class areas as they participate in different activities and use the various resources
				@ Indoor areas include: small group desks, desks for pairs and individual desks; large floor space for using equipment (maths, construction e.g. Lego, board games, blocks); wet area for Make and Build (using recycled materials) and painting etc.; reading corner with big cushions; pigeon holes for school bags, teacher, individual; children's and class (eg recounts, useful words, general information) work on walls and benches; flows to outdoor area	-> ->	-> -> Mutual respect	-> ->		
ii. Social Context	-> ->	-> -> Events	-> ->	@ Excursions: Weekly "Going out mornings"	-> ->	-> -> Learning	-> ->	@ Learning	-> -> @ Children move freely between indoor and outdoor areas at choosing times and breaks
					-> ->	-> -> Responsibility	-> ->	@ Responsibility	-> -> @ Children list items they will need to take on their bushwalk to Mt
					-> ->	-> -> Self-determination	-> ->	@ Self-determination	
					-> ->	-> -> Learning	-> ->	@ Learning	
					-> ->	-> -> Learning environment	-> ->	@ Learning environment	
				@ Audience for another class	-> ->	-> -> Mutual respect	-> ->	@ Mutual respect	-> -> @ The children visit Leah's class to be an audience for a class play
		-> -> Stakeholders	-> ->	@ Year 10 farewell	-> ->	-> -> Interrelatedness	-> ->	@ Interrelatedness	-> -> @ Children listen intently as Hilary explains the process
				@ Parents	-> ->	-> -> Shared experiences	-> ->	@ Shared experiences	-> -> @ Children script and produce play 'Around the world'. They make invitations for parents and friends to visit and bring foods from different cultures
				@ Children	-> ->	-> -> Shared meanings	-> ->	@ Shared meanings	
				@ Teacher	-> ->	-> -> Mutual respect	-> ->	@ Mutual respect	
					-> ->	-> -> Interdependence	-> ->	@ Interdependence	

(cont.)

Table 4.6 (cont.)

DATA POOL C: CLASSROOM OBSERVATION DATA

INFORMATION		CATEGORIES OF KNOWLEDGE		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA OF SCHOOL'S/TEACHER'S ARTICULATION OF THE SCHOOL'S PHILOSOPHY		CATEGORIES OF SCHOOL/TEACHER BELIEFS		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA OF CHILDREN'S RESPONSES TO THE SCHOOL'S PHILOSOPHY	
THEMES									
-> -> ii. Social Context (cont.)	-> -> Learning Environment	-> -> @ Free play -> -> @ Writing down/Choosing time -> -> @ Group Time -> -> @ Work wheel -> -> @ Group collage -> -> @ Dealing with conflict -> -> @ Dealing with destructive behaviour -> -> @ Room layouts -> -> @ Going out mornings -> -> @ Work groupings -> -> @ Free play -> -> @ Writing Down/Choosing Time -> -> @ Involving parents -> -> @ Children -> -> @ Adults -> -> @ Child-centred approach to teaching and learning, e.g., asking children for suggestions for class activities -> -> @ Teacher initiated: Reading 'Daniel the reluctant duck' and relating it to the Duck dance & the presence of wild ducks in the school -> -> @ Storytime	-> -> Socialization -> -> Individual efficacy -> -> Mutual respect -> -> Co-operation -> -> Individual & group efficacy -> -> Co-operation -> -> Mutual respect -> -> Individual & group efficacy -> -> Individual efficacy -> -> Socialization -> -> Learning -> -> Home-school continuum -> -> Learning -> -> Individual efficacy -> -> Communal respect -> -> Learning -> ->	-> -> @ Children arrive at school and move naturally into free play (Co Individually, all the children tell Hillary what they will do during this time -> -> @ Children listen to each others' news; to a story -> -> @ Members of groups work in close proximity, sometimes interacting -> -> @ Children participate in individualized open-ended exercises -> -> @ One child decides to move away from the other child -> -> @ The class discusses damage to bushes outside the Principal's office, decide to repair what they can, replace others and write a letter of apology to the Principal -> -> @ Children appear confident to use resources and equipment -> -> @ Children know the routine and move easily into small groups -> -> @ Children continue something begun earlier -> -> @ Children become (deeply) involved in an activity of specific interest to them -> -> @ Children participate in mixups when parents take small groups for activities, etc. e.g., cooking; published books -> -> @ Write thankyou letters/ articles for the school bulletin -> -> @ Children write and use functional classroom signs everyday -> -> @ Children script and produce puppets shows, plays, bring materials from home -> -> @ Children relate their own experiences and knowledge relevant to what the teacher is saying					
-> -> iii. Educational Context	-> -> Audience -> -> Curriculum								(cont.)

Table 4.6 (cont.)

DATA POOL C: CLASSROOM OBSERVATION DATA

INFORMATION		CATEGORIES OF KNOWLEDGE		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA OF SCHOOL'S/TEACHER'S ARTICULATION OF THE SCHOOL'S PHILOSOPHY		CATEGORIES OF SCHOOL/TEACHER BELIEFS		EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA OF CHILDREN'S RESPONSES TO THE SCHOOL'S PHILOSOPHY	
THEMES									
(cont.) ->									

(cont.)

DATA POOL C: CLASSROOM OBSERVATION DATA

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For each Case Study the following patterns emerged from the data:

- Background to the Case Study child;
 - Introduction to the person [child's name];
 - Intergenerational family acculturation; and
 - Why the parents chose Banksia Grove School for their child.

This pattern provides an historical insight into the child and their family and connects recurring intergenerational family acculturation patterns with current patterns within the family.

- The individual child as a meaning maker:
 - Modes of expression;
 - Persistence;
 - Humour; and
 - Social needs.

The data seemed to indicate that children were always trying to make sense of their experiences in the classroom. It is this "making sense" that I have called "meaning making". The children in my study, while appearing to make meaning in similar ways did so from very different perspectives (i.e., knowledge of how the world works). Making meaning in this general sense was important to document as it constitutes the children's "knowledge of the world".

- The individual child as a constructor of literacy:
 - Exploration of different modes of expression.
 - Need to control the process;
 - Persistence; and
 - Sense of purpose.

Defining literacy as a transient, idiosyncratic Gestalt, which is a by product of constructions of meaning from symbolic and embedded symbolic information in textual data allowed me to connect the construction of literacy to the making of meaning. Meaning making is

intrinsic in the process of constructing literacy. For like literacy (see my elaboration on my definition in Chapter 2), meaning making is a creative, critical, receptive and expressive act (of communication) in which signs and codes from the whole environment are the text. As such, it involves the meaningful patterning of embedded symbolic information, the negotiation of meanings for oral, verbal and non-verbal (sensory and affective) communication including the ability to retrieve (with understanding and appreciation) and compose written communication. This is always a dyadic event in which there is always a sender and a receiver (these can be one and the same or different) between whom a message is relayed. It is context specific across space and over time.

When constructing literacy, each child in my study clearly made meaning by using their "knowledge of the world" and how it works based on their intergenerational family and school acculturations. How the recognition of meaningful patterns occurs during the development of idiosyncratic responses when young children construct literacy in the classroom is illustrated in my Case Studies of three young children (see Chapter 5). There seem to be several layers at which the data could have been accessed to develop an understanding of the processes involved. These included:

- a. Describing embedded symbolic (acculturation) information in the school;
- b. Describing embedded symbolic (acculturation) information in the home;
- c. Identifying the presence and role of embedded symbolic (acculturation) information processing in the individual child;
- d. Showing evidence of a transfer of embedded symbolic information between home and school; and
- e. Describing embedded symbolic information transfer between home and school during the construction of literacy

To understand how accessing the data at the above layers affected my

interpretation of that data, I needed to develop a knowledge base about the roles of acculturation and literacy in meaning making and ultimately the construction of reality.

Building a Knowledge Base

During the coding process, as I found meaningful patterns I purposively reaccessed the data to confirm or disconfirm the credibility of my template for making meaning from my patterning of my data. This process enabled me to build a knowledge base from which I could explore the data with the aim of finding an answer to how young children use knowledge of the world derived from their families of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom. This knowledge base consisted of a meaning making template of embedded symbolic information processing which I then applied to each of my Case Studies as a "test" of transferability. Dependability was enhanced by the maintenance of an audit trail (see Table 3.2), extensive member checking of my interpretations presented in the Case Studies and an audit by a colleague.

The next logical step in this study was to apply my patterning of the data to a specific context: That of children constructing literacy in the classroom. In the next chapter I present three Case Studies of children as a "test" of transferability of the embedded symbolic information processing framework I have developed thus far.

SUMMARY OF MY ANALYTIC PROCESS

As I read back over what I've just written, it looks as if the volume of data was unwieldily but this was true only at a superficial level. As I analysed my data using Toffler's (1990) framework, the following embedded layers emerged:

- The raw data;
- Embedded information;
- Embedded knowledge;
- Practices derived from the embedded belief system;
- Recurring patterns of practice; and

- An embedded belief system (i.e., beliefs, attitudes and values).

Figure 4.2 is an attempt at a pictorial representation of emergence of these embedded layers in the data.

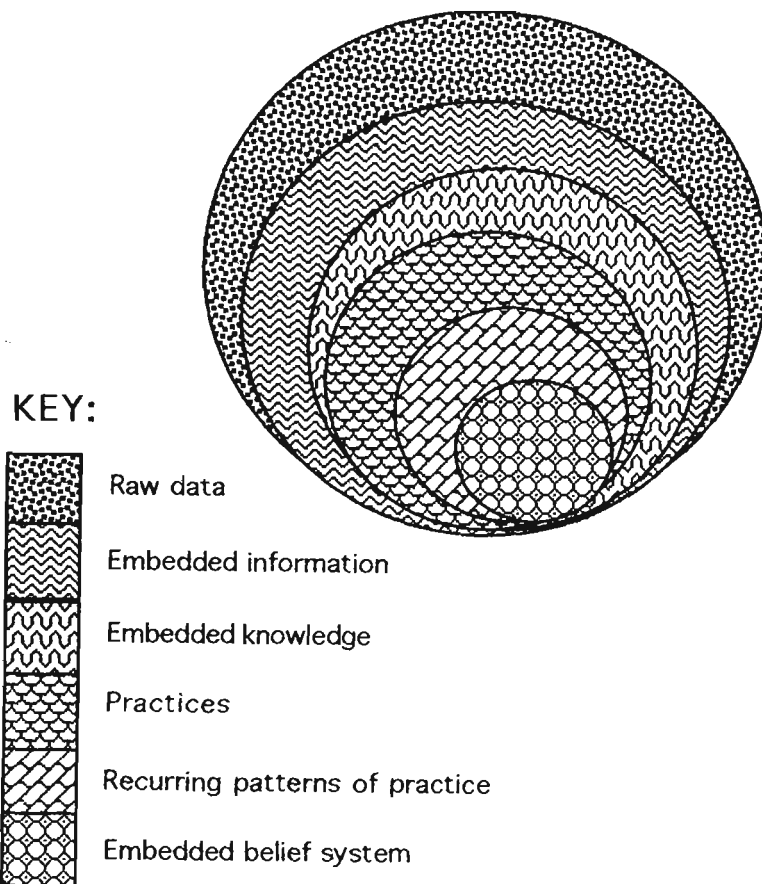


Figure 4.2: The manifestation of the embedded layers of data accessed in this study

I have termed this process of analysis *symbolic analytic information processing*.

AN OVERVIEW OF SYMBOLIC-ANALYTIC INFORMATION PROCESSING

Having reached this stage in the process, I cannot say the data were "reduced" for that would be incongruent with the conceptual framework I have employed. The data were still there regardless of what I did or did not do and open access to the whole data pool was an essential component of the iterative and recurrent symbolic analytic process. Within such a framework, it was possible to start "seeing" embedded nuances in every aspect of the data. This was overwhelming and had to be constrained by returning to the purpose for accessing the data to allow me to work within a

holistic systemic framework and refrain from approaching a reductionist conceptualization of dealing with the data. The point at which one purposively accesses the data is quite arbitrary as there is no point at which embedded nuances (super-symbolic information) do not exist. With this in mind, I chose to focus on identifying the processes for purposively accessing and meaningfully patterning information and not to focus on the more superficial surface features of literacy practices (Ref.: Christie, 1990; Stanovich, 1980). As stated in Chapter 2, I argued the framework used by previous researchers emphasized superficial features of literacy. I pointed out then, I chose to use Toffler's (1990) framework to "purposively access" and "meaningfully pattern" the embedded information and not focus on the superficial surface features of literacy as do Christie (1990) and Stanovich (1980). Surface features are included, though, as evidence of developing literacy practices in each of the young children. The focus is on how each child idiosyncratically patterned their responses to make meaning during their constructions of literacy in the classroom and this is reflected in the way in which the data were coded. This process appears to involve recognizing processing of embedded symbolic data.

Recognizing and processing layers of embedded data

When data are gathered to the point of redundancy (i.e., when no new information is provided by the data, Lincoln & Guba, 1985) as in a Naturalistic Inquiry such as this one, the volume of data gathered can become unwieldy. However, that unwieldiness mostly exists at a relatively functional level of data analysis. By applying the framework developed from Toffler (1990) and the tools of Naturalistic Inquiry to the analysis of the data, it will be possible to highlight deeply embedded social and cultural nuances of the processes that support the individual's world view and from which they derive highly transferable (embedded symbolic) knowledge about how the world works during the construction of literacy in the classroom.

I have defined these layers of data as follows:

Raw data

Data, according to Toffler (1990) are "unrelated 'facts'". I have modified this definition to read seemingly "unrelated 'facts'" because they are actually

related even before we have detected those relationships through meaningful patterning of data. *Raw data* in this study include the underlying beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices of the intergenerational family unit and the school. This layer of data represents the outer reaches of this particular study;

Embedded information

This is comprised of purposively accessed and meaningfully patterned raw data, "that have been fitted into categories and classification schemes or other patterns" (Ref.: Toffler, 1990:18). Context patterns, in Table 4.3, derived from the data are an example of these patterns. The patterns in this study were derived from the point at which I "arbitrarily" purposively accessed the data (i.e., I arbitrarily chose to conduct this study with a specific focus and within the conceptual and theoretical framework which I have taken).

Embedded knowledge

This constitutes one layer of embedded information derived from meaningfully patterning data in the embedded information layer. Like embedded information, the derivation of embedded knowledge depends on the point at which the data pool was purposively accessed and how the data were patterned. Patterns, such as applications, events and motivation, embedded in the data which have been meaningfully patterned into "Context" information, constitute embedded knowledge within that information (see Table 4.3 above). This knowledge is information which has been "refined into more general statements" by being "fitted into categories and classification schemes or other patterns" (Toffler, 1990:18) about "how the world works".

Practices

Practices are developed in the process of purposively accessing and meaningfully patterning the data. They are embedded in the code used to meaningfully pattern information data into knowledge and are a response to making meaning based on our knowledge of "how the world works". They are the superficial surface components which contribute to (but do not

constitute) a Gestalt in meaning making.

Iterated patterns of practice

When patterns of practice are repeated, they may be considered to be relatively enduring. It is at the level of practice that information seems to again become increasingly abstract for embedded within a practice is the belief system about the nature of what is "true", how to make meaning (i.e., how to interpret data) and what value to place on which data, information and knowledge.

Embedded belief systems

Embedded beliefs, attitudes and values were identified from the children's responses to the making of meaning and the construction of literacy in the classroom when the classroom observation data were pooled with the intergenerational family acculturation data for each child to form one pool of data which could then be meaningfully patterned to derive information about the embedded belief system of each child.

I derived this process from Toffler's (1990) definition of data, information and knowledge and my definitions of beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices in Chapter 1 (see Table 1.2). These definitions were in response to my reading of Toffler's (1990) definitions of data, information and knowledge from his conceptual framework and my attempt to define beliefs, attitudes and values using Rokeach's (1972) theoretical framework. It became obvious to me that Rokeach's (1972) definitions were inadequate within Toffler's (1990) conceptual framework which I laid over this study. The result was that I derived my own definitions as in Table 1.2 and it is these definitions which have been used to conceptualize the process of analysis I used in this study. My process of analysis by which these embedded layers of data were accessed is articulated in Table 4.3.

My processes of analysis are probably best understood when they are applied to actual case studies as presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS OF ANALYSIS

The real world is nothing but a vast jumble of noises, shapes, colors, smells, and textures - essentially meaningless until the human mind imposes some order upon them. The capacity for abstraction - for discovering patterns and meanings - is, of course, the very essence of symbolic analysis, in which reality must be simplified so that it can be understood and manipulated in new ways (Reich, 1993:229).

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I present the results of analysing my data using Toffler's (1990) conceptual framework to discover and describe acculturated patterns and meanings. I do this in order to develop a grounded theory of how young children use their knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom. To do this I describe the background of the children's school, how the school culture operates to make meaning, how the school culture facilitates the construction of literacy and how the teacher facilitates meaning making during the construction of literacy in the classroom. This description is based on information from authorized and unauthorized documents, classroom observations and teacher interviews. It is the school's acculturation process as it describes the school's beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices. I use this information to provide the school context in which to present the Case Studies of the three children in a similar fashion (i.e., I describe the background of each child, how each child makes meaning, how each child constructs literacy in the classroom). The structure of this chapter is set out in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Structure of Chapter 5

DATA TYPE	INFORMATION TYPE	INTERPRETATIVE RESPONSE
-> -> BANKSIA GROVE SCHOOL	-> -> a. Background to Banksia Grove School	-> -> i. An introduction to Banksia Grove School ii. How & why the school was established iii. Banksia Grove School's acculturation processes
	-> -> b. How the Banksia Grove School culture operates to make meaning	-> -> i. Interpersonal relationships * Shared experiences ii. The classroom context
	-> -> c. How one teacher facilitates meaning making during the construction of literacy in the classroom	-> ->
-> -> PRESENTING THE CASE STUDIES	-> -> c. Introduction	-> -> i. Background to the Case Study Child ii. [Case Study's name] as a meaning maker iii. [Case Study's name] as a constructor of literacy iv A summary of my Case Study of [Case Study's name]
	-> -> d. Background to the Case Study of Christine	-> -> i. An introduction to the person, Christine ii. Intergenerational family acculturation iii. Why Christine's parents chose Banksia Grove School for her
-> -> CASE STUDY 1: CHRISTINE	-> -> e. Christine as a meaning maker	-> -> i. Modes of expression ii. Persistence iii. Humour iv Social needs
	-> -> f. Christine as a constructor of literacy	-> -> i. Persistence ii. Need to control the process iii. Sense of purpose iv Exploration of different modes of expression
	-> -> g. A summary of my Case Study of Christine	

(cont.)

Table 5.1 (cont.)

DATA TYPE	INFORMATION TYPE	INTERPRETATIVE RESPONSE
-> -> CASE STUDY 2: LIAM	-> -> h. Background to the Case Study of Liam	-> -> i. An introduction to the person, Liam ii. Intergenerational family acculturation iii. Why Liam's parents chose Banksia Grove School for him
	-> i. Liam as a meaning maker	-> -> i. Modes of expression ii. Persistence iii. Humour iv. Sense of purpose
	-> j. Liam as a constructor of literacy	-> -> i. Exploration of different modes of expression ii. Need to control the process iii. Persistence iv. Sense of purpose
	-> k. A summary of my Case Study of Liam	-> ->
-> -> CASE STUDY 3: CASEY	-> -> l. Background to the Case Study of Casey	-> -> i. An introduction to the person, Casey ii. Intergenerational family acculturation iii. Why Casey's parents chose Banksia Grove School for her
	-> m. Casey as a meaning maker	-> -> i. Modes of expression ii. Persistence iii. Humour iv. Sense of purpose
	-> n. Casey as a constructor of literacy	-> -> i. Exploration of different modes of expression ii. Need to control the process iii. Persistence iv. Sense of purpose
	-> o. A summary of my Case Study of Casey	-> ->
-> -> OVERVIEW OF THE RESULTS OF MY ANALYSIS	-> ->	

BANKSIA GROVE SCHOOL

Since it was not really practical to construct a genogram of the school I relied heavily on key words and phrases which acted as access codes to the underlying acculturation of the school community (see my discussion in Chapter 4 on access codes). I have used Authorized and Unauthorized Documents and Classroom Observations to provide a background to the school and to describe how the school culture operates to make meaning, how the school culture supports the construction of literacy and how the teacher facilitates meaning making during the construction of literacy in the classroom. In this section I present:

- Background to Banksia Grove School;
- How the school culture operates to make meaning;
- How one teacher facilitates meaning making during the construction of literacy in the classroom.

BACKGROUND TO BANKSIA GROVE SCHOOL

In the background to the school I provide an introduction to the school, Banksia Grove, how and why it was established and its identifiable acculturation processes.

An Introduction to Banksia Grove School

Banksia Grove is a middle class school community whose adult members are mostly well educated, highly articulate members of society both locally and nationally. Its population is highly mobile as parents are transferred interstate and overseas, often at relatively short notice.

At the entrance to the school (and elsewhere, e.g., Unauthorized Document 1:11; Unauthorized Document 2:3) the school is described as:

an independent, co-educational, non-denominational school for children from kindergarten to year ten

The architecture of the school is intended be an expression of the school's

educational philosophy and practice:

Submission on Educational Policy and Architectural Planning: Students and teachers are certainly more important than buildings, but given the opportunity to plan a building to suit one's own educational methods means that the building can become a teaching aid in itself.

We have outlined four basic fields of study [for Secondary] and our policy is that continuities and interrelationships are to be stressed. The buildings can be designed so that educational links are topographically expressed.
(Unauthorized Document 1:41)

Banksia Grove has always viewed itself as responsive to the needs of its community and the wider community:

The aims and philosophy of Banksia Grove are always under review. In the twenty years since the school began, both the immediate community and the wider society have changed. The school endeavours to be open to change as appropriate, whilst retaining an essential character. We set out to translate our general beliefs into daily practice (Authorized Document 1:29).

Being responsive to everyone has not always been easy as individual rights and needs have had to be balanced with those of the total community:

Principal's Report - Annual General Meeting - March - 1986: This year and next will see the new arrangements begin to flourish - or fail - of course we all hope they flourish. The new arrangements may also lead to tensions between Council and staff if visions and goals do not coincide. I feel that the consultative function of the Policy group will be crucial in this regard for it is through this that staff and parents will feel included in any policy decisions. Also with a clear path to policy there will be people who become disenchanted and feel the school is no longer for them as has been the case in the past (Unauthorized Document 1:229).

Former parent: The subsequent years [ie after the school began] seemed at the time to be mainly occupied in getting a Government grant for the permanent building. But, in retrospect, the most important activity in this period was putting together a reasonable staff and student body by trial and error. I am afraid that, initially, the people we attracted in both categories included some who caused us serious problems (as if we did not have enough!). Again, in retrospect, it is remarkable that the board worked as well as it did, considering that it was entirely composed (apart from myself, of course) of opinionated eccentrics. As long as we were facing serious challenges (getting the school going and getting a building grant) this was probably a source of strength. Those who were most opinionated and eccentric were also the ones who were prepared to work.

I am afraid that, each time we successfully negotiated a major hurdle, this was followed by some bloodletting on the board. But this had two advantages it maintained a flow of new opinions, eccentricities and, above all, energy. In a
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way, the school behaved like a monster with its own life, seizing, consuming and discarding board members, staff and students.

Inevitably the time came when the Banksia Grove monster discarded its first Treasurer. The reasons which led me to resign proved completely invalid. Nevertheless the timing, if not the reason, was right. I look back on my involvement in the establishment of the Banksia Grove School with considerable satisfaction (Unauthorized Document 1:277-278).

The school is run by the School Council comprising mostly parents as well as staff and student members. The Council statement of beliefs provides the focus for the school's philosophy and practice. Council's beliefs, as stated in the school's 1989 Registration Document, are divided into four areas of belief (Ref.: Authorized Document 1:7-8):

- Beliefs about children;
- Beliefs about knowledge and learning;
- Beliefs about society; and
- Beliefs about the Banksia Grove experience of education.

These beliefs underpin the broad aim of the school which, as listed by the Principal in the school registration documents, is:

to provide an environment that:

- a) respects the individuality of the child
- b) fosters self-determination in the child
- c) develops the child's creative and critical abilities
- d) stresses cooperation, and
- e) stresses active involvement of learners in a wide range of education situations (Authorized Document 1:9).

These beliefs and aim are reinforced in the *Rules of the Banksia Grove School Incorporated* (i.e., the binding legal rules of incorporation) under "Objectives of association, Clause 3":

3. Objects of association
The objects of the association are:

- (a) to carry on a school that is non-denominational and co-educational.
The school shall be carried on in an environment that:

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- respects the individuality of each child;
 - fosters self-determination in each child;
 - develops each child's creative and critical abilities;
 - stresses co-operation between children;
 - encourages children to be involved in a wide range of educational activities;
 - allows children to participate in the affairs of the school;
 - does not permit sarcasm, humiliation, or corporal punishment of any child;
 - respects the professional status of teachers; and
 - facilitates parent involvement in the school; and
- (b) to stimulate public interest in education and to advance the cause of education, in the school and in the community (Authorized Document 1:153).

How and why Banksia Grove School was established is directly related to the above aim and beliefs.

How and why Banksia Grove School was established

At the planning stage various expert opinions were sought locally and interstate as well as in the literature, notably A. S. Neill and Summerhill School and John Holt's work about children and learning (Ref.: Unauthorized Document 1:9). The school was established with the purpose of offering an alternative to more traditional forms of education for Primary School and, later, for subsequent years, through to Year 10. Its conception occurred within the framework of an early childhood program within a more traditional non-government school system:

School magazine 1973: The need for the school was first recognised by a group of parents who were impressed and delighted with the results being achieved by Miss Bette Michaels and her staff at Cherrybrook Infants School. These parents wanted their children to continue their education along the same lines in primary school (Unauthorized Document 1:5).

Established as a parent initiative in the early 1970s, Banksia Grove was part of the progressive school movement at that time and its establishment was supported by several prominent Australians many of them within the Labor movement. The school has maintained a strong parental participation and influence on its philosophy and practice while endeavouring to also ensure the philosophy is translated into classroom practice:

Aims and Philosophy of the School: The school began as a result of parent initiative and as such is still maintained by strong parental support. Such involvement and trust is a highlight of the school as are the strong relations which exist between pupils and teachers. This is a reflection of the educational philosophy which recognises the education of the whole person in a merging of attitudes, values, emotions and skills in individual and group learning situations (Authorized Document 1:32).

The origins of the school have been significant in the ongoing acculturation processes experienced by the school community.

Banksia Grove School's acculturation processes

The process of acculturation at Banksia Grove is facilitated in the following ways:

- A holistic child-centred learning environment;
- Emphasizing a home-school continuum;
- A democratic approach to decision making; and
- Promoting individual, communal and environmental rights, respect and support.

Each of these facilitators is described in Authorized Documents 1, 2 and 3 as follows:

A holistic child-centred learning environment

A holistic child-centred learning environment which focuses on the individual child learning in the context of shared experiences and their personal interests. Children are encouraged to develop a personally relevant focus to group and teacher initiated activities

Emphasizing a home-school continuum

The school encourages families to participate in the Banksia Grove Community as fully as possible to facilitate in the development of shared knowledge and shared meanings about children, learning and school.

A democratic approach to decision making

Children, parents and staff are strongly encouraged to participate in decision making from what happens on a day to day (at times, moment by moment) in the classroom to the overall running of the school by the School Council.

Promoting Individual, communal and environmental rights, respect and support

Individual, communal and environmental rights, respect and support are actively promoted through the curriculum and day to day running of classes and throughout the school generally.

How these function to facilitate Banksia Grove's acculturation processes may be illustrated as follows.

The school aims to offer a child-centred educational alternative not otherwise available locally:

Principal: Banksia Grove seemed to me in 1973, when I first made contact with the school, to be a collection of enthusiastic, idealistic people intent on doing it differently. Differently meant obvious things like no uniform, first names, informal atmosphere and lots of parents offering help - I mean lots of parents - to the point where the school was abuzz with all sorts of activity.

Differently meant no bells, no school assembly, no code of conduct and no rule system. It all meant trying out new ideas, mainly about being with young children and letting their interests drive the day. It actually drove some teachers to distraction and distress, as most teachers were used to a regular routine in their teaching (Unauthorized Document 1:301).

The school has evolved from a somewhat soft-centred progressivism to one which is based upon a number of inter-linked assumptions:

1. Instruction needs to be tailored to the needs of the learners and centre on these if the intrinsic needs of the children are to be met.
2. We need to have faith in a democratic culture which will resist vulgarisation and which practises democratic principles in its schools.
3. In order to enable the child to adjust to change, and to enlarge their world view, the school has a broader function to include a concern for the health, vocation, family and community life of all those involved.
4. That the accumulation of experiences which are valued by the child and which are meaningful to his/her daily life should inform our thinking on curriculum.

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5. The process of revitalisation, of evaluation and re-direction should properly be the business of all those involved in the school. This should give rise to a dynamic process of growth and change for all participants (Authorized Document 1:9,32)

The school's acculturation processes are strongly influenced by the school's broad aim with regards to the environment at Banksia Grove which underpins the Council's statement of beliefs about:

- Children;
- Knowledge and learning;
- Society; and
- The Banksia Grove experience of education.

Beliefs about children

These beliefs are centred on the uniqueness, natural curiosity, and potential of the individual child. When considering the individual child, the school is guided by rights and responsibilities relating to individual, environmental and communal needs:

Generally these rights and responsibilities could be said to cover the following areas:

- Respect for the physical, social, emotional and intellectual well-being of others.
- Respect for the environment.
- Respect for communal and personal property (Authorized Document 1:46).

These beliefs about the child are reflected in the curriculum's emphasis on an individualised approach to learning which encourages the child to follow their own interests and develop a personal focus to some group activity especially during choosing/writing down times each day. Choosing time or writing down time is a time when each child chooses something they want to do and the teacher writes down their choice (see Appendix V). Inherent in this approach is communal respect as well as respect for the individuality of the child whose interests, creative and critical abilities are valued and developed in the classroom alongside those of their peers:

Rather than setting a lot of specific "school rules" we encourage children to act responsibly within these general areas [i.e., see above "rights and responsibilities"].

At all levels we set aside time to discuss the notion of rights and responsibilities, to model appropriate behaviour and to pursue inappropriate behaviour, so that the children are very much involved in the process.

We do have some very explicit school rules - for example, children may play with sticks no longer than their little finger, children are not allowed to leave the school site, small children are not allowed to go to the dam without an adult - the violation of which brings consequences, such as the withdrawal of privileges (Authorized Document 1:46).

This process of valuing and developing each child's interests is concomitant with daily decision making, involving purposeful and meaningful activities in the classroom and in the field (i.e., from sharing experiences on excursions) and opportunities to use knowledge personally derived from the classroom and field activities and consider its efficacy by individual children and the whole group also fosters self-determination in the child. Active involvement of individual children as learners is stressed in a wide range of education situations of immediate personal interest and value in the classroom, the school and beyond. Co-operation is developed as children participate in group activities within which they are able to find mutually meaningful ways of exploring meaning making with others. Applied examples of this are the group collage *Can you find* by Kindergarten, puppet shows and the play *Around the world*.

Beliefs about knowledge and learning

Knowledge and learning are seen as being pragmatic, whole and personally relevant both now and in the future:

Council Statement of Beliefs: ... children need instrumental and pragmatic knowledge which they can use as the basis for action - personally, on society and in the physical world.

The process of learning is the process of ordering experience; a child needs to order its own experience (with adult help) before coming to grips with society's orderings.

The traditional forms of knowledge are not seen as discrete by young children but as part of a whole (Authorized Document 1:29).

Beliefs about society

Education is seen as needing to be responsive to a changing society in which uniqueness of the individual as well as mutual rights and needs for all its members in an historically evolving and finite environment are central (Ref.: Council Statement of Beliefs in Authorized Document 1:29). Emphasis on outdoor education has been enduring and aimed at raising appreciation of the finiteness of the environment and the interdependence of human beings and the environment:

Teacher: The air clear and crisp, the sun shining, the smoke wisping up through the gums - we sit back and wait for the billy to boil.
The wind biting, the sun gone, the smoke billowing into our streaming eyes and noses and who feels like tea anyway.
In the [...] Valley last week 18 children and 4-6 adults had to withstand conditions like these.

Our activities were simple - building rope bridges, walking following a rope with our eyes closed, cooking, drinking billy tea, sketching, or gazing into the fire listening to Robert Browning's poetry (read by one of the kids).

It was a gentle camp and the children were gentle. With a little guidance and less assistance they managed to feed and shelter themselves very comfortably.

Apart from the skills and camping confidence which developed it was wonderful to hear children talking to each other about the sunrise, the clouds, a beautiful tree, or an unusual toadstool.

As a beginning experience it was very successful. Some of the children have written about things which were important to them (Unauthorized Document 1:264-265).

Beliefs about the Banksia Grove experience of education

One enduring and distinguishing feature of Banksia Grove might be that "the Banksia Grove child is not preparing for life: he[sic] is living it" (Unauthorized Document 3:28). The education experience at Banksia Grove differs from person to person. Several people have recorded their experiences of education at the school:

- A former# student:

Status of "current" and "former" are as at the time of making the statement

I think it well nigh impossible for anyone to write about 'The Banksia Grove experience', because every one of us, the hundreds and hundreds who have been involved with the school, has a million different experiences, perceived countless events at different levels of significance. Thus, 'The Banksia Grove experience' is the most enormous, multi-faceted, multi-dimensional, rich and glittering tapestry of event, emotion and experience imaginable, and it can never all be written down.

Having at length reached this conclusion I can but write 'My Banksia Grove experience', which is represented, I like to think, by just one rather dashing looking Persian sort of a horse, woven in silken thread and sequins towards the middle right section of the exhaustive Banksia Grove Bayeux.

I was happy to go to Banksia Grove back in 1972, and heartbroken to leave in 1979. ... My memories of the last day are of copious tears wept over Secondary teachers and well loved colleagues, and over that suddenly damp and insignificant square of paper, the Year 10 Certificate.

For the interim, I find my head quite full-as-a-boot with memories of the most staggering variation and in shattering numbers. All these, even the miserable, evoke in me a feeling of wistfulness, a fondness which inspires me to believe that despite the heartaches, lethargy, bitterness, unrest, fear and endless teeeeeeeedium with the place that I knew, the sweetness, creativity, enthusiasm, interest, security and joyfulness were the more constant factors. Whether this was true for other people in those years, or if it is still the case I do not know, but for me the years '72-'79 were beautiful (Unauthorized Document 1:272-273).

- A former parent:

Two of my children attended the Banksia Grove in the early days - both had gone to Cherrybrook Infants. Both left Banksia Grove - one to Cherrybrook Girls College and the other to Cherrybrook Primary. Both adjusted to their new school without undue difficulty. Both seem to have gained something from their time at Banksia Grove which distinguishes them from their fellow students. Whether this 'something' is good or not is not yet clear, though I am optimistic (Unauthorized Document 1:278).

- A former teacher:

Primary Teacher: Then, one Wednesday night, the parents and friends of the kids in our combined class came to look at our [...] Bay display. It was a lovely autumn evening, still and cool, and our room had been transformed. As it got darker outside, the fluorescent lighting brought out the rich greens and blues and yellows of the coastal paintings that covered most walls. On each of our classroom tables there was a display of photos, pencil and charcoal sketches of squid and octopuses, and neat copies of the kids' sea stories and diaries. On a
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bigger table in the centre of the room were the models - a papier-mache starfish painted a vivid red and black, a grey cuttlefish made from an old sheet and stuffed with polystyrene, seaweed made from string, and a cardboard lighthouse with battery-operated light. We'd strung fishnets across one part of the ceiling, from which cardboard sea-creatures hung, and, in a darkened corner of the room, stood the model rockpool. It was about two metres square, built on a wooden base with chicken wire and papier-mache. We'd painted it with browns and greys, fixed submerged lights under its various ledges, and filled it with individually designed and painted fish, weeds and crabs. Blue cellophane 'water' was stretched across the model, and, with its lights on, the rockpool had a sense of depth and subtle shades of colour we hadn't seen during the day.

B[...Outdoor Education teacher] had helped the kids make a seafood casserole, which was served after the family groups had wandered amongst the exhibits. Small groups of adults sat on the carpet or on the grass outside, while the kids played in the dark or in the school's covered walkways (Unauthorized document 2:13).

- A current parent:

One of the best things about Banksia Grove is the mixing of the age groups the secondaries wandering into the kinder and primary areas and the kinders venturing into the hallowed halls of secondary, to borrow a newspaper, use a sewing machine or look for an older friend or brother or sister.

And in the old days it was the same: the primary kids loved to explore the 'secret' garden at the other end of the oval, and at lunchtime the little kids might be seen climbing all over an accommodating older kid, on the bench in the sun outside P's [Principal] window, or being given a cuddle or a ride on the shoulders by another. (At our children's previous school there was an arbitrary line across the concrete playground, over which one was not allowed to step, separating infants and primary.).

In the library it sometimes surprised people to see a little kid looking at a picture book and close by some older kids studying hard at the tables. Now I suppose we are used to it (Unauthorized Document 1:279).

- A current teacher:

Secondary Teacher: My overwhelming image of Banksia Grove is of kids enjoying their school existence. I was aware of it on the very first day at the school, when I came in for my interview/orientation. There was a feeling in the school and among the students, of enjoyment in being there.

In my early days, when faced with away from school interest in "why send your child to Banksia Grove?", I often found myself saying: "It's school, and the students like to be there. We can't keep them home, even when they're sick, - school is too important to them". And, of course, it is because they are involved, genuinely involved, not in token decisions or activities, but in the ongoing process of their own education, making decisions about themselves

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and learning real consequences, but safely.

At Banksia Grove young people are treated as worthwhile individuals. And (no surprise) they respond to this by being worthwhile individuals.

The kids are involved, even when they are not at the business of courses and classes; they are engaged in life everywhere. The traditional system would hold this student activity as invalid in terms of traditional education. But close contact with students over the years has made me more aware and receptive of their needs and the day to day business of living for them. And it is a reflection of our adult lives being shaped, altered, growing or changing; trying out new ideas, new perceptions; engaged in friendly co-operative ventures together; spontaneously stretching themselves into physical activity - constantly relating, communicating and assimilating the world around them (Unauthorized Document 1:292).

- Current parents and students:

The statements below are from a whole school survey at the end of 1992 (published in the Banksia Grove School Bulletin on 6/5/93: Ref.: Authorized Document 2:118). Parents explained why they chose Banksia Grove School for their children and Year Ten students at the end of their time at Banksia Grove School reflected on their experiences at the school (some of these students would have been at the school for all eleven years of their school life) while others may have spent only Year 10 at the school. There is not a comparable list of statements of what people did not like about the school or why they had left the school.

WHY CHOOSE BANKSIA GROVE SCHOOL?

Here's what parents told us at the end of last year:

- The close friendships, cooperative atmosphere, encouragement of self respect & self-direction in kids. The reporting system on paper & interviews.
- Open, approachable staff. Positive feedback to students. Supportive attitudes of staff to students.
- Yet another fantastic year with an exemplary teacher.
- [The school's] ability to make a child 'happy' and eager to learn.
- Things in general that I really appreciate about the school - the encouragement of parent involvement in the classroom, lots of room for the kids to design projects that are going on, the wonderful physical environment, small class sizes and mixed age groups.
- The incredible commitment from teachers to children.
- Caring teachers; children valued as individuals.
- Opportunity for children to form friendships across different age groups.
- Outdoor activities.
- Feedback received on child's performance.
- Giving kids confidence in dealing with social situations; encouraging

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practical experience for Learning; allowing 'choices' to be a part of the learning process.

- 'Hands on' Learning.
- Close relationship between home, teacher and child.
- Children's excitement in Learning and the wonderful learning experiences they had.
- Care and interest of teaching staff, including the Principal, for each child.

The bottom line comes from graduating Year 10 students:

- I love the individual attention that each student gets. You really feel that you could talk to teachers about worries and problems.
- [Year 10 was] a great year for preparing myself and fellow Year 10 students for the next two years at college.
- I would just like to thank all the teachers and staff for encouraging and helping me through the last couple of years. If I had been [elsewhere], I think it could have been quite possible for me to have dropped out anywhere along the line.

There are several identifiable recurring patterns in Banksia Grove's acculturation process. According to intergenerational family acculturation theory, recurring patterns of practice assist in the meaning making process within the intergenerational family unit. Work by Minuchin (e.g., 1974) into recurring patterns in intergenerational family units indicate that "[t]hese repeated patterns determine how, when, and to whom family members relate" (Nichols, 1984:472). Research in organizational culture also indicates repeated patterns of acculturation determine how, when, and to whom and what organizational members relate (e.g., Daniels & Spiker, 1994; Smircich & Calás, 1987; Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1984, 1982). Recurring patterns or themes inherent in Banksia Grove's processes of acculturation are:

individualized child-centred learning
life-long love of learning fostered by school
personal and group responsibility
respect for the rights and needs of others
responsive and purposeful education to fit the child for membership of society
now and in the future
self-determination
self-discipline
self-realisation
self-respect

How this acculturation has influenced Banksia Grove's meaning making is discussed below.

HOW THE BANKSIA GROVE SCHOOL CULTURE OPERATES TO MAKE MEANING

Meaning making in this school and community is a process fraught with differences of opinion, sometimes fiercely different opinions. This fact of life in the school and community is inherent in its emphasis on balancing the uniqueness of the individual and the rights and needs of all members collectively (see exemplar above from a former parent about "bloodletting on the board"). The composition of the school is one of mostly highly articulate mid to high range middle class professionals who are often used to being assertive in the workplace and expect the same in their choice of school (Ref.: Unauthorized Documents 1 and 2).

Essentially, meaning making at Banksia Grove is deliberately aimed at building and maintaining a sense of community with a strong sense of a home-school continuum (Ref.: Unauthorized Document 3). A strong prevailing sense of whole school community has been fundamental to furthering Banksia Grove's purposeful and responsive education philosophy and practice. The building and maintaining a strong sense of community is achieved through:

- Interpersonal relationships; and
- Shared experiences.

Interpersonal relationships

Interpersonal relationships are fundamental to how the school operates and aims to encourage children to feel "empowered to take steps of their own" (Foreword by the Principal in Unauthorized Document 1:ix). Relationships usually demonstrate:

- Interdependence;
- Mutual respect; and
- Mutual support.

Interdependence, mutual respect and mutual support are fostered in two ways:

- By interrelating things, actions and events; and
- By interrelating people.

Things, actions and events are interrelated by the teacher explicitly drawing the children's attentions to recurring things, actions and events in different contexts. Hilary, the teacher in this study, often drew attention to connections for the children, especially during their first year of school:

Hilary: This is what we're going to do: I'll read you a short story, then we're going to do our wheel with our new jobs on it and I'll have to explain the jobs because some of them you haven't ever done before. ... You'll have to listen really well. ... This is a story of a duck and I thought I'd read you this for a couple of reasons:

There are ducks at our school;

The other reason, do you remember yesterday, I said I was going dancing after school and learn four more dances? Well, the first dance we learned ... Were you there, Casey? ... Was called *The Duck*. So if we can go to the Drama Room later today I can teach you *The Duck* dance as well. This is a book about Daniel, *Daniel, the Reluctant Duck*. (Children spontaneously read *the* and *Duck*). ... The other thing I like about this book is the pictures. They haven't been drawn. They're actually photographs.

(Classroom Observation 13.8.91).

...

She's [Jillie, the Release Teacher] going to come and be with you after Morning Tea and after lunch is a very special time in the Drama Room that you've been invited to when the school says goodbye to all the children who've been here since they were as old as you and have been here all the way to Year 10 and now they're leaving and now they're going to go away to College.

Children: Forever?

Hilary: They'll go to College for two years and then they'll be finished school forever. But when they leave this school and they have been here such a long time we have a special ceremony to say goodbye to them and we give them a special rolled up piece of paper, which we call a certificate, called their Year 10 Certificate and it says they've been at this school and what they've done at the school and that they've finished their school at Banksia Grove and P[Principal] always tells a little story about them all. He tells a story (the children sit very quietly listening) about the big children who are leaving and usually it's something funny they did at school. Sometimes it's something they did way way way back in Kindergarten and there'll probably be some jokes about what the big children did, too, and you'll be going to that this afternoon. I won't be there but Jillie will take you to the Drama Room to see Year 10. ... Sometimes he looks in their file. I have a file for each of you and I keep in it things you did in Kindergarten and I will still have it when you're in Year 10. And before Year 10 he will look in them and sometimes he will find something these great big

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children wrote when they were in Kindergarten. Little books they made.
(Classroom Observation 6.12.91).

...

[After reading a book about trees' roots to the class] When we go to the
Exersite later we'll see if we can see some trees and if we can see any with
some roots (Classroom Observation 11.3.92).

People become interrelated by having parents and other relatives, friends, and others visit the school on a continual basis and by especially inviting other members of the Banksia Grove Community, members of extended families and friends to the school for special presentations. Secondary students also assist in the process of interdependence building as they often participate in Community Service, a required part of their programme, by assisting teachers and children in other classes from Kindergarten to Year 6 during their normal class times (Ref.: Classroom Observation data, e.g., 12.4.91). Parents, and outside experts brought in by parents and staff, are often valuable resources to any classroom such as during excursions and mixups when children from one or more classes join adult run groups to work on a personal project or participate in a particular activity of their choosing (e.g., cooking, sewing, woodwork, creative art, orienteering and so on). Parents (and even whole families) sometimes join groups (within and outside school hours) as participants with their children (Unauthorized Document 2). An example of the extent to which the Banksia Grove Community can function as an integrated unit, with plenty of latitude for individuality, was evident in the Long Walk, a one off occasion, to celebrate twenty years as a school community (see Figure 5.1). Similar occasions included celebrating two hundred years of British settlement in Australia in 1988 and Banksia Grove's ten years as a school community. More often class groups (usually consisting of two classes) work together to produce something and families and friends are invited to come and share their efforts (both the process and the product). An example of this during the time of my research was a play, *Around the World*, produced in 1992 (Ref.: Classroom Observations 3.11.92 & 10.11.92). This type of event occurs quite regularly across the Primary School (Authorized Document 2 & Unauthorized Documents 1 & 2).

THE LONG WALK

A super information and slide night about the Long Walk and Base Camps will be held at 8.00 pm at BG on Wednesday, 5 August 1992.

(P)



THE LONG WALK

12 - 27 SEPTEMBER

The final arrangements are coming together for the events in The Long Walk.

Sections have been designed to allow as many people as possible to participate at various levels from sitting in a base camp, to easy day walks and up to week long treks across mountain ranges and rivers (anyone seen "Deliverance"? - here's your chance to be Burt Reynolds).

Briefly these are:

1. Base Camp at B (PN) - camping area with camp sites, toilets, showers and BBQs. Short walks into the Gorge. Opportunity to see the first stage walkers on their way.

2. B (PN) to N (PN) via S (PN) - five day walk suitable for Yrs 8+ (and fit adults!).

3. N (PN) Base Camp - Weekend camping to welcome walkers from first stage and enjoy the sights of beautiful downtown N (PN) (one Pub and Caravan Park!) - day walks or swimming in (N) River. Toilets and hot showers available. Starting point for several stages to Y (PN) and K (PN).

4. N (PN) to K (PN) walk via B (PN), T (PN) and S (PN) Crossing. Suitable for same as first stage. (Leader: M (P)).

5. W (PN) (near N (PN)) to Y (PN) via B (PN), B (PN) and T (PN). By Car from Y (PN) to K (PN) Suitable for Year 4+ and moderately fit adults. (Leader: J (P)).

6. N (PN) to K (PN) walk via P (PN) Pt., Mt. C (PN) B (PN), M (PN) Valley and T (PN). Hardest of the walks - suitable for older kids and fit adults (Leader: B (T)).

7. Camping at K (PN) and day walk into M (PN) National Park via D (PN) Mountain. Rest and recuperation. Celebration of achievement! BBQ Social gathering in the K (PN) Hall on Saturday night. Suitable for all families and all ages. Return to 'HOME' on Sunday. (On-site vans available for hire - see last week's Bulletin.)

CANOEING? It would be possible to have a group paddle up the (PN) River from N (PN) to S (PN). Crossing (two days up and one day back) to meet the second stage walkers. We need an expedition leader - any volunteers? (Canoes would be available.)

GENERAL: We hope that as many current and past BG families can join us in this fitting Birthday event celebrating 20 years of Outdoor Education at BG. M (P) will be showing his slides of the areas involved in the walk to whet your appetite next Wednesday, 5 August at 8 pm in the Library.

Look for the display of the walking routes on the maps in the Library. Any queries, please call the stage leaders or me.

R (P), Coordinator (PHONE: AH)

PLEASE TEAR OFF AND RETURN TO THE OFFICE

NAME: _____

I am interested in:

☐

1. Camping at B (PN) Gorge

☐

2. Walking from B (PN) to N (PN)

☐

3. Camping at N (PN)

☐

4. Walking from N (PN) to K (PN) (Leader: M (P))

☐

5. Walking from W (PN) to Y (PN) (Leader: J (P))

☐

6. Walking from N (PN) to K (PN) (Leader: B (T))

☐

7. Camping/Bay Walking at the K (PN) Weekend Celebration

☐

8. Canoeing from N (PN) to S (PN) Crossing

KEY:

BG = Banksia Grove

P = Parent's name

PN = Place Name

T = Teacher

(cont.)

Figure 5.1: Some Banksia Grove Community activities before and after The Long Walk in 1992 as reported in the School Bulletin 30.7.92 and 12.11.92

Figure 5.1 (cont.)

(cont.)



THE LONG WALK - WINDING DOWN

A meeting was held in the Library on Tuesday, 27 October for all those who participated in The Long Walk. It provided a good opportunity for photographs and reminiscences to be shared and for plans to be made for future events.

The group leaders were invited to comment on their experiences and the main points were as follows:-

M (P) : N (PN) TO K (PN)

M (P) felt that 12 was the maximum number of people he would like to take on such a walk. It was a manageable number and was a small enough group to make cave camping feasible. He found that navigational uncertainties tended to perturb the younger members of his group but were inevitable and were an important learning exercise. He enjoyed the walk very much.

M (P) was impressed by the energy of the kids who climbed P (PN) on the final day in spite of poor weather conditions.

A (P) : W (PN) TO Y (PN)

This group consisted of three adults and five students and A (P) found this to be an excellent number. He thought the walk was a stretching and challenging experience and very worthwhile. Everyone participated in the decision making.

B (T) : S (PN) TO K (PN)

B (T) missed the first two days because he and S (U) had succumbed to the 'flu'. However, all was not lost when J. (P) agreed to take over and lead the group until B (T) was able to join them. There were seven strong students on the walk and they had a really good time until the rain set in on the Thursday night. This resulted in the walk being cut short by 24 hours and the walkers either got a lift in to K (PN) or the really intrepid ones walked in on the Friday evening. B (T) mentioned his concern at the number of other walkers they met - at least three other school parties, some of whom did an annual walk in the B (PN) at the same time every year.

J (P) was very impressed by the camping caves and by the convenience of having water nearby. He also particularly enjoyed the B (PN) they visited and the tea and biscuits laid on by J (P) at S (PN).

K (P) : W (PN) TO B (PN)

This was the three day walk and the one which attracted the most people - 21. They were able to sleep in a cave on the second night where they experienced very windy conditions. K (P) said he would never forget watching G (P) prepare, cook and toss a pancake under these incredibly difficult conditions. The group was very cohesive but he did worry about how they would cope if there were an accident when they were 13 kms from help.

School Bulletin 12/11/92

THE CANOE TRIP - D (U) RIVER B (T) AND G (T)

There was not much water in the river until it rained on the Thursday night. N, the leader, was heard to say that the first five kms were the slowest he had ever done. However the trip was greatly enjoyed. B (T) stressed the importance of carrying minimum luggage in the canoes when the water was low to avoid scraping the bottom. G (T) said that although it was said about the lack of water she loved the flowing and movement of the river and felt they had learnt a lot about coping in wet conditions. Most of the students were very keen to continue canoeing.

THE FUTURE

It was agreed that it would be worthwhile to set up a record of The Long Walk, with comments and photos. All contributions would be gratefully accepted. There was a lot of enthusiasm for further challenging expeditions, with white river rafting and a walk in the E (PN) area being especially mentioned. The possibility of a family weekend early next year was suggested. Pre trip training in navigational and other skills was also recommended.

In conclusion, P (PR) thanked all the people who had helped to organise The Long Walk. In particular, M (P) who had initiated it and had put in a lot of hard work, R (P), who had acted as Chairperson, the Group Leaders and their Seconds and the organisers of the Base Camps, R (P), B (T) and A (T). We all felt it had been a truly wonderful celebration of 20 years of outdoor education at B & a vote of thanks must go to P (PR) himself for his support and hard work.

A (T)

With interrelatedness comes the sense of mutual respect and mutual support. Classroom and whole school activities function around the notions of mutual respect and mutual support. Co-operative activities such as puppet shows, plays, group collage and Group times during class sessions emphasize rights and responsibilities of individuals and the group as a whole (Ref.: Classroom Observation Data). School camps and excursions have a similar function as well as other functions. The process aims to develop all aspects of interpersonal relations mentioned above.

Interpersonal relationships are further fostered through ongoing opportunities for shared experiences.

Shared experiences

Shared experiences establish, maintain and make explicit community "traditions" and expectations through almost predictable lists of excursions and camps, oral histories and storytelling (Ref.: Unauthorized Documents 1 & 2). Excursions and camps are held from Kindergarten onwards and aim to fulfil several purposes such as socialization, constructing literacy, developing a first hand knowledge of history, natural science and so on:

CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS

Bushwalking, camps, tours and cross-country skiing have become features of the school program for children of all ages. These activities increase self-reliance and have significant educational value both in specific areas (e.g. biology, geography, geology) and in the development of good interpersonal relationships and co-operation between children and adults (Authorized Document 1:108).

Parents accompany younger children on camps. Many parents choose to go on camps throughout the years. (My general observations have been that in fact many children strongly desire their parents join them even in later Primary years and beyond, because they enjoy participating in camp activities together.)

Typically, Banksia Grove school camps are very informal with plenty of opportunities for participants to choose what they will do from a small range of options depending on the number of adults present and other resources available. These camps are a fundamental part of the Banksia Grove

curriculum:

Outdoor Education Teacher: The benefit of doing activities in the outdoors is great. I know of no other school that offers such a broad number and type of activities. As is usual there is that tendency to formalise activities but the kids over their years at Banksia Grove get a very broad spectrum of outdoor pursuits. When I talk to ex students who have left Banksia Grove it surprises me how clear and obviously how important the things we have done are.

I used the word formalized. It was I who introduced the dreaded permission forms. I stand guilty! Also as time has gone by certain activities have become part of the expected school calendar. Ski trips, [...] Bay trips, caving excursions, have stayed part of the program. History excursions pop up now and then. Sometimes I am asked to assist with such trips - getting accommodation, working out logistics etc. Not all trips demand my presence but during the school year I get to go on most of the trips.

"What is so important about these trips?" I hear you cry out from the crowd.

We start the children going on excursions from Kindy on. By Infants the kids are offered trips of one night or two with their parents if possible. By the time the children are in third grade they are able to do even longer trips. The benefits can be judged by attending a trip and seeing how well even the younger children can organize themselves (Unauthorized Document 1:267).

Published histories of the school consist of individuals telling their stories as members of the Banksia Grove Community. Whole school meaning making often involves sharing in experiences and relating the stories (storytelling) in the classroom and around campfires with several story tellers resident within the community. Stories often involve older children who have previously passed through classes at the school (Ref.: Unauthorized Documents 1 & 2).

How Hilary, the classroom teacher, uses the school's way of meaning making to make meaning in the classroom is described in the next section.

The classroom context

The day is divided into three sessions of roughly an hour and a half each. First Session is from 9:15-9:30am to about 10:50am, Second Session is from about 11:30am to 12:50pm and the Third Session is from 1:50pm to 3:10pm with Morning Tea and Lunch in between. While language learning is ever present (Ref.: Authorized Document 3), most morning sessions focus on literacy, after Morning Tea the focus is mostly on Numeracy. Science and other areas of knowledge are integrated into these times. The afternoon

session is most frequently a choosing time during which the children can choose less demanding things to do. While the program is flexible, it is also mostly predictable. Each of the first two sessions may involve a time of Free Play during which children can play indoors or outdoors at whatever they wish. Some choose to work on unfinished class work while others play in the sand pit (complete with the hose and water in Summer), on the climbing equipment, in the cubby (indoors), play with puzzles, construct something in Make and Build, play with something brought from home, read, write, and so on. Other features of these two sessions include Choosing Time and Quiet Work Time. At Choosing Time children can often think of what they want to do, let the teacher know and get on with it. Quiet Work Times, however, tend to be teacher directed in the sense that "jobs" and membership of groups are allocated by the teacher. The Work Wheel is a daily event as children, in small groups, move through activities several times over a week or more before new activities are allocated. Quiet Work Time activities on the Work Wheel included:

- Construction - clever sticks, Duplo, Marble Maze, Lego, Mobilo;
- Drawing;
- Listening Post;
- Make and Build;
- Observing and sketching newly hatched chickens;
- Painting;
- Reading (Corner) with Hilary/ Adrienne; and
- Writing.

At least the first and last sessions are usually begun or concluded with a story.

From their first day at Banksia Grove School, children are immersed in very practical, purposeful and immediately relevant demonstrations of many different modes for constructing literacy:

Children in kindergarten are immersed in literacy, can see that it fulfils various needs, feel that others trust and expect that they will learn to read, and write receive positive responses to their attempts at reading and writing, and receive the help they need when they need it. And so, some or all of the following are taking place in kindergarten every day: children are being read to; a big book is shared and reading strategies are modelled; a big book is written with the children about something they've done or somewhere they've been; lists are
(cont.)

(cont.)

made - things to choose from, things we need; signs are made (please don't sit on the floors); stories are written or scribed; a child shares a book with an adult; messages are left (dear P[Principal] we've gone to the moon); letters written for class post box.

Making a "big book" or "class book" about a class experience meets all the criteria for helping children to become literate. The topic of the book is a real, exciting experience they have all participated in; every child can contribute to the book and identify strongly with it. And so a trip to a local orchard provides an enjoyable experience and a favourite book to be shared many times, in the writing and the reading, with a friend, the teacher, other adults, other family members. Photographs of the visit provide a graphic reminder and valuable picture clues when reading. The text can be simple - a description of the main events of the visit - so common sight words reappear often: 'the', 'and', 'we', and other words relevant to the experience become familiar - 'apple', 'trees', 'orchard', 'tractor'. Thinking about what to write, writing it so that it makes sense, using simple conventions, are all modelled as the work takes shape. And reading the finished product provides ample opportunity to model useful strategies - looking at the picture, remembering the event, what sound does it begin with, what would make sense here, let's leave it out and go back when we've read on a bit further.

The book then takes its place in the group's corporate memory, and fund of reading material - a valuable, relevant, enjoyable early step on the road to becoming literate (Authorized Document 1:145).

Within the context of a social year in kindergarten, we lay the foundations for development in literacy and numeracy and nurture the child's innate and natural love of learning. We do this by showing that we, as adults and as a school, regard learning as valuable, enjoyable and attainable. And so in literacy for example, we read to the children daily and we make books together, we scribe stories for the children - we involve them in many literacy activities, thereby showing that we value such activity, that it is fun and relevant to their lives and we communicate the expectation that they too will one day read and write (Authorized Document 1:125-126).

The school's child-centred approach to one element of literacy is best described by the following extract. Children are encouraged to find their individually preferred modes for constructing literacy although this is not well understood by some adult members of the community hence the following extract from a statement by the Principal entitled *Reading at Banksia Grove*. Capitals appear in the original document and provide emphasis for the more contentious aspects of (the school's approach to) reading:

A writer on reading acquisition and reading process theory, Goodman, put it neatly.

"Like all language activities, reading has its central purpose, effective communication of meaning. In the full sense, comprehension is the only objective of the reader. To the extent that he loses comprehension as a goal he

(cont.)

(cont.)

is doing something other than reading: saying sounds, naming words, manipulating language. This alone would be enough to justify the claim that instruction in reading must centre on comprehension." One of the simplest and most sensible places to begin collecting and sorting reading material is with the child. Each child's life differs in environment, expectations, experiences, social setting and inherited capacity to manage various tasks. Each child then holds the key to his/her reading and writing development. Every child has come to expect speech to work for him or her, to initially satisfy needs and desires (seems like I haven't come far) and in later development, to explore more complex concepts. So with reading, speech has a primary function, a function that is in part an antecedent of mature reading. AT BANKSIA GROVE THEN, WE NEED TO ALLOW THE CHILD TO TALK, DISCUSS, ARGUE, MUSE, ETC. AND USE TO THE GREATEST DEGREE POSSIBLE ALL THE FUNCTIONS OF SPEECH. So it is hoped that at school and home reading will be seen as an extension to the ways children can understand and be understood in writing as a natural extension of speech. AT BANKSIA GROVE, WE ALSO NEED TO BE ABLE TO HAVE THE TIME TO USE THE CHILD'S EXPERIENCE TO HELP READING GROWTH. Parents and teachers scribe for young children, older children type up and illustrate their own books, reports on themes in classrooms are collated, magazines, journals and even small novels are made by the older ones. The child must be able to conclude that reading is rewarding and if the child has mastered basic reading strategies and has overcome any limiting specific difficulties then the child's reading life will be a joy.

The use of the child's life experience as a reading material source helps the child to cue in on the flow of the language and a good oral language helps the child to PREDICT the flow of words, events and possible outcomes of strings of words. The more sophisticated use of reading, reading to gain new information and incorporate it in with old knowledge is a higher form of predicting events from past experience. Only when a child (or an adult) runs into a hurdle with a work or phrase does s/he check for other cues as to its meaning; we revert to checking the context -

or we check out the sound of the word or we check out the look of the word

Children usually can read words in the context of a story but may stumble when asked to read the same words within a word list. Frank Smith in his book "Reading" (our library P51.424.5 sml) indicates his distrust of methods of reading instruction based upon a phonetic or letter/sound approach. Smith

reading is no tawo rd byw or dapp roach.

THIS IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE AT BANKSIA GROVE PHONETICS WILL NOT BE USED AS THE APPROACH TO READING OR SPELLING
(Authorized document 1:64).

The school expects "the home environment to be somewhere near the school's environment in terms of the attitudes and approaches to reading acquisition" (Authorized Document 1:65) and offers suggestions how whole families can support "young readers":

1. Parents, Brothers and Sisters - Read to your young charges;
2. In larger stories to be read, sometimes paraphrase a complete story so that the plot is understood. If you slide into discussion about the book after

(cont.)

(cont.)

- reading, all the better;
- 3. Point out special words, not necessarily connectives, prepositions etc., but people, events and activities;
- 4. Vary the bedtime book diet

Often a child's first book can consist of such rich first hand experiences as "My dad - well, he got booked for speeding and he got real mad."

For that child language lives - it means something.

There is also an essential political statement in the way schools teach children to read. In the debate over declining literacy standards one basic assumption of the decline theorists is that literacy is a technique which if practised sufficiently on rules learned, can be 'got' like a driver's licence at a certain age (usually at 6 - 8 years of age). To be literate does not mean that we have taken the child to an end like [Year 12 final certificate named], being able to fill out forms, etc. Literacy implies a critical consciousness and assists us in taking control over our lives. We hope at Banksia Grove that we provide the opportunity for the reader to bring to bear new information on his or her past experience and so use reading as yet another way of understanding the world.

It takes real courage and trust not to race into a set reading programme the minute a five year old walks through the classroom doors, but to wait, look and listen to what they talk about, how they talk and why, to note the context and make this the basis of the first printed words and sentences in the classroom. Hardly radical stuff - just sensible (Authorized Document 1:66-67).

What I have just written about Banksia Grove School, its background, and how the school culture operates to make meaning, constitutes its "knowledge of the world". In the next section I describe how this "knowledge of the world" is translated into classroom practice by one teacher.

These ways of making meaning are reflected in the ways one teacher facilitates meaning making during the construction of literacy in the classroom.

HOW ONE TEACHER FACILITATES MEANING MAKING DURING THE CONSTRUCTION OF LITERACY IN THE CLASSROOM

Children are regarded as responsible learners and therefore constructors of literacy in their own right. In the classroom, the teacher, Hilary, provides an environment conducive to the construction of literacy, that is "an environment (CAMBOURNE'S CONDITIONS) that as often as possible, and in as many ways as possible, involves children in reading" (Ref.: Authorized Document 3:9,14; capitals present in the original text). She uses several contexts and strategies to demonstrate literacy to the children throughout the day, every

day:

Hilary There are several strategies that can be used & we should teach children how to select the most appropriate one at different times. Reading is a parallel not linear process.
"What the brain says to the eye matters more than what the eye says to the brain" Frank Smith sums it up WITH THE PROVISIO THAT DIFFERENT KIDS LEARN DIFFERENTLY# (Authorized Document 3:13).

These comments are taken from brief notes often written in shorthand. For ease of reading I have written the shorthand notes out in full. Capitals and underlines were present in the original text.

How Hilary does this is shown in Table 5.2 (Ref.: Authorized Document 3:14-21 & Classroom Observations).

Table 5.2: Strategies Hilary, the teacher, uses to facilitate meaning making during the construction of literacy in the classroom

EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA	CLASSROOM OBSERVATION DATES
• Providing shared experiences such as excursions and "Big Books"	• 14.3.91; 10.9.91; 31.3.93
• Conferencing with the children about what they have written	• 8.11.93
• Always making reading and/or writing activities during Quiet Work Times	• 4.3.91; 20.8.91; 11.3.92; 1.9.92; 6.4.93; 8.11.93
• Always having books available for children to look at and read in the Reading Corner and on her easel	• all Classroom Observations
• In addition to herself, using other adults (i.e., teacher's aide, parents) and secondary students to listen to children read as often as possible	• 8.4.91; 12.4.91; 6.5.91; 8.11.93
• Modelling the reading process by reading to the children several times a day and talking about specific strategies and when and how to use them	• 3.6.91; 10.9.91; 5.10.91; 29.10.91; 23.3.92; 25.8.92
• Demonstrating multiple uses for and means of constructing literacy	• 14.3.91; 12.4.91; 27.5.91; 3.11.93; 22.6.93
• Providing personal incentives to construct literacy such as reading children's books brought from home and the library and constructing personally relevant Big Books such as <i>Read all about it!</i> which contained news from class members	• 6.5.91; 11.3.92
• Writing signs and other material (e.g., the birthday chart, the number of Bill Peet Books read, letter from another school, a class recount of a trip to an apple orchard) and displaying them around the classroom	• 27.5.91; 20.8.91; 25.3.92; 21.7.93
• Demonstrating that she expects the children to read ... one day (Ref.: Authorized Document 3:14) by displaying and using textual material to explain things such as the weekly timetable, notices, constructing and reading from Big Books, writing information on the blackboard	• 14.3.91; 27.5.91; 9.11.93 12.4.91; 8.9.92; 8.11.93
• Scribing children's stories as they dictate	• 22.6.93
• Accepting spelling approximations so children can write down their thoughts	• 8.4.91; 12.4.91; 23.3.92
• Exploring story patterning and sequencing	• 10.9.91; 8.11.93
• Supporting self-correction by emphasizing that what is on the page is meant to make sense	• 12.4.91; 23.3.92; 9.11.93
• Publishing children's story books	• 10.9.91
• Supporting literacy promoting processes in other activities such as persistence and co-operation in completing the collage; problem solving in deciding what to make the cubby into; and in presenting the puppet shows	• 10.9.91; 8.11.93; 6.8.91; 13.8.91; 10.9.91; 13.8.91; 20.8.91; 24.9.91; 23.6.93

The acculturation processes inherent in the classroom context in which children and adults construct literacy at Banksia Grove School, could be important in defining that construction. I now present the three Case Studies of Christine, Liam and Casey within the context of their experiences as constructors of literacy in the classroom at Banksia Grove School.

Children in Hilary's classroom are immersed in meaning making that facilitates the construction of literacy as shown in Table 5.3 below.

Table 5.3: Ways children in Hilary's class participate during the construction of literacy in the classroom

EXEMPLARS FROM THE DATA	CLASSROOM OBSERVATION DATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Show signs that they expect to read textual material when they read text available in the classroom such as a recount of an excursion, a Big Book Writing signs such as "closed" on their cubby shop and notices for events such as plays show that the children expect others to be able to read what they write especially when they make it into the weekly school bulletin (see Figure 5.2 below).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 14.3.91; 12.4.91; 6.8.91; 13.8.91; 3.12.91; 11.3.92; 25.8.92; 10.11.92; 23.6.93
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work on rough drafts, with invented spellings and rewrites of the story, through to published books with corrected spellings, sequencing and grammar	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10.9.91; 25.8.92; 8.11.93
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conference with others (children and adults)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5.10.91; 25.8.92; 6.4.93
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dictate/write reports, recounts and stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 11.3.92; 25.3.92; 22.6.93
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write signs for their day to day activities such as the cubby, a play	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3.11.92; 10.11.92
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use textual information in their classroom to inform them of what is required	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 11.3.92; 25.8.92; 8.11.93

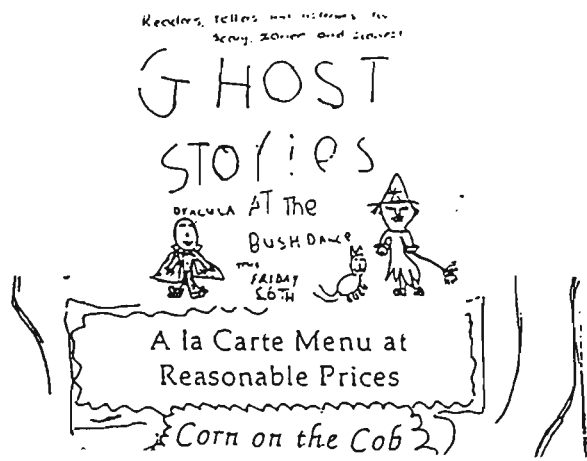


Figure 5.2 Notice by Christine, my first Case Study, advertizing ghost stories at a Bush Dance in the school bulletin (Authorized Document 2: 112, 25.3.93)

PRESENTING THE CASE STUDIES

In this section I present the three Case Studies of young children within the context of their intergenerational family acculturation and their school acculturation. I do this as I endeavour to understand how young children use their knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom. The children in the three Case Studies all started school (Kindergarten) at Banksia Grove at the beginning of the year in 1991. Christine left the school in April, 1993 and Liam and Casey were still at the school at the end of 1993 when I finished my Classroom Observations. The three children turned six during July, August and September, 1991.

As I read through my data, firstly on my Case Study of Christine, and later, Liam and Casey, it seemed that the data, for the purposes of presenting the results of my analysis here, best fitted into three broad patterns or themes:

- Background to the Case Study Child;
- [Case Study's name] as a meaning maker; and
- [Case Study's name] as a constructor of literacy.

BACKGROUND TO THE CASE STUDY CHILD

I have used Intergenerational Family Acculturation and Classroom Observation data pools to derive information for this section which provides an overview of the context of each Case Study child including:

- An introduction to the person: This is an overview of the person in the Case Study;
- Intergenerational family acculturation: This provides the intergenerational family context of the Case Study child including identifiable recurring themes; and
- Why [Case Study's name] parents chose Banksia Grove School for her or him : For a child to attend Banksia Grove School a conscious decision must be made by the parents. I felt this information might be useful when considering the child within the context of the whole family's intergenerational

acculturation.

[CASE STUDY'S NAME] AS A MEANING MAKER

Information in this section was derived from data on Intergenerational Family Acculturation, in Classroom Observations and Authorized Document 3 (Teacher's Notes and School Reports). There seemed to be two strands in the data: One of making meaning in a general sense and one of making meaning in order to construct literacy. I felt that by including the more generic pattern of meaning making I could provide a fuller picture of each Case Study in the lead up to presenting them as a constructor of literacy. In effect, each child uses their generic meaning making strategies when making meaning for the express purposes of constructing literacy. In essence, by including this pattern I am able to show that ways of making meaning are transferable to and from the construction of literacy and are not exclusive to it. This is an important part of presenting the results of my analysis as I am attempting to demonstrate how this might happen in the case of embedded symbolic information as it is transferred from one situation (i.e., home) to another (i.e., school) during the construction of literacy in the classroom.

[CASE STUDY'S NAME] AS A CONSTRUCTOR OF LITERACY

Information in this section was derived from three data pools: Intergenerational Family Acculturation, Classroom Observations and Authorized Document 3. Here I focus on the making of meaning specifically during the construction of literacy.

A SUMMARY OF MY CASE STUDY OF [CASE STUDY'S NAME]

In this section I draw together the information presented in the rest of the Case Study to form a coherent knowledge base about how the child used their knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy.

The process I went through to construct these Case Studies as presented here is pictorially represented in Figure 5.3.

Operational definitions for the features identified for each child were presented in Table 4.9.

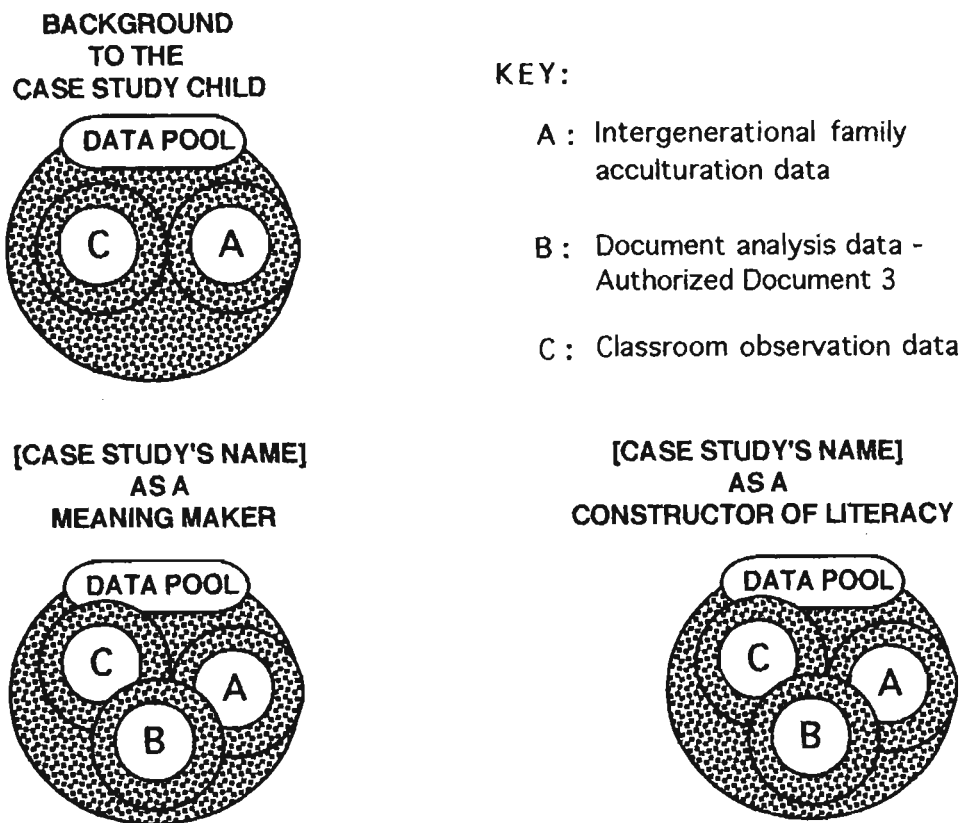


Figure 5.3: The process of constructing the Case Studies as presented here

CASE STUDY: CHRISTINE

In this Case Study I present:

- Background to the Case Study of Christine;
- Christine as a meaning maker;
- Christine as a constructor of literacy; and
- A summary of my Case Study of Christine.

BACKGROUND TO THE CASE STUDY OF CHRISTINE

In the background to this Case Study I provide an introduction to the person, Christine, her intergenerational family acculturation and why her parents specifically chose Banksia Grove School for her.

An introduction to the person, Christine

The consistent picture of Christine which emerges from the data and from my interactions with her is one of a child with a well developed sense of humour who is enthusiastic about life and school. Family and friends are important to her both socially and as a means of sharing and confirming new knowledge or ideas to make learning meaningful. Her parents' (cynical) hopes are sometimes as basic as that she might not lose her shoes at school or that she will get ready for school on time.

Christine's intergenerational family acculturation

Christine comes from a family of mostly ex-British yeomen and labourers who became farm workers and landowners in Australia (Ref.: Response to Demographics: Question 3). Some branches of Christine's family have been in Australia for four generations while her paternal grandfather stayed in Australia to marry her paternal grandmother during the Second World War (Ref.: Response to Demographics: Question 3). Contact with the extended family is limited (Ref.: Response to Demographics: Question 3).

There is a strong historical sense of the "rights of the working man [sic]" with ties to the Labor movement and Communist Party (Ref.: Responses to Demographics: Question 5; Part I: Question 7). *Leadership* is often in the

form of community service through public office, frequently providing respectable work roles demonstrating morality, reliability and a strong work ethic (i.e., *persistence*) (Ref.: Response to Part I: Question 5; Part II: Questions 1,3,7).

Creativity is present in the form of creative pursuits such as traditional women's skills and interests in the theatre and the arts (Ref.: Response to Part I: Question 6).

There is also a history of exclusive *allegiances*, some life long, strong generational and intergenerational networks (i.e., traditional women's and broader social networks) and a love of people and children, in particular, in Christine's extended family (Ref.: Response to Part I: Questions 1,3).

Humour is an ever present medium for communication in Christine's intergenerational family unit with the "prized role of the 'wag'" being shared by various members at different times (Ref.: Responses to Part I: Question 7; Focus Interview). Within her immediate family, Christine shares (with the rest of the family from time to time) the prized family role of the "wag". Her parents describe her as follows:

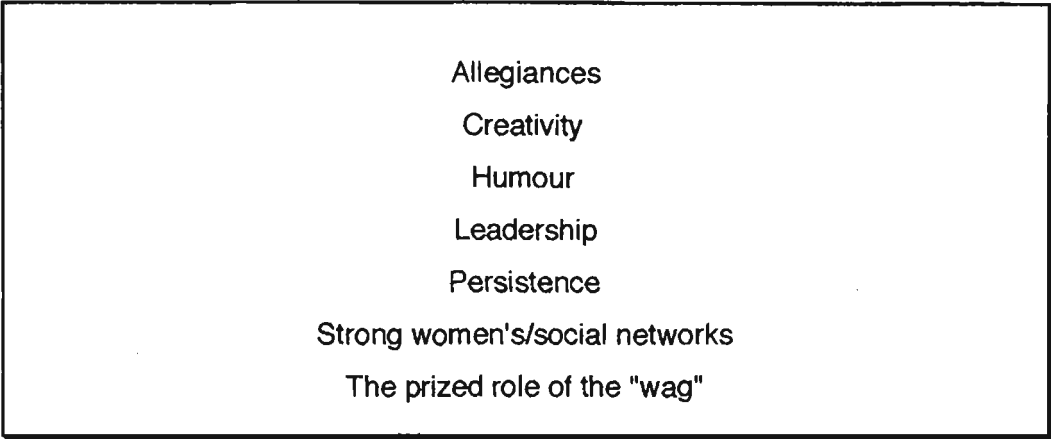
a "wag" with a good sense of humour, bright, persistent, loving, provocative (she's a great tease), creative, inquisitive, artistic, emotional, energetic, noisy, uncompromising (well let's be honest stubborn)

Her parents see their responsibility, with regard to Christine, as changing from week to week depending on what is happening with Christine. Mostly they see their role as ensuring physical and emotional wellbeing, providing unconditional love and nurturing Christine's view of herself as a loving, worthwhile, capable person with talents and qualities that are valued (Ref.: Response to Part II: Question 8).

Her family acculturation has emphasised and nurtured her bright, loving, hard working (*persistent*) and strong "woman" attributes which are found scattered throughout her intergenerational family as are her strong social needs (Ref.: Responses to Part I: Questions 1, 6, 7 & 8).

As mentioned earlier, research by Minuchin (e.g., 1974) into recurring

patterns in intergenerational family units indicates that "repeated patterns determine how, when, and to whom family members relate" (Nichols, 1984:472). In Christine's intergenerational family unit consistently recurring themes include:



Why Christine's parents chose Banksia Grove School for her

When considering why Christine's parents chose Banksia Grove for her, if Minuchin (Nichols, 1984) is correct, then recurring intergenerational patterns may underly their reasons. Christine's parents' reasons for choosing Banksia Grove School for her were four fold:

- Community;
- Curriculum;
- Expectations; and
- Self-determination.

Each of these factors played varying roles in the decision by Christine's parents to send her to Banksia Grove School with curriculum and self-determination being the most significant factors.

Community

A strong social network is a feature of Christine's intergenerational family unit (Ref.: Response to Part I: Question 6) and is reflected here as "community". The sense of community within the school was one deciding factor:

Then there's the community element of it, too, is important. But that's not to say Banksia Grove is unique in that respect...

Curriculum

It seems that opportunity for personal creativity is valued by Christine's parents and this is evident at an intergenerational level with several creative outlets featuring, such as traditional women's skills and the theatre (Ref.: Response to Part I: Questions 1,7,8). The consistently interesting curriculum at Banksia Grove, based on their older children's experiences at the school, was central to their decision in choosing Banksia Grove for Christine:

The other thing is it's consistently interesting for our kids. ... I mean year by year, day by day ... but there's always been some interesting approach to the curriculum that's really grabbed them ... you can pick [sibling's name]'s highlights ... building ... construction ... plays ... research ... design own programs ... Parliament ... then [sibling] and Australian History. ... You get that in other schools but it's not consistent.

Expectations

Allegiances are important at the intergenerational level (Ref.: Response to Part I: Question 6) and here, siblings have established the bench mark for a set of expectations, as Christine expected to go to Banksia Grove as had her siblings:

She knew the school because of [siblings' names] ... She expected to go there.

Self-determination

Leadership is a very strong feature of Christine's intergenerational family (Ref.: Responses to Demographics: Question 5; Part I: Questions 1,7). Christine's parents believe children at Banksia Grove really feel they have a role in directing and suggesting things (Focus Interview):

The thing in particular [that lead us to choose Banksia Grove] is that they [the children] feel they have a role in directing and suggesting things and even when they don't ... take the Australian History project which was someone else's idea ... but they felt it was their learning not that they're [sic] participating in someone else's teaching. They do feel that strongly. ... They all express ... well not Christine so much, [older sibling's names here] express their views as if they were able to stand back, critically evaluate it and say this is what they think should happen ... they say that because that's what they believe actually.

How this background affects Christine as a meaning maker and as a constructor of literacy is discussed below.

CHRISTINE AS A MEANING MAKER

Data pools accessed to construct this section include:

- Intergenerational family acculturation data (Parent Questionnaire and focus interview with a parent);
- Authorized Document 3 data (Teacher records, including school reports and classroom notes); and
- Classroom observation data (Video tapes of classroom interactions).

As I was attempting to pattern these data the following patterns or themes of how Christine makes meaning emerged:

- Modes of expression;
- Persistence;
- Humour; and
- Social needs.

These characteristics of her responses reflect her intergenerational acculturation themes listed above. Christine makes meaning within one topic through exploring different modes of expression such as dramatic play (for herself, no audience), making up plays for an audience of family and friends, make and build, drawing and making up songs (Ref.: Response to Part II: Question 2).

Modes of expression

This feature seems to be closely related to Christine's sense of humour and her creativity (defined by her parents as "the capacity for novel thinking, perceiving relationships and making associations between ideas, objects and process. It is not the reproduction of some model, demonstration or prior learning" - Ref.: Response to Part II: Question 1) both of which are intergenerational features. When she first started Kindergarten and experienced social problems as a result of attempting to use her humour, Christine's exploration of different modes of expression declined. Her exploration of different modes of expression at school is closely tied to how she learns at home:

Parent: Christine likes to express the things she learns in a variety of ways - though drawing is her favourite, but she will make up songs, make up her own plays (to be observed by an audience) or dramatic play (only for her) as a response to the one topic.

and at school. As she gained social confidence, her sense of humour returned as did her preferred modes of creative expression. This happened about eighteen months after starting school:

Teacher: She ... takes up on everything there is to offer, particularly art and craft pursuits. She has been doing a lot of detailed drawing lately (i.e. the play program cover [see Figure 5.4 below]) and seems to have a real flair for art activities. ... She was a dedicated member of the group that wrote the story of the play, and a fully involved actor in the play itself - something she seems to have a real flair for. She loved both setting up the Art Show and completing work to go in it.

Persistence

This is a very strong family trait with all of Christine's immediate family exhibiting it and parallel traits found in much of the extended family (e.g., "hard working", "reliable"). Embedded within this feature is that of Christine's self-determination as a meaning maker. The enduring nature of this feature of Christine's meaning making between home and school is well documented:

Parent: She's very definite about what she wants so she's not a kid who has any trouble settling on an activity or once she's settled on it, sticking to it. ... I'm impressed with the way she'll see something through. ... A couple of weeks ago she made a little book at home and she asked us for virtually all the words in it. She kept coming back. ... She'd do it night after night. She'd staple it and then she'd want it read back, through it... She was quite content to do her own thing. She didn't rely on us for suggestions or ideas or whatever. ... Quite often she'll be like that. ... I guess that's the context in which I was thinking of stubbornness. ... She's persistent with something ... but if she's got the idea she's not a kid that looks for approval for it necessarily. ... Her own internal motivation is sufficient.

Teacher: Christine enjoys our "quiet work times" and works hard and well, clear about what she has to do and happy to stick at it - feeling a sense of fulfilment when she has finished.

....

As always Christine is full of initiative and ideas for things to do at school, and able to carry them out.

Humour

Christine's sense of humour is a very important means by which she communicates within her family.

Parents: Christine frequently describes herself as a "ratbag" and will have read elsewhere that the "wag" is a role which is well regarded in the family. Probably Christine's sense of humour and persistence are two striking features.

While her humour is appreciated by her teacher at school, when she first started school, the other children did not appreciate her very well developed brand of often cynical humour.

Teacher: It is a pleasure to see Christine so happy and settled - she has a lovely smile and a great sense of humour.

Her way of making meaning through her humour resulted in her being socially isolated from her peers when she first started school. This was a "bit of a shock" to her (Focus Interview). Gradually she was able to adjust to her social group and temper her humour so that she was able to join in with her peers.

Social needs

Strong social networks are a feature of Christine's intergenerational family acculturation. Getting on well with her peers is important to Christine especially for the purposes of learning and this is why not being able to communicate using her own brand of humour was a shock to her when she first started school. She likes to learn in social contexts (e.g., dramatic play, make and build, drawing) and her parents say these influence how she conceptualizes learning:

Parents: Christine ... saw the decision of a playmate to play with someone else as a shift in allegiance and would be distressed if someone didn't play with her. She was certainly interested in the activities of the class and would relate these to us, but they were certainly of less significance than the social scene.

Teacher: Socially Christine has been in the thick of the girls' group since the beginning of the year, and early this term I don't think it was a particularly easy time for any of them. ... There were frequent changes in allegiance that caused problems and all of them are quite strong personalities - the classic too many chiefs syndrome!

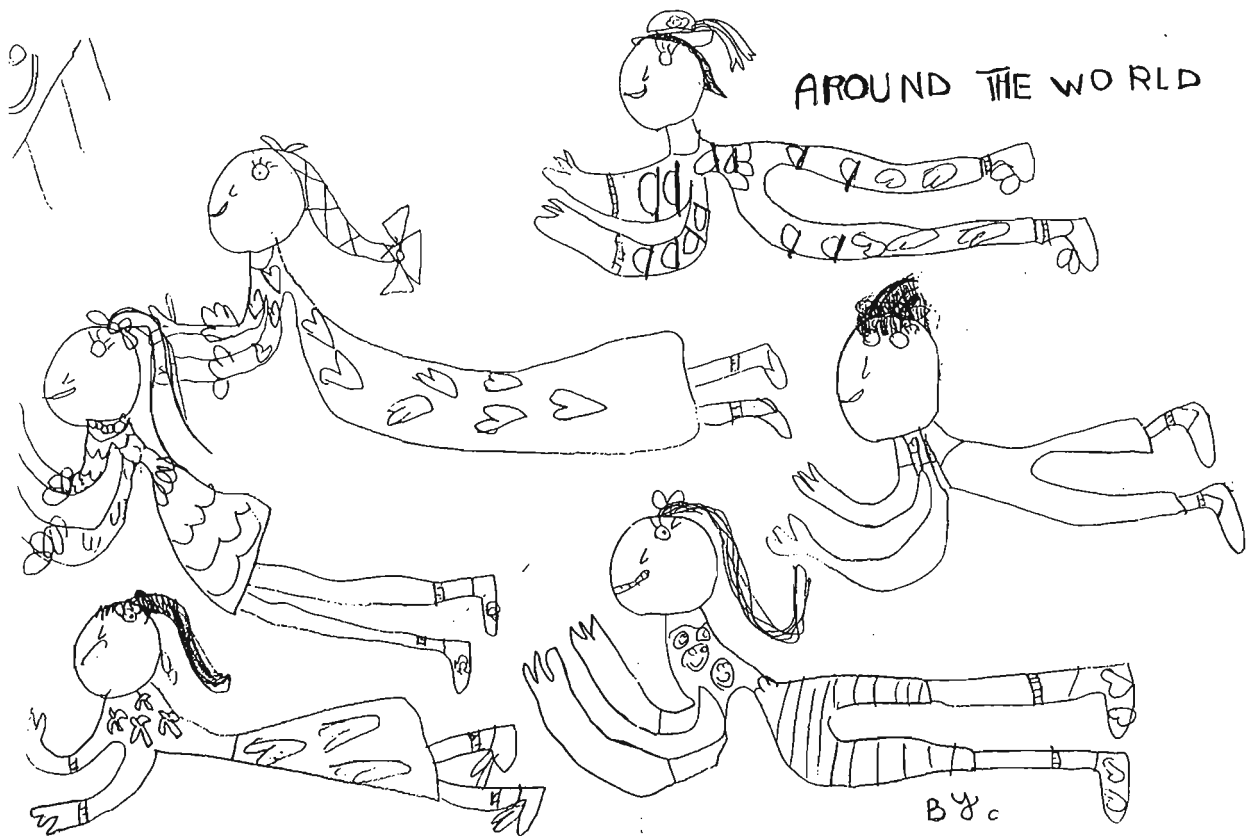


Figure 5.4 The play program cover by Christine

Socialization is important in Christine's development of literacy practices as she likes to share and confirm new knowledge or ideas with those around her:

Parents: [T]his [getting on with her peers] is one of Christine's central concerns about school. It is probably her most significant area of learning at school this year. Because Christine likes to "learn" in the context of dramatic play, make and build, drawing etc , and most of these activities are social in nature and her relationships have a direct bearing on how she regards learning. It is the sharing and confirmation of new knowledge or ideas with friends which makes learning alive.

Each of these features of Christine as a meaning maker has influenced her responses to the construction of literacy.

CHRISTINE AS A CONSTRUCTOR OF LITERACY

In this section I draw together the connections between Christine's intergenerational family acculturation, her school acculturation and her idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy. To do this I describe:

- The salient features of Christine, the learner, as an individual member of her intergenerational family of origin and her school (as described by her parents, teacher and myself from classroom observations);
- Christine as an active meaning maker; and
- Christine as an active constructor of literacy who uses her knowledge of the world derived from her primary experiences in her family of origin and her school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom.

Christine's construction of literacy is characterized by

- Persistence;
- Need to control the process;
- Sense of purpose; and
- Exploration of different modes of expression.

These features of her learning which, embedded in her acculturated system of meaning making (derived from her primary experiences in her family of origin and her school) described above, have influenced how she constructs literacy in the classroom in the following ways.

Persistence

When Christine constructs literacy in the classroom she exhibits quite a deal of self determination and persistence at the task consistent with that trait within her intergenerational family of origin. Her parents clearly identify her persistence as a strong feature of her activities:

Parent: Christine loves drawing and consumes vast quantities of paper. Her drawings sometimes resemble a comic opera (as does life in the household at times) - they are quite detailed, invariably are part of a story and are often accompanied by dialogue or singing (the comic opera!).

For a long time she drew scenes from *The Little Mermaid* and indeed princesses, mermaids and weddings are still her favourites. She likes drawing characters from stories she's heard or things like sharks from the aquarium.

Her teacher also identifies her ability to persist with an activity:

Teacher: She has written copiously this semester, always independently and with great fervour. She has written whole books and illustrated them in a sitting, and she loves to share them when they are finished - no doubt you've seen volumes of them. Her spelling approximations are becoming more accurate, and are especially so when she slows down a bit. I have been keeping an eye on them as I was a bit concerned for a while, as I mentioned to you.

Persistence is one way in which Christine makes meaning when she constructs literacy. She engages profoundly with the data as she immerses herself to a point at which she is sufficiently satisfied with the outcome (i.e., has achieved a sufficiently satisfying Gestalt) as noticed by her teacher who describes Christine as "*feeling a sense of fulfilment when she has finished*". She is happy to keep on asking how words are spelled and she writes what she knows as mentioned in her parent's comment:

Parent: I'm impressed with the way she'll see something through. ... A couple of weeks ago she made a little book at home and she asked us for virtually all the words in it. She kept coming back. ... She'd do it night after night. She'd staple it and then she'd want it read back, through it... She was quite content to do her own thing. She didn't rely on us for suggestions or ideas or whatever. ...

She is comfortable in asking an adult to complete the task when it is more than she is able to persist with (see Journal entry telling of her visit to the aquarium in Figure 5.5).

One of the reasons Christine's parents chose Banksia Grove School for her was because it allowed children a high degree of self-determination in their learning. Banksia Grove School's practice of allowing children to choose (self-determination) what they will do (within limits, see Teacher's records in Appendix X) has worked well for Christine as it has allowed her the freedom to engage deeply with data of her choosing to make meaning through the construction of literacy and where there has been an interest from other children in her class, the whole class has engaged in sharing Christine's interests and making meaning such as through their exploration of sea creatures and visiting the aquarium as a class group. The social aspect of learning that is so important to Christine is enhanced in the whole process as her ability to access her Conversation Ring within her Information System is greatly increased when she can share her knowledge with her peers and they with her.

Need to control the process

Christine's need to control the process by which she responds to the construction of literacy is closely related to her willingness to persist. She does not like control to be taken away from her either at home or school:

Parent: [(In response to Part II: Question 2: How does Christine learn best) Christine likes to take control over learning. She doesn't like too many surprises...] She likes considerable control over the process. ... I guess the surprise relates to someone else taking control. ... She's a kid who feels very comfortable with what she can do. ... That doesn't lock her in ... she feels she can take steps ... she likes to be in control of that ... like the book [when she reads with an adult] she likes it to be her decision about it [when she reads herself without the adult]

(cont.)

(cont.)

Teacher: Christine also enjoys reading in the group, using the big books and group stories and so on, but has not shown as much interest in reading for herself, although she is quite happy to when asked. She likes the one to one situation, and has enjoyed having Adrienne as a regular listening adult. When we read together she prefers me to read the book to her first, and then she reads to me (this is something she and Adrienne have established). She is not reading word for word yet, but has a good memory for the patterns in the text and the story line. Lately I have been encouraging her to slow down a bit and go word by word; she has been quite happy to do that.

Control for Christine seems to come in four modes of expression:

- The topic she explores;
- The timing of that exploration;
- The process of exploration; and
- The modes through which she expresses her meaning making.

Being a self-initiator (*cp* self-determination), Christine is able to decide on her own topic of learning with little assistance from others. She prefers it to be in her own time such as when she begins to read a book with an adult:

Parent: She likes considerable control over the process. ... she likes to be in control of that ... like the book [when she reads with an adult] she likes it to be her decision about it [when she reads herself without the adult]

Teacher: When we read together she prefers me to read the book to her first, and then she reads to me (this is something she and Adrienne have established).

Her process of exploration of a topic is both deep and broad. It is exemplified by persistence while deeply engaged in whatever she has immersed herself as she explores different applications of her new knowledge and evaluates the efficacy of those applications each time she reaccesses the data such as her fascination with sea creatures which started with her interest in the story of *The Little Mermaid*:

Parent: Her "obsession" with *The Little Mermaid* story is a good example. She has enjoyed the story (in the book) and the film, she enjoys drawing various scenes, she enjoys singing the songs, playing out the action - either with friends or with dolls. She has developed an interest in dolphins, then other sea creatures and can talk authoritatively about Beluga Whales and several kinds of shark.

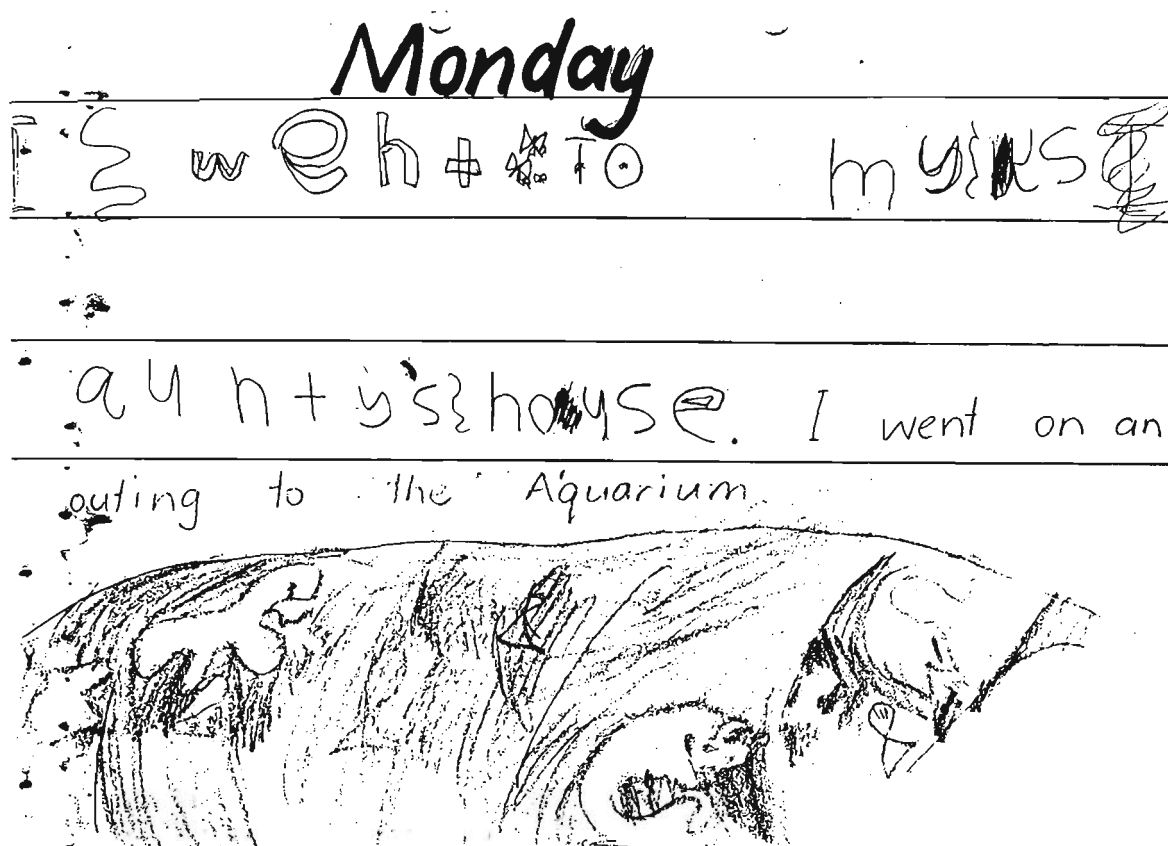


Figure 5.5 A page from Christine's Journal where she tells of her "outing" to the aquarium

The way Christine has branched out from her initial interest in the story of *The Little Mermaid* represents her attempts to make meaning beyond what she already knows by applying a template of how she makes meaning with the *The Little Mermaid* to how she makes meaning about other (sea) related information. As she has applied her template to the different areas, her knowledge and interest bases have been expanded and this expansion has been evidenced in such things as her drawings, writings (see her Journal page in Figure 5.5), her dramatic play and in her authoritative knowledge of Beluga Whales and other sea creatures.

"The consistently interesting curriculum" with its breadth and depth of learning modes and its multiplicity of opportunities for individual and group exploration and expression, was one feature which influenced Christine's parents when they considered where to send her to school. Christine seems

to have benefited from Banksia Grove's practice of allowing students to explore topics through a wide range of daily available activities and providing choosing times and free times during the day has meant that Christine has had the opportunity to pursue her interests as far as she needed, taking control over what she does (i.e., what she chooses to be her data pool), when she does it, how she does it (i.e., how she meaningfully patterns her data) and with what and whom she does it (i.e., how she applies and evaluates the efficacy of that application and when and how, why and what she adds to her knowledge base and ultimately her belief system which will ultimately influence what she learns next). This practice seems to have connected with Christine's strong sense of connections and purpose, in the classroom and at home, described by her parents, her teacher and observed by me.

Sense of purpose

Christine is a very purposeful child who knows what she wants (she follows a pattern of strong women in her intergenerational family) and responds best when her purpose is clear and she is in control of the process:

Teacher: Christine uses her own time at school profitably and well. She chooses a wide variety of things to do, and a variety of people to do them with. She often chooses to extend something we have begun as a group, such as sewing, knitting, origami, clay and other craft things in particular, and at the moment she is heavily involved in imaginative play based on a whole variety of topics, often with [V], often with some or all the other girls, sometimes with a group of boys - last week she was the proud mother of seven baby boy rabbits and she was scuttling around the place keeping them all in order and feeding them! ... She's a champion puzzle "do-er" and a prolific drawer.

Christine's sense of purpose seems to be enhanced by her connections between different areas of exploration as she seems driven (*cp* persistence) to seek further meaningful patterns in data analogous to her initial topic of interest.

By providing times during the day when Christine's interests can be pursued and valued in the classroom it gives her access to peers for further discussing her knowledge and adding to it from what others know on the topic (i.e., she accesses her Conversational Information Ring which is next in immediacy after her Internal Information Ring). This is very confirming for

Christine for whom the social aspect of learning is essential:

Parent: She was certainly interested in the activities of the class and would relate these to us, but they were certainly of less significance than the social scene.

...

It is the sharing and confirmation of new knowledge or ideas with friends which makes learning alive.

Exploration of different modes of expression

When she feels in control, with a clear sense of purpose Christine seems to naturally want to explore different modes of expression within the one topic over a prolonged time. She often branches out into adjacent areas of interest and knowledge in great depth such as in the case of Beluga Whales:

Parent: She enjoys sticking with one idea, and exploring it in many ways, branching out from something which is loved and familiar. Her "obsession" with *The Little Mermaid* story is a good example. She has enjoyed the story (in the book) and the film, she enjoys drawing various scenes, she enjoys singing the songs, playing out the action - either with friends or with dolls. She has developed an interest in dolphins, then other sea creatures and can talk authoritatively about Beluga Whales and several kinds of shark.

One of Christine's Journal pages (see Figure 5.5) she tells the story of how she went, with her aunty, to the aquarium at the height of her interest in sea creatures which stemmed from her initial interest at home in *The Little Mermaid*.

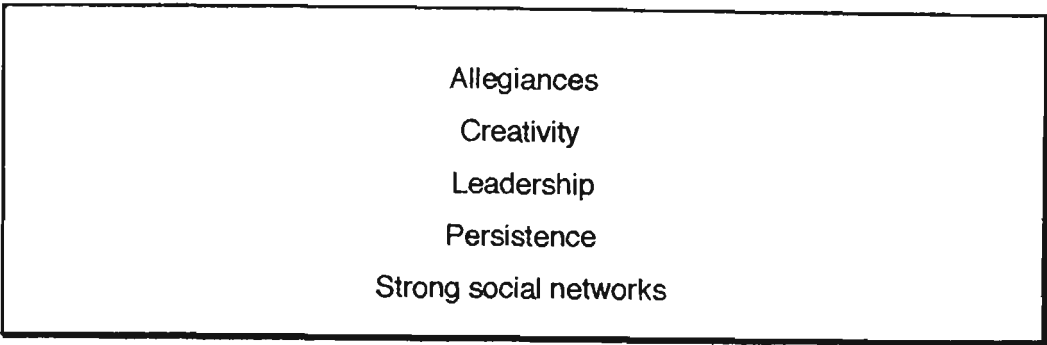
These characteristics of Christine, embedded in her acculturated meaning making (derived from her primary experiences in her family of origin and her school) described above, have clearly influenced how she constructs literacy in the classroom.

A SUMMARY OF MY CASE STUDY OF CHRISTINE

Here, I describe Christine as an active constructor of literacy who uses her knowledge of the world derived from her primary experiences in her family of origin and her school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the

construction of literacy in the classroom.

Recurring patterns in her intergenerational family relevant to Christine as a constructor of literacy appear to be:



During her time in Kindergarten, her parents felt her deep involvement in social issues within the class distracted from her ability to focus on developing her literacy practices. Half way through Year One those distractions had eased and while she was more subdued (i.e., less likely to freely exercise her sense of humour) she was more comfortable with exploring different modes of expression such as her drawings and had developed a passion (persistence) for making very small books full of intricate drawings. Her drawings seem to serve at least the purpose, as well as possibly others, of being fulfilling to Christine.

My observations of Christine concur with those of her parents and her teacher. On several occasions I observed Christine happily applying herself to some activity or other. When she was constructing her intricate little books she would often sit away from the rest of the group sometimes for most of the day or whenever she got the opportunity to work on her books. She was very persistent, controlled, puposeful, and pleased with her efforts (Ref.: Classroom Observations 11.8.92; 25.8.92). Her well developed sense of humour was often unappreciated by her peers and this initially had the effect of isolating her from them. When she was able to work out what was appreciated and what was not, she became more settled and her confidence in expressing her self increased as did her exploration at school of more modes of expression such as in her role in the play and the Art Show mentioned by her teacher in November, 1992.

CASE STUDY: LIAM

In this Case Study I present:

- Background to the Case Study of Liam;
- Liam as a meaning maker;
- Liam as a constructor of literacy; and
- A summary of my Case Study of Liam.

BACKGROUND TO THE CASE STUDY OF LIAM

In the background to this Case Study I provide an introduction to the person, Liam, his intergenerational family acculturation and why his parents specifically chose Banksia Grove School for him.

An introduction to the person, Liam

Liam's teacher's description of him as physically "robust and delicate" is an apt one (Ref.: Authorized Document 3:43). He is intelligent, strong, humourous, creative, intensely private and fragile. He is noticeable by his "very wide general knowledge and a very mature vocabulary" (Teacher: Authorized Document 3:43). He revels in the company of like minded people yet often finds sharing his personal space with others, even his friends, difficult (Ref.: Response to Part II: Question 2). He's a no nonsense person who likes to know where he stands and where others stand in relation to him. He takes his time to get to know others before he will share some of himself, especially his particular brand of wit. His parents pragmatic hopes for him include him being able to overcome his shyness and for happiness in life (Ref.: Response to Part II: Question 19).

Liam's Intergenerational family acculturation

Liam's extended family has a working class background and originates from the British Isles. Most members of Liam's intergenerational family were born in Australia with the exception of both his grandfathers who were born in England. Current family support is through Liam's paternal and maternal grandmothers with whom there are "close emotional ties". Contact with the rest of the small extended family is very limited (Ref.: Responses to

Demographics: Questions 2,3,5). The family is characterized by a sense of inadequacy (i.e., vulnerability) for various reasons and there is at least one account of children being raised by relatives (usually grandmothers) other than their parents on both sides of Liam's intergenerational family (Ref.: Responses to Demographics: Questions 2; Part I: Question 4). These events may have led to a strong sense of self-preservation through social isolation, the emphasis on maintaining personal integrity and being responsible for oneself and others who need assistance (Ref.: Responses to Part I: Question 7; Part II: Questions 11,12,15). Males figure prominently as the black sheep in the family. Power resides in the nuclear family unit (Ref.: Responses to Part I: Questions 1,2). The role of heroes in a family is one of cohesion (Roberto, 1992; Ref.: also Stagoll & Lang, 1980) and their absence in the intergenerational family may increase a sense of disconnection:

Parent: [In response to Who are the family heroes?] None; most family stories in our recollection are contradictory, we believe many to be fantasies or wishful thinking - mechanism to cope when feeling inadequate and socially unacceptable

Liam's intergenerational family acculturation has supported his vulnerability, conciseness, intense need for privacy, self-reliance and no nonsense approach to life. His mother describes him as:

delightful, caring and considerate, a complex thinker, he has a strong sense of self preservation, shy, seeks friendship with people he likes and respects and doesn't seem to want to be involved with people whose actions he doesn't like.

Consistently recurring themes running through Liam's family acculturation include:

- integrity
- isolation
- responsibility
- vulnerability

These themes are reflected in his immediate family's goals:

to be able to earn an income and support a happy, satisfied life

and ethics:

"a good day's work for a good day's pay"
"acceptance of each other as we are"
"where you find yourself to be strong and capable you should take responsibility
for those less capable around you"

Why Liam's parents chose Banksia Grove for him

Liam's parents believe there should be congruence between home and school:

Parent: I think it is important that home and school have similar values and expectations so I think Banksia Grove is not for everyone.

Issues central to choosing Banksia Grove School for Liam included:

- Pragmatics; and
- Philosophy of education.

These two issues reflect Liam's family's acculturation in terms of their practical approach and individual responsibility.

Pragmatics

The family is very practical. Being practical appears to increase integrity and reduce vulnerability, two strong family features. In this, their practical approach to choosing a school for Liam included the family's familiarity with the school and a perceived need in Liam:

Parents: Our [professional] association with the school [Izzy, sibling, was already at Banksia Grove and it had worked for her].

...

Liam was very frustrated with creche and pre-school, particularly when only one activity could be chosen and then it had to be put away before he had explored all its possibilities. He has an excellent concentration span.

Philosophy of education

Two aspects of the school's philosophy of education which influenced his parents' decision were:

- Respect for individual and group rights and responsibilities; and
- The child-centred curriculum.

The school's respect for the individual's and group's rights and responsibilities was central to Liam's parents' decision to send him to Banksia Grove school. Being responsible for your actions and caring for others less able are salient features in Liam's family (Ref.: Response to Part I: Question 7). They describe the school and the role of the school as:

A comfortable, stimulating environment where individual and group rights and responsibilities are respected.

...

To respect the rights and responsibilities of the child.

Self-determination is articulated as responsibility. It is an important intergenerational theme in Liam's family as there are several members who have difficulty taking responsibility for themselves and Liam, also, has had to deal with issues in this area:

Parent: I think if any one ... if they were trying to inflict rules or regimentation he would have resisted something terrible.

Teacher: It concerns me that he finds it so difficult to accept responsibility for himself. If I am talking to him about something he has done he will often say that it was the fault of whoever he was with. I have tried to help him see that we

(cont.)

(cont.)

are each responsible for our own actions and that we sometimes need to make decisions which are difficult.

...

Liam seems to view adults as authority figures and if I take on this role he is more able to accept what I have to say. This is a concern as it gets in the way of him taking responsibility for himself, or realising that working in a partnership is more productive.

...

He has shown a great interest in the going out mornings and I was pleased to hear that he was taking responsibility for making sure he was well prepared, as we have really stressed that to everyone.

The child-centred curriculum is seen as an articulation of the school's philosophy, through operationalization of what it means for all stakeholders to feel comfortable, stimulated, and challenged within their own agendas. In the sense that this allows the individual to maintain a sense of integrity, it also reduces the likelihood of the individual developing a feeling of inadequacy rendering him or her vulnerable. This is expressed, by Liam's mother, as follows:

Parents: For learning to occur at a rate which the child needs and can cope with

...

To provide an environment which is interesting and stimulating and conducive to learning

How this background affects Liam as a meaning maker and as a constructor of literacy is discussed below.

LIAM AS A MEANING MAKER

One of the frustrations Liam experienced prior to coming to school at Banksia Grove was limited scope for him to explore as he needed to make meaning. He likes to be able to explore one thing thoroughly before moving onto the next to repeat the process. Science interests are central to how he makes meaning and this is a feature found in all members in his immediate family:

Parent: I think that's [science] just a bent we all [i.e., Liam's nuclear family] have ... that's the way we go ... I noticed even in all the books we buy ... When Izzi [sibling] had all this First Fleet stuff ... we read those things when they come our way but we don't tend to buy them. ... That might reflect why our bookshelves are full of technology books and animal books and that kind of thing.

Liam's meaning making reflects his acculturation and is characterized by:

- Modes of expression;
- Persistence;
- Humour; and
- Social needs.

Modes of expression

Liam's creativity is manifested in his dramatic play, his drawings, his craftwork and in his sense of humour such as in *The can you find book* (see Figure 5.6) he made. When he is free to choose his modes of expression, Liam's integrity remains intact and he persists until he is sufficiently satisfied:

Parent: His work shows steady growth and development. He surprised me with his ability to do lino printing which we were working on at home.

Teacher: His diorama was a terrific example of cooperative working as he and Linley [another student] discussed what under-sea creatures they would make, who would make what, how they would hang them and so on.

...

Liam really enjoyed being a cloud in the play and was very proud of himself. He found it difficult to focus on anything except his own part and so during rehearsals was inclined to do his bit and then rest on the sidelines talking to Michael [another student]. It was difficult for him to see that this was disruptive to the rest of the play. On the night he was able to gain a sense of the performance and so was able to control his urge to discuss his last journey across the stage. He was not so involved with the Art Show but did have his pottery tile on display.

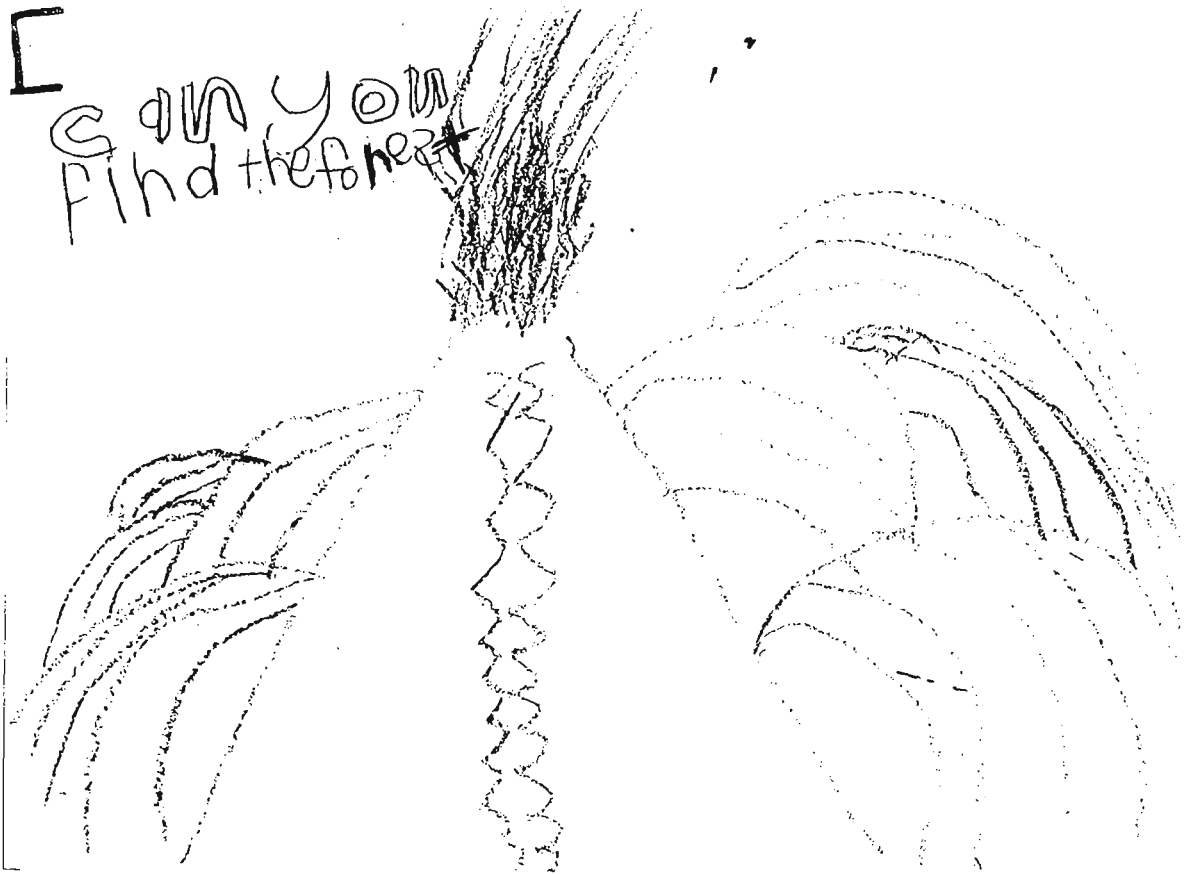


Figure 5.6: A page from Liam's *The can you find book*

Persistence

This is aligned with the intergenerational family characteristic of integrity and the drive to do one's best which his mother describes as the "classic family trait" (Focus Interview).

Parent: When activities came out [at preschool] ... if there were four activities and each child was only intended to do one ... well he wanted to do everything and he wanted to do this one thoroughly and then that one and then that one and then this one and not you can do five minutes of this today and that's it.

He's got a very good concentration span and he can sustain a game ... he could set up the lego ... we bought an old cupboard and converted it into a terrace dolls house ... it's sought of this ongoing game that they [Liam and Izzy, his sibling] both move in and play ... and goes on for days and then they leave it for a while and then get back to it. ... So he can sustain ideas or thoughts or whatever he wants to do for a long time ... he's very good at that.

Teacher: He is happy to join in all the activities we do, and he is careful to understand what the requirements are and to do his very best.

He was magnificent on the bushwalk and although he obviously felt challenged by some of the creek crossings, for example, he kept going with great

(cont.)

(cont.)

enjoyment and determination.

He is extremely well motivated to pursue his own interests, and he has many ideas of his own each day that he uses his own time well to pursue. He is a keen maker and doer, and a frequent inhabitant of the make-and-build corner and the sandpit. He has creative ideas that he can put into reality, and he rarely needs adult input when he's in inventive mode. Liam also takes up many of the optional activities offered in the program, such as knitting, sewing, origami, paper-making, and so on. Lately- he has been heavily involved in imaginative play often based on some intricate engineering in the sandpit and involving James.

Humour

Liam's sense of humour is very strong and once he feels comfortable (i.e., not vulnerable and isolated) with someone he readily communicates through his humour. However, it is often hidden:

Teacher: Even at the most difficult times I always enjoyed Liam's special sense of humour and our own quiet conversations about this and that - now I feel this side of Liam is coming out more and more for everyone to share and benefit from as he relaxes into the group.

He has a great sense of humour and I love to see the smile unfolding on his face and then developing into a hearty chuckle when he has played some sort of trick on me (and I must admit to not appreciating absolutely all of them. ...

When it surfaces, his humour can be very subtly woven into some piece of work such as *The can you find book* (see Figure 4.6) in which he enjoyed hiding a number of things for the reader to find, some more subtle than others.

Social needs

Liam needs his friends and he also needs space to himself. Liam's strong need for space to himself reflects his intergenerational family acculturation pattern of self imposed social isolation. His parents feel he will learn regardless of whether or not he gets on with his peers. This is borne out in experience within the intergenerational family unit as individual members have frequently learned in relative social isolation. He is a quiet, at times

introspective and serious child, who despite bouts of shyness and self isolating actions gets on well with and enjoys the company of his peers:

Parents: This [getting on with his peers] is an important part of his social development and will have a great influence on his self-esteem and confidence. He seeks friendships with people he likes and respects and doesn't seem to want to be involved with people whose actions he doesn't like.

...

In his case I don't really see it [getting on with his peers] as a critical factor [in his ability to learn]

...

[Liam gets on with his peers] very well, he has bouts of shyness, but he enjoys company and interacts well.

...

They're [the children at Banksia Grove] so stimulated here in the day and there's so much social interaction that they often need to be on their own to just have a space to just sort of sort through all the issues of their own day and their own social [?] ... so I think, to Liam, it [socialization] is important but his own time is important, too, more so than other kids.

Teacher: Liam is finding it difficult to learn that things won't always go the way he wants them to. Because of this he often finds it hard to work and play cooperatively with other children. He often tries to dictate what should happen next but of course it doesn't work like that. When he is feeling on top of things he is able to accept this but if he is under the weather in some way, he can become upset. He will be able to feel more in control when he learns some more negotiating skills.

...

It took a long time for Liam to accept me and the new group at the beginning of the year. I now feel that we are quite good friends.

...

After each of the term breaks I have felt that our relationship needed some time to reestablish.

Liam's need for personal space often resulted in social conflicts when he felt his personal space was being encroached upon. During these times he seemed to spontaneously move into self-isolation mode. His actions indicate that he feels, challenged, vulnerable and frightened and feels the need to be able to control his experiences in the world. These are prominent features in his intergenerational family acculturation:

Parent: Liam is very vulnerable at his age ... the world is a big place ... I think the world is very threatening to Liam at the moment and when Izzy was at that age she was the same.

...

(cont.)

(cont.)

Liam spent a lot more time with [a relative] than what Izzy did. He used to go up there to her ... and I think she's very frightened by anything ... by thunderstorms ... and I think Liam has picked up a lot more of that behaviour [i.e., feeling vulnerable, threatened, frightened] and I think it's inherent in them [Liam and other members of one branch of the family]. I think they all have it ... an emotional ... if you want to say it's genetic ... an emotional genetic set ... they've got this one that makes them so threatened by the environment and I think that's more cultivated in Liam because he spent more time with her ... I think the difficulty is a lot of things go in that he's not ready to process.

Teacher: It seems to me that Liam's last remaining difficulty is to do with being around other people and the tension and anguish that causes him at times. Again the change in him has been quite dramatic and the angry outbursts are much less frequent these days. They still happen, usually when someone deliberately or otherwise invades Liam's space or challenges him or appears to challenge him in some way, but I'm hoping that the same quiet feedback every time, from Brenda [teacher's aide] and I, that his verbal or physical abuse is not O.K., but that it is fine to go and find a quiet space and come back when he's ready, is slowly working.

Generally he is capable and confident and performs best when not under any pressure - without a queue of people behind him waiting to skip, for example.

Liam has come a long way this year. The most obvious change in him is in his ability to cope when things don't go his way. He used to get so angry and resort so often to shouting at whoever appeared to be in his way. He is now much more able to control his angry response. I am often able to talk to him about the problem in a more reasonable and calm way.

He prefers to be with others and is not happy playing or working by himself. In writing down time he has often chosen to be involved in some imaginative game made up by a group of the boys. He also loves to be involved in made up games using the mobilo. He has enjoyed being with the older group this year and getting to know some of the older boys.

How Liam makes meaning is demonstrated in his responses to the construction of literacy.

LIAM AS A CONSTRUCTOR OF LITERACY

Liam's parents define literacy as "the ability to read and write with a high level of competence (postgraduate)". Further, they expect him to become literate "by questioning, learning experiences, personal desire, parental encouragement and value". In this section I draw together the connections between Liam's intergenerational family acculturation, his school acculturation and his idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy. To do this I look at:

-
- The salient features of Liam, the learner, as an individual member of his intergenerational family of origin and his school (as described by his parents, teacher and myself from classroom observations);
 - Liam as an active meaning maker; and
 - Liam as an active constructor of literacy who uses his knowledge of the world derived from his primary experiences in his family of origin and his school to develop idiosyncratic responses to the construction of literacy in the classroom.

Liam's construction of literacy is characterized by:

- Exploration of different modes of expression.
- Need to control the process;
- Persistence; and
- Sense of purpose.

These characteristics of Liam's learning, embedded in his acculturated meaning making (derived from his primary experiences in his family of origin and his school) described above, have influenced how he constructs literacy in the classroom in the following ways.

Exploration of different modes of expression

Liam needs to feel secure in his environment before he is willing to explore different modes of expression. When he does explore he is very keen and quickly becomes engaged in the experience:

Teacher: Liam is a very responsive child and he has taken a great interest in all the things we have done so far this year, from the bees to the aquarium (where he showed real courage overcoming his fear of the tunnel), to corresponding with penfriends to the organic garden.

...

At group times Liam is generally interested and attentive although he can be distracted by others at times. He likes to contribute to group discussions, to answer questions, help read big books, make suggestions in group problem-solving times and so on, and he is comfortable giving news to the whole group. He has a very wide general knowledge and a very mature vocabulary, and has a lot to offer the group. He is able to take turns and to listen as well as to have his own say.

Need to control the process

Liam often feels threatened by unfamiliar activities as he feels his sense of control over what he is doing is taken away from him:

Parent: That [reading a big book with Adrienne and trying to guess the hidden words] would have been very threatening to him ... [Adrienne: He wouldn't have been in control?] ...mmm ... and a challenge to perform so he wouldn't do it at all.

...

He's obviously thought about that [i.e., Liam: I don't think I'll ever be able to read and write ... I mean ... It's just too hard ... you've got to be able to write to be able to read] and that the two tasks go side by side and he's saying I can read 'cat', I can read 'book', I can read my name ... because he's saying I can't read university text books therefore I'll never be able to read.

Teacher: Liam happily dictates a story or commentary to accompany a drawing, and he is always articulate and coherent.

...

Otherwise [i.e., other than a book with hidden objects in it for the reader to find] he has been inclined to avoid writing tasks and I think he feels about writing the same as he does about reading, that he should be able to do it correctly now.

Control for Liam seems to come in three modes of expression:

- The topic he explores;
- The timing of that exploration;
- The process of exploration; and
- The modes through which he expresses his meaning making.

Liam likes to construct meaning through exploring science topics such as his persistence, over a substantial length of time, with volcanoes which were present in his work for the first two years of school (e.g., Liam's contribution to *Can you find?* by Kindergarten and his own *The can you find book* (see Figure 5.7) made during the second half of his second year at school):

Parent: I think that's [science] just a bent we all [i.e., the nuclear family] have ... that's the way we go ... I noticed even in all the books we buy ...

His need to control the timing of what he does seems to be related to his nonsense "spade is a spade" (mother) approach to life, his need for control

over the process and the modes through which he expresses his meaning making.

Liam's contribution to *Can you find?* by Kindergarten:



Liam's own *The can you find book* constructed in the second half of Year One, his second year at school:

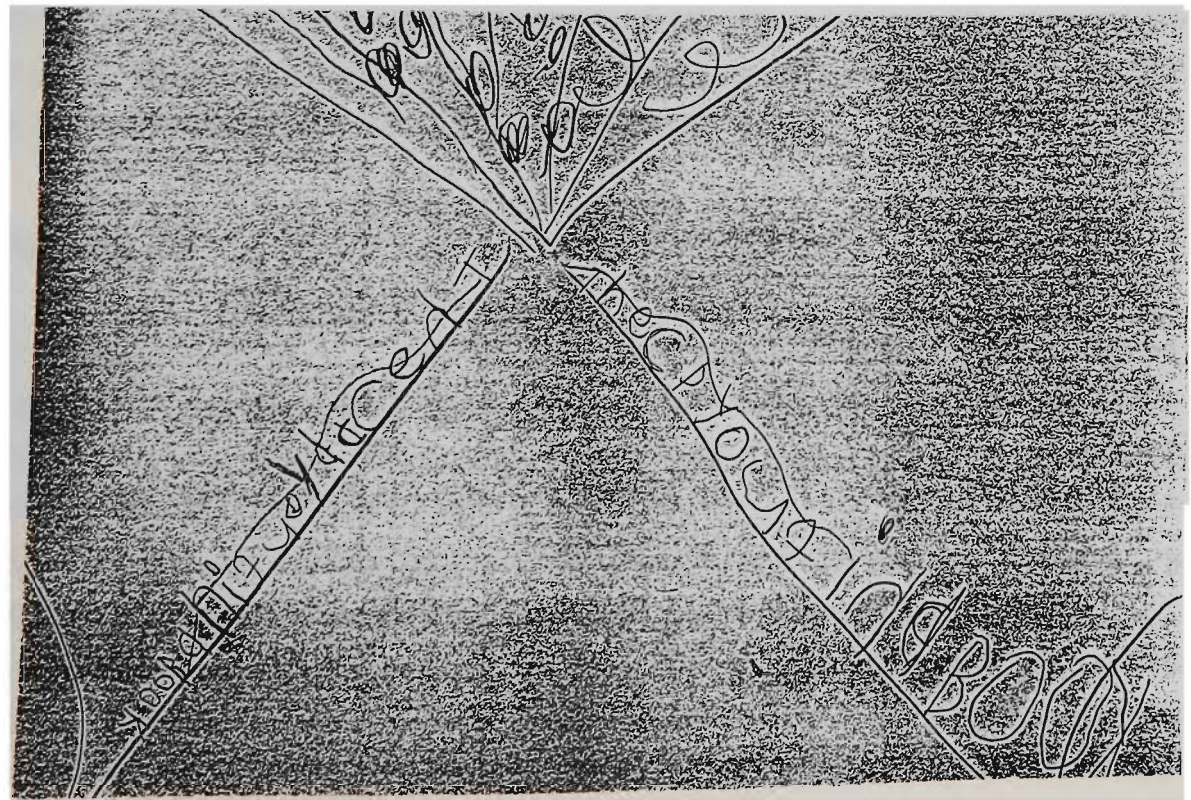


Figure 5.7: Liam's persistence in constructing meaning through a topic within science is demonstrated in his fascination with volcanoes over two years.

While this feature was manifested in his initial reluctance to attempt literacy activities, its pervasiveness was not limited to his construction of literacy:

Teacher: Liam has not shown much interest in reading and I think you are right Bridget it is because he wants to be able to do it straight away without going through the process of learning. When we read big books with the group he is able to be interested and involved. He now quite enjoys working out the words I have covered up. He sees it as fun and also a challenge within his reach, whereas he used to feel quite threatened by it. He also has a go at reading the agenda before our meetings. He has recently agreed to read to me and we have been able to have a pleasant time sitting on the cushions with a book. He likes repetitive books and gets a great buzz from recognising the pattern. Once he has established this he is able to read quite fluently though he does not always read word for word. He looks carefully at the words, especially the first letter, and also at the pictures to help him work out what is happening. If he can not work out a word by himself he is able to use clues which I give him. He likes to take his time and to think carefully about what word fits and makes sense.

...

Generally he is capable and confident and performs best when not under any pressure - without a queue of people behind him waiting to skip, for example.

...

Liam feels much happier about his efforts in Maths activities. He is often reluctant to try something new but because he is able to experience immediate success he quickly becomes very enthusiastic and reluctant to stop.

Being able to determine his own agenda (*cp* responsibility) has been very important for Liam as he has learned to deal with his fears and appreciate his and other's strengths and contributions (*cp* his determination on the bush walk and his work with Linley on the diorama).

Persistence

This feature of Liam's responses to the construction of literacy is an interesting one. His fear of the unknown, the too difficult (e.g., "can't read a University text book" (mother)), the possible failure, the loss of face interferes from time to time with Liam's learning. With the construction of literacy he initially avoided any literacy activities in the classroom as much as possible unless they had a clear purpose and appeared achievable to him. Liam was consistently interested in scientific things, especially volcanoes and these dominated his drawings from Kindergarten for quite some time (see Figure 5.7 above). His "obsession" with volcanoes, in particular, demonstrate Liam's willingness to persist when he is immersed in something of his own choosing (*cp* Teacher's comment above: "He is extremely well motivated to pursue his own interests"):

Parents: He writes groups of letters and asks us to say them, we laugh about the sounds and he keeps doing this.

Teacher: Liam has been working on another book which is similar to the first one he produced. He has worked hard on the drawings. The reader has to find something in each one, and the hidden object is becoming more subtly disguised. He has been prepared to have a go at writing the instructions himself [to the book with hidden objects in it for the reader to find] and this is a great move forward. This book is almost completed and he has worked hard to do the title page and the front and back covers himself.

Sense of purpose

Liam's practical personality seems to demand obviously practical learning which has readily attainable purposes without too much fuss. His sense of vulnerability may have influenced him in not trying to participate in some literacy practices, which weren't obviously able to be applied, because they were too threatening to him:

Parent: He likes to call a spade a spade

Teacher: Liam has not shown much interest in reading and I think you are right Bridget [mother] it is because he wants to be able to do it straight away without going through the process of learning.

...

When we read big books with the group he is able to be interested and involved. He now quite enjoys working out the words I have covered up. He sees it as fun and also a challenge within his reach, whereas he used to feel quite threatened by it.

...

He also has a go at reading the agenda before our meetings. He has recently agreed to read to me and we have been able to have a pleasant time sitting on the cushions with a book.

...

He likes repetitive books and gets a great buzz from recognising the pattern. Once he has established this he is able to read quite fluently though he does not always read word for word. He looks carefully at the words, especially the first letter, and also at the pictures to help him work out what is happening. If he can not work out a word by himself he is able to use clues which I give him.

...

He likes to take his time and to think carefully about what word fits and makes sense.

These characteristics of Liam, embedded in his acculturated meaning making (derived from his primary experiences in his family of origin and his

school) described above, have clearly influenced how he constructs literacy in the classroom.

A SUMMARY OF MY CASE STUDY OF LIAM

Liam's need to persist with his exploration of a topic of particular interest to him is very strong. This appears to be related to his need to be in control of his learning at all times. As he has achieved greater command of his own learning he has been more willing to share more intimate aspects of himself such as his humour and been more willing to take risks when attempting literacy tasks like guessing "missing" words from a familiar big book, copying words scribed for him by his teacher and ultimately writing his own stories.

Liam's parents believe it is important for him to feel comfortable, stimulated and responsible for his own learning and that the school should reflect similar values. Liam's template for making meaning has been one of how to maintain his integrity when faced with potentially threatening learning experiences in the classroom to overcome any sense he may have had of vulnerability. He has often achieved his purposes through socially isolating himself when he has felt too threatened. As he has learned to make sense of and relax within his environment he has become less isolating and more responsible for himself and as a member of the whole class group. This has in turn reduced his sense of vulnerability and enabled him to operate, and thus learn, more and more effectively within the classroom situation.

His integrity has been further maintained by the time frame in which all this has happened: The process has been largely driven by Liam as he simply refused to meet other people's agendas. Banksia Grove's flexible, child-centred approach to learning allowed him the space and time to find a personally effective means of progressing as a strong, self-determined constructor of literacy in the classroom.

I frequently observed Liam's careful assessment and evaluation of the classroom environment and possible inherent risks to his integrity as he kept a safe distance from the teacher, myself, and other students for much of the three years of the study. His social isolation was considerably lessened and his sense of responsibility increased by the presence of his close friends with whom he shared many enjoyable hours.

CASE STUDY: CASEY

In this Case Study I present:

- Background to the Case Study of Casey;
- Casey as a meaning maker;
- Casey as a constructor of literacy; and
- A summary of my Case Study of Casey.

BACKGROUND TO THE CASE STUDY OF CASEY

In the background to this Case Study I provide an introduction to the person, Casey, her intergenerational family acculturation and why her parents specifically chose Banksia Grove School for her.

An introduction to the person, Casey

Casey is a self-contained, self directed, outgoing, popular, intelligent, creative child who presents a strong, face-saving facade to the world. She tends to organize her world in a way that minimises her involvement in situations which may involve loss of face and she will manipulate a difficult situation to save face (Ref.: Focus Interview). Her mother identifies strongly with Casey:

Mother: She's my clone.
Mother like daughter. ... Casey is very much like me and it will always be difficult to distinguish between what I would like for myself and what I would like for her.

Casey's intergenerational family acculturation

Casey has a small extended family in which strong, frustrated, manipulating, "rule-behind-the-throne" (i.e., *controlling*), "non-status" women with a *social role* and absent men are common (Ref.: Responses to Part I: Questions 3,6,7,8). This is present in Casey's immediate family although her mother is keen to change that pattern:

Mother: The reality is that there is a pattern of strong frustrated women in my family. They rule ruthlessly but in a most underhand way. I notice similar traits in myself. Men aren't so much weak as absent (e.g., at work, at golf, helping a friend, etc.).

...

Ken [Casey's father] is notoriously absent

...

In fact going back to what we were saying before about doing things and hoping that the children will be influenced by them, I'm hoping sort of, that I'm not wasting my time, but certainly a large factor in my decision to go back and study for a career and to carry it through and get a job and be seen to count in my own right was in a hope I might counteract that attitude [i.e., re the "non-status" social role of women].

For some time Casey's maternal grandmother viewed her as the second generation "good girl" (like her mother) while her elder sister was the second generation "bad girl" (like her mother's cousin) and Casey's behaviour seemed to reflect this (Ref.: Response to Part I: Question 2). Her mother finds it difficult to separate her hopes and expectations that she holds for herself from those she has for Casey but says:

Mother: I hope that she will enjoy learning (she certainly has so far). That she will find a direction for that learning with less false starts than I did. ... She will make the necessary effort to acquire all the skills she requires to live the life that she chooses whatever that may be. ... At present I have no reason to believe she will do otherwise.

Despite the set *social role for women*, there is a tendency for Casey's mother to be self-reliant (i.e., *independent*) to the point of *self isolation*. She identifies this feature as having originated from her isolated experience as an only child in an adult social world (Ref.: Focus Interview). Casey also demonstrates this aspect of her personality quite regularly and it seems to be connected with saving face as she tends to observe others and prefer to go off by herself returning when she has learned whatever it was:

Mother: She likes to listen to me explain things to Kate [older sister] and then ask a question but usually she just goes away and tries it out till she gets it right herself.

Casey's intergenerational family acculturation has supported her strong, independent, isolating, controlling yet social approach to life. She has contact with all members of her small extended family although distance limits some contacts (Ref.: Responses to Part I: Questions 6,7,8). Her mother describes her as follows:

Mother: I think Casey is a happy child. She is philosophical about most things, although she found the change from being home to going to school a little unsettling if the tantrums are anything to go by. She is curious and, I think, intelligent. She has very good fine motor skill and enjoys most activities which require her to think and do at the same time. She seems to have very good problem solving skills, both in her learning and in her relationships.

Guiding values and myths in the family seem to be closely related with men being encouraged to work in a good paying job while women are the social beings and homemakers. Women do not have status in their own right but get it from their spouse (Ref.: Responses to Part I: Questions 3,7). Themes running through Casey's intergenerational acculturation include:

independence
self-isolation
loyalty
need for control
social role for women
provider status for men

Why Casey's parents chose Banksia Grove for her

Casey's parents decided on Banksia Grove School for a number of reasons:

- Parents' childhood experiences of school;
- Personal contact with the school;
- Self directed learning;
- Emphasis on self-sufficiency and organization; and
- Teachers function as resources.

Parents' childhood experiences of school

Her parents' experiences of school were frustrating and unhappy. Specifically, her mother felt she did not have enough freedom to learn the way she needed to learn as an independent learner (Ref.: Focus Interview). Memories of these experiences prompted them to consider alternatives for their own children:

Mother: Because it's the school I would have liked to go to. ... I'm quite clear about that.

...

... get a jar out and a spoon and shovel it down the gob and then put a piece of paper in front of you and say "Throw up"! ... That's my recollection of High School particularly and it annoyed the hell out of me ... I mean it seemed to me it was an opportunity that was just wasted

...

... Ken [spouse] hated school.

Personal contact with the school

Casey's mother is a very independent person who sees personal autonomy as a right. Seeing how the school operated and that its students functioned as responsible members of the school community and were, at the same time, autonomous was an important factor when considering Banksia Grove School for Casey:

Mother: Kate (older sister) was already doing well there ... Also because Casey was keen to learn but not very disciplined about it

...

Kim and John [very close friends' children] were already there ... so I got to know ... I got to see the kids around the place and I was very impressed by the kids at Banksia Grove.

Self directed learning

This featured very strongly and was directly related to Casey's mother's childhood experience of school described above:

Mother: ...The fact that ... it was self-directed learning...

Emphasis on self-sufficiency and personal organization

Casey's mother's experience at University the first time round left her feeling cheated by her school education. She is determined this will not happen with her children:

Mother: There were things I needed to learn at High School ... that I believe I should have learned at High School which I didn't have at my disposal at University and consequently I found the transition to University very hard. ... In fact, it's not until this degree [a subsequent degree] that I realized what I've tried to do at University and I think that's something in A streams they should be helping you towards - being self-sufficient, being able to timetable or sort of allocate your time so you don't have to work on the Charlie Brown principle: I work best under pressure therefore I'll leave it until Tuesday night. It's due Wednesday.

...

Casey was keen to learn but not yet very disciplined about it. I wanted her to go to a school where she would have the opportunity to learn self discipline in her own way and time, not one where discipline was imposed.

Teachers function as resources

This factor is closely related to all of the others and leads to autonomy (self-direction):

Mother: That the teachers were inclined to act as resources for you to stimulate interest in things.

How this background affects Casey as a meaning maker and a constructor of literacy is discussed below.

CASEY AS A MEANING MAKER

Casey likes to privately immerse herself in something before attempting to apply it in the presence of others. She keenly explores different modes of expression including stories, craft, sandpit, make and build, painting and drawing. Her responses are characterized by her:

- Modes of expression;
- Persistence;
- Humour; and
- Social needs.

These characteristics of her responses reflect her intergenerational acculturation themes listed above.

Modes of expression

Casey's creativity spontaneously arises from her general sense of enjoyment of life and ensures she explores several modes of expression. Her sense of enjoyment was marked from the beginning of her time at Banksia Grove School:

Teacher: It has been a pleasure watching Casey quickly and happily settle in to Kindergarten. She was very soon comfortable with all the routines and expectations, and was obviously ready to take up all there was to offer, as well as to create her own work and pleasure. She is always busy, always creating, and she sets about everything in a very efficient, organised way. She always knows what she's going to do, with what and how, and she rarely needs any adult input at all.

At choosing times Casey often chooses something creative - it may be something she is in the middle of, it may be a completely new idea, it may be something on offer, like knitting or sewing or origami, or it may be expanding on some technique we have just done, such as wax resist or finger paint. Just lately too she has been very involved in imaginative play, often but not always with Casey [sic], and she has also had a continuing passion with the sandpit, which wasn't much dampened by the colder weather! Needless to say Casey uses her own time at school.

Casey has continued to enjoy everything on offer this year, and to provide her own interests and pursuits. Her art work is as original and delightful as ever, and obviously a great source of pride and pleasure to her, which is great to see. She continues to use all the media - making, painting, drawing, and is never short of

(cont.)

(cont.)

an original idea. She has really appreciated and benefited from all the going-out mornings, and she was involved in the play throughout the whole writing and production phase. She was very enthusiastic and responsible, organising props and other people (very nicely!), as well as her own role.

Persistence

Casey's persistence verges almost on determination in isolation which seems to be a strongly developed characteristic also found in her mother. Persistence in private also seems to be closely related to maintaining control and avoiding loss of face:

Mother: Casey's preferred method of learning is indirect, ... usually she just goes away and tries it out till she gets it right herself. She seemed to go from recognising letters in her own name to knowing the names of all the letters in the alphabet and some of their sounds in about one month - this is typical of her.

...

She likes to control, we both do and we become very stressed if we can't control ... running off with Jane [friend] is a response to stress at school.

...

She'll get in the way of her own learning because she's frightened of her own learning for fear she's not perfect at it ... If she's like me, she'll get to a point where she'll realize she'll have to grind her teeth and get on with it

Humour

Casey's sense of humour is inherent in her joy and enthusiasm. It seems to be a central way of making meaning for Casey and is present in her "philosophical approach to life" (mother) and her total involvement in activities and chattiness (teacher):

Teacher: It's lovely to watch the energy and joy Casey brings to her every day at school - I hope she will never lose it.

...

Casey uses her own time at school extremely well, and she often integrates what she is learning at school into her play - which explains why she was seen diving into a cardboard box the other day - she was, in fact, a baby blue whale!

(cont.)

(cont.)

Physically Casey is always totally involved, fit, co-ordinated and skilled. She is a champion skipper and has been helping some of the younger children and she is a great bush-walker, plodding along, never missing a beat, chatting all the way and generally sorting out the meaning of life.

However, her sense of humour has not always worked to her advantage:

Mother: In her early stages [at Banksia Grove School] she became friendly with Jane and tended to join her in messing around rather than listening when Hilary was trying to talk to the group.

Hilary and I both talked to Casey and explained that it was OK to mess around with friends some of the time but that the only way to take full advantage of what school had to offer was to listen when things were being discussed.

Casey really worked with this idea and mostly seems to be able to be Jane's friend and listen ... Yes, [getting on with her peers is] very important. Casey was used to playing mostly with older children prior to starting school and she was most successful at being part of their activities. However, when she started school she tried out some of the behaviour of her peers in an attempt to promote the friendship ... I was very glad when she found she could have friends but not necessarily always do the same things as they did.

Social needs

Casey plays the social role well. This is a strongly identified role for women in her intergenerational family acculturation. She is popular in her class as well as amongst older children:

Mother: Casey has not progressed as far or as fast as I had expected with reading - she seems to have found the whole social and general learning environment more interesting than the mechanics of learning to read.

How Casey makes meaning is demonstrated in her responses to the construction of literacy.

CASEY AS A CONSTRUCTOR OF LITERACY

In this section I draw together the connections between Casey's intergenerational family acculturation, her school acculturation and her idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy. To do this I look

at:

- The salient features of Casey, the learner, as an individual member of her intergenerational family of origin and her school (as described by her parents, teacher and myself from classroom observations);
- Casey as an active meaning maker; and
- Casey as an active constructor of literacy who uses her knowledge of the world derived from her primary experiences in her family of origin and her school to develop idiosyncratic responses to the construction of literacy.

Casey's construction of literacy is characterized by:

- Exploration of different modes of expression.
- Need to control the process;
- Persistence; and
- Sense of purpose.

These features of her learning, which, embedded in her acculturated system of meaning making (derived from her primary experiences in her family of origin and her school) described above, have influenced how she constructs literacy in the classroom in the following ways.

Exploration of different modes of expression

Casey's exploration of different modes of expression is usually quite broad and intense and intrinsically satisfying. Whatever she attempts to explore, she devotes to it a great deal of energy and enthusiasm.

Teacher: Casey enjoys our increasing number of "quiet work times" and she works hard and well at all the different things we do. She is always clear about the task, works hard and takes pleasure in a job well done.

Need to control the process

Casey's need to control the process is marked by the withdrawal of her input

until such times as she feels competent enough to demonstrate adequate skills.

Mother: Casey is patently overawed by people who can do things better than her. She's like me, experience has taught me it is starting that is the problem not the actual task. So ... I use determination to make myself start by gritting my teeth the first time I do something ... it's also about control ... I have to force myself ... I need to make that shift over to the right brain

...

She [Casey] thinks "I'm not going to let on in case I can't get it quite right"

Teacher: I really hope that when she gets back [from a long holiday] she will either have taken that leap of faith with her reading and writing, or be just about ready to, because I do feel that sometimes she gives herself a hard time about what she can and can't do or rather what she perceives she can't do. I have no doubt that she could read and write independently right now if only she could be happy to take a few risks.

Persistence

This feature of Casey's meaning making is closely related to her need to control the process of constructing literacy and is two fold in nature:

- Intensity - She becomes intensely involved in whatever she does; and
- Withdrawal - If she perceives her skills as being inadequate she will withdraw and spend time covertly developing adequate skills which she then demonstrates in their fullness.

For some time Casey hesitated about literacy related tasks but persisted with what she felt capable of:

Mother: As she became more conscious that she wasn't reading fully what was on the page (this was her own insight as far as I know) she became reluctant to read to me and went back to being read to. This continued until she was about seven at which time she announced to me one night that she would read to me. She picked up a reasonably difficult, unfamiliar children's book and read perfectly, with expression and comprehension. I picked up my jaw and realised she was literate.

...

Teacher: At the moment she is passionate about making her own books and many an epic has been begun if not always finished. She dictates stories that are coherent and articulate and the illustrations are always magnificent. Casey takes a great interest in all the early literacy things we do - she is acquiring the (cont.)

(cont.)

letter sounds, and she enjoys making a good guess or remembering common words when we read a *book* together or a big book in a group.

At work times Casey sustains her interest and involvement well, and has undertaken some tasks that have required quite an input - some of her stories, for example. She takes care with her work, and enjoys illustrating her stories and so on. She is an independent writer when she chooses to be, and this term I have been encouraging her to write often, to see if we can really get it happening - it's so close! This term too Casey has shown much more interest in reading and often chooses to read to me, on top of the individual and group reading sessions we have together. She is using a good range of skills reading for meaning, using the initial sound clue, using picture clues and making use of the context. She seems to most enjoy group reading sessions, when we share a big book or a group story together.

Sense of purpose

This feature is also driven by her need to control the process and drives her persistence with literacy activities. It is also related to her isolation behaviours at home and school as she uses self imposed isolation as a means of learning what she has decided she wants to learn or needs to learn:

Mother: She set herself the goal of learning to read when she went to school

...

[In response to "Is getting on with her peers important from a learning and/or literacy perspective for Casey?"] Most of the time no. With her peers she seems to be separating the aspects, however, it is still very important in her relationship with the older children at home. They seem very proud of her achievement and she often rushes off to show Kim [very close cousin like friend 6 years older] a new skill.

These characteristics of Casey, embedded in her acculturated meaning making (derived from her primary experiences in her family of origin and her school) described above, have clearly influenced how she constructs literacy in the classroom.

A SUMMARY OF MY CASE STUDY OF CASEY

Casey consistently relies on being able to learn in isolation when she is confronted with new knowledge that requires some work before integration.

Her mother acknowledges that this is very much how she, herself, works, too. Casey is comfortable when she has had time to purposively access and meaningfully pattern information to build a body of knowledge which she then applies outside the isolation of her learning. This is exemplified in her learning the alphabet and in learning to read (Focus Interview).

She is very involved socially in her class group and is very popular, a role she is used to playing with older children outside of school. Her ever present sense of humour is clearly appreciated by her peers and her teacher and she uses this to her best advantage most of the time. Whenever I observed Casey in the classroom she was ready with her own sense of humour to show me what she was doing or had done or was planning to do, usually laughing at the same time.

Initially, the social aspects of school seemed more important than any other aspects as Casey developed a very close friendship with another girl (Jane) in her class which seemed to take up much of her time and energies. Her sense of belonging at Banksia Grove School seemed evident in the sense that at school, she moved into Kindergarten "quickly and happily" despite tantrums at home.

During my observations, there were several occasions on which Casey isolated herself within the context of the school. To do this she would not come inside when it was group time or quiet work time or if she did come she would remain on the edge of the group and "mess around" with someone else instead of listening or joining in. When she did join in she was usually bright, enthusiastic, persistent and knowledgeable.

**OVERVIEW OF THE RESULTS OF MY ANALYSIS:
IDIOSYNCRATIC RESPONSES DURING THE
CONSTRUCTION OF LITERACY**

From my analysis of these results, there seems to be evidence of three channels by which embedded symbolic information is reciprocally transferred between home and school during the development of idiosyncratic responses to the construction of literacy in the classroom. The processes involved are iterative and include:

-
- Interpretive actions in response to other people and their actions and reactions, things, and events in the classroom and at home (e.g., different modes of exploring and expressing the same issue or learning);
 - Interpretive verbal responses to other people and their actions and reactions, things, and events in the classroom and at home (e.g., congruence between key words and phrases used by adults and child at home and school); and
 - Drawings created and words and phrases used during class activities and at home (e.g., recurring themes and words in stories, drawings which reflect beliefs embedded in drawings and key words and phrases used at home and school).

Corroborated evidence for these included:

- Parent responses to the intergenerational family acculturation questionnaire and focus interviews;
- Teacher's comments such as in school reports, teacher records and focus interview responses;
- Statements made by and material produced by the individual child and corroborated by the parents;
- Video taped observations; and
- Member checking.

THE CHILD AS AN IDIOSYNCRATIC CONSTRUCTOR OF LITERACY

Previously, I have defined literacy as a transient, idiosyncratic Gestalt, which is a by product of constructions of meaning from symbolic and embedded symbolic textual data (see Chapter 1). Acculturated meaning making appears to function as a meaning making system embedded within an individual's Information System. This meaning making system consists of an enduring arrangement of information (i.e., knowledge) specifically about making meaning from social and cultural information within the family, the community, an organization and a culture. It is readily applied to making meaning during the construction of literacy in the classroom.

How each child accessed the channels by which embedded acculturated symbolic information is transferred between home and school were

discussed above. As each Case Study represents a pool of data in its own right I remained consistent with the rest of this study and the processes of embedded symbolic information by purposively accessing my selected pool of data and processing the information within it before attempting to apply the template for patterning my data in that pool to the next pool of data (i.e., the next Case Study). This approach is also consistent with my agreement (i.e., not to compare children) with the school and the families who participated (see Chapter 3 and my research proposal in Appendix I).

In these Case Studies I have shown how each child, while appearing to respond to the construction of literacy using different modes of expression, needing to control the process, are persistent and work with a sense of purpose do so using very different knowledge of how the world works. The development of these idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom are further discussed in Chapter 6 where I present a grounded theory for understanding how this process seems to work.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

Focusing on events leads to "event" explanations ... Such explanations may be true as far as they go, but they distract us from seeing the longer-term patterns of change that lie behind the events (Senge, 1990:21).

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I present my grounded theory of how I now believe young children use of their knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom. However, before I do that I present my reflections on the process of making meaning as I experienced it during my research and this writeup. I do this to show connections between my whole process and what the literature says about how we construct meaning. I then connect this with the experiences of the children in my study when I present my grounded theory.

As stated in Chapter 1, the primary aim of the study was to develop a grounded theory of acculturated meaning making in the development of idiosyncratic literacy practices. By this I meant how young children use their knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses to the construction of literacy. My conceptual and theoretical frameworks were presented in Chapters 1 and 2. In Chapter 3 I described the research process I undertook during the course of the study. My process of analysis is described in Chapter 4 and the results of my analysis of the data relevant to the above stated aim were presented in Chapter 5. In fulfilling this aim I have:

- a. Presented one school's culture: Beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices over the time from when the establishment of the school was first conceived in the late 1960s to 1993 when this study concluded (i.e., the school's acculturation). To do this I described:
 - The background of the school including its acculturation processes;
 - How the school culture operates to make meaning;

-
- How the school culture facilitates the construction of literacy; and
 - How one teacher facilitates meaning making during the construction of literacy in the classroom;
- b. Presented three individual families' intergenerational family acculturation: Beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices. To do this for each of the three Case Studies I have described:
- The background to each Case Study child including their intergenerational family acculturation;
- c. Ascribed intergenerational family acculturated patterns of responses, by three young children, to the making of meaning in the classroom, when they were constructing literacy during their first three years of school. To do this I have presented my interpretation of:
- Each Case Study child as a meaning maker; and
 - Each Case Study child as a constructor of literacy.

REFLECTION ON THE PROCESS OF MY RESEARCH

During the course of my research and writing up of this thesis I have been refining my understanding of how the young children in my study made meaning during the construction of literacy in the classroom. As with any writeup of research, the final chapter provides a synthesis of the knowledge gained from having conducted the research and it is but a beginning as the new knowledge is laid bare to all for scrutiny. In Strauss and Corbin's (1990:235) words "no manuscript is ever finished" and so it is with this one. Part of the process is the achievement of a sufficiently satisfying Gestalt at some point in time and space. There is no endpoint to the evolution of the text. It keeps evolving, mutating with each new construction of literacy from it. The text itself is a process just like the process of constructing literacy from textual data.

The research process of Naturalistic Inquiry after "iteration to redundancy", is not as "linear" as Lincoln and Guba's (1985) flow diagram (see Figure 3.2) might suggest but rather consists of multiple Gestalts until a point of intrinsic

satisfaction is achieved (i.e., a "sufficient" whole or Gestalt) for the researcher at that time in that place (see Figure 3.3). By this I mean we develop a mini grounded theory that is in itself a Gestalt every time we examine the data. To perceive data we by definition purposively access the data pool (which consists of a previous Gestalt (i.e., a mini grounded theory). If this is how the research process evolves then the data and the grounded theory co-evolve and together produce an acceptable transient endpoint Gestalt (i.e., the "final" grounded theory is not derived directly from or the consequence of patterning of or categories in the data but is the outcome of interactions between current knowledge which initially led to the conduct of the research, evolving grounded theory and the data).

It was through creating these Gestalts that I was able to match whether what I was perceiving as patterns in the data were in fact providing meaningful information from which I could construct a (shared) meaning that met my needs, purposes and expectations for the study. This is congruent with Gestalt theory which emphasizes the need to attend to the whole in order to better appreciate patterns within the data (Goldstein, 1984). If the successive Gestalts were useful then subsequent Gestalts confirmed them in the perception of other related meaningful patterns of information derived from the data and from which meanings were constructed to meet my specific needs and purposes for this thesis.

The process was perhaps more like a trial and error process of approximation on a satisfaction and dissatisfaction of meaning continuum and persisted throughout the entire process from initial reading of the literature, through my data collection and to the writeup of my research in this thesis. Information Anxiety (Wurman, 1989) was ever present with increasing times of respite occurring as I dared to immerse myself in all my data (including the literature) over and over again. With each immersion I was able to engage more and more fully with the data in the sense that I was increasingly able to perceive more of the whole from which I could derive more satisfying meaningful patterns. As I moved through this process and my expectations (i.e., beliefs about my data based on my successively confirmed Gestalts) were fulfilled, I began to take ownership of what I had created and became clearer and more confident about myself as a researcher and more precise in my articulation of my research findings. Some of what I experienced is also noted in different areas of the literature.

CONNECTING MY REFLECTIONS OF MEANING MAKING WITH THOSE IN THE LITERATURE

It seems one way of articulating what I have experienced can be described in terms of Cambourne's (1988) Conditions for learning. Cambourne's Conditions appear to have assisted the process in the following ways:

- Immersion;
- Demonstration; and
- Engagement.

Immersion.

To be able to purposively access and meaningfully pattern data to satisfy one's needs and purposes I needed to be intimately familiar with all my data (see point about Gestalt theory and the need to perceive the whole before patterning stimuli or data). This was not a once off event but an iterative process.

Demonstration

According to Cambourne (1988), if we observe a demonstration, engage with it and believe it is achievable for us, then we are likely to be willing to apply what we know if and when given the opportunity. This means that the way we access and meaningfully pattern data depends on how we see significant others going about purposively accessing and meaningfully pattern data every moment of every day.

In terms of conducting and presenting my research in this thesis, I was not able to witness another researcher analysing their data in a way that was also appropriate for me. However, I did read widely about how to analyse qualitative data and how other qualitative researchers analyzed their data. I then applied what I knew from what I had read. From this application of my knowledge I found that what seemed appropriate to a symbolic-analytic process was not necessarily the same as what was reported in the literature. For example, I found it more useful to meaningfully pattern data by looking for what I would describe as "flows" in the data where patterns connected than to constantly compare and contrast data coded into the various

categories with the earlier coded data. This worked something like a dumping system which could later be checked for consistency of membership again using consistency of patterning through components of each coding. This experience is echoed in an earlier quote I used (see first page of Chapter 5) from Reich (1993:229) which is repeated below:

The real world is nothing but a vast jumble of noises, shapes, colors, smells, and textures - essentially meaningless until the human mind imposes some order upon them. The capacity for abstraction - for discovering patterns and meanings - is, of course, the very essence of symbolic analysis, in which reality must be simplified so that it can be understood and manipulated in new ways.

This may be the process Wyer & Srull's (1986) observations of associate processing are connecting with. I perceived patterns in my data on the basis that they were meaningful in terms of my stated aim and research question. This experience is also consistent with Helson's (1933, in Goldstein, 1984) observation that we prefer more meaningful organizations of data over less meaningful ones.

Engagement

An individual has to engage in demonstrations before they can become meaningful. If the demonstrator is a credible person and if the demonstration is engaging and works for the demonstrator we assume the same will be true for us so we work hard observing others and, when we are ready we will attempt to do what those significant others do all the time. If we find we enjoy our attempts then we will keep on trying until we reach a satisfactory endpoint Gestalt. These responses are driven by expectations that "I" can do this, too, and include demonstration, engagement, use and approximation and ultimately a belief that "I can make sense of things here" (i.e., responsibility for purposively accessing and meaningfully patterning data to meet my own needs and purposes and this is inherently sufficiently satisfying for me). I certainly believed qualitative data analysis was possible as others I knew had successfully done it.

Whenever I accessed my data it was with the intention or purpose of applying and evaluating my current knowledge template for making meaning from that data. Hence I accessed the data using a specific frame of reference, not as a *tabular rasa*. This is what I mean by purposively accessing the data. On each occasion, my patterning of the data was to fulfil

the purpose for which I had accessed (i.e., to apply and evaluate my current knowledge template for making meaning from that data). This is what I mean by meaningfully patterning the data. Each patterning was a way of organizing data to provide different information about it (Ref.: Wurman, 1989) so I could ultimately reach a sufficiently satisfying Gestalt that was a grounded theory of how young children use of their knowledge of the world derived from their primary experiences in their family of origin and their school to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom. How this process works is perhaps best illustrated by revisiting my definitions of several key terms in Chapter 2. As a result of my experience with this research, I now firmly believe data, information and knowledge are not an adjunct to or a consequence of but are reciprocally involved in the development of beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices. The purposive accession of seemingly "unconnected facts" that constitute data, meaningful patterning of that data to derive information relevant to the purpose for accessing them, and development of a body of knowledge from applying information derived from the data and evaluating the efficacy of that application over and over again in different contexts from which a belief system about "how the world works" is derived and ultimately attitudes and a value system which further drive future explorations into accessing and patterning the data. How I think this process works is shown in Table 6.1.

Bandura (1977) described these phenomena over twenty years ago and attributed them to what he called social learning which involves vicarious learning by observation following from a demonstration of learning through imitating the observed behaviour. Bandura's (1977) interpretation results in a passive image of a person unable to "break free" from vicariously learned (i.e., socially conditioned) behaviours. What I am trying to say is that it is not imitation or social conditioning in behavioural terms at work here. I see what Bandura (1977) described in his paper *Social learning theory* is the child who is immersed in an experience or "world text" involving powerful demonstrations of how to purposively access and meaningfully pattern data to derive useful information to meet one's needs and purposes (i.e., we "see" what we "want" to see and what we expect to see). The individual "reasons" that if it worked for X then it might also work for me, I think I'll give it a go. Or they might think: "So that's how it's done!" Behaviour Theory and, also Social Learning Theory which is an extension of Behaviour Theory, is a conduit (transmission) theory. What I am suggesting is a much more

active process in which responsibility for one's actions and decision making is paramount.

Table 6.1: The interrelatedness of data, information, knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices

DATA :

Purposive accession of seemingly "unconnected 'facts'" (see Toffler, 1990:18) leads to the development of Information about the world.

INFORMATION:

"[D]ata that have been fitted into categories and classification schemes or other patterns" (Toffler, 1990:18). Application of information, and evaluation of the efficacy of that application, adds to an individual's knowledge base about how the world works.

KNOWLEDGE:

"[I]nformation that has been further refined into more general statements" (Toffler, 1990:18). Applications of knowledge of how the world works and ongoing evaluations of the efficacy of those applications leads to the development of beliefs about the world.

BELIEFS:

Knowledge one holds to be "true" about people, things, actions and events. An application of beliefs leads to the development of attitudes about the world and how and why it works the way it does.

ATTITUDES:

Belief knowledge consisting of an enduring arrangement (i.e., coding) of information *about a particular person, thing, action or event which is used to interpret interactions with and experiences related to that person, thing, action or event.* Application of attitudes leads to the development of values about what is worthwhile about how and why the world works the way it does.

VALUES:

Attitudinal knowledge consisting of an enduring arrangement (i.e., coding) of information *about particular persons, things, actions or events which is used to judge the worth of those persons, things, actions or events.* Values determine how we purposively access and process the data the next time round leading to patterns and practices of experiences.

PRACTICES:

A practice is an identifiable, recurrent and enduring set of actions, in which knowledge is arranged (i.e., coded) according to one's beliefs about the world and how it works in a specific application, used to achieve a specific goal related to that application which results in a sufficiently satisfying Gestalt. Embedded symbolic information in practices (i.e., beliefs, attitudes and values) ensures their durability. While practices may be adapted to suit the context, enduring practices most likely endure because they are useful and help make meaning over time and across space.

PATTERNS:

Recurring practices over time and across space are evident as recurring patterns in the data.

Here, I am suggesting a trial and error approach¹ in which an individual has multiple attempts to construct a Gestalt not because they vicariously learned something as direct as a functional response but a symbolic way of purposively accessing and meaningfully patterning data which may or may not be of use to them. One way they can find out whether or not it is of use, is it to engage in it and responsively evaluate their levels of satisfaction with the Gestalt they are able to generate from their efforts. This is, in a sense, a process of organizing, negotiating, renegotiating and reorganizing the data until a sufficiently satisfactory endpoint Gestalt can be evolved. This may be the same process as that of individuation (Ref.: von Franz, 1964) whereby a person becomes an integrated, whole individual and internalization occurs as in Wurman's (1989) Internal Information ring. I define internalization within my current conceptual framework as: The process of seeking out and finding connections or "flows" in the data of Reality (see Chapter 4) which confirm the individual's current meaning making knowledge and beliefs about how the world works. New knowledge that supports the individual's current beliefs is added to the individual's current body of knowledge. Consistently recurring patterns in the data become internalized as expected consistencies (i.e., expectancies) in the world.

Recurring practices suggest a single dynamic meaning making "template" system may operate. By a "dynamic meaning making 'template' system", I mean a way of viewing/perceiving/understanding/making sense of one's experience is a generic world view. This is supported by Chase and Clark's (1972:225, in Gibson, 1985:150) research which suggests "meaning is to be found in a modality-free symbolic memory, but can be converted into modality specific images when this is wanted."

Such a dynamic system would provide consistency of experience and presumably reduce anxiety over time and across space. What my analysis, as presented in Chapter 5, would seem to suggest is that the origins of such a system is the individual's intergenerational family acculturation. The children in my Case Studies each appear to have placed over their school experiences a dynamic "template" system for making meaning which was clearly derived from their intergenerational family acculturation. As they were more and more able to make meaning at school and specifically during

¹ Perhaps this is what happens in Goodman's (1967) hypothesis testing.

the construction of literacy in the classroom, changes occurred in their meaning making "template" system. This phenomenon would suggest that the "template" system is eminently mutable (i.e., changeable to meet the needs of the individual whose express purpose is to construct meaning from their experiences). I find myself identifying strongly with this process during the research presented here.

The grounded theory, which is presented below, represents my current set of beliefs (i.e., my transient sufficiently satisfying Gestalt) about how children construct literacy in the classroom.

PRESENTING A GROUNDED THEORY OF HOW YOUNG CHILDREN CONSTRUCT LITERACY IN THE CLASSROOM

I have employed qualitative research methods as described in Chapters 3 and 4 with "a systematic set of procedures to develop and inductively derive grounded theory about how young children use their knowledge of the world during the construction of literacy in the classroom (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). According to Strauss and Corbin (1990:23)

[a] well-constructed grounded theory will meet four central criteria for judging the applicability of theory to a phenomenon: fit, understanding, generality and control.

In essence a grounded theory should make sense and be useful in furthering understanding about the focus phenomenon in the context from which it was derived. It should be able to be applied to other contexts related to the phenomenon under consideration. A grounded theory should also provide information that guides stakeholders in what action should be taken in regard to the phenomenon, in this case how young children use their knowledge of the world during the construction of literacy in the classroom.

In this section I present my grounded theory as follows:

- An overview of my grounded theory of how young children use their knowledge of the world to develop idiosyncratic responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom;
- Detailed aspects of my grounded theory; and
- A summary of my grounded theory.

AN OVERVIEW OF MY GROUNDED THEORY

The family provides the child's first post natal experiences of observing, being immersed in and engaging in demonstrations of how to make meaning. Young children enter school already knowing how to construct meaning from textual data. This is evident when they are able to read road signs, cereal packets and shop signs such as "McDonalds". Young children's first encounter with making meaning is through the meaning making system of their intergenerational family unit (i.e., intergenerational family acculturation). This process begins well before adequate language develops. This intergenerational family acculturation meaning making system consists of beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices. It is this intergenerational family acculturation which provides a dynamic template system for building a body of knowledge about how the world works on individual and communal bases. It is this intergenerational family acculturation meaning making system that the child uses to make meaning during the construction of literacy in the classroom.

To better understand how this grounded theory works it is necessary to describe various aspects of it in some detail.

DETAILED ASPECTS OF MY GROUNDED THEORY

In presenting my grounded theory there are several aspects which need to be considered in some detail. These include:

- The nature of contexts in relation to the individual's Information System;
- The processes of making meaning;
- The origins, nature and evolution of meaning making; and
- Meaning making during the construction of literacy in the classroom.

The nature of contexts In relation to the Individual's Information System

According to Wurman (1989), contexts appear to fall along a continuum of immediacy. My study would suggest another dimension of context, that of internalization (see Figure 6.1). Earlier in this chapter, I defined

internalization as the process of seeking out and finding connections or "flows" in the data of Reality (see Chapter 4) which confirm the individual's current meaning making knowledge and beliefs about how the world works. This connotes a deep contextual coding of internalized data (i.e., embedded social and cultural constructions of how the world works). Hence immediacy may be judged in terms of internalized contextual information.

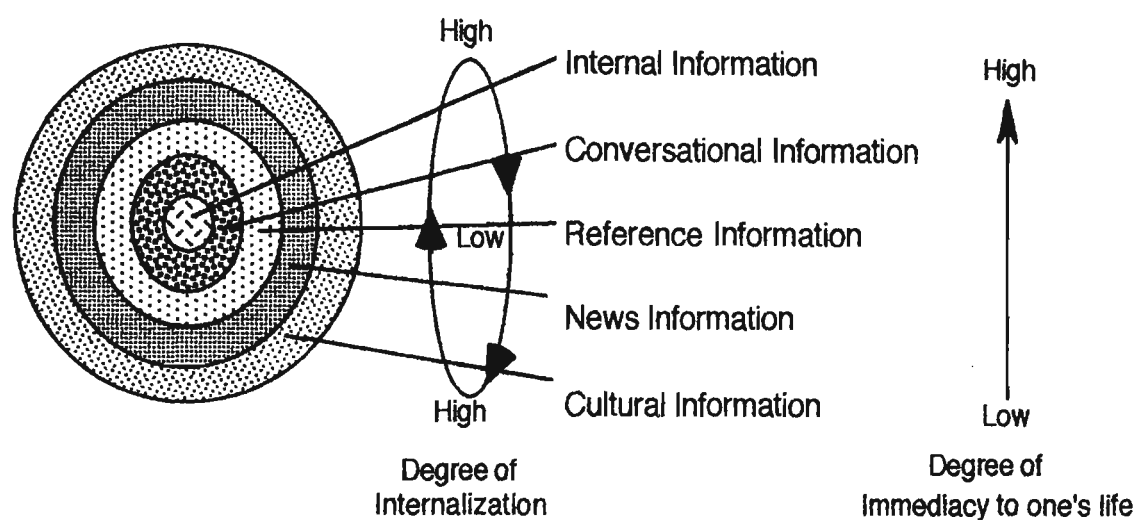


Figure 6.1: The possible relationship between Immediacy and Internalization of Information

Immediacy and Internalization

According to Wurman (1989), immediacy relates to basic survival and daily functioning needs many of which may not be willingly shared with others. While immediacy decreases from the centre out (i.e., from the Internal Information ring to the Cultural Information ring). Internalization is highest for information in the innermost and outermost rings (i.e., Internal Information and Cultural Information). This infers the presence of multiple external "contexts" each with different levels of immediacy and internalization. Internalization is complete for a given context when information from that context (e.g., constructing literacy in the classroom) is fully integrated into the individual's generic view of how the world works (i.e., including when constructing literacy). Immediacy will vary from individual to individual as will internalization. Internalized knowledge is embedded in highly contextualized idiosyncratic beliefs about how the world works. It is this internalized knowledge that I believe young children access during the construction of literacy in the classroom. Internalized knowledge, embedded in highly contextualized idiosyncratic beliefs, is their primary referent for making

meaning. This observation is supported by the notions of the Primary Developmental Context (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and Early Learning Sets (Erickson, 1985) from which children derive meaning about the world. There may be a continuum and maybe a cycle of contextuality from Internal to External as the relevancy and thus the immediacy of information changes.

Internal Context

Internal Context would include knowledge of the world which, according to Wurman (1989), held within the individual's Internal Information and Cultural Information rings including beliefs, attitudes, values, patterns and practices derived initially from an individual's intergenerational family acculturation. A strong internal context for a specific task would mean fewer external context cues will be accessed unless there is a problem in constructing meaning. This may be why, according to Stanovich's (1980) review of literature in this area, he claimed Goodman's (1967) top-down model could not explain why poor readers used more [external] context cues while good readers attended more to graphophonemic cues. Good readers have an internal context referent for making meaning which is accessed automatically during the construction of literacy.

External Context

External Context would include personally less immediate information or information that is new to the individual and which to be understood, needs to be processed using the symbolic-analytic information processing described above. The need for poor readers to access external context cues as reported by Stanovich (1980) makes sense when their internal context is unable to construct meaning based on their internalized knowledge of how the world works. The poorer reader may be attempting to purposively access the whole data relevant to the reading task in order to make meaning from whole textual data by attempting to perceive new patterns in that data. This is evidence to support the need for a holistic approach to the teaching and learning of literacy.

Constantly fluid movement between Internal Context and External Context is necessary for new learning to occur. Such movement, within a symbolic-analytic framework, as employed in this thesis, would entail transferring of

embedded symbolic information about how the world works from the Internal Context to the External Context such as in the case of the construction of literacy from written materials in the classroom. In this sense recognition and comprehension processes are not completely interactive "whereby comprehension processes are meshed with recognition processes in such a way that the former can accommodate changes in the latter" as proposed by Wilkinson, Gurninski & Stanovich (in press 1981, in Stanovich, 1980:59). Recognition and comprehension are part of the one process: Embedded symbolic information analysis described in this thesis.

The more abstract a unit of information, the more the individual is required to access internalized contextual symbolic information regarding relevant social and cultural nuances (see Figure 6.2). Highly internalized information may form part of the individual's Internal Information System. This information would have contextual information embedded within it.

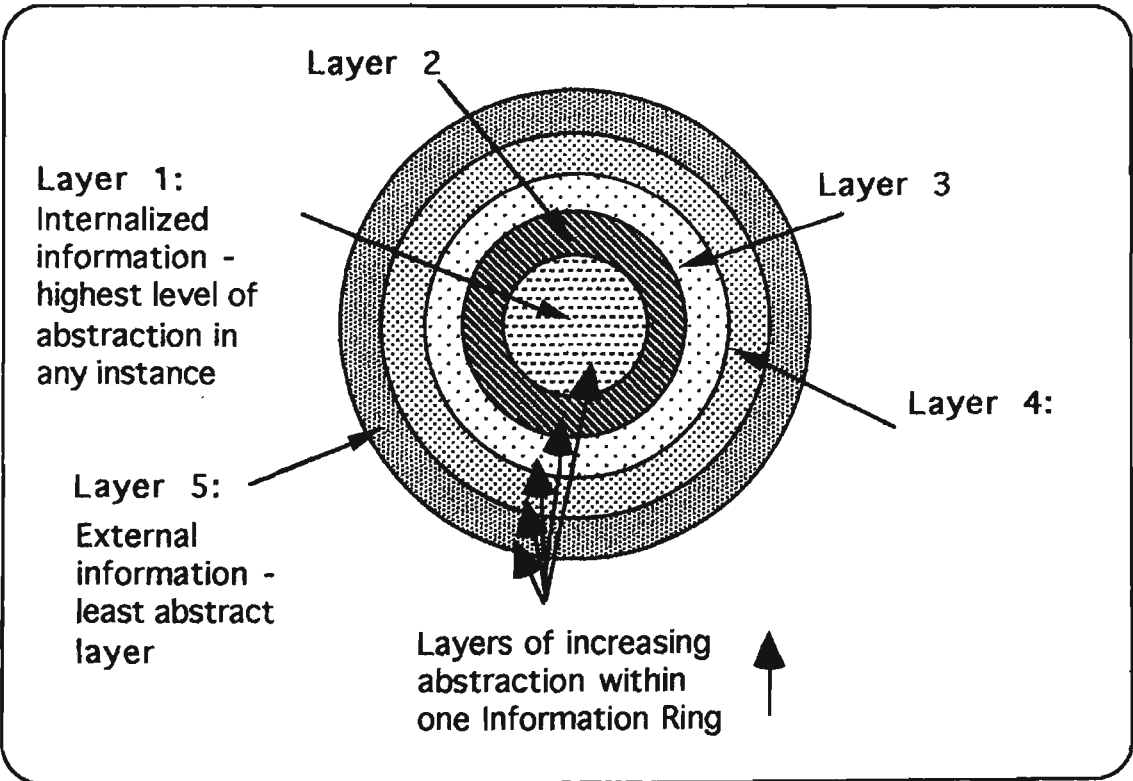


Figure 6.2 Layers of embedded symbolic information are added as the degree of abstraction increases and are shed as the degree of abstraction decreases.

Transferability

A salient feature of symbolic-analytic information processing is that of transferability. In symbolic-analytic information processing it is the fundamental iterative process of applying one's patterning of the data in different contexts and responsively evaluating the efficacy of those applications that allows the individual to build a knowledge base and ultimately a belief system about how the world works in general and in specific contexts. Repeated successes at transferring one's patterning (i.e., knowledge of how the world works) increases the trustworthiness of that patterning. Transferability in a symbolic-analytic framework closely parallels transferability in Naturalistic Inquiry. In Naturalistic Inquiry transferability is an element of trustworthiness and refers to the ability of a grounded theory to be useful when applied to different contexts.

Intercontextuality

Belief knowledge, and all knowledge derived from it, is knowledge which may be considered to have been internalized (i.e., resides within the Internal Information Ring). In this sense it is the most immediate knowledge base from which a child can make sense of her or his experiences across contexts over time and through space. It is the intercontextual nature of embedded symbolic information in the Internal Information ring of the individual's Information System which may be fundamental to understanding any processes involved in the transfer of embedded symbolic information between home and school. The successful transfer of knowledge across contexts (such as home-school) further adds to the child's body of knowledge about how the world works and how they fit into it relative to others (i.e., self concept and ultimately, self esteem, as systems of belief within the individual, may be involved here; Ref.: Heathington, 1994; Johns, & VanLeirsburg, 1994; Athey, 1985; Bettelheim & Zelan, 1982).

The phenomenon of intercontextuality infers some carryover effect of making meaning in one context to making meaning in one or more other contexts. It also infers the possibility of other meaning making systems functioning as contexts and contexts functioning as meaning making systems in their own right. In this sense the construction of literacy may constitute a meaning

making context or system in much the same way as acculturation or a classroom might.

The processes of making meaning

Meaning making appears to be a generative or creative process which occurs as follows:

- Purposive accession of data;
- Meaningful patterning of data to derive information;
- Application of information (i.e., purposively reaccess the data) derived from the data to develop a knowledge base;
- [• *Iteration of this process to this point defines a set of practices;*]
- Responsively evaluate the data by meaningfully repatterning it using the knowledge template about how the world works to build a belief system;
- Application of information (i.e., purposively reaccess the data) derived from the data to develop an attitude;
- Responsively evaluate the data by meaningfully repatterning it using the attitude template about how the world works to build a value system;
- [• *Iteration of this process to this point over time and space defines recurring patterns of practices in which are embedded one's internalized belief system*]

Table 6.2 presents the processes of meaning making as it relates to the construction of literacy in the young children in my study. An eminently mutable dynamic meaning making template system applied to the construction of meaning using the process outlined in Table 6.2 suggests the Hegelian notion of a "body of knowledge" which can be learned is fallacious. Knowledge is not a static entity. It is constructed during the process of symbolic-analysis and from the deriving bodies of knowledge. Two or more people may choose to negotiate a shared meaning from their idiosyncratic bodies of knowledge at a given point in time and space.

Table 6.2: Processes in making meaning for the young children in my study during the construction of literacy.

COLLECTING DATA:

A child engages in a demonstration of how the process of constructing literacy works.

DERIVING INFORMATION:

Having engaged in a successful demonstration of how the process of constructing literacy works, the child is ready to apply this information by constructing literacy for themselves.

BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE BASE:

The child then applies the information gleaned from the demonstration to constructing their own literacy. The arrangement of information in a child's knowledge base is reflected in the way they apply the information they gained from the demonstration and reflects recurring patterns in their intergenerational family acculturation. Each time an application occurs the child evaluates the efficacy of that application and decides whether or not to persist with it, modify it or to try something else. Through this process the child further refines their information "into more general statements" (Toffler, 1990:18) about how the world works. This results in them building their body of knowledge about how the process of constructing literacy works for them.

EVOLVING PRACTICE:

Practices reflect their derivation in the organization of information in the underlying knowledge base within the individual (i.e., their template for meaning making). Practices involve the application of an individual's knowledge of how the world works (i.e., acculturated meaning making) leads to the development of beliefs about the world.

BUILDING A BELIEF SYSTEM:

The child further refines their knowledge into more general statements one holds to be "true" about the construction of literacy. A successful application of beliefs about how to construct literacy leads the child to develop an attitude about literacy and how and why it works the way it does.

DEVELOPING AN ATTITUDE:

An attitude towards literacy develops when a child organizes their belief knowledge into an enduring arrangement (i.e., coding) of information about literacy which is used to interpret interactions with and experiences related to the construction. A successful application of an attitude (positive or negative) leads to the development of values about what is worthwhile about how and why literacy works the way it does.

DERIVING VALUES:

Values are subsequently derived by the child organizing attitudinal knowledge into an enduring arrangement (i.e., coding) of information about particular literacy related activities which is used to judge the worth of those activities. Values determine how the child will access and process the data the next time round leading to patterns and practices of experiences.

ITERATING PATTERNS OF PRACTICE:

Repetition of practices over time and space result in enduring patterns of practice based on the child's underlying belief system about the nature, value and purpose of the process of the construction of literacy for them.

Information in Table 6.2 closely resembles that in Table 4.6 in which I presented the analytic process I used in this study. Building on my analytic process, Table 6.2 shows how young children develop a body of knowledge about how the world works and use this knowledge to build their belief system about how the world works for them in a personally relevant and

satisfying (or irrelevant and dissatisfying) way. My research shows that this process requires a great deal of *persistence* by the individual child. It would seem that this persistence is motivated by a *sense of purpose* which is always to construct meaning from textual data. Also integral to the process is the *exploration of different modes of expression* as the children seek to apply information gleaned from demonstrations, and later, their knowledge, and evaluate the efficacy of their applications, of how the process of constructing literacy works for them personally. Embedded in the child's need to understand how the process of constructing literacy works for them personally is their *need to control the process* by which they derive that understanding. This is equity. Christie (1990) claims children need models from which to make meaning. My research indicates that relevant and meaningful *demonstrations* of how language works to make meaning in a whole language context is empowering to individual children.

Goodman (1985) also describes a similar process as the one above. It seems that meaning making, from an embedded symbolic view, entails making connections by seeking out "flows" in the data. This view implies a coherent, unified, whole, dynamic process of constructing meaning. The process outlined in Table 6.2 also suggests the presence of a single dynamic meaning making "template" system (see above discussion) within the individual's Information System (Ref.: Wurman, 1989) derived from an individual's primary meaning making system of intergenerational family acculturation. When viewed in terms of intergenerational family acculturation, the implication is that there exists a generic meaning making system originating from that evolved through the individual's experience as a member of their intergenerational family unit. This then infers individual differences are to be expected, not the exception. How this may occur is discussed in the next section.

The origins, nature and evolution of Meaning Making

From my data it appears that human beings are cumulative creatures. By this I mean we make use of our experiences in such a way as to use all experience to make meaning. From my evidence of a transfer of embedded symbolic information in the form of intergenerational family acculturation information between home and school I would have to infer that we are at least selectively cumulative beings. Not all embedded symbolic information

from home is transferred to school. Mostly, only those which appear to be or are most useful are transferred.

The notion of a meaning making system within an Information System

Wurman (1989) suggests a mechanism exists by which each ring of the Information System is influenced by all the others. Given the well documented processes of intergenerational family acculturation, I suggest that these are the "mechanism" by which all the rings affect each other. This seems to me to constitute a meaning making system within the Information System. How the processes of intergenerational family acculturation may function in this capacity at a generic level is pictorially represented in Figure 6.3.

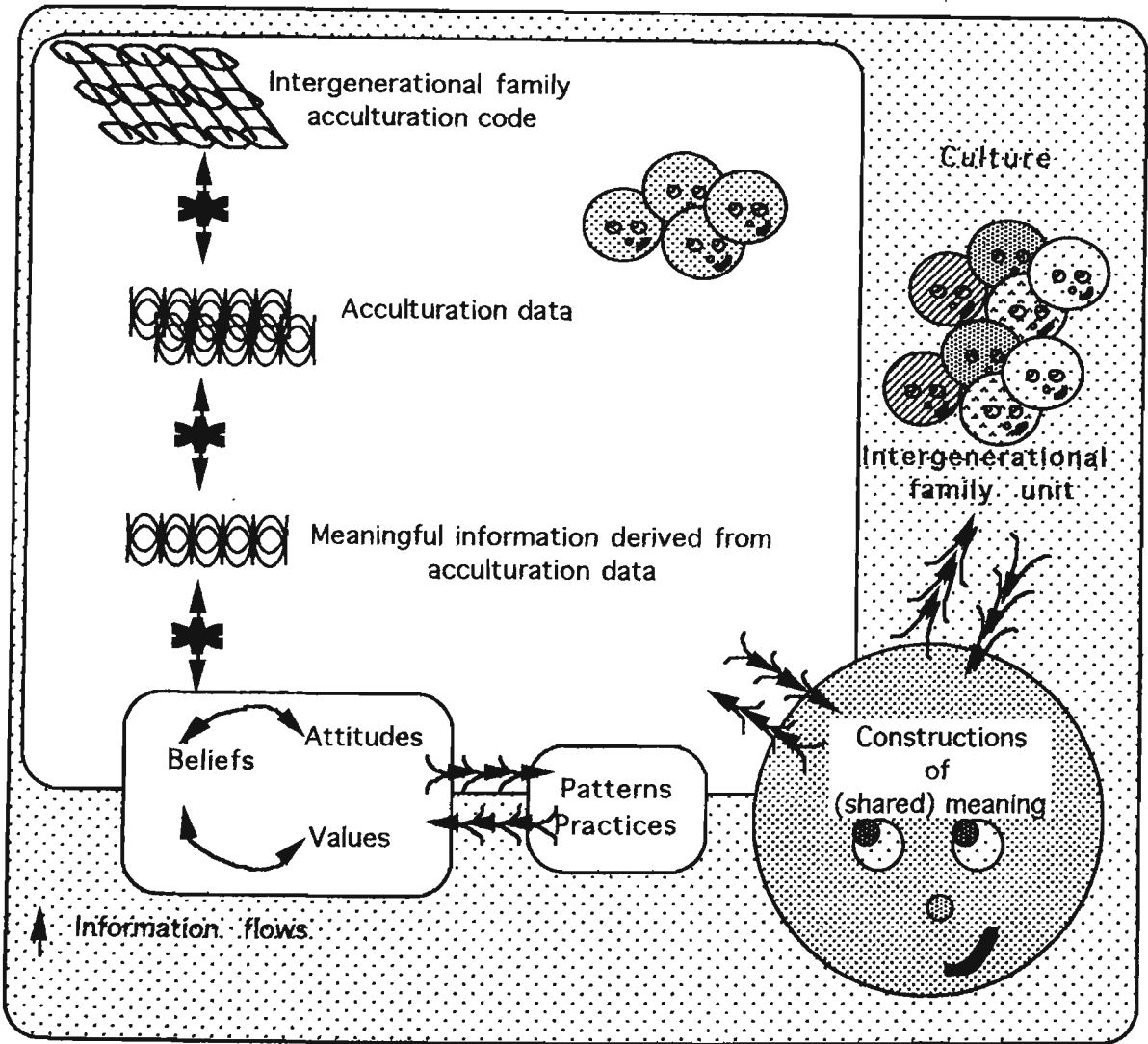


Figure 6.3: The role of acculturation in the derivation of a single dynamic meaning making template system

When applied to meaning making during the construction of literacy Figure 6.3 is modified as shown in Figure 6.4. How I conceive of this system operating is as follows: The individual's dynamic meaning making template system is able to spontaneously adapt itself to specific contexts and tasks such as meaning making during the construction of literacy in the classroom. Initially this adaptation is slow as the individual seeks out novel patterns, flows and connections in the data. Once meaning making during the construction of literacy is internalized, the individual's dynamic meaning making template system is sufficiently fluid to enable it to accommodate meaning making during the construction of literacy with a minimum of conscious effort across familiar contexts. The dynamic meaning making template system is still recognizable during early attempts at meaning making during the construction of literacy in the classroom.

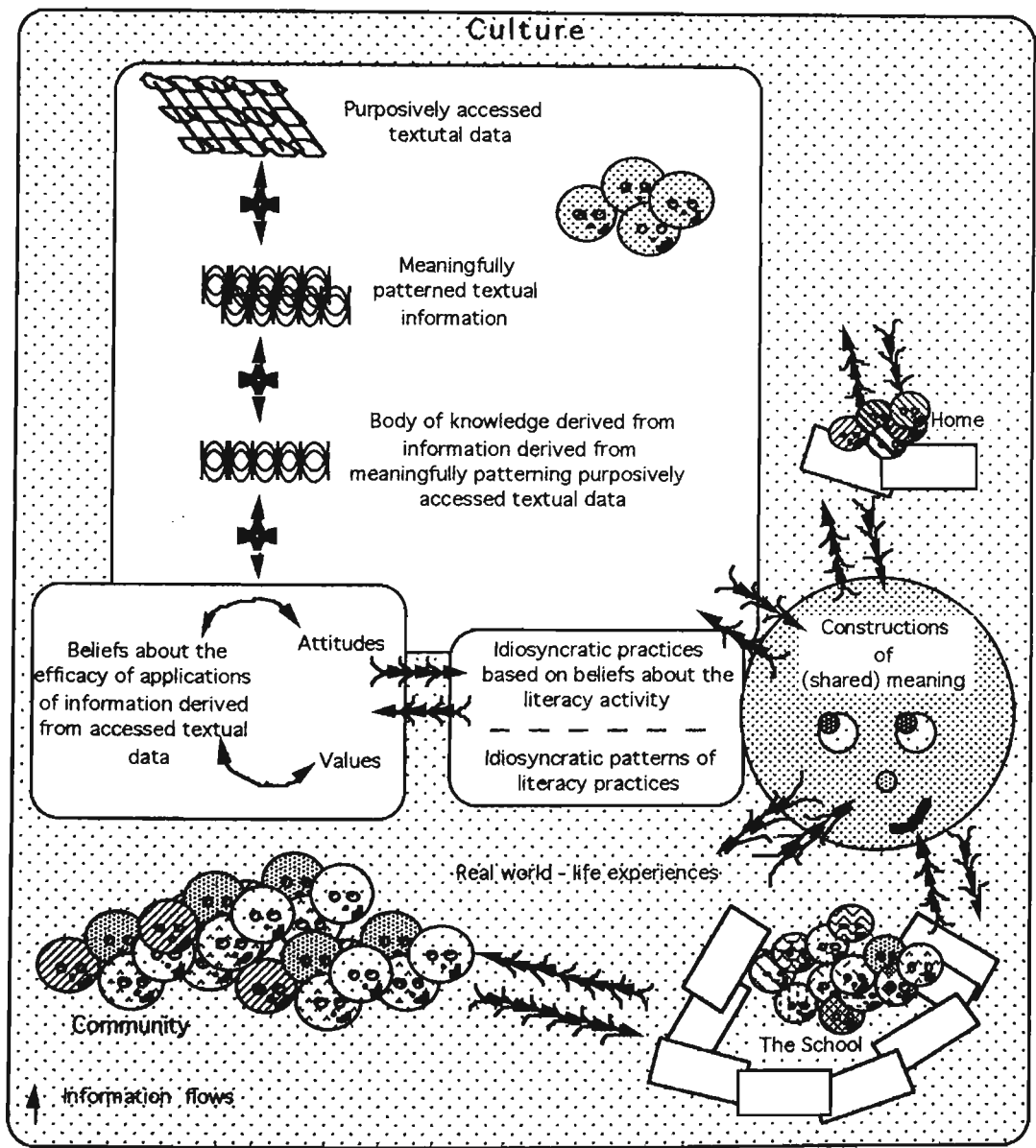


Figure 6.4: The evolution of a Literacy Meaning Making System from the acculturation process

Furthermore, if this is correct, then the phenomenon of intercontextuality presupposes that other meaning making contexts or systems might also exist. I would conceive of these systems as having the role of providing a framework for applying symbolic-analytic information processing skills to making sense of immense amounts of data for a specific personal need and purpose, in a given context. This may be what some would call multiple literacies. However, I am not so much suggesting multiple literacies but rather multiple meaning making contextual systems through which unfamiliar contexts are gradually integrated into the individual's primary meaning making system (i.e., intergenerational family acculturation) as they increase in familiarity for the individual. My definition of literacy (in Chapter 1) as a transient, idiosyncratic Gestalt, which is a by product of constructions of meaning from symbolic and embedded symbolic textual data presupposes a meaning making system within the context of Literacy. Figure 6.5 is an attempt to represent the interdependence of the meaning making systems of intergenerational family acculturation and literacy which are seen to constitute meaning making systems embedded in an individual's Information System.

Intergenerational family acculturation as the primary meaning making system

From my data it seems that acculturated meaning making is subsequently applied to generic meaning making as well as specific meaning making during the construction of literacy in the classroom. Each child in my study applied their own knowledge of the world to make meaning during their construction of literacy in the classroom.

Meaning making during the construction of literacy in the classroom

- The construction of literacy is a meaning making process involving the transfer of embedded symbolic information between home and school. The following characteristics were observed in the children in my Case Studies during the construction of literacy in the classroom:
 - Persistence;
 - Need to control the process;
 - Sense of purpose; and

- Exploration of different modes of expression.

While each child could be described using the above framework, each child participated in the construction of literacy with very different views about how the world worked for them when constructing literacy in the classroom. These differences were clearly differences in their knowledge of how the world works derived from their experiences in their family of origin (i.e., their intergenerational family acculturations).

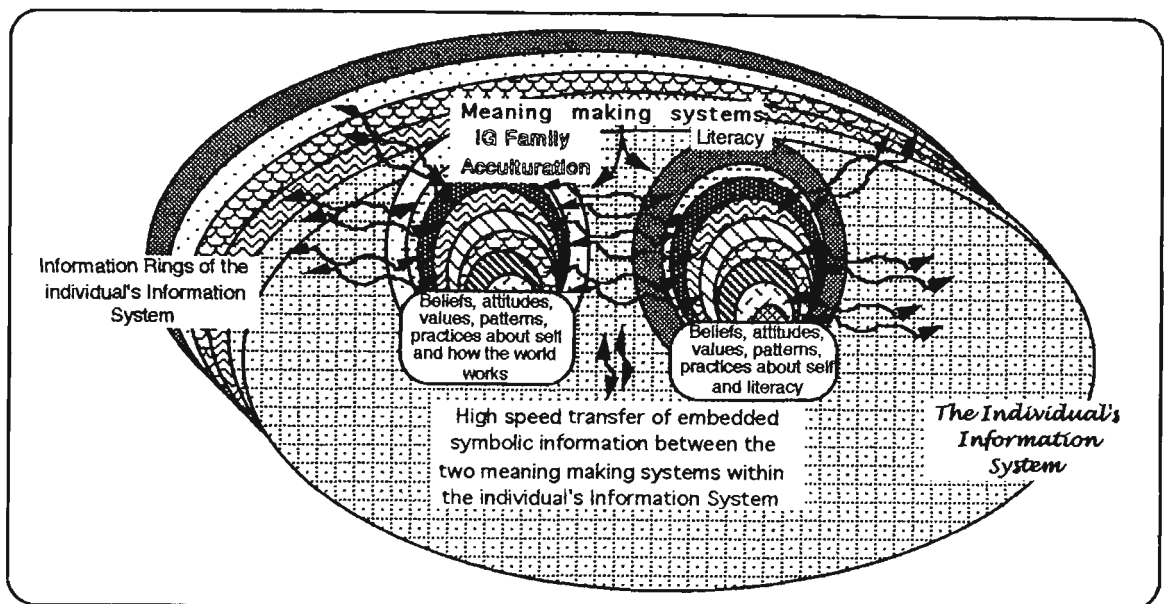


Figure 6.5: High speed transfers of embedded symbolic information enhance the interconnectedness of the layers of the data and the acculturation and literacy meaning making systems (and other meaning making systems) within the Individual's Information System

A SUMMARY OF MY GROUNDED THEORY

My conceptualization of my grounded theory is, in part, analogous to the genetic coding and information process beginning with deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA). In genetics, DNA contains coded instructions for the synthesis of proteins. Transmission of information occurs in a dynamic system which means mutations (i.e., changes) in genetic coding can and do occur (Vander, Sherman & Luciano, 1990). During intergenerational family acculturation processes information is coded in specific ways based on the intergenerational family unit's experiences (Minuchin, 1974; Lieberman, 1979). These codes, which represent a "world view" or the intergenerational family's "knowledge of the world" and how it works, "determine how, when,

and to whom family members relate" (Minuchin, 1974, in Nichols, 1984:472) based on the "knowledge of the world" contained within them. From the analysis of my data I would also add that the intergenerational family's "knowledge of the world" also suggests "to what" a member relates.

I do not suggest a deterministic view of intergenerational family acculturation. Rather intergenerational family acculturation acts as a strong meaning making system for family members. Anything more than that would exclude opportunities for family members to learn from life experiences and thus change emphases within the intergenerational meaning making system such as in mutations following significant life events (e.g., Bryant, 1994) which intergenerational family acculturation theory clearly shows happens (e.g., Roberto, 1992; Minuchin, 1974). This "knowledge of the world" provides the data pool which members of the intergenerational family unit can access in order to make meaning in the world. Intergenerational family acculturation processes provides the child with their first post natal demonstrations of how to make meaning (and the child usually happily engages in them). This is the process of meaning making whereby "whole world" data are purposively accessed, meaningfully patterned to derive useful information (ribonucleic acid, RNA) which is then applied in some way and the efficacy of that application is evaluated, accepted (i.e., used to build a body of knowledge - amino acids), changed or dropped according to that evaluation. Iteration of this process leads to the building of a belief system, the "building blocks" of intergenerational family acculturation and meaning making (see Table 6.1) in a similar fashion to the synthesis of proteins from amino acids. Like proteins which are synthesized in the cytoplasm ("region of the cell outside the nucleus", Vander *et al*, 1990:A-20), the belief system is built during interactions in the real world not from the nucleus of the individual. Figure 6.6 illustrates this process during the construction of literacy in the classroom.

This study has provided a new way of describing young children's responses during the construction of literacy in the classroom. With this new description have come the need to reconceptualize other areas of the child's school experience. Included in this is the way we teach and understand how children develop literacy. Embedded social and cultural information in school culture is also brought into focus with the results of this study. This has important ramifications for how we structure young children's days at school.

Lastly but not least we need to examine more closely our educational practices including the structure and purpose of our curricula.

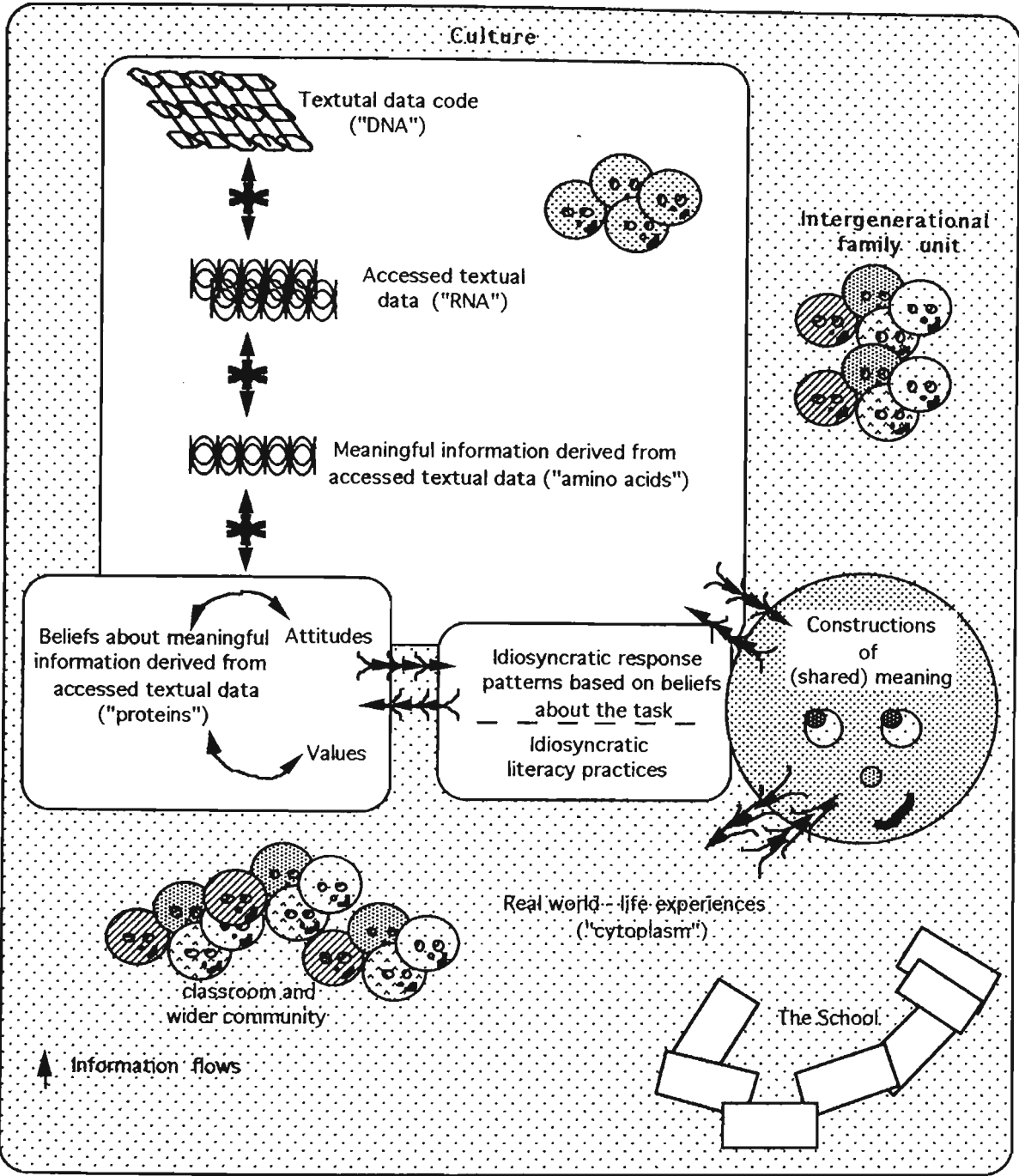


Figure 6.6: The DNA model applied to acculturated making of meaning during the construction of literacy in the classroom

IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY

What I have presented in this thesis has some far reaching implications. The implications of my grounded theory are considered in terms of:

- Children as constructors of literacy in the classroom;
- Teaching and learning of relevant literacy skills in schools;
- The culture of schools;
- Future literacy research; and
- Literacy revisited.

Each of these is discussed below.

CHILDREN AS CONSTRUCTORS OF LITERACY IN THE CLASSROOM

Children do not leave behind what they already know when they start school. On the contrary, they come to school knowing a great deal about how to make meaning from their experiences. How children construct literacy in the classroom is largely dependent on their intergenerational family acculturation. School offers them the opportunity to extend their knowledge and to make meaning in a variety of contexts. The teaching of literacy should at all times honour and respect the individual child's existing knowledge if equity is to be achieved for all children in the classroom. How this may be best achieved is described in the next section.

TEACHING AND LEARNING RELEVANT LITERACY SKILLS IN SCHOOLS

The study raises several issues specific to the teaching and learning of relevant literacy skills which are discussed below.

- a. The construction of literacy is a socio-cultural and psycholinguistic process. Any attempt to teach or learn components of the process without partaking in the whole process first cannot involve the construction of literacy. According to Gestalt theory the whole is more than the sum of its component parts (Polanyi, 1966). This tenet of Gestalt theory has been helpful in supporting an argument for

teaching and learning literacy within whole language contexts. However, this argument frequently assumes that literacy is a tangible entity such that it can be seen, touched, used, evidenced in some direct way. If, however, literacy is as I suggest is a "transient, idiosyncratic Gestalt, which is a by product of constructions of meaning from symbolic and embedded symbolic information in textual data", then it is not a directly observable anything. It is a by product (transient at that and idiosyncratic) of a process. Teaching and learning of literacy must focus on teaching of the process of constructing meaning from embedded symbolic textual data.

- b. The transfer of embedded symbolic acculturated information and concomitant symbolic-analytic information processing strategies appear to be transferred between contexts (i.e., *Intercontextuality*). These phenomena would further seem to indicate there exists an innate ability to construct meaning at a deep conceptual level using embedded symbolic information even for young children. This echoes Chase & Clark's (1972:225, in Gibson, 1985:149-150) observations:

Our results suggest that the comprehension of both pictures and sentences must ultimately be represented in the mental symbolic system. We do not mean by this that the ultimate representation of pictures and sentences is identical to linguistic descriptions of deep structure, but rather that there is a deep or conceptual structure that is common to both sentences and pictures.

If meaning making happens at a profound symbolic level it would need to be sufficiently embedded in the individual's symbolic system which is grounded in the social, cultural and psychological unity of that individual originating from intergenerational family acculturation.

- c. The process by which literacy is constructed is from whole to part. To construct literacy the individual follows the steps of symbolic-analytic information processing (see Table 6.2 and Figures 6.3 and 6.4 above) which are briefly restated below:

- Purposive accession of *all* the data;
- Meaningful patterning of that data to derive information using their generic dynamic meaning making "template" system;
- Application of the information derived from meaningfully patterning the data during the construction of literacy;

- Evaluation of the efficacy of that application including deciding whether or not to add the knowledge gained from that application to build a knowledge base about the process of constructing literacy; and
- Iteration of the process to build a body of knowledge and ultimately a belief system about the process and purposes of constructing literacy.

Motivation is provided each "step" of the way as the individual is able to achieve successive "sufficiently satisfying" Gestalts that motivate iterations of the process. Further motivation is provided when the individual is able to successfully construct a meaning which others can share (e.g., another child or adult is able to read a child's story or words without much or any assistance from the child).

- d. Language does not have meaning by itself. It has only potential meaning. In this sense language is passive until a language user chooses to use it. Language appears to resemble an "off-the-shelf", a *prêt-à-porter*, meaning making template system (i.e., rules about syntax, phonemes etc.) for users. This feature of language is well documented by socio- and psycholinguists and others (e.g., Stanovich, 1990; Bryant, 1989; Halliday, 1978; Goodman, 1982).
- e. When a language user constructs literacy they do so from the "whole world text" using language, affect and cognition (thought) to do it. They do not seem to be able to do otherwise since making meaning during the construction of literacy involves applying the meaning making template system derived from the individual's intergenerational family acculturation which provides "knowledge of the world". How this may occur is described in Figure 6.7.
- f. As stated above, the construction of literacy involves interactions between affect, cognition (thought) and language. Affect is most strongly evidenced with the child's need to control the construction process. Each child in my study clearly reacted at an emotional level to control being removed. Christine prefers to allow others to take the lead until she feels she has control over the process. Liam avoided literacy related activities (apart from annotating his own drawings)

believing he could not do it because "he couldn't read a university text book" (Focus Interview). Casey's anxiety about not being able to construct literacy was manifested in her avoiding potentially threatening literacy activities by staying outside the classroom.

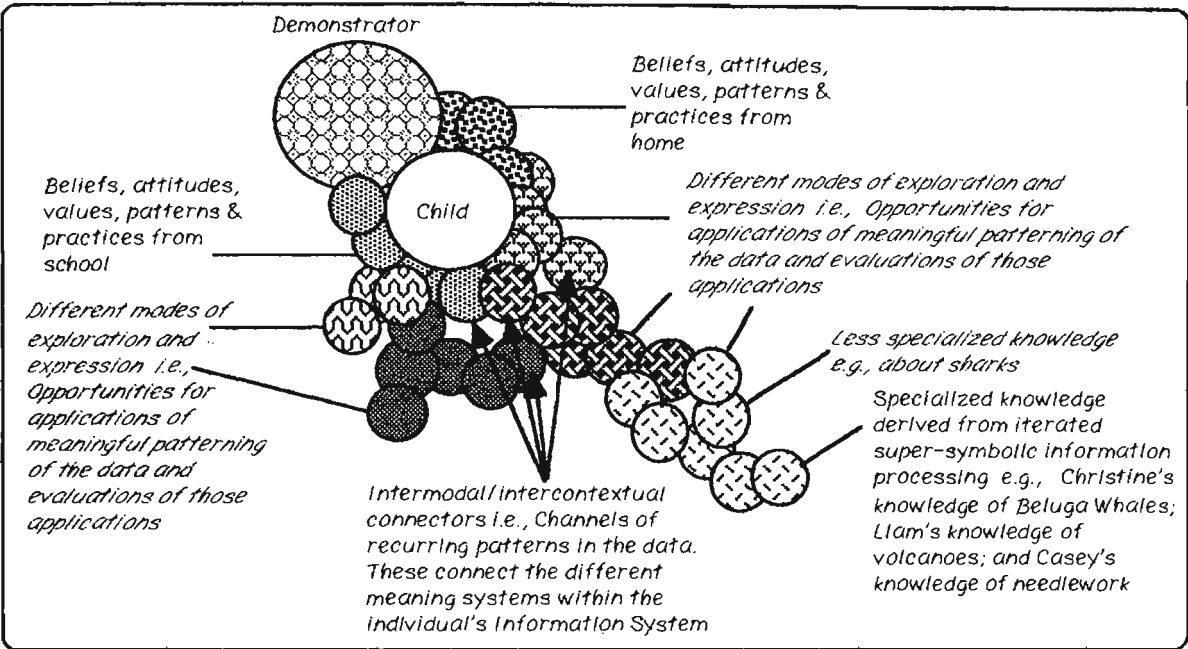


Figure 6.7: Using one's knowledge of the world to make meaning during the construction of literacy.

- h. If there is a single meaning making template system, then the process of constructing literacy is the same for all readers, writers, speakers and listeners. According to Goodman (1985;1967) the primary purpose of reading is to construct meaning. This is true for all modes of constructing literacy which is a by product of the process of making meaning from textual data. Problems will arise during the process of constructing literacy if an individual attempts to construct meaning but is unable to achieve a shared meaning with others and to personally achieve a sufficiently satisfying Gestalt from the process.
- i. During the construction of literacy the individual seeks to pattern embedded symbolic information because that is how they naturally operate whenever they are involved in constructing meaning. This process is embedded in the symbolic social and cultural experiences of the individual. This may be why "[r]eading is a selective process [involving] the partial use of minimal surface language cues selected from perceptual input on the basis of the reader's expectation"

(Goodman, 1967:33). If the reader does not seek to pattern sufficiently embedded symbolic information, comprehension may not be possible as the chasm is too wide and deep between the surface features and the individual's experience which is, itself, symbolic.

j. Reality is sampled and experienced multidimensionally in order to make meaning during the construction of literacy. All three children in my Case Studies explored different modes of expression at different times:

- Sight;
- Hearing;
- Taste;
- Touch;
- Smell;
- Kinesics;
- Affect;
- Language;
- Thought/Intellect; and
- Memory.

Not all modes were used on all occasions. Manipulation of materials during this process appeared to involve the whole child which I feel needs to be labelled Whole Person as manipulation seemed to provide a tangible aspect to the process for the children.

k. The notions that language is expressive and receptive were derived from the field of neuropsychology for the express purpose of diagnosing deficiencies and emic and etic pathologies of language (Ref.: Lezak, 1983; Walsh, 1978; Luria, 1973). In neuropsychology this distinction may be useful but in education and specifically in the classroom it may be distracting. The construction of literacy involves all language faculties (i.e., reading, writing, speaking and listening) and may therefore be considered to be expressive and receptive at the same time. Process writing is an example of this as children discuss and conference their writing all four faculties are being employed (Ref.: Cambourne & Turbill, 1987). Further, language only

becomes meaningful when a language user uses it to construct meaning within their social, cultural and psychological experience.

- l. Goodman (1984:102) defines comprehension as the process of constructing meaning:

comprehending is a constructive process, in which readers *make* sense of text, it goes on during reading and even long afterwards as the reader reconsiders and reconstructs what was comprehended

The statements such as "I get it!" and "I know what you mean!" usually denote comprehension has occurred. Such statements intuit a data-information-knowledge cycle as described above and in Table 6.2 and implicated in the construction of literacy.

- m. Children are already competent meaning makers when they arrive at school and as Goodman (1982) recommends we need to get them to focus on meaning in the classroom, too. Children's meaning making strategies derived from their intergenerational family acculturation may be so vastly different from that of the school that what happens in the classroom may make little sense to children leaving them alienated and confused about what is expected of them and how they are to deliver it.

THE CULTURE OF SCHOOLS

School culture is an area that requires substantial research. Culture clearly imparts embedded symbolic information which a young child needs to understand and experience as not too different from their prior experiences. How different school cultures operate to make meaning is not well understood. Cambourne's (1988) Conditions for classroom learning and the philosophy of Whole Language generally have had a profound effect on classroom practices and hence culture (Ref.: Weaver, 1994). One way of furthering our understanding of school culture and embedded symbolic information inherent in it is to explore the structure and purpose of the school curriculum. The structure and purpose of the school curriculum is one area which may benefit from a reconceptualization in response to the findings in this study. Any changes in curricula will impact on school culture.

Structure and purpose of school curricula

Young children need time to approach literacy related activities. They need to be able to order them in ways that make sense to them and provide them with new knowledge about how to construct literacy not just in the classroom but anywhere anytime. A child sensitive curriculum will allow the child freedom to make decisions about their own learning, not about how to avoid learning, but how to learn in a personally most effective way. The teacher's role would be to guide each child to ensure an ever broadening knowledge of how the world works for them and for others. School curricula needs to be *responsive*. Perhaps the school curriculum could even be presented in a way that actually models symbolic-analytic skills (i.e., the teacher moves through a symbolic-analytic process during group and individualized teaching times).

These areas clearly need input from significant research efforts.

FUTURE RESEARCH

- a Literacy research which moves from part to whole will not be able to appreciate what appears to be the innate meaning making process which is used during the construction of literacy. The process by which literacy is constructed is from whole to part and any study of that process must also be from whole to part. Literacy research must deal with whole language contexts which are relevant and meaningful.
- b. As mentioned above, the construction of literacy involves interactions between affect, cognition (thought) and language. Future research must include all three aspects of the constructor of literacy in whole language contexts. To exclude one of these is tantamount to decontextualizing and reducing the process which ceases to be literacy research.
- c. Research needs to examine more closely the process of internalization by from which a body of knowledge may be derived as this would seem to be integral to the process of meaning making. Transfer of embedded symbolic information from home to school occurs in a reciprocal process as the child's knowledge of the world

initially derived from their family of origin is expanded by knowledge of the world derived from their school experiences. While initial transfer of such knowledge may be in one direction, that situation is transitory as the individual child accommodates new knowledge from school. That parents are aware of this was evident in all three parents' responses to Question 18 in Part II of the parent questionnaire (i.e., How will you know when he/she has achieved functional literacy?):

Christine's Parents: It's a question of how much goes into thinking about what is reading and writing as opposed to the act of reading and writing.

If the balance isn't right the frustration of the process gets in the way of working with the ideas.

Liam's Parents: By the confidence he will have in his own ability and a change in the nature of his questions.

Casey's Parent: When she stops asking what the words are on the TV screen.

Parents' responses to Question 21 in Part II (What things is Christine/Liam/Casey doing that tells you s/he is learning from his/her school experience?) demonstrated even more clearly that embedded symbolic information is transferred from school to home:

Christine's Parents: Mostly talk. She shares lots of her new knowledge with us, sometimes relating details of an excursion (e.g., to an apple orchid) or an activity (e.g., work with the skeleton), sometimes by showing us things she has made (e.g., a book, a drawing, a model), sometimes by the things she mentions incidentally in conversation (e.g., her understanding of the organs of the body)

There have been so many things Christine has learned this year it would be too tedious to list, but some things stand out - I've been impressed by how much her world view has expanded. She has a notion of such things as government, social roles, banking, organizations and so on. She has learned to ask more incisive questions - a transition from "Where did you hurt yourself?" to "Where did your leg break?"

Liam's Parents: Identifying some letters; he has a particular interest in numbers; the value he places on his school activities as learning experiences; his growth of knowledge.

Casey's Parent: Casey has not progressed as far as I had expected with reading - she seems to have found the whole social and general learning environment more interesting than the mechanics of learning to read. She has learned numerous "facts" which she drags out to win arguments with her sister and her use of numbers has developed a great deal since she started school.

(cont.)

(cont.)

She has also made some good friends and is beginning to learn what you can and cannot get away with in a group when learning is the goal! She is also learning to share projects and to co-operate with others to achieve an agreed goal!.

In each instance the parents seem to be describing a process by which the child's meaning making is altered (mutated) in some way which allows the child to be more socially aware as they build their body of knowledge following recurring patterns of intergenerational family acculturation.

- d. Further research is needed to describe more fully the potential role of embedded symbolic information in the semantic cueing system and hypothesis testing (Ref.: Goodman, 1967) and automatic spreading activation (Stanovich, 1980) during the construction of literacy.
- e. Processing of embedded symbolic information moves from the whole to parts of the whole to construct meaning during the construction of literacy. This may be construed in Stanovich's (1980:34) framework as "higher level processes [which] interact, and direct the flow of information through, lower level processes". However, given the fluid nature of Reality presented in Chapter 4, it would be conceptually flawed to use Stanovich's (1980) framework to describe the processes of analyzing embedded symbolic information presented here. Stanovich's (1980) argument infers a hierarchy which cannot exist in such a fluid Reality. Senge (1990) suggests the need to perceive hierarchies is related to a need to control one's experience and in so doing, limiting dialogue. Within an embedded symbolic information processing framework are highly fluid, dynamic embedded layers of data which continually evolve and dialogue is instantaneous. There is no need for a compensatory mechanism to be in place because there is only one process by which reading occurs and literacy is constructed.

The processes of analysing embedded symbolic information as I have presented, suggest data are purposively accessed and meaningfully patterned to meet an individual's needs. That patterning is then applied to construct meaning in specific contexts. The individual constantly evaluates

the efficacy of those applications and decides whether to accept, reject or modify their patterning accordingly. During the construction of literacy during reading, this process involves purposively accessing the written text, meaningfully patterning it in terms of syntactic and graphophonemic cues using semantic cues (this happens simultaneously, Ref.: Goodman, 1967). The presence of a dynamic generic meaning making template which allows the individual to move through textual data seeking out "flows" and connections in the data echoes several extant seemingly disparate hypotheses about the reading process in particular. These include:

- Stanovich's (1980) automatic-spreading activation process;
- Christie's (1990) genre theory; and
- Goodman's (1967) hypothesis-testing of process of reading.

Stanovich's (1980) notion of an automatic-spreading activation process may be similar to my description of moving through the data seeking out "flows" and connections and is also supported by studies of associative processing such as those by Wyer and Srull (1986). However, the processes of analysing embedded symbolic information are all encompassing and do not work in conjunction with a conscious attention mechanism as Stanovich's (1980) theory might suggest. The processes of analysing embedded symbolic information are both conscious and unconscious. This makes sense in terms of making connections and finding flows in the data in terms of data held in working, short term and long term memory. Within an embedded symbolic information processing framework, Stanovich's (1980) adherence to two separate mechanisms (i.e., automatic-spreading activation mechanism and conscious attention mechanism) would actually "disconnect" and slow down the process of meaning making that is necessary for comprehension during reading.

Christie's (1990) genre theory of literacy specifically seeks to provide access to different types of texts on the basis that they each have different patterns that need to be learned if one is to become literate. Embedded symbolic information processing also seeks to identify patterns. Patterns in embedded symbolic information processing are consistent connections through textual data. Teaching genres specifically without teaching them within a Whole Language context is tantamount to teaching there that exists discrete data pools (i.e., genres) which can be accessed as required. This

notion is counter to embedded symbolic information processing which, again, aims to seek out connections and "flows" in the data and in the process modify the individual's meaning making template system. Christie's (1990) genre theory of literacy is a limited one. It is also a deeply value laden one very likely bounded by her own experiences of literacy construction.

Goodman's (1985,1967) hypothesis testing model of the reading process parallels the processes of analysing embedded symbolic information at all levels of purposive accession and meaningful patterning of data and applying that application, evaluating the efficacy of that application and so on. What embedded symbolic information processing adds to Goodman's theory is information about the context in which hypothesis-testing (i.e., analysis and interpretation of embedded symbolic information) occurs. Additionally, embedded symbolic information processing describes how connections are made in textual data.

Language is, itself a meaning making template system. When approached using symbolic-analytic skills the meaning making template system of language is clearly highlighted. Success in meaningfully patterning textual data results in efficacious applications that add to the individual's dynamic primary meaning making template system and thus expand their world view. Individual differences are inherent in the process.

This thesis has raised many more questions than it has answered. One significant and fundamental question remains: What is literacy?

LITERACY REVISITED

In a Super-symbolic Information Age it seems that to be literate is to be able to construct meaning from textual data. More specifically it involves:

- Being able to move effortlessly through textual data; and
- Being able to construct socially and culturally relevant meanings from textual data.

To be able to move effortlessly through textual data means being able to live and experience life more fully in relation to others within a society. It is not to

have power over society and one's experiences in that society. Moving effortlessly through textual data occurs through connecting recurring patterns of social and cultural nuances while constantly assessing and evaluating their efficacy (i.e., are they reasonable/worthwhile connections etc. such as socially and culturally defined gender/age relations) and responding to those assessments and evaluations. This knowledge can then be used to negotiate shared realities with others about what it means to be a member of that society and culture. This is a real power of literacy.

To present access to literacy as decontextualized sub-skills or written genres is to disconnect meaning making. At minimum it may be confusing to a child who is well advanced in constructing socially and culturally relevant meanings from whole textual data in contexts outside of the classroom. From my study, it seems the route to literacy is through socially and culturally embedded symbolic information processing. It is also deeply psychological. The linguistic aspects of literacy are embedded in the social and cultural nuances of the individual's experiences. How this might work is akin to a Whole theory of literacy such that the individual starts out from the psychological perspective, this is tempered through cultural experiences afforded by intergenerational family acculturation. As the child moves out into the wider world, socially derived knowledge (i.e., socialization, see discussion in Chapter 2) is added to (i.e., used to modify their current acculturated meaning making template system) the child's knowledge of how the world works relative to their acculturated knowledge and experiences of that world. Figure 6.8 is an attempt to pictorially represent this process. The individual begins with what Wurman (1989) calls the Internal Information Ring and what I would call the psychological referent (i.e., the referent is the self) or internalized information about basic survival. In this sense I would modify Wurman's (1989) model of the Information System by renaming the Internal Information Ring the Internalized Information Ring and include in it all wholly internalized information about how the world works.

Culturally derived information (i.e., intergenerational family acculturation) appears to become internalized in the sense described above and becomes the way for individuals to interpret and value people, actions, events and experiences generally. This process modifies the psychological referent and results in a cultural-psychological referent system for making meaning of one's experiences. The individual's world view has expanded.

Social encounters and responses from others outside the intergenerational family unit further modify the cultural-psychological referent template system for making meaning. Construction of meaning now occurs using the newly modified cultural-psychological referent which becomes a socio-cultural-psychological referent. The child's world view is deepened.

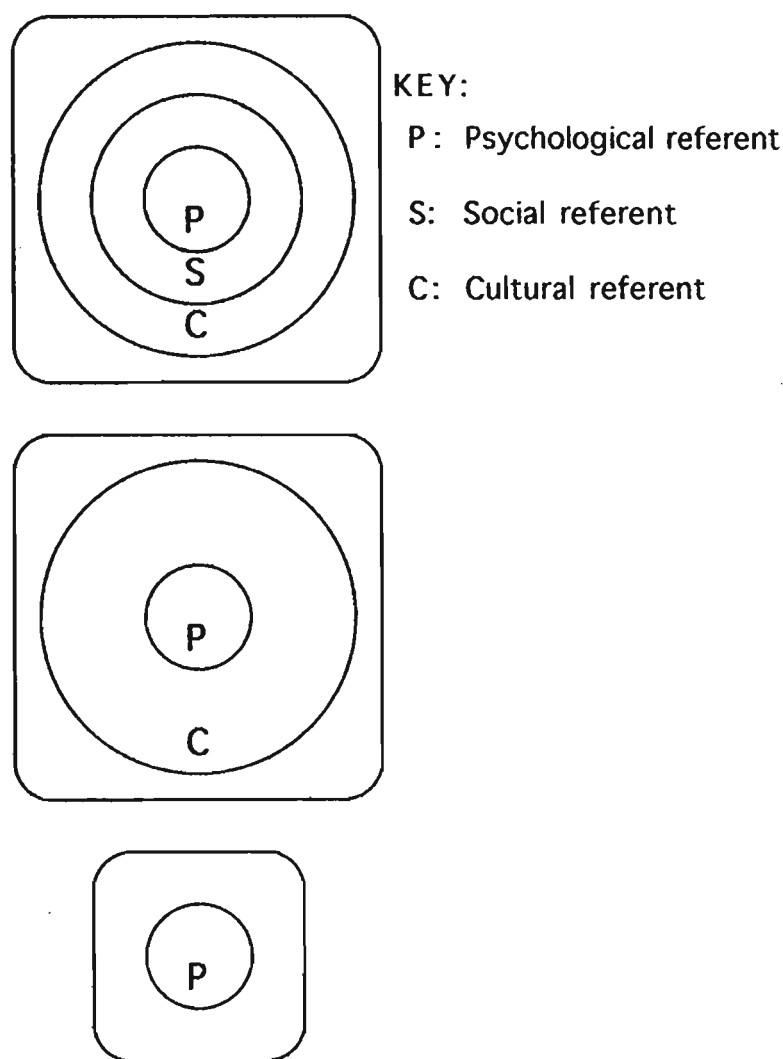


Figure 6.8: The process of becoming embedded in the social and cultural nuances of one's experiences.

Linguistic information (i.e., graphophonemic cues, syntactical cues and semantic cues) are embedded within cultural information and does not stand alone (Ref.: Harste, Burke & Woodward, 1983). Culturally defined knowledge is required to analyse and interpret culturally derived linguistic nuances. To teach decontextualized phonics, to teach decontextualized written genres is nothing more than to teach phonics, and written genres. This is not the route to literacy. This is not teaching literacy. Teaching

recurring patterns of phonics and genres within a whole socio-cultural-psychological context may come closer to teaching literacy.

CONCLUSIONS

Literacy is a transient, idiosyncratic Gestalt which is a by product of constructions of socially and culturally relevant meanings from symbolic and embedded symbolic information in textual data. To be literate in a Super-symbolic Information Age is to be able to construct socially and culturally relevant meanings from symbolic and embedded symbolic information in textual data. To teach literacy is to teach how to construct socially and culturally relevant meanings from symbolic and embedded symbolic information in textual data.

The young children in my study were naturally constructing literacy by transferring embedded symbolic information between home and school using their symbolic analytic processing skills. Educators need to make extensive use of such skills for enhancing children's knowledge of the world and encouraging children to further explore their constructions of literacy both as individuals and as active participants in their societies and cultures.

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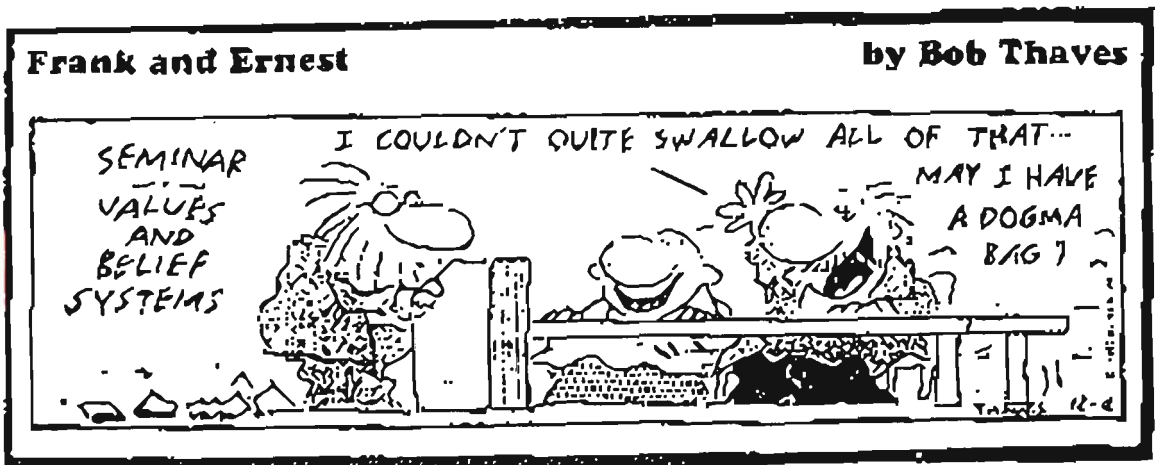
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APPENDICES



Source: *The Australian*

Appendix I: Research Proposal

LONGITUDINAL CASE STUDIES IN LEARNING: EARLY LITERACY AT THE BANKSIA GROVE SCHOOL

ADRIENNE HUBER

1990

AIM

The primary aim of this study is to explore the individual journeys of a number of children through early literacy during their first 2-3 years at school and retrospectively from birth. The design is purposely longitudinal case studies of a relatively homogeneous group of young children. A secondary aim is to produce material in electronic and/or written form which will assist parents and teachers to develop a dynamic grounded theory for individual children's development.

The reasons for this are as follows:

For my part -

I am not interested in making comparisons between children as this takes us back towards the norming model of standardized testing and class rankings which is inevitably unjust to someone somewhere some of the time;

My interest is in developing enough skill in observing and analysing individual children and their situation that at the end of this I can work with parents and teachers to assist them in also learning how to observe the learning process in children and therefore make the most of the individual child's strengths to enhance all areas of learning for the child;

As a Psychologist, I currently use all sorts of wonderful tests to tell me things about children as I rarely get to see the child in action in the real world. Parents and teachers are often completely unaware of specific behaviours that are causing problems for the child until I specifically target them in my report.

This approach bothers me in that I can make certain decisions about a child and the parents go away happy (to some extent) to pursue the issue with appropriate remedial people. I, however, am left feeling the whole process is an injustice to the child because no one learns to pick up on the subtle things the child does probably every hour of everyday.

My belief is that if adults were more aware of how to observe the learning process more naturally everyday then fewer children would be caught in the remedial basket. This would be less likely to occur as the first option because with being able to observe will come an answer of how best to help the child right then and there on the spot before a particular practice becomes a problem behaviour. There will still be times when more formal testing would be needed such as when a child appears to be unable to understand or process certain types of information.

For the school's part -

The school very flexible and will endeavour to use any approach which will facilitate the learning approach for individual children starting with an wholistic approach;

The school consists mostly of middle class professional families with a generally high standard of education relative to the rest of Australia who are mostly aware of their child's educational process in the sense that they monitor it rather closely. This is facilitated by a considerable blurr between home and school. The school is run by the parents for their children;

Parents send their children to the school for specific reasons which mostly includes its philosophy of the child and of education and the level of parental involvement in all aspects of their child's education;

The school's philosophy is such that individual potential is encouraged with children not being required to work at the pace of their peers but are encouraged to work at a satisfactory pace for themselves and being encouraged to map their own work schedule;

These qualities should enhance my longitudinal case study design as the number of variables that will influence the study will be greatly reduced relative to a cross-sectional longitudinal study. As the norming model admits, there is usually more differences within groups than between them yet this doesn't deter people from emphasizing the latter!

The philosophy of the school is non-competitive, therefore also non-comparative. This supports a case study design because there is no conscious cross comparisons being made.

METHOD

Participants: Children commencing Kindergarten in 1991 and their parents who have agreed to participate in the study. All participating Kindergarten children will be attending the Banksia Grove School in Wattle Place. It is anticipated that about ten children will commence the study with about half that number leaving the study for various reasons as a number of families take overseas postings from time to time.

Materials: Field note books, children's comments and work, reflective diaries of adults involved, teachers' notes, half yearly and end of year school reports, video camera, audio tape. Transcripts of video and audio tapes, field notes and diaries and teachers notes.

Procedure: All families with a child enrolled in Kindergarten at the Banksia Grove School at the commencement of the school year in 1991 will be invited to participate in the study. Families will be approached during December, 1990 so that I can be present in the classroom from Day 1, 1991 so as to fit in better with the class and to be considered part of the class. I envisage participating both as researcher and teacher's aide.

I want to emphasize the importance I place on not disturbing the dynamics of the group in any way. I do not wish to be an intruder in the class.

All videoing and audio taping and note taking will be carried out as discreetly as possible.

This research is a longitudinal (2-3 years) case study design and cross comparisons are not an aim nor contemplated in any way.

Breakup of the study is as follows:

NOTE: THIS IS AN ONGOING CIRCULAR PROCESS

PHILOSOPHIES ESPOUSED:
(Past, Present, Evolving, Covert, Overt)

Teachers	Data will be from diaries, field notes and ongoing
Parents	interviews and discussions with all participants.
Children	

PHILOSOPHIES IN ACTION:
(Evolving, Covert, Overt)

Teachers	Data will be from diaries, field notes, half yearly
Parents	reports and ongoing interviews and discussions with all
Children	participants. Audio and video tapes of children at work in the classroom.

PRE SCHOOL ENTRY HISTORY

Physical development	Data will be from diaries,
Social-emotional development	interviews and discussions with
Educational development/history	parents and children where
Literacy development - speech,	appropriate.
language, drawings, writing,	
reading	

FAMILY HISTORY

Parental literacy development/experience	Data will be from diaries,
- home, school, post school	interviews and discussions
Siblings' - literacy development/experience	with parents
- home, school, (post school)	
Parental expectations and practices	

SCHOOL HISTORY
(Oral, written)

Banksia Grove Philosophy & practice - curriculum & registration
Teachers at the Banksia Grove School - the Banksia Grove philosophy & practice

Press cuttings, audio tapes of opening speeches

Several published books on the school

WHAT'S IN IT FOR BANKSIA GROVE?

It is hoped that Banksia Grove will have a clearer means of assessing:

- (i) How the curriculum is meeting the individual needs of children;
- (ii) How individual children are progressing on a moment-by- moment, day-by-day and month-by-month basis;
- (iii) Will be able to generate a more specific curriculum for children experiencing difficulties before remediation becomes the only option;
- (iv) Increased teacher confidence in assessing children's needs;

It is also envisaged that the study outcome will provide a considerably viable alternative to the more formal less personal Educational Assessment possibly being proposed for the STATE.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR PARENTS?

It is hoped that parents will be able to better assess their child's needs and respond to them on the spot in a natural way reducing the need for more formal remediation for children who are deemed to need it.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR MY CHILD?

Confidence in monitoring their own feelings about how and what they are doing at school and being able to tell others about them and thereby taking an active self determining critically constructive role in their education.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR THE RESEARCHER?

Hopefully a PhD! Oh... and Fame and Fortune!!!! HA!HA!HA!... That'll be the day!!

WHAT'S EXPECTED FROM PARTICIPANTS?

- * CONFIDENTIALITY, a spirit of co-operativeness and of supportiveness for all participants and for the researcher
- * A commitment to the study in general and more specifically to furthering the educational facilities for children
- * A willingness to keep diaries and notes (parents and teachers). The fuller the notes and diaries the richer the information for the study to draw on. **HOWEVER, I cannot emphasize enough how important it is not to overdo your journalling so as to destroy the natural quality that is essential to the study.**
- * Availability at relatively short notice to discuss issues in the research from time to time
- * An ability to be open, honest, non defensive and co-operative in discussions and negotiations

LONGITUDINAL CASE STUDIES IN LEARNING: EARLY LITERACY AT THE BANKSIA GROVE SCHOOL

**ADRIENNE HUBER
1990**

AGREEMENT BETWEEN ADRIENNE AND EACH PARTICIPANT AND PARTICIPANTS COLLECTIVELY AND INDIVIDUALLY.

All field notes and diaries, video and audio tapes that are transcribed for publication will not be made public nor shared with others within the study group prior to those mentioned therein being given the right of veto on all or any information recorded therein.

Participants may withdraw at any time without prejudice. Notice is to be in writing (form attached).

At the conclusion of the study copies of field notes and diaries, video and audio tapes will be donated to the Banksia Grove School library for use within the library only for a minimum of two years following completion of the study.

Grievances are to be taken directly to the individual concerned then to the class teacher and finally to the Principal if still not resolved.

Adrienne is not responsible for consulting on a child's progress or lack thereof except where the specific issue is directly related to the study. An appropriate meeting should be arranged with the teacher to discuss the problem.

This study is not an evaluation of teaching or parental methods as such but is centred on the individual child's response to learning and literacy within their experience of the world.

(BOTH Banksia Grove AND THE INCOMING FAMILIES WERE PROVIDED WITH A COPY OF THIS PROPOSAL AND ASKED FOR THEIR COMMENTS)

LONGITUDINAL CASE STUDIES IN LEARNING: EARLY LITERACY AT THE BANKSIA GROVE SCHOOL

ADRIENNE HUBER
1990

Parent's Consent form

I _____ understand the following:

- (i) That the study has an "emergent" design which means the research is driven by the individual child's developmental and progress patterns;
- (ii) That I have the right of veto on any material relevant to me and my family prior to it being made public;
- (iii) That grievances are to initially be taken to the person concerned, then to the teacher and finally to the principal if still unresolved;
- (iv) That I may withdraw (in writing) from the study at any time without prejudice;
- (v) That Adrienne is not available to provide information about my child's progress except where it is directly relevant to the study.

I have a copy of the aim and basic method used in this study. I have read them and accept them as presented.

I _____ agree to participate in the above study CONDUCTED AT THE Banksia Grove SCHOOL BY ADRIENNE HUBER until further notice or until it is completed at the end of 1993.

I also agree for my child, _____, to participate on the same understanding.

Signed _____ Date _____
#####

LONGITUDINAL CASE STUDIES IN LEARNING: EARLY LITERACY AT THE BANKSIA GROVE SCHOOL

ADRIENNE HUBER

1990

Child's Consent Form¹

I _____ agree to participate in the study AT THE Banksia Grove
SCHOOL BY ADRIENNE HUBER until further notice or until it is completed at the end of
1993.

Signed _____ Date _____
#####

1. The study and what it means to the children will be discussed with them prior to them signing this
consent form which is modelled after one the children sign before they go on excursions.

NOT USED

**LONGITUDINAL CASE STUDIES IN LEARNING:
EARLY LITERACY AT THE BANKSIA GROVE SCHOOL**

**ADRIENNE HUBER
1990**

Teacher's Consent Form

I _____ understand the following:

- (i) That the study has an "emergent" design which means the research is driven by the individual child's developmental and progress patterns;
- (ii) That I have the right of veto on any material relevant to me and my family prior to it being made public;
- (iii) That grievances are to initially be taken to the person concerned, then to the Principal if still unresolved;
- (iv) That I may withdraw (in writing) from the study at any time without prejudice;
- (v) That Adrienne is not available to provide information about a child's progress except where it is directly relevant to the study.

I have a copy of the aim and basic method used in this study. I have read them and accept them as presented.

I _____ agree to participate in the above study CONDUCTED AT THE Banksia Grove SCHOOL BY ADRIENNE HUBER until further notice or until it is completed at the end of 1993.

Signed _____ Date _____

Principal agreed and signed _____ Date _____ #####

LONGITUDINAL CASE STUDIES IN LEARNING: EARLY LITERACY AT THE BANKSIA GROVE SCHOOL

ADRIENNE HUBER
1990

NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL

I _____ hereby give notice of my intetion to withdraw my family from the
above study WITHOUT PREJUDICE. The effective date of my withdrawal
is _____.

Comments (optional):

Signed _____ Date _____

5th December, 1990

My address

Ph:

Dear Parents and children,

I am a Psychologist and a Doctoral candidate for the University of Wollongong in the Department of Education. [...], with [...] during 1991.

For my Doctoral research I have approached Banksia Grove for their cooperation and participation in research which focuses on the child entering Kindergarten in 1991 and following individual children and their families for three years to the end of Year 2 at Banksia Grove only.

The study does not set out specific parameters for the child to be assessed on. Rather the research is driven by the parameters the child provides. This means that the research is very dependent on what individual children are doing at any given time. That will be different for every child in the study.

The other main point I wish to emphasize is that the study is not comparative. In other words, children will not be compared or be made or asked to compete against each other. This is made clearer in the attached submission.

Confidentiality is of the utmost importance to the progress of the study and I can discuss this with you further if you have any concerns. This is also discussed in the attached proposal.

Time wise, if there are no objections, I would like to start in the classroom on Day 1 of Term 1, 1991 so that I do not disrupt the class but can become part of the class in the most natural way I possibly can.

My information collection will be in many forms and if you look at page 5 of the proposal you will see the various forms listed there. The reason for the multiple forms is that I need to have different sources of information against which I can check each to reduce bias, misunderstanding and incorrect recordings or simply pick up information another source has been less effective in gathering.

I would be pleased if, when you have read my proposal, you could make any comments on it and any suggestions. The study is definitely not a static one but is very open to change at any time and is very dependent on the dynamic relationships between all participants, so please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any bright ideas. This is not a study in which "things" are done to the participants. Quite the reverse is true.

Please understand there is no compulsion to participate in the study or to even continue in it if at any time you or your Kindergarten child decides otherwise.

I will be present and will introduce myself this Friday afternoon/evening at the welcoming meal for new Kindergarten people. I look forward to meeting you on Friday.

Regards,

Adrienne Huber

Data collection modes

The logic of this research design serves to generate theory rather than to prove theory. Information in this research is used for the purposes of illumination and education, not experimentation.

Questions and questionnaires emerge from the observations, issues and concerns of the participants themselves and cannot be stated *a priori*. The information will be context specific.

Information is collected for research purposes, only after the prospective participants have been informed about the aims and objectives of the research project and subsequently agreed to participate. A formal "consent" will be received by the researcher, in writing, from the participants.

Participants will be aware that any information they contribute will be accessible to them, prior to publication in any form, and that they retain the right of *veto* at all times.

Tape recordings may be used as an *aide-memoire* or as an intermediate step in producing transcripts. Such recordings could be used as a reference source for all participants and NOT for "human experimentation". Transcripts provide ready access for individuals to judge whether or not their contribution may or may not be used in research. Tape recordings and transcripts will be kept for the duration of the research and accessed by the researcher and the persons concerned.

Observations, audio tape and photographic records may be used in developing a descriptive account. However, they will only be used with the permission of those persons involved in the particular setting.

Participants' journals would be included in the data:

- (a) With the author's desire to share the information and
- (b) Only if they have any bearing as indicators of the success or shortcomings of the research.

Demographic data may be used in accordance with established protocols regarding confidentiality in the organization and network of interests concerned.

Representative case studies will be carried out as a basis of the study. These will only take place with participants who have agreed in writing to take part in the process. The persons concerned will retain the right of *veto* and withdrawal from the study without prejudice. Notice of withdrawal will be made in writing by the participant concerned and will be effective from the nominated time. All information will be reported in such a way as to maintain confidentiality for all participants.

ADRIENNE HUBER

30th November, 1990

My address

Ph:

Dear Parents,

I am currently undertaking research for my PhD in Education at the University of Wollongong. My subject is language development and more specifically, literacy development. I am following some children who started Kindergarten at Banksia Grove in 1991. These children are now in Hilary and Paula's classes so I will be working with them from time to time.

We (Paula, Hilary and I) are keen not to treat any children differently from any others. (... so am very conscious of the Banksia Grove philosophy and practice.) I will be available for all children not only those in the study. This approach worked very well last year and we do not envisage any changes this year.

At this stage I will be in the classrooms on Monday and Wednesday mornings. From time to time these times will change due to other commitments for both the children and myself.

Please give me a ring if you would like to know more about my work in the classrooms.

Regards

Adrienne Huber

Appendix II: Sample member checking letters

CONFIDENTIAL

TO:

FROM: Adrienne Huber

No. of pages:

Date: Tuesday, 14/2/95

Dear ,

Here is my draft write up of case study I spoke to you about on the phone. Would you mind checking it for any factual errors/ inconsistencies "to the best of your knowledge" and anything you would prefer to be left out or included? Information in the boxes are direct quotes. I have sent a copy of this information to Hilary who is also checking it for any errors/inconsistencies and anything she does not want included, etc. for whatever reason. Thanks again.

I'll send you a proforma re accuracy shortly. I look forward to your comments.

Regards,
Adrienne.
14/2/95

CONFIDENTIAL

I have read Adrienne Huber's draft writeups of the Case Study of my/our child and the school and agree that they are fair representations of my child and the school.

Signed,
(Name)

Appendix III: Observation Sessions and Dates

	1991	1992	1993
JANUARY			
FEBRUARY			
MARCH	4S1*; 14S1	11S1; 18S1; 23S1; 25S1	3S1; 12S1; 31S1,S2
APRIL	8S1; 12S1; 19S1		6S1,S2
MAY	6S1; 27S1; 30S1	4S1; 19S1; 26S1	12S1
JUNE	3S1; 25S2	2S1,S2; 16S1,S2; 23S1,S2	22S1,S2;23S1,S2
JULY			21S1
AUGUST	6S1; 13S1; 20S1	11S1; 18S1; 25S1,S2;	
SEPTEMBER	10S1; 24S1	1S1S2; 8S1,S2; 15S1,S2	
OCTOBER	15S1; 16S1; 22S1; 23S2; 29S1; 30S1	20S1,S2; 27S1,S2	
NOVEMEBR	20S1;25S1,S2; 26S1,S2	3S1,S2; 10S1; 17S2	8S1,S2,S3; 9S1,S2,S3; 10S1,S2,S3; 11S1,S3; 12S2,S3
DECEMBER	2S1,S2; 3S1,S2; 6S1; 10S1; 11S2		
School Terms:			
Term 1:	28.1 -29.3	27.1 -16.4	1.2 -8.4
Term 2:	8.4.-28.6	27.4.-26.6	19.4.-25.6
Term 3:	15.7-27.9	13.7-25.9	12.7-24.9
Term 4:	14.10-13.12	12.10-18.12	11.10-17.12

* 4 = 4th March, 1991

S1 = Session 1 (9:15-10:50) S2 = Session 2 (11:30-12:50) S3 = Session 3 (1:50-3:10)

Appendix IV: Parent Questionnaire

6th August, 1991

Dear Jane and Luke,

Re: Research in Kindergarten

Enclosed is a book for journalling in and list of questions which are intended as starting prompts to help you begin a diary of Kim's progress. Please feel free to write your responses in the book along with any other comments about Kim's progress (eg. books he's reading; words he knows; any flashes of brilliance!! etc) and the study.

Many of the questions are quite personal and your responses will not be made known to anyone else. At this stage I anticipate categorizing responses for individual children without ever making known the actual responses without your prior permission. I would appreciate your frank honesty when responding to questions and any other information you may volunteer as this will assist me in making a more accurate assessment of Kim's progress over the next few years.

I would also like to obtain further information about Kim's first 5 years of life. This information would include specific developmental information. Some of this information may be contained in his Baby Health Clinic Booklet.

Please contact me on [phone.....] should you be uncertain as to what you need to do at any time.

Thankyou for participating in this study I hope you will enjoy it as much I am.

Regards,

Adrienne Huber

YOUR FAMILY INHERITANCE

"There is no present or future, only the past happening over and over again"
Eugene O'Neill

THE FAMILY TREE (Genogram)

RECURRENT INTERGENERATIONAL PATTERNS:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| * alcoholism & other substance abuse | * academic prowess |
| * high expectations & demands | * violence |
| * mental illness | * sporting prowess |
| * depression | * law breaking |
| * assertiveness | * physical fitness |
| * genetic defects | * job instability |
| * learning difficulties | * rigid thinking and expectations |
| * phobias | * child abuse |
| | * suicide attempts |

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION CAN BE PLACED ON A GENOGRAM:

1. Names, ages and state of health of family members
2. Dates of birth, death, marriages, divorces, separations, accidents, serious illness, moving to a new house or to a different city, changes of job. (All of these are transitions and can be significant stressors. Especially note if any have occurred just before an escalation of marital conflict).
3. Physical location of parents, aunts, uncles, cousins, etc. (This can give an indication of how close or distant the family is from near relatives).
4. Sibling positions.
5. Education, occupations and work histories of spouses, parents and significant others.
6. Ethnicity and religious background.

MAKING A GENOGRAM:

Below is a genogram for "Tom" & "Mary"

NB. Tom & Mary live in the same Perth suburb as Arthur and Joan. Brad is in hospital nearby. Tom's parents live in southern Sydney.



DRAW YOUR OWN FAMILY TREE, then ask yourself the following questions:

Part I

1. Who are the success stories, the heroes of the family? Is the criterion for success in business, academia, sport or finances? Who has power in your family and how is it exercised? Was there anyone definitely "in charge"?
2. Who are the "black sheep" or "scapegoats"? Who broke the family rules? What are the taboos? What isn't spoken about in your family? Are there family secrets?
3. What are the typical gender roles? Do women rule "behind the throne"? Is there a pattern of weak men and strong women - or vice versa?
4. Who are the spiritual pioneers, saints and prophets?
5. Where are you in the birth order? What did it mean to occupy that position in the family?
6. Are relationships in your family close or distant? How do people show affection? How do they deal with anger? Conflict? What words would you use to describe your family atmosphere: open, friendly, silent, turbulent, greedy, noisy, calm, uncommunicative, depressed, angry, accepting, ambitious, competitive.....
7. What are the guiding values of your family? Religion.... Wealth. poverty....high achievement....community service....something else? (Some of these questions have been suggested by Ms L. Bailey, Clinical Psychologist at the A.N.U.).
8. What is the family dream or myth? Are there scripts handed out for individuals (eg. the oldest son always goes into the army, the youngest daughter stays single and looks after aging parents, etc.).

The above work of The Rev'd Dr. Bruce Stevens is much appreciated

(Ref: Guerin & Pendergast, 1979)

Part II

1. How would you define the following terms:
Learning
Creativity
Child development
Education
Literacy
Functional literacy
2. How do you think a child:
Learns?
Is best educated?
Becomes literate?
How does what you have written in response to the above question apply to Kim?
3. How did you (both parents where possible) become literate (reading, writing, spelling, etc.), numerate, socialized?
4. What did others (parents, teachers, friends) do to help you learn?
5. Do you think you are a good reader?
|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
no yes
6. Do you think you are a good writer?

|.....|.....|.....|.....|.....|
no yes
7. What is your highest level of education?
8. What are your hopes and expectations for Kim?
9. How did Kim's siblings (if any) become literate?
10. What do you see as your most important responsibility towards Kim as her parents?

-
-
11. How would you describe Kim's progress at BANKSIA GROVE during the first semester?
 12. Do you think how well Kim gets on with her peers is important? Please elaborate on your answer.
 13. Is getting on with her peers important from a learning and/or literacy perspective for Kim?
 14. How well does Kim get on with her peers?
 15. How would you describe Kim?
 16. Describe what Kim is doing with her drawings, writing, etc. For example are Kim's drawings "more than" her earlier "scribble"?
 17. At what age/stage would you expect Kim to become functionally literate?
 18. How will you know she has achieved functional literacy?
 19. What would you prefer/expect Hilary, Kim's teacher do to help her to develop her literacy, numeracy and socialization?
 20. If you knew Kim was having difficulty learning at school (literacy/ numeracy/ socialization) what would you do about it?
 21. What things is Kim doing that tells you she is learning from her school experience? What is she learning or has she learned since starting school?
 22. What things is Kim doing that tells you she is moving towards becoming literate?
 23. Does Kim recognize any words?

If **no**, are you concerned about this or do you know that Kim will begin to read words at some stage?

If **yes**, write down as many as she knows.

24. Is Kim attempting to read sentences, short, beginner readers, other books?

If **no**, do you have any doubts that she will read?

If **yes**, do you consider Kim a good reader?

I.....I.....I.....I.....I.....I

no

yes

Explain your response to and hunches about this including how you see the process here and describing your feelings and Kim's feelings if possible.

What does Kim do when she comes to a word she does not know?

What do you do?

Do you ever do anything else?

What is Kim's response to your actions/efforts?

25. Is Kim writing any words yet?

If **no**, are you concerned about this or do you know that Kim will begin to write words at some stage?

If **yes**, ask her to write as many as she knows either individually or in a sentence or sentences. If she does not know a particular word in a sentence please underline it and make a note that Kim is still learning this word.

26. List Kim's favourite books that you read to her.

27. If Kim is reading, list her favourite books that she reads herself.

28. Why did you choose Banksia Grove for Kim?

-
-
29. In your own words, how would you articulate the philosophical approach of Banksia Grove's approach to education?
 30. How is the philosophy articulated/not articulated in the Kindergarten classroom everyday?
 31. How have your expectations of Banksia Grove been meet or not met so far?
 32. Would you recommend Banksia Grove to other families on your experience? Elaborate on your answer.

Appendix V: Sample School Report

Dear Patsie and Ken,

I have enjoyed spending another year with Casey, she is such an affectionate, interested and enthusiastic soul, we'll really miss her presence in the group in the first half of next year. For her part, I'm sure the trip will be a fantastic experience, she is a very lucky girl!

There's no doubt that Casey has had her ups and downs this year, and I really hope that when she gets back she will either have taken that leap of faith with her reading and writing, or be just about ready to, because I do feel that sometimes she gives herself a hard time about what she can and can't do or rather what she perceives she can't do. I have no doubt that she could read and write independently right now if only she could be happy to take a few risks. I feel that somehow her tantrums and bad moods are all tied up with this issue to some extent, and sometimes exacerbated by her stormy and demanding relationship with Jane. Not that I want to paint a gloomy picture - I think that Casey has grown this year in every way, and most of the time she is very happy, busy and productive in the group. But there are times when she is upset in a very deep-seated sort of way, and I feel a bit at a loss to know what it is all about.

Casey is very popular in the group, and has a wide group of friends beyond Jane. Cathy, Ella, Lindy, and Kim in particular are all companions, and Christine is often part of the action too, although the disputes flare up sometimes, just like they did last year. I have been a bit surprised that Casey hasn't sought the company of some of the older girls in Paula's group, but I don't see any problem in that. Her relationship with Jane has continued to be very important for them both, and positive and negative for them both. On a good day they bring out the best in each other, and on a bad day...well, you probably know as well as I do! In third term I gave Casey quite a few sessions in Paula's group, just to give her a bit of breathing space in a way, and I think it was good for her in that she focussed a bit more on some reading and writing. The trip may well be good for both of them in that way.

Casey has continued to enjoy everything on offer this year, and to provide her own interests and pursuits. Her art work is as original and delightful as ever, and obviously a great source of pride and pleasure to her, which is great to see. She continues to use all the media - making, painting, drawing, and is never short of an original idea. She has really appreciated and benefited from all the going-out mornings, and she was involved in the play throughout the whole writing and production phase. She was very enthusiastic and responsible, organising props and other people (very nicely!), as well as her own role.

At group times Casey is best away from Jane, otherwise she chats and deliberately disrupts the proceedings, so we have insisted on their sitting separately of late - the extent of her rudeness never quite reaches Jane's, but it is definitely something to be discouraged. It has improved markedly this term. Even away from Jane, Casey often loses concentration and holds a conversation with a neighbour - I'm not sure which comes first, but it does become very wearing! In spite of that, she is always happy to contribute in both the large and the smaller group, and always knows what is going on and what we are doing! She is co-operative and responsible when we go out, and benefits from all the outings because she is focussed and interested.

Physically Casey is always totally involved, fit, co-ordinated and skilled. She is a champion skipper and has been helping some of the younger children and she is a great bush-walker, plodding along, never missing a beat, chatting all the way and generally sorting out the meaning of life.

At work times Casey sustains her interest and involvement well, and has undertaken some tasks that have required quite an input - some of her stories, for example. She takes care with her work, and enjoys illustrating her stories and so on. She is an independent writer when she chooses to be, and this term I have been encouraging

her to write often, to see if we can really get it happening - it's so close! This term too Casey has shown much more interest in reading and often chooses to read to me, on top of the individual and group reading sessions we have together. She is using a good range of skills reading for meaning, using the initial sound clue, using picture clues and making use of the context. She seems to most enjoy group reading sessions, when we share a big book or a group story together. Casey has extended all her skills in maths, and enjoys challenges in number work in particular. She has also enjoyed the spatial work we have done altogether, and making solids out of nets. She has begun work on two digit numbers with the concrete materials and has enjoyed the problem-solving book we have been using.

Thank you for all your involvement again this year, Patsie, it's very much appreciated. I hope you all have a wonderful trip - we are looking forward to corresponding regularly with Casey and hearing all the news, even if we are a rather deep shade of green!

Hilary

Appendix VI: Sample forms of teacher records

Week 4 Term 3		
General	<p>finish last week's long wheel x 1.</p> <p>News</p> <p>finish letter to N</p>	<p>(popcorn!)</p> <p>Big book session</p> <p>Dancing drama room</p> <p>Ninbin ↓</p> <p>choosing</p>
General	<p>New wheel</p> <p>① hunting to me ② collage to B. ③ reading ④ drawing</p> <p>v. keen - lots of letters want to do it! colouring in!!</p>	<p>Maths session - whole group</p> <p>Library</p> <p>Muric</p>
General	<p>K... [Release Tchr]</p> <p>made hats - v. successful.</p>	<p>New Maths Wheel</p> <p>① const. ② more suns ③ game to Barb. ④ peg patterns</p> <p>Body bore - blood circulⁿ</p> <p>game out day</p>
General	<p>well-occupied - const. + drawing mostly + skipping</p> <p>postponed wheel 10.15</p> <p>FIRE INCIDENT - G + L</p> <p>talk about using toilets</p>	<p>Big talk about canig for room at MT / Lunch</p> <p>BB 1. rubbish in bin 2. lunch box in bag 3. bag in your pigeon hole 4. chair under 5. go & play!!</p> <p>worked well</p> <p>1.5. throwing sa in room after lunch!</p> <p>Craft & sewing</p>
General	<p>News - N</p> <p>Wheel</p> <p>Dancing more opting out - N, M, J copying / S...</p> <p>Room / awful after MT !!</p>	<p>Body book - gms</p> <p>Walk up hill to see snow</p>

Week 6 T3 JE child's name J

<div>late in - handled</div> <div>Talk ① coming in</div> <div>② not handling on mat</div> <div>NR. OK</div>	<div>in OK</div> <div>handled on mat</div>	<div>late in for story</div> <div>OK for story</div>
<div>in OK</div> <div>handled -</div>	<div>OK</div> <div>game outside</div>	<div>OK</div> <div>game outside</div>
<div>delib. uncap & photograph</div>	<div>dancing - wild -</div> <div>leapt in E</div>	<div>handled S</div> <div>T body</div>
<div></div>	<div>he - OK</div>	<div></div>
<div>group - handling</div> <div>Wheel - great painting</div> <div>of his flag</div> <div>Keen to eat MT - no breakfast</div>	<div>wheel - not here</div> <div>strong OK (D)</div> <div>a</div>	<div>handled 1</div> <div>at T.V.</div> <div>Story - OK -</div> <div>begin long</div> <div>handling ideas</div>
<div>group - handling</div> <div>Wheel - great painting</div> <div>of his flag</div> <div>Keen to eat MT - no breakfast</div>	<div>great illustr for</div> <div>dis saw book</div> <div>- silly during</div> <div>discussion time</div>	<div>Refused to</div> <div>come for story</div> <div>- did illustr</div> <div>for dinosaur</div> <div>missed out play</div> <div>lasted to T</div> <div>end of day</div>
<div>(nail clippers -</div> <div>Wheel - OK - head - then</div> <div>panted altho wanted</div> <div>to play after 5 mins.</div>	<div>dancing - great</div> <div>fre drill - handled</div>	<div>story - good</div> <div>play - outside</div> <div>gr - better</div>

TERM IV - 1991

Week 1 14-15/10/91

Journal - decided to do one again for 2 weeks.
Provided good focus & reason for daily writing - was v. popular. More sophisticated this time - to make it a little different & add some more * calendar concepts * date - note date every day * Roman numerals on cover. (Read OX Cart now see seasons etc - northern hemisphere!). Is an unrealistic challenge for some but appropriate challenge for others. Encouraging those ready to do some writing for themselves. Some - more - now have concept of a Journal as keeping record of events over time.

Wheel - 1. paint 2. draw 3. write
4. read to me - big book Mrs Wray-Wray
= enc. individuals to read - less threatening in small group - more time.
- discussed Ms/Mrs/Mr/Miss

Scenes' books - made "scenes" in groups & individually - to allow 3D experiments + build on previous spontaneous activity. Wrote "adventure" or story to accompany

EVERY DAY - I READ ALOUD

FOR PLEASURE, + TO

POINT OUT THINGS OF

INTEREST - eg. Caps, find

the words you know, trying
words, etc etc etc

scene. Dictated & suited.
Drawing attention to numbering pages = more
practice writing numerals.

+

Cf's problems in name/copying / L → R



biggie print
name in capitals help?
make bigger name card

Week 2

* Cont. Journals

- Wheel
1. printing TB.
 2. construct equip.
 3. reading to me
 4. drawing + dictated story or own writing

reading to me : as I explained - "Joining-in" books
- for those ready : encouraging self-connecting /
looking at medial, final sounds / ~~at~~
ldng. wd. for wd. / talking about using
combination of cues - eg. picture + initial
sound / talking about ways we work out
words / giving time to read aloud - reluctant - eg. ^{Chris} Valdis
- for others - as approp. - for some read
to them as a story
- chr. who want to take book home at night

tadpoles - drew picture & dictated story
about tadpoles.

- read several lib. books about level of
frog - chr. themselves decided to go to lib.
to get books - good to see.

Cont. Wk 3.

Letter/sounds OK

Alone - relevant to take notes
 Annie - well on the way
 Arlyn - slow : of difficulty to
 come but well on the way

Letter/sounds devel. OK

Grny
 Max
 Sunny

Arvon } beginning:
 Chris } s/c ✓
 Tale } w/wd
 Kyrin } medial: final
 Valdis }

Need conc. input

Idis
 Isabella
 Caitlin

Nudgy not ready yet.



Arvon Valdis / Kyrin / Tale / Arvon / Chris
 ready for a bit of concentrated input
 & reading. Very receptive to discussion
 & input at the moment. Much more
 successful in small group. ?

Chris	Arvon
Idis	Alex
Valdis	Annie
Arlyn	Arlyn
Idis	Caitlin
Arlyn	Isabella
Arlyn	Nicky



need to look at wheel groups again

Week 3

Wheel - 1. printing : B. ^{Writing}
 2. Cleverstick/Duplo 3. Booding : me
 4. Listening post : story

writing - draw picture "have a go" at writing
 own story - say wd. to themselves & make
 a guess; for those still without letters
 sounds - say word, what sound, have's
 the letter that says that sound (using
 letter chart)

myths & legends

have been reading Tale's book - fascinated
 by Cyclops, Medusa etc.

Transformers

- been v. popular again -
 group made space base - helped
 teams write sign - Mars, landing station
 etc.

Tadpoles wrote sign; some people
 have had a go at labelling their
 own pictures.

Festival

Have referred to list of things we've going to do several times. Next can use it as reference now.

String pictures

shared comments about how they produced them etc. Ewe lang. about lines, spaces, patterning.

x Summing
x Tidbitella

Tracking station

Wk 4

begin Space "theme"

- read aloud to intro
- book display

input for
- 0?

(} bingo, 1 spy, memory,
} letter/sound/picture match.

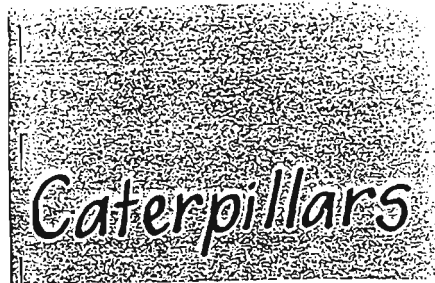
Writing Down / Choosing Time.

Wk4 T3	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	draw	banicade	drawing	A	drawing
	sew	play A K	sewing		skip
	game T A G C	banicade	sewing		tiger out
Casey	sewing	T K A	sewing		skip
	play outside T G C	banicade T G	a		a
Christine	sewing	a	skipping		skip
	T A + G		outside	sewing	game T G C
Liam	T A G C		outside	(with J(P))	T G + V
	a	a	a		a
	drawing	drawing	drawing		draw
	b' board	T A A			board
	game T N	draw with	outside new		T N A
	"Alien Beige" game T M	outside	outside		game T M
	a	a	a		T G V
	a	a	clawing	T	T G
		WIND	fine -G	T sewing Group from Infants	

Date: 26/5/93 School Bulletin Attachment

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cooking Group (4) (1 group each week - mixed)	Science Group (4) (1 group each week - mixed)	Reading Skills " Activities	Language and Number	Language and Number
← Skills Building	Activities - Set tasks - optional order	Language work		
10:15 - 11:30 Library H	Activities Morning P (PR) - (Woodwork) A (T) - (Marbelling) A (T) - (Clay) V (P) - (plasticine) (for 4 weeks then change of activity)	Activities with Karen (Planning/release time)	H (T) Music / Optional (Room) or quiet work time with H (T) 12:15 - 1:00 Library H Personal Project Time	Art & Craft Morning Mixed group
Mixed Group Physical Games				
- Story Time →				- Story Time -
Mixed Group → Choosing Time				Choosing Time
- Next two weeks - co-operative shop merchandise preparation time				

Appendix VII: Samples of Story/book writing, reports
(recounts), and other materials



Caterpillars
have lots of
legs.

The caterpillar
makes itself
a cocoon.

Then out comes
a butterfly or
a moth.

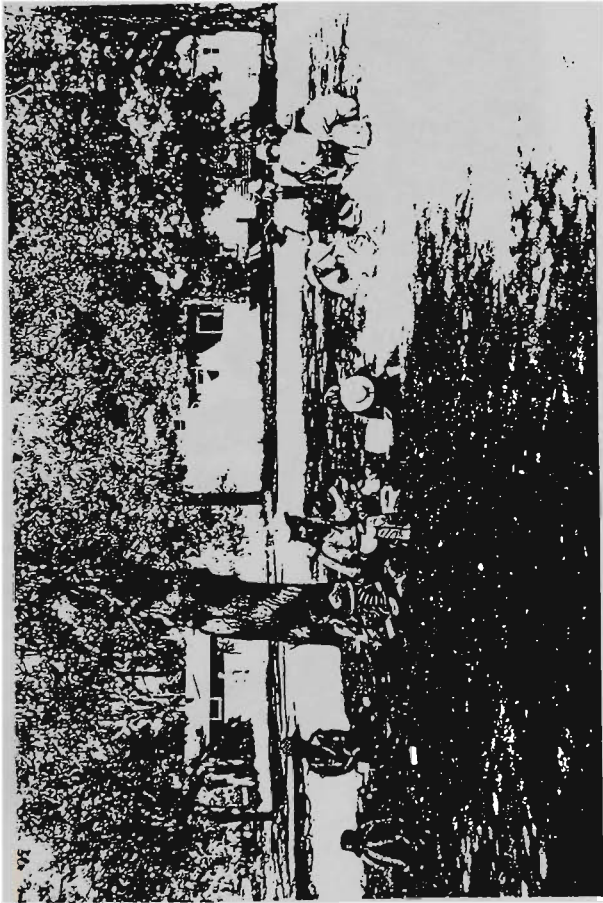
Caterpillars
have breathing
holes along
their sides.

Caterpillars
only eat their
favourite leaves.

One day we

went to

P



First we went to

1



Then we went to

2



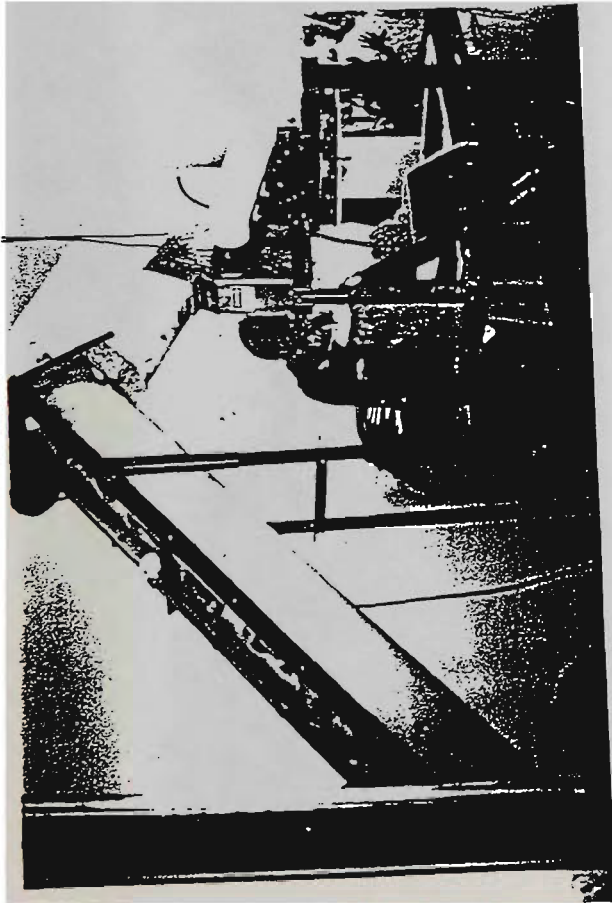
At the worm farm we

21



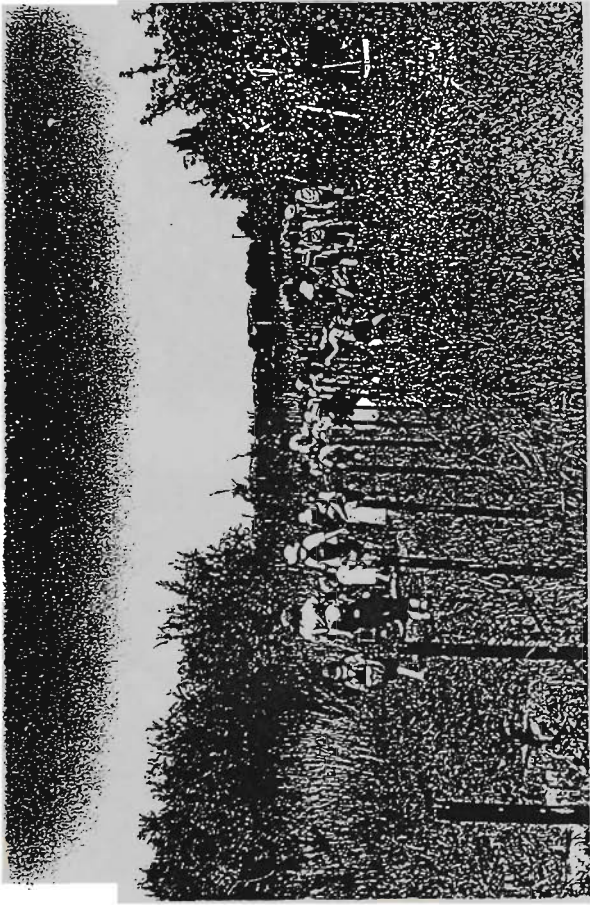
After the worm farm we

3



We watched W She
was

4



Next we set off to



R told us

6



Then we

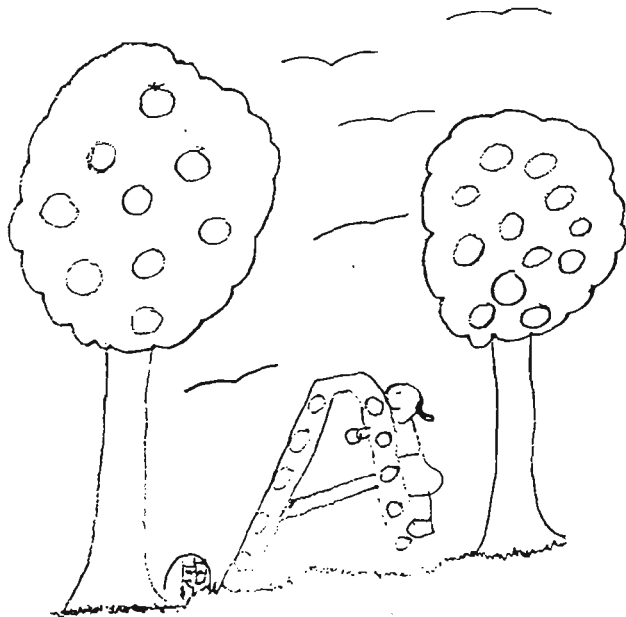
7

ONE DAY THE INFANTS & KINDIES WENT TO P

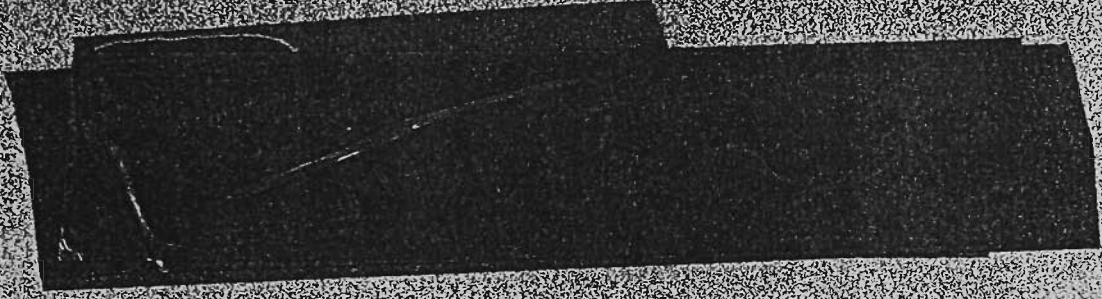
First we went to the old School and had morning tea.
Then we went to the worm farm, D^r owned the worm farm and he
let us hold some worms. Last we went to the apple orchard.
V^r and R^r worked at the apple orchard. We saw the Apple
Juicing Machine. W^r operated it. We picked ten apples
each. R^r told us how to pick those apples. Then we had
lunch by the river. We bought some apples and went back to
school and had a Great Apple Cook-Up.

+

T



T



TOWER

Chapter One

Every Wednesday morning we all go out. One day we went up to Tower. When we were driving up Mountain everyone said, "Wow, we're so high up."

We all went inside and we saw some stuffed animals so we went over to look at them. There was a snake and a kangaroo and a Blue Tongue Lizard and a Bearded Dragon and a mouse and a Rosella. A and A went over to look at them. While they weren't looking all the creatures came to life. They broke open the glass cabinet and they tried to get into the bus and drive away in it. N got out his net gun and he caught all the animals. He took them out into the wild.

Chapter Two

Meanwhile the rest of us went up the stairs to the Viewing Gallery. We saw a bridge, the lake, the and

Some of us could even see our own houses.

M was looking down at and an alien arrived right on top of him. M shouted, "Don't move - the alien will try to get you." He got his mini gun and killed it because there's no other way on Earth to get rid of an alien.

Chapter Three

H climbed up on the bars and suddenly the bar broke and she fell. C saw H out of the corner of her eye and said,

"A: come and save Helen. If we go down to the bottom of the tower there's an old net - we can catch her in that."

We could all hear Helen screaming,

"HHEEEELLLLPPPPP!"

C and A raced down to the bottom of the tower and they found the net...BUT, it had a BIG hole in it.

"Oh no! H's going to fall through the hole."

So they called all the kids and they gathered round and they caught her.

"Thankyou for saving me." H said.

Chapter Four

Everyone looked around and said, "Where's ?"

was right up the top of the tower and she looked over the edge and said, "Helloooo!"

We all said, "Oh no! is about to fall through the clouds."

K., N., C. and K. said, "Let's save

." So they ran up the stairs, and in the elevator, to the top of the tower.

But they were too late. had already

fallen into a cloud. K., N., C. and

K. all came down and said, " is in trouble."

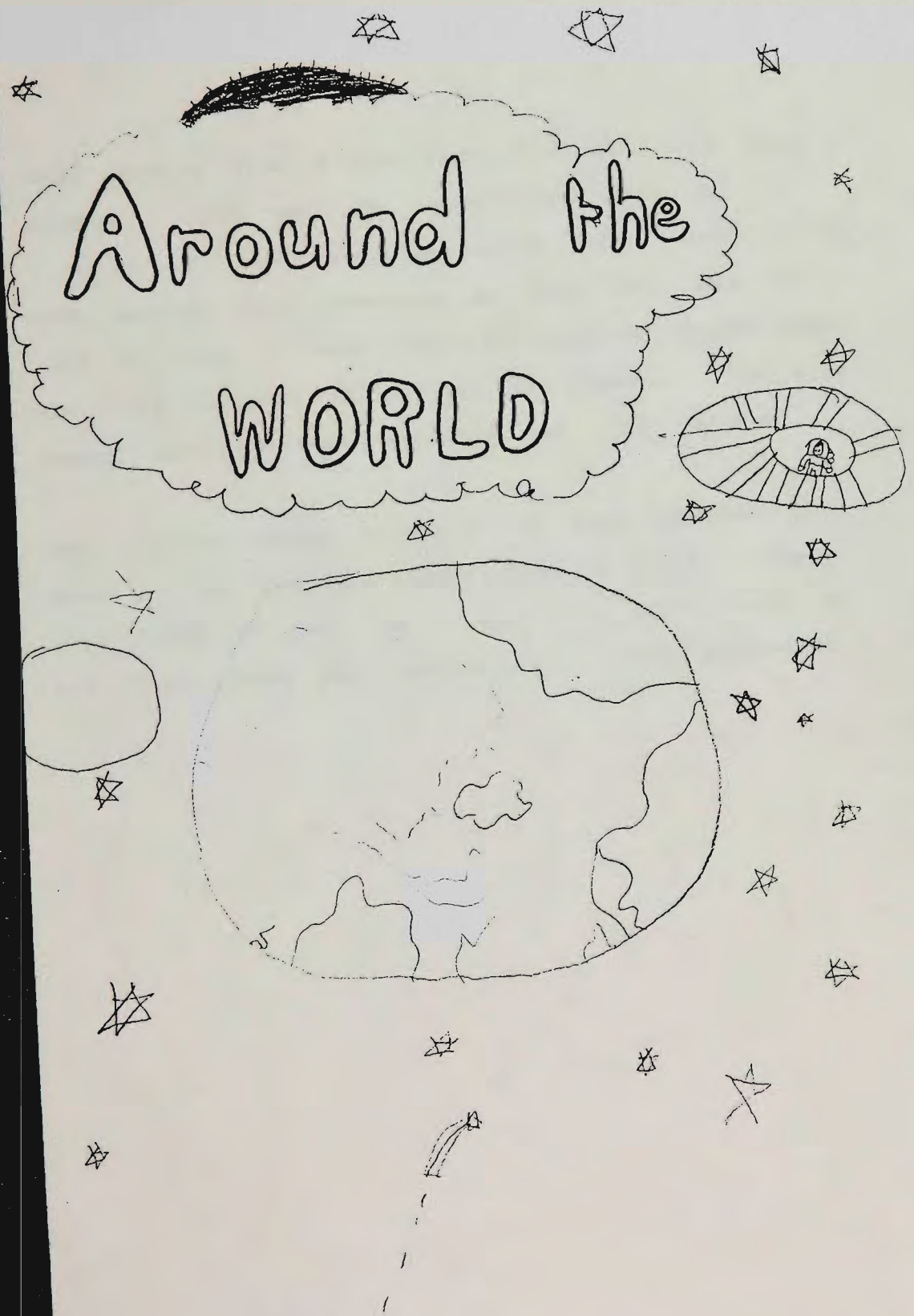
Everybody looked up and saw A floating down on a cloud. We all said, "Phew!"

A looked over the edge of the cloud and said, "Hellooo!"

Then she landed softly on the ground.

Everyone rushed over and said, "Yippee! A cloud." We tried to play in the cloud but we couldn't feel anything.

We were so worried that there would be more accidents that we went home.



Once upon a time a few kids went out with their parents. They went to explore the bush at T . They were having a picnic lunch. The kids spotted some kangaroos so they went down to look at them. Their favorite kangaroo hopped away and they followed it. Then it stopped. The kids looked back and they couldn't see their parents.

The kangaroo hopped off and the kids followed it again. The kangaroo jumped over a creek. The kids tried to jump too. But they didn't make it and their shoes got soaking wet. They complained.

They saw a berry bush. They saw some giant berries. They picked the berries and tried to eat them. But the berries felt hard. They rattled them and heard something inside. So they tried to break them open. Some shoes fell out. They tried one on. It fitted. They broke some more berries open and out came some more shoes. They all tried on a pair.

They felt strange. They didn't feel like normal shoes. They felt warm. The children felt themselves lift up a little bit. They hovered above the ground. Suddenly they went higher. They were flying. They got such a surprise and some of them were frightened.

Then they knew the shoes were magic. Suddenly they disappeared into the clouds. They realised they were flying out of Australia. They hadn't been flying for very long when they looked down and saw New Zealand. They saw some people waving a flag. They felt themselves lowering down. They landed softly. They saw a funny bird with a long beak walking along. It was a kiwi.

A man took them into his house and showed them a globe. They chose which country to go to next. They decided to go to India.

It was time to go. They were used to flying now. The children wondered how they would get to India. The man gave them the globe. They found India on the globe. They blinked two times and they started to fly.

When they got to India they met a man called P . They asked if they could go into his house. They had some Indian food. They had bread pakora and tikki.

They had a ride down the road on an elephant. They saw a turtle walking along a track. They started to get hot so they blinked two times and started to fly.

They didn't know where they were going. They were worried that they might land in a dangerous place. They flew South-West. The shoes took them to South Africa. They saw another elephant. They thought it looked the same as the Indian elephant but it had bigger ears.

They looked down and they saw a long beach. They decided to land on the sand and go for a swim. First they wanted to know the temperature of the water. But then they just went in. The water felt different to Australian beaches because it was much warmer. They were swimming in the Indian Ocean.

They flew out of the water. They didn't know where they were going. They flew North-East. They landed on a roof. They thought they were in China.

They saw a little girl and they asked her where they were. She said they were in China. They asked her what her name was. It was S W L.

She asked them if they wanted some dumplings and rice. They ate with chopsticks. They didn't know how to use chopsticks so S W L taught them. After that they thought it was easy.

When they finished eating they went outside for a walk. They saw all these motor bikes and bicycles. It was so busy that they felt like flying on. They said goodbye, blinked two times and up they went.

They looked at the globe and decided to go to Latvia. They had to fly North-West. When they got there they found out that it was very cold. Out came a mother and her baby. The mother asked them if they would like to come in and sit by the fire. The mother's name was L and the baby's name was Z. The mother asked if they wanted some borsch soup but they really didn't know what borsch soup was. They decided to try some anyway. They thought it smelt disgusting but the color was beautiful. L put some cream in each bowl. It tasted just perfect.

Then it was time for them to go. They thanked L and Z for the lovely soup. They blinked two times and flew off in a south-westerly direction.

8

They flew over the Atlantic Ocean and went to South America. They decided to land in Argentina. They thought it was very warm and they were pleased because they had been cold in Latvia.

They saw a bird and they thought it was a baby stork but it really was a toucan. They saw a man coming out of a house and they said hello to him. His name was S . He said "Hola!" but they didn't know what it meant. S was cooking some rice with milk. It was called "arroz con leche" He asked them if they wanted some rice but they said they had eaten some rice in China. But they had some anyway. They said goodbye to Sebastian and he said "adios" back.

9

They left the globe in S's house and so they didn't know where to go. They blinked two times and flew north. They landed in Peru. A lady came along called T. She said "Hola! Como estas?" The kids looked confused for a moment. T started singing a Spanish song.

"Hola

Como estas

Muy bien

Gracias."

The kids started joining in. They all made up a dance together and Theresa gave them some castanets to play.

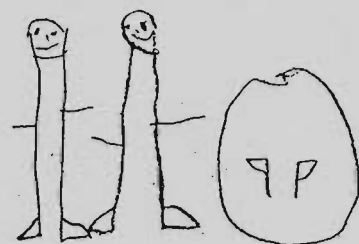
Theresa went to the market to do some shopping. She said to the kids "Mi casa es su casa". The kids went through the house and they found a pinata. They hung it up. They went outside thinking T was there and they saw a funny animal. One of them knew that it was a llama.

T came home and saw the pinata up. She thought it was lovely of them to put it up because it was her birthday.

The kids were really tired and they wanted to go home. But they didn't know the way. They told the magic shoes to take them back to Australia. T said, "Buenas noches!"

They blinked two times and they closed their eyes and in twenty minutes they were back in Tidbinbilla. The kangaroo was still there. The kangaroo hopped on. He went past the berry bush, back over the creek and led the kids to their parents. They got back just in time for supper and their parents said, "Where have you been? Do you want some supper?"

But the kids were already asleep.



The Adventures in the Garden



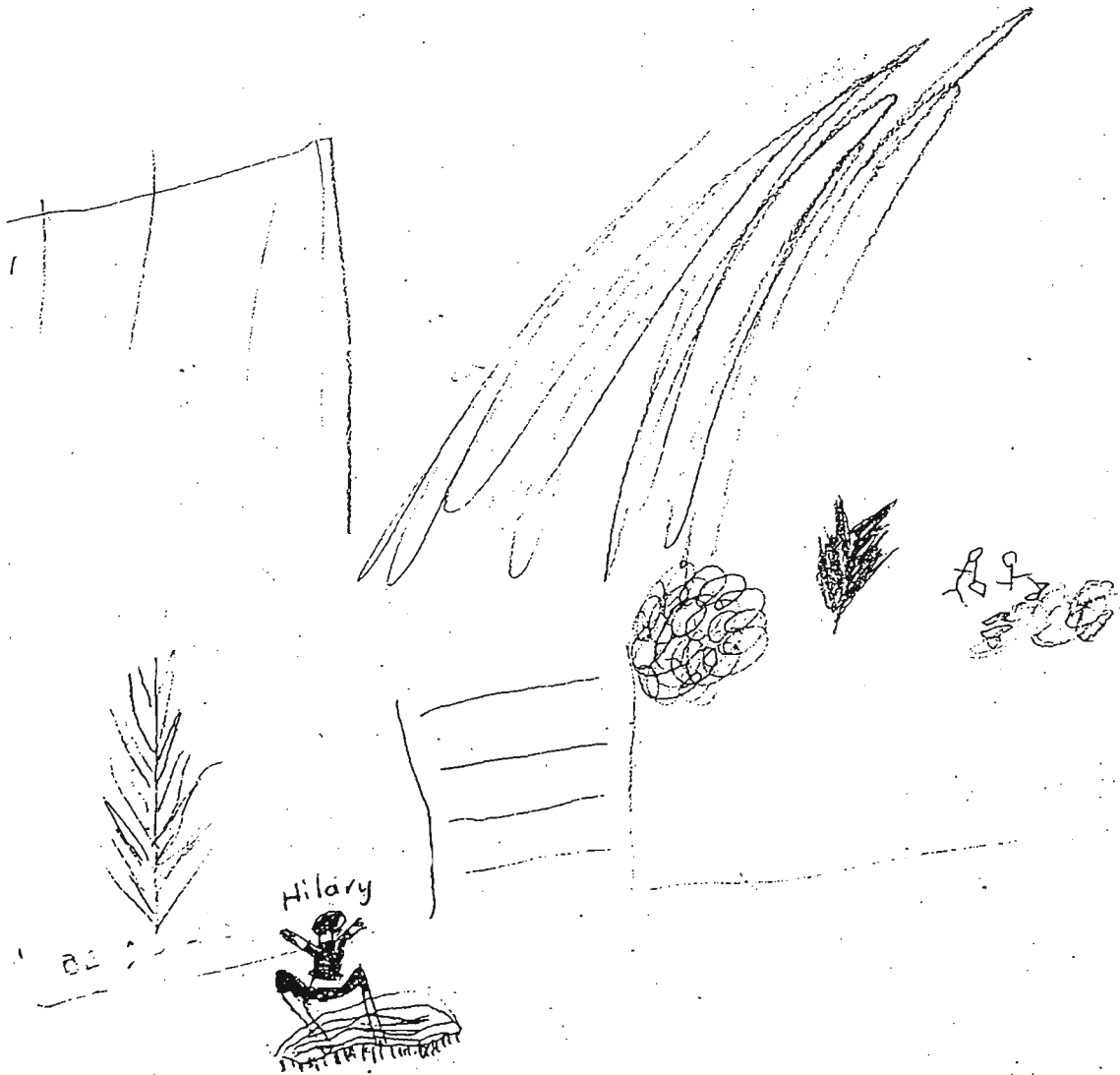
The
Adventures
in the
Garden.

written by the Kids
in Infants - 1992.

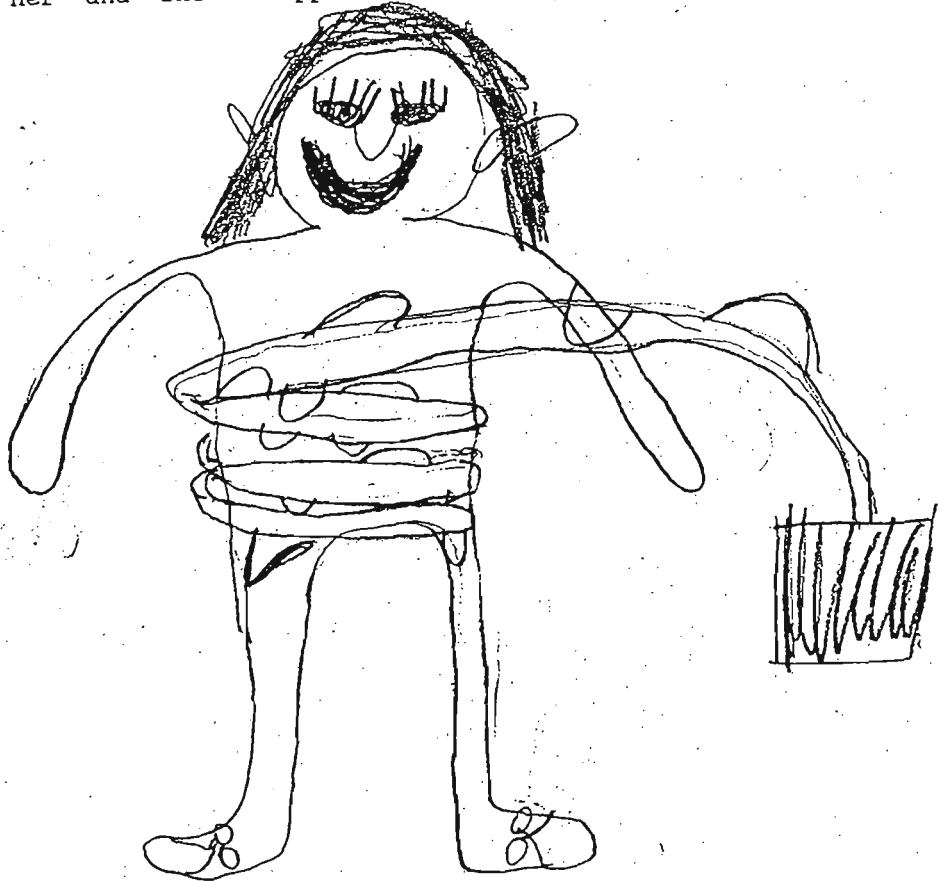
One morning we decided to fix up our garden. We got into groups to do our jobs. One group went to the pine forest to collect pine cones and sticks. N saw a GI-NORMOUS pine cone. It was SO BIG that he couldn't pick it up. N yelled to I, "I come and help me." But they couldn't pick it up. I yelled to C, "C come and help us." But they still couldn't pick it up. So C yelled to M, "M come and help us." But they STILL couldn't pick it up. So M yelled to A, "A come and help us." And then they all picked it up and took it back to school and put it on the garden.



He was busy in the garden planting plants. A little slater crawled out of the pine cone and ate one of the plants. Then the slater grew and GREW and GREW. Then the giant slater crawled behind and swallowed her whole.



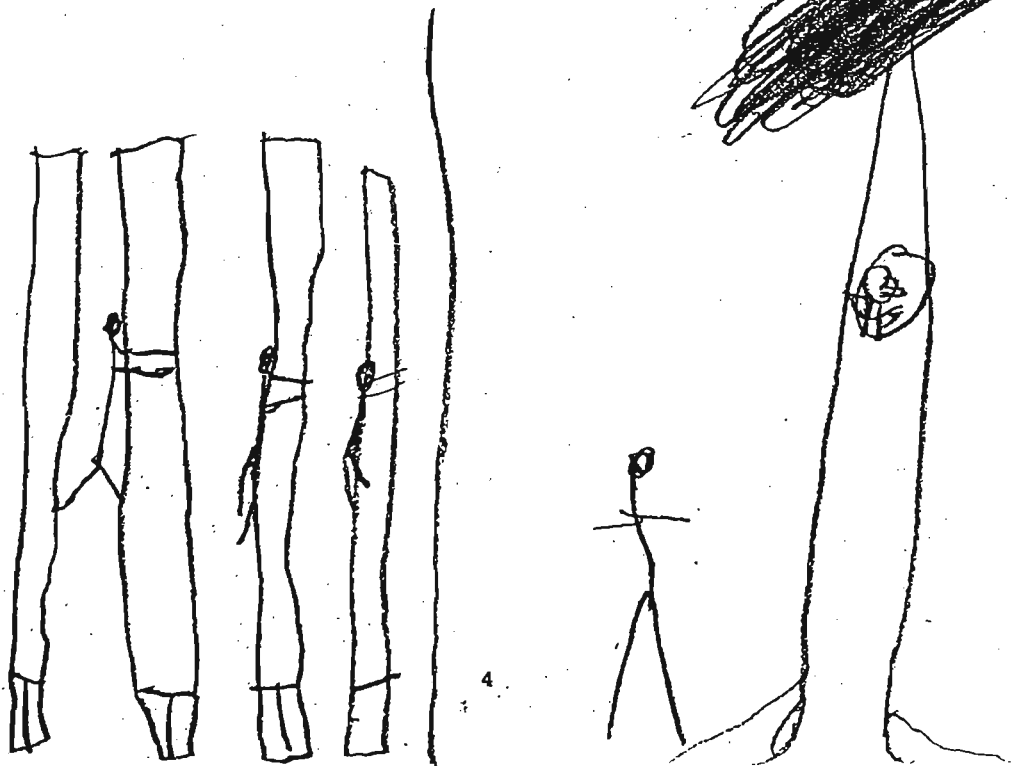
Meanwhile A. , K. , T. , A. , E.
N. and K. went to the shops. The kids were
looking around the nursery. A. was pushing A.
and K. in a trolley. N. was piggy backing
E. D. chose all the plants.
All the kids said, "Could we please choose one seed?"
So they did.
They went back to school and planted it. All of a
sudden it grew and GREW and GREW.
Annie went to look at it and it started to curl up
around her and she disappeared.



2
Meanwhile T , S . and Tr went off with M
to collect cow manure. S saw four strange
looking trees. He called T and Tr . They
each started climbing one of the trees but the trees
were very hairy. They climbed all the way to the
top and walked across a big branch until they saw
two big holes. Then they saw two enormous eyes.
It was a giant cow.

All of a sudden the cow went, "MMMMM - MOOOOOOOOOO!"
And they were all blown back to school.

M was looking for them all over the place but
he couldn't find them. He finally gave up and went
back to school.



Meanwhile T , V , M , S , C and H
were digging a hole for V 's pumpkin. They made
a really deep hole...

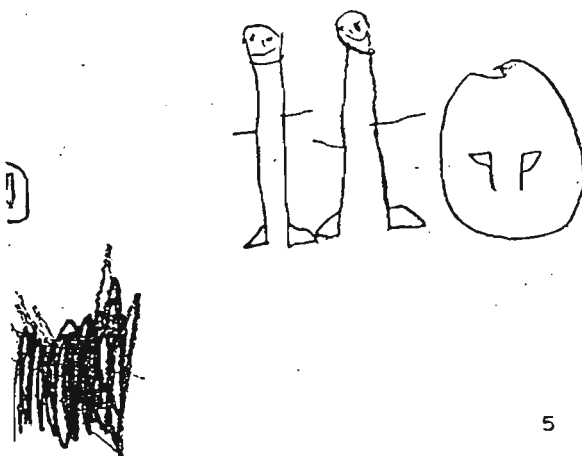
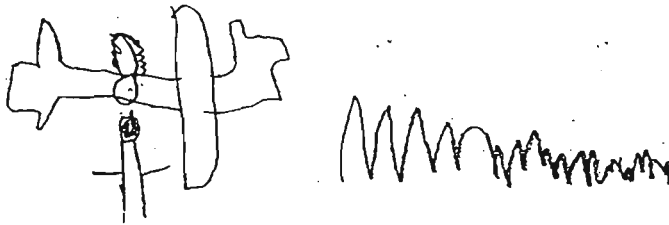
V looked down and said, "I mean that is a
really big hole man."

T looked in the hole and disappeared.

Then V looked in the hole and he disappeared.

C looked in the hole and she disappeared.

J was searching for T and stepped in the hole
and she disappeared.

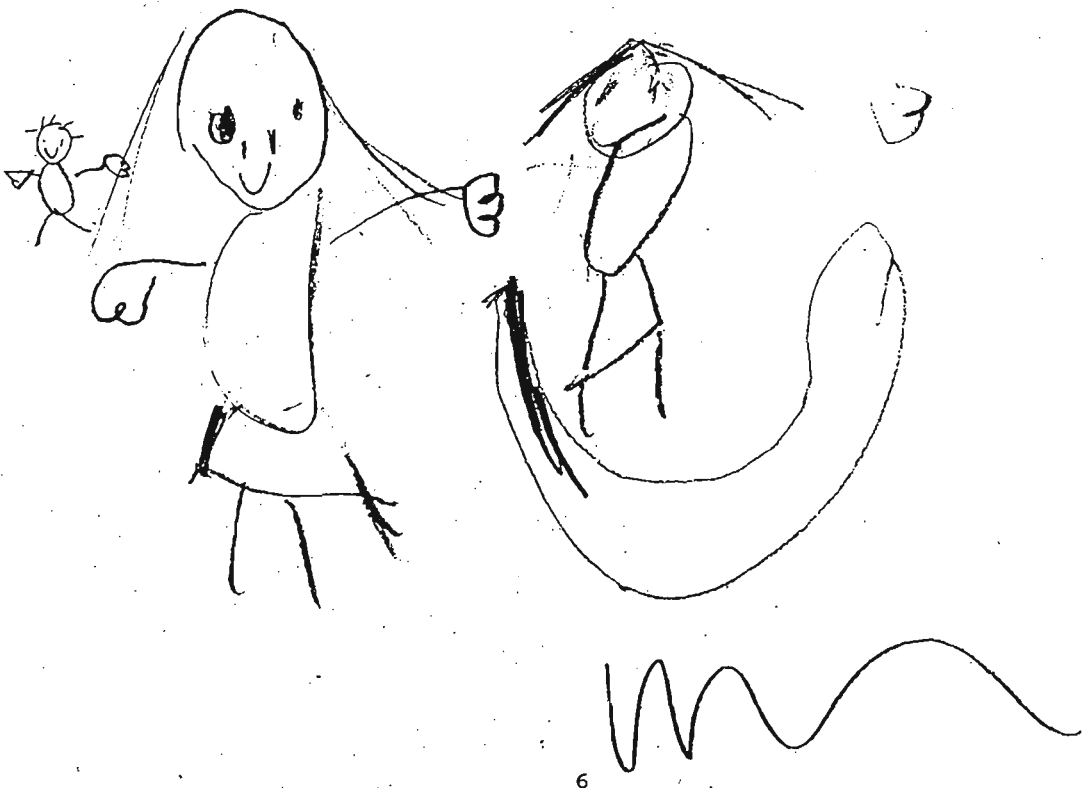


Meanwhile C, T, C and C were watering the plants. C's watering can had so much water in it that it made a flood. So C sat on a giant leaf and the leaf started to float away.

T said, "Where is C going?"

C said, "Where is Cl going?"

J said, "Where is C going?"



ENDING ONE

Meanwhile C, F, A, M and P looked around the garden and said, "Where is everybody?"

Just then came around the corner and said, "I have been somewhere very, very dark."

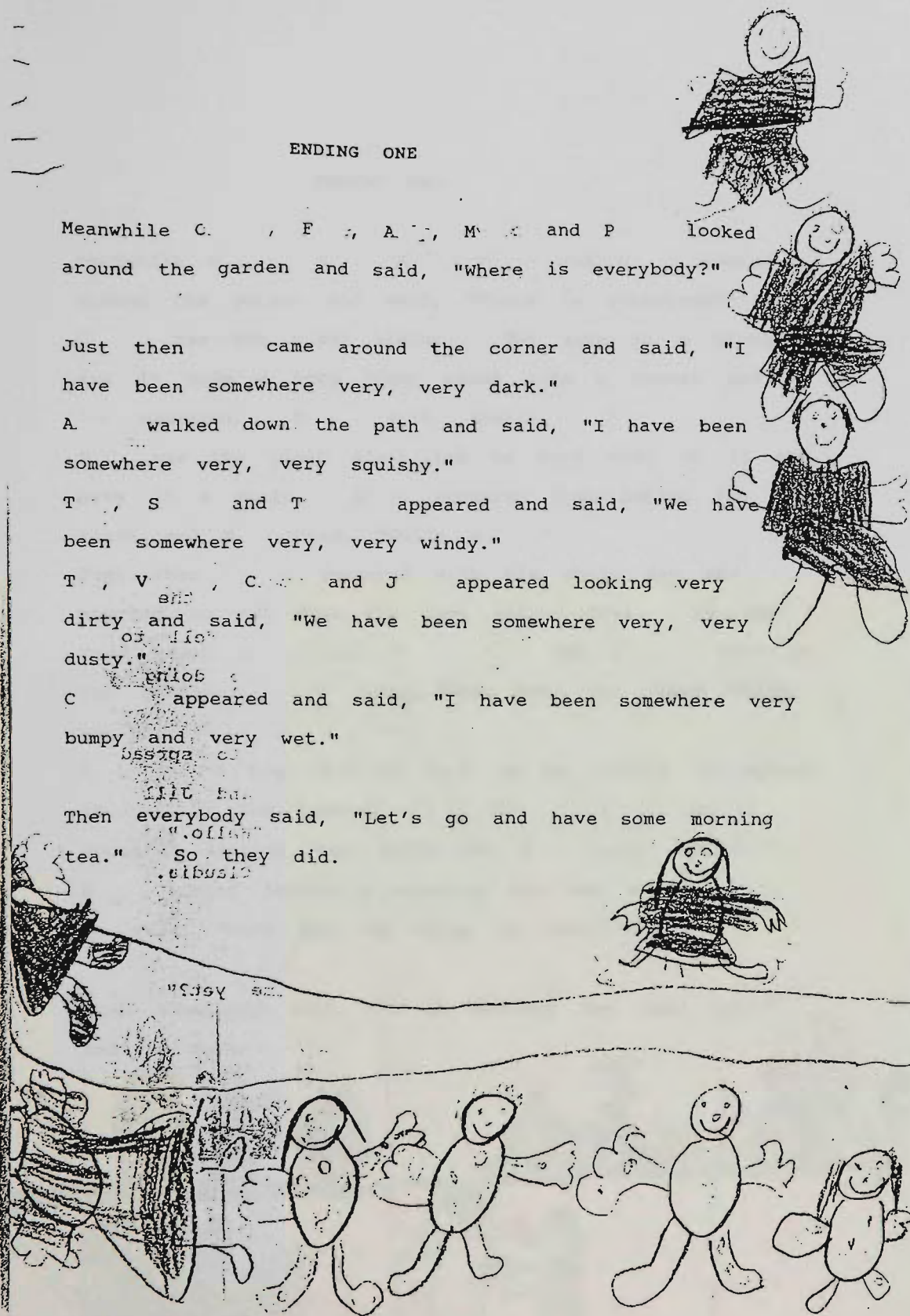
A walked down the path and said, "I have been somewhere very, very squishy."

T, S and T appeared and said, "We have been somewhere very, very windy."

T, V, C and J appeared looking very dirty and said, "We have been somewhere very, very dusty."

C appeared and said, "I have been somewhere very bumpy and very wet."

Then everybody said, "Let's go and have some morning tea." So they did.



ENDING TWO

Meanwhile C , E , A , M and P looked around the garden and said, "Where is everybody?" C saw the giant slater. She gave it a tickle and it made a very funny sound like a sneeze and appeared. C said, "Hello ."

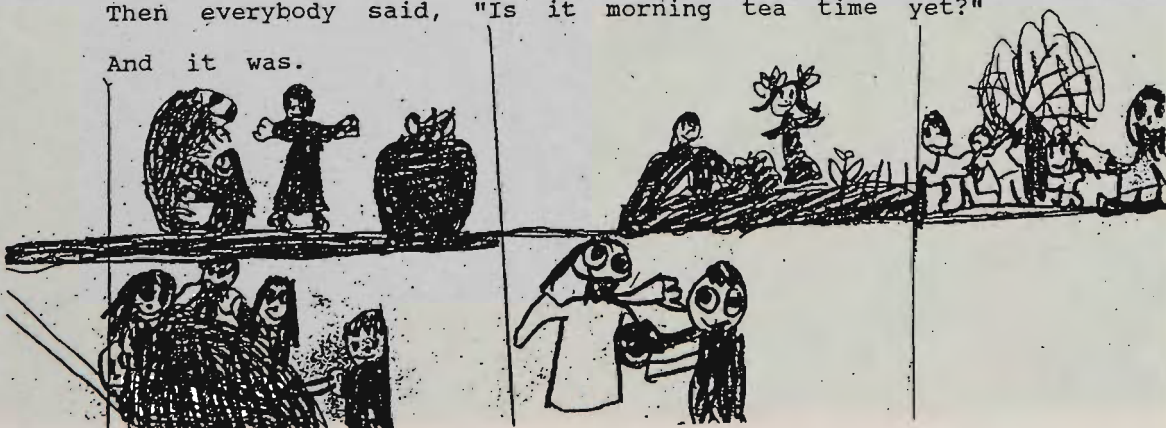
E saw the giant plant and he went over to it and gave it a shake. A appeared from behind the plant and E said, "Hello A: ."

Just then appeared with his chain saw and started to cut down the dead wattle tree. As the tree began to vibrate S , T and T fell to the ground. said, "What were you three doing up there?"

A saw a big pile of dirt so he started to spread it out on the garden. T , V , C and J appeared looking very dirty and A said, "Hello." M looked inside a watering can and saw C. He said, "What are you doing in there?"

Then everybody said, "Is it morning tea time yet?"

And it was.



Me M

Bushwalk

written by Infants, 1992

illustrated by

I.
Last week we went to Mt M for a bushwalk. We took sunscreen, hats, backpacks and our lunch. We set off along the track.
When we came to the first dam we stopped and had morning tea. We all ran around the dam.

Oh we do like to be in the bush
Running around this old dam.

2.
S. was trying to catch a yabby. He caught a yabby that was TOO BIG. It pulled him into the water. A tried to pull S out but she fell in the water too. I tried to pull A out but he fell in the water too.

Oh we do like to be in the bush
Swimming around this old dam.

3

N had a good idea. He said, "Why don't we get a rope and pull everybody out?"

Then A said, "But where is a rope?"

M found a vine tree. P found some scissors in her pack.

H said, "Give them to me. I'll cut the vine."

C said, "Hey! There's I's legs sticking out of the water. Why don't we tie the vine onto them?"
Then all the kids pulled them out. When they got out they were soaking wet. On the end of the vine was the 'TOO BIG' yabby.

A said, "I want to take it home because my mum likes yabbies."
D said, "Remember -

Take nothing but photos

Leave nothing but footprints."

So with great difficulty we threw the yabby back in.

4

Then we headed off to the next dam. Some kids went for a paddle.

Oh we do like to be in the bush
Paddling around in this dam.

S saw a flash that came out of the water.

He shouted, "WHAT'S THAT?"

All the kids said, "What are you talking about?"

S said, "I thought I saw a giant fish crossed with a giant dragon fly. It was
TOO BIG."

5

Suddenly C, T, T, C, N
 and T. all got pulled into the water.
 They started to shout, "Help!" But all we
 could see were bubbles. T and V
 made a lasso out of vines. They spun it
 around and caught all the children in it.
 V called out, "N, P, C
 and J - come and help us." So they
 did. When they got out they were SOAKING
 wet.

6

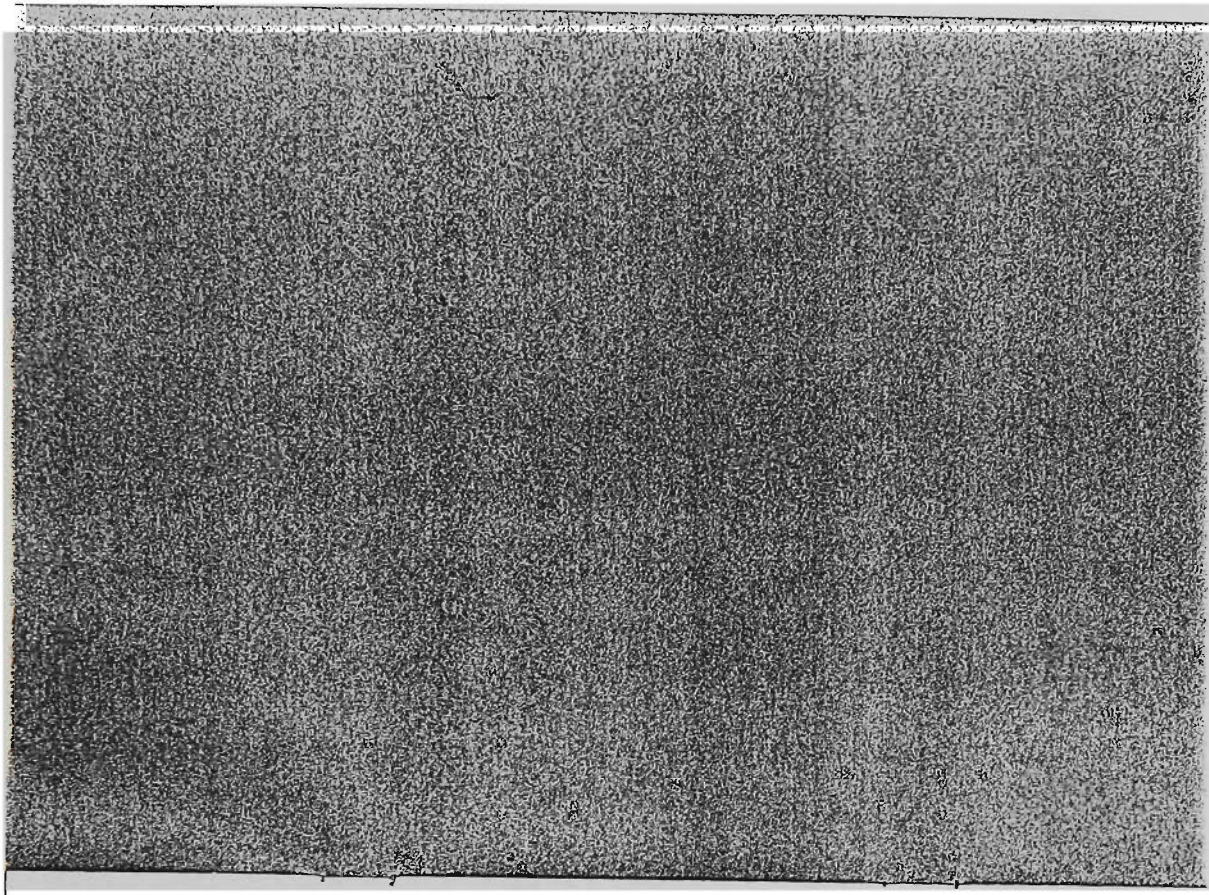
L, E, A, K and K were filling
 up plastic bags with water.
 Oh we do like to be in the bush
 Filling our bags up with water.
 K filled up his bag with water. It was
 so heavy that he fell in the dam.
 He called out, "Help! Help!" M and
 E tried to pull him out, but they
 couldn't.
 The Mt M bunyip didn't like people in
 his dam so he pushed K out. K was
 SOAKING WET.
 Ann said, "How did you get out?"
 K said, "I don't know - I felt something
 push me."

7

We all said, "Let's get out of here." So
we headed back down the road to school.

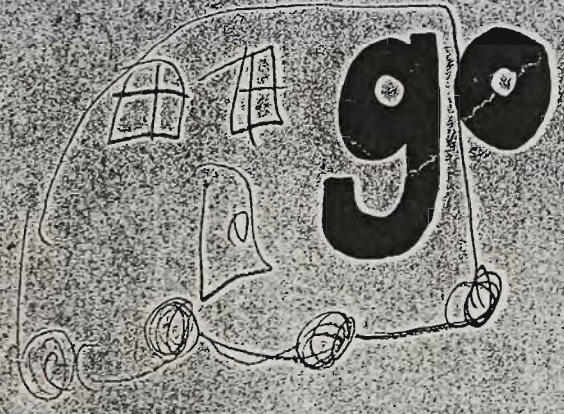
Oh we do like to be in the bush

Walking along down this road.

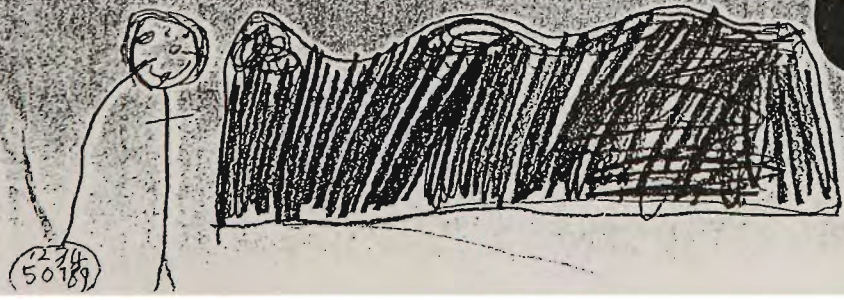




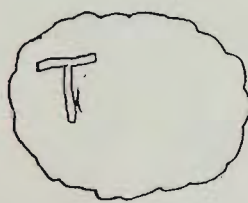
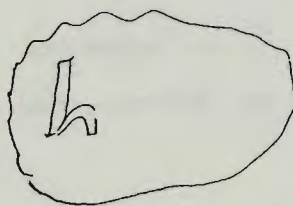
Let's



Swimming



Let's go swimming



C

C

T

V

T

T

o

N

D

P

S

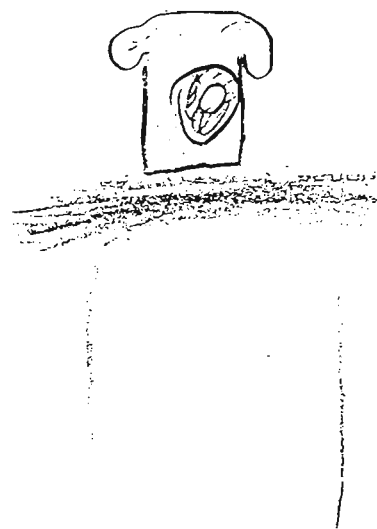
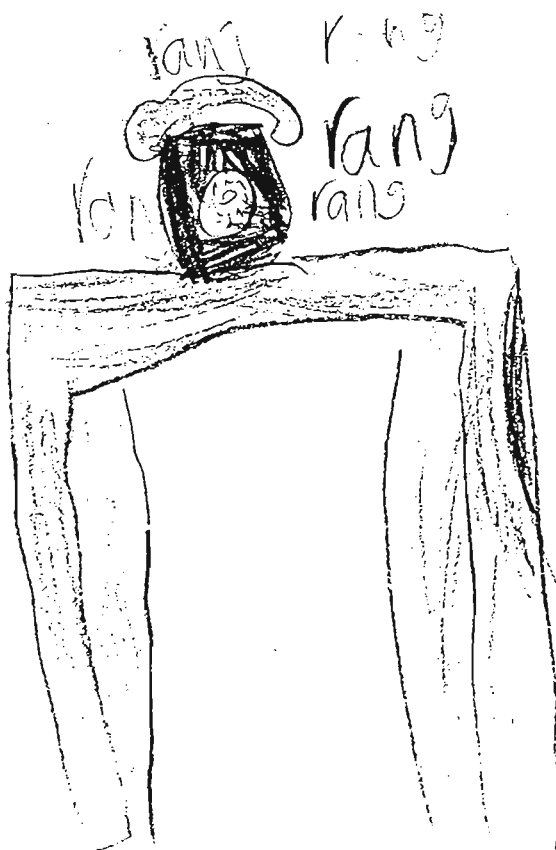
I
C

M

W

1

We all decided to go swimming at . So
rang up on the phone and booked us in for Mondays,
Wednesdays and Fridays.



2

We were all hot and excited and we all ran around like hairy goats. We all ran up to the bus.

H said, "I bags in the front!"

A said, "I bags in the front!"

C said, "I bags in the front!"

P said, "None of you can sit in the front.

M can."

M said, "Oh goodie!"

started up the engine. We all sang songs.

N said, "Why don't we sing 'No one in the house'?" So we did.

3

"No one in the house but me ! S !"
No one in the house but me I know.
No one in the house but 'S ! S !'
Playing on the old banjo."

4

We finally got to . M- was there waiting for us.

V said, "Oh goodie! My dad's here."

We all went into the pool and sat on the edge.

When the groups were ready some of us went in the big pool and some of us went in the little pool.

5

S got in the little pool and went underwater.
He saw something blue. He thought it was a diving
ring.

UH! OH! It was a monster!

T. threw the diving ring and the monster bit it.

C. screamed, "Aaaahhh!"

With Tr.'s magical powers he made a laser bommy
knocker and hit the monster. The monster got
knocked out.

6

The other kids hopped in the big pool. Tim went in the deep end with Tim. Sam saw a thin fish in the water. He said, "What's that?"

Vince and Tim jumped in to see. They saw big teeth. They thought it was a Grey Nurse Shark. The shark bit Tim's fake arm and its teeth disappeared.

Vince got his swiss army knife and screwed the shark's nose out with his cork screw.

Carl said, "Now the shark can't smell any more."

A was scared and said, "I want to go back to school."

I said, "Let's go back to school so I can tell my mum."

When we were on the bus S said, "We should have taken a photo."

V said, "Too late."

N said, "When we get back to school - no one will believe us."

CLASS JOURNAL:
(BIG BOOK FORMAT) JOINTLY CONSTRUCTED
BY THE WHOLE CLASS
DURING THE COURSE OF THE YEAR

Transcript

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT SCHOOL?

PART 1

Written by Hilary [teacher] and the children. Illustrated by the children.

Term 1

We played under the sprinkler.

----- [new page]

We played cricket.

We went to the pine forest

We made some bread

We have a cubby! N.... gave it to us.

Yesterday I went to the hospital to see N.... He was on the 4th. floor, in ward P1, in room 12, in bed number 32!

(This is a story with lots of numbers!)

This is a true story.

(25)*

The children counted the number of words *

Don't go on the oval today! There are some students [from Horticultural College] having mowing lessons!

Today 2 birds were in Kindy. The birds had trouble getting out of Kindy - because they thought the windows were the sky. A.... (adult) helped to catch them with his hat.

(30)

4th. March (Thursday)

We put the eggs in the incubator today.
In 21 days time we hope we will have some chicks!!

Don't go to the garage - because it is balancing on some bricks. It's dangerous!!

Today it is

- - - - - (city's name - one letter per dash)

birthday. [City name] is [number = age] today!

Monday 23rd March, 1993

We have been very busy this morning:

[K... - child's first name]	1 ...	made a haunted house
[J... - child's first name]	2 ...	made a model and cooked
[Mi... - child's first name]	3 ...	made a book about his dog

and cooked

[Se... - child's first name] 4 ... helped K... and played
parachute

[Ma... - child's first name] 5 ... made creeks and castles
with E

[N... - child's first name] 6 ... poor N... is in hospital
AGAIN!

[An... - child's first name] 7 ... painted turtle portraits

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(= Su... on 28/4/93) Ad

[Ed... - child's first name] 10 ... made creeks and castles
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24.3.93

Day 20!

1 of the eggs has a crack! We can hear the chick cheeping
and pecking! It's very, very exciting!!

Day 21

We have 4⁶ 7 chicks!

3 yellow AND 1 2 3 4 blacks. AND [child's hand writing]
another 1 2 is are cracking right now!

Term 2

Thursday 22nd April

Today An...’s dad is setting up our computer.

Wednesday 28th April

We planted 10 bulbs. N.... brought them for us

{Se... - child’s first name}

{P... - child’s first name}

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{Ad... - child’s first name} this week?

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{C... - child’s first name}

{Ed... - child’s first name}

{B... - child’s first name}

{Ma... - child’s first name}

Thursday 29th April

We made some Hairy Harrys.

Friday 7th May

Today a duck came to visit us at school

Monday _____ 10th May

We chose:

- R ... and Su..., chose the computer
- P..., Ed..., Er... and C... are helping Li... [teacher trainee] make a rainbow snake
- J... chose drawing
- Se... is reading books
- B... is climbing trees with An

Tuesday 25th May 1993

Last Friday was a very busy day!

1. The fire engine came
2. B... R... [adult] came (*italics mine = child's handwriting*)
3. We had Su...'s birthday cake (*italics mine = child's handwriting*)
4. We said "good-bye" to Li..

30 28

31 29

Monday 31st May

The last day of May! Tomorrow will be the first day of J u n e

Hilary [teacher] cut her thumb on the guillotine in the photocopy room. It is very sore.

Tuesday 1st June

P... [Principal] said "Today is the first day of the new season". He's right! Today is the first day of June AND the first day of winter. It's going to be cold for a while.

Wednesday 2nd June

On Friday night there will be an ECLIPSE of the MOON. Another way of saying it is: a LUNAR ECLIPSE.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT SCHOOL?
PART 2

Monday 7.6.93

Who saw the eclipse on Friday night?

Friday 11.6.93

This week we have seen 2 shows - "Peter and the Wolf" and "God will save us (not)". We enjoyed them both.



[map of W N E Friday 18.6.93
Australia
with some S
places]

West <==> East

Yesterday we had a new person in our class. her name is El....
She has come all the way from the other side of Australia!



Term 3

Tuesday 13.7.93

R... 's news: "I brought my skipping rope".

Er... 's news: "I brought my toy rabbit".

P... 's news: "I went to the dinosaurs 2 times".

Su... 's news: "I brought my bunny".

El... 's news: "I got Rocky. Daddy bought it for me."

F... 's news: "I've got a new sticker book".

Thursday

15th July 1993

Ad... - Wednesday

Mi... - Friday Thursday

Su... - Tuesday

Er... - Wednesday

El... - Sunday Sunday

J... day

F... - Monday

P... - Thursday

Tuesday 3rd August

We went to the pine forest. Then we wrote a story.

Thursday

We made a plaster cast with P... [Principal].

B... Ca... 's dad
Br... in our class
Be... El... 's dad
Br... Su... 's new cousin
Be... Su... 's dad
Br... Br... 's sister
Bo... Mi... 's dad's friend
Bo... Er... 's grandad
Be... Er... 's friend
(10)

Ba... El... 's dog
(11)

Monday 13th September

Today is the first day of the E. E. C. C.
(the Early Childhood Centre)

3 things to remember [re the ECC]:

1. ALWAYS ask
before you go.
2. ALWAYS use the front door.
3. Just a few visitors at a time.

Tuesday 14.9.93

Yesterday we wrote a tricky dinosaur story - then some kids
made it into a play.

Wednesday 15.9.93

We made plaster casts with P... [Principal], and we guessed which dinosaur by the footprints.

Term 4

Wednesday 13.10.93

Today we went to see the new rooms with P... [Principal].

Wednesday 20.10.93

G... 's [former teacher] baby was born today. His birthday will be the day before his mum's.

J... C... [children's author] wrote to us to thank us for our letters and pictures. She is writing a new book.

3.11.93

Now it is November. We have finished the dinosaur work - Friday - on Friday we are going to give the book we made to the ECC.

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- J... chose drawing
- Se... is reading books
- B... is climbing trees with An

Tuesday 25th May 1993

Last Friday was a very busy day!

1. The fire engine came
2. B... R... [adult] came [*italics mine = child's handwriting*]
3. We had Su...'s birthday cake [*italics mine = child's handwriting*]
4. We said "good-bye" to Li..

30 28

31 29

Monday 31st May

The last day of May! Tomorrow will be the first day of J u n e

Hilary [teacher] cut her thumb on the guillotine in the photocopy room. It is very sore.

Tuesday 1st June

P... [Principal] said "Today is the first day of the new season". He's right! Today is the first day of June AND the first day of winter. It's going to be cold for a while.

Wednesday 2nd June

On Friday night there will be an ECLIPSE of the MOON. Another way of saying it is: a LUNAR ECLIPSE.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT SCHOOL? PART 2

Monday 7.6.93

Who saw the eclipse on Friday night?

Friday 11.6.93

This week we have seen 2 shows - "Peter and the Wolf" and "God will save us (not)". We enjoyed them both.



[map of
Australia
with some
places]

W N
 E
 S

Friday 18.6.93

West <==> East

Yesterday we had a new person in our class. her name is El....
She has come all the way from the other side of Australia!



Term 3

Tuesday 13.7.93

R... 's news: "I brought my skipping rope".

Er... 's news: "I brought my toy rabbit".

P... 's news: "I went to the dinosaurs 2 times".

Su... 's news: "I brought my bunny".

El... 's news: "I got Rocky. Daddy bought it for me."

F... 's news: "I've got a new sticker book".

Thursday

15th July 1993

Ad... - Wednesday

Mi... - Friday Thursday

Su... - Tuesday

Er... - Wednesday

El... - Sunday Sunday

J... day

F... - Monday

P... - Thursday

Tuesday 3rd August

We went to the pine forest. Then we wrote a story.

Thursday

We made a plaster cast with P... [Principal].

B... Ca... 's dad
Br... in our class
Be... El... 's dad
Br... Su... 's new cousin
Be... Su... 's dad
Br... Br... 's sister
Bo... Mi... 's dad's friend
Bo... Er... 's grandad
Be... Er... 's friend

(10)

Ba... El... 's dog

(11)

Monday 13th September

Today is the first day of the E. E. C. C.
(the Early Childhood Centre)

3 things to remember [re the ECC]:

1. ALWAYS ask
before you go.
2. ALWAYS use the front door.
3. Just a few visitors at a time.

Tuesday 14.9.93

Yesterday we wrote a tricky dinosaur story - then some kids
made it into a play.

Wednesday 15.9.93

We made plaster casts with P... [Principal], and we guessed which dinosaur by the footprints.

Term 4

Wednesday 13.10.93

Today we went to see the new rooms with P... [Principal].

Wednesday 20.10.93

G... 's [former teacher] baby was born today. His birthday will be the day before his mum's.

J... C... [children's author] wrote to us to thank us for our letters and pictures. She is writing a new book.

3.11.93

Now it is November. We have finished the dinosaur work - Friday - on Friday we are going to give the book we made to the ECC.

GOING-OUT MORNINGS - WHY?

We initiated going-out mornings with several objectives in mind, and, as so often happens, even more advantages became obvious as time went on.

We felt that there is such a wealth of places to go and things to see in (PN) . . . that we were not really taking as much advantage of living in such a city as we could. As a school we use the environment more than most, but we still felt there was a lot we could tap into and enthuse the children with. Children at this age get a lot of pleasure in doing new things, seeing new places, and we felt this was something to be encouraged. We are also keen to take every opportunity to show the children that learning is not confined to the classroom.

We felt that this would be another area where children's own interests and knowledge could be built upon, where they could have some control over their learning, and share some of their own experiences with the whole group. It was gratifying that as soon as we started the mornings there were some children who had ideas about where we could go, and increasingly people suggest things we could do - we went to the printer's, for example, because of a child's particular interest in and questions about print and publishing, which was sparked off by Jackie French's visit. Sometimes the visits come about as a result of things we are doing (such as the visit to (N) . . . , which was designed to provide inspiration for the scale model we are making at school), at other times they are purely for their own value - someone thought we would all be interested in The (N) . . . , for example, and someone remembered that the bike rides were a great success last year so maybe we should have another one. This element of "revisiting" is one that has become even more obvious as the year goes on, that children this age love to do something they have enjoyed before - so the return to (PN) . . . on a bushwalk brought back fond memories for some, that they articulated very strongly. This seems something to be valued and encouraged in this age of "use it once and throw it away".

Decisions about where to go and discussions about what was enjoyed and what wasn't have also made the group more aware of individual interests, and the fact that what pleases one may not please another. We have also had examples of people thinking of a visit that they think someone else in the group would particularly like.

We have noted that some of the older children have a growing awareness of everything that's involved in going out, and might have suggestions about what we can do if the bus isn't available, for example. Later on in the school the children

themselves are required to make the arrangements for some excursions, so good groundwork is being laid in Infants, one of the advantages we hadn't predicted.

(cont.)

(cont.)

"Going-Out Mornings - Why?" n.d.
Given that "going out" is an important feature of education at BG, and given that it is often quite a demanding task for young children, we felt that something like some "practice" would be helpful for children in this age group. Going out in a group places very different demands on the children compared to going out in a family group - more self-control and awareness are needed, and there are more likely to be distractions in a bigger group. We don't line the children up, or put them in twos, for example, when we go out - we prefer to encourage them to remain aware of what's going on and to keep an eye out for the leader, to realise when the group is moving on and so on. They do not have constant one to one direction, and need to be responsive and responsible, and aware of safety issues. At times they might find themselves in the charge of a parent other than their own, and this is yet another relationship they have to recognise and respect. Obviously these mornings could not happen without the help of parents in the group - this is a good opportunity to say thank you to those who come along and do such a great job.

We had firm ideas about the sort of follow-up we would do for the trips. You might all be familiar with school groups that trail around the Art Gallery with a stencil to fill in, designed to prove they have in fact viewed the paintings they were supposed to. We wanted to be sure that any follow-up was worthwhile and added to, not detracted from, the trip itself. Sometimes, we felt, it might not be appropriate to follow up at all - the trip and the pleasure it invoked would be sufficient in themselves. As it turns out, the children are all very keen to record Wednesday mornings in the "Excursion Book" (their title) and do this in a variety of ways - drawing, writing or dictating their thoughts and opinions. Recently we have enjoyed writing reports for the Bulletin, and sometimes thank-you letters are appropriate. We have also painted murals, made models and made journal entries. All this has been activity with a purpose clearly perceived by the children.

On a very practical level we felt that going out regularly would encourage the children to become increasingly responsible for themselves. So we deliberately don't send a note home every Tuesday with the details and requirements for the next day, but give the children an oral briefing and encourage them to get themselves prepared and to tell you where we're off to. You can help in this by asking where the group is going each week, do they need anything different, and by asking for any feedback on Wednesday

evenings (without interrogating!). You could also help us by notifying the school on a Wednesday morning if your child is not coming that day, and asking the Office to come and let us know, so we know not to wait.

Here is a list of the places we have visited so far:

(N) ; (PN) . Dam; (PN) . Tower; (N) Police
College; The (N) ; the R.S.P.C.A.; T (S) 's Farm; The
Aquarium; C (PN) ; The Printer's; The (N)
Gallery; R (N)

[1992]

"WRITING DOWN" OR "CHOOSING TIME"

Herewith the second of our promised background notes. We hope you find them useful, and welcome any feedback.

"Writing down" or "choosing time" is probably one of the most significant features of the program that makes different from other schools. It is regarded as a very important part of the program by both children and staff, and is highly valued by both. It is part of the program from the earliest days in Kindergarten to the final years in Secondary, although it takes slightly different forms as the children get older.

In Infants it is a period in the day when the children nominate what they are going to do, and their choice is recorded (hence the term "writing down"). There is a very strong expectation from the teacher that what a child has nominated to do, s/he will in fact do, and likewise there is a serious undertaking on the child's part to engage in what s/he has nominated. This seriousness of intent underlies the whole notion of this part of the program.

The children regard this time as very precious, and (rightly) as something they are duly entitled to - in other words, it is not time used as a reward for good work or good behaviour - it has a higher status than that. It is interesting, too, that the children perceive this time as different from play time (maybe not always obvious to the untrained eye! but more of that later). On a couple of occasions we have extended a play-time because everyone has been profitably engaged and it seemed pointless to stop the activity so that they could then choose an activity! The children were consequently dismayed to discover they had "missed" a writing down time.

Why do we have choosing time and value it so highly? There are many reasons. It shows we respect what children choose to do, by allowing them time, and giving them help, to do it at school - in other schools the message is very clearly "school is the teacher's domain and s/he will determine what is done". It means that children can follow up on things that interest them - it's one of the ways we can attempt to ensure that learning remains something worth doing for it's own sake. A spin-off from this is that children learn extremely well from each other - so the curriculum is enriched by having so many people to learn from, not just the teacher.

It provides a time for child and teacher to have individual time together while the teacher helps on a particular project the child has initiated. It also allows children the opportunity to set themselves a challenge that is entirely outside the things that have been going on with the teacher, or that is an extension of something introduced by the teacher (for example, a couple of children worked on some very demanding collages they initiated themselves after we'd done some collage work altogether). We have also observed that this time seems to lend itself to children mixing with a wider or different age group than they would do at play or work times.

(cont.)

[1992]

(cont.)

Choosing Time
or
Writing Down

In the longer perspective, this time is valuable preparation for when the children will have time to work individually on things they are interested in (S.I.A. 's in Secondary - "self-initiated activities" - basically a course a student can initiate and negotiate on an individual basis). Or on extensions of group projects - such as in one of the middle primary groups at the moment where they are making a machine of many parts. These children are used to working towards a goal, using their time well, seeing their contributions as valuable and as their responsibility to complete.

Choosing time also provides a valuable opportunity for the teacher to gain knowledge about a child - What are his/her interests? What social choices does s/he make? Are they consistent choices? How easy/difficult is it for a child to initiate an activity? What variety is there in a child's choices? What role does the child take when sharing an interest - leading? following? negotiating? co-operating? Each child's choices are recorded, providing over time a good picture of his/her development in using this time well. These sessions also provide time for a teacher to target a particular child for any reason and work with him/her on special projects in a slightly different way from other tasks. It is also an ideal time to get to know a child well as an individual - particularly a child new to the group, or one difficult to get to know.

All this is not to say that, like many aspects of a program that attempts to provide something different and better than the average, there aren't dilemmas for the teacher to resolve. The sorts of things we discuss and think about are these. What do we do about children who choose the same activity over a long period of time? Anything? At what stage? How? What is our role when we are in doubt about the appropriateness of a choice? (for example, playing with some of the toys that are brought to school). What is our approach when a child has difficulty making a choice? How much should we suggest or direct? At this age, how strict are we going to be about accountability? (that is, if a child nominates one thing and does another).

And finally, another dilemma if you like - how to see through the 'chaos' to what is actually going on. For our part, we're pretty experienced chaos watchers! and our records reveal a clear picture over time. Rather, how can we help parents to see through the chaos, and value the opportunities their children have.

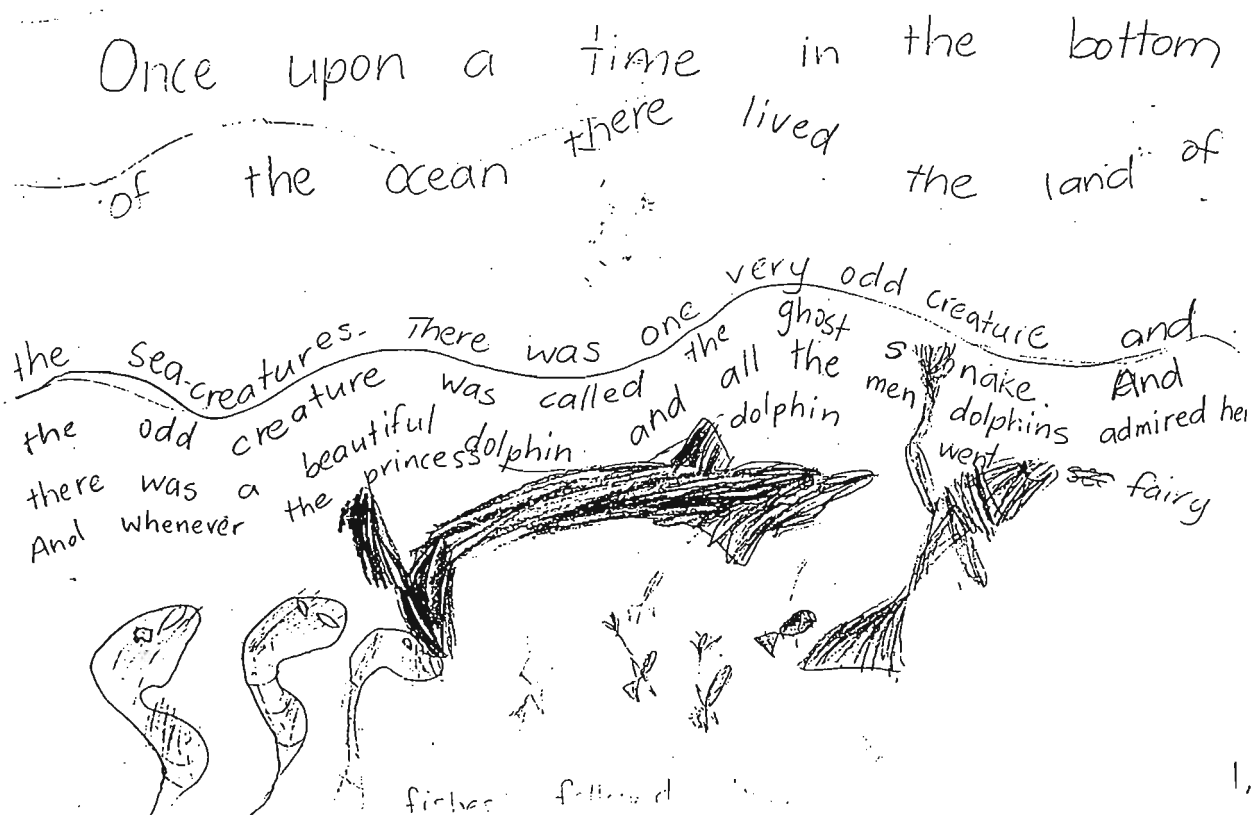
Your attitude to, and understanding of, this part of the program can only enhance it's value to your child. Do you ever ask "What did you do in choosing time today?" or suggest an activity that the child could extend from home to school? Obviously your interest and involvement will indicate that you too value this part of your child's learning.

H + P
(T) (T)
[1992]

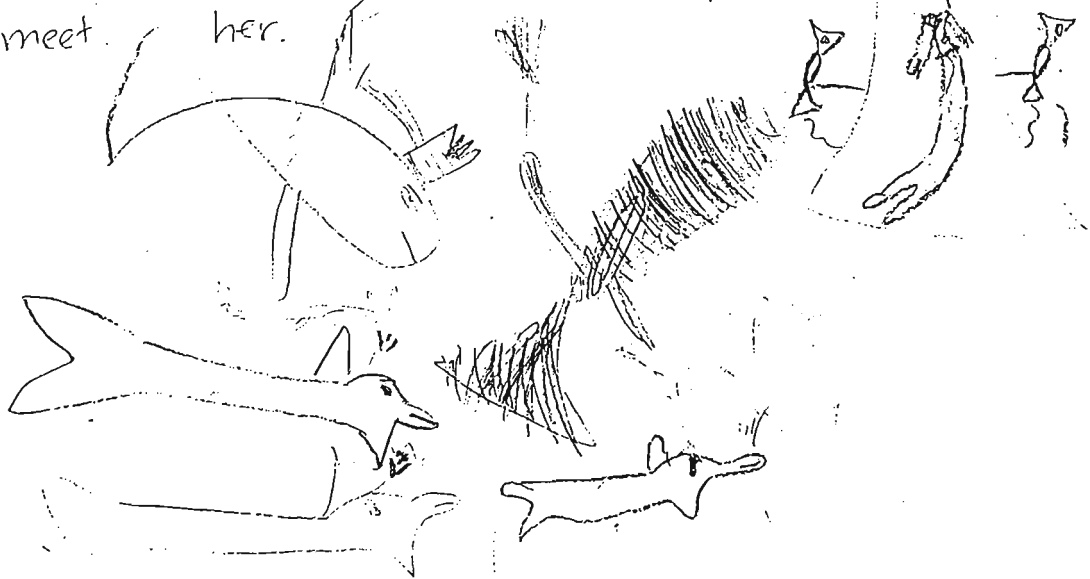
Appendix VIII: Sample points used for focus interview questions

1. In response to the question how does Chrstitine learn etc. you said, "Christine likes control over her learning. She doesn't like too many surprises." How does this relate to your intergenerational family's experiences?
2. Your comment about Christine and *The Little Mermaid* is a great example of what she is really like. I've seen it at home. At school she seems far more restrained possible by her relationships with other children?
3. Christine's sense of humour doesn't seem so upfront at school.
4. Isolation seems a strong feature for Liam. How does this relate to the experiences of other members of his intergenerational family?
5. Would you say there is an ethic of isolation?
6. Why was C (Mother's cousin) the black sheep in the family?
7. Do you think the similarities between you and Casey extend to the way she learns? How?

Appendix IX: Samples of children's work



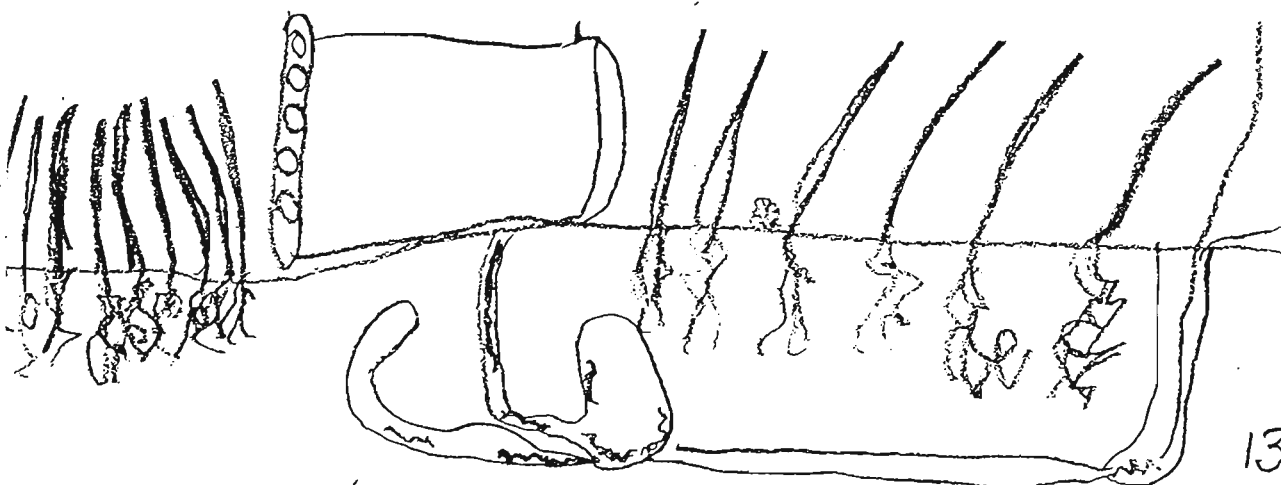
Then the very day came when all the
sea queens and fishes came
to meet her.



My Frog
And
Worm

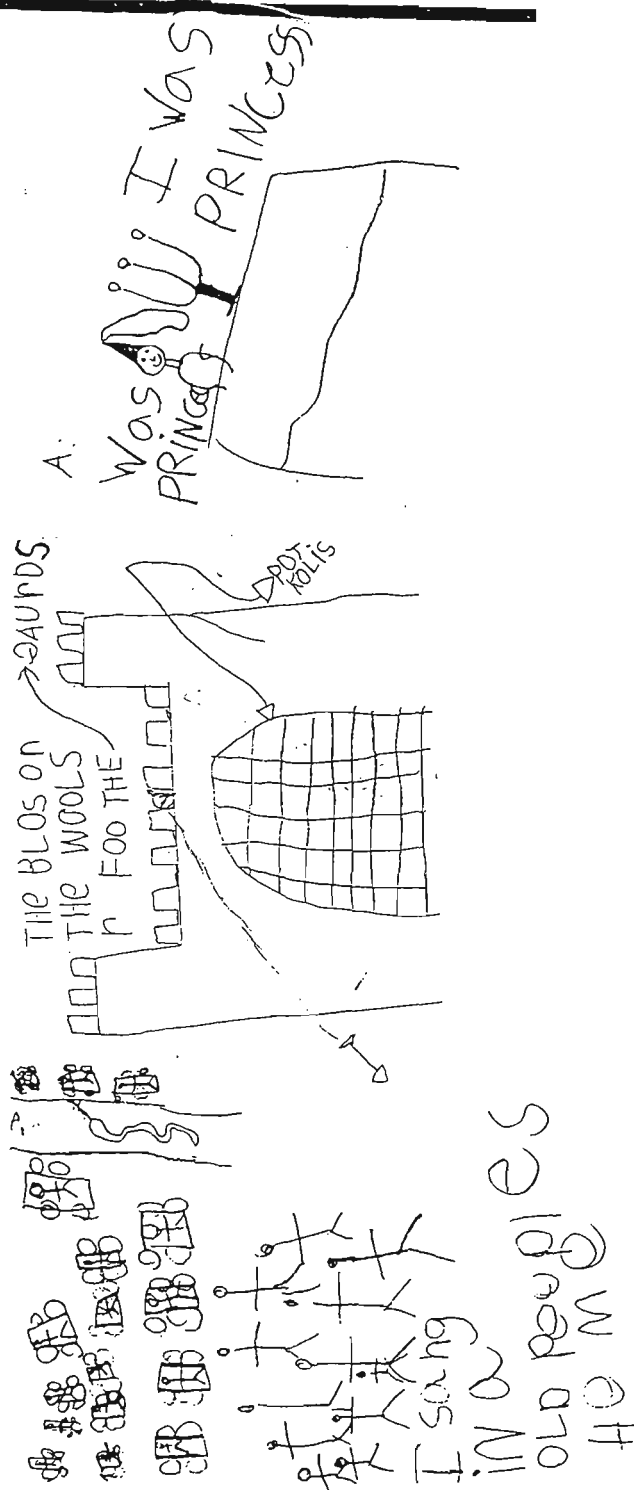
THE
ZOOM
WORM
CAST
IN
THE GAS

AD
FREE

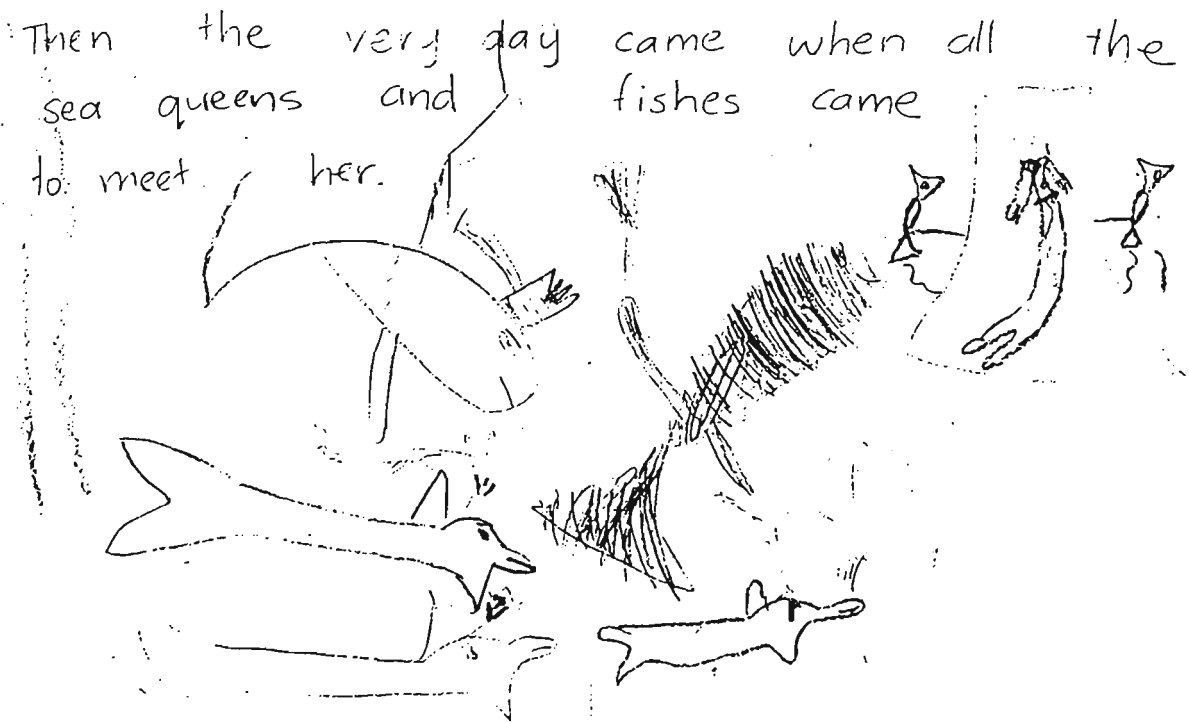
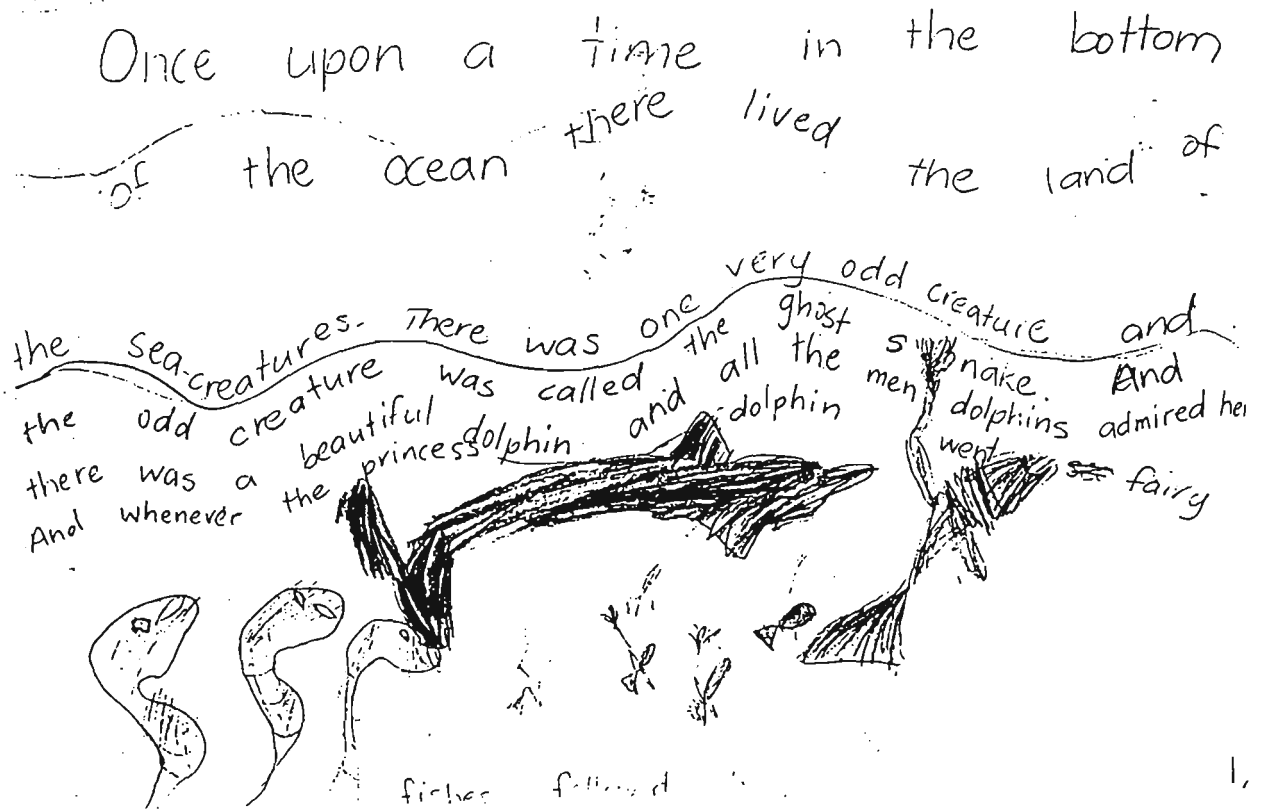


13

Infants report the news ~ Medieval and Modern!

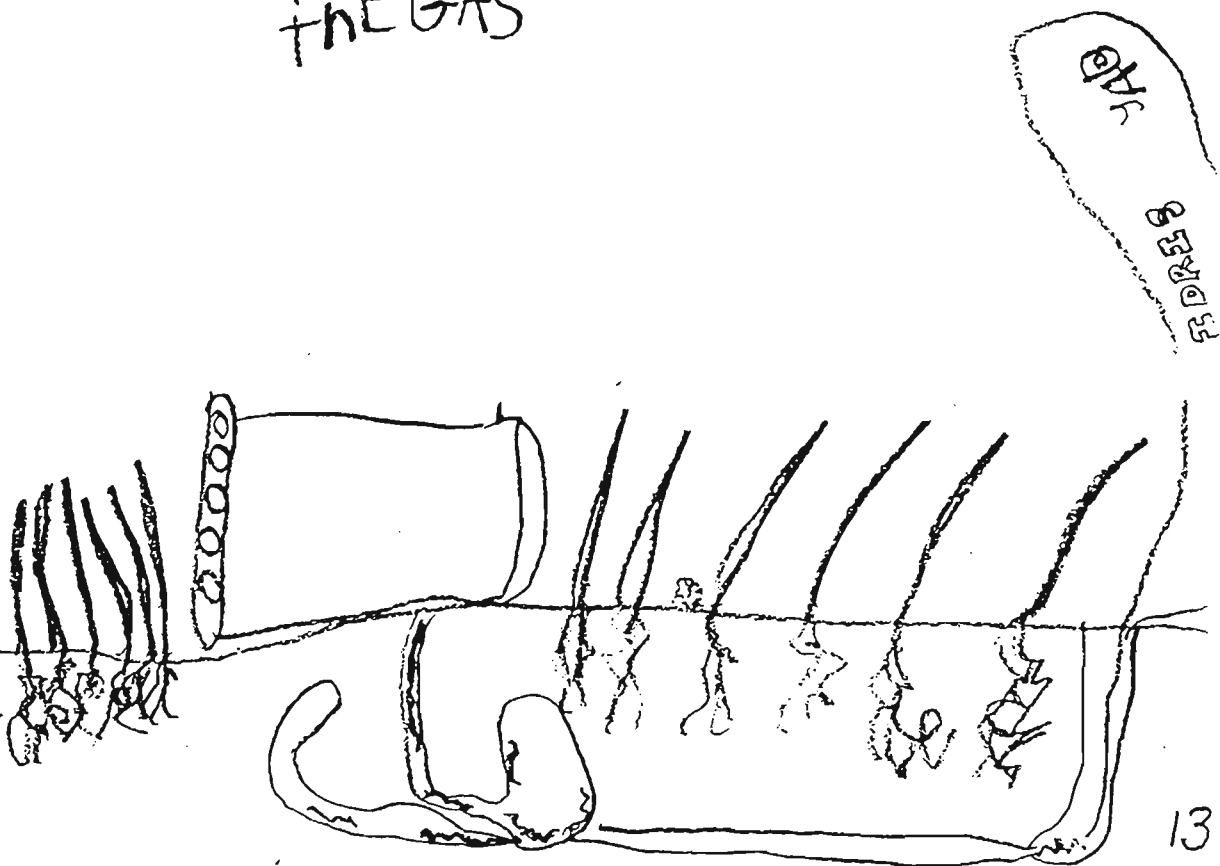


Appendix IX: Samples of children's work

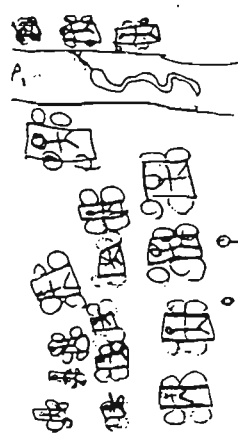


My Frog
And
Worm

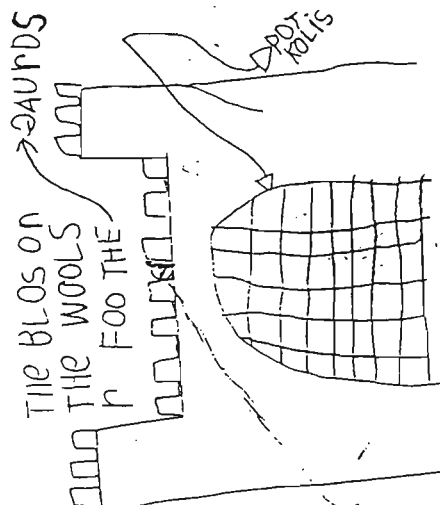
THES
zoom
worm
CAST
IN
THE GAS



Infants report the news ~ Medieval and Modern!



人人人
I sang
in 2 peoples
old peoples
40 M



A:
Was I was
PRINCE PRINCESS

T. 92



One day I made a sign.
I wanted to put it on top of the hill
with the snakes on it to warn
people

Appendix X: Key words and phrases from Unauthorized Document 2

academic	bird	confrontation
accumulate	books	confuse
accurate	bored	connect
action	brick-making	construct
activity	bucket	contract
adapt	build	control
adult	burst	conversation
adult-conceived	bus	cook
alive	bushland	cooperation
Jed	by-product	coping
ambitious	cajole	copy
Banksia Grove	Clark	cottage
angry	canvas	courage
animate	capture	craft
appeal	care	creativity
appreciate	careful	cubby
architecture	carpet	cubby-building
argue	challenge	cupboards
arrive	chart	curiosity
articulate	chat	curriculum
assess	cheerfulness	dam
assume	children	dampening
atmosphere	choice	day
attempt	choose	day trips
attitude	chose	day-long
audience	classroom	day-to-day
avenue	cleaning-up	debate
bare	climate	decide
barrier	close	decipher
Bruce	colleague	decision
basic	communicate	decreed
battle	community	delusion
begin	complain	demanding
belief	complex	develop
belonging	concentrate	diary
P [Principal]	confidence	different

direct	express	halt
discourage	extend	hammer
discover	extent	hand
discussion	exuberant	handwriting
disgust	face	happy
dismantle	faith	hectares
dispassionately	fantasy	help
display	fear	horizon
distraught	feed	idiot
diversity	feel	illegible
door	film	imaginary
drama	flies	imagine
draw	flit	immerse
dumb	fluctuate	impatient
easy	focal point	important
echo	focus	impulsive
education	foliage	incompatible
effective	forest	independent
embarrass	form	indirect
emotion	formal	initiative
emphasis	free	insight
encourage	frequent	intellect
energy	friend	interest
engrossed	fright	interfere
enthusiasm	fun	interview
entry	funeral	inventing
environment	game	invitation
escape	gardening	involve
event	genuine	kangaroo
evidence	girl	Kerry
exacerbating	good	kid
example	grass	knew
excite	gratitude	know
excluded	grounds	laugh
expectation	group	learn
experience	guidance	Lyn
explain	half-reading	letter
explore	half-remembering	library

life	package	realistic
limitation	paint	refine
lino	parent	reflect
listen	parliament	relation
live	partner	remedy
make	paste	research
make-believe	path	research-based
Mary	pause	respect
mascot	Prue	response
matter	perception	responsible
mental note	perform	restrain
mess	person	result
method	persona	rich
mind	personality	role-play
mislead	petition	room
misplace	photograph	rubbish
mix	physical	run
model	place	self-confidence
monastery	plan	self-conscious
monster	planning	self-criticisms
mood	playmaking	self-esteem
morale	pleased	sense
motivate	pleasure	sequence
mow	potential	sew
my aim	pretending	share
mystery	primary	shopkeepers
nail	private	shout
Nell	problem	show
natural	programme	shrub
need	progress	sight
newspaper	project	significant
nightmare	propose	silence
numeracy	push-mower	sketch
numerate	puzzle	skill
opportunity	quality	smile
organize	questionnaires	snake
outside	rage	social
oversee	read	society

sound	teacher-directed	unsuccessful
source	tears	unused
space	tense	urge
spell	tent	value
spoil	tentatively	Jake
sprinkler	test	venture
stealing	thoughtful	visit
Mark	timber	voice
stimulate	time	volunteer
stone	tool	vulnerable
story	topic	wait
strain	tradition	wall
strength	transcript	waning
strict	travel	wave
structure	trust	way
stupid	turtle	weekend
succeed	uncertain	well-worn
supportive	uncommitted	window
swap	unconscious	wire
syllabus	understand	work
symbol	undulate	workshop
system	unexpected	world
taboo	unfamiliar	worry
tackle	unfortunate	write
talent	unorthodox	
taught	unpredictable	
teach	unstructured	

1. A & C took some rough measurements, and then went to P, the Principal. He did some calculations about cost
2. a parent organized a trip to the NLA
3. achieve a particular effect
4. acquiring trade skills
5. active learner
6. after school one day, Don and his father were making some cardboard bricks

-
-
7. Don to his father] 'here read this... it's a story I made up about my medieval life'...why don't you read it to me?... Don read the first sentence tentatively, and seemed surprised that he had managed it.... then he launched into the rest of it...
 8. Jed and I decided from the outset that this year we would build a village set in the Middle Ages
 9. Jed was finishing off a m'ared by a committee of kids
 10. Jed's and my role was to help it be as rich a world as possible by bringing (in John Holt's words) as much os the outside world as we could into the classroom, and then get out of the way
 11. an interesting group of kids
 12. Andrea, an adult
 13. at home
 14. Back to the kitchen. Find two secondary boys washing and cleaning up. They have been hired by Martha Higgins and co. [the shepherd family whose responsibility it was to clean the kitchen that day] so they can earn village money
 15. Bruce brought in an octopus, squid and cuttlefish for sketching and dissecting
 16. Bruce had helped the kids make
 17. P [Principal] had a way of asking kids questions about their ideas that helped them see possibilities
 18. P [Principal] would have sat down and talked more with these two about their intentions
 19. bottlegreen school buildings
 20. boundary disputes
 21. break from their projects
 22. breaking out
 23. build in the woodshed
 24. buy some basic supplies
 25. Can you all think for a minute about what it is that you'd really like to do, or to learn, this year? If I know what you're expecting from being in this group, well, that's going to help me with my planning
 26. child-centred playmaking
 27. Children use fantasy not to get out of, but to get into, the real world
 28. chook pens
 29. Cooper's bubbles
 30. Cathy, ... a student teacher
 31. class excursion
 32. class magazine
 33. classroom democracy
 34. clean up
 35. climb rocks

-
-
36. collecting signatures opposing the concrete pitch
 37. combined group
 38. contrast to the self-disparaging
 39. covered walkway
 40. cut our grass
 41. daily diary writing
 42. deeper insight into the lives of the early settlers
 43. designing and making currency
 44. desire to learn
 45. diary writing
 46. difficult to reach
 47. digging tools
 48. discussion or an incident in class would lead to a play
 49. do you feel like joining Jed
 50. doesn't come easily
 51. each kid was able to work individually
 52. Ella [our teacher's aide] was sick during the actual running of the village and first Betty and then Lin (parents) took her place
 53. emotional attachment
 54. every child takes a quite unique path to social, emotional and intellectual maturity, and that this was incompatible with parents' call for order and predicability
 55. everyone went off to write a rough plan of their project which, they'd hand into one of us
 56. explored different ways
 57. express their view of themselves
 58. expression of their friendship
 59. fabric of the curriculum
 60. fantasy world
 61. folding partition
 62. follow up
 63. food and equipment list
 64. for which they wouldn't need my help
 65. glass jars
 66. got some kids to help him make some storage areas
 67. gradually this split or separateness had gone
 68. greater exposure to print
 69. growing sense that she could do it
 70. having a good look at the world
 71. He doesn't feel split anymore
 72. He was enjoying his role as an elder, initiating the younger kids into the rites of the tribe

-
-
73. He was nearly eleven, and the youngest kids in the group were just nine.
 74. he followed me to the bench outside
 75. he really understood the full extent of the concept [stealing]
 76. he's outside making easels with some of the girls
 77. healthy release
 78. heart and soul
 79. his world was as real to him as mine was to me, and it was with his world that I had to work if I wanted to encourage the changes that had already so obviously taken place since he first came to the school
 80. home and school had seemed like two totally different places
 81. Human mind
 82. I asked Clem and Prue to organize the cleaning and cooking rosters for the rest of the camp
 83. I asked each kid in turn about his or her plans
 84. I asked them if they wanted to do something about it
 85. I believed
 86. I called the kids together at the beginning of the day
 87. I concluded
 88. I decided to let him try and figure it out
 89. I feel simply like announcing that everyone does the play, that it's compulsory, ... but I know that it wouldn't work. I think we're just going to have to talk it out'
 90. I found it really strange when I did that. It was strange how I read just like an adult.
 91. I found that it helped get kids started if they heard what others were planning
 92. I had a
 93. I had become too involved in the model itself
 94. I had not properly understood the motivations
 95. I hope to
 96. I kept
 97. I listened to
 98. I made up a story
 99. I noticed
 100. I noticed how he was working out meaning from context using the sounds of the letters to help him guess the word
 101. I persisted
 102. I ploughed on
 103. I really want to learn how to read and write
 104. I saw her take that step
 105. I tended to impose ideas on them
 106. I think

-
-
107. I think I prefer the idea of you reading into the tape-recorder
 108. I wanted
 109. I wanted to get in there and learn from my own mistakes
 110. I wanted to see them become more knowledgeable about how societies work and how they could be influenced and changed
 111. I was fooling around
 112. I was looking forward to the challenge of finding ways of weaving these enthusiasms
 113. I was serious
 114. I wasn't sure I could have designed a class exercise that would have been as effective in promoting all sorts of language skills - reading and spelling obviously, but also communication - as they worked out what was fair and what was possible
 115. I watched them for five minutes, marvelling at their commitment and organizing skills
 116. I went away feeling more empowered rather than somehow inadequate in the face of the knowledge of the 'experts'
 117. I went over and helped him focus his attention
 118. I would have been proud
 119. I would show her how
 120. I'd been encouraging
 121. I'd talked to the parents in general terms about the connections between academic progress and creative expression, through the visual, dramatic and manual arts, and through writing
 122. I'm just looking through this book to see if I get any ideas
 123. I've been thinking
 124. I've brought
 125. idea of the concrete pitch emerged
 126. If you like our ideas ... if you don't
 127. If you're really so sure you can fit, you can try to get in after you've done your writing
 128. if the day was dominated by activities based on reading and writing, kids like Don would inevitably see themselves as failing
 129. important skill
 130. impose a temporary solution
 131. improvised play
 132. in a deep and exciting forest
 133. innate curiosity
 134. inspect the school grounds
 135. intensive week-long unit
 136. invited through to watch some plays
 137. It becomes important for kids like these two to get something completed, to feel good about it. If you're feeling good about the task, then you're feeling good about yourself,

-
-
- you get some kudos from your friends, and the next thing you'll do you'll most likely tackle in a different way
138. it happens when
139. it was hard finding material that suited him
140. Jan (Shae's mother)
141. M Bay
142. Jack was a part-time blacksmith
143. junk box
144. Kerry had told me
145. kids lit fires
146. kids love copying aspects of the adult world
147. Kids' own choices
148. King (P)
149. lack of judgement
150. later in the year
151. lesson time
152. let her have her head
153. like the others, he was again in my group in 1984, now as one of the older kids in a group of nine, ten and eleven year olds
154. list of things you need to put in your backpack
155. local supermarket
156. looking at books
157. lots of visitors from other parts of the school
158. made that her project
159. make a play
160. make a point of working
161. making things
162. making up plays
163. many seemed to be still at the stage of seeing the village as an experience that happened to them, or that they shaped through their imaginations rather than through their planning and day-to-day mechanics of group co-ordination
164. Maureen (the teacher of the five-year olds)
165. Mark and his dad
166. maths folder
167. meandering line
168. meeting of the primary teachers
169. mental note
170. model house
171. model rockpool

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172. model-making
 173. moving away from activity and thinking centred on immediate interest
 174. my arm was still around his shoulders
 175. natural intelligence
 176. natural play
 177. necessity for trust
 178. never finishing anything
 179. no logically sequenced spelling programme
 180. non-denominational
 181. not another one of Mark's stories
 182. Now can we get in
 183. number patterns
 184. official opening
 185. Oh come on, Mark. we can't wait forever
 186. OK, as long as you understand that everyone else is writing and the room is silent. don't disturb us
 187. one Sunday afternoon, Joseph's dad and Jed spent a couple of hours with the blacksmiths, assembling the forge
 188. open plan
 189. opening up
 190. original idea
 191. our education system has got the balance all wrong. It saw the cubby building and children's play as supplements to the basic 3-R's schooling, whereas for me it was the playing, exploring, imagining, questioning, and creating which was basic
 192. our first major task was to find ways of involving the children in the project, so that they began to feel that they were influencing its course, that it was their village
 193. our room had been transformed
 194. paper mâché
 195. parents began sending us notes
 196. past experiences
 197. Paul had gone to Jake and Prue to give him a fresh start with a new group of younger kids, to break up some relationships between Paul and some others that we felt weren't doing anyone much good, and to give him a feeling of feeling of having more time to develop his fairly weak reading skills
 198. Prue and Jake
 199. personally responsible
 200. persuaded parents to come to school one weekend to make hundreds of them [cardboard bricks]
 201. Percy of Curtainia

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202. Percy told his gory crusade stories
 203. picking up skills and confidence just through the act of reading
 204. pine forest
 205. playing around
 206. playing the game
 207. point of view
 208. Pope (Jake)
 209. practical course
 210. practising putting up their tent
 211. prepare their budget
 212. pretending I couldn't understand the game as well as the kids
 213. previous years
 214. pride of ownership
 215. primary school
 216. private space
 217. quiet corner
 218. quiet times together sitting looking at the words she needed in her stories
 219. reading programme
 220. reading the diaries
 221. reading together
 222. record everything
 223. releasing tension
 224. research skills
 225. right then, said Jed as we sat down after school one day for another of our planning sessions
 226. rush ahead
 227. school activities
 228. school council
 229. secondary drama teacher, Percy
 230. see what needs doing
 231. self-imposed standards and pressures
 232. separate room
 233. share their ideas
 234. single flat roof
 235. small group
 236. small hollow
 237. snuffing out the flame
 238. soaking wet
 239. some of them raised objections

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240. something more objective, more sustained
 241. spelling lists (often made up from the kids' own work)
 242. spur of the moment
 243. spurt in their reading
 244. starting point
 245. starting something new
 246. step-by-step
 247. stepped out from behind the mask
 248. story I was reading
 249. student from the School of Music
 250. suited her purposes
 251. summer grass
 252. superficial list of 'fun' activities
 253. Take yesterday's lesson,...If it had been based on the experiences those kids had had in the cubby area, on their negotiations, building, disappointments and triumphs, then a session organized by Christine about the early settlers could have been just the thing to stimulate an interest in history, to set the kids looking more closely around a museum or dipping into some old newspapers or history books. But, presented the way it was, the lesson made no attempt to link the material with the outside lives of these children. And the children behaved in that lesson accordingly, as if the subject matter, while possibly mildly interesting, didn't have anything to do with themselves, their thoughts or their experiences
 254. targets for language and maths skills
 255. The Kindergarten children at the school decided to make their own village, and Anna (who was a great favourite with the five-year olds) and some of her friends spent a couple of days helping them, using some of our bricks. Margaret, their teacher, told me afterwards how sensitively these older children had helped the young ones work on their five-year old ideas, instead of imposing more mature plans on them
 256. the child as
 257. the child is
 258. the forge was a focal point for visitors
 259. the group gathered
 260. the play
 261. the problem is that we have to work on this: we decided to make a rule that there would be no stealing, and some village money has been taken. What are we going to do?
 262. their memories for symbols and sounds were very weak, though both could remember what they had done at the coast or details of a story I had read months ago
 263. There have been kids who worked in the library while a village was on
 264. There is a hill at the back of the school, and the grass had grown long there. At

lunchtimes and before school for about two weeks after the village was taken down, groups of children from our class went up the hill, made grass villages, and gave themselves new roles. There were monks and kings, soldiers and spies.

- 265. There was a lot of learning in that village
- 266. there needs to be more time in the school day when the adults aren't organizing lessons themselves, when the kids have a chance to pursue activities they choose, in ways they determine
- 267. these towns worked on many different levels for different children
- 268. They explore and experiment with material objects, and with words and numbers. This is how they become literate and numerate
- 269. They say: "...they starved, they lived, they ate, they died. " they have this, but they never have the details
- 270. they learned to read better, more through general reading that through this kind of exercise
- 271. thoughtful involvement
- 272. tidy up
- 273. to help you decide
- 274. unable to watch calmly
- 275. underlying difficulties
- 276. unhappy experiences
- 277. uninterrupted time to listen to the reading
- 278. unique experience
- 279. Vicki (an ex-Banksia Grove pupil who was in for the day)
- 280. village rules
- 281. we began work on the play
- 282. we could see them responding to the altered environment
- 283. we didn't agree
- 284. we had a visit from a member of the Society for the Promotion of Creative Anachronisms
- 285. we had a writing time in the group after morning tea, and Kelly and Zara asked if they could do their writing inside the turtle
- 286. we had invited classes from other parts of the school to come
- 287. we make time for him to tackle the skills he finds difficult
- 288. we saw the play as an exercise in co-operation, something that brought kids together, taught them all sorts of social skills, helped them to listen and to compromise, helped them to be sensitive and articulate
- 289. we think will stimulate
- 290. we'd had the same sort of list up there every morning, so there was a fair bit that Don could predict
- 291. we've done a lot of extra maths and we've had enough

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292. wet area
 293. what parents were asking for - the targets, the assessments, the regularity - were not just extras we could tack onto our existing programme. They were a fundamentally different way of looking at children and learning.... They were based on the assumption that children are only learning to read when they have a book in front of them, only learning to write when there is a pen in their hands, only learning to compute when they are doing a sum
 294. what was important for kids fortunate enough to be free of specific learning difficulties was vital for kids like Don
 295. what's everyone going to do this morning
 296. when we take children out of the world of their own experiences ... out of the world of fantasy, imagination, talk, activity, argument and play, then we remove them from the source of their energy and intelligence. they then appear either dutiful or somehow limited,... or bored and rebellious. We need to base what we do at school on what really matters to kids
 297. whole group
 298. window panes
 299. wire mesh
 300. with an edge to my voice
 301. without anxiety
 302. wooden frame
 303. work out difficulties for themselves
 304. worked outside on her cubby
 305. working together
 306. writing stories
 307. wrong time

POSTSCRIPT

After presenting my grounded theory to Brian, my supervisor, he suggested parallels with quantum theory in physics and suggested I read Gary Zukav's book on the history of quantum physics, its founders and theories, titled *The dancing wu li masters* ¹. While I found several parallels, the two most striking parallels, I think, were the notions of Reality proposed and the concept of moving through physical data seeking out recurring patterns (geodesics). Until I read Zukav's book I had had little contact with anything to do with quantum physics and found the parallels most interesting and exciting.

¹ Zukav, G. (1991) *The dancing wu li masters: An overview of the new physics*, London: Rider.