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**School of Education
College of Social Sciences**

UNIVERSITY of GLASGOW



**DOMINICAN THOMIST PEDAGOGY
FOR A POST-SECULAR SOCIETY:
DEVELOPING DIALOGIC SKILLS IN RE
FOR UK SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
to attain the award of**

DOCTOR of PHILOSOPHY

July 2018

Author's acknowledgement

“I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.”

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ABSTRACT

DOMINICAN THOMIST PEDAGOGY FOR A POST-SECULAR SOCIETY: DEVELOPING DIALOGIC SKILLS IN RE FOR UK SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

A purpose of this thesis is to reclaim and rehabilitate the word “secular” for the Christian lexicon. In its original conception, society comprises three realms – sacred, secular and profane. The secular realm was the neutral area between the sacred and profane realms and all people are welcome to contribute within this public sphere. Today, “secular” is couched in terms that are oppositional to Christianity. There is much, though, in secularity to admire – and given that its liberal values have Christian roots – this should be unsurprising.

The main purpose of this thesis is to determine how, in UK secondary school classrooms, within the subject domain of religious education – this secular realm can be reclaimed. Viewing the classroom as a microcosm of society a Dominican Thomist pedagogy is mooted. Such pedagogy is Thomist with regard to its focus on reasoning and it is Dominican with respect to its engagement with the secular spirit of the age. To prepare secondary school students to become enabled to fortify the secular realm they are encouraged to develop two dialogic skills: consensus building through cumulative talk and constructive criticism through exploratory talk.

With a stimulus of two texts – one based on science and the supernatural and the other on New Testament scholarship – sixty-five students from ten UK secondary schools engage with paired conversations. Their conversations are recorded and transcribed and subsequently analysed for quality through word counts for both cumulative talk and exploratory talk. The students completed a questionnaire survey for adopting a deep approach to learning and the

ten test items are analysed for statistical significance through medium of a Chi Square Test. They also wrote a one sentence comment reflecting upon their experience and the perceived value – pedagogical or social – of this dialogic RE intervention.

The results indicate high levels of student engagement with paired conversations as demonstrated with thirty-nine of the sixty-two conversations graded as high quality, thirteen as mid-quality, and ten as low quality. To a statistically significant degree, the students' self-reporting questionnaire survey indicates that they adopt a deep approach to learning. Their written comments furnish ample evidence that the students enjoy the experience of paired conversations and they cite, in the main, pedagogical reasons for their beliefs.

In conclusion, there is sound evidence to indicate to schools and RE teachers that this dialogic intervention promotes quality conversations based on cumulative talk and exploratory talk. It is recommended that further research and curriculum development is undertaken with respect to new technologies to help embed these two types of talk within RE classrooms. Given that the two types of talk bear the Dominican Thomist hallmarks of reasoning, truth and engagement with secularity and that these hallmarks are found within the hermeneutical-communicative RE and critical RE pedagogies; then it is recommended that further research and curriculum development is undertaken here. Further, given the leading role of University of Glasgow scholars in advocacy of such pedagogies; then it is recommended that they liaise with the Catholic University of Leuven which houses the Continent's leading exponents of hermeneutical-communicative RE. Such a partnership could prove fruitful in realising a vision whereby paired conversations within the safe space of a school prepare students to fortify the public sphere within a post-secular society.

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In Memoriam

Dedicated to May & Ian and Lily

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

What does it mean to say that we live in a secular age?
Almost everyone would agree that in some sense we do... (Taylor 2007: 1)

The claim that we live in a secular age is made in the opening words of Charles Taylor's magnum opus, *A Secular Age*: and his assertion has a wealth of scholarly support from such as Calhoun et al (2011), Mendieta & van Antwerpen (2011), Parker and Reader (2016), Schuller (2006) and Williams (2012), to name but a few. Indeed, Stoeckl (2015: 1) boldly asserts that 'European societies are secularized societies' whilst in a discussion of American society, Moreland (2012: 27) contends that:

...Most people have little or no understanding of a Christian way of seeing the world, nor is a Christian worldview an important participant in the way we as a society frame and debate issues in the public square. Three of the major centers of influence in our culture – the university, the media, and the government – are largely devoid of serious religious discussion.

This viewpoint, though, is not without opposition with Smith (2008: 2), amongst others, arguing that secularism is '...the latest expression of the Christian religion... being Christian ethics shorn of its doctrine'.¹ However, this is a minority view; and it is widely accepted² that

¹ A similar argument is proposed by Glendinning (2017: 203) '...that we conceive the becoming-secular of Europe not as a movement of the becoming-atheist of humanity... but as a moment *within* the long-run event of the becoming-Christian of the world: it is a mutation within that movement, an alteration within an event that we can call the Christianisation of the world.'

² e.g. see Halman & Draulans (2006) who, drawing upon data from a European Values Study, contend that 'The findings provide evidence in favour of secularization theories...'

we do live in a secular age.³ Nonetheless, given the contested nature of secularism then it is helpful to define this concept.

With rich detail, Taylor (2007) considers secularism for more than seven hundred pages. For our purposes, though, Casanova (2011) outlines a concise three-fold definition of secularism as follows:

1. *Secular* as a category of knowledge – that which is other than religious;
2. *Secularisms* as ideologies or worldviews in which religion has either been superseded or should be banished from the public sphere;
3. *Secularization* as a means of analysing modern historical events, in particular –
 - a) Disaggregation of secular institutions from religious institutions in the public spheres of economics, politics and science;
 - b) Progressive decline of religious beliefs and practices as a result of modernization; and
 - c) Privatization of religion as a political pre-condition.

However, despite this useful clarification, Casanova (2011: 54) contends that whilst the three categories of secular, secularism and secularization are related, they ‘...are used very differently in various academic-disciplinary and socio-political and cultural contexts’.

Furthermore, he later concedes that, although the secular/religious dyad is in common use, ‘...what remains hotly disputed and debated... is how, where, and by whom the proper boundaries between the religious and the secular ought to be drawn’ (Casanova 2011: 63).

³ Indeed, discussion of secularism even pervades leisure time activities e.g. the composer James MacMillan argues that ‘...Celtic fans should always ...give space for gospel values to pervade what the club is about; even in a secular age’ (Purden 2012: 9).

Given this blurred complexity of understandings and definitions,⁴ it is imperative to define the context in which secular is being used within this study.

Three realms' model

Herein, the term *secular* is used in the context of a three realms' model. According to Markus (2006) there arose in early Christianity an understanding that society comprises three realms namely the sacred, the profane, and the secular. Markus (2006: 5-6) defines these realms as follows:

- a) *Sacred* - '...will be roughly coextensive with the sphere of Christian religious belief, practises, institutions and cult' e.g. participating in mass, attending Bible studies class, etc.
- b) *Profane* - '...will be close to what has to be rejected in the surrounding culture, practises, institutions...' e.g. abortion, pornography, etc.
- c) *Secular* - '...does not have such connotations of radical opposition to the sacred; it is more neutral, capable of being accepted or adapted...' e.g. attending school, discussion in a pub, etc.

In terms of boundaries between these realms they are held to be '...far from fixed, being instead subject to fluctuation, pressures from every side, and constant renegotiation' (Markus 2006: 27). This is illustrated as below:⁵

⁴ Discussing the work of Williams (2012) the scholars Parker and Reader (2016: 245) refer to '...the slipperiness of the categories "secularism" and "secularisation".'

⁵ This argumentation and case study presented by Luby (2016a) at the Christian Faith Formation and Education international conference, Liverpool Hope University, June 2016.

Early Church case study

When the Early Church first admitted Gentiles it placed few restrictions upon them; but one of these was to abstain from meat that had been blessed to pagan gods. And so to eat such meat would be regarded as an act that was ‘irredeemably profane’. However, the prohibition of eating such meat prevented Christians from attending important civil events; and over time, this restriction of total abstention from profane meat became impractical. So, in order that Christians could more actively participate in civil life this restriction was relaxed. Effectively then, because of the pressure to participate more fully in civil and public life the eating of ‘pagan meat’ was renegotiated from an unacceptable activity within the profane realm, to an acceptable activity within the secular realm.

Although fluctuation and renegotiation of boundaries was permissible within this three realms’ model, nonetheless, the secular realm had a crucial function to ‘...resist any hostile takeover of this middle ground between sacred and profane...’ (Markus 2006: 37). Arguably, Western societies have struggled to maintain this neutrality of the secular realm. Post-Constantine and through the era of Christendom the sacred realm prospered and the profane realm declined. This Christian “victory” was achieved at the expense of the secular realm failing with regard to its function of preserving neutrality; since it had become suffused with Christian values to the extent that, in Europe, it was virtually impossible not to profess belief in God.

Post-Enlightenment however, the situation reversed because the secular realm became a public space ‘...emptied of God or of any reference to ultimate reality’ (Taylor 2007: 2). Again, Western societies have failed to uphold the role of the secular realm with respect to neutrality as it has become suffused with some liberal values. This steady and growing

removal of religion's influence upon the public sphere, and the consequent loss of neutrality within the secular realm, provoked a lament from Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI that 'Secularism is no longer that element of neutrality, which opens up space for freedom for all' (Johnston & Petre 2004). Speaking then, as Cardinal Ratzinger, in Italy's *La Repubblica* newspaper, he was condemning "secular ideological aggression" against Christianity as manifested by (a) the jailing of a Swedish Protestant minister who used Scripture in his critique of homosexuality; and (b) and the refusal of the European Parliament to approve Italian politician Rocco Buttiglione as justice minister because of his firm Catholic views.

Such losses of influence have instigated widespread debate within Christian circles as how best to react; with Dreher (2017a: 69) going as far as to moot a "Benedict Option" that '...call[s] for a *strategic separation* from the everyday world.' Broadly speaking though, within the Catholic Church, two differing movements have arisen in response to aggressive secularism: namely, Augustinian Thomism and Whig⁶ Thomism. As Rowland (2005) explains:

There are thus two different readings of modernity and with that, two different readings of how the Church should engage the contemporary world. While the Whigs want the Church to accommodate the culture of modernity, the Augustinians favour a much more critical stance.

Two Thomisms

Augustinian Thomism decries the collapse of the neutrality of the secular realm and asserts that the Catholic Church must work to overthrow the liberal values which pervade the secular

⁶ According to Rowland (2005) 'The expression "Whig Thomist" was coined by Michael Novak to describe his intellectual project... as a sociological generalization it can be said that the Whigs were the heirs of the Scottish Enlightenment, which emphasized economic and political liberty, or an emerging philosophy known as liberalism...'

realm. The perception of Augustinian Thomists such as Weigel (2013) is that the Catholic Church should be on a war footing since:

Throughout the Western world, the culture no longer carries the faith, because the culture has become increasingly hostile to the faith. Catholicism can no longer be absorbed by osmosis from the environment, for the environment has become toxic.

In response to this toxicity, and akin to the “Benedict Option” above, Weigel (2013) proposes a form of evangelical Catholicism ‘...that will equip the Church for its evangelical responsibilities in a time of great challenge.’ Church communities will be radically renewed as they prepare themselves to re-propose Catholicism to the world (Mallon 2014).

Nonetheless, this approach commits the Catholic Church to separating from the secular realm and so, temporarily at least, the Three Realms’ Model would not be fully functioning; since a barrier would be erected between the sacred and secular realms.

A different approach, but with a similarly unsatisfactory outcome, is proposed by Whig Thomism. Like their Augustinian counterparts, the Whig Thomists accept that the neutrality of the secular realm has been overcome by liberal values. However, rather than retreating from the secular realm, the Whig Thomists seek to work with the prevailing liberal values and to Christianise them. For example, a chief proponent of this view Novak (1991: 437), draws a parallel between capitalism and moral virtues, ‘...the spirit of capitalism, its dynamic principle, its central commitment to practical intellect: to invention, discovery, reasoned cooperation, and the intellectual and moral virtue of enterprise.’

Novak is making the point that free markets depend upon liberal, democratic values that are generated from Christian sources.⁷ The net effect, though, is similar to the Augustinian Thomist approach. If the Whig Thomists were to be successful in Christianising the secular realm, there would remain only two realms, sacred and profane; and again, the Three Realms' Model would not be fully functioning. How likely though, is the prospect of success for either the Augustinian Thomists or the Whig Thomists?

On the one hand, the Augustinian Thomist desire to retreat from the secular realm for the purpose of renewal may not fully take into account the ingrained secularism prevalent within the West. Indeed, as Casanova (2011: 67) contends: '... people are not simply religiously "unmusical" but are actually closed to any form of transcendence beyond the purely secular immanent frame'. Given this lack of "musicality" and closure to the transcendent then the prospects for a successful re-evangelisation of the West appears to be slim.⁸

On the other hand, the Whig Thomists wish to transform the secular realm through Christianisation of its liberal values. However, according to Rowland (2003: 159), this admixture of values has resulted in a process of 'heretical reconstruction' or 'secular parody', whereby '... a divine directive to "love your neighbour" has been transmuted into "tolerance"'. Seeking the good of others seems incomprehensible to people who have been acculturated through liberal values to allow others to do as they wish. And furthermore, some would contend that liberal values themselves are rooted in Christianity:

⁷ A similar but more substantive parallel between Christianity and capitalism is drawn by Stark (2005: 163) who argues that 'capitalism... had originated in deeply Catholic societies'.

⁸ See Woodhead (2016: 245) who contends, on the basis of series of large, nationally representative surveys of beliefs and values in Great Britain that '... 'no religion' has become a new norm and... Britain has ceased to be a Christian country.'

...Western democracy owe(s) its essential intellectual origins and legitimacy to Christian ideals, not to any Greco-Roman legacy. It all began with the New Testament. (Stark 2005: 76)

So, granting acculturation through liberal values that are a secular parody of Christian values, the prospects for a successful transformation of the secular realm also appear to be slim.

Creating a post-secular society

Since it would appear that neither transformation nor retreat from the secular realm are likely to succeed – is it not timely for the Catholic Church to rethink her approach to the secular realm?⁹ For the Church has continually rethought her strategies for evangelisation when confronted with ‘...transformations of culture — the fall of the Roman Empire, the Enlightenment, industrialization, democratization, globalization...’ Perhaps now, argues Glendon (2001), ‘what may be required... is nothing less than a large-scale reappraisal and renewal of the educational apostolate of the Church’.

What might be at the heart of such a renewed educational apostolate? Rather than taking an Augustinian Thomist view of the secular realm as an enemy to be conquered – or a Whig Thomist view of this realm as a patient to be cured – should the Catholic Church not view the secular realm as *a neglected friend*? In the same fashion that one would wish such a friend restored to former good standing; should not the Church wish the secular realm to be restored

⁹ See Rowland (2003: 163) who contends that the Church has so far failed to ‘... appreciate that modernity is a cultural formation and to... [devise] pastoral strategies to be adopted in the dioceses of metropolitan modernity where the prevailing culture was not so much pre-Christian as post and anti-Christian.’ An example of this is outlined by Archbishop Fisichella (2015: 7) President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, who speaks of cultural formation via the internet and the near impossibility of even finding common language; since the mention of Christian concepts such as contemplation and adoration will cause young people to ‘...look at you as if you are from outer space.’

to a state of ‘neutrality which opens up space for freedom for all’? After all, this was the original understanding of the role of the secular realm.

Liberal alliance

In expending her energies to fortify and restore the secular realm, the Church would not be without support, since some influential liberal thinkers express similar desires. As understood in the classic liberal tradition, the liberal secular realm is pluralist, tolerant and neutral with regard to religion. However, there has since arisen another form of liberalism¹⁰ that promotes the flourishing of secular humanist objectives (Appleby 2011); and this more ‘virulent’ liberalism has promoted a process of secularization determined to squeeze religion out of the public sphere and to privatise entirely religious belief.¹¹

Somewhat surprisingly, this belittling of the role of religion in the public sphere has attracted criticism from no less a figure than Jurgen Habermas, regarded as ‘...the personification of liberal, individual, and secular thinking’ (Schuller 2006: 15). In a revision of his earlier thinking and writings, Habermas (2006: 51) now argues for a *post-secular society* in which he envisions that:

¹⁰ Others such as Conroy & Davis (2008: 197) disagree by claiming that it is ‘...classical liberalism... aggressively advancing its own values, which it masks as universal – values such as autonomy, individual freedom, and reasonableness – and circumscribing the concept of religion as private and personal...’

¹¹ e.g. see Willimon (2017: 19) who contends that: ‘Even though the state alleges that it practices freedom of religion, the secular state tolerates no alternatives to its sovereignty. Christians are free in American democracy to be as religious as we please as long as we keep our religion personal and private. Contemporary secular politics decrees that people of faith must first jettison the church’s peculiar speech and practices before we can be allowed to go public and do politics.’

The neutrality of the state authority on questions of world views guarantees the same ethical freedom to every citizen... When secularized citizens act in their role as citizens of the state, they must not deny in principle that religious images of the world have the potential to express truth. Nor must they refuse their believing fellow citizens the right to make contributions in a religious language to public debates.

Habermas' vision is of a post-secular society in which religion returns to a renewed public sphere in which religious imagery and language are freely used. Other eminent liberal theorists have also revised their views of religion in the public sphere e.g. John Rawls who accepts in a late work '...that religiously motivated arguments should be accepted as publicly valid...' (Calhoun 2011: 78). To re-create the secular realm such that we have a post-secular society - is this not a legitimate aim for evangelization - a worthy educational apostolate?

Such a vision appears also to be supported by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, who comments:

What, then, ought we to do? ...I am in broad agreement with Jurgen Habermas' remarks about a post-secular society, about the willingness to learn from each other, and about self-limitation on both sides. (Ratzinger 2006: 77)

From a Christian perspective, this vision of a post-secular society is a clear improvement upon the situation today. That religion should have a valid role in the public sphere and that religious imagery and language might be freely expressed and regarded as potentially true: such developments are to be welcomed. Moreover, there is a realistic prospect of success, rather than 'tilting at windmills' *Don Quixote* style to re-evangelise the secular realm; rather than a Herculean cleansing of the *Augean Stables* to transform the secular into the sacred, there is here offered a clear-headed alliance between the Catholic Church and classic liberal thinkers to create a genuinely post-secular society.

But for such an alliance, there is a price to be paid: self-limitation. The Catholic Church will need to recognise that a post-secular society will not be a form of Constantinian or mediaeval Christendom; rather it will be a *pluralist* Christendom ‘...within whose walls unbelievers live together and share in the same temporal good’ (Maritain 1938: 166). In so doing, the Church will help to create ‘...a vitally Christian orientation in the new political order while assuring justice and freedom for non-Christian groups’ (Ibarra 2013: 122). In such a just society – a pluralist Christendom – both liberals and Christians will ‘...take seriously each other’s contributions to controversial subjects in the public debate’ (Habermas 2006: 47). At present, the Church’s views may be afforded serious recognition with regard to private matters of personal morality such as abortion, divorce, same-sex relationships, etc. However, in the public sphere discussions concerning technological and medical advances are dominated by economic, political, sociological and especially scientific voices (Smith 2008). For a theological voice to be taken seriously in the public sphere, then self-limitation seems a price worth paying.

Principle of self-limitation

If the secular realm in a post-secular society is one in which the public sphere of debate is marked by self-limitation, then the liberal traditions will also need to accept the self-limitations of restraint from advocacy of e.g. secularist ideologies that contend religion should be banished from the public sphere; and secularization ideologies in which religion is held to be a purely private matter.

Hence for those from the classic liberal traditions the principle of self-limitation imposes the restriction of accepting *political liberalism* and discarding *comprehensive liberalism*. As advocated by John Locke, political liberalism envisioned a society in which persons from

diverse traditions altered their ways of thinking and acting in response to conversations with others: this took place in an environment supported by the values of freedom and tolerance.

Guaranteed by the state, these values

...gradually ceased to be a means to the greater end of the pursuit of truth and justice, and instead became reified as ends in themselves. As a result, Locke's political liberalism gave way to a comprehensive liberalism in which the ideal society is not one that pursues truth and truthfulness, but one that maximises autonomy and tolerance. In such a society, rather than defend their particular exclusive beliefs and explore the exclusive beliefs of others in a common quest for truth, representatives of particular traditions must abandon their exclusive beliefs because they are deemed to undermine freedom and breed intolerance. Instead of imagining a genuinely open pluralistic society harbouring a range of different traditions and contradictory belief systems, we must imagine a closed monolithic society living in peace and harmony only because its members have abandoned their exclusive truth claims *en masse*.

(Wright 2013: 110)

And so, comprehensive liberalism has paved the way for various secularisms and for secularization. In order, therefore, to successfully create a post-secular society, it is necessary that those from the classic liberal tradition adopt and promote political liberalism at the expense of comprehensive liberalism.

For her part, in the common pursuit of truth and truthfulness, the Catholic Church will require to impose upon herself the self-limitation of not making '...a direct appeal to the absolute, a transcendent notion of ultimate truth, [as this] is a step outside the bounds of reasoned public discourse' (Calhoun et al 2011: 19). For the creation of a post-secular society, the admission price for the Catholic Church to influence public life is the imposition of a vow of silence regarding transcendent, revealed knowledge; and a focus on human reasoning. In order that Christians become more fully involved in the public sphere of civil life, such self-limitation

requires some sacrifice from the Church. As illustrated in the Early Church case study above, the Church was willing to relax a self-limitation of abstention from pagan meat as an admission price for the Christian voice to be heard more clearly in the public sphere.

This is a self-limitation with which the Catholic Church should be comfortable. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 39) makes clear:

In defending the ability of human reason to know God, the Church is expressing her confidence in the possibility of speaking about him to all men and with all men, and therefore of dialogue with other religions, with philosophy and science, as well as with unbelievers and atheists.

Limiting debate within public sphere to the use of human reason – and so excluding supernatural faith – does not prevent the Church from carrying out its apostolate of evangelization. As Saint Thomas Aquinas affirms, ‘both the light of reason and the light of faith come from God... hence there can be no contradiction between them’ (*Fides et Ratio* n.43). And so, from a Catholic perspective, this proposal for creating a post-secular society founded on the use of human reason can be described as *Thomist*. Fittingly, given Aquinas’ background, it can also be portrayed as *Dominican*: how so?

A Dominican Thomist approach

As an alternative to the Augustinian Thomist and Whig Thomist approaches that seek to retreat from or transform the secular realm, a third Dominican Thomist approach is proposed in this study. This approach seeks a three realms’ solution whereby the Catholic Church, in alliance with the classic liberal tradition, aims to strengthen the neutrality of the secular realm and, in so doing, create a genuinely post-secular society. Such an approach can be termed Thomist in that this alliance is founded on a shared avowal of the powers of human

reasoning. It can also bear the appellation ‘Dominican’ for two reasons. Firstly, this three realms’ model of society is predicated upon the times of the Early Church and, as such, it resembles the theological movement of *ressourcement*, which was in essence a return to tradition. ‘[T]he primary exponents of *ressourcement*... were a small group of French Dominicans of the faculty of Le Saulchoir in Paris...’ established in the late 1930s. (Kaslyn 2013: 307)¹² Secondly, in his discussion of the Dominican Order, Drane (1988: 71) comments that it:

...has constantly been true to its vocation as the organ of popularizing truth. It has borrowed from the spirit of the age to supply the wants of the age.

What are the wants of this secular age? And what is its spirit?

Perhaps it is Taylor (2007: 9) who comes closest to capturing the wants and spirit of the secular age when he speaks of ‘...the power of cool, disengaged reason, capable of contemplating the world and human life without illusion, and of acting lucidly for the best in the interest of human flourishing’. The wants of this age, as of every age, concern human flourishing. But in the secular age the answers are found neither in philosophical theories, nor moral codes, nor religious devotions: the answer is to be found in human reasoning. In this secular age it is not the supernatural which inspires awe: it is reason. And so a Dominican Thomist response to this want for human flourishing in a secular age would be to borrow from the spirit of the age: human reason.

This accord over human reason – this Dominican Thomist alliance between the Catholic and classic liberal traditions – comes at a propitious time. For liberal thinkers have gone into

¹² See also Schindler (2013).

overdrive as they reconsider secularity within the context of globalisation. This reconsideration has borne much fruit as attested by:

- a multi-year project under the auspices of the Social Science Research Council to reformulate secularity (Calhoun et al 2011);
- books and articles concerned with rethinking and rehabilitating secularity (e.g. Bhargava 2011);
- a deeper understanding of secularity having a multiplicity of relationships with religion (e.g. Stepan 2011); and
- new concepts and theories for this multiplicity such as ‘twin tolerations’ and ‘principled distance’.¹³

Given this ferment of activity and the resultant reconceptualization of secularity on the part of liberal thinkers - and given Pope Francis’ welcoming approach to atheists (Brown 2013) - this seems an apposite time for the Catholic Church to build an alliance with liberalism¹⁴ in the creation of a post-secular society. But where do we begin?

Pedagogy

An appropriate educational starting point is *pedagogy*, which is a relationship between classroom practices and wider society that is recognised as performing a ‘...crucial role in the process of social reproduction i.e. the process whereby a society reproduces itself over time and so maintains its identity across the generations...’ (Carr 1993: 6) However, pedagogies need not only be concerned with social reproduction and preservation of society’s status quo, since,

¹³ e.g. see <http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2008/10/28/rethinking-secularism/> [accessed 13 March 2018]

¹⁴ According to Dreher (2017: 68) by itself ‘Liberalism is not sufficient to do the necessary work of binding society together and giving its members purpose.’

... (as) mainsprings of schooling. They can serve... as levers of social production. They can be in the vanguard of social change... (Hamilton 1990: 55)

Pedagogy as social production is required for the creation of a post-secular society.¹⁵

However, working in partnership with classic liberalism to achieve this social change requires a high degree of sensitivity from the Catholic Church, since ‘...education is commonly prized as both the heir and the custodian of liberal principles’ (Conroy & Davis 2008: 188). The Church should tread softly.

Not only should the Catholic Church be sensitive to liberal ideals, she should also recognise that the implementation of grand abstract theories, intended to heal society’s divisions, rests upon an understanding that they take place within the context of the concrete lives of individuals. And this is especially the case with pedagogy, for ‘It is concrete subjects that teachers and educators meet in schools’ (Bergdahl 2010: 174). Whilst treading carefully with respect to individuals and pedagogy, the Church should note the advice of Gearon (2013: 104) that there is a fundamental or ‘incommensurable’ difference between pedagogies ‘...related to the religious life... [and those] ...more closely related to secularity’. That is to

¹⁵ That social change can be effected through religious education (RE) pedagogy is an argument made by both academia and RE professionals e.g. see Freathy et al (2017) and Chater and Erricker (2013). Evidence for its suitability as such a vehicle for societal transformation is found in the commendatory findings of Conroy et al (2013: 185) concerning a C of E secondary school ‘...that has been formed through a series of mergers of failing secondary schools serving a challenging catchment area... The priority was to create in the classroom a space in which the bigger social and political issues affecting young people in their daily lives could be grappled with and where everyone had a voice... Students in the focus group were very positive about Religious Education and emphasized the fact that everyone was included and entitled to express their views.’ Furthermore, despite the claim from Clarke & Woodhead (2015: 28) that ‘in recent years, criticism of the teaching of Religious Education in English schools has been substantial and authoritative’; there is a surprisingly high level of political interest afforded to RE pedagogies e.g. the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (2007, *Toledo Guiding Principles on Teaching about Religions and Beliefs in Public Schools*); and even the CIA (Gearon 2013). For a sophisticated critique of RE pedagogies within a European context see Conroy (2016b).

say, for pedagogy as social production, rather than confessional pedagogy, it may be advisable to fashion pedagogy that ‘...arise(s) from bringing religion and education into a relationship within the context of a secular education system serving the needs and interests of... a diversely plural society’ (Grimmitt 2000: 15). The world of RE is rich with pedagogies that have arisen in response to the issues and difficulties posed by secularity and pluralism (e.g. Blaylock 2004, Gearon 2013, Grimmitt 2000): but which pedagogy fulfils Habermas’ vision of a post-secular society?

Habermas envisages a post-secular society in which religious language and images have the potential to express truth. Not only do such language and images have a legitimate place within public debates, Habermas (2006: 51-52) also has an expectation that ‘...the secularized citizens play their part in the endeavors to translate relevant contributions from the religious language into a language that is accessible to the public as a whole’. This clearly entails dialogue between those with faith and those without faith; and a genuine commitment to understand each other. Indeed, it implies that each side must collaborate to produce a common language. Which religious education (RE) pedagogies are best suited to this task?

First, it is a task that resembles Cooling’s ‘concept-cracking’ methodology,¹⁶ which places ‘emphasis on taking belief statements seriously as truth claims and analysing evidence and arguments around them...’ (Blaylock 2004: 15) Secondly, it calls to mind critical realism, an approach which regards itself as ‘...a theology concerned with questions of ultimate truth...’ (Wright 2000: 172) This critical pedagogy creates intelligent conversations between the horizon of the students and the horizons of religion; and these conversations are concerned

¹⁶ See http://www.stapleford-centre.org/files/files/Trevor_Cooling-Concept_Cracking-Exploring_Christian_Beliefs_in_School.pdf [accessed 13 March 2018]

with questions of ultimate truth. Thirdly, it resonates with the proposal of Castelli (2012) for an RE faith dialogue pedagogy that develops students' skills in articulating their own beliefs whilst responding to others' belief systems. Specifically, Dominican Thomist pedagogy should therefore be characterised by students conversing intelligently about ultimate truth claims through analysis of arguments and evidence. In so doing, they might develop their own belief systems in response to the beliefs of others.

Within Scottish Catholic education though, such critical pedagogy seems far removed from – indeed incommensurable with – confessional pedagogy as espoused by the authoritative document *This Is Our Faith* (CEC 2011).¹⁷ A Dominican Thomist pedagogy commits Catholic educators to an unusually open and dialogic approach to RE classroom practices. A fundamental question then arises: 'how commensurate is this critical pedagogy with the teachings of the Catholic Church?'

The Catholic Church and dialogue

In the modern world, the Catholic Church is confident about dialogue with those of other faiths and of no faith (de Lubac 1995); and actively encourages it. As Pope Francis (2013: 34) tells us in his first encyclical letter, '...the security of faith sets us on a journey; it enables witness and dialogue with all'. And his predecessor Pope Saint John Paul II (1990: 56) set down the marker for such a journey in dialogue with his encyclical letter *Redemptoris Missio*:

¹⁷ A similar criticism is directed at the Flemish curriculum with the complaint '...that Roman Catholic RE is no longer an adequate way to prepare pupils for the post-Christian and post-secular society...' Boeve (2012: 143).

Dialogue does not originate from tactical concerns or self-interest, but is an activity with its own guiding principles, requirements and dignity... Those engaged in this dialogue must be consistent with their own religious traditions and convictions, and be open to understanding those of the other party without pretense or close-mindedness, but with truth, humility and frankness, knowing that dialogue can enrich each side. There must be no abandonment of principles nor false irenicism, but instead a witness given and received for mutual advancement...

This is a robust understanding of dialogue in which there is no suing for a false peace. Parties to dialogue, Catholic and non-Catholic, are encouraged, nay instructed, to remain true to their beliefs and to engage frankly with each other. At the heart of such dialogue is a common pursuit of truth. As the Church's Declaration on Religious Freedom (*Dignitatis Humanae*) makes clear,

Truth... is to be sought in a manner proper to the dignity of the human person and his social nature. The inquiry is to be free, carried on with the aid of teaching or instruction, communication and dialogue, in the course of which people explain to one another the truth they have discovered, or think they have discovered, in order thus to assist one another in the quest for truth... (Pope Paul VI 1965a: 3)

A strongly dialogic approach to discovering truth is particularly well reflected within the Church's teaching concerning education. Crucially, there is here a moral imperative to take into account the needs of *all* students, as emphasised by the Congregation for Catholic Education (1982: Para.14) with its assertion that,

Catholic educators... must have the greatest respect for those students who are not Catholic. They should be open at all times to authentic dialogue...

This openness to 'authentic dialogue' indicates that the educational context cannot be one that operates on 'tactical concerns or self-interest' as alluded by Pope Saint John Paul II

above. If the purpose of the dialogue is simply to convert non-Catholics, then it would be inauthentic or ‘a form of manipulation’ (Baum 2000). To be truly authentic the Catholic students have to engage in

... *respectful dialogue* [emphasis added] with those who do not yet accept the Gospel. Believers can profit from this dialogue by learning to appreciate better ‘those elements of truth and grace which are found among peoples, and which are, as it were, a secret presence of God.’ (CCC 856)

Through participation in authentic and respectful dialogue, Catholic students can benefit from discovering ‘elements of truth and grace’ within their peers. For in a ‘mysterious way’ their peers may already be linked to the Catholic Church. Whilst it is a Catholic truth that ‘outside the Church there is no salvation’ – this can be misunderstood. As Pope Saint John Paul II (1995) explains:¹⁸

...salvation is accessible in mysterious ways... It is a mysterious relationship. It is mysterious for those who receive the grace, because they do not know the Church and sometimes even outwardly reject her.

As we observed above, Catholics need to tread warily here. They cannot assume a superior position in their relationship with “non-Catholics” since these “non-Catholics” may be - unknown to themselves, and despite their outward protestations - mysteriously linked to the

¹⁸ See CCC (847) ‘those who, through no fault of their own, do not know Christ and his Church... but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience—those too may achieve eternal salvation.’ And also *Gaudium et Spes* (22) ‘All this holds true not only for Christians, but for all men of good will in whose hearts grace works in an unseen way. For, since Christ died for all men, and since the ultimate vocation of man is in fact one, and divine, we ought to believe that the Holy Spirit in a manner known only to God offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this paschal mystery’.

Catholic Church. Rather, in dialogue, Catholics should be genuinely open to finding “truth and grace” within their peers.

Given that the Church encourages and upholds authentic, respectful dialogue in pursuit of the truth - and in the hope that she accepts the self-limitation of human reasoning – how might such a Dominican Thomist pedagogy manifest itself in the RE classroom?

Reasoning - cumulative talk and exploratory talk

As outlined above, the heart of Dominican Thomist pedagogy is to be found in reasoning and dialogue. In the classroom, reasoning can be developed through the acquisition and honing of the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk (Mercer 1995). Reasoning is made visible as students try to create trust and achieve consensus through cumulative talk in which they ‘...build positively but uncritically on what the other has said’. This is a pre-requisite to exploratory talk in which the students ‘...engage critically but constructively with each other’s ideas’ (Mercer 1995: 104).

The development of such reasoning, through the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, was undertaken by twenty students at a Scottish city-centre secondary school as part of a small-scale action research study (Luby 2012, 2013) by the present author. It is noteworthy that, despite the small sample size, the findings are statistically significant; providing some evidence that a beginning had been made that is indicative of possibility of Dominican Thomist pedagogy.

Summary

Early Christianity had an understanding of society comprising three realms – sacred, secular and profane. The function of the secular realm was to be a ‘buffer zone’ between the sacred and profane realms. However, the realms’ boundaries were fluid and indeed, proved to be porous, as through the post-Constantine and medieval Christendom eras the secular realm was saturated with Christian values such that, in Western societies, ‘...it was virtually impossible not to believe in God...’ (Taylor 2007: 3) Early Enlightenment Europe witnessed the advance of classic liberalism that still supported the neutrality of the secular realm. However, the porosity of its boundaries again proved its undoing as the secular realm became engulfed by a much more aggressive form of liberalism, such that societies in the West moved ‘...from a condition where, in Christendom, people lived naively within a theistic construal, to one in which... unbelief has become for many the major default option’ (Taylor 2007: 14).

This waning of the influence of religion in the public sphere has provoked two broad responses from the Catholic Church. An Augustinian Thomist approach has been mooted which aims to retreat from the secular realm, whereas a Whig Thomist approach seeks to transform the secular realm into the sacred. Both scenarios, if successful, would weaken the three realms’ model. A third way is proposed whereby, rather than the secular realm being rejected or transformed, it is fortified through a strengthening of its boundaries in order to create a meaningfully post-secular society. This boundary is the principle of self-limitation.

This boundary principle of self-limitation for a post-secular society makes demands upon both parties: those from the liberal traditions and the Catholic Church. The former require restraining from advocacy of both secularist ideologies and secularization; whilst the latter

need restraining from advocacy of supernatural or transcendent notions of truth. United in agreement, both parties can then seek to create a sincerely post-secular society signified by a public sphere of debate that focuses on the power of human reasoning.

For the Catholic Church this attention to human reasoning opens the door to a Dominican Thomist solution to the pervasive influence of liberal values in the secular realm. The approach is Thomist in that it values human reason as both a gift from and a route to God. It is Dominican in that borrows from the spirit of the age – ‘cool, disengaged reason’ – to supply the wants of this age: human flourishing. Much human flourishing begins in the classroom and to create a post-secular society an appropriate Dominican Thomist pedagogy should be developed.

Given this proposed alliance between the Catholic Church and classic liberalism, it is deemed advisable to eschew normative confessional pedagogy and rather seek to promote a pedagogy fashioned within the liberal domain. Such ‘critical pedagogy’ is characterised by students having intelligent conversations about ultimate truth claims. These conversations entail analysis of arguments and evidence and, in so doing, the students can develop their powers of reasoning. The dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk have been identified as useful in developing such reasoning; and they lie at the heart of Dominican Thomist pedagogy.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW: EXPANDING THE CLAIM

I address everyone, including the followers of other religions or those who are simply seeking an answer to the fundamental questions of life... I address all... to assure them that the Church wants to continue to weave an open and sincere dialogue with them, in the search for the true good of the human being and of society... and declare the willingness of all Catholics to cooperate for an authentic social development, respectful of the dignity of every human being. I will make every conscientious effort to continue the promising dialogue initiated by my Venerable Predecessors with the different civilizations, so that mutual understanding may create the conditions for a better future for all. (Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, 2005)

With this *missa pro ecclesia*, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI eloquently sums up the argument of the opening chapter. If we truly are to create a post-secular civilization, then fortification of the secular realm is a necessity. It is necessary in order that people from all walks of life can genuinely have a voice; that their views are respected; and that there is genuine dialogue. Indeed, a beginning has been made with the establishment of an itinerant *Courtyard of the Gentiles*¹⁹ project under the auspices of the Pontifical Council for Culture.²⁰ This is a ‘...new initiative of the Holy See designed to offer a conceptual space for meaningful encounters between Christians and atheists...’ (Franchi 2014: 58). First, though, contemporaneous with the Catholic Church ‘...continu[ing] the promising dialogue... with the different civilizations,’ the Church needs to conduct such a dialogue within herself.

¹⁹ The Courtyard of the Gentiles held its inaugural meeting in Paris (2011) and since then has held meetings in the Italian cities of Florence, Palermo, Rome, Bologna and Assisi; the European capital cities of Tirana, Stockholm, Barcelona, Berlin, Prague, Budapest and Bucharest; and across the Atlantic in Argentina, Uruguay and the US.

²⁰ ‘Nowadays the “Courtyard of the Gentiles” has become a reality, a new “frontier” where [those] who are engaged in the field of culture and faith, believe that a more welcoming and fraternal community might spring up on the basis of the dialogue.’ <http://english.cortiledeigentili.com/chiamo/origini/> [accessed 19 January 2018]

Dominican Thomist strategy

As argued in the first chapter, there are two broad views as to how the Church should respond to liberal, modern culture – Whig Thomism and Augustinian Thomism – and both seem intent on overcoming the other’s argument and supplanting it with their own. However, this approach contradicts the advice of St Thomas Aquinas, their “founder,”²¹ who held that:

We must love them both, those whose opinions we share and those whose opinions we reject. For both have labored in the search for truth and both have helped us in the finding of it. (Pieper, 1991b: 84)²²

A Thomistic approach is to respect the opinions of those with whom one disagrees and, simultaneously, to strive to see the rightness within the other’s opinions. If possible, one should become reconciled with the other’s opinions in order that each can lead the other into a fuller understanding of the truth. With regard to recognising the rightness of the other’s view, Pieper evidences this as a feature of Aquinas’ discussion of the two major intellectual forces of the thirteenth century - radical evangelism and Aristotelian natural philosophy. Pieper (1991b: 31) also contends that ‘the remarkable thing about St Thomas... is that he accepted the rightness of both approaches... although they seemed mutually opposed to one another...’ Is it possible then for Augustinian Thomists and Whig Thomists to accept the “rightness” within each other’s arguments?

A biblical precedent can be found in the Gospel of Matthew, when Jesus instructs his disciples in preparation for going ‘...to the lost sheep of the House of Israel’ (10: 6).²³ When encountering people who will welcome them – and reject them – the disciples should be

²¹ Strictly speaking, of course, Aquinas founded no school of disciples (Pieper, 1991b: 159).

²² Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle’s Metaphysics 12, 9 No. 2566*.

²³ All biblical quotations are from *New Jerusalem Bible, 1994*.

‘...cunning as snakes and yet innocent as doves’(10:16); or, as Moreland (2012: 40) interprets it; how can disciples become ‘...deeply spiritual people who are wise and savvy, yet innocent and pure?’ Granted that both Thomistic branches comprise people aspiring to deep spirituality – can they combine Augustinian innocence and purity with Whig wisdom and savvy?

On the one hand, through fear of contamination, Augustinian Thomists routinely reject modern Western culture. Coining the term, the ‘Benedict Option,’ Dreher (2017a: 11) argues in this vein that,

The currents of culture have become so antithetical to Christianity that if we’re going to form ourselves and our kids in the authentic faith, we’re going to have to have some kind of limited withdrawal. What do I mean by that? I mean to put your kids in an authentic Christian school, for example. I mean things such as turning off the TV. Don’t be so quick to open the door to popular culture. Growing up, I experienced how television... was like a sewer pipe into the home. Today its smartphones. Even in my small Louisiana town, fifth-grade boys are watching hardcore pornography on their smartphones. The parents of these boys just choose not to see.

Dreher argues for a strategic withdrawal from secularised Western culture. In essence, this would afford the Christian Church an opportunity to retreat within the sacred realm, to “lick its wounds” and to regroup. However, it would also entail a secession from the secular realm and, in effect, reduce society to a two realms’ model of sacred and profane.

With an eloquent critique of the Augustinian Thomist stance, Rolheiser (2016: 47) affords insight to a Whig Thomist understanding of secular culture thus:

A prophet makes a vow of love, not of alienation. Daniel Berrigan wrote those words – and they need to be highlighted today, when a lot of sincere, committed, religious people self-define as cultural warriors, as prophets at war with secular culture.

...In this outlook, secular culture is seen as a negative force that is threatening our faith, morals, religious liberties and churches... In the face of this, they believe, the churches must be highly vigilant, defensive and in a warrior stance.

Partly they're correct. There are voices and movements within secular culture that do threaten some essentials within our faith and moral lives, as is seen in the issue of abortion... But the real picture is more nuanced than this defensiveness merits.

Secularity... also carries many key Christian values that challenge us to live more deeply our own principles... Secular culture, in its best expressions, is a powerful challenge... to be more sensitive and more moral in the face of economic inequality, human rights violations, war, racism, sexism and the ravaging of mother nature for short-term gain. **The voice of God is also inside secular culture.** [emphasis added]

...Secular culture is not the Antichrist. It ultimately comes out of Judeo-Christian roots and has inextricably embedded within its core many central values of Judeo-Christianity. We need, then, to be careful as cultural warriors, not to be blindly fighting truth, justice, the poor, equality and the integrity of creation. Too often, in a black-and-white approach, we end up having God fighting God.

A prophet has to be characterised first of all by love, by empathy for the very people he or she is challenging.

...So before we can effectively speak a prophetic challenge to our culture we must first let the people we are trying to win over know that we love them... Too often this is not the case. Our culture doesn't sense or believe that we love it...

Prophecy has to be an act of love, otherwise it's merely alienation.

Whig Thomists believe, therefore, that they have sufficient wisdom to re-Christianise this secular culture. They point to the Judaeo-Christian roots of secularity and are in agreement with Rolheiser's assertion that 'The voice of God is also inside secular culture.' There is some similarity, therefore, with the beliefs of Graeme Smith and Simon Glendinning on the opening page of this thesis. The former holds that secularity is '...the latest expression of the Christian religion...' Smith (2008: 2); whilst the latter contends that secularisation '...is a

mutation... an alteration within an event that we can call the Christianisation of the world' (Glendinning 2017: 23). To many though, this would seem an overly optimistic and Christian view of the process of secularisation. Moreover, even if resultant attempts to re-Christianise Western societies were to be successful, the net result would still be a two realms' model of society: sacred and profane.

So, both Augustinian Thomism and Whig Thomism accept the "rightness" of the other's argument that modern Western culture should be replaced with a two-realm model of society: sacred and profane. Their disagreement is about strategy. The Augustinian Thomist strategy is to re-evangelise the "secular civilization" that is modern, liberal culture in the West; whilst the Whig Thomist strategy is to rebuild "sacred civilization" from the rubble of said culture. Both offer limited prospects of success. Dominican Thomism, though, offers an alternative, third strategy.

Accepting the argument of Rolheiser above *not* to alienate those of a secular disposition, Dominican Thomism disavows Augustinian Thomism, and so does not adopt a defensive, warrior-like stance. Dominican Thomists concur with Whig Thomists' view that secularity has Judaeo-Christian roots and that God is to be found within secular culture: and so it offers a hand of friendship. This friendship comprises collaboration to create a "post-secular civilization or society". Such a new, post-secular society supports a fortified secular realm built through an alliance of liberalism and Catholicism. Dominican Thomism contends that proponents of liberal values are allies with whom the Catholic Church can engage in authentic dialogue; and the purpose of such dialogue is to fortify the secular realm in the creation of a three-realm post-secular society. This Dominican Thomist strategy builds upon the introductory statement of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI that Catholics should engage with

dialogue in order to create a different civilization: and this new civilization is a three-realm post-secular society.

Arguably, this Dominican Thomist strategy can unite both Whig Thomists and Augustinian Thomists by partially realising their aims of reconstructing or removing the prevailing liberal, modern culture. If both Augustinian Thomists and Whig Thomists can be persuaded to adopt this Dominican Thomist strategy, then the Catholic Church can present a united front for dialogue with proponents of liberal values in a common pursuit of fortifying the secular realm. According to Ibarra (2013: 45) such a unified stance is an authentic, Thomist solution since ‘...the vitality of Thomism is due precisely to this capacity for perpetual renewal, to a constant and unforeseeable mobility in the search for concordances and integration’. Rather than Augustinian rancour or Whig usurpation, this integrated and unified Dominican Thomist strategy offers a hand of friendship in seeking collaboration with those who promote liberal values. How, though, might Augustinian Thomists and Whig Thomists be persuaded?

Ultimate ends and subordinate ends

A possible route to persuasion is the Thomist concept of “ultimate ends and subordinate ends”. As argued in the opening chapter, Habermas and Ratzinger contend that both proponents of Catholicism and liberalism should adopt the principle of self-limitation in order to create a post-secular society. Notably, this principle sits well with the teaching of Aquinas regarding ultimate ends and subordinate ends. As Augustine Di Noia outlines at his Faith & Reason Institute Lecture, ‘Divine Wisdom and Christian Humanism,’ 23 February, 2000:

It was one of the great contributions of Aquinas to western thought to have shown that to say ‘ultimate’ is not to say ‘exclusive.’ (Rather it is) to say that no other subordinate end could ever take the place of the ultimate end, but it doesn’t mean that subordinate ends couldn’t be pursued.

The desire of both Augustinian Thomists and Whig Thomists is that the secular realm be subdued with the ultimate end being a two-realm society comprising sacred and profane realms. However, it has been argued above that this may be an unrealistic ambition. Rather, the advice being proffered is that both Augustinian Thomists and Whig Thomists should align themselves with the Dominican Thomist strategy of a three-realm society in which the secular realm is strengthened. Not only is this a more realistic ambition; but also for Augustinian Thomists and Whig Thomists it can legitimately be pursued as a subordinate end. Hence, this strategy invites both Augustinian Thomists and Whig Thomists to embrace the principle of self-limitation – or, in Saint Thomas Aquinas’ terms, to seek subordinate ends rather than ultimate ends.

This pursuit of the subordinate end of a post-secular society could be viewed by Augustinian Thomists and Whig Thomists as a means of preparing the soil for evangelisation. As depicted by the Congregation for the Clergy (1997: 23):

The sower knows that the seed falls on specific soils and that it must absorb all the elements that enable it to bear fruit. He also knows that some of these elements can prejudice the germination of the seed and indeed the very harvest itself.

For Augustinian Thomists, at present, the soil of liberal, modern culture is toxic: and they turn their backs on it. For Whig Thomists the present soil may be depicted as rubble-strewn; and from this rubble they wish to rescue stones in order to build a more Christian society. But neither soil is likely to be fruitful; each soil contains elements – poison or rubble – that will

‘prejudice the germination’ of the Gospel seed. From both soils the harvest is likely to be poor. So, why not collaborate with others in creating a new, fertile soil? This new soil is the fortified secular realm – or renewed public sphere – of a post-secular society. In this public sphere, religious language and imagery are used freely and religious arguments have public validity. This is a soil more likely to germinate the Gospel seed and to produce a rich harvest.

A procedurally secular public sphere

Rowan Williams describes this fortified secular realm or renewed public sphere as being ‘procedurally secular’. In his view ‘...it is possible to imagine a “procedurally” secular society... which is always open to being persuaded by confessional or ideological argument on particular issues, but is not committed to privileging permanently any one confessional group’ (Williams 2007: 334). Unlike programmatic secularism, which strives for a public sphere empty of religious views, procedural secularism welcomes ‘...fair and open argument about how common life should be run because everyone argues on the same basis... [of] “public reason”.’ (Williams 2007: 329)²⁴

According to Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI this open argumentation, in pursuit of the ‘common life,’ requires the Catholic Church to accept the principle of self-limitation. The Church needs to accommodate and make common bonds with those around her *before* she has the opportunity to share the Gospel. She must focus on working with interested others to

²⁴ This line of argument from Williams (2007) bears comparison with the critique of Taylor (2007: 432) regarding the ‘negative narratives’ of secularisation that fail to take account of ‘...seeing that the new structures indeed, undermine old forms, but leave open the possibility of new forms which can flourish’. Moreover, Taylor (2007) contends that once the substantive understanding of secularisation is determined, it is then possible to identify the significant, positive influences of traditional Christian belief upon the historical development of the process of secularisation e.g. ‘...two significant components of traditional Christian belief: (1) the belief in a supra-human power; (2) the “transformation perspective” – a belief that individuals, or society as a whole, are called to fulfil transcendent goals...’ (Guyver, 2014: 40).

create a procedurally secular society in order to create a fertile soil for evangelisation. Such an accommodation does raise the question: “what might be these common bonds?”

History has some lessons to teach us.

Lessons from history

In the course of pursuing her apostolate for evangelisation over the course of two thousand years the Church has, at various times and in different places, adopted the strategies favoured by both Augustinian Thomists and Whig Thomists. On the one hand, her apostolate has been Augustinian Thomist when the Church has overthrown a civilisation that she deems evil – such as the Aztecs of Central America. In this place and at that time, the Church had the political power to so do (Po-Chi Hsia 1998). On the other hand, her apostolate has been Whig Thomist when, with little political influence, the Church has been ‘faced with an ancient and self-confident civilisation...’ such as China. In this place and at that time, ‘...natural reason and moral philosophy became the rhetoric of persuasion’ (Po-Chia Hsia 2004: 376).²⁵

However, the argument being developed here is that in the place of Western societies and in the time of secularisation, the Church should employ a Dominican Thomist apostolate for the creation of a post-secular society. And this requires the Catholic Church to accept the principle of self-limitation; and to seek common ground with others in the fortification of a secular realm. Again, though, of what might this common ground consist?

²⁵ See also Moreland (2012: 41) who asserts that ‘...the church was meant to be and has often been the instrument of reason in society’.

Early Church

As outlined in the opening chapter, from the beginning, the Early Church was willing to make an accommodation in order that Christians could more fully participate in public life; in this case with regard to the consumption of pagan meat. Such consumption was reclassified from a prohibited activity within the profane realm to that of an acceptable activity within the secular realm. This case may have been somewhat reluctantly accepted by the Church; but in other cases it warmly embraced activities that stemmed from the profane realm: none more so than with the study of non-Christian philosophy. Indeed, ‘Clement..., Origen, and Eusebius, amongst others, argued that pagan religion and philosophy enshrined much of what was to be learned more concretely in Christianity; and that potential converts should study their own non-Christian philosophers as an introduction to specifically Christian teaching’ (MacCormack 1985: 443). Non-Christian philosophy, then, could be a suitable starting point for identifying and sharing common ground with others in the pursuit of creating post-secular society. This becomes more apparent when one examines the development of the doctrine of prudence.

Occidental era²⁶

Doctrine of virtue

Virtues are qualities or traits that are held to be morally good and so are prized as foundations for good moral being. They are valued as promoting right behavior and thus doing what is right as against doing what is wrong: the opposite of virtue is vice. The four classic, cardinal virtues are prudence, temperance, courage, and justice; whereas the three Christian theological virtues are faith, hope and love.

²⁶ Pieper (1991b: 3) asserts that ‘The thirteenth century has been called the specifically “Occidental” century’.

During the thirteenth century Arab philosophy and science had entered into the heart of intellectual Christendom and, initially, they were regarded as ‘...something alien, new, dangerous, “pagan”.’ (Pieper, 1991b: 4) Ultimately, though, much assumed Islamic philosophy and science was evident in Byzantium and the interpenetration of Islamic and Christian philosophies ran both ways. Amongst the imports was the doctrine of virtue i.e. the four cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. Of classical Greek origin, this doctrine was initially regarded with a degree of suspicion by Catholic thinkers because of its tendency to downplay Scriptural commandments and duties. Over time, though, the doctrine of virtue became a feature not only of the secular realm, but also of the sacred realm. Indeed, according to Pieper (1966: xi) ‘it has become a basic component of the European consciousness, as the result of centuries of persistent intellectual endeavor by all the creative elements of the emerging West, both the Greeks (Plato, Aristotle) and the Romans (Cicero, Seneca), both Judaism (Philo) and Christianity (Clement of Alexandria, St. Augustine).’ The doctrine of virtue then, offers a template for both Catholic and liberal thinkers. It is clearly possible for philosophical ideas and concepts to emanate from the secular realm; and to be fashioned and ultimately embraced by thinkers within the sacred realm.

Potentially, this doctrine of virtue offers a route for collaboration in the creation of a post-secular society.²⁷ The doctrine of virtue has been described by Pieper (1991a: 9) as ‘...the utmost of what a man can be; it is the realization of the human capacity for being.’ Although Catholics and liberals will have different concepts of this human flourishing; the doctrine of virtue is ‘by nature free of regimentation and restriction ...its aim is to clear a trail, to open a

²⁷ A similar argument is mooted by Kraynak (2004) with regard to the role of prudence in a collaboration between Thomism and liberal democracy.

way' (Pieper, 1966: xii). This lack of restriction and openness are good omens for dialogue and collaboration between Catholicism and liberalism. Such a positive regard for the role of doctrine of virtue presumes, of course, that it can unite the different responses of the Catholic Church to secularisation – Whig Thomist and Augustinian Thomist: but can it?

As argued above, if Catholics and liberals are to collaborate in the creation of a post-secular society; it is first of all necessary that Catholicism itself is broadly united. Support from both Augustinian Thomists and Whig Thomists is more likely to be garnered if they perceive that, to some extent, the doctrine of virtue can realise their aspirations.

Pre-eminence of prudence

If the Augustinian Thomists are to be persuaded of the value of the Dominican Thomist strategy to create a post-secular society, then it would be helpful if said society was to have an '...*ethos* [original emphasis] governed by Christian virtues ...unified in its various domains by a passionate urge for spiritual perfection' (Nichols A., 2003: xii). Upon first reading, this 'passionate urge for spiritual perfection' does not seem to sit well with collaboration with liberalism. But what is spiritual perfection? Intriguingly, according to Pieper (1966: 6-7) spiritual perfection is the attainment of the four cardinal virtues, above all, that of *prudence*:

Virtue is a 'perfected ability' of man as a spiritual person; and justice, fortitude, and temperance, as 'abilities' of the whole man, achieve their 'perfection' only when they are founded upon prudence, that is to say upon the perfected ability to make right decisions. Only by means of this perfected ability to make good choices are instinctive inclinations toward goodness exalted into the spiritual core of man's decisions, from which truly human acts arise.

So, upon closer reading, this urge for spiritual perfection desired by the Augustinian Thomists is attainable through the inculcation of the four cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance: and the foremost and fundamental virtue is that of prudence.²⁸ A post-secular society, then, that had the virtue of prudence at its core could be a realistic and attractive proposition for Augustinian Thomists: but what of the Whig Thomists?

Their aspirations appear no less ambitious with regard to the doctrine of virtue. As indicated in the preceding chapter, a leading Whig Thomist (Novak, 1991) concerns himself with drawing parallels between democratic capitalism and moral virtues; especially with regard to enterprise.²⁹ Novak (2004) highlights its quality of inventiveness and the dynamic spirit of enterprise in seeing new practical possibilities for others.³⁰ Aquinas would recognise this as *solertia* i.e.

²⁸ See also Brown W P (1996: 11).

²⁹ In his seminal work, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*, Novak (1991) identifies 7 features of “democratic capitalism” that, he claims, re-orient liberal, modern culture toward Christian values i.e.

1. *Structure* – market economy’s economic institutions of banks and businesses allied with a polity respectful of individual rights and conjoined with a system of moral-cultural institutions such as churches and universities that have a concern for liberty and justice.
2. *New economics* – the new economics of democratic capitalism is “communitative” and not individualistic and, as such, are a seedbed for voluntary communities and associations.
3. *Theodicy* – The call from God to humanity to create, to work, to be inventive and prudent.
4. *Entrepreneurship* – ‘...the role of insight and practical wisdom in entrepreneurship and skilful management’ (Novak, 1991: 47).
5. *Practical principles* – in order to render a business profitable there is a requirement to adhere to practical principles such as cooperation which, of themselves, promote religious values.
6. *Virtue* – Economic rationality must be learned for successful commercial and industrial practice; and the act of acquiring it promotes Aristotelian temperance and prudence, fortitude and justice.
7. *Spirit* – i.e. ‘...the spirit of capitalism, its dynamic principle, its central commitment to practical intellect: to invention, discovery, reasoned cooperation, and the intellectual and moral virtue of enterprise’ (Novak, 1991: 437) [adapted from source: Luby, 2006b: 7-8].

³⁰ Novak offers a positive, optimistic view of capitalism whilst others would contend that there is no discernible link between capitalism and prudence.

...the capacity for instantly grasping an unexpected situation, and deciding with extreme quick-wittedness, to be one of the components of perfect prudence. *Solertia*, [original emphasis] clear-sighted objectivity in the face of the unexpected, is expressly listed in the *Summa Theologica* as one of the prerequisites without which prudence remains imperfect. (Pieper, 1966: 13)

And so, according to a major commentator on Aquinas, one of the fundamentals of a Whig Thomist understanding of capitalism – enterprise – can be identified with a prerequisite for prudence. A vision of a fortified secular realm within a post-secular society, based on the virtue of prudence, thus has *solertia* with which to attract Whig Thomists. The virtue of prudence, with its “freedom from regimentation and restriction”, may have the potential to unite Augustinian Thomists and Whig Thomists; but can it “clear a trail and open a way” for collaboration with liberals in the creation of a post-secular society?

Given that the doctrine of virtue is already “embedded in European consciousness,” then it may offer a suitable point for collaboration between Catholicism and liberalism.³¹ A post-secular society, founded on the doctrine of virtue, could be an attractive proposition for liberals. The attractiveness of the fundamental virtue of prudence is emphasised by its lack within many individuals in Western societies. As Gronbacher (2001) suggests:³²

Our culture offers a multitude of choices; many more than were available even a few decades ago. Unfortunately, many of the choices made in our society are imprudent ones. We see the statistics concerning drug abuse, illegitimate births, crime, and random acts of violence towards people and property...

³¹ A different starting point might be *compassion* which is the argument made by Hedges (2017) in the final chapter of his book ‘Living in a Religiously Diverse, Post-Christian and Post-Secular World.’

³² As quoted in Luby (2006b: 33). Original article is presently unavailable on the World Wide Web. Gronbacher, G M A. 2001. Choice, Even in a Free Society has its Limits. www.thegoodsteward.com. 02 February, 2001.

A post-secular Western society should enable individuals to better address such imprudent choices. For her part, the Catholic Church would promote the doctrine of virtue such that individuals try to perfect their ability to make right decisions and good choices. Nonetheless, there will need to be constructive dialogue with those of a liberal persuasion, immersed as they are in upholding individual rights. Both Catholics and liberals agree on the importance of such individual human rights since, as Moreland (2012: 34) contends,

Individual rights are important, and, for the Christian, they are grounded in the image of God and not in the state. In other words, the Christian believes that human rights are derived from the image of God in us; they do not ultimately come from the state.

Both Catholics and liberals, then, agree on the value of individual human rights – but they disagree as to the guarantor of such rights: God or the state. Debate about the source tends to be argumentative and repetitive. For example, Moreland (2012) illustrates this point with the divisive issue of abortion. Much of the present debate within Western society is framed within the argument of a woman’s individual ‘human right’ to choose; as opposed to the divine command regarding the sanctity of life. However, if Catholics and liberals are to collaborate in the creation of a new, post-secular society then this debate, like others, will need to be reframed. With regard to abortion Moreland (2012: 34) suggests that,

...the abortion debate should not be framed primarily as a debate about the right to life versus the right to choice. Basically, it should be discussed in terms of this question: What does a woman or a community committed to moral virtue and duty do when faced with the question of abortion?

Recap

A lesson from the history of the Occidental era is the value of the doctrine of virtue. Emanating from the profane realm, it offers a means to unite Augustinian Thomists and Whig

Thomists in the common pursuit of the subordinate end of creating a post-secular society. Within such a society, cultivation of the virtue of prudence would be a priority. A post-secular society that aims to perfect the ability of its people to make right decisions and good choices is also attractive to liberals. Within this society's fortified secular realm both the Catholic Church and others can demonstrate the reasoning underpinning what they hold to be right decisions and good choices over a range of issues. In so doing, they will begin to address the need outlined above in the opening statement from the first message of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI to the College of Cardinals in the Sistine chapel. This is a need echoed in the plea of Pope Francis that 'Everyone must be committed to building a society that is truly just and caring' (Guardian, 01 January 2014).³³

This social production by Catholics and liberals through fortifying the secular realm with a common bond of the virtue of prudence must begin somewhere; and the era of Early Modern Catholicism identifies a suitable starting point.

Early Modern Catholicism

As part of her recovery from the trauma of the Reformation, the Catholic Church employed the tactics of catechesis, evangelisation and mission as she endeavoured to regain lost ground.

- For those Europeans whom the Catholic Church held to be her own she promoted more effective catechesis (Bireley, 1999);
- The Church evangelised those people '...in areas of Europe that were nominally Catholic but were in many ways cut off from orthodox Tridentine Catholicism' (Gentilcore, 1994: 269); and

³³ This position is also held by some evangelical Christians e.g. Moreland (2012: 65) who contends that '...the church is to work for a just state, not a Christian state or theocracy'. See also Franchi (2014: 57).

- She sent Europeans to “international mission fields” including China (Po-Chi Hsia, 1998).

However, a striking feature of Early Modern Catholicism was the introduction of mass education; and there was an unashamed link between Catholicism and social production. As Bireley (1999: 122) comments:

Christianization engendered a more disciplined and civilized population. Civil authorities considered this an important gain for both society and government. Christianization and an ordered, disciplined society belonged together. For both purposes authorities supported the schools.

As argued above, a widespread inculcation of the virtue of prudence would be “an important gain” for society; indeed, it would be the bedrock of the secular realm within a post-secular society. And a beginning to this inculcation should be fashioned in schools with both the Catholic Church and the secular authorities collaborating for the common good.³⁴ The value of the Church working with others to create a harmonious society is acknowledged by the Congregation for Catholic Education (2013) which in the introduction to its document – *Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools: Living in Harmony for a Civilization of Love* – contends that:

³⁴ A point emphasised from a UK perspective by the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Nichols (2015: 26) with his statement that ‘The Catholic community in England and Wales is profoundly committed to the common good of our society. Alongside those of other faiths we make substantial contributions to the human capital on which our society depends...’ Referring to ‘...emerging spaces of ethical convergence...taking place *outside* the sacred or church domain,’ Baker (2016: 269) cites examples of such practices from other Christian such as the Oasis Trust which ‘...runs several academy schools across the UK, often in socially deprived areas... [and] use their schools as hubs to deliver many other kinds of welfare including housing, social care, debt counselling advice, youth services.’

Education contains a central challenge for the future: to allow various cultural expressions to co-exist and to promote dialogue so as to foster a peaceful society... Schools have a great responsibility in this field, called as they are to develop intercultural dialogue in their pedagogical vision.

So, there is an historical principle that the Church should work with secular authorities to refashion society: and the starting place is the classroom. The classroom then should be the seedbed of a Dominican Thomist apostolate that seeks to imbue the virtue of prudence amongst all members of a post-secular society.

Nevertheless, whilst this argument for a Dominican Thomist apostolate may be attractive, it could be open to the criticism that it is a naïve understanding. Yes, within the fortified secular realm of a post-secular society, it should be possible to have cordial dialogue with those who promote liberal values – but what of those who are hostile to the Catholic faith? Their activities are unlikely to be confined to the profane realm. For them liberalism may be but a cover for atheism. What of those who laud books like *50 Great Myths about Atheism* that are claimed to give the reader ‘...lots of ammunition for arguing with those pesky theists and accommodationists’.³⁵ What about those who praise *A Manual for Creating Atheists*? The stated purpose of this book is to enable atheists to learn questioning and dialogue techniques that will enable them to engage in conversations that, ultimately, will strip faith from religious believers.³⁶ Is there not a danger that a fortified secular realm will be a gift for atheism? Does the Catholic Church not run the risk of the secular realm becoming a profane realm? Might not the Augustinian Thomist criticism about the toxicity of today’s liberal, modern culture be a forewarning concerning a post-secular society?

³⁵ Review of *50 Great Myths about Atheism* - see <http://whyevolutionistrue.wordpress.com/2013/10/14/three-good-new-books-on-secularism-and-atheism/> [accessed 27 January 2018]

³⁶ See <http://www.thedivineconspiracy.org/Z5280S.pdf> [accessed 27 January 2018]

Potentially, the answer to these three questions is “Yes”. For the creation of a new post-secular society, the Catholic Church must be prepared to engage with atheism.

Modern Catholicism

To a large extent, the preparatory work for such an engagement has already been undertaken by Henri de Lubac. In *The Drama of Atheist Humanism* (1995) he analyses the work of the three “greats” of the “historical juncture” (Smith 2013) of contemporary atheism: Comte, Feuerbach and Nietzsche. And in the foreword de Lubac receives the following accolade from Hans Urs von Balthasar; namely, that his book provides ‘...guidelines for the conversations of Christians with their atheistic brothers’. Moreover, de Lubac is one of the two French theologians who are ‘lodestars’ for Pope Francis (Ivereigh 2015); and this conversational approach is adeptly illustrated by Ivereigh (2015: 372) in his retelling of Pope Francis “silently blessing” of a mostly unbelieving media because he ‘...respect[s] the conscience of each, but in the knowledge that each of you is a child of God.’

Such a conversational approach may hold some appeal for Whig Thomists who seek opportunities to Christianise others’ values; but for Augustinian Thomists it may be akin to “supping with the devil”. However, the latter should recall that according to Aquinas, ‘If one is to disarm one's adversary... one has got to know his arguments better even than he does’ (Akin, 2001: foreword).³⁷ Indeed, both sets of Thomists should acknowledge Pieper’s admonition on the second page of this chapter, given that even some atheists do: e.g. ‘...we can and should respect other viewpoints and recognize the truths that everyone finds and can give respect to their honest search for truth and meaning’ (Hedges 2017: 178).

³⁷ Regis Martin STD, foreword to *The Salvation Controversy*.

And so, through the voice of de Lubac, we begin a conversation with our atheistic brothers: Ludwig Feuerbach, Friedrich Nietzsche and Auguste Comte.

Feuerbach and Nietzsche

In 1842 Feuerbach had his book *Das Wesen des Christentums (The Essence of Christianity)* published; and this prompted a retort that ‘Herr Feuerbach in Berlin... offers Christian Europe a new god to worship – the human race’.³⁸ Feuerbach believes that “God is made in the image of Man” and so completely reverses Christian teaching. Intriguingly, Feuerbach does not consider himself an atheist; rather he believes that ‘The true atheist is not the man who denies God... it is the man for whom the attributes of divinity, such as love, wisdom and justice, are nothing’ (de Lubac, 1995: 31).³⁹ So, Feuerbach shares with Catholicism a love of God’s attributes; but he ascribes them to humanity since ‘It is the essence of man that is the supreme being...’ (de Lubac, 1995: 30).⁴⁰ Despite this role reversal of God and humanity, there is, at least, some common ground⁴¹ between Catholicism and this form of atheism; as both recognise the divine attributes of love, wisdom and justice – although each ascribes them to opposing sources.⁴² And, notably, it was neither Feuerbach nor another atheist who proclaimed the following:

³⁸ Emile Saisset, 1850, *Les Ecoles philosophiques en France*, as quoted in de Lubac (1995: 135).

³⁹ Referring to Feuerbach *Principes de la philosophie de l’avenir* p46.

⁴⁰ Referring to Feuerbach’s *Essence du christianisme* p92.

⁴¹ See also Carroll and Norman (2017: xiii) who contend that ‘The idea of a simple division between a uniform camp of religion and a uniform camp of atheism is more misleading than ever in the contemporary world...’

⁴² An example, perhaps, of “panentheistic humanism,” a term coined by Carroll (2017: 95) in which ‘...experiences are expressed in a variety of ways by religious and non-religious traditions and point in the direction of layers of transcendence which expand a narrow materialistic and reductionist conception of the self.’

O man.... Consider your royal dignity! ...Behold, of all that exists there is nothing that can contain your greatness.

Rather, these words were exclaimed by a Christian saint, Gregory of Nyssa.⁴³

However, whilst Feuerbach's form of atheism shares with Christianity the inherent "royal dignity" of humanity, Nietzsche's atheism presents a rather different picture. He complains bitterly of Christians that:

If they want me to believe in their Saviour... His followers will have to look more like men who have been saved!⁴⁴

For de Lubac the important lesson to be drawn here is that there are compassionate and spiritual atheists who are disappointed by Christians. Whilst Feuerbach points us to the common ground for dialogue between Catholicism and atheism, from the disappointment of Nietzsche we learn how to conduct this dialogue – with humility. For de Lubac (1995: 123-124) chastises us:

Among the best of those whom we thus disappoint, some of the most clear-sighted and the most spiritual find themselves... on the threshold [but] they pause, repelled by the spectacle that we present – we, the Christians of today...

Sadly, this chastisement carries even more force now, given the many reports of the sexual abuse of children across the continents of America, Europe and Australasia. These reports have received significant media and public attention and many of the cases span several decades and are brought forward years after the abuse occurred.

⁴³ Gregory of Nyssa *In cantica* as quoted in de Lubac (1995: 20).

⁴⁴ Nietzsche *Zarathoustra* p99 as quoted in de Lubac (1995: 122).

So, from this encounter with the atheism of Feuerbach and Nietzsche we identify common ground and learn to engage with humility. And there are those from an atheistic world view who share such sentiments e.g. ‘...atheism and religion are not simply opposite poles and locked in combat, but rather are world views which may respect and listen to each other’ (Hedges 2017: 9). However, it is with Comte’s version of atheism that the Catholic Church has to reckon with today: for it most resembles the secular spirit of which Taylor spoke in the opening chapter.

Comte

In the same year that Feuerbach produced his seminal work that influenced Karl Marx and Frederick Engels amongst others, Auguste Comte introduced to the world his doctrine of positivism in *Cours de philosophie positive (The Course in Positivist Philosophy)*. Indeed, so influential was this doctrine that by the end of the nineteenth century Comte’s “positive spirit” had ‘...become almost unnoticeable, “like the air one breathes”.’ (de Lubac, 1995: 135) Comte’s form of atheism is more elusive than those proposed by Feuerbach and Nietzsche. It is organic and positive as it aims ‘...to replace Christianity in Europe, in order to set the whole world upon a new course... (as) modern man seeks to escape from any kind of transcendency and to shake off the thing it regards as an unbearable yoke – namely, faith in God’ (de Lubac, 1995: 136). Its current form is secularism (Casanova 2011).

Comtian atheism – or secularism – relegates theology to the lowest of three states of knowledge, namely fictitious.⁴⁵ It is superseded by the metaphysical or abstract which, in its turn, gives way to the highest state of knowledge – scientific/positive. Ultimately, in this

⁴⁵ His argument is that the human mind processes all forms of knowledge through three “states” i.e. theological/fictitious, metaphysical/abstract, and scientific/positive.

scheme humanity would no longer be tied down by simple, religious prejudices; since ‘the day is approaching when... “theology would necessarily die out as physics advances”.’ (de Lubac, 1995: 147)⁴⁶ The worship of God is to be replaced by the worship of humanity; for positivism and not Catholicism is the “true religion”. Viewed in this fashion there appears little room for dialogue between Catholicism and positivism: it appears more like a battleground than a debating chamber. And yet, there may be a way ahead.

Although positivism accords a low status to the ‘states’ of theology and metaphysics, at least they are acknowledged. Thus, there may be some common ground between Catholicism and positivism, and a theologian such as de Lubac seeks to explore this. In *The Mystery of the Supernatural* de Lubac argues that within humanity there is a desire for God, for the supernatural. It is this desire that can fashion common ground between theology and physics; that can partially reconcile positivism and Catholicism. To exemplify; in theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking’s book *Universe in a Nutshell*, leading scientists at the “cutting edge of astrophysics” discuss the likelihood of “brane worlds” or other dimensions. They speculate that the explanation for the known, physical universe or nature lies without i.e. it is *supra* natural. Although Hawking and other scientists avoid using the word “supernatural”, a supernatural explanation for the natural order of the universe can be interpreted from their evidence and argumentation. Thus, from both physics and theology there is a desire to understand the universe: this constitutes common ground between Catholicism and positivism and offers some promise for dialogue.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Referring to Comte’s *Cours de philosophie positive* vol.4:108.

⁴⁷ Alternatively, applying the non-overlapping magisteria (NOMA) of Gould (1997) then positivism in the domain of facts, and religion in the domain of values, can each shed their own light.

From de Lubac's conversation with the "greats" of theism we learn that within both atheists and Catholics there is a desire for the supernatural: the former seek to understand the nature of the Universe, whilst the latter seek a relationship with the author of the Universe. Both atheists and Catholics hold dear the 'divine attributes' of love, wisdom and justice: the former sees this divinity resting within humanity, whilst the latter with God. Granted a spirit of humility,⁴⁸ it appears that dialogue could prove fruitful.

Review

An alternative Dominican Thomist strategy is being proposed. It is *Thomistic* in that:

- First, it seeks to unite the opposing views held by Augustinian Thomists and Whig Thomists through affirming the "rightness" of their views with regard to their disavowal of liberal, modern culture;
- Secondly, it seeks to bring them into a fuller understanding of the truth that the Catholic Church has an obligation to build a society that is just and caring for all of its members. This requires a strengthening of the secular realm and not its abolition; and
- Thirdly, it follows the teaching of Aquinas with respect to subordinate ends. Whilst the ultimate end is the evangelisation of all peoples; it is nevertheless legitimate to pursue the subordinate end of a just and caring society.

This strategy can be understood as *Dominican* in that it uses the Dominican mantra of borrowing from "the spirit of the age to supply the wants of the age" (Drane 1988). The spirit of this secular age is the "power of cool, disengaged reason" and the wants of the age are

⁴⁸ Humility is one of the five 'dispositions and procedures' advocated by Castelli (2018: 147) regarding the teaching of dialogue in RE classrooms.

“human flourishing” (Taylor 2007). A marriage of this spirit and these wants is exemplified by the virtue of prudence i.e. the “perfected ability” to make good choices and right decisions (Pieper 1966). Hence, this Dominican Thomist strategy proposes to create a post-secular society through pursuing the subordinate end of the inculcation of the virtue of prudence amongst all members of society. The ultimate end for the Catholic Church is the evangelisation of all peoples; but in the meantime she should embrace pre-evangelisation and content herself with making common bonds with those around her.

This self-limitation requires of the Church that she engage in authentic and respectful dialogue with those from all backgrounds.⁴⁹ History teaches her not to be fearful of such dialogue even with those who are hostile to Christian faith – for even here common ground can be found. Indeed, it is in the interests of those who are hostile to the faith not to become religiously illiterate since this condition ‘...makes one poorly equipped to have any claim to be either culturally knowledgeable or politically aware’ (Hedges 2017: 10). The creation of a public sphere in which all world views are respected benefits both Christians and atheists alike. And the beginning point for such a post-secular society is the classroom: and it is to classroom pedagogy that we now turn.

Classroom Pedagogy

If a post-secular society seeks virtuous citizens who have developed a “perfected ability to make good choices and right decisions”, then such development should begin in the

⁴⁹ Again, a Dominican influence can be detected. The research officer of the Secretariat for Dialogue with Non-Believers when it became part of the Pontifical Council for Culture was no less than Michael Paul Gallagher; and his learning underpins the launch of the Courtyard of the Gentiles. As a Jesuit priest, Michael Paul Gallagher (1992) highlights the prime role of dialogue with respect to atheism; whilst the Dominican preacher Cajetan Kelly (1956) relates the influence of the Dominican order regarding the Jesuits’ founder St Ignatius.

classroom. As discussed in the opening chapter, Dominican Thomist pedagogy would be characterised by students conversing intelligently about ultimate truth claims through analysis of arguments and evidence. However, despite widespread support for RE that ‘...is critical, outward looking, and dialogical’ (Clarke & Woodhead 2015: 34), as the Ofsted (2013) report *Religious education: realising the potential* demonstrates, it is not an easy task to enable students to think critically about a range of religious, ethical and philosophical issues.

Within a Scottish context, there also appears to be an element of “challenge” that renders this task even more difficult. These intelligent conversations are not to be conducted “at a distance” but rather, they may run the risk of causing personal offence. The Chief Executive of Education Scotland in the *Curriculum Impact Review Report* for religious and moral education (RME) contends that:

Exploring and sharing our own viewpoints, beliefs and values and having them sometimes *challenged by others...* [emphasis added] Religious and Moral Education provides a key context for exploring values and beliefs in this way and therefore plays a central role in preparing young Scots for their future. (Education Scotland, 2014: Foreword)⁵⁰

Later in the report, the authors argue against developing a classroom culture that ‘...teaches only a broad respect and tolerance of others...’ and which ‘...too often remains silent for *fear of offending others* [emphasis added].’ Instead, the authors of this report claim that:

⁵⁰ This report appears to have been influenced by a preceding Scottish Government (2011) document, *Belief in Dialogue*.

The Scottish model of Religious and Moral Education [should be] built on the premise that to respect the beliefs and values of others... *only from a position of distance, is not good enough* [emphasis added]. This curriculum area provides children and young people with meaningful opportunities for genuine dialogue about faith and beliefs, including those which are not grounded in religion, through grappling with these challenges for themselves. (Education Scotland, 2014: 8-9)

To say the least, this is a robust view of the role of dialogue within Scottish RME classrooms. The prospect of having one's '...own viewpoints, beliefs and values... challenged by others' is difficult to contemplate – for both teachers and students. For example, the demands placed upon both teachers and students to conduct such dialogue sensitively were highlighted in a conversation with an intelligent and articulate student (aged 14 years) who took umbrage at the suggestion that her views on deicide were inconsistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church. Despite a tactful approach from the teacher this led, sadly, to her withdrawal from her course in Roman Catholic Religious Education (RCRE).

However, this robust approach to dialogue now appears to be taking root across the UK. A Report of the Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life (2015) asserts that 'education about religion and belief is essential because it is in schools and colleges that we have the best and earliest chance of breaking down ignorance and developing individuals who will be receptive of the other, and ask difficult questions without fear of offending.' This view also sits well with the view within the Catholic Church that dialogue should be authentic and respectful. Furthermore, it supports the argument within this thesis that the members of a post-secular society should be open to and knowledgeable about religious argumentation e.g.

During class and group discussions... the majority of young people demonstrate knowledge and understanding of contemporary debates related to important aspects of society. This includes human rights, crime and punishment, equalities, sustainability, medical ethics and globalisation. *They are not always well enough informed about how religious and other viewpoints might influence such debates within the public domain* [emphasis added] (Education Scotland, 2014: 13).

In order to remedy this lack of understanding regarding the role of religion within the public sphere, the authors point out that ‘...there is scope ...to support the development of higher order thinking skills’ amongst students (Education Scotland, 2014: 13). The context of the development of these “higher order thinking skills” for students is that of class and group dialogue.

A leading project with respect to developing such dialogic skills for students is *Thinking Together* based at the Faculty of Education, Cambridge University. This project promotes ‘a dialogue-based approach to the development of children's thinking and learning [which] is based on over two decades of classroom-based research into the relationship between talking and thinking’ (see <http://thinkingtogether.educ.cam.ac.uk>)⁵¹ A foundational book for the project is Mercer’s *The Guided Construction of Knowledge: Talk Amongst Teachers and Learners*. In this work Mercer (1995: 104) advocates that students practise the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk. With the former they ‘...build positively but uncritically on what the other has said’ and their discourse is ‘...characterized by repetitions, confirmations and elaborations’ [see Figure 1 below].

⁵¹ Accessed 27 January 2018.

Figure 1

Cumulative talk – linguistic analysis

Robbie: Definitely! Do you ... would you agree with me that ... I don't feel like ... I do believe in evolution as well as God like creating animals but I do believe they also evolved into what we have today. Would you agree with that?

Jamie: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Totally agree! That's pretty sound.

Robbie: Cool! Pretty sound indeed. Um ... yeah ... I also think stuff that's read in the Bible is not fully meant to be taken entirely literally like the story of Adam and Eve and stuff.

Jamie: Yeah I think some people take that too literally and people are up in arms about evolution and Adam and Eve and how it's all wrong but I think it's more symbolic than it is literal.

Robbie: Definitely! Yeah that's what it is ...

In this example from Luby (2014: 63), cumulative talk is demonstrated by Jamie confirming Robbie's belief in God-guided evolution. Also, there is both repetition and confirmation with regard to a literal understanding of the Adam and Eve story. Indeed, some elaboration is offered by Jamie with the introduction of symbolism; and this is confirmed by Robbie. This sharing of ideas and information and joint decision-making helps to establish trust; and 'trust is an essential component... particularly when students are challenging their own and others' world-views' (Pierce and Gilles 2008: 43). So, the development of trust within cumulative talk appears to be a necessary pre-requisite for exploratory talk in which the students '...engage critically but constructively with each other's ideas' (Mercer 1995: 104).

Exploratory talk, though, is more than just a robust form of dialogue at the linguistic level: it gets to the very heart of Dominican Thomist post-secular pedagogy that is characterised by intelligent conversations about ultimate truth claims. And, as Mercer suggests, this can be demonstrated through three levels of analysis – *linguistic, psychological* and *cultural*.

Linguistic analytical level

At a *linguistic level*, exploratory talk satisfies the demand for robust student conversations in RE that will promote ‘speech acts’ such as assertions, challenges, explanations, requests, etc. At this level, exploratory talk is typified by ‘statements and suggestions [being] offered for joint consideration [and] these may be challenged and counter-challenged, but challenges are justified and alternative hypotheses are offered’ (Mercer 1995: 104) [see Figure 2 below].

Figure 2

Exploratory talk – linguistic analysis

Douglas: Well I might disagree with you there because I think that um ... humans are the cause of sin because God gave us freewill, he didn't want to control us otherwise we'd be like robots.

Craig: Uh huh.

Douglas: And that wouldn't give us any freedom at all, we'll always be good and God gave us freewill to choose what is right but obviously humans didn't choose that way, they didn't the right way and they've become selfish, like Eve tricking Adam into eating that apple which caused him to sin against God, and that obviously angered God and I think for me I think that's because of sin, humans are the cause of sin.

Craig: Yeah, I'd agree that humans are the cause of sin and no doubt our sort of freewill, if we have it. We often choose the wrong path and, again the Adam and Eve story is a fantastic

way of illustrating society, and how people sin and what effect it can have. But, again, I think these stories need to be taken with a pinch of salt; and that they are in my opinion nothing more than stories. But you can still read into them as much as you can read into many sorts of novels and literature; which of course we know they aren't true stories. But we can still appreciate the moral values that they give us such as to name a few, The Lord of the Flies and Animal Farm, that many of us studied in English um ... that's my point of view with regards to that.

Douglas: Well I think the stories could be pretty accurate because they've been passed on with the Bible and the Catholic Church; they've been passed on ever since Jesus came into this world as a form of God and even before that in the Old Testament.

(source: Luby 2014: 63-64)

In this example, exploratory talk is evidenced by Douglas,⁵² who offers a view on the relationship between humanity, freewill and sin. This view is challenged by Craig who justifies his criticism by countering that Douglas holds a too literal understanding of the Creation story. Instead, Craig moots an alternative hypothesis in which the Creation story is regarded more like a novel that contains important moral truths. In response, Douglas counter-challenges this view with an appeal to the authority of the Bible and Tradition. As recommended by Education Scotland, at a linguistic level, this is an example of students engaging in genuine dialogue about faith and belief and includes a viewpoint that is not grounded in religion.

Psychological analytical level

The opening chapter discussed the spirit of this secular age and, in particular, identified from Taylor's *magnum opus* – *A Secular Age* – that this spirit is 'the power of cool, disengaged

⁵² To protect their anonymity these names are fictional.

reason'. It is an accord about human reason that will enable a Dominican Thomist alliance between the Catholic and classic liberal traditions. Tellingly, exploratory talk is central to human reasoning as affirmed by Mercer (1995: 105):

Exploratory talk foregrounds reasoning [emphasis added]. Its ground rules require that the views of all participants are sought and considered, that proposals are explicitly stated and evaluated, and that explicit agreement precedes decisions and actions. Both cumulative and exploratory talk seem to be aimed at the achievement of consensus... In cumulative talk... ideas and information are certainly shared and joint decisions may be reached... Exploratory talk, by incorporating both conflict and the open sharing of ideas represents the more 'visible' pursuit of rational consensus through conversation.

In Catholic understanding, '...education must assist the formation of reason as a way of enabling the human person to perceive truth itself' (Franchi 2014: 61).⁵³ We witness the beginnings of such formation in the above conversation between Douglas and Craig through their exemplification of the attributes of "conflict" and "the open sharing of ideas".

Moreover, their "visible pursuit of rational consensus" is based on "ground rules" that not only derive implicitly from their friendship; but also explicitly from a prompt sheet that each reads prior to their conversation.⁵⁴ This prompt sheet derives from the recommendations of McKenna et al (2008) who undertook a large scale research project on inter faith dialogue in RE with primary school pupils. Recognition that these ground rules have influenced Douglas and Craig's conversation seems to be evidenced by:

- (a) Douglas clearly stating his disagreement at the outset and telling Craig that he wishes him to think about humans being the cause of sin; and

⁵³ Franchi is referring to the address of Pope Emeritus Benedict to the Collège des Bernardins, Paris, 12 September 2008.

⁵⁴ Source Luby (2012: 40). See Figure 3, Chapter Three.

(b) Craig initially indicating his agreement with Douglas's idea but then explaining why he thinks differently about the Creation story.

Crucially, for Dominican Thomist pedagogy, exploratory talk is a dialogic skill that can be developed in the classroom. From the primary sector of schooling we ascertain that pupils can learn to comprehend and apply the ground rules for exploratory talk that underpin the development of reasoning (McKenna et al 2008), whilst from the secondary sector of schooling we learn that although 'we need to teach pupils how to dialogue...' (Castelli 2018: 146), a teacher can intervene to promote this dialogic skill within classroom activities (Luby 2015b). At the heart of these ground rules and interventions is the creation of a 'safe space' as commended by CORE (2017: 26):⁵⁵

The phrase 'a safe space to discuss difference,'... was the most often quoted single phrase across the evidence gathering sessions. Teachers and subject experts alike turned to it to explain the distinctive place of RE in the curriculum. This is not 'safe' in the sense of 'sanitised' but rather a space where people can talk – agree and disagree – freely about the contentious issues raised by worldviews.

This 'safe space' within the classroom is analogous to the secular realm within a post-secular society: both act as a neutral zone for the discussion of worldviews. Given then, that for pedagogy, the classroom is a microcosm of society; it is timely to consider the third, cultural level of analysis.

⁵⁵ CORE attributes 'safe space' to the work of Robert Jackson. See also Trethewey and Menzies (2015: 9) in their advocacy of a safe space and participants '...need[ing] to be taught the linguistic and behavioural tools to ask questions and to... learn from each other in a non-threatening way.'

Cultural analytical level

Drawing upon a threefold model of society comprising profane, sacred and secular realms, the argument being developed within this thesis is that the Catholic Church should ally with those from the classic liberal tradition in order to strengthen the secular realm. In the past this realm has proved weak and porous such that it has been overwhelmed by values emanating from the sacred realm in the pre-Enlightenment era; and by values emanating from the profane realm in the post-Enlightenment era. It is in the interest of both parties – Catholic and liberal – to create a post-secular society with a fortified secular realm that will enable all people from different faith and non-faith backgrounds to contribute confidently to the public sphere. In order to do so each party will be required to impose upon itself the principle of self-limitation. With such an agreement in place, then both parties can seek to create a post-secular society that bears the hallmark of a public sphere dignified by debate that is founded on human reasoning.

Dignified debate founded upon human reasoning is not an everyday occurrence within the public sphere: a cursory examination of the media attests to this.⁵⁶ Such exemplary behaviour needs to be learned; and the beginnings of such behaviour can be learned in the classroom. As discussed in the opening chapter, it is generally acknowledged that education ‘...has a central role in shaping a society...’ (Hartnett and Naish 1990: 12); and this is evidenced by the publication of no less than 45 Government reports concerning education since 2000 (see <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/index.html>).

⁵⁶ e.g. newspaper headlines of 10 June, 2018 include ‘May Savages Lords Over Brexit’ (Sunday Express) and ‘North Korea’s RESERVOIR DOGS: Kim’s henchmen for Trump summit REVEALED’ (The Daily Star On Sunday).

Recently, there has been much interest in the relationship between RE pedagogies and the future shape of society (e.g. Chater and Erricker, 2013; Gearon, 2013; OSCE 2007). From a Dominican Thomist perspective, the critical RE pedagogy mooted by Wright (2000, 2007) is of particular interest with regard to his advocacy of students creating intelligent conversations about questions of ultimate truth.⁵⁷

Within this relationship between critical RE pedagogy and the creation of a fortified secular realm...

...exploratory talk deserves special attention [emphasis added] (as) it typifies language which embodies certain principles – of accountability, of clarity, of constructive criticism and receptiveness to well-argued proposals – which are valued highly in many societies. In many of our key social institutions... people have to use language to critically interrogate the quality of the claims, hypotheses and proposals made by other people, to express clearly their own understandings, to reach consensual agreement and make joint decisions’ (Mercer 1995: 106)

Such a sophisticated approach to public debate is surely to be welcomed by both the classic liberal and Catholic traditions. And so critical RE pedagogy that focuses on the development of the dialogic skill of exploratory talk could sow the seed for a public sphere that would fortify the secular realm. Hence, this Dominican Thomist strategy could:

- a) Enable Catholic educators to take full cognisance of the moral imperative to take into account the needs of all pupils by promoting authentic dialogue (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982); and

⁵⁷ See also Sister Mary Dominic Heath (2017: 39) who points out that a sincere quest for truth is akin to the moral virtue of studiousness ‘...that attracts us to what is worth knowing (the true and good)’

- b) Assist those from both the classic liberal and Catholic traditions to learn how to debate seriously with each other's views concerning controversial matters in the public sphere (Habermas 2006).

Summary

Positing a three realms' model for Western societies – profane, sacred and secular – the secular realm has a crucial role to perform in being neutral territory between the profane and sacred realms. Within the secular realm there should be free rein within the public sphere to espouse different values and ideologies; and all voices should be heard. However, post-Enlightenment the voice of the sacred realm has been gradually stilled within the public sphere and, disconcertingly, the Catholic Church often finds that her views are bypassed and ignored. This has provoked two opposing responses within the Catholic Church. On the one hand, the Augustinian Thomist strategy is to sweep away the toxic, secular realm and fashion a return to the heady days of Christendom. On the other hand, the Whig Thomist strategy is to Christianise the secular realm by building upon the liberal values therein. In either case only two realms will remain – sacred and profane.

An alternative Dominican Thomist strategy is proposed and elaborated here: a post-secular society that retains the three realms' model but with a fortified secular realm. The fortification of the secular realm is achieved through an alliance of classic liberalism and Catholicism. This alliance is founded upon both proponents of Catholicism and liberalism adopting the principle of self-limitation. It is acknowledged that, initially, self-limitation will have little appeal for those of an Augustinian Thomist or Whig Thomist persuasion. However, if they can set aside their ultimate end of evangelisation, there is much to be gained by pursuing the subordinate end of creating a fortified secular realm. First of all, in the public

sphere both religious imagery and language will be used freely; and religious argumentation will be taken seriously. Secondly, through embracing self-limitation, those from the classic liberal tradition will refrain from advocating secularist ideologies. Thirdly, those from both the Catholic tradition and the classic liberal tradition can collaborate to create a post-secular society that promotes the virtue of prudence - the perfected ability to make right decisions and good choices.

Such a revitalised public sphere should also re-energise Christians. From within the sacred realm, the Church ‘...may [still] *preach* to unbelievers what Scripture says about some topic, but when believers *argue* for their views in the public square or *defend* them against those who do not accept the Scriptures, they should use general principles of moral argument and reasoning’ (Moreland 2012: 65). Likewise, though, from within the profane realm, there may arise a re-energised atheism. Indeed, this is already being witnessed in the rise of the movement known as “New Atheism” with leading proponents such as Dawkins, Dennett and Hitchens. This new atheism is promoted by those who advocate the view that religion is irrational, even superstitious, and should not be tolerated but should be criticised and exposed. Nonetheless, there is little that is new in their arguments;⁵⁸ and from the Modern era’s “conversations” of de Lubac with Comte, Feuerbach and Nietzsche we learn that there is common ground between some Catholics and atheists. Both value love, wisdom and justice, even if they ascribe them to different sources.⁵⁹ So, bearing in mind the divine

⁵⁸ See <http://www.iep.utm.edu/n-atheis/#H8> [Accessed 27 January 2018]

⁵⁹ Wisdom, justice, and love (compassion and integrity) are inscribed on the mace of the Scottish Parliament and they have helped to define the values for Scotland’s democracy and latest major curricular initiative *Curriculum for Excellence* (see <https://www2.gov.scot/Publications/2004/11/20178/45862#4>).

imperative to ‘love your enemies,’⁶⁰ it should be possible for Catholics to collaborate with others in the establishment of a post-secular society.⁶¹

Arguably, this collaboration has already begun⁶² with the *Courtyard of the Gentiles* – a manifestation of a ‘...desire for the apparent hostility between Christians and atheists to be... dissolved’ (Franchi 2014: 60). A sparkling example of dialogue between Christianity and atheism is found in ‘Science, stories and the self’ which is a conversation between Raymond Tallis, an avowed atheist, and Rowan Williams. (Carroll and Norman 2017)

So, summing up this discussion of Early Modern Catholicism, the Church is aware that she can work successfully with secular authorities to refashion society for the common good. At this present time, though, the common good is located in a post-secular society and not a fully Christian society. This post-secular society should have a fortified secular realm in which all can freely exchange views that will be treated with respect. But listening with respect is a behaviour that requires to be learned – and this learning commences in the classroom.

As argued above, such classroom learning should focus on developing the dialogic skills of *cumulative talk* and *exploratory talk*. With cumulative talk, the students learn to build positively and uncritically on what each other says; and in so doing they establish a relationship of trust. This dialogic skill is a pre-requisite for the more robust dialogic skill of

⁶⁰ Luke 6:27 ‘But I say this to you who are listening: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you...’ New Jerusalem Bible (1994).

⁶¹ As Williams (2017: 28) reminds us: ‘...being in the body of Christ, in the community of baptized believers, gives us the freedom... to love the world with the unquestioning generosity of God, never restricting ourselves to loving those who are familiar to us and who are like us.’

⁶² Some would dispute this claim e.g. see Nucci (2011).

exploratory talk; whereby students learn to engage critically and constructively with each other's views.

Exploratory talk is the more important of these dialogic skills and its suitability can be demonstrated on three levels. Firstly, at a linguistic level, exploratory talk requires participants to use speech acts that will lead to hypotheses that can be challenged and counter-challenged; and such challenges must be justified and alternatives should be offered. Secondly, at a psychological level, exploratory talk is a conduit for reasoning in that it requires all views to be considered; that hypotheses or proposals are clearly stated and evaluated; and that firm agreement precedes decisions and actions. Thirdly, at a cultural level, through its embodiment of principles such as accountability, clarity and constructive criticism; exploratory talk is the kind of educated discourse or reasoning that is prevalent in many key social institutions.

Exploratory talk is therefore a sophisticated dialogic skill – the acquisition and use of which is prized by both those from the classic liberal and Catholic traditions. The next chapter shall address how we might begin the process of such acquisition within the classroom. In so doing, we shall begin to fulfil the assurance of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, outlined in the introduction to this chapter, that the Catholic Church seeks authentic and respectful dialogue for the good of humanity.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

...I consider essential for facing the present moment: constructive dialogue...When leaders in various fields ask me for advice, my response is always the same: dialogue, dialogue, dialogue. (Pope Francis 27 July 2013; as quoted in Sherman 2015)

Introduction

An argument is made in the preceding chapters for a Dominican Thomist strategy that will fortify the secular realm in order to create a procedurally secular society. The creation of such a society should begin within the classroom; and the genesis of this creation is dialogue. Robin Alexander⁶³ identifies five significant reasons why dialogue is so fundamental to education and one of these reasons is *social and cultural*. According to Alexander, talk enables children to relate with others and in so doing, not only build up their identities but also the surrounding culture. So, if Western, liberal culture is to be re-created as a procedurally secular society in the fullest sense then it begins with children's talk in the classroom.

Alexander has undertaken much research in this area; including an international comparative research programme (England, France, India, Russia, United States) in which he locates the analysis of culture and pedagogy in '...educational systems, policies and histories, and of schools as organisations and micro-cultures' (Alexander 2008: 93). And notably, he is not alone in his belief that dialogue is central to both pedagogy and culture. For it is a recognised Vygotskian cultural-historical activity theory that '...emphasise[s] the central role of

⁶³ Alexander, R. 2006. *Talk for learning: Teaching and learning through dialogue*. (DVD) Selby, Yorkshire: North Yorkshire County Council in conjunction with Dialogos – as referred to in Scott (2009).

dialogue in taking over and making one's own the knowledge, skills and practices that enable one to participate productively in the activities of one's community and of the wider society...' (Wells and Ball 2008: 170) Some evidence for the success of dialogue performing such a transformative role within a society is to be found in the "Argentine model."

Established in 2005 by Pope Francis (then Cardinal Bergoglio) this 'Argentine model of interreligious dialogue [is] unique in the world... as it relies on friendship rather than on reaching theological agreement' (Ivereigh 2015: 321)

It was through relationships built upon friendship that Bergoglio was able '...to create an unprecedented civic space' (Ivereigh 2015: 322) in which matters of religious, political and societal importance are addressed. This civic space engendered by dialogue between friends is a prototype for the procedurally secular realm envisaged here.⁶⁴ If the micro-cultures of schools and classrooms are imbued with conversations that are both cumulative and exploratory in nature; then the prospects for a procedurally secular realm are enhanced.

Given the central role of classroom dialogue in fashioning a school micro-culture that might foreshadow the creation of a procedurally secular society, the "Argentine model of interreligious dialogue" signals that religious education classrooms could be suitable loci for developing just such dialogic skills. The Religious Education Council of England & Wales designates as a key feature of the purpose of RE study '...develop[ing] in pupils aptitude for

⁶⁴ Pope Francis has often spoken of a "culture of encounter" and echoes of this are found in the words of Pearce (2017: xvii) when he contends that: 'In encounter at its best we can find our own horizons are expanded, with mutual enrichment. In an increasingly plural society we can only gain from having a better understanding of one another, including the beliefs and values which shape our attitudes and hopes. We need to think together, as well as work together, to achieve this.'

dialogue so that they can participate positively in our society with its diverse religions and world-views' (REC 2013: 14).⁶⁵

From a research perspective, Fancourt (2016: 2) helpfully delineates a four-fold relationship between dialogue and religious education i.e.

- Dialogue in the classroom between pupils from different faith and non-faith perspectives;
- Using technology to enable dialogue between schools for students with different backgrounds;
- Encountering different religious ideas in the RE classroom which '...often overlaps with demands for dialogical pedagogies...'; and
- Religious education in dialogue with other disciplines.

Given the argument of the preceding chapters as to the importance of inculcating the impulses and imperatives of critical RE pedagogy and the development of the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, it is with the first and the third of these relationships that we are here directly concerned. However, what kind of approach should be employed to researching these pedagogical relationships? In order to answer this question, I shall examine key trends in current education research and, in so doing, draw upon previous experiences of education research.

⁶⁵ In a similar vein, Rev. Foster-Fulton, convener of the Church of Scotland's Church and Society Council, contends that 'Our experience is that the best ways to develop societal cohesion are through well-rounded religious and moral education in schools, through inter-faith dialogue in the community and genuine collaboration' (Horton 2015: 6).

Research approaches

The scientific approach

From a historical perspective, Nisbet (2005) portrays the nature of education research as essentially tripartite i.e. *psychological, anthropological and sociological*. The beginnings of education research are to be found in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and comprise primarily psychological experiments and enquiries.⁶⁶ Taking a lead from the renowned philosopher, Jurgen Habermas, Wilfred Carr (1986) terms this understanding of education as *scientific* in that:

- a) It is founded upon an empirical form of knowledge i.e. knowledge of education is furthered through the scientific method of drawing a general principle from a number of observed facts which are then checked by experiment.
- b) The nature of education is deemed to be instrumental i.e. it is concerned to bring about desirable educational outcomes such as students' acquisition of knowledge and skills.
- c) Education research has a technical function which is to inform education practitioners and theorists about said general principles.

At the outset of my career a scientific approach to research was of great value since...

As a beginning teacher-researcher I found the scientific insights afforded by psychology, especially with regard to quasi-experiments, to be particularly helpful when I investigated enterprise methods of classroom learning and teaching in the 1980s. (Luby 2010b: 14)

⁶⁶ Verma and Mallick (1999) identify this stage as 'pure/basic research' whilst Gage (2007) labels it 'anti-naturalist.'

A scientific approach to research for the present study also appeals in that previous research (Luby 2012) was limited in its scope to one secondary school; and so it was not feasible to make generalisations from that research. However, the findings do indicate that a dialogic approach to RE promotes success in the classroom if one is seeking to encourage students to converse and think deeply. So, rather than aim for generalisability, the intention here is to seek findings that may be termed *indicative*.

If the findings are indicative, then they will offer what Bassey (1981) terms ‘reliability’. That is to say, from a series of scientific case studies there will be sufficient information and data such that teachers of religious education will be able to draw comparisons with their own pedagogic contexts and make informed judgements as to how they can develop dialogic RE within their classrooms.⁶⁷ In order to enhance the indicativeness of the research and the reliability of this study, the following is proposed with regard to methodology. The sample study of secondary schools will be increased from one to five; and the selection will ensure that there is a variety of schools from different backgrounds with respect to both type and location. The previous research (Luby 2012) was undertaken with twenty students in one state comprehensive school located within a city centre. The proposal for this study is that there are five schools comprising both comprehensive schools and academies; and that they are located within both rural and urban settings (see Table 1 below). Furthermore, in order to strengthen the indicativeness and reliability of the findings a total of fifty students are to be selected i.e. ten students from each of the five schools.

⁶⁷ Arguably, this also affords an opportunity for knowledge exchange and societal impact. See <https://esrc.ukri.org/research/impact-toolkit/what-is-impact/>

Table 1

Proposed sample of secondary schools

<u>School name (fictitious)</u>	<u>Type & Location</u>
<i>Apostle</i>	Y8-Y13 comprehensive in city location
<i>Saintly</i>	Y7-Y11 academy in an industrial town
<i>Wings</i>	Y7-Y13 academy in a rural location
<i>City</i>	Y8-Y13 comprehensive in city location
<i>Grammar</i>	Y8-Y13 comprehensive in agricultural town

Taking cognisance of the *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* and its edict that ‘Researchers must ensure that participation in research is on the basis of voluntary informed consent’ (SERA 2005: 9), the Head Teachers of each of these schools will be invited to give their consent for their school to participate in this research study (see appendix 1). Whilst four of the five schools are located within the state, non-denominational sector, one of the schools is Roman Catholic.⁶⁸ With this selection, it is hoped that the findings from this study will have some indicativeness and relatability for teachers of RE in both sectors. That is to say, critical RE pedagogy to promote dialogic skills may be a well-founded approach for both state and Catholic schools.

Summary

First, from a scientific approach to research, this study will embrace an empirical form of knowledge in that knowledge of pedagogy is furthered through the scientific method of promoting a general principle of dialogic RE from a number of observed facts (previous research by Luby 2012), which are then checked by the quasi-experiment of paired

⁶⁸ It is anticipated that the large majority of the fieldwork will be carried out in England where approximately 10% of UK maintained schools are Roman Catholic – see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/maintained-faith-schools>

conversations. Secondly, in accord with the nature of education being deemed instrumental, this research is concerned to bring about the desirable educational outcomes of students' acquisition of dialogic skills. Thirdly, this research has a technical function which is to inform other education practitioners and theorists about the general principles of dialogic RE.

So, a scientific approach to research addresses a desire to allow other teachers of RE to relate to the findings with some degree of confidence. But what of the salience of other approaches to education research for this enquiry?

Interpretative approach

Emanating from the second part of Nisbet's (2005) historical portrait is "applied field research" (Verma and Mallick, 1999) or the "interpretivist" approach to research (Gage, 2007). Again, drawing upon Habermas and relating this approach to education, Carr (1986) terms this approach as *interpretative* i.e.

- a) It is based on an interpretative form of knowledge i.e. knowledge of education is improved through explanation of the meaning of educational practice and, in so doing, uses both objective and subjective evidence.
- b) The nature of education is communicative and so is concerned with the exchange of information, ideas and feelings.
- c) Education research has a practical function which is to consider said explanations as a basis for deliberations about what ought to be done.

Later in my career, an interpretative approach to educational research proved valuable as I conducted applied research with respect to the nature of democracy in classroom practices (Luby 1993). An interpretative approach to research for this present study is attractive in that,

with paired conversations, the communication of information and exchange of participants' ideas and feelings is highly important. For paired conversations, then, each Catholic student will be asked to choose a non-Catholic classmate or friend with whom they will feel comfortable engaging in conversation. This is in accord with the recommendation of McKenna et al (2008: 116) that 'the dialogue programme should be... a safe environment and context (including the context of relationships)'. Not only does this sit well with the Argentine model of interreligious dialogue, based on friendships, as discussed above; but also it can lay claim to drawing deeply from the well of religious tradition. As Aldridge (2015: 140) attests, it also models the Jewish tradition of *Haverim*, whereby '...study partners... inspire each other's intellectual growth by lovingly challenging each other's claims to the truth'.⁶⁹

Summary

The research methodology will also allow for an interpretative form of knowledge in that the study will comprise both objective and subjective evidence. The former will include transcript analysis of paired conversations and questionnaire data; whilst the latter will comprise personal, handwritten comments from the students. The students' comments embrace the communicative nature of education in that it enables them to express their ideas and feelings about participating in dialogic RE. It is anticipated that this mixture of objective and subjective evidence will have an effect upon the practical function of education research as other RE teachers deliberate about what ought to be done in their classrooms.

⁶⁹ Aldridge quotes from Archer et al (2004: 19)

Action Research approach

The third part of the historical portrayal by Nisbet (2005) is that the latter half of the twentieth century witnessed the arrival on the education research scene of the ‘teacher-as-researcher’ and the ‘reflective practitioner’. Verma and Mallick (1999) call this ‘action research’.⁷⁰ Here an important dichotomy emerges. Generally speaking, when action research is regarded as reflective practice, then it is relatively uncontentious, since it is ‘...designed to render an existing situation more efficient and effective’ (Cohen et al 2000: 231). However, with its roots firmly embedded in sociology, action research can be viewed as critical praxis: and this is contentious because it is both political *and* educational.

Reviewing my career; whenever my action research or scholarship was in accord with the prevailing authorities then it was tolerated or even well received.⁷¹ However, as a Chartered Teacher, I was expected to ‘...critically evaluate educational policy ...in relation to the current debates in the educational and wider community; and engage with others in the critical discussion of educational policy and practice’ (GTCS 2009: 11). I endeavoured to attain this standard through critiques of developments in the world of Catholic RE (e.g. Luby 2008); but when such work or study clashed with the authority’s views then it was labelled ‘disputatious’ (Luby 2010a).

Taking this on board, developing cumulative talk and exploratory talk with this research study is ‘...attempting to encourage what, in British classrooms, is in effect a *transformation* [emphasis added] of the culture of talk...’ (Alexander 2008: 100); and transformation does

⁷⁰ Gage (2007) terms this ‘critical theory’

⁷¹ e.g. invitation from Scottish Government to write a guest blog about Masters level study for teachers i.e. A torchbearer’s story <http://engageforeducation.org/2012/11/guest-blog-a-torchbearers-story/> [no longer available]

not come without cost. A cost for this research study is that it does not fit neatly within one of the three approaches to education research outlined above: namely, the scientific, interpretative and action research approaches. The view being developed here is that education is inter-disciplinary, and so these three approaches are complementary: they form a continuum. As Brew (2001: 23) contends,

We are witnessing... competing methods of inquiry within disciplines and the growth of interdisciplinarity as well as the growth in professional areas of study where the concept of a discipline is alien. All of this now means that the emphasis on describing the nature of research from a disciplinary perspective is somewhat outdated...

Furthermore, as Gage (2007) also points out, much of the history of education research is littered with arguments and divisions, suggesting that a 'paradigm war' has broken out between the three disciplines of anthropology, psychology and sociology. See e.g. the debate between Hargreaves (2007 a, b) and Hammersley (2007 b, c) with regard to evidence-based practice.⁷² However, if one adopts an inter-disciplinary perspective to education research, then it is possible to select research methods from each of the disciplines across the said continuum.⁷³ This is evident above with respect to the scientific and interpretative summaries. So, what can be derived from the action approach to education research?

From the genre of action research, we learn that change and transformation take time and involves repeated interventions (Costello 2011, Dick 2002, Norton 2009). My experiences corroborate this; and so I will follow previous practices (Luby 1993, 2012) and use a series of

⁷² Although this argument erupted in the mid-1990s it is still ongoing e.g. see Biesta, G. J. J. 2010. Why 'What Works' Still Won't Work: From Evidence-Based Education to Value-Based Education. *Stud Philos Educ* 29:491–503.

⁷³ This is similar to the argument of Winter (1998: 361) who contends that 'Theory in an action research process is a personal, improvised selection of resources; reflexive and multi-disciplinary... and integration of the ideas required for practical action.'

teacher-led interventions as catalysts for the discursive engagements. As before, the main resource for these interventions will be excerpts from the schoolbook *Trial of the Resurrection* (Luby 2006a). Excerpt A focuses on religion and science whilst excerpt B examines historical evidences about the life of Jesus (see below).

Excerpt A

Transcript from Court proceedings...

Judge: “Yes, you may proceed.”

Calvin: “Thank you, your Honour. As you know we exist in a 4-dimensional Universe with the properties of height, length, depth and time. Or do we? Stephen Hawking, professor of Mathematics at Cambridge University – and star of ‘The Simpsons’ – tells us that we may live in an 11-dimensional Universe. (Turning to the Jury) Exhibit UN1, the book ‘Universe in a Nutshell’: please look at pages 178 and 179. If these are accurate, and the Universe is 11-dimensional, then where are the missing 7 dimensions? For a clue to the missing dimensions, let us turn to page 186, where Hawking discusses ‘dark matter.’ And, here, I quote:

“Various cosmological observations strongly suggest that there should be much more matter in our galaxy... than we see.”

Indeed, I am informed that no less than ninety-six percent of the known universe is missing! I repeat; scientists are unable to locate 96% of the known mass in the Universe? Where is it? Well, to be fair, the scientists do try to offer an explanation. Let us examine exhibit UN2. [At this point, Calvin had a large screen presentation displayed – SHADOW WORLDS] As you can see, some scientists think that we live on a shadow world, whilst underneath us is a massive world that contains the missing matter. I say ‘underneath,’ meaning that, like the missing 7-dimensions, it is outside of our vision.

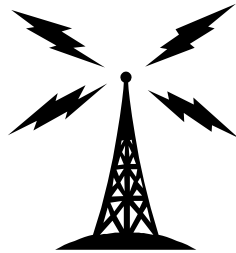
Extraordinary, isn’t it? For thousands of years, religion has spoken of a supernatural world – above and beyond our vision. And, here today, in the 21st century, we have scientists appearing to confirm the existence of supernatural worlds.”

Chief Prosecutor: *“Your Honour, I object. This is mere speculation.”*

Calvin: *“Yes, you are right - it is speculation. But it is speculation by some of the world’s top scientific thinkers!”*

Chief Prosecutor: *“Your Honour, this is a court of law. As my learned colleague reminded us yesterday; we deal with facts, with evidence. I mean, saying that there are things which exist that we cannot see, or hear...” [shrugs shoulders]*

Calvin: *“Things existing that we cannot hear? What about a dog whistle? Does it not make a noise that we cannot hear? When earthquakes occur, does the planet not ring like a bell – and yet we hear nothing?!”*



Things existing that we cannot see? Are not television signals pulsing through this very courtroom just now? And what about radio signals? Just switch on a television or a radio and the signals are converted into pictures and sounds! Things existing that we cannot see or hear – are they not all around us?

Chief Prosecutor: *“Your Honour, I object. My learned colleague is going off the point.”*

Judge: *“On the contrary, I think he is making his point rather well.”*

Starters for Discussion

What point is Calvin trying to make?

Do you agree with the Judge’s comment? Why (not)?

Some Christians think that Heaven is all around us – but we just can’t see it. What do you think?

(source: Luby 2006a: 15-17)

Excerpt B
Court transcript...

Calvin: *“I should like to make four points. Recent scholarship tells us the following:⁷⁴*

- 1. Historical findings suggest the New Testament was written shortly after the events took place.*
- 2. Recent language studies also indicate that the Gospels were written close to the time that they actually happened.*
- 3. Recent scientific study of Gospel fragments could be material evidence of eyewitness accounts of the life of Jesus.*
- 4. Even the enemies of Jesus admit that he was a powerful teacher and a miracle worker; and that he was crucified and believed to have risen on the third day.*

Chief Prosecutor: *“Oh, really, your Honour, I object! This is fanciful nonsense! What, even the enemies of Jesus admit that he was a great teacher and a miracle worker?! Oh, come off it!”*

Calvin: *“Yes, my learned colleague, remarkable isn't it? If you don't want to read about Jesus from his friends, then what do his enemies, the Romans and the Jewish religious leaders tell us? For example, Tacitus, Josephus and the Talmud:*

- 1. Jesus was a real person – some wrote about him because he annoyed them!*
- 2. Jesus was a great teacher – he attracted large crowds to listen to his teachings – but the religious leaders didn't like his teachings and so they argued against them.*
- 3. Jesus performed miracles! Yes, even his enemies admitted this. They called him a ‘wonder-worker’ but claimed that his power came from the devil and not from God.*
- 4. Jesus was crucified. And finally;*
- 5. His followers believe that Jesus rose from the dead.*

A great teacher, who performed miracles, crucified and believed to have risen from the dead. Sounds pretty much like the Bible got it right, after all, don't you think?”

And with that Calvin sat down.

⁷⁴ See Exhibits ‘FJ’, ‘HEB’ and ‘MIC’.

Starters for Discussion

To what extent do you agree, or disagree, that this is good evidence about Jesus?

What are your views about Jesus?

(source: Luby 2006a: 35-36)

The topic of religion & science (excerpt A) features heavily in RE syllabi and it is apposite for this study⁷⁵ given that it lends itself well to a ‘...learning approach that takes the debates seriously, but gives a central place to the intellectual growth of the student doing the learning.’ (Blaylock 2012: 225) The topic of historical evidence (excerpt B) is less common within RE syllabi. However, it is noteworthy that both of these excerpts proved effective at promoting both cumulative talk and exploratory talk (Luby 2015a). The importance of topic selection is emphasised by Cormack et al 1998 (as quoted in Scott 2009: 3) who found that ‘Effective talk for learning did not just happen... the clarity of task setting... and appropriate selection of topic... had an impact on students’ learning.’

Recap

Drawing from a philosophy of education research that views scientific, interpretative and action approaches on a continuum, what can be determined with respect to researching the development of critical RE pedagogy that promotes the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk?

⁷⁵ Similarly, Andrew Wright draws upon the work of renowned scholars in the field of theology, (Ian Barbour, Alistair McGrath, Arthur Peacock, John Polkinghorne and Thomas Torrance) to make the point that theology and science ‘...share a common critically realistic framework [since] both are concerned with objective realities existing independently of the perceiving subject’ (Wright 2013: 50).

From a desire that *indicativeness* and *relatability* may be applied to the research findings, then one inclines to draw upon the scientific approach to education research. The sample in this study will comprise five secondary schools from different backgrounds with respect to both location and type. These schools will be located within both rural and urban areas and the sample will contain both comprehensive schools and academies; and one of these shall be Catholic. In order to lend some representativeness to the findings then, in comparison with previous research, the number of participants will be more than doubled.

In order to encourage the participants to freely exchange information, ideas and feelings, then one learns from the interpretative approach to education research. The conversations in this research will be paired, with students discussing with friends and this accords with practices in previous research. Recognising that the research programme is but the beginning of a process of transformation, then one draws upon the action research approach to education research. For the paired conversations there will be a mini-series of interventions that are intended to promote the development of the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk.

Developing research methodology

Paired conversations

At the heart of the research methodology is the paired conversations between students who feel comfortable engaging in dialogue. A dyadic approach underpinned much of the original development work undertaken in the development of dialogic skills (Vygotsky 1978); and it is a specific recommended strategy with regard to a recent study in the development of exploratory talk in oracy (Haynes 2015). As well as being a recommendation of McKenna et

al (2008), it is also noteworthy that parallels can be drawn with the strategies employed within intercultural education to create a ‘safe space’⁷⁶ in which participants are ‘...taught the linguistic and behavioural tools to ask questions and... to learn from each other in a non-threatening way’ (Trethewey & Menzies 2015: 9).

The nurturing context is also emphasised by Pierce and Gilles (2008), who use the term ‘critical’ for conversations which ‘...involve students engaged in exploratory talk that includes questioning or challenging beliefs.’ Indeed, they contend that ‘...these conversations can only take place within a supportive learning community in which learners feel comfortable taking risks, putting forth tentative ideas, and raising difficult questions that examine their own and others’ beliefs and actions’ (Mercer and Hodgkinson 2008: xiii). Because of its very nature, Barnes (2008: 5) contends that it is expected that,

When young people are trying out ideas and modifying them as they speak... their delivery will be hesitant, broken, and full of dead-ends and changes of direction. ...Exploratory talk is hesitant and incomplete because it enables the speaker to try out ideas, to hear how they sound, to see what others make of them, to arrange information and ideas into different patterns.

An example of this hesitancy and broken delivery is demonstrated in this example from the work of Luby (2012),⁷⁷ in which the participant ‘Heather’⁷⁸ struggles to reconcile Catholic teaching on abortion with her own developing views:

⁷⁶ For an in-depth discussion of ‘safe space’ see Chapter 5 of R. Jackson (2014) *Signposts*.

⁷⁷ This is an extract from a recorded and transcribed conversation from the research notes of this study that was *not* used within the main body of the report.

⁷⁸ Pseudonym to preserve anonymity.

Definitely! Yeah that's what it is. Um... my first question to you is...is... I don't know why I'm laughing, is.... you understand the Catholic Church have very strong feelings against abortion, they're very anti-abortion, they believe that even...it is...it's not like a formulation of cells which is a potential baby human it is a human. They believe that it is a human, it's at that stage, it has a soul and they think you can't just kill something which has a soul which I for one disagree with because not...not because obviously they might have a soul but it's not...it's OK if it's...it's not got the brain cells developed enough to realise that...realise it has a soul what do you think...?

It would be a brave teenager who was sufficiently confident to voice out loud such hesitations and brokenness in her thinking to her classmates. However, within the confines of a secure and friendly relationship such attempts at developing exploratory talk are more feasible.

Conversational roots

A format for developing cumulative talk and exploratory talk within a friendly environment was established by Ursula McKenna and her colleagues, Julia Ipgrave and Robert Jackson, at the Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit (WRERU). Collegially, they developed '...an approach to religious dialogue and dialogue about religions between primary school children from different religious and cultural backgrounds...' (McKenna et al 2008: 7).

Through email and face-to-face conversations, their *Building E-Bridges* project links children from primary schools in the multicultural Midlands city of Leicester with children from schools in rural East Sussex. That WRERU can provide a template for inter-faith dialogue is evidenced from three sources:

- Firstly, the study by McKenna et al (2008) produces data that is both reliable and valid and is triangulated through questionnaires, interviews and sampling of pupils' work.
- Secondly, the sources are relevant; being pupils and teachers in primary schools in England.
- Thirdly, the methods of data collection are appropriate, namely '...questionnaires, various types of interviews, observation and documentary analysis...' (McKenna et al 2008: 32).

The work of WRERU, then, provides a foundation upon which to build methodology for analysing face-to-face conversations between pupils concerning inter-faith dialogue. Indeed, this work is particularly suitable for the present study in that it has firm Catholic roots. As Wright (2013: 115) points out, 'the vast majority of exclusive traditions possess their own internal theological resources for dialogue...' And that these resources should be used for the purposes of religious education is affirmed by Cooling (2015) in his keynote address to the annual conference of the Association of University Lecturers in Religion and Education (AULRE). The internal Catholic theological resource for dialogue is the document *The Attitude of the Church Towards Followers of Other Religions: Reflections and Orientations on Dialogue and Mission* produced by Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue of the Catholic Church (Vatican, 1984). According to McKenna et al (2008: 22) from this document the Catholic Church fashioned a framework for inter-faith dialogue that has '...subsequently [been] used by Christians of other churches engaged in inter faith dialogue.'

Preparing for conversations

Having established that paired conversations with friendly partners are an appropriate environment for developing dialogic skills, it is timely to consider how to prepare the ground for such conversations. For some researchers like Haynes (2005) this entails the participants spending time exploring and developing their understanding of disputational, cumulative and exploratory talk as a preparatory step for participation in the research programme. This is admirable; and it is relevant in that it takes place with students from secondary schools and of a comparable age (Y9). However, it is only feasible in Haynes' circumstances (or similar) when the students are in the teacher's class for several periods per week. In the world of mainstream religious education such provision is something of a rarity, apart from those studying for national qualifications. Schools are highly unlikely to release students from studying for national qualifications for a research programme; and so the sample of students requires to be drawn from those undertaking a general RE course of some description. This means that they are likely to be studying RE for one or two periods per week; and so the approach adopted by Haynes becomes unfeasible.⁷⁹

Another relevant but more practical approach is mooted by Luby (2012). Drawing upon the recommendations of McKenna et al (2008), a prompt sheet was devised [see Figure 3 below]. The purpose of the prompt sheet is to clarify the procedure for the students' conversations; in order to enhance their powers of reasoning such that they may develop the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk. Reference to this prompt sheet was made repeatedly throughout the action research of Luby (2012); and in a similar fashion, Haynes (2015) made repeated references to ground rules for exploratory talk.

⁷⁹ See SERA 2007: 11.

Figure 3

Prompt sheet

1. Do you understand what your partner is saying? If not, ask her/him to explain the difficult word or idea.
2. Do you agree with anything your partner is saying? If so, let her/him know that your ideas are the same.
3. Do you disagree with her/his ideas? If so, explain why you think differently.
4. Tell her/him the problem or question that you wish her/him to think about.

(source: Luby, 2012: 40)

This prompt sheet offers ‘ground rules’ for the dialogues, as advocated by Mercer and Dawes (2008). And the rules need repeated reference if they are to become a mainstay for the students’ critical conversations. It cannot be assumed that students are aware of the ground rules that will produce a productive discussion. Indeed, according to Mercer and Dawes (2008: 70), this is likely not to be the case since ‘for some children, school may provide their only real opportunity for learning how to engage in focussed, reasoned discussion...’ And so they will need assistance in order to ‘...benefit [from] a shared understanding of this important aspect of how to make it happen successfully’ (Mercer and Dawes 2008: 65). The selection of the students is at the discretion of the school given the vagaries of timetabling, commitments and events taking place at the time of school visits. However, prior to participation with this research, all of the students will be given a briefing session at which the ground rules will be explained and discussed.

A further strengthening of the argument for having *paired* conversations is an acknowledgement of the assertion made above by Alexander (2008) that these types of talk (cumulative and exploratory) are *transformative*. Not only is transformation difficult to

achieve, also engaging with such kinds of talk is ‘...rather a brave thing to do and tends not to happen unless there is a degree of trust within a discussion group’ (Mercer and Dawes 2008: 65). Establishing such a degree of trust within a group takes time; but a paired conversation between two students is more readily achievable. Additionally, it is technically more difficult to record and accurately transcribe the conversations of each participant in a group; but less so for a pair.

With such paired conversations, it is important that both students feel comfortable and their conversations should ‘...enable pupils to articulate their own views as well as listen to and interpret the views of others’ (McKenna et al 2008: 16). On the one hand, Christians should feel free ‘...to witness to the Gospel in thought, word and deed in a manner that opens out the possibility of conversion to the Christian faith’ (Wright 2013: 116). However, Catholics must recognise their self-limitation in not making an appeal to a supernatural authority such as God or the Holy Bible as the final arbiter. On the other hand, other students should feel that the tenor of the conversations will ‘...acknowledge, respect, affirm and celebrate the freedom God has given to all human beings to be the people they actually are’ (Wright 2013: 116).⁸⁰ In return, their participation in such conversations will be a tacit acceptance of a self-limiting disavowal of both secularist ideology - that contends that religion should be banished from the public sphere; and secularization, which holds religion to be a purely private matter. Such boundaries will be made clear verbally to the students prior to the research programme; and they will be reminded throughout. In such a fashion then, these paired conversations are intended to be a microcosm for a procedurally secular society.

⁸⁰ From a Dominican Thomist standpoint, this is akin to celebrating the moral virtue of studiousness that ‘...makes us more fully human, more ourselves’ (Heath 2017: 39).

Developing research questions

Having established the parameters of this research programme - namely, a series of paired conversations with students in Y8-Y11 across a range of secondary schools - it is timely to address the specific research questions. According to Thompson (2007) in her paper ‘Developing Classroom Talk through Practitioner Research’, it is advisable to link studies in order to afford higher levels of generalisability. Although it is indicativeness and relatability that is sought here, nonetheless this appears to be sound advice. Hence, with regard to research questions, it is useful to bear in mind the four hypotheses for future research set out by Luby (2014: 69) i.e.

- (Ho1) Dialogic RE encourages students to remain on-task;
- (Ho2) Dialogic RE promotes cumulative talk;
- (Ho3) Dialogic RE promotes exploratory talk; and
- (Ho4) Dialogic RE encourages deep learning.

The first hypothesis is practical in nature. In order to minimise disruption to teachers who have agreed that their students can participate in this research programme, the intention is to follow the prior practice that paired conversations take place outside of the classroom (Luby 2012). If, though, such paired conversations are to become a feature of RE pedagogy, the first concern of a teacher with such a pedagogic strategy is likely to be that students remain on-task when they are outside the teacher’s visible control. And this begs the first research question.

Research Question 1

To what extent do the students remain on task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?

The paired conversations will be recorded and transcribed, and then a quantitative analysis will be undertaken through a word count of the transcriptions by noting the percentage of time that students were “on task” and “off task” (see Table 2 below). The first measure of analysis will be to compare “on task” conversation with that of “off task” conversation. For example, with the first paired conversation in Table 2 there are 1323 words of which 2.0% are off task – being concerned with exchanging pleasantries – whilst the remaining 98.0% are on task. On average, each of the paired conversations depicted in Table 2 remain on task for 92.3% of the word count.

Table 2
On Task / Off Task

<u>Conversation</u>	<u>Word count</u>	<u>On Task%</u>	<u>Off Task%</u>
1	1323	98.0	2.0
2	1302	96.5	3.5
3	1921	98.2	1.8
4	1876	96.6	3.4
5	1674	91.1	8.9
6	711	89.7	10.3
7	744	89.4	10.6
8	1486	97.0	3.0
9	2438	71.9	28.1
10	2356	95.2	4.8
Overall average		92.3%	7.7%

(source: Luby 2014: 62)

There is no hard and fast rule as to what percentage of time students should be on task, but as an experienced teacher I was ‘...satisfied with the pupils being, on average, on task for

92.3% of the time; especially as they were outwith my supervision' (Luby 2014: 61). Whilst the students remain on task, it is important that such activity addresses the development of the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk.

Research Question 2

To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

The *first strategy* for determining such participation is to discount extraneous conversation such as declaratory statements typified below:

Robbie: OK. The first question is what are your views on God?

Jamie: *Well, being an atheist myself I don't believe there is one.*

Robbie: OK.

Jamie: *Yeah.*

(source: Luby 2014: 62)

Also to be disregarded are statements for clarification such as the following:

Sheila: Is there anything you want to discuss?

Mhairi: *Uh...I don't know I thought you were asking the questions!*

Sheila: Yeah. OK. Um...um...what about the design argument how do you feel about that?

Mhairi: *What is the intelligent design argument?*

(source: Luby 2014: 62)

Although it may be a precursor to developing exploratory talk, the *second strategy* is to discount disputational talk. Mercer (1995: 104) describes this type of talk as being '...characterised by disagreement and individual decision making... (and) short exchanges consisting of assertions and challenges or counter assertions' e.g.

Douglas: So what religion are you?

Craig: I am an atheist.

Douglas: OK. So...why are you an atheist?

Craig: Because I don't believe that a single man would have made everything which exists today.

Douglas: Ah but I do!

Craig: Yeah but...why would you think that, like...

Douglas: Because he did! What do you think that meteorites are going to crash and make plants and human beings?

Craig: Well no its...that's not a meteorite, it didn't actually crash it was 2 planets that collided.

Douglas: OK; so how are people made? (source: Luby 2014: 62)

The aim of the *third strategy* is to identify discourse that can be understood as cumulative talk; whereby pupils 'build positively but uncritically on what the other has said'. Although Mercer uses the term 'uncritically,' I understand this to be 'non-judgementally.' In any case, such cumulative talk is '...characterized by repetitions, confirmations and elaborations' (Mercer 1995: 104) e.g.

Robbie: Definitely! Do you...would you agree with me that...I don't feel like...I do believe in evolution as well as God like creating animals but I do believe they also evolved into what we have today would you agree with that?

Jamie: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Totally agree! That's pretty sound.

Robbie: Cool! Pretty sound indeed. Um...yeah...I also think stuff that's read in the Bible is not fully meant to be taken entirely literally like the story of Adam and Eve and stuff.

Jamie: Yeah I think some people take that too literally and people are up in arms about evolution and Adam and Eve and how it's all wrong but I think it's more symbolic than it is literal.

Robbie: Definitely! Yeah that's what it is... (source: Luby 2014: 63)

In this example, the respondent, Jamie, confirms the belief of the initiator, Robbie, in theistic evolution. Also, there is both repetition and confirmation with regard to a literal

understanding of the Adam and Eve story. Indeed, some elaboration is offered by Jamie with the introduction of symbolism which is subsequently confirmed by Robbie.

As depicted below (see Table 3), the total percentage of a conversation that can be classified as cumulative talk can be tabulated in order to invite comparison, analysis and discussion. For example, three of the conversations (nos. 3, 4 & 5) comprise 90% or more cumulative talk – which is considerably above average. In contrast, two of the conversations (nos. 8 & 9) comprise less than 25% cumulative talk – which is less than half the average.

Table 3

Cumulative Talk

<u>Conversation</u>	<u>Word count</u>	<u>Cumulative talk %</u>
1	1323	50.4
2	1302	70.8
3	1921	92.1
4	1876	90.3
5	1674	90.0
6	711	53.7
7	744	75.2
8	1486	6.0
9	2438	24.6
10	2356	85.3
Overall average		63.8%

(source: Luby 2014: 63)

The focus of the *fourth strategy* is to identify conversations that promote exploratory talk; whereby pupils ‘engage critically but constructively with each other’s ideas.’ Exploratory talk is characterized by ‘statements and suggestions (being) offered for joint consideration

(and) these may be challenged and counter-challenged, but challenges are justified and alternative hypotheses are offered' (Mercer 1995: 104). An example is illustrated below with the conversation between Douglas and Craig discussed previously (Fig.2, p68):

Douglas: Well I might disagree with you there because I think that um...humans are the cause of sin because God gave us freewill, he didn't want to control us otherwise we'd be like robots.

Craig: Uh huh.

Douglas: And that wouldn't give us any freedom at all, we'll always be good and God gave us freewill to choose what is right but obviously humans didn't choose that way, they didn't the right way and they've become selfish, like Eve tricking Adam into eating that apple which caused him to sin against God, and that obviously angered God and I think for me I think that's because of sin, humans are the cause of sin.

Craig: Yeah, I'd agree that humans are the cause of sin and no doubt our sort of freewill, if we have it. We often choose the wrong path and, again the Adam and Eve story is a fantastic way of illustrating society, and how people sin and what effect it can have. But, again, I think these stories need to be taken with a pinch of salt; and that they are in my opinion nothing more than stories. But you can still read into them as much as you can read into many sorts of novels and literature; which of course we know they aren't true stories. But we can still appreciate the moral values that they give us such as to name a few, The Lord of the Flies and Animal Farm, that many of us studied in English um...that's my point of view with regards to that.

Douglas: Well I think the stories could be pretty accurate because they've been passed on with the Bible and the Catholic Church; they've been passed on ever since Jesus came into this world as a form of God and even before that in the Old Testament.

(source: Luby 2014: 63-64)

Exploratory talk is evidenced by the initiator, Douglas, offering a view on the relationship between humanity, freewill and sin. The respondent, Craig, challenges this viewpoint; and justifies it through criticism of a too literal understanding of the Creation story. Rather, Craig proposes an alternative hypothesis whereby the Creation story should be regarded more like a

novel that contains important moral truths. This view, in its turn, is counter challenged by Douglas who appeals to the authority of the Bible and Tradition.

The total percentage of the conversations that can be classified as exploratory talk is listed in Table 4 below. Again, this invites comparison, analysis and discussion. For example, three of the conversations (nos. 3, 4 & 7) comprise 0% exploratory talk; whilst, in contrast, four of the conversations (nos. 1, 6, 8 & 9) comprise more than 25% cumulative talk – which is well above the average.

Table 4
Exploratory Talk

Conversation	Word count	Exploratory talk %
1	1323	45.5
2	1302	15.2
3	1921	0.0
4	1876	0.0
5	1674	3.0
6	711	28.7
7	744	0.0
8	1486	28.2
9	2438	29.8
10	2356	9.6
Overall average		16.0%

(source: Luby 2014: 64)

The comparison and analysis of the tabulated findings promotes discussion as to the quality of learning that is taking place. Whilst the focus of research is the development of students’ reasoning through the promotion of cumulative talk and exploratory talk; it is also instructive to ascertain the quality of students’ learning. Given that pedagogical argument of the thesis is a depiction of ‘safe space’ within the classroom as representative of a society’s public sphere,

then the development of dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk needs to be deep rooted. This invites the third research question.

Research Question 3

To what extent does dialogic RE promote a deep approach to students' learning?

McKenna et al (2008: 116) express the desire that 'Children taking part in inter faith dialogue should... exercise a depth of religious thought... beyond the descriptive' - likewise for this thesis promoting dialogic skills in RE. The long-term vision is that of a post-secular society which has a fortified secular realm, in which all can freely exchange views that will be treated with respect. This free exchange and mutual respect is founded upon members of society having developed their dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk. This development begins within the classroom; and so there must be depth to this process of classroom learning.

As with previous classroom-based research in religious education pedagogy (Luby 1993, 2012) *deep learning* is distinctive in six ways. At a higher order level, the students' learning is distinguished by:⁸¹

1. their depth of understanding;
2. their engagement with critical thinking; and
3. recognition that such depth and criticality requires a degree of perseverance.

⁸¹ The higher order level criteria 1, 2 and 3 correspond below with figure 4 item 1; figure 4 item 5; and figure 5 item 7 respectively.

At a lower order level, the students' learning is distinctive by the requirements to:⁸²

4. fashion links with previous learning;
5. make connections between different areas of learning; and
6. given that this type of learning is deemed as preparation for participation in public life then there must be a link with real-life situations.

The research instrument for assessing such deep learning is a survey questionnaire.

Regarding the validity of this research instrument, according to Siegle (n.d.):⁸³

...we never say that an instrument is valid or not valid...we say it is valid for a specific purpose with a specific group of people. Validity is specific to the appropriateness of the interpretations we wish to make with the scores.

The validity of this research instrument of a survey questionnaire is demonstrated by the specificity of its purpose. The source of the original survey questionnaire is Noel Entwistle, one of the “founding fathers” of the study of deep learning (e.g. Entwistle & Ramsden, 1983). In the 1980's along with his Hungarian colleague, Bela Kozeki, he specifically devised the questionnaire test items for research into deep approaches to learning with British secondary school students (Entwistle & Kozeki, 1985). These test items were subsequently slightly modified and then used for research into deep approaches to learning in RE (Luby 1995, 2014). Hence, this research instrument of survey questionnaire comprising ten test items is valid for the specific purpose of researching deep learning with this specific group of fifty British students.

⁸² The lower order level criteria 4, 5 and 6 correspond below with figure 5 items 8 & 9; figure 4 item 3 & figure 5 item 6; and figure 4 item 4 & figure 5 item 10 respectively.

⁸³ https://researchbasics.education.uconn.edu/instrument_validity/ Accessed 01 February 2018.

Moreover, in terms of “the appropriateness of interpretations regarding the scores,” the following approach is adopted. Half of the ten test items will focus on the teaching aspect of this dialogic approach to RE (see Figure 4 below).

Figure 4

Deep learning – teaching focus

This approach to learning RE through dialogue:

1. Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.
2. Is generally good at explaining things for me.
3. Generally helps me to make links between different topics.
4. Is generally good at showing how what I am learning is linked to everyday life.
5. Is good at asking questions which make me think.

(source: Luby 2014: 67)

The other half of the ten test items within the survey questionnaire will focus on the students’ perceptions of their learning (see Figure 5 below).

Figure 5

Deep learning – pupil focus

With this approach to learning RE through dialogue:

6. I often have to try to see the connections between ideas in one area and those in another.
7. I generally try to understand things, even when they seem difficult at the beginning.
8. I often ask myself questions about the things I hear in lessons or read in books.
9. I often try to relate what I learn to previous work.
10. When I am trying to understand new ideas, I often try to see how they might apply in real-life situations.

(source: Luby 2014: 68)

Given the use of these ten test items in previous classroom-based research in RE, then it is appropriate to use the findings with respect to interpreting the extent to which students adopt a deep approach to learning. Nonetheless, the criticism of Cohen et al (2000) still holds with regard to the validity of this survey questionnaire as a research instrument - i.e. validity is a matter of degree, since it is impossible for research to be one hundred percent valid.

The findings arising from the survey questionnaire will be subject to a Chi Square Test⁸⁴ in order to determine their statistical significance or otherwise (see Figure 6 below). Such quantitative analysis will help to confirm or disconfirm the hypothesis mooted by Luby (2014: 69) that 'Dialogic RE encourages deep learning.' Additionally, such analysis will help to strengthen, or weaken, any claims that may be made to reliability of the findings i.e. the degree to which a research instrument produces stable and consistent results.

⁸⁴ As outlined by <http://www.garnetthenley.com/ChiSquareLec.pdf>

Figure 6

Chi Square Test

Test item 1

Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.

Response 1a

Observations [O] – Expected [E] = Difference [D]

i.e. [O] 6 – [E] 4 = [D] 2

[D] squared = 4

[D] squared 4 / [E] 4 = **1**

Response 1b

[O] 12 – [E] 4 = [D] 8

[D] squared = 64

[D] squared 64 / [E] 4 = **16**

Response 1c

[O] 2 – [E] 4 = [D] -2

[D] squared = 4

[D] squared 4 / [E] 4 = **1**

Response 1d

[O] 0 – [E] 4 = [D] -4

[D] squared = 16

[D] squared 16 / [E] 4 = **4**

Response 1e

[O] 0 – [E] 4 = [D] -4

[D] squared = 16

[D] squared 16 / [E] 4 = **4**

$1+16+1+4+4 = 26$ Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value

$26 > 9.49$ Result is statistically significant

(Source: adapted from Luby 2014: 68)

Caveat

However, even if these interventions do show that whilst students remain on-task they engage with both cumulative talk and exploratory talk, and that there is evidence of deep learning taking place, this can only be but a beginning. The socially productive pedagogy advocated within this thesis may not be best served by one-off interventions. Rather, for the RE classroom dialogue to become a seedbed for a procedurally secular society, then dialogic skills must become a regular feature of classroom life: this invites the fourth research question.

Research Question 4

How might the development of dialogic skills become a regular feature within classroom life?

In order to answer this research question, it is necessary to consider pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) introduced to the lexicon of education by Shulman (1986, 1987). PCK is summarised succinctly by Cochran (1997) as follows:

Pedagogical content knowledge is a type of knowledge that is unique to teachers, and is based on the manner in which teachers relate their pedagogical knowledge (what they know about teaching) to their subject matter knowledge (what they know about what they teach). It is the integration or the synthesis of teachers' pedagogical knowledge and their subject matter knowledge that comprises pedagogical content knowledge.

In order for classroom dialogue to become a regular feature within the classroom life of other RE practitioners, then both the subject matter knowledge of this study and how it is taught need to be in accord with the prevailing PCK. The author's claim to possessing current PCK with regard to the teaching of RE in secondary classrooms is on the wane; given that four

years have elapsed since he taught daily in a classroom. The criticism of Pearson and Robson (2005) that what may have been expertise in the past soon reaches its sell-by date may be justified in this instance.

So, for PCK to have credibility there must be input from current classroom practitioners of RE as according to Sachs (2001), the development of PCK can be enhanced within a community of practice.⁸⁵ Thus, in order to answer this research question of how dialogic skills might become a regular feature of RE classroom life, there will be consultations with critical friends. This community of critical friends will comprise two practitioners and three other educationists. The first educationist is Gillian Georgiou, the RE Adviser for the Anglican Diocese of Lincoln. As such, she is particularly well placed to comment on PCK since, as she comments in her blog, ‘We shall not cease from exploration...’⁸⁶

We regularly have contact with actual teaching practice, but have the time and mental space that our teacher colleagues do not always have the luxury of to engage with the latest academic thinking. Equally, we are often aware of or participating in the most cutting edge theoretical and practical research, but have a more easily accessible conduit directly into the classroom.

A current example of this ‘...participating in the most cutting edge theoretical and practical research...’ is Georgiou’s involvement with the national project *Understanding Christianity*, which aims to develop students’ religious, theological and cultural literacy by

⁸⁵ Likewise, as Buysse, Sparkman and Wesley (2003: 263) contend, within such a community, ‘The potential for practitioners and researchers to co-construct knowledge exists in this model because communities of practice represent an ongoing enterprise that invites both groups to share, build upon, and transform what they know about effective practices.’

⁸⁶ See <http://gilliangiorgiou.blogspot.co.uk/2016/10/re-advisers-why-bother-reflection-on.html> [accessed 27 February 2018].

...laying down excellent foundations for further study at GCSE and beyond [and] it is relevant to RE in every classroom in every school, in Church of England and in Community, Academy and Free schools.

[source: <http://www.understandingchristianity.org.uk/>]⁸⁷

The second educationist is Paul Warwick of Cambridge University who is Principal Investigator for the Digitalised Dialogues Across the Curriculum (DiDiAC) project, which uses a micro-blogging tool Talkwall. The DiDiAC project claims that ‘research demonstrates how students who are taught dialogic skills can show enhanced critical thinking and collaborative problem solving.’ Additionally, the project aims to investigate:

- The potential of digital technology to enhance existing (and promote new) forms of classroom dialogue, provide a visualisation of ‘inter-thinking’ and prompt/direct participation in collaborative activities.
- The skills that need to be attained in order for students to master digitalised communicative contexts, and how teachers can support this mastery through their pedagogy.
- How 21st-century competences (e.g. critical thinking and collaboration) are developed through the use of such digital technology.

(source: <https://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/didiac/>)⁸⁸

With this project’s emphasis upon classroom dialogue, critical thinking and collaboration, there appears to be an opportunity for cross-fertilisation of ideas and practices between the DiDiAC project and the present study (Warwick 2016).

⁸⁷ accessed 27 February 2018.

⁸⁸ Accessed 27 February 2018.

The third educationist in this community of critical friends is Andrew Dickenson, Senior Lecturer of New Technologies and Computing at Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln; and designated as both an Apple Distinguished Educator and a Book Creator Ambassador. It is hoped that his classroom experience and expertise will afford insight to new technologies for promoting dialogue in the classroom.

The first practitioner in this community is the head of department (HoD) of religious education at the Lion Rampant academy school.⁸⁹ This is a larger than average-sized secondary school that was rated ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted. The selection of this school came about through opportunity sampling as discussed below. The HoD expressed interest in the research and this led to a sharing of some of the raw data produced by the fieldwork; and subsequently an invitation to participate within this community of critical friends. The second practitioner is an assistant head teacher with responsibility for religious education at the City Catholic School. This practitioner was approached in order to gain insights about RE pedagogy from a faith perspective; and she kindly agreed to participate in this community.

Finally, given that a substantial amount of data will be collated, including survey questionnaire responses and transcribed conversations, then ethical considerations require to be addressed.

Ethical considerations

In accordance with the *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* (BERA 2011) the following procedures will be undertaken:

⁸⁹ Names of all schools have been changed to preserve anonymity.

- electronic data (both recordings and transcriptions) will be stored on a password - protected computer;
- paper - based data will be stored in a locked cupboard to which only I have access;
- all electronic and paper data that identifies individuals will be destroyed after completion of the project; and
- anonymised electronic data which cannot be linked to any other data concerning participants will be kept for use by me or other researchers.

Ultimately, the final say will rest with the students. Although the researcher may guide and facilitate the circumstances of the paired conversations, pertaining to their learning through dialogic RE, it will be the students ‘...who provide[d] the energy and the ideas underpinning their conversations’ (Luby 2014: 70). Given this, and in line with the interpretivist approach to education research discussed above, the students will be asked to sum up (anonymously) in a written sentence their thoughts about this experience. These summations will then be analysed under the categories of *pedagogical* and *social* in order to draw comparisons with previous research e.g. Luby (2014: 70):

Pedagogical – ‘A learning experience that enables you to see other people’s views and perspectives and ultimately how your beliefs compare’...

Pedagogical and social – ‘Allowing me to learn by listening to other people’s points of view, which often contrast with my own, has greatly benefitted my understanding of some Catholic ideas; and has done so through a medium which I find enjoyable’.

Social – ‘I think this has been a more interesting way of learning in RE [and] I’ve enjoyed listening to other people’s thoughts and feelings on certain issues in this small group as you can express your feelings without being judged by your class.’

Summary

This study promotes and examines Dominican Thomist RE pedagogy that has a particular emphasis on the development of the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk. Building upon previous research that took place in one secondary school there will be five secondary schools involved with each school having a different background with respect to type and location. In order to enhance indicativeness and relatability there will be a total of fifty students comprising ten students from each school.

Each of the students will participate in paired conversations with classmates with whom they feel comfortable engaging in discussion: one from each pair will be a Catholic student. Following upon a briefing session, their conversations will be recorded and transcribed. The teacher-led intervention for each paired conversation will be in the domains of religion and science and historical evidence.

The transcribed conversations will be analysed quantitatively in respect of the four research questions:

- 1. To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?*

This will entail a quantitative analysis that comprises a word count of the conversations with respect to both on-task and off-task activity.

- 2. To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?*

Quantitative analysis of the conversations will be conducted by discounting statements that are of a declaratory nature or which seek clarification. A word count will determine the percentage of the conversations that comprise either cumulative talk or exploratory talk.

- 3. To what extent does dialogic RE promote a deep approach to students' learning?*

A survey questionnaire will be administered that comprises ten test items pertaining to a deep approach to learning. Analysis for statistical significance will be undertaken through the means of a Chi Square Test.

- 4. How might the development of dialogic skills become a regular feature within classroom life?*

Discussions will take place within a small community of critical friends comprising two RE practitioners, two academics and a diocesan RE adviser to examine this final research question.

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⁹⁰ Fictionalised to preserve anonymity

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CHAPTER FOUR

Part A – Presentation of Data and Analysis

‘In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the need to help young people develop their abilities to use spoken language effectively’ (Mercer et al 2017: 15)

Introduction

The previous chapter makes clear that, for the paired conversations, fifty students were sought from five schools. Previous work in this specific area of developing dialogic skills in RE for secondary school students was undertaken through an action research study. Focusing on twenty students within one school that Luby (2012: 71) describes as ‘...an academically high-attainment city comprehensive with the majority of pupils living in a relatively affluent catchment area.’ Notably, the limitations of this study led Luby (2012: 82) to recommend that ‘...any future larger scale study should select a sample of schools using the following criteria:

- Levels of attainment.
- Affluence of location.
- Location of schools; and
- Types of school.’

Originally, the intention of this study was to adopt the approach of stratified sampling. The four criteria above identify the different types of schools that would make up the target population, such that the sample would be representative, to some extent, of the general secondary school population across the United Kingdom. An advantage of stratified sampling is that, if the sample is highly representative of the target population, then one can generalise from the results obtained. As discussed in the previous chapter, though, the key features

sought are that of indicativeness and relatability. Is there sufficient breadth and diversity within the target sample that RE teachers will find common features to which they can relate? If so, then they make take some interest in the findings.

Following through with the original intention of stratified sampling, a tranche of invitations (see appendix 1) was sent to Catholic secondary schools that had been recommended as possibilities for participation in this research project. However, there was a disappointing lack of response from these schools; indeed, there was a nil response. The second tranche of invitations fared little better – with only two schools responding – and one of these declined. After obtaining clearance from the relevant local authority, the offer of participation from this Scottish secondary school was gratefully accepted. At the same time, approaches were made to several non-Catholic schools with whom the author has professional connections; but there was a similarly disappointing response.

Sampling and Schools

Unlike others in this field of researching religious education such as Conroy et al 2013, I was not in a position to ascertain reasons for these disappointments. My response was pragmatic and I decided to use a form of opportunity sampling instead. Head teachers of primary schools, and a Diocesan RE adviser, with whom the author has good professional relationships were approached for their support; and they were asked if they could render an introduction to their associated secondary schools. They kindly did this; and so the schools from the target population became those available at the time and willing to take part. The sample is based, therefore, on opportunity or convenience. Although this form of sampling proved to be a relatively straightforward and ‘...quick way... of choosing participants, [it] may not provide a representative sample, and could be biased’ (McLeod 2014). So, it is

important to analyse the target sample in order to ascertain if there is a reasonable degree of representativeness; such that the findings may be relatable to RE teachers in the UK.

Of the ten schools who participated in the study, nine were from England and one was in Scotland. Therefore, information with regard to classification criteria below is based primarily on England and its education system (see Figure 7 below):

Figure 7
Classification Criteria

Type:

- state,
- academy, and
- faith (Anglican, Catholic);

Location:

- city,
- town,
- semi-rural, and
- rural;

Affluence of location: Most Deprived (Decile 1) through to Least Deprived (Decile 10) based on 2015 English indices of multiple deprivation.

Levels of performance: Based on most recent Ofsted grading of

- Outstanding,
- Good,
- Requires Improvement, and
- Inadequate.

School 1:

*Apostle High*⁹¹

Type – Faith [Catholic]

Location – edge of city but with large rural catchment area

Affluence of school location by postcode - decile 1

Affluence of catchment area postcodes⁹² – mean average decile score of 3⁹³

Levels of performance – n/a

School 2:

City Catholic School

Type – Faith [Catholic]

Location – city

Affluence of school location by postcode - decile 1

Affluence of catchment area postcodes – mean average decile score of 3

Levels of performance – Outstanding

School 3:

County C of E Academy

Type – Faith [Anglican]

Location – rural

Affluence of school location by postcode - decile 4

Affluence of catchment area postcodes – mean average decile score of 3

Levels of performance – Good

School 4:

Magdalene C of E Academy

Type – Faith [Anglican]

Location – town

Affluence of school location by postcode - decile 6

Affluence of catchment area postcodes - mean average decile score of 2

Levels of performance – Requires Improvement

⁹¹ All school names are fictitious in order to protect anonymity.

⁹² Unlike others, this catchment area postcode based on 2016 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.

⁹³ Scores are rounded up or down to nearest whole figure.

School 5:

Metropolitan Borough School

Type – Academy

Location – town

Affluence of school location by postcode - decile 5

Affluence of catchment area postcodes - mean average decile score of 6

Levels of performance - Good

School 6:

Municipal Borough School

Type – Academy

Location – town

Affluence of school location by postcode - decile 8

Affluence of catchment area postcodes – mean average decile score of 5

Levels of performance – Requires Improvement

School 7:

Angel High

Type – Academy

Location – semi-rural

Affluence of school location by postcode - decile 10

Affluence of catchment area postcodes – mean average decile score of 7

Levels of performance – Outstanding

School 8:

Lion Rampant School

Type – Academy

Location – city

Affluence of school location by postcode - decile 9

Affluence of catchment area postcodes – mean average decile score of 3

Levels of performance – Outstanding

School 9:

Templar School

Type – Academy

Location – city

Affluence of school location by postcode - decile 2

Affluence of catchment area postcodes – mean average decile score of 4

Levels of performance – Good⁹⁴

School 10:

Acacia Lane School

Type – State [comprehensive]

Location – town

Affluence of school location by postcode - decile 9

Affluence of catchment area postcodes – mean average decile score of 3

Levels of performance – Inadequate

Analysis for indicativeness of target sample

1. School Types

According to Ofsted (<https://www.gov.uk/types-of-school/overview>) there are seven types of school, namely:

A. State schools

Following the national curriculum they are further sub-divided

- a) local council community schools;
- b) foundation and voluntary schools which have more freedom than community schools; and
- c) grammar schools, run by the council, a foundation body or a trust.

⁹⁴ Two months after the fieldwork this school was inspected by Ofsted and rated 'Inadequate.'

B. Faith schools

Similarly, they have to follow the national curriculum, but they can choose what they teach in religious studies. Also, faith schools may have different admissions criteria and staffing policies to state schools.

C. Free schools

Free schools are funded by the government and not run by the local council. They do not need to follow the national curriculum but can't use academic selection processes like a grammar school. One type of free school is a University Technical College (UTC) that specialises in subjects like engineering and construction.

D. Academies

Academies are publicly funded independent schools that don't have to follow the national curriculum; although they still have to follow the same rules on admissions and exclusions as other state schools. Some academies have sponsors such as businesses or faith groups.

E. City technology colleges

These are independent schools in urban areas that are owned and funded by companies as well as central government. City technology colleges have an emphasis on technological and practical skills.

F. State boarding schools

These schools provide free education but do charge fees for boarding. Some state boarding schools are run by academies or free schools whilst some are run by a local council.

G. Private schools

Also known as independent schools they charge fees; and students don't have to follow the national curriculum.

By December 2016, it became apparent that only three of the seven types listed above were to be represented in the sample. Fortunately, it was the three most common types, i.e.

1. State schools – Acacia Lane;
2. Faith schools – Apostle High, City Catholic School, County C of E Academy, Magdalene C of E Academy; and
3. Academies – Angel High, Lion Rampant, Metropolitan Borough, Municipal Borough and Templar School.

Of the remaining four types, neither city technology colleges nor state boarding schools were in the vicinity of either workplace or home; and so no attempt at contact was made. However, a Free School (University Technical College) is near to the workplace; and independent schools are in the vicinity of both workplace and home. Contact was made with both the UTC and several independent schools; but this proved to be fruitless. Despite this disappointment, it is fair to claim that the ten schools in the target sample do represent, to some degree, the three most common types of schools in the United Kingdom.

However, according to the Department for Education EduBase (March 2016), some 59% of England's secondary schools have academy status, whilst 35% of secondary schools remain within their local authorities.⁹⁵ The target sample has a ratio of 5:1 between academies and state schools; and so the academies are over-represented within this sample. Similarly, faith schools are over-represented as only 19% of state-funded secondary schools are faith schools (Long and Bolton 2017). As the three most common types of schools are represented then this over-representation of faith schools and academies is acceptable given that:

- circumstances determined the use of opportunity sampling;
- there is an anticipated increase of state schools converting to academy status given that this is the UK Government's long term goal;⁹⁶ and
- although the findings are intended for all secondary schools, there is a special focus for faith schools.

2. Location

There is a spread of locations, i.e. city, town, semi-rural and rural location. It appears that no records are kept of the number of schools in these types of location;⁹⁷ but it does seem unlikely that the sample's ratio of 4:4:1:1 is representative: and so the target sample is likely to be skewed towards city and town locations.

⁹⁵ According to BBC News Education, 7 May 2016, it is just over 61% for academy status.

⁹⁶ See <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-13274090>

⁹⁷ See Freedom of Information request 2016-0005414 https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/locations_of_all_uk_primary_and See also <https://www.gov.uk/find-school-in-england>

3. Affluence of location / catchment area

As indicated above, the affluence of nine of the schools' locations and catchment areas is determined by their postcode with reference to the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation for England (see <http://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/idmap.html>); and for one school it is with reference to the 2016 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (see <http://simd.scot/2016/#/simd2016/BTTTTFTT/9/-4.0000/55.9000/>). Postcodes are ranked in deciles from 1 to 10; with 1 being the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods and 10 being the least deprived 10% of neighbourhoods. For example, the postcode for the author's previous workplace is LN1 3DY and this places the institution in decile 8 which is amongst the 30% least deprived neighbourhoods.

For this study, the schools' catchment areas are "visualised" through the use of "pupil heat maps", which are based on official pupil data taken from the last government school census [source: <https://www.schoolguide.co.uk/catchment>]. Using the latest available data, this "visualisation" shows where all pupils attending the school live at that time, and so it can be a useful indicator of the schools' catchment areas. For example, with regard to Magdalene C of E Academy, the "pupil heat map" identifies several neighbourhoods as falling within this school's catchment area. The mean average decile score for these neighbourhoods is 2.

With regard to the ten schools in the target sample, the mean average decile scores for the catchment areas is 3.9. And so, an "average" sample school is to be found in decile 4 of this range which places it amongst the top 40% deprived neighbourhoods. However, there is nothing "average" about school locations and their catchment areas as exemplified by following:

Angel High – This is notable as it is the most extreme example within this study whereby location is mismatched with catchment areas. According to 2015 English Index of Multiple Deprivation, the school is located in decile 10 which is ‘amongst the top 10% least deprived neighbourhoods.’ Yet, by Ofsted’s reckoning, the school serves ‘...an area of relative economic and social disadvantage.’ A trip to the school quickly resolves this contradiction. Whilst the school itself is located within an almost quintessential English village setting, the surrounding catchment area is populated with much heavy industry.

Templar School – Conversely, the postcode location of this school places it ‘amongst the top 20% most deprived neighbourhoods’ in England; but nearby postcodes identify the school’s catchment area as being ‘amongst the top 40% least deprived neighbourhoods’ in the country.

It should be borne in mind that some of the students within a catchment area will not attend that school; indeed, there may also be students who attend from outside of the catchment area. Nonetheless, it is fair to conclude that there is a varied representation of schools as determined by postcode location (see Figure 8a below). However, it is conceded that the opportunity sample of schools is skewed towards neighbourhoods of deprivation as indicated by Figure 8b below:

Figure 8a

Diversity of Schools

Location Postcode

Decile 1 Most Deprived > Decile 10 Least Deprived

Decile No. of Schools

1	1
2	1
3	1
4	1
5	1
6	1
7	0
8	1
9	2
10	1

Figure 8b

Diversity of Schools

Postcode Catchment Area

Decile 1 Most Deprived > Decile 10 Least Deprived

Decile No. of Schools

1	0
2	1
3	5
4	1
5	1
6	1
7	1
8	0
9	0
10	0

Thus, it may be fair to summarise the opportunity sample as being broadly representative of secondary schools with regard to type, location and affluence of catchment areas – but with three caveats. First, there is an over-representation of faith schools and academies. Secondly, the locations of schools are skewed towards cities and towns. Thirdly, the sample is biased towards schools that have catchment areas containing neighbourhoods of deprivation.

The final criterion for analysis is that of performance levels within the schools.

4. Performance Levels

At the time of the data collection the latest Ofsted report (01 December 2016) stated that 78% of secondary schools in England were either ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding.’ This equates to almost eight schools in the sample of nine above⁹⁸ in which the schools are graded as follows:

Outstanding - three schools namely, City Catholic, Angel High and Lion Rampant.

Good - three schools namely, County C of E, Metropolitan Borough and Templar.⁹⁹

Requires Improvement – two schools namely, Magdalene C of E and Municipal Borough.

Inadequate – one school namely, Acacia Lane.

With regard to types of schools, there should be a ratio of almost 8:1 comparing ‘Outstanding/Good’ with ‘Requires Improvement/Inadequate.’ However, the ratio is 6:3 and so the sample skews towards the lower end of the spectrum.

⁹⁸ Scottish school not included as it is not subject to Ofsted inspection

⁹⁹ Subsequently downgraded to ‘Inadequate’.

Overall then, taking together the four criteria of type, location, affluence of catchment areas and performance levels, the opportunity sample can be criticised on three grounds:

1. There is an over-representation of faith schools and academies;
2. The school locations are biased towards cities and towns; and
3. It skews towards schools performing at the lower end of the Ofsted spectrum.

Nonetheless, there is still a broad representation of schools given that:

- a) The three most common types of schools are well represented;
- b) All four kinds of location (city, town, semi-rural and rural) are represented;
- c) There is a broad diversity of catchment areas spread throughout the deciles spanning from ‘most deprived’ to ‘least deprived’; and
- d) All four categories of Ofsted performance levels are covered within the sample.

Fieldwork with Students

As discussed in the previous chapter, an aim of the study is to enhance indicativeness and reliability. The original target of fifty students from five schools is exceeded, and so claims for reliability have been slightly strengthened. With ten schools and a higher number of students in the sample, there is now a wider choice with which practising RE teachers can relate. Also, there are two other noteworthy factors concerning reliability. With the approach of stratified sampling, the original aim was to invite participation from students in Y8-Y11. It was anticipated that exam pressures might inhibit the involvement of students in Y12 and Y13. However, with the abandonment of stratified sampling and the use of opportunity sampling instead, the choice of student involvement was left in the hands of heads of department of religious education. This resulted in only four students from Y9 being involved with the study as illustrated below in Table 5.

Table 5
Year Group Participation
(n=65)

<u>School</u>	<u>Y9</u>	<u>Y10</u>	<u>Y11</u>	<u>Y12</u>	<u>Y13</u>
Apostle High			2		11
City Catholic					4
County C of E		2	5		
Magdalene C of E		7			
Metropolitan Borough				6	
Municipal Borough	4				
Angel High		6			
Lion Rampant		6			
Templar High				4	2
Acacia Lane		6			
<i>Sub-totals</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>17</i>

With sixty-one students participating from Key Stages Four and Five (i.e. Y10-Y13); then teachers of religious education can relate the findings of this study, with a degree of certainty, to their own students. However, it would be unwise to accord any relatability of findings to younger students in Key Stage Three (i.e. Y7-Y9).

The second noteworthy point concerning relatability is the ratio of Catholics to non-Catholics participating in this study. The opportunity sampling produces a ratio of eight Catholics to fifty-seven from other backgrounds; and this ratio is, close to reality within the UK in which around 1 in 12 are Catholic (BBC News, 15 September 2010).¹⁰⁰ Again, this strengthens relatability of the findings with the reality of RE classrooms. The breakdown of religious and non-religious affiliation of the participants is outlined below in Table 6.

¹⁰⁰ How many Catholics are there in Britain? <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/11297461> [accessed 19 March 2018]. Albeit all of the Catholics are to be found in the two Catholic schools only

<u>Table 6</u>
<u>Affiliation of Participants</u>
(n=65)
Agnostic = 22
Atheist = 14
Catholic ¹⁰¹ = 8
Deist = 2
Muslim = 2
Non-religious = 4
Other Christian = 12
Sikh = 1

It is now timely to analyse each of the four research questions.

RESEARCH QUESTION 1

To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?

If teachers of RE are contemplating the introduction of dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk into their classrooms, then one of their first considerations is likely to be “Will the students remain on-task whilst outside my supervision?” This is a legitimate concern for teachers, although the previous action research study by Luby (2012) might assuage such anxiety given that the twenty pupils were on task for more than 92% of the time (see Table 2).

However, there are two marked differences. First, as action research the previous study was undertaken by the students’ own classroom teacher. This means that there was already a

¹⁰¹ Four declared to be non-practising

student-teacher relationship in place and, at the very least, the students were aware that they could be subject to disciplinary sanctions if they participated in too much off task activity. With this study, however, there is no such relationship as the researcher is a stranger to the students. Both common sense and practical experience indicate that with this research study there is a greater likelihood of students engaging with off task activities. Secondly, the definition of 'on task' is more rigorous this time, with 'on task activity' being restricted to time spent on cumulative talk and exploratory talk. With the previous study, disputational talk was acceptable and included within the word count.

This definition of on task activity including cumulative talk and exploratory talk means that both research question 1 and research question 2 need to be analysed together.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2

To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

For an illustration, let us examine the returns from the first school in which fieldwork was conducted namely, Apostle High.

School 1 - Apostle High:

This is a smaller than average sized Catholic secondary school situated on the outskirts of a city. It serves a large catchment area comprising both city and rural areas. Fieldwork undertaken with thirteen students - eleven in Y13 and two in Y11. The students self-declared their religious affiliation as follows:

Catholic ¹⁰² –	5
Other Christian –	1
Agnostic –	6
Atheist -	1

As stated, Apostle High was the first school to participate in the study. The students were situated in rooms close to their RE classroom. For some of the students, their conversation was private in that nobody else was present; whilst for other students it was semi-private, in that they shared a room with another pair of students. The students were briefed prior to their paired conversations. This comprised an explanation about the procedure and an examination of the prompt sheet (see Figure 3) to which they had access throughout the conversation. The students were provided with an opportunity to ask questions; and then they were invited to read either excerpt A (Science and the Supernatural) or excerpt B (Historical Evidences) from the schoolbook *Trial of the Resurrection*. Additionally, there were three ‘Starter for Discussion’ questions that the students were free to use or not i.e.

<p>Starter for Discussion (optional)</p> <p><u>Excerpt A</u> What point is Calvin trying to make? Do you agree with the Judge’s comments? Why (not)? Some Christians think Heaven is all around us – but we just can’t see it. What do you think?</p> <p><u>Excerpt B</u> To what extent do you agree, or disagree, that this is good evidence about Jesus? What are your views about Jesus?</p>

Additionally, for excerpt B they had access to copies of “exhibits FJ, MIC and HEB” for reference and consultation (see appendices 1-1, 1-2 and 1-3 respectively). Following upon

¹⁰² Two practising and three non-practising.

this, the students participated with their conversations that were recorded and transcribed; and preliminary analyses are set out below beginning with the first school, Apostle High.

Table of On Task Averages 1

Apostle High

(n=11)

Conversation ¹⁰³	Words	Cumulative talk%	Exploratory talk%	On Task%
1	2536	50.7	36.2	86.9
2	2215	66.0	28.0	94.0
3	2765	5.1	33.6	38.7
4	847	22.0	7.4	29.4
6	997	3.1	36.0	39.1
7	379	48.5	11.6	60.1
8	2606	30.4	40.0	70.4
9	1038	44.9	51.7	96.6
10	1503	73.5	25.9	99.4
11	965	83.2	9.5	92.7
12	1832	42.5	15.6	58.1
Average	1607	42.7	26.9	69.6

As outlined above, within the eleven conversations the students from Apostle High are on task for an average of 69.6%. This mean average does mask a wide variety of returns.

Broadly speaking, these eleven conversations are classified into three categories i.e.

- 6 high quality conversations (nos. 1, 2, 8, 9, 10 and 11);
- 1 mid quality conversations (no. 12); and
- 4 low quality conversations (nos. 3, 4, 6 and 7).

The two criteria for determining the quality of the conversations are as follows:

¹⁰³ Conversation no.5 not listed as recording was corrupt

1. The number of words in the conversation; and
2. The percentage of words that are deemed “on task” i.e. comprising cumulative talk and exploratory talk.

For the first criterion, consideration was given to using the running time of the conversations instead e.g. the opening three conversations last 15 minutes 00 seconds, 12 minutes 52 seconds, and 15 minutes 15 seconds respectively. However, throughout the study there were too many complicating factors regarding time made available to the students. In one school, the conversations take place during a registration period and not during class time. In another school, the session overruns into the students’ lunch hour. In a different school, the sessions are brought to a premature end as another class was timetabled to use that room. The basic principle is that the students are informed prior to their sessions to speak for as long, or as little, as seems natural – and then to switch off the recorder. And so, because of these and other factors, such as differing paces of speech, it was decided to use the number of words as the first criterion. From a previous study (Luby 2012), it became apparent that a conversation usually requires a minimum of 700 words to produce good levels of cumulative talk and exploratory talk. Therefore, a minimum standard for a “high quality” conversation is that of 700 words.

For the second criterion of “on task” activity, it is important to bear in mind that, as discussed in the previous chapter, “off task” activity can include legitimate aims. One such aim is that of making a declaratory statement. For example, a respondent states pursuant to a question about God, “Well, being an atheist myself I don’t believe there is one” (Luby 2014: 62). This statement is both relevant and helpful to his conversation partner who initiates the discussion. Another legitimate aim of “off task” activity is that of seeking clarification. For instance, a

conversation partner asks “Yeah. OK. Um...um...what about the design argument how do you feel about that?” In return, she receives the response, “What is the intelligent design argument?” (Luby 2014: 62). Again, both of these questions seeking clarification are relevant and helpful to the conversation partners. Of questionable legitimacy, though, is disputational talk. As outlined in chapter three, according to the literature it can be a precursor to exploratory talk, but previous experience did not support this assertion (Luby, 2012).¹⁰⁴ Hence, it is discounted for conversations to be rated as “high quality”. In the world of educational assessment, the figure of 70% is often set as the bar for high quality achievement (e.g. an “A” pass at A-Level studies; Honours classifications, etc.) Therefore, the second criterion for achieving a conversation of “high quality” is set at 70% and above for a combination of cumulative talk and exploratory talk.

Conversations that do not meet the criteria of a minimum of 700 words and 70% on task activity combining cumulative talk and exploratory talk are to be rated as either “mid quality” or “low quality”. Continuing the parallel with educational assessment, the double threshold for a “mid-quality” conversation is set at a minimum of 500 words and 50% on task activity. Conversations below this double threshold are deemed to be of “low quality”. As shown in the Table of On Task Averages 1 above, this means that the eleven Apostle High conversations comprise six “high quality”, one “mid quality”, and four “low quality”.

Let us examine these Apostle High conversations in some more detail.

¹⁰⁴ e.g. see conversation no. 3 below with Y13 students Leya and Coraline whose conversation is marred with a majority comprising disputational talk (see appendix C for full transcript)

HIGH QUALITY CONVERSATIONS

Preliminary analysis of conversation no. 1¹⁰⁵

*Y13 Lucy*¹⁰⁶ (*agnostic*)¹⁰⁷ and *Alice* (*atheist*)

There are 2536 words in their passage of conversation about excerpt B. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 86.9% of this conversation. With respect to cumulative talk, Lucy and Alice build upon each other's comments regarding their common distrust of eyewitness accounts and Old Testament stories and their suspicion of miracles. With regard to exploratory talk, Alice and Lucy challenge the apparent lack of evidence underpinning the scholarship that claims the Gospels were written at an early date. They also question the authority of the Old Testament and, without mentioning it by name, the magisterium of the Catholic Church regarding which passages of Scripture should be taken literally; and which are to be understood metaphorically.

Preliminary analysis of conversation no. 2¹⁰⁸

Y13 Jasmine (*agnostic*) and *Tilly* (*practising Catholic*) [1]

There are 2215 words in their passage of conversation about excerpt B. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, Jasmine and Tilly are on task for 94.0% of this conversation. With respect to cumulative talk, Jasmine and Tilly share a commonality of views concerning miracles, God as a cause for creation and evolution, and the afterlife. With regard to exploratory talk, Tilly offers metaphor as a key to understanding the Genesis story and posits the design argument as a feature of the universe; and they struggle together about a modern-day concept of sin and its consequences.

¹⁰⁵ See appendix A for full transcript of this conversation. This is included with the manuscript as an example of grading for high quality conversations.

¹⁰⁶ The students selected names other than their own for participation in this study.

¹⁰⁷ The students were invited to declare their (non-) religious affiliation as they perceived it.

¹⁰⁸ See appendix B for full transcript of this conversation. This is to be found in the USB appendix.

Preliminary analysis of conversation no. 8¹⁰⁹

Y13 Jim (agnostic) and Tom (practising Catholic) [1]

This passage of conversation has a substantive word count of 2606 words, and in terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, it just surpasses the threshold with an on task return of 70.4%. With regard to cumulative talk, they question both the feasibility of interaction with a spiritual dimension; and the nature and development of human knowledge at the time of Jesus. With respect to exploratory talk, Jim and Tom question the nature of the after-life and the purpose of free will.

Preliminary analysis of conversation no. 9¹¹⁰

Y13 Jim (agnostic) and Tom (practising Catholic) [2]

This passage of conversation is shorter with 1038 words. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 96.6% of this conversation. Their conversation focuses on topics such as fate and free will, the role of God, and the nature of truth.

Preliminary analysis of conversation no. 10¹¹¹

Y13 Leya (practising Catholic) & Alexander (agnostic)

This is a more substantive passage of conversation comprising 1503 words. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, Leya and Alexander are on task for 99.4% of this conversation. Jointly they are intrigued by the dimensionality of the universe and they

¹⁰⁹ See appendix H for full transcript of this conversation. This is to be found in the USB appendix.

¹¹⁰ See appendix I for full transcript of this conversation. This is to be found in the USB appendix.

¹¹¹ See appendix J for full transcript of this conversation. This is to be found in the USB appendix.

explore the concept of God as creator of this universe. They both adopt a disbelieving attitude towards a literal interpretation of the biblical story in Genesis.

Preliminary analysis of conversation no. 11¹¹²

Y13 Lucy and Keira (both agnostic)

This is a less substantive passage of conversation comprising 965 words. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, Lucy and Keira are on task for 92.7% of this conversation. There is very little exploratory talk (9.5%) which focuses primarily on the Day of Judgement. Most of their conversation comprises cumulative talk (83.2%) such as the after-life and their agreement that the Bible should be understood metaphorically and not literally.

The classification of these seven conversations as “high quality” is based on the criteria outlined above. Furthermore, as an experienced practitioner of RE I look upon these conversations and wish that I had been able to engender more such conversations within my classrooms: and I am not alone with this professional judgement. An Assistant Head Teacher (and Head of Religious Studies) at the other Catholic school within this study, Angel High, read a “high quality” conversation from her Y10 students and commented:

When I read it, they actually both showed the kind of open mindedness that I would expect from them... And they were both quite willing to engage with the idea I thought... I think that they bounced off each other quite well... I think they listened... but I think they engaged with it well. Um... I think they were trying to have a genuine conversation about whether there is another world. Um... I think there was some attempt to build on each other's conversations as they went along. And to engage with the new ideas and move them forward.

¹¹² See appendix K for full transcript of this conversation. This is to be found in the USB appendix.

The only concerns expressed by the Assistant Head Teacher were to do with the practicalities of this enterprise of students engaging in paired conversations outside of the classroom – and this is the focus of the fourth research question. Further corroboration comes from an experienced Head of Religious Studies at another school, Municipal Borough, who undertook a similar exercise of examining her Y9 students’ transcripts and voiced the following sentiments (see extract 1 below):

Extract 1

Researcher: I mean the thing is, as a teacher right, if you send two children out of the class fifteen minutes or whatever, by the time they travel and then come back, and later on you get a transcript like that of the conversation would you be happy?

Head of Department: I'd be incredibly happy actually. Very happy because-

Researcher: Why?

Head of Department: You are getting pupils to really engage in the topic and I think it's very difficult in a class situation where pupils can express their views clearly; they might have them hidden within them but they're too scared to show them, they're scared of being nerdy for example. I think honestly it's just excellent, it's so nice to see them doing critical thinking in a way. Critical thinking skills.

Notably, both heads of departments had positive responses and indicated that their students were “engaged” with the topic of conversation. Moreover, the Municipal Borough head of department further expresses her pleasure at the students ‘doing critical thinking.’ So there is some evidence from the professional judgements of three experienced RE teachers that paired conversations promote student engagement and critical thinking. This level of conversation is

deemed high quality: what, though, of conversations that are termed mid quality or low quality?

MID QUALITY CONVERSATION

Preliminary analysis of conversation no. 12¹¹³

Y13 Lucy & Keira & Alexander (all agnostic)

There are 1832 words in this passage of conversation. A timetabling clash meant that another student had to return to class and this presented an opportunity for a triple conversation (there having been two previous triple conversations in the fieldwork by this time). Disappointingly, the students are off task for a sizeable part of the conversation with a discussion about racism. Thus in terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the three students are on task for 58.1% of this conversation.

In terms of indicativeness and relatability, I would hope that the seven conversations discussed above are of sufficient promise to prompt RE teachers to think about employing such dialogic pedagogy within their classrooms. They would wish, though, to see findings from a wider variety of both schools and students. However, prior to such an examination, there are four “low quality” conversations, which require consideration.

¹¹³ See appendix L for full transcript of this conversation. This is included with the manuscript as an example of grading for mid quality conversations.

LOW QUALITY CONVERSATIONS

Preliminary analysis of conversation no. 3¹¹⁴

Y13 Leya and Coraline (both non-practising Catholics)

This is a substantive passage of conversation comprising 2765 words. However, disappointingly, in terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are on task for only 38.7% of this conversation. The majority of the conversation is disputatious and cumulative talk comprises a mere 140 words or 5.1%. Admittedly, though, there are genuine attempts at exploratory talk as evidenced by the 929 words that comprise 33.6% of their conversation. But overall, much of their conversation runs down side tracks such as the veracity or otherwise of the moon landings; the complexity of Scottish history, especially the Battle of Stirling Bridge; and even a zombie apocalypse!

Preliminary analysis of conversation no. 4¹¹⁵

Y11 Sunny (non-practising Catholic) and Harambe (agnostic) [1]

There are 847 words in their brief passage of conversation and, in terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk; the two students are on task for 29.4% of this conversation. Compared with conversation no. 3 above there is a higher percentage of cumulative talk; but they waste much time on what can be termed nonsensical talk. Furthermore, there are only 63 words or 7.4% of the conversation that can be termed exploratory talk.

Conversations 3 and 4 are the types of dialogue about which a teacher is likely to be very concerned. On the one hand, with conversation no. 3 there is a personality clash as the two students spend much of the time in disputation; but this can be addressed by the teacher

¹¹⁴ See appendix C for full transcript of this conversation. This is included with the manuscript as an example of grading for low quality conversation.

¹¹⁵ See appendix D for full transcript of this conversation. This is to be found in the USB appendix.

taking care in the selection of partnerships. On the other hand, with conversation no. 4 there appears to be little attempt to take the activity seriously. A classroom teacher would be very disappointed with the lack of quality in both conversations; and with conversation no. 4 a teacher may resort to disciplinary measures concerning the students' behaviour.

Preliminary analysis of conversation no. 6¹¹⁶

Y13 Jasmine (agnostic) and Tilly (practising Catholic) [2]

There are 997 words in this passage of conversation that is, overall, of poorer quality than their previous conversation (see no. 2). In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, Jasmine and Tilly are on task for 39.1% of this conversation. Much of this conversation is disputational and, whilst discussing freewill, Jasmine and Tilly become fixated upon arguing about the role of fate with regard to finding true love.

Preliminary analysis of conversation no. 7¹¹⁷

Y11 Sunny (non-practising Catholic) and Harambe (agnostic) [2]

Prior to this conversation taking place, the researcher remarked upon the poor quality of the previous conversation (see conversation no. 4 above). In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 60.1% of this conversation, and on this count, it merits a rating of "mid quality". However, there are a meagre 379 words in this brief passage of conversation, and much of this discussion focuses on the cult film *The Matrix* with only a tangential link to RE.

¹¹⁶ See appendix F for full transcript of this conversation. This is to be found in the USB appendix.

¹¹⁷ See appendix G for full transcript of this conversation. This is to be found in the USB appendix.

Initial findings

With regard to answering the first research question – “to what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?” – a straightforward answer is 69.6%. However, as outlined above, there is a high degree of variability within these conversations. Six of the conversations are exemplary with no less than an average of 94.6% of the time spent on both cumulative talk and exploratory talk. This student talk focused on a breadth of topics, amongst them –

Literal and metaphorical understandings of biblical stories;

Miracles;

Creation and evolution;

Heaven and hell;

Reincarnation;

Judgement;

Fate and free will;

Nature of truth; and

God as creator.

One of the conversations is classified as “mid-quality” and includes discussion of metaphor, historical influences, and racism. Arguably, given this set of seven conversations, then many RE teachers in the UK who teach A-level or Advanced/Higher Grade Religious Studies and Philosophy might consider adopting such dialogic pedagogy. However, the four remaining “low quality” conversations give pause for thought. These conversations have an average of only 41.8% on task activity that comprises cumulative talk and exploratory talk. Indeed, some of the conversations are bedevilled by disputatious or nonsensical talk.

Therefore, it is necessary to examine, in a similar fashion, the findings from the other nine schools in the study before arriving at a firmer set of conclusions.

School 2 – City Catholic School

The other Catholic school in this study is the City Catholic School that is an outstanding secondary school in which more than 80% of students are baptised Catholics; and, indeed, almost all of the students are practising members of a church. The majority of learners are White British,¹¹⁸ although the proportion of learners from other ethnic backgrounds is higher than that found in most schools, which reflects the local population. The number of students whose first language is not English is around average but growing. The school serves a wide, mixed area of the city with some areas of significant disadvantage. The overall ability of students on entry is average whilst the number of students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average.

Fieldwork undertaken with four students in Y13 all of whom are studying A-level Religious Studies. The students self-declared their religious affiliation as follows:

Atheist -	2
Catholic -	2

Again, with regard to answering the first research question – “to what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?”

A straightforward answer is 89.9%. Three of the paired conversations (nos. 13, 14 and 15) rate

¹¹⁸ Academically, this designation is weak since, for example, the majority of Catholics in the UK are *not* from a British heritage. Moreover, “white” is *not* an ethnic description. However, it is commonly used by UK government’s inspection agency, Ofsted, for their description and analysis of pupils’ backgrounds e.g. see <https://educationinspection.blog.gov.uk/tag/white-british-pupils/>

as “high quality” and the other (no. 16) as “mid quality”. Conversation no. 13 took place between Prentice and Lily both of whom are practising Catholics.¹¹⁹ There are 1809 words in their passage of conversation with cumulative talk comprising 6.1% whilst exploratory talk comprises 90.5%. This is a surprisingly high amount of exploratory talk given that both have the same religious background. One might anticipate that, rather, much of their talk would be cumulative. However, Lily and Prentice interrogate the historical evidence for the New Testament and analyse religious experiences, both individual and corporate. They debate proof for miracles and discuss scientific theories; and they disagree over comparisons between biblical and fantastical stories. This is a rich conversation worthy of two A-level students.

Conversation no. 14 is between James and Eileen both of whom are atheists. There are 2181 words in this passage of conversation with cumulative talk constituting 52.8%. With this type of talk, they examine the roots of historical evidence and they question links between violence as portrayed in the Old Testament and modern day terrorism. The students question the central concept of Christianity that God is love, noting that they believe much of the Bible to be concerned with condemnation and judgement. Despite being intrigued by the notion of an after-life, they express confidence that science will ultimately disprove this. Exploratory talk constitutes a healthy 36.9% of their conversation in which they traverse from criticising the Bible as a means to oppress the rights of minorities to considering both the cause and the nature of the universe. Again, this is a rich and fluid conversation from two students of A-level Religious Studies.

For their second set of conversations, the partners agreed to switch so that atheists engaged with Catholics. Conversation no. 15 is between Prentice and James and consists of 2081 words of

¹¹⁹ see appendices M, N, O and P in USB for full transcripts of conversations 13, 14, 15 and 16

which an evenly matched 44.2% is cumulative talk and 44.0% is exploratory talk. With the former, they build consensus over the possibility of spiritual worlds existing in other dimensions and even share stories of the supernatural. With the latter, they explore the concept of the soul as a form of energy, the relevance of reported near death experiences and even religion as a form of social conditioning.

The “mid quality” conversation is no. 16 between Lily and Eileen and comprises 852 words of which 58.7% is cumulative talk and 26.4% is exploratory talk. Although they touch upon Plato’s “world of forms,” their dialogue is relatively brief and lacks the depth of the other conversations. Technically, it meets the criteria for “high quality,” but given their background of A-level studies, and applying professional judgement, this conversation is downgraded to “mid quality”. So, in response to the first research question, the following is ascertained for City Catholic School.

Table of On Task Averages 2

City Catholic School

(n=4)

<u>Conversation</u>	<u>Words</u>	<u>cumulative talk%</u>	<u>exploratory talk%</u>	<u>On Task%</u>
13	1809	6.1	90.5	96.6
14	2181	52.8	36.9	89.7
15	2081	44.2	44.0	88.2
16	852	58.7	26.4	85.1
Average	1731	40.4	49.5	89.9

In comparison with Apostle High, the conversations contain, on average, 124 more words.

Cumulative talk is slightly less by 2.3% but exploratory talk is significantly higher by 22.6%.

Hence, overall on-task activity is also significantly higher by 20.3%. What might explain this superior performance? An obvious explanation is that we are not comparing like-for-like. There are only four students in the City Catholic School sample as compared with eleven students

from the Apostle High sample. Notably, all of the students in the City Catholic School are studying A-level Religious Studies; but the same cannot be said for the Apostle High students for whom this course is not available. This more in-depth level of knowledge may account for the superior performance of the City Catholic School students as compared with those from Apostle High – especially with regard to exploratory talk.

Another factor to be considered is the quality of conversation. Whilst the City Catholic School sample comprises only Y13 students, two of the Apostle High students are in Y11; and both of their conversations are deemed “low quality”. Perhaps this younger age grouping partly explains the inferior performance of Apostle High (see Table 7 below).

Table 7
Catholic Schools
Quality of Conversations
(n=15)

<u>Apostle High</u>	<u>City Catholic</u>
6 HIGH QUALITY	3 HIGH QUALITY
1 MID QUALITY	1 MID QUALITY
4 LOW QUALITY	0 LOW QUALITY

From the perspective of an RE teacher, an emerging theme is that such a dialogic approach to RE is worthy of consideration for Y13 students, especially if they are undertaking an A-level (or similar) Religious Studies course. Indeed, in a similar fashion with regard to “text speak,” this is the stated experience in recent years of an RE Diocesan Adviser concerning her students in an ethnically diverse London comprehensive school sited close to areas of deprivation (see extract 2 below).

Extract 2

Researcher: Okay so did your students then have Twitter accounts?

Diocesan Adviser: They did, yes.

Researcher: So if they went away for conversation you could say to them I'd like you to sum up the main points of conversation in a tweet or go into a blog and write an entry?

Diocesan Adviser: Yeah absolutely!

Researcher: So we can then all see what you've been doing, what you've been talking about?

Diocesan Adviser: And that would be for the whole class, that wouldn't just be me checking the blog or checking the Twitter account, that would be the whole class live in various different areas of the school checking what each other are doing.

Researcher: At the same time?

Diocesan Adviser: Yeah essentially, so say I have group A in the library, I have group B in the canteen, I have group C in my classroom, group A might tweet oh we've just realised that we both strongly agree X. My groups B and C have the option, as do I, to respond to that if we wish to...

Researcher: Okay! So the things you mentioned at the beginning about the blog and the Twitter...that was 'A' Level students?

Diocesan Adviser: That was 'A' Level students...

So from a sample of sixteen students in two Catholic schools an emergent theme is that a dialogic approach to RE appears feasible and desirable for Sixth Form students undertaking A-level Religious Studies. The percentages of on task activity with regard to cumulative talk and exploratory talk, and the quality of conversations, may be deemed sufficient to give an RE teacher enough confidence to disperse students to different parts of the school building. A

limited, partial corroboration of the feasibility of student dispersal throughout a school is offered by an RE Diocesan Adviser.

What, though, of other schools in this study? Do they contradict or corroborate this emergent finding? Let us examine the other two faith schools – Magdalene C of E Academy and County C of E Academy.

School 3 - County C of E Academy

The County C of E Academy is a smaller-than-average secondary school situated in a village location. The large majority of students are of White British heritage while a very small number come from several minority ethnic groups. The number of students who speak English as an additional language is low but increasing, especially for those who are from the European Union. The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is above average.

Fieldwork undertaken with seven students (all GCSE) – five in Y11 and two in Y10. The students self-declared their religious affiliation as follows:

Agnostic –	3
Atheist –	2
Other Christian –	2

These students had to endure the poorest conditions for their paired conversations, situated within cramped accommodation in which they were very close to each other. This is likely to have been a factor in the relative paucity of the quality of their conversations.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ See appendices Q, R and S for original recordings of conversations 17-22. These are to be found in the USB appendix.

HIGH QUALITY CONVERSATION

Preliminary analysis of conversation no. 17

Y11 Toby (agnostic) & Greg (practising Christian) 1

There are 1425 words in this passage of conversation. Cumulative talk comprises 688 words or 48.3% of their conversation in which they build a consensus regarding the dimensionality of the universe, science and religion and the nature of proof. Their exploratory talk comprises 421 words or 29.5% of the conversation, which entails discussion about near death experience and the relationship of the soul with the after-life. Overall, the two students are on task for 77.8% of this conversation.

MID QUALITY CONVERSATIONS

Preliminary analysis of conversation no. 18

Y10 GCSE Megan (Christian) & Oliver (atheist) 1

There are 1568 words in this passage of conversation and, in terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk; the two students are on task for 44.6% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk is a joint questioning of the multi-dimensionality of the universe and the evidence thereof; whilst their exploratory talk questions proof especially with respect to the nature of time.

Although more than half of Megan and Oliver's talk is discounted; it is arguable that much of it should have been included as exploratory talk. The acknowledged pioneer of exploratory talk Barnes (2008: 3) contends that 'When young people are trying out ideas and modifying them as they speak... their delivery will be hesitant, broken, and full of dead-ends and changes of

direction'.¹²¹ Such type of talk is evidenced in Megan and Oliver's conversation and an example is given below:

Oliver: Hang on transcription...it could be real because it says...it doesn't matter.

Megan: *Stephen Hawking's, he's like predicted everything hasn't he.*

Oliver: He hasn't predicted everything.

Megan: *No, he's gave us like –*

Oliver: He has come up with...come up with several theories about space and time.

Megan: *Yeah but he's quite accurate. So...and is like really clever.*

Conversation no. 19

Y11 Toby (agnostic) & Greg (practising Christian) 2

There are 1905 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 51.4% of this conversation. Regarding cumulative talk, they both question the nature of miracles especially the resurrection. With respect to exploratory talk, they examine the natures of evidence and belief.

Conversation no. 20

Y11 Spencer (agnostic) & Hannah (atheist) & Alison (agnostic) 1

This passage of conversation comprises 1590 words of which, in terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the three students are on task for 60.7% of this conversation. Discussion of the nature of proof with respect to science and religion features within cumulative talk; whilst exploratory talk contrasts speculation with proof and there is even an imaginative interpretation

¹²¹ In the world of RE a similar stance is mooted by Castelli (2018: 148) who argues for a '...classroom that builds pupils' confidence in developing their self-expression as they struggle to articulate personal beliefs and understandings that may often be partial and not yet fully formed.'

of symbolism within their given text. Again, like conversation 18 above, a fair percentage of the talk is discounted; although it falls within the scope of Barnes' (2008) more generous definition of exploratory talk.

Conversation no. 22

Y11 Spencer (agnostic) & Hannah (atheist) & Alison (agnostic) 2

In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the three students are on task for 83.9% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk focuses on the role of the Bible with regard to a changing relationship between the Christian church and modern day society. The exploratory talk touches upon the transliteration of the Gospel accounts from Hebrew to Greek. There are only 491 words in this passage of conversation as it was brought to an early finish by the researcher; since the accommodation was required by another class. Technically, this is below the threshold of 500 words but, using professional judgement, this conversation merits "mid quality".

LOW QUALITY CONVERSATION

Conversation no. 21

Y10 GCSE Megan (Christian) & Oliver (atheist) 2

There are 844 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 36.3% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk focuses on symbolism inherent within miracles; and their exploratory talk concerns myth making.

So, in response to the research question - *'To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?'* The following is ascertained for County C of E Academy:

Table of On Task Averages 3

County C of E Academy

(n=6)

Conversation	Words	Cumulative talk%	Exploratory talk%	On Task%
17	1425	48.3	29.5	77.8
18	1568	30.3	14.3	44.6
19	1905	31.2	20.2	51.4
20	1590	26.4	34.3	60.7
21	844	24.6	11.7	36.3
22	491	70.1	13.8	83.9
Average	1304	38.5	26.3	64.8

To sum up, in terms of rating for quality of conversations, County C of E Academy returns one high quality (no. 17); four mid quality (nos. 18, 19, 20 & 22); and one low quality (no. 21).

What then, of the other Church of England Academy?

School 4 – Magdalene C of E Academy

Magdalene C of E Academy is an average-sized school with a smaller than average sixth form sited within an area of deprivation. The proportion of students known to be disadvantaged is well above that found nationally and is increasing over time. The great majority of students come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is well above average.

Fieldwork undertaken with seven students in Y10 (all GCSE). The students self-declared their religious affiliation as follows:

Agnostic -	2
Non-religious -	4
Other Christian -	1

The same form of analysis undertaken with the other three faith schools is conducted with Magdalene C of E Academy (see appendix 2). This analysis produces the following findings:

Table of On Task Averages 4

Magdalene C of E Academy

(n=6)

<u>Conversation</u>	<u>Words</u>	<u>Cumulative talk%</u>	<u>Exploratory talk%</u>	<u>On Task%</u>
23	2517	16.6	47.5	64.1
24	2181	53.2	39.1	92.3
25	1909	26.6	71.4	98.0
26	2183	22.0	77.2	99.2
27	1808	40.2	48.0	88.2
28	939	38.6	49.4	88.0
Average	1923	32.9	55.4	88.3

Given that Magdalene C of E Academy is a school that “Requires Improvement” according to Ofsted; and that it has a catchment area sited in an area of deprivation - then this is an excellent performance from the students. Indeed, Magdalene C of E Academy outperforms all of the other three faith schools, despite their more favoured circumstances. This is testament to their teacher¹²² and is evidenced by a broad range of topics that are discussed within their conversations e.g.

- the mystery of Easter Island, spooky encounters, the concept of gravity and the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross for the human race (exploratory talk, conversation no. 25);
 - forms of prayer, proof, dreams and fate (cumulative talk, conversation no. 26);
- and

¹²² Disappointingly, shortly thereafter, the teacher left the profession for another post

- Schrodinger’s cat experiment, alternative historical timelines and Stephen Hawking’s “Theory of Everything” (cumulative talk, conversation no. 27).

In summation, there are five high quality conversations (nos. 24-28), and one mid quality conversation (no. 23). The overall findings from the four faith schools are depicted below in Table 8.

Table 8
Faith Schools
Quality of Conversations
(n=27)

<u>School</u>	High Quality	Mid Quality	Low Quality
Apostle High	6	1	4
City Catholic School	3	1	0
County C of E Academy	1	4	1
Magdalene C of E Academy	5	1	0
Total	15	7	5

These returns require to be analysed in the context of the two research questions i.e.

Research question 1 – *To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?*

Research question 2 – *To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?*

Accepting the parameters established above regarding the quality of conversations, the following null hypothesis is tested:

(Ho) ‘This intervention does not promote high quality conversations comprising cumulative talk and exploratory talk.’

A Chi Square Test is applied and the following results are obtained (see Table 9 below):

Table 9
Chi Square Test
Faith Schools – Quality of Conversations

Response 1 – High Quality

Observations [O] – Expected [E] = Difference [D]

i.e. [O] 15 – [E] 9 = [D] 6

[D] squared = 36

[D] squared / [E] = 4

Response 2 – Mid Quality

Observations [O] – Expected [E] = Difference [D]

i.e. [O] 7 – [E] 9 = [D] -2

[D] squared = 4

[D] squared / [E] = 0.44

Response 3 – Low Quality

Observations [O] – Expected [E] = Difference [D]

i.e. [O] 5 – [E] 9 = [D] -4

[D] squared = 16

[D] squared / [E] = 1.78

$4.00 + 0.44 + 1.78 = 6.22$ *Degrees of freedom {df} is 2 = 5.99 critical value*

$6.22 > 5.99$ *Result is statistically significant*

As a result, with a degree of statistical significance, the null hypothesis is disconfirmed for the four faith schools; and the returns indicate that this dialogic intervention *does* promote high quality conversations comprising cumulative talk and exploratory talk. In terms of reliability for RE teachers, this is encouraging. Furthermore, it is worth bearing mind that none of these four faith schools has favoured socio-economic circumstances. The mean average decile score for each of their school catchment postcode areas are 3, 3, 3 and 2 respectively (where 1 is the highest and 10 is the lowest in terms of deprivation). With regard

to performance inspection, Apostle High is under the jurisdiction of Education Scotland, whereas the other three schools are graded by Ofsted; with one school in each of the following categories – “Outstanding”, “Good” and “Requires Improvement”. The ratio of “Outstanding/Good” to “Requires Improvement/ Inadequate” is therefore 2:1, which as discussed above, is significantly below the national ratio of almost 8:1.

However, with regard to relatability, whilst it is true that an RE teacher may take into account the socio-economic circumstances of the students and the school’s perceived standing in the community as rated by Ofsted, the main consideration is likely to be “is this dialogic approach right for *my* students?” In so doing, attention should be given to the work by Heinz Streib concerning RE conversational analysis within a multi-faith setting. Streib et al (2001: 168) have developed ‘...a new measure in the psychology of... religious development...’ entitled Religious Schema Scale. This schema affords an opportunity to undertake quantitative analyses of students’ RE development and readiness for inter faith dialogue. The Religious Schema Scale is useful for assessing students’ stages of religious development with regard to three different stages i.e.

- *religious exclusivism* - deriving from the ‘truth of texts and teachings’;
- *religious pluralism* - a concern for ‘fairness, tolerance and rational choice’; and
- *xenosophia* - ‘readiness for interreligious dialogue.’ (Streib et al 2010: 168)

Such information could be an important consideration for a teacher prior to embarking upon a dialogic approach to RE. However, given that the participating students in this study are selected by convenience sampling, there was little opportunity to ask their teachers to issue a questionnaire survey that assesses the extent of the students’ readiness for RE conversations.

What can be determined with hindsight, though, is whether or not different features of the student population have a significant role to play within this dialogic intervention. That is to say, are high quality conversations dependent upon factors such as:

- *Age of student?*
- *Study of an examination course?* and
- *Religious background?*

These three factors are selected for the following reasons. If one is establishing dialogic pedagogy for the creation of a procedurally secular society – at what age might such pedagogy be introduced? Are younger students capable of meeting the demands of dialogic RE? A feature of the research procedure is that, for safeguarding reasons, the researcher stood outside or nearby a room in which the students engaged in dialogue. It was noticeable that the most animated conversations came from younger students. The second factor of examination study derives from the critique of Conroy (2016a) regarding a pervasive stultifying influence of the role of examinations that contribute to students' religious illiteracy. Is dialogic RE compatible with the demands of examination syllabi? The third factor of religious background is based on the argumentation within preceding chapters that those from both religious and liberal backgrounds will need to cooperate in the creation of a procedurally secular society. Is dialogic RE suitable for both those from a faith background and those from a non-faith background; or is one type of background more favourably disposed to engage with dialogic RE?

Reflecting upon, first of all, the four faith schools - with regard to the first student feature of *age*, there are fifteen conversations in the Key Stage 5 (KS5) grouping (Y12 and Y13). Of these, eight are high quality; three are mid quality; and four are low quality. In comparison,

there are twelve conversations in the Key Stage 4 (KS4) grouping (Y10 and Y11). Of these, six are high quality; three are mid quality; and three are low quality. Applying a Chi Square Test with {df} level of 2: the KS5 group returns a score of 2.40 and the KS4 group records 1.50. As both of these scores are below 5.99, then the age feature is not statistically significant.

What then of the second student feature? There are sixteen conversations between students undertaking Religious Studies *examinations* at either GCSE or A-level. Of these, nine are high quality; four are mid quality; and three are low quality. Drawing a comparison, there are eleven conversations between students who are not studying a religious studies examination course. Of these, five are high quality; two are mid quality; and four are low quality. Again, this appears to be an insignificant difference, which is confirmed by application of a Chi Square Test. With a {df} level of 2, the examination group returns a score of 4.04 and the non-examination group records 1.26. As both of these scores are below 5.99, then the examination feature is not statistically significant.

With respect to the third student feature of *religious background* the findings are, again, inconclusive. The students' self-declaration of religious backgrounds can be categorised into four broad definitions i.e.

- Catholic / Christian;
- Agnostic;
- Atheist; and
- Non-religious.

In terms of the twenty-seven conversations that took place in the four faith schools, the quality of the conversations is depicted below in Table 10.

Table 10
Faith Schools
Quality of Conversations by Religious Background
(n=27)

Conversation Backgrounds		Quality	Conversation Backgrounds		Quality
1	Agnostic & Atheist	High	2	Agnostic & Catholic	High
3	both Catholic	Low	4	Agnostic & Catholic	Low
5	Agnostic & Christian	invalid ¹²³	6	Agnostic & Catholic	Low
7	Agnostic & Catholic	Low	8	Agnostic & Catholic	High
9	Agnostic & Catholic	High	10	Agnostic & Catholic	High
11	both Agnostic	High	12	x 3 Agnostic	Mid
13	both Catholic	High	14	both Atheist	High
15	Atheist & Catholic	High	16	Atheist & Catholic	Mid
17	Agnostic & Christian	High	18	Atheist & Christian	Mid
19	Agnostic & Christian	Mid	20	2 Agnostic + 1 Atheist	Mid
21	Atheist & Christian	Low	22	2 Agnostic + 1 Atheist	Mid
23	both non-religious	Mid	24	both non-religious	High
25	both non-religious	High	26	both non-religious	High
27	2 Agnostic + Christian	High	28	2 Atheist + Christian	High

For the purpose of analysis, these twenty-seven conversations are examined from the perspective of sixty-one individual encounters (see Table 11 below).

¹²³ Recording corrupt

Table 11
Faith Schools
Quality of Conversations as Individual Encounters
by Religious Background
(n=59)

	Catholic/Christian	Agnostic	Atheist	Non-religious
High Quality	11	10	7	6
Mid Quality	3	8	4	2
Low Quality	5	3	0	0

At first glance, from this set of raw figures, there appears to be little difference between the four categories. This is confirmed through analysis by Chi Square Test which reveals that the returns for each of the four categories are not statistically significant (see Table 12 below).

Table 12
Faith Schools
Quality of Conversations as Individual Encounters
by Religious Background
Chi Square Test for Significance
(n=59)

Catholic/Christian	score of 5.51 {df} 2 and $5.51 < 5.99$	∴ Not Significant
Agnostic	score of 4.64 {df} 2 and $3.72 < 5.99$	∴ Not Significant
Atheist	score of 5.00 {df} 2 and $5.00 < 5.99$	∴ Not Significant
Non-religious	score of 5.82 {df} 2 and $5.82 < 5.99$	∴ Not Significant

Overall then, with respect to the student feature of religious background, there are no significant differences in performances between students from the various backgrounds. It should be noted that it is not a straightforward exercise to delineate these backgrounds since,

on the one hand, no less than three from the Non-religious category declared themselves to be “baptised,” which suggests a Christian influence. On the other hand, four of the Catholics and one of the Christians declared themselves as “non-practising,” pointing towards secular influences.

Overall, from the perspective of four faith schools, one can make the following observations. With respect to establishing a dialogic pedagogy for the creation of a procedurally secular society:

- a) Regarding the feature of age, there is no significant difference in performance between KS4 and KS5 students;
- b) Regarding the feature of examination, there is no significant difference between those studying an examination syllabus and those undertaking non-examination RE; and
- c) Regarding the feature of religious background, there appears, again, to be no significant difference between those from a faith background and those from a non-faith background.

Therefore, one may conclude, tentatively, that dialogic RE *is* suitable for students in both KS4 and KS5, whether or not they are studying an examination syllabus. Analysis of the six non-faith schools will deepen insight regarding the quality of students’ conversations; and it may illuminate the student features of age, examinations and religious background.

Non-faith Schools

Academies

School 5 – Metropolitan Borough School

The Metropolitan Borough School is an above-average sized secondary school.

There is a small proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds. Almost all students speak English as their first language. The proportion of students eligible for support through the pupil premium is below the national average. The proportion of students who are disabled or have special educational needs is slightly above the national average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.

Fieldwork undertaken with six students in Y12 and they self-declared their religious affiliation as follows:

Agnostic -	2
Atheist -	2
Catholic -	1 (non-practising)
Other Christian -	1 (non-practising)

Preliminary analyses of their conversations are to be found in appendix 3. The following is ascertained with respect to research questions 1 and 2 i.e.

- 1. To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?*
- 2. To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?*

Table of On Task Averages 5

Metropolitan Borough

(n=6)

Conversation	Words	Cumulative%	Exploratory%	On Task%
29	921	54.8	41.5	96.3
30	594	59.9	38.2	98.1
31	1440	70.8	19.4	90.2
32	1269	54.3	31.5	85.8
33	1237	49.9	23.4	73.3
34	804	22.5	48.4	70.9
Average	1044	52.0	33.7	85.7

The on task activity from the six students has a pleasing average of more than eighty-five per cent and so, given the high percentages of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, five of these conversations are deemed as “high quality” (i.e. nos. 29 and 31-34). The remaining conversation (no. 30) is deemed as “mid quality” as it fails to meet the threshold of 700 words. As with the faith schools, a wide range of topics are discussed in the students’ conversations e.g.

- heaven and hell, ghosts and spirits, other dimensions, pseudo-science and the power of science (cumulative talk, conversation no. 29);
- laws of the universe, and religion as a coping mechanism (exploratory talk, conversation no. 29);
- shadow world, nature of scientific evidence, consciousness, and homophobia (cumulative talk, conversation no. 31); and
- advanced technology and scientism (exploratory talk, conversation no. 33).

With respect to the three student features of age, examination and religious background, the following is noteworthy. From a variety of non-religious backgrounds, all of the students are sixth formers (Y12); but they are not studying Religious Studies at A-level. Indeed, unlike the majority of schools whereby the paired conversations took place during class time for RE, for the Metropolitan Borough students this took place during a half-hour session allocated for registration.

The most discernible difference between this non-faith academy and the four faith schools is the decile score for the school's catchment areas. Whilst the faith schools had a mean average of 2.75, placing them within the top thirty percent most deprived neighbourhoods; Metropolitan Borough has a mean average score of 6 which places this academy within the top fifty percent least deprived neighbourhoods. This emerging school feature is worthy of further consideration as we continue with this analysis.

School 6: Municipal Borough School

Context:

Municipal Borough School is a smaller than the average-sized suburban secondary school that incorporates post-16 provision. The school is a member of a small multi-academy trust led by an executive head teacher. Eighty per cent of students are of White British heritage, with the others coming from several, different ethnic groups. About one in seven of the students speak English as an additional language. About one in fifteen students is disabled or has special educational needs and this proportion is below average. A quarter of students are disadvantaged and this proportion is in line with the national average.

Fieldwork undertaken with four students in Y9 and they self-declared their religious affiliation as follows:

Agnostic - 1
 Atheist - 1
 Other Christian - 2

Preliminary analyses of these conversations are to be found in appendix 4.

Table of On Task Averages 6
Municipal Borough School

(n=4)

Conversation	Words	Cumulative%	Exploratory%	On Task%
35	1518	44.2	51.0	95.2
36	2150	58.8	31.1	89.9
37	1553	31.7	60.7	92.4
38	934	35.9	37.6	73.5
Average	1539	42.6	45.1	87.7

Again, there is an encouraging level of on task activity within these student conversations. In comparison with the previous school, Metropolitan Borough, there is a slightly higher average score of more than eighty-seven percent.¹²⁴ Therefore, using the set criteria, all of the conversations rate as “High Quality”. Given that these are the youngest students to participate with this study, then this is a commendable set of returns.

¹²⁴ Both Municipal Borough and Metropolitan Borough schools outperform the mean average score of 78.7% for the four faith schools

Despite their younger age, as with the other schools, a broad range of topics is discussed in the students' conversations, e.g.

- law and spirit, science and miracles (cumulative talk, conversation no. 35);
- an examination of a shadow world, death as a 'stepping stone' to an after-life, and evidence and belief (exploratory talk, conversation no. 36); and
- biblical typology, evolution, and Christology (cumulative talk, conversation no.37).

The young age of the participants has already been remarked upon; and with regard to the other two student features – they are not studying RE at an examination level; and there is a varied faith background, with two being practising Christians, and the other two comprising one agnostic and one atheist.

Again, a discernible difference is the emerging school feature of catchment area. In this case, Municipal Borough has a mean average score of 5, which places this school in the top fifty percent of most deprived neighbourhoods. However, this is still significantly below the faith schools' mean average score of 2.75, which places those schools in the top thirty percent of most deprived neighbourhoods.

School 7: Angel High

Context:

Despite the physical location of being a village school, Angel High serves an area of relative economic and social disadvantage and is oversubscribed. Students are mainly of White British heritage with the proportion of ethnic minority pupils and those for whom English is not a first language being well below the national average. The proportion of students with a

learning disability is average whilst those with a statement of special educational needs is above average.

Fieldwork undertaken with six students in Y10 who self-declared their religious affiliation as follows:

Agnostic - 3
 Atheist - 2
 Sikh - 1

Preliminary analyses of these conversations can be found in appendix 5.

Table of On Task Averages 7

Angel High

(n=6)

Conversation	Words	Cumulative%	Exploratory%	On Task%
39	963	19.6	36.9	56.5
40	1355	26.7	18.2	44.9
41	554	32.1	43.0	75.1
42	823	35.0	44.8	79.8
43	828	63.5	1.6	65.1
44	1270	63.9	14.1	78.0
Average	965	40.1	26.4	66.5

There is a relatively low level of on task activity within these student conversations; indeed, it is the second lowest of the seven schools examined so far. In terms of quality of conversations this equates to two “high quality” conversations (nos. 42 and 44); three “mid quality” conversations (nos. 39, 41 and 43); and one “low quality” conversation (no. 40).

Nonetheless, the conversations range over a number of topics e.g.

- scientism, other dimensions, and higher beings (exploratory talk, conversation no. 39); and
- questioning the veracity of historical evidence, and miracles as magic (cumulative talk, conversation no. 44);

In terms of the analysis of student features, the six Y10 students are not studying RE at an examination level; and they come from an almost exclusive non-religious background. Indeed, there is no Christian representation at all. With respect to the school feature of catchment area, Angel High is dissimilar to the faith schools in that it has a mean average score of decile 7 that places it in the top 40% of least deprived neighbourhoods.

School 8: Lion Rampant School

Context:

Lion Rampant is an oversubscribed larger than average-sized secondary school, located on the edge of a city. It is recognised for excellence in languages, expressive arts and sport. The school has a rich cultural mix of students with around 40% coming from a wide range of different ethnic heritages. The proportion of students whose first language is not English is more than twice the national average. The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs – requiring additional support from external services or with a statement of their special educational needs – is below average.

Fieldwork undertaken with six students in Y10. The students self-declared their religious affiliation as follows:

Atheist -	2
Muslim -	2
Other Christian -	2

Preliminary analyses of these conversations are found in appendix 6.

Table of On Task Averages 8
Lion Rampant School
(n=6)

Conversation	Words	Cumulative%	Exploratory%	On Task%
45	1417	46.3	37.1	83.4
46	1687	56.0	21.5	77.5
47	1243	32.1	43.0	75.1
48	1237	77.2	17.3	94.5
49	1083	59.4	24.5	83.9
50	1007	38.6	46.1	84.7
Average	1279	51.6	31.6	83.2

With Lion Rampant academy school there is a return to high levels of on task activity. The grading for quality of conversations reflects this, as all of them meet the criteria for “high quality”. As expected, there is a wide range of topics in the students’ conversations e.g.

- exploring the nature of proof as it relates to the possibility of the existence of unseen dimensions of reality (exploratory talk, conversation no. 45);
- sharing and developing Islamic beliefs about the crucifixion of Jesus, and sin and punishment (cumulative talk, conversation no. 46);
- sharing Christian beliefs about Jesus, Archangel Michael, and Lucifer the devil (cumulative talk, conversation no. 48); and
- referencing cultural influences upon morality (exploratory talk, conversation no. 49).

With regard to analysing the student features of age, examination and religious background – the six Y10 students are not studying RE at examination level and, unlike the previous school,

they come from a variety of faith and non-faith backgrounds. With respect to the school feature of catchment area, this academy is similar to the faith schools in that its mean average score of decile 3 places it in the same level of deprivation i.e. top 30% most deprived neighbourhoods.

School 9: Templar School

Templar is a larger-than-average secondary school that is a specialist language college. The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is broadly average. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is lower than in most similar schools, as is the proportion of students who speak English as an additional language. Most students are from White British backgrounds, with a growing number from an Eastern European heritage. The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is a little below average. The proportion of students supported with a statement of special educational needs is above average.

Fieldwork undertaken with six students – four in Y12 and two in Y13. The six students self-declared their religious affiliation as follows:

Agnostic -	3
Christian -	1
Deist -	2

Preliminary analyses of these conversations are to be found in appendix 7.

Table of On Task Averages 9

Templar High

(n=6)

Conversation	Words	Cumulative%	Exploratory%	On Task%
51	1604	48.0	29.5	77.5
52	1198	43.4	40.8	84.2
53	828	43.5	39.7	83.2
54	724	30.4	51.9	82.3
55	2790	26.6	68.4	95.0
56	2827	18.6	71.7	90.3
Average	1662	35.1	50.3	85.4

Regarding research question 1, there is, again, a high level of on task activity. Furthermore, with respect to research question 2, all of these conversations surpass the threshold for a “high quality” rating. As anticipated from A-level students, they discuss a broad range of topics e.g.

- discussion of multiverse theory, cycle of life, spiritual energy, and religious conflict (exploratory talk, conversation no. 55); and
- discussion of magic and the messiah, the Book of Mormon, Shakespeare’s Othello, superstition and Satanism (exploratory talk, conversation no. 56).

With regard to the student features of age, examination and religious background – all of the six students are sixth formers studying A-level Religious Studies – and, although primarily agnostic, they do have various faith and non-faith backgrounds. With respect to the school feature of catchment area, this academy is close to the faith schools as it is in decile 4. This is the top 40% of deprived neighbourhoods, and so just one decile below the faith schools.

The overall findings from the five non-faith academy schools are outlined below in Table 13.

Table 13
Non-faith Academies
Quality of Conversations
(n=28)

<u>School</u>	High Quality	Mid Quality	Low Quality
Metropolitan Borough	5	1	0
Municipal Borough	4	0	0
Angel High	2	3	1
Lion Rampant School	6	0	0
Templar School	6	0	0
Total	23	4	1

As for the four faith schools (see Table 11 above), the following null hypothesis is tested with regard to the five non-faith academies - namely, (Ho) 'This intervention does not promote high quality conversations comprising cumulative talk and exploratory talk.' Again, a Chi Square Test is applied and this produces the following results (see Table 14 below):

Table 14
Chi Square Test

Non-faith Academies – Quality of Conversations

Response 1 – High Quality

Observations [O] – Expected [E] = Difference [D]

i.e. [O] 23 – [E] 9.3 = [D] 13.7

[D] squared = 187.69

[D] squared / [E] = 20.18

Response 2 – Mid Quality

Observations [O] – Expected [E] = Difference [D]

i.e. [O] 4 – [E] 9.3 = [D] -5.3

[D] squared = 28.09

[D] squared / [E] = 3.11

Response 3 – Low Quality

Observations [O] – Expected [E] = Difference [D]

i.e. [O] 1 – [E] 9.3 = [D] -8.3

[D] squared = 68.89

[D] squared / [E] = 7.41

20.18+3.11+7.41 = 30.70 Degrees of freedom {df} is 2 = 5.99 critical value

30.70 > 5.99 *Result is statistically significant*

Therefore, with a degree of statistical significance, the null hypothesis is disconfirmed for the five non-faith academies; and the returns indicate that this dialogic intervention *does* promote high quality conversations comprising cumulative talk and exploratory talk.

From the perspective of an experienced RE teacher, the findings from the academy schools are highly promising and, indeed, even more favourable than those from the faith schools.¹²⁵

¹²⁵ The returns from both the faith schools and the non-faith academies are statistically significant. The academies' score is 30.70 whereas the faith schools' score is 6.22

The finding that twenty-seven out of twenty-eight conversations are either high quality or mid quality is very encouraging. In a similar fashion to the discussion above about faith schools, the next step is to determine from this sample of five non-faith academies if any of the different features of the student population have a significant role to play within this dialogic intervention. This comprises analysis of the paired conversations with respect to the following factors:

- *Age of student,*
- *Study of an examination course, and*
- *Religious background.*

Reflecting upon the five non-faith academies, with regard to the first student feature of *age*, there are twelve conversations in the Key Stage 5 grouping (Y12 and Y13). Of these, eleven are high quality and one is mid quality. In comparison, there are sixteen conversations in the Key Stage 4 grouping (Y9-Y11).¹²⁶ Of these, twelve are high quality; three are mid quality; and one is low quality. In terms of Chi Square Test analysis, the older age grouping records a score of 18.50, and the younger age group returns a score of 12.96. Given a {df} of 2 both are above the required score of 5.99, and so both are statistically significant.

This finding of statistical significance contrasts with the faith schools where the findings are not statistically significant. Moreover, this is given further amplification when one extracts and examines the findings from the four Municipal Borough students. As given above, these are Y9 (KS3) students and the youngest to participate with this study and yet they had the 3rd highest return of all of the ten schools for on task activity i.e. 87.7% cumulative talk and

¹²⁶ The four conversations from Municipal Borough are in Y9 i.e. Key Stage 3 but have been included in Key Stage 4 for purposes of analysis

exploratory talk. This breeds a degree of confidence that dialogic RE can be a feature of the early years of secondary schooling. However, given the small overall sample size of twenty-seven students for the four faith schools, and twenty-eight students for the five non-faith academies, it is wise to treat the findings with a degree of caution. Nonetheless, this feature of age is worth revisiting for a future study with a larger cohort of participants.

What then of the second student feature? There are only six conversations, from one academy school, between students undertaking Religious Studies *examinations* at A-level: all of them are rated high quality. There are twenty-two conversations between students, from the other four academies, who are not studying a religious studies examination course. Of these, seventeen are high quality; four are mid quality; and one is low quality. In both cases, the returns are statistically significant. Applying the Chi Square Test to the returns from the six examination students gives a score of 12.00. For the returns from the twenty-two non-examination students, the score is 19.82. Both scores exceed 5.99 for a {df} level of 2.

Again, this finding of statistical significance contrasts with the faith schools for which the findings are not statistically significant. The same cautionary note applies for this student feature of examination study as for the previous feature of age: but it may be worth reconsidering this student feature with a larger cohort in a future study.

Regarding the third student feature of *religious background*, the findings are outlined below. The students' self-declaration of religious backgrounds is categorised into four broad definitions i.e.

- Catholic / Christian;
- Agnostic;
- Atheist; and
- Other religions.¹²⁷

In terms of the twenty-eight conversations that took place in the five non-faith academies, the quality of the conversations is depicted below in Table 15.

Table 15
Academies
Quality of Conversations by Religious Background
(n=28)

Conversation Backgrounds		Quality	Conversation Backgrounds		Quality
29	Agnostic & Atheist	High	30	Agnostic & Atheist	Mid
31	Agnostic & Atheist	High	32	Agnostic & Atheist	High
33	Catholic & Christian	High	34	Catholic & Christian	High
35	Atheist & Christian	High	36	Atheist & Christian	High
37	Agnostic & Christian	High	38	Agnostic & Christian	High
39	Atheist & Sikh	Mid	40	Atheist & Sikh	Low
41	Agnostic & Atheist	Mid	42	Agnostic & Atheist	High
43	both Agnostic	Mid	44	both Agnostic	High
45	both Muslim	High	46	both Muslim	High
47	both Christian	High	48	both Christian	High
49	both Atheist	High	50	both Atheist	High
51	Agnostic & Christian	High	52	Agnostic & Christian	High
53	Agnostic & Deist	High	54	Agnostic & Deist	High
55	Agnostic & Deist	High	56	Agnostic & Deist	High

¹²⁷ This category includes those of non-Christian faiths (i.e. one Sikh and two Muslims); and two from the philosophical standpoint of Deism

For the purpose of analysis, these twenty-eight conversations are examined from the perspective of fifty-eight individual encounters (see Table 16 below).

Table 16
Academy Schools
Quality of Conversations as Individual Encounters
by Religious Background

(n=58)

	Catholic/Christian	Agnostic	Atheist	Other religious
High Quality	14	14	10	8
Mid Quality	0	4	3	1
Low Quality	0	0	1	1

Analysis by Chi Square Test reveals that each of the four categories have significant returns (see Table 17 below).

Table 17
Non-faith Academies
Quality of Conversations as Individual Encounters
by Religious Background
Chi Square Test for Significance

(n=58)

Catholic/Christian score of 27.80 {df} 2 and $27.80 > 5.99$	∴ Significant
Agnostic score of 17.34 {df} 2 and $17.34 > 5.99$	∴ Significant
Atheist score of 9.50 {df} 2 and $9.50 > 5.99$	∴ Significant
Other religious score of 9.89 {df} 2 and $9.89 > 5.99$	∴ Significant

Again, this contrasts with the returns from the faith schools (see Table 12), in which all but the Catholic/Christian score are not statistically significant. A cautionary note, though, is that

within the Catholic/Christian category two of the students declare themselves as non-practising. Nonetheless, this highlights another area for possible future research.

Having determined that the three student features offer areas for future study regarding the promotion of high quality conversations, what of the other emergent school feature of catchment areas? The superior, but not statistically significant performance of the academies in comparison with faith schools carries two qualifications. Firstly, the former have more favourable socio-economic circumstances since in terms of the schools' catchment area postcodes, the mean average decile score of the academy schools is 5.00 as compared with 2.75 for the faith schools. This places an 'average' academy school from this study within the top 50% of most deprived neighbourhoods, which is 2 deciles below the 'average' faith school that is in the top 30% of most deprived neighbourhoods. Again, as with the student features, this school feature of catchment area may warrant further investigation in a future large-scale study.

A second school feature worthy of some consideration is that of Ofsted ratings. The faith schools have one school in each of the "Outstanding", "Good" and "Requires Improvement" categories.¹²⁸ The academy schools have one school in the "Requires Improvement" category and two schools in each of the "Outstanding" and "Good" categories. Using a score system of +3 for Outstanding, +2 for Good, +1 for Requires Improvement, and 0 for Inadequate – this gives the faith schools an average score of 2.0 and the academy schools an average score of

¹²⁸ The Scottish school is not subject to Ofsted. Judging by the evidence report from its latest HMI inspection, most likely, it would be classified in the Good category. This still gives a score of 2.0

2.2. In terms of Ofsted ratings then,¹²⁹ there is little to distinguish between these two types of schools.

Summary of faith schools and academy schools

Overall, though, in terms of indicativeness and relatability, the total results from both faith schools and academies appear promising given that from fifty-five conversations no less than forty-nine are either “high quality” or “mid quality” (i.e. 86%). Reinforcing this sense of promise is the recognition that this small sample of schools skews towards the lower end of the spectrum for performance by Ofsted ratings. This is further strengthened by acknowledging that the average school within this sample is located within decile 4 i.e. the top 40% of most deprived neighbourhoods. There remains but one non-academy, non-faith school to consider.

School 10: Acacia Lane School

Acacia Lane is a very small suburban school that is under-performing. The majority of students are of White British heritage, and there are very few who speak English as an additional language. The school has a specially resourced provision for students with hearing impairment. Approximately a quarter of the students on roll are eligible for pupil premium funding and this is just below the national average. The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is above the national average, at around 25% of the student roll.

¹²⁹ Two months after the fieldwork was completed one of the academies was downgraded by Ofsted from Good to Inadequate. On this basis, average score for academies would be reduced to 1.8

Fieldwork undertaken with six students in Y10. The students self-declared their religious affiliation as follows:

Agnostic -	2
Atheist -	2
Other Christian -	2

Preliminary analyses of these conversations are found in appendix 8.

Table of On Task Averages 10
Acacia Lane
(n=6)

Conversation	Words	Cumulative%	Exploratory%	On Task%
57	588	0	0	0
58	712	2.8	30.6	33.4
59	570	31.6	31.8	63.4
60	562	20.3	15.3	35.6
61	428	1.6	44.9	46.5
62	778	7.7	84.3	92.0
Average	606	10.7	34.5	45.2

One conversation is deemed as “high quality” (no. 62), whilst the remainder are rated as either “mid quality” (no. 59) or “low quality” (nos. 57, 58, 60 and 61). There is a limited range of topics under discussion within the students’ conversations that, for the most part, are stilted and lacking in depth. In terms of relatability, it is unlikely that an RE teacher within such a school setting of being graded “Inadequate” by Ofsted; and subject to long-term decline over several years¹³⁰ would consider either dialogic teaching for RE or, indeed, volunteering their students for a PhD study. It is sad to record that both the Head Teacher and

¹³⁰ Over a period of seven years the school roll declined to almost a third of its intake

the Head of Religious Education who kindly assisted with this study have both relinquished their posts as the school transfers to a multi-academy trust.

Overall summary

What might one conclude, then, in response to both research question 1 and research question 2? The first research question posits, “To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?” Whilst the second research question asks, “To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?” A summary of the findings displays below in Table 18.

Table 18
Summary of Quality Conversations
(n=61)

School	High Quality	Mid Quality	Low Quality
Faith Schools (n=27)	15	7	5
Academies (n=28)	23	4	1
State school (n=6)	1	1	4
Total	39	12	10
	(63.9%)	(19.7%)	(16.4%)

In terms of indicativeness and relatability for RE teachers, I would submit that with almost 84% of the students’ conversations rating as either high quality or mid quality – then it is fair to conclude that in response to research question 1 – “the large majority of students remain on task, for the most part, when outwith the visible control of the teacher.” With regard to the second research question – then it is fair to say that – “This intervention is likely to promote good levels of participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by most students.”

It is timely to consider the third research question.

RESEARCH QUESTION 3

To what extent does dialogic RE promote a deep approach to students' learning?

From a pedagogical perspective, if the argument “that the classroom is a microcosm of future society” is to carry weight, then the students’ conversations need to have a degree of depth.

In order to assess the extent, or otherwise, that deep learning is taking place, the students complete a 10-point Likert-scale survey upon completion of their conversations. As with previous practice in this type of education research (Luby 1993, 2012) three features are worthy of note:

1. the ten test items are slightly modified versions of those used by pioneers in the field of a deep approach to learning, Noel Entwistle and Bela Kozeki (1985);
2. a null hypothesis is adopted, namely that ‘dialogic RE does not promote a deep approach to students’ learning; and
3. the survey findings are subject to a Chi Square Test for statistical significance.

In order to illustrate, let us examine the thirteen student responses from the first school surveyed, Apostle High, as outlined below in Tables 19a - 19d.

Table 19a
Apostle High
Deep learning – teaching focus
(n=13)

<u>Item</u>	Definitely			Definitely	
	Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Disagree
<i>This approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
1. Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.	5	6	2	0	0
2. Is generally good at explaining things for me.	1	9	2	1	0
3. Generally helps me to make links between different topics.	5	5	1	0	0¹³¹
4. Is generally good at showing how what I am learning is linked to everyday life.	5	7	0	1	0
5. Is good at asking questions which make me think.	12	1	0	0	0

The thirteen students respond positively to the five test items with fifty-six ‘definitely agree’ or ‘agree’ responses; and only seven responses being ‘unsure’, ‘disagree’ or ‘definitely disagree’. The Chi Square Test reveals the following with regard to statistical significance:

¹³¹ 2 No Responses

Table 19b

Deep learning – teaching focus

Chi Square Test

(n=13)

Category	Observed	Expected	Residual=(Obs-Exp)	Component=(Obs-Exp) ² / Exp	
Item 1a	5	2.60	2.40	5.76	2.22
Item 1b	6	2.60	3.40	11.56	4.45
Item 1c	2	2.60	-0.60	0.36	0.14
Item 1d	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16
Item 1e	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16

2.22 + 4.45 + 0.14 + 4.16 + 4.16 = 15.13; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value

15.13 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 2a	1	2.60	-1.60	2.56	0.98
Item 2b	9	2.60	7.40	54.76	21.06
Item 2c	2	2.60	-0.60	0.36	0.14
Item 2d	1	2.60	-1.60	2.56	0.98
Item 2e	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16

0.98 + 21.06 + 0.00 + 0.98 + 4.16 = 27.32; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value

27.32 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 3a	5	2.20	2.80	7.84	3.56
Item 3b	5	2.20	2.80	7.84	3.56
Item 3c	1	2.20	-1.20	1.44	0.65
Item 3d	0	2.20	-2.20	4.84	2.20
Item 3e	0	2.20	-2.20	4.84	2.20

3.56 + 3.56 + 0.65 + 2.20 + 2.20 = 12.17; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value

12.17 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Table 19b contd

Category	Observed	Expected	Residual= (Obs-Exp)	(Obs-Exp) ²	Component= (Obs-Exp) ² / Exp
Item 4a	5	2.60	2.40	5.76	2.22
Item 4b	7	2.60	4.40	19.36	7.45
Item 4c	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16
Item 4d	1	2.60	-1.60	2.56	0.98
Item 4e	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16

2.22 + 7.45 + 4.16 + 0.98 + 4.16 = 18.97; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
 18.97 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 5a	12	2.60	9.40	88.36	33.98
Item 5b	1	2.60	-1.60	2.56	0.98
Item 5c	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16
Item 5d	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16
Item 5e	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16

33.98 + 0.98 + 4.16 + 4.16 + 4.16 = 47.44; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
 47.44 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

This set of thirteen responses from Apostle High indicates the students' perceptions of the extent to which deep learning is taking place within their conversations. It is notable that these five test items concerning the teaching focus of their paired conversations all post returns that have statistical significance. It is fair to say then, that in the estimation of the thirteen students surveyed this approach to learning in RE through dialogue does promote deep learning.

Table 19c
Apostle High
Deep learning – pupil focus
(n=13)

<u>Item</u>	Definitely			Definitely	
	Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Disagree
<i>With this approach to learning</i>					
<i>RE through dialogue:</i>					
6. I often have to try to see the connections between ideas in one area and those in another.	3	6	2	2	0
7. I generally try to understand things, even when they seem difficult at the beginning.	7	6	0	0	0
8. I often ask myself questions about the things I hear in lessons or read in books.	8	4	1	0	0
9. I often try to relate what I learn to previous work.	3	10	0	0	0
10. When I am trying to understand new ideas, I often try to see how they might apply in real-life situations.	6	4	3	0	0

Again, the thirteen students respond positively with fifty-seven ‘definitely agree’ or ‘agree’ returns; and only eight returns being ‘unsure’, ‘disagree’ or ‘definitely disagree’. The Chi Square Test reveals the following with regard to statistical significance (see Table 19d below):

Table 19d

Deep learning – pupil focus: Chi Square Test

(n=13)

Residual= Component=
Category Observed Expected (Obs-Exp) (Obs-Exp)^2 (Obs-Exp)^2 / Exp

Item 6a	3	2.60	0.40	0.16	0.06
Item 6b	6	2.60	3.40	11.56	4.45
Item 6c	2	2.60	-0.60	0.36	0.14
Item 6d	2	2.60	-0.60	0.36	0.14
Item 6e	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16

$0.06 + 4.45 + 0.14 + 0.14 + 4.16 = 8.950$; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value

$8.95 < 9.47$ **Result is *not* statistically significant**

Item 7a	7	2.60	4.40	19.36	7.45
Item 7b	6	2.60	3.40	11.56	4.45
Item 7c	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16
Item 7d	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16
Item 7e	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16

$7.45 + 4.45 + 4.16 + 4.16 + 4.16 = 24.38$; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value

$24.38 > 9.47$ **Result is statistically significant**

Item 8a	8	2.60	5.40	29.16	11.22
Item 8b	4	2.60	1.40	1.96	0.75
Item 8c	1	2.60	-1.60	2.56	0.98
Item 8d	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16
Item 8e	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16

$11.22 + 0.75 + 0.98 + 4.16 + 4.16 = 21.27$; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value

$21.27 > 9.47$ **Result is statistically significant**

Table 19d contd

Category	Observed	Expected	Residual= (Obs-Exp)	Component= (Obs-Exp) ²	(Obs-Exp) ² / Exp
Item 9a	3	2.60	0.40	0.16	0.06
Item 9b	10	2.60	7.40	54.76	21.06
Item 9c	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16
Item 9d	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16
Item 9e	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16

0.06 + 21.06 + 4.16 + 4.16 + 4.16 = 33.60; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
33.60 > 9.47 Result is statistically significant

Item 10a	6	2.60	3.40	11.56	4.45
Item 10b	4	2.60	1.40	1.96	0.75
Item 10c	3	2.60	0.40	0.16	0.06
Item 10d	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16
Item 10e	0	2.60	-2.60	6.76	4.16

4.45 + 0.75 + 0.06 + 4.16 + 4.16 = 13.58; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
13.58 > 9.47 Result is statistically significant

This second set of thirteen responses from Apostle High gives a further indication of the students' perceptions of the extent to which deep learning is taking place within their conversations. It is notable that four of the five test items concerning the pupil focus of their conversations (i.e. items 7, 8, 9 and 10) post returns that have statistical significance. This is confirmatory evidence that it is fair to assert that, in the estimation of the students surveyed; this dialogic RE *does* promote a deep approach to learning.

It is also possible to buttress this subjective self-reporting evidence from the students with objective evidence from transcripts of their conversations. For example, in the previous chapter, an exemplar of exploratory talk is analysed whereby the student, Craig, states:

But you can still read into them as much as you can read into many sorts of novels and literature; which of course we know they aren't true stories. But we can still appreciate the moral values that they give us such as to name a few, *The Lord of the Flies* and *Animal Farm*, that many of us studied in English...

One can view this transcript extract as evidence for test items 8 and 9 i.e.

- no. 8 "I often ask myself questions about the things I hear in lessons or read in books"; and
- no. 9 "I often try to relate what I learn to previous work."

Are there similar examples, across the range of test items, from within the conversations of the Apostle High students? An analysis of the opening two conversations reveals the following:

Linkage – test item nos. 3, 6, 8 and 9 grouped together since all are concerned with seeing and fashioning links between topics or relating with previous work.

Appendix A, Conversation 1

- Linking Old Testament with New Testament (p3);

Appendix B, Conversation 2

- Linking creation story with scientific theory of evolution (p2); and
- Christian after-life with Buddhist concept of enlightenment (p4).

Authenticity – test item nos. 4 and 10 grouped together since both seek links with real-life situations.

Appendix A, Conversation 1

- Discussion of eye-witness accounts (pp1-2); and
- Degradation of historical fragments (p2).

Criticality – test item no. 5, i.e. “Is good at asking questions which make me think.”

Appendix A, Conversation 1

- Lack of information underpinning claims to scholarship (pp1-2);
- Apparent lack of evidence underpinning New Testament stories especially miracles (pp3-4); and
- Literal and metaphorical understandings of Biblical stories and authoritative interpretation (p4).

Appendix B, Conversation 2

- Miracles as a moral exemplar for action (p3).

Tenacity – test item no. 7, i.e. “I generally try to understand things even when they seem difficult at the beginning.”

Appendix A, Conversation 1

- Reliability of evidence discussed top half of p1; top half of p2; middle of p3; most of p5; middle of p6, and most of p7.

Suffice to say, one can support the subjective opinions of the Apostle High students with regard to dialogic RE promoting a deep approach to learning through analysis of the conversation transcripts. Of course, this is but one school. The findings from the other nine schools with respect to the deep learning questionnaire survey require to be analysed in the same fashion; and they are detailed in appendix 9a (teaching focus) and appendix 9b (pupil focus) respectively. A summary of these survey findings is depicted below in Tables 20a and 20b.

Table 20a
SUMMARY
Questionnaire Survey Responses
(n=65)

	Definitely		Unsure	Disagree	Definitely
	Agree	Agree			Disagree
Test item 1	15	38	8	4	0
Test item 2	15	36	12	2	0
Test item 3	27	27	7	2	0 ¹³²
Test item 4	20	26	13	6	0
Test item 5	49	14	2	0	0
Test item 6	12	34	14	5	0
Test item 7	32	30	2	1	0
Test item 8	27	24	9	4	0 ¹³³
Test item 9	22	33	5	5	0
Test item 10	23	28	10	4	0
<i>Totals</i>	<i>242</i>	<i>290</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>0</i>

On the surface, this is a very positive overall response from the students, with no less than 82.2% of the returns being either “Definitely Agree” or “Agree”. In order to determine statistical significance these returns are subject to a Chi Square Test (see Table 20b below).

¹³² 2 responses omitted; [n=63]

¹³³ 1 no response; [n=64]

Table 20b
SUMMARY
Chi Square Test

(n=65)

(Ho) “Dialogic RE does not promote a deep approach to students’ learning”

<u>Category</u>	<u>Observed</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Residual=</u> <u>(Obs-Exp)</u>	<u>Component=</u> <u>(Obs-Exp)^2</u>	<u>(Obs-Exp)^2 / Exp</u>
Item 1a	15	13	2	4	0.31
Item 1b	38	13	25	625	48.08
Item 1c	8	12.6	-4.60	21.16	1.68
Item 1d	4	13	-9	81	6.23
Item 1e	0	13	-13	169	13.00

0.31 + 48.08 + 1.68 + 6.23 + 13.00 = 69.30; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value. 69.30 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 2a	15	13	2	4	0.31
Item 2b	36	13	23	529	40.69
Item 2c	12	13	-1	1	0.08
Item 2d	2	13	-11	121	9.31
Item 2e	0	13	-13	169	13.00

0.31 + 40.69 + 0.08 + 9.31 + 13.00 = 63.39; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value. 63.39 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 3a	27	12.60	14.40	207.36	16.46
Item 3b	27	12.60	14.40	207.36	16.46
Item 3c	7	12.60	-5.60	31.36	2.49
Item 3d	2	12.60	-10.60	121	9.31
Item 3e	0	12.60	-12.60	169	13.00

16.46 + 16.46 + 2.49 + 9.31 + 13.00 = 57.72; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value. 57.72 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Table 20b contd

Category	Observed	Expected	Residual=(Obs-Exp)	(Obs-Exp) ²	Component=(Obs-Exp) ² / Exp
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Item 4a	20	13	7	49	3.77
Item 4b	26	13	13	169	13.00
Item 4c	13	13	0	0	0.00
Item 4d	6	13	-7	49	3.77
Item 4e	0	13	-13	169	13.00

3.77 + 13.00 + 0.00 + 3.77 + 13.00 = 33.54; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value. 33.54 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 5a	49	13	36	1296	99.69
Item 5b	14	13	1	1	0.77
Item 5c	2	13	-11	121	9.31
Item 5d	0	13	-13	169	13.00
Item 5e	0	13	-13	169	13.00

99.69 + 0.77 + 9.31 + 13.00 + 13.00 = 135.77; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value. 135.77 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 6a	12	13	-1	1	0.08
Item 6b	34	13	21	441	33.92
Item 6c	14	13	1	1	0.77
Item 6d	5	13	-8	64	4.92
Item 6e	0	13	-13	169	13.00

0.08 + 33.92 + 0.77 + 4.92 + 13.00 = 52.69; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value. 52.69 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 7a	32	13	19	361	27.77
Item 7b	30	13	17	289	22.23
Item 7c	2	13	-11	121	9.31
Item 7d	1	13	-12	144	11.08
Item 7e	0	13	-13	169	13.00

27.77 + 22.23 + 9.31 + 11.08 + 13.00 = 83.39; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value. 83.39 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Table 20b contd

Category	Observed	Expected	Residual=(Obs-Exp)	(Obs-Exp) ²	Component=(Obs-Exp) ² / Exp
Item 8a	27	12.80	14.20	201.64	15.75
Item 8b	24	12.80	11.20	125.44	9.80
Item 8c	9	12.80	-3.80	14.44	1.13
Item 8d	4	12.80	-8.80	77.44	6.05
Item 8e	0	12.80	-12.80	163.84	12.80

$15.75 + 9.80 + 1.13 + 6.05 + 12.80 = 45.53$; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value. $45.53 > 9.47$ **Result is statistically significant**

Item 9a	22	13	9	81	6.23
Item 9b	33	13	20	400	30.77
Item 9c	5	13	-8	64	4.92
Item 9d	5	13	-8	64	4.92
Item 9e	0	13	-13	169	13.00

$6.23 + 30.77 + 4.92 + 4.92 + 13.00 = 59.84$; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value. $59.84 > 9.47$ **Result is statistically significant**

Item 10a	23	13	10	100	7.69
Item 10b	28	13	15	225	17.31
Item 10c	10	13	-3	9	0.69
Item 10d	4	13	-9	81	6.23
Item 10e	0	13	-13	169	13.00

$7.69 + 17.31 + 0.69 + 6.23 + 13.00 = 44.92$; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value. $44.92 > 9.47$ **Result is statistically significant**

With all of the ten test items posting returns that are statistically significant, this disconfirms the null hypothesis. Therefore, it is fair to claim that in the estimation of the sixty-five students surveyed, this dialogic RE *does* promote a deep approach to learning. Indeed, even when examining the returns in the following sub-groups the results are still significant i.e.

- Seventeen students in two Catholic schools;¹³⁴
- Thirty-one students in four faith schools;¹³⁵ and
- Twenty-eight students in five academies.¹³⁶

Worthy of further comment are the returns for test item 5 i.e. “Is good at asking questions which make me think”. Only two of the returns are “Unsure” whilst no less than forty-nine are “Definitely Agree” and the remaining fourteen are “Agree”. This is testament to the students’ perceptions of how well the paired (and triple) conversations cause them to think; and corroborates the above comment of the Municipal Borough head of department of religious studies that “...it’s just excellent, it’s so nice to see them doing critical thinking in a way. Critical thinking skills.”

Developing consensus

Within the parameters of this study, a developing consensus is that *dialogic RE does promote cumulative talk and exploratory talk*. The large majority of the students’ conversations support such a claim. Student features such as age, examination courses and religious background make little discernible difference, whilst school features like catchment area and Ofsted rating have only a minor role; although for a school with an “inadequate” rating such a dialogic approach may be inadvisable. An emergent theme for a larger-scale future study could be the difference in performance between faith schools and non-faith academies.

¹³⁴ see tables 2a and 3a, appendix 9a; and tables 2b and 3b, appendix 9b

¹³⁵ see tables 6a and 7a, appendix 9a; and tables 6b and 7b, appendix 9b

¹³⁶ see tables 13a and 14a, appendix 9a; and tables 13b and 14b, appendix 9b

However, the main thrust of this research is, again, *indicativeness* and *relatability* for RE teachers. That a triumvirate of experienced teachers (diocesan adviser, assistant head teacher, and head of department) perceive value in dialogic RE should attract attention: but what of the students? What do they think? Certainly, from the questionnaire survey they strongly suggest that it promotes a deep approach to learning. Confirmation was sought from the students themselves as to personally, what do they think of this dialogic approach? Upon completion of the questionnaire survey, the students had an opportunity to write down a one-sentence comment about their feelings and thoughts with regard to the process of undertaking paired conversations. As Castelli (2018: 144) comments: ‘Good RE goes for depth... is contemporary and always allows the first-person voice to be heard.’

As can be seen from Figure 9 below, the first-person responses from Apostle High, the first school to participate with the fieldwork are, with one exception, very positive. The categories of “mainly Pedagogical”, “Pedagogical & Social”, and “mainly Social” are drawn from an earlier study (Luby 2012).

Figure 9
Students’ Comments – Apostle High
(n=13)

Positive: mainly Pedagogical

“I really like doing dialogics (sic) chats as it’s much easier to discuss deeper topics.”

“I believe it’s a good way of learning as you can speak freely without teachers listening in all the time and it’s a way to share your views.”

“I can open myself up and let others know what I believe; it could be fictional or not but also have entertaining discussions which lets me help to understand people.”

“I think that this method is most likely the only way of encouraging this type of conversation between most people our age: I know that I wouldn’t introduce this type of discussion with a friend unless it has been promoted such as this.”

“I find the conversations to be very important and beneficial as it allows you to express your views yet learn what other people think too.”

“I feel like discussing with a small group allows you to get your point across and communicate freely.”

“I think it is a good way of learning; made me think about things I didn’t expect to.”

“It’s definitely an interesting way to learn (as) I enjoy being able to freely express my opinions and learn about others’ opinions; and having the opportunity to question my own views through learning new ones.”

Positive: Social & Pedagogical

“I think it is a very good way of learning because it makes it easier to take in the information and also you can talk and socialise with your friends.

“I think this way of learning is fun because you interact and talk to your friends; and also it’s easier to take in the information.”

Negative: mainly Pedagogical

“I think it was an easy way of learning; however, I prefer class discussions as you get a broader opinion of RE.”

Likewise, the four students at the other Catholic school indicate a positive response (see Figure 10 below).

Figure 10
Students' Comments – City Catholic School
(n=4)

Positive – mainly Pedagogical

“I think this approach is generally helpful for learning in RE as it makes me question my opinion and the opinions of others when learning.”

“Useful for reinforcing information and critically analysing the information.”

“I believe this way of learning is very useful if you already have prior knowledge of the topic as you can link the extract to your own knowledge.”

“I think this way of learning is beneficial as it makes you engage in a subject and broadens your understanding through worked examples; it encourages openness.”

It is perhaps striking that these four A-level students cite only pedagogical reasons for their positive responses to this experience of paired conversations outside of the classroom. Notably, each suggests ways in which this dialogic approach to RE can be seen to promote deeper learning. For the first student it is the questioning of opinions, whilst for the second student it is reinforcement and critical analysis. For the third student it is building upon previous knowledge, whilst for the fourth student it broadens understanding and encourages openness. All of these are desirable features to encourage within an RE classroom; and the comments from the second and third students display features associated with deepening one's approach to learning.

All of the students' comments, from the remaining eight schools in this study are detailed in appendix 10; and a summary is found below in Table 21.

Table 21
Students' Comments –re Dialogic RE
(n=62)

School	+ve mainly Pedagogical	+ve Social & Pedagogical	Mixed Pedagogical	-ve Pedagogical
Apostle High ¹³⁷	8	2	0	1
City Catholic	4	0	0	0
County C of E ¹³⁸	3	0	2	1
Magdalene C of E	5	2	0	0
Met Borough	5	0	1	0
Municipal Boro'	3	1	0	0
Angel High	4	1	1	0
Lion Rampant	3	1	2	0
Templar High	5	0	1	0
Acacia Lane	6	0	0	0
Sub-totals	46	7	7	2

Analysis of Students' Comments

Overall, there is a very positive response from the students with their comments. The two *negative pedagogical comments* express a desire to -

(a) Participate in a larger group as this would provide a greater variety of comment and opinion,¹³⁹ and

(b) Be given more time in order to better understand the topic.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ 2 no responses

¹³⁸ 1 no response

¹³⁹ Support for this comment comes from a sixth form Templar student who contends that '...it is hard to learn new ideas as the dialogue is only between two people so only two views come across.'

¹⁴⁰ A similar concern with time is expressed by Y10 Lion Rampant student who asserts '...only problem ...is that we don't know how long conversations may take which may result in a shortage of time.'

The first pedagogical criticism can be addressed by an RE teacher affording time for discussion within a larger grouping – with such discussion likely to take place before and/or after the paired conversations. The paired conversations offer an opportunity to engage with a topic in depth and, most likely, the RE teacher would wish to share the fruits of such discussion with the rest of the class. At this juncture it is apt to note that these paired conversations can be viewed within the wider domain of dialogic teaching. Both the Cambridge Primary Review Trust and the University of York have been involved with raising levels of attainment across English, Maths, and Science in primary schools by improving the quality of teacher and pupil talk in the classroom. Termed “dialogic teaching”, this approach ‘...emphasises dialogue through which pupils learn to reason, discuss, argue, and explain in order to develop their higher order thinking as well as their articulacy.’ (Jay et al, 2017: 4) And so RE is not the only subject in which the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk can be developed through participation in a larger group providing a greater variety of comment and opinion.

However, the second pedagogical criticism is more perplexing. A request for more time runs counter to the findings from the questionnaire survey i.e. test item 1 “Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.” Of the sixty-five responses, (see Table 20a above) no less than fifty-three either agree or definitely agree with this statement. Eight are unsure and four disagree. Perhaps the *mixed pedagogical comments* can shed some light on this criticism. Two of the GCSE students at County C of E Academy decry:

“This way of learning is a good idea because you are discussing things you wouldn’t normally think of; but I think some people might struggle with it if they don’t understand the topic.”

“I think this type of learning is well suited to higher level thinkers but may be challenging for some.”

In terms of ‘...discussing things you wouldn’t normally think of...’ it is acknowledged that the texts presented to the students in this study (excerpts A and B) are not taken from typical RE syllabi.¹⁴¹ From their perspective, there is a high degree of unfamiliarity with the scientific and historical content and, on the one hand, it is interesting to speculate as to the extent that this unfamiliarity provokes cumulative talk and exploratory talk.¹⁴² On the other hand, the RE teacher selects the students for the paired conversations, and the suspicion remains, albeit from informal remarks, that some of this selection is based on their perceived discursive abilities. Therefore, any future research study should not only take account of the nature of the texts intended to promote discussion, but also consideration should be given, as highlighted above, to pre-determining student’s level of readiness for dialogue, such as with Streib’s Religious Schema Scale. Impetus for such consideration is found in the following comment of Y12 Metropolitan Borough student:

“I like this learning as a way of questioning my and other’s beliefs to build stronger understandings; but it’s very limited depending on how strong your beliefs are.”

¹⁴¹ See Conroy et al (2013: 223) for a critique of RE syllabi.

¹⁴² In this respect it bears similarity with a hermeneutical-communicative model of RE advanced by Pollefeyt (2008a: 320) that has ‘the aim of... teach[ing] people to look at reality from a different perspective.’

With regard to the other student comments, (+ve mainly Pedagogical and +ve Social & Pedagogical) there are five emerging points. First, the students cite the value in learning the thoughts and opinions of others. Secondly, they value the opportunity to speak freely. Thirdly, they appreciate encountering unfamiliar and new ideas. Fourthly, they believe that they are developing their own understandings. Finally, they welcome the depth of discussion afforded by the paired conversations.

These supportive student comments and the very positive returns from the questionnaire survey, allied with the quality of many of the conversations, should pique the interest of RE teachers regarding the development of dialogic skills. What remains to be considered, though, is the final research question.

RESEARCH QUESTION 4

How might the development of dialogic skills become a regular feature within classroom life?

A central argument of the thesis is that the creation of a procedurally secular realm begins in the classroom since, adopting a productive view of pedagogy, the classroom is a microcosm of future society. I would contend that the evidence to date, from the conversation transcripts, the questionnaire survey and the students' comments, suggest that the development of the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk in the secondary school subject of RE constitute a contribution to this project. However, the research approach of paired conversations outwith the classroom will be challenging for fellow RE teachers to take on board. They may be comfortable with sixth formers going to a quiet spot in the school – such as the library – to engage in such conversations; but, most likely, they will be less comfortable with younger students doing likewise. Additionally, finding the time to analyse, discuss and share conversation transcripts could prove very difficult.

RE practitioners will seek up-to-date and convincing pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) if they are to implement dialogic skills within their classrooms. To this end, as discussed in the previous chapter a small community of critical friends considers this fourth research question. This community comprises a Diocesan RE Adviser, the Principal Investigator for the Digitalised Dialogues Across the Curriculum (DiDiAC) project, a senior lecturer for computing and new technologies and two RE practitioners – an assistant head teacher (AHT) at City Catholic School and a head of department (HoD) of religious studies at Municipal Borough School.

The two practitioners are attracted to this dialogic RE pedagogy – albeit with reservations.

Extract 1 above and extract 3 below from the professional conversations with the HoD and the AHT highlight their views concerning the students developing dialogic skills. From extract 1, it is useful to note that this engagement and critical thinking corroborate, to a degree, the findings from the questionnaire survey that the students are developing the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk.

Extract 3

AHT: When I read it, they actually both showed the kind of open mindedness that I would expect from them because I know those two lads quite well. And they were both quite willing to engage with the idea I thought, although one was saying where is the evidence? Where is the empirical evidence for it? But of course, the other who is the sci-fi buff um...he was the one who was I thought more willing to engage with the idea of lots of different dimensions. Um...
[...]

Researcher: So ...so what did you think of the conversation? ...did you think it was ...they had a valuable conversation?

AHT: I think they did, um ...I think that they bounced off each other quite well ...I think they listened [...] ...but I think they engaged with it well. Um...I think they were trying to have a genuine conversation about whether there is another world. Um... I think there was some attempt to build on each other's conversations as they went along. And to engage with the new ideas and move them forward. I think –

Again, to an extent, there is corroboration of cumulative talk by the AHT when she speaks of engagement and ‘...some attempt to build on each other’s conversations...’ As stated above, though, both RE practitioners do have some reservations about the practicality of this dialogic approach. In extracts 4a and 4b below, the HoD at Municipal Borough and the AHT at City Catholic School refer to the first of these reservations i.e. covering the syllabus.

Extract 4a

Researcher: ...I think we're agreeing a quality conversation, how can we share it and use it with the rest of the class?

HoD: [...] But there are so many issues with it because first of all, content time, in order to get assessments done for OFSTED according to um...how you've got to show progress um...you just haven't got the time to really engage pupils in a debate and engage everybody, because you've got to show progress with every single child [...]

Researcher: My understanding of OFSTED though, is that they don't tell you your teaching approaches.

HoD: No, they don't; but the school policy does!

Researcher: So it's not OFSTED, it's the school?

HoD: Its...its fulfilling an OFSTED framework where you have to show pupils making progress on what they've previously learnt. And unfortunately it has to be in written form because that's what OFSTED look at which is in books but you've got such...okay if...it would take a long time for kids to go out for 20 minutes and... when you teach all the kids in the school, each kid to do 20 minutes of that you know that's a lot.

Extract 4b

AHT: No, I wouldn't see that as a waste of time but I would wonder how I could do that in practical terms. Having transcripts is nice but if you are going to reproduce that kind of exercise several times over with a group that's a lot to...a lot of conversations to sift through. Um...I just wondered you know much like the link that you sent me, was it Talk Wall?

Researcher: Talk Wall, uh huh.

AHT: Um...I wondered whether you could do something which is even simpler than that which wouldn't necessarily involve iPads and sending things up.... Why not just have Post-It notes, and they literally stick on the wall? Um...it would be difficult actually to bring in the recording and the transcripts and so on, and then bring the ideas back because in terms of... I think in terms of the outcomes the word you used there was richness, I think you probably could get really good outcomes with it but its whether or not in practice you could actually deliver the syllabus in the amount of time that you had available while making those opportunities available.

For the HoD at Municipal Borough, it is the pressure of covering the syllabus or 'content time.' Ofsted requirements as mediated through the school policy mean that she questions whether or not she would be able to provide sufficient evidence of progress – particularly if students are released from the classroom for twenty minutes of conversation. Similarly, the AHT at City

Catholic School also questions ‘...whether or not in practice you could actually deliver the syllabus in the amount of time that you had available while making those opportunities (for conversation) available.’ So, in terms of relatability, RE teachers may find the evidence for the benefits of dialogic RE persuasive – but not sufficiently so to overcome the practical concern of covering the syllabus.

A second reservation expressed is that of logistics (see extract 5 below).

Extract 5

HoD: But I think there's logistics there as well with places for them to go. So...in our school I know we are very short of classrooms and the library is very often used for other lessons. So, it's finding that quiet place to go. [...]

Researcher: But assuming the logistical part can be overcome, the logistical parts are important; you find a quiet space, so we're kind of taking that for granted. A quiet space can be found; adequate supervision of a teacher or an adult nearby like a librarian can be found. I mean there are problems; but they could be overcome, [...]

HoD: Yeah it could be a starting point. I could probably do it with one year group; to do it throughout the school would be a nightmare for me personally but I think you know finding somebody to in a way quietly supervise would also be a nightmare. Um...I think it could be done. I do think so. It does depend on the pupils as well.

The HoD is an RE teacher who is sufficiently intrigued by her students' responses to these paired conversations that she is willing to examine transcripts and give up some of her valuable time for discussion with the researcher. Her strong reservation with paired conversations outside of the classroom derives from the difficulties of finding both adequate accommodation and

supervision. This “logistical nightmare” of paired conversations outside of the classroom suggests that alternative pedagogical approaches are required.

The practitioners themselves indicate different pedagogic strategies for developing dialogic skills within the professional conversations. In extract 4b above, the AHT suggests the use of Post-It notes to summarise the main points from students’ paired conversations such that they can share with their peers. She also refers to the pedagogic technique of “think-pause-pounce-bounce” as outlined below in extract 6.

Extract 6

AHT: Yeah, I mean there is something in teaching called “think, pause, pounce, bounce”, have you heard of that? [Laughter] So... it’s...a method which is used in the classroom with lots of people in there where you pose a question, and give them time to think. You pose the question, you pause and then you pounce on somebody...so you ask somebody...you ask somebody what they think and then you bounce it onto the next person. So...so...person A would give their thoughts and then you say well person B what do you think of that, how do you think...and if they say don’t know...well do you understand what they were trying to say? And they usually can repeat it back; so do you agree with that or not, or...how could somebody challenge that opinion? So, we do quite a bit of that in class anyway, um...and even when you're just doing pair work you would encourage the kids to kind of share their answers so they've got a little bit more confidence in actually voicing their ideas because it's not just coming from them, it's coming from the pair. Um...but...then...I think a lot of teachers now are trying to look at questioning techniques to try and get the pupils to be a little bit more expansive on their responses.

“Think-pause-pounce-bounce” is a variation on the snowballing technique whereby the teacher aims to give the students time to develop their answers through brief passages of conversations with others. This extends their confidence such that they are able to share their responses with a

wider audience of their peers. Nonetheless, this is primarily teacher-led discussion and the opportunities for genuine student-led conversation are constrained by the practicalities of the classroom context.

A more promising route for pedagogic strategies that promote dialogic RE involves the use of social media. As discussed above in extract 2, sixth formers do not require adult supervision and can find suitable places within school premises to undertake Twitter-speak conversations with each other. Such conversations can be enhanced through input from the teacher (see extract 7 below).

Extract 7

HoD: Have you heard of Edmodo? Ah right okay, I can show you that if you wish which is um...it's like Face Book, social media, but in fact its where you can get responses, I'm doing this with sixth form so if I just log onto that Edmodo. There we go! Connect with students. I'm only doing this with sixth form at the moment uh...log in... here we go.

Researcher: Is this free?

HoD: Free, totally free, absolutely free and you can have your students to join up with it. Hopefully I can get onto it now! There you go, so I've developed a Year 12 philosophy and ethics group. So it's all on their apps on their phones if you know what I mean?

Researcher: How many have you got in the group?

HoD: Only got four, so its manageable, but I just share them like little videos, I give them like little heads up on what they need to do, bring in. And again just...get them to do that wider reading and then they can discuss it amongst each other as well so they can write replies to each other you know. I've got some likes. [Laughter] Which is quite nice but I only set this up last week so...as you can see -

This head of department's use of videos and '...giv[e]ing them like little heads up on what they need to do, bring in' can be seen as a move towards flipped learning '...in which direct instruction moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space'.¹⁴³ This type of learning reverses the traditional learning environment as instructional content is often delivered online, outside of the classroom. In contrast, outside of the class activities, such as homework, are moved into the classroom. Ideally, more time can be set aside for higher order skills such as problem solving, and peer collaboration. Also, although fuller consideration of "flipped learning" is beyond the scope of this study; it is interesting to note that this pedagogy affords opportunities to the students to engage in conversations outside of the classroom.

A more fulsome understanding of how new technologies can promote the development of dialogic RE is offered by the fifth member of the community of enquiry, Andrew Dickenson. A senior lecturer of new technologies and computing at Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln, he is both an "Apple Distinguished Educator" and a "Book Creator Ambassador". Andrew suggests three ways in which new technologies can forward the development of dialogic skills in RE. Firstly, Book Creator, which is an application (app) that creates a multi-media book in which students can share videos, texts and record conversations. These are saved to Cloud as an editable document upon which students can collaborate.¹⁴⁴ Secondly, "GarageBand" is free software that one can download onto a phone or other device. A teacher can then sit with students as they co-edit paired conversations prior to sharing with class. Thirdly, the use of iTunes University (iTunes U) in which the classroom is set up so that only two students can see

¹⁴³ See https://flippedlearning.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/FLIP_handout_FNL_Web.pdf [accessed 24 March 2018]

¹⁴⁴ Alternatively, it can be saved as a 'finished product' for reading only i.e. [a] saved as an uneditable e-book; or [b] saved as a pdf (text); or [c] saved as a video (which displays as a book).

what is on their screen. The students' conversation is recorded; and then shared with the teacher for editing, prior to this being shared with rest of the class.

So, in response to Research Question 4, 'How might the development of dialogic skills become a regular feature within classroom life?' one can turn to the new technologies of Book Creator, GarageBand and i-Tunes U. These offer pedagogic strategies whereby students can have a degree of privacy for their conversations before sharing said conversations with teachers and peers. Such technologies should feature in future interventions and research intended to promote the development of dialogic skills in RE.

Part A summary

The fieldwork for this study concerning the development of dialogic skills in RE aimed to recruit five secondary schools through a process of stratified sampling: this proved unsuccessful. Nonetheless, ten secondary schools are recruited for this study through opportunity sampling. The following is ascertained by examining these schools through the lens of the four criteria of a) location of schools; b) affluence of location; c) types of schools; and d) levels of attainment. Firstly, this sample skews towards city and town locations at the expense of semi-rural and rural locations. Secondly, it skews towards neighbourhoods of deprivation. Thirdly, whilst the sample only contains three types of schools – these are the most common types of schools namely, academies, faith and state schools. Finally, it contains an imbalance of schools according the Ofsted performance rankings of “Outstanding – Good – Requires Improvement – and Inadequate” with a third of the schools being rated in the lower two categories. Whilst the failure to attain a stratified sample is unhelpful for the purpose of generalisability, this opportunity sample of ten schools is useful for indicativeness and relatability. The above imbalances indicate that the schools have not been cherry-picked; and an RE teacher is more

likely to concur that “if dialogic RE is successful in these schools, then it can be successful in my school.”

In terms of gauging the success or otherwise of dialogic RE there are five different research instruments employed. The first measurement is that of the students’ conversation transcripts with respect to the opening research questions i.e.

1. To what extent do the students remain on task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?
2. To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

A research instrument of transcript analysis is used to determine the levels of on task activity and these conversations are judged as either high quality, mid quality or low quality with the criterion for such judgements discussed above. As outlined in Table 18, from a total of sixty-one conversations, there are judged to be thirty-nine high quality, twelve mid quality and ten low quality conversations. Anecdotal support for these judgements comes from the observations of an assistant head teacher and a head of department who read some of their students’ transcripts. Thus, as discussed above, in terms of reliability for RE teachers, it is reasonable to conclude that “the large majority of students remain on task, for the most part, when out with the visible control of the teacher, and this intervention is likely to promote good levels of participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by most students.”

A second research instrument of statistical analysis through a Chi Square Test is employed to analyse whether or not particular features of the student population have a significant role to play within this dialogic RE intervention. The three student features analysed are those of a) age

of student, b) study of an examination course, and c) religious background. None of these proved to be significant although they may merit further investigation for a larger-scale study. Likewise, analysis undertaken for the school features of catchment areas and Ofsted ratings merits a similar recommendation.

The third and fourth research instruments are intended to address the third research question i.e. to what extent does dialogic RE promote a deep approach to students' learning? The third research instrument is a questionnaire survey comprising ten test items fashioned from the work of a pioneer in the field of deep learning. With a Likert-scale of five responses namely, "Definitely Agree, Agree, Unsure, Disagree, and Definitely Disagree", Table 19a above displays a very positive overall response from the sixty-five students, with more than eighty-two percent of their returns being either "Definitely Agree" or "Agree". In order to determine statistical significance the students' returns are subject to a Chi Square Test (see Table 20b); and the responses to all of the ten test items are found to be statistically significant. It is fair to conclude that, in the estimation of the students surveyed; this dialogic RE intervention does promote a deep approach to learning.

The fourth research instrument is a freehand written one-sentence response from sixty-two students, as to their views on this dialogic RE intervention. As can be seen from Table 20, forty-six cited positive pedagogical comments; seven cited a mixture of positive social and pedagogical comments; another seven gave mixed pedagogical comments; and only two cited negative pedagogical comments. This is an important finding in terms of relatability for RE teachers; since an overall positive response is likely to prompt them to give dialogic RE serious consideration.

If RE teachers are to consider introducing dialogic RE to their classrooms, then the fourth research question needs addressing i.e. How might the development of dialogic skills become a regular feature within classroom life? The final research instrument is small community of enquiry comprising two RE practitioners, a diocesan RE adviser, a principal investigator of a digitalised dialogues project based at Cambridge University; and a senior lecturer in new technologies and computing who is both an Apple Distinguished Educator and a Book Creator Ambassador. From their expertise, it becomes apparent that in order to meet the needs for privacy and good relationships as mooted by McKenna et al (2008) within the busyness of classroom life; then pedagogies derived from social media are advisable. This includes the new technologies of Book Creator, GarageBand and i-Tunes U.

Given that the presentation and preliminary analysis of data in part A sets out the successes and limitations of this dialogic RE intervention; then it is timely to interrogate the data thematically in part B.

CHAPTER FOUR

Part B Thematic Interrogation of Data

‘It is our hope... to improve the amount and quality of oracy teaching in British schools, so that young people are better prepared for life in the 21st century’ (Mercer et al 2017: 17)

A central argument of this thesis is for a three realms’ model of society in which a procedurally secular realm is the domain for dialogue between the sacred and profane realms. With respect to this argument, the review of the literature identifies four themes that one can use to interrogate the data set out in part A of this chapter. The first theme is that of a *pedagogical vision for intercultural dialogue* as mooted by the Congregation for Catholic Education (2013: Introduction). This vision calls upon schools ‘...to allow various cultural expressions to co-exist and to promote dialogue so as to foster a peaceful society’.

Evidence for this dialogic RE intervention having the potential to do so is attested through an analysis of Table 10 and Table 16 above regarding students’ conversations by religious background. From Table 10, one ascertains that within the four faith schools, there are fifteen conversations in which participants with a self-declared religious background (sacred realm i.e. Catholic, Christian, Deist and Sikh) converse with those students with a self-identified non-religious background (profane realm i.e. Agnostic, Atheist).¹⁴⁵ Similarly, from Table 16, one determines that there are twelve such conversations across the realms:¹⁴⁶ thus giving a total of twenty-seven conversations. In terms of quality, nineteen of these conversations are judged as “high”; three conversations are rated “mid”; and five conversations are deemed

¹⁴⁵ Conversation nos. 2, 4, 6-10, 15-19, 21, 27 and 28

¹⁴⁶ Conversation nos. 35-40, and 51-56

“low” (see Table 22). Adopting a null hypothesis: (Ho) ‘This dialogic RE intervention does not promote cumulative talk and exploratory talk for conversations across the realms.’

Table 22
Chi Square Test - Conversations across the Realms
(n=27)

Response 1 – High Quality

Observations [O] – Expected [E] = Difference [D] i.e. $18 - 9 = 9$
[D] squared = 81 and [D] squared / [E] = 9

Response 2 – Mid Quality

Observations [O] – Expected [E] = Difference [D] i.e. $4 - 9 = -5$
[D] squared = 25 and [D] squared / [E] = 2.78

Response 3 – Low Quality

Observations [O] – Expected [E] = Difference [D] i.e. $5 - 9 = -4$
[D] squared = 16 and [D] squared / [E] = 1.78

$9.00 + 2.78 + 1.78 = 13.56$ Degrees of freedom {df} is 2 = 5.99 critical value

$13.56 > 5.99$ Result is statistically significant

The null hypothesis is disconfirmed, and so it is reasonable to conclude that this dialogic RE intervention does promote cumulative talk and exploratory talk for conversations across the realms. Thus it is reasonable to conjecture that dialogic RE can provide a foundation within the classroom upon which to begin to build a procedurally secular realm.

Similarly, it is important that dialogue take place within the realms e.g. as discussed in the opening chapters, there is disagreement between Augustinian Thomists and Whig Thomists within the sacred realm. So what can we learn from the students’ conversations about dialogue within the realms? As indicated by Table 10, there are twelve conversations taking

place between participants self-declaring within the same realm.¹⁴⁷ Likewise, from Table 16, one ascertains that there are sixteen such conversations.¹⁴⁸ Of this total of twenty-eight conversations, twenty are judged as “high” quality; seven are rated “mid” quality; and one is deemed “low” quality (see Table 23 below). Again, a null hypothesis is adopted i.e. (Ho) ‘This dialogic RE intervention does not promote cumulative talk and exploratory talk for conversations within the realms.’

Table 23
Chi Square Test - Conversations within the Realms
(n=28)

Response 1 – High Quality

Observations [O] – Expected [E] = Difference [D] i.e. $13 - 9.3 = 3.7$

[D] squared = 13.69 and [D] squared / [E] = 1.47

Response 2 – Mid Quality

Observations [O] – Expected [E] = Difference [D] i.e. $7 - 9.3 = -2.3$

[D] squared = 5.29 and [D] squared / [E] = 0.57

Response 3 – Low Quality

Observations [O] – Expected [E] = Difference [D] i.e. $0 - 9.3 = -9.3$

[D] squared = 86.49 and [D] squared / [E] = 9.3

$1.47 + 0.57 + 9.30 = 13.56$ Degrees of freedom {df} is 2 = 5.99 critical value

$11.34 > 5.99$ Result is statistically significant

So again, the null hypothesis is disconfirmed. Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that this dialogic RE intervention does promote cumulative talk and exploratory talk for conversations within the realms. Hence, statistically speaking, Tables 22 and 23 offer confirmatory evidence that, within the parameters of these fifty-five conversations, this dialogic RE

¹⁴⁷ Conversation nos. 1, 3, 11-14, 20, and 22-26

¹⁴⁸ Conversation nos. 29-34 and 41-50

intervention *does* address the desire of the Congregation for Catholic Education to promote dialogue. What, though, of the wish to foster a peaceful society?

A reading of the students' comments¹⁴⁹ in the summary above in Table 21 demonstrates that the students find the dialogic RE intervention to be a positive experience. Derived from previous research (Luby, 2012) from the sixty-two comments, no less than fifty-three state pedagogical or social reasons for perceived benefits to this approach to their learning. Only nine students express mixed or negative comments. Allied with the evidence displayed in tables 20a and 20b above concerning the students adopting a deep approach to learning, it is fair to claim this dialogic RE intervention *does* appear to lay a piece of the groundwork desired by the Congregation for Catholic Education for a peaceful society.

However, the second theme extracted from the literature review suggests that the laying of such groundwork will present some difficulty for RE teachers. Education Scotland (2014) contends that dialogic RE should be *robust and challenging* (see chapter 2). Occasionally, though, the robustness of the dialogue oversteps the mark and becomes disputatious – such as conversation no. 3 between two non-practising Catholics in the sixth form. Perhaps, in terms of relatability, this is a risk that RE teachers will need to take. Certainly, there are examples within the students' conversations whereby they are prepared to challenge each other's views; but this needs consideration within the context of exploratory talk.

As discussed previously, exploratory talk is that in which the students '...engage critically but constructively with each other's ideas' (Mercer 1995: 104). The demand from Education Scotland (2014) is for a challenging and robust dialogue in RE, but this can fall short of the

¹⁴⁹ For full comments see both figures 8 and 9 and appendix 10

requirements for exploratory talk in which criticality is allied with constructive cooperation. To illustrate: depicted below is extract 8 (from conversation no. 3 between non-practising Catholics, Leya and Coraline) in which the demand for challenge and robustness may be satisfied, but not the requirements for exploratory talk; and so it is disputatious. This contrasts with extract 9 (from conversation no. 9 between agnostic Jim and practising Catholic Tom) which better matches the requirements for exploratory talk.

Extract 8

Leya: Do you think Jesus is real?

Coraline: Um...I do and I don't. I believe that...I believe that he does exist because there is so much evidence to suggest that he done all of these things. However, I don't believe it because there's not...there's not actual proof that he did exist.

Leya: Oh, there is evidence.

Coraline: What evidence?

Leya: There is evidence. There's visual accounts, people from -

Coraline: Visual accounts?

Leya: Like people -

Coraline: From whom?

Leya: People that were alive when Jesus was alive, they have stated that Jesus was a real person. He didn't obviously die and come back to life -

Coraline: Have you met this person?

Leya: No, because they've been dead for hundreds of years.

Coraline: Have they told you this themselves?

Leya: No, but there has been testaments.

Coraline: So how do you know?

As discussed in chapter two, Education Scotland (2014: 8) contends that religious education should be ‘...built on the premise that to respect the beliefs and values of others... *only from a position of distance, is not good enough* [emphasis added].’ This exchange between Coraline and Leya is very much “in your face” and comprises many short, jabbing accusatory questions and statements; and alongside a lack of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, these account for its classification as a “low quality” conversation.

Extract 9

Jim: Um...illusion like...it's our world isn't it? Like...that we see so...it doesn't really...like see all these people that live in that world and they're content, when I say content like they're not aware of being in... What like...what is wrong with that, if you like...believe that then...like you genuinely believe that that's your understanding, your knowledge of it then there is no issue with that being an illusion I don't think. What about you?

Tom: You know he said it bugs him like a splinter in his mind so that could be one way you know, you just can't be bothered with the illusion you just...want the truth and everything like that.

Jim: Alright, yeah, so it's...you're saying that it's like...you've got a feeling that you just want to know the actual answer?

Jim and Tom are discussing the film *The Matrix* in a cooperative fashion, and they appear comfortable with expressing thoughts and ideas that are not yet fully formed. In addition to grappling with the nature of truth, in their full conversation (no. 9) they also discuss fate and free will, and the role of God. This results in a “high quality” conversation during which, in

terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 96.6% of the word count.

So far, from this interrogation of the data, it can be determined that these two types of talk, cumulative and exploratory, not only match the broad desire of the Congregation for Catholic Education for dialogue that is likely to foster a peaceful society; but also they improve upon the specific expectations of Education Scotland for challenging and robust dialogue in that they align criticality with constructive cooperation. How else then, can these two types of talk be interrogated?

The third theme drawn from the literature review is tripartite: *linguistic, psychological* and *cultural analytical levels*. At a *linguistic level*, exploratory talk satisfies the demand for robust student conversations in RE that will promote ‘speech acts’ such as assertions, challenges, explanations, and requests. This dialogic RE intervention promotes an average of thirty-eight percent exploratory talk across the sixty-two conversations. This compares favourably with not only previous research in this specific area that promotes just under twenty-three percent exploratory talk (Luby 2012); but also the broad finding of Mercer (1995: 108) that,

By the time that the... project had been running for about a year both teachers and researchers were disappointed with the quality of talk which had taken place. The kind of talk which we had come to typify as ‘exploratory’ occurred sporadically and only occasionally throughout the sessions.

With an average of more than a third of the conversations comprising exploratory talk, then one cannot accuse this dialogic RE intervention of producing results that are “sporadic and

only occasional". Indeed, from the sixty-two conversations only four might merit this accusation regarding exploratory talk i.e.

- Conversation no. 57 which has zero;
- Conversation no. 43 which has a negligible 1.6%; and
- Conversations nos. 4 and 11 that have very low returns of 7.4% and 9.5% respectively.

Hence, it is fair to conclude that this interrogation at a linguistic analytical level confirms the previous findings that dialogic RE promotes exploratory talk and satisfies the demand for robust student conversations in religious education.

The second part of this tripartite theme interrogates the data at a *psychological analytical level*: in particular, a belief that both cumulative talk and exploratory talk aim at the achievement of *consensus*. On the one hand, with cumulative talk, there is a sharing of ideas and information and a reaching of joint decisions. On the other hand, exploratory talk incorporates ‘...both conflict and the open sharing of ideas represent[ing] the more ‘visible’ pursuit of rational consensus through conversation’ (Mercer 1995: 108). This is demonstrated below (extracts 10 and 11) through an examination of the very first paired conversation between sixth formers Lucy (agnostic) and Alice (atheist). In their substantive conversation comprising more than two thousand and five hundred words, in terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the students are on task for almost eighty-seven percent of the word count. With respect to cumulative talk, Lucy and Alice build upon each other’s comments by sharing their ideas concerning eyewitness accounts of Jesus and his miracles and Old Testament stories; and ultimately, they unite in their distrust.

Extract 10

Lucy: And um...and um...like...yeah I don't know, I kind of feel like the Old Testament is what led to religion being taught. Like people practised it from the teachings of the Old Testament; and then I feel like Jesus was probably just a priest, a man who was religious. Whether or not...and then perhaps...whether he said he was the Son of God, or whether it was people who were like this man he must be...he's something special, whether it was the public that decided he was the Son of God, or like because there is really no way of telling do you know what I mean?

Alice: There's no like physical evidence other than like word of mouth or something...like it could so easily be someone's imagination.

Lucy: That's true; it could just be a story.

Alice: Or a dream or a group of people that have maybe saw something that they thought was something else; and because it's a group, everyone thinks that, oh it's definitely happened, because more than one person has said it.

Lucy: Yeah exactly, because obviously not really that much happened in their lives at that point in time, like they didn't necessarily have that much going on.

Alice: Yeah!

Lucy: And um...so yeah maybe like if someone came along and they did something this is the most exciting amazing thing they've ever seen. Like...even if like, you know, the story of him feeding all the people with the fish and the bread and everything like I highly doubt that he made this into...it's impossible!

Alice: Or like when the wall...what did they...the water or something?

Lucy: When they separated the water. Yeah.

Alice: The split, the sea, yeah.

Lucy: Um...I don't think that's possible.

Alice: Yeah and why did these miracles only happen then why can no one do this now?

Lucy: Exactly! Yeah definitely!

The above extract is one illustration that, throughout the sixty-two conversations, the dialogic RE intervention consistently promotes cumulative talk, with an overall average return of 38.7%. As with exploratory talk, it is neither sporadic nor occasional, with only seven of the sixty-two conversations seriously underperforming i.e.

- Conversation no. 57 which has zero cumulative talk;
- Conversations nos. 5, 58 and 61 which have negligible returns of 3.1%, 2.8% and 1.6% respectively; and
- Conversations nos. 3 and 62 that have very low returns of 5.1% and 7.7% respectively.

With regard to exploratory talk incorporating conflict and the open sharing of ideas, the evidence from this study suggests that the notion of “conflict” requires re-interpretation. Extract 8 above highlights conflict between Leya and Coraline, and for an RE teacher this is an unhealthy situation as it raises concerns that such dispute may harm the students’ friendship.¹⁵⁰ Additionally, in terms of relatability, such dispute renders dialogic RE as an unattractive prospect. Furthermore, it also runs counter to the advice within the literature (e.g. McKenna et al 2008) that the student pairs should be friendly with each other. “Conflict”

¹⁵⁰ An important feature for RE as noted by CORE (2017: 3) namely, ‘...the young people that we have spoken to have told us that RE enables them to have better friendships and to develop greater respect and empathy for others.’

might be better understood as “disagreement” i.e. a feature within “dialectics”.¹⁵¹ For example, in extract 11 below from the second conversation within this study, sixth formers Tilly (practising Catholic) and Jasmine (agnostic) freely discuss their beliefs about the after-life. This freedom enables Tilly to voice her disagreement with what she perceives to be Church teaching.

Extract 11

Tilly: Personally, I think that your body and your soul are two different things, and I like to think that your soul only lives on earth once and that's it. I just think...I don't believe in reincarnation or anything. Like obviously in a way you kind of...your body is reincarnated because like all the –

Jasmine: It goes back to the earth.

Tilly: Tissues and everything it goes back into the earth and then into all the plants and everything. I mean in that way your body is regenerated by the earth, but I think your soul is solely yours and it can only belong to you in one lifetime. And I think...I believe that your soul does go on once you die, I think it does. Although I really do disagree, I do disagree that um...hell...like you go to hell if you commit sins in your life. I don't like believing that because...it's um just...I just think it's very, very cruel; a cruel kind of...it's a tricky one because I mean I like to think that rapists and horrible murders and things get sent there but the majority of people will commit what the Bible considers a sin in their everyday lives. And I just think that that would not be fair at all for those people to be sent to hell because they committed these sins. When in like modern day life they're not really considered as sin, like, as they were like when the Bible was written. So yeah...

¹⁵¹ i.e. ‘...discourse between two or more people holding different points of view about a subject but wishing to establish the truth through reasoned arguments’ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dialectic> (accessed 8 February 2018). See also ‘discussion and reasoning by dialogue as a method of intellectual investigation’ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dialectic> (accessed 8 February 2018).

Jasmine: I think certain things are in a sense sort of...very...as a sin it's very difficult not to commit with certain things, like obviously very small ones we would consider insignificant...

Tilly: Like things like lying, and being jealous, things like that, people do that all the time even with adultery, I know like I believe cheating is wrong but I think um...

Jasmine: Someone doesn't deserve to go to an eternal suffering because of that sort of thing.

Tilly: No! I think...because in the Bible, in the Testament, I think like in that time people believed that you...like you had your one soul mate and that was the first person you married and you stayed with them forever, and that was considered a good marriage. But in reality, that person that you like first married might not be...you just might not get along. There is no point staying in an unhappy marriage for that sake so I think...like sometimes people cheat and it's wrong to cheat you're right but then again if it's an unhappy marriage I don't see why you should be forced to stay together if you're not getting along. So things like that, I just think they don't really work in today's society so...I don't think people should be eternally punished for doing stuff that's just considered normal you know?

Jasmine: Yeah! Yeah! Definitely! I think as well such things like that because depending on...I think there are so many different factors of whether somebody...how somebody should be judged, I just don't think...I don't think anybody should be judged like that so whether they should be sent to eternal suffering in hell or eternal peace in heaven, you should be able to keep trying. Maybe like...I don't know in what way, whether it was something like reincarnation or maybe your soul goes on to somewhere else to sort of repay that in a...I'm not saying it wouldn't be like eternal, it would be somewhere to lead them onto a better place maybe.

This dialectical episode offers rich pedagogical fruit. A teacher of Catholic RE reading Tilly's comments would see opportunities for challenging and deepening her faith with regard to Christian teaching concerning the bodily after-life. Discussion could be given to the

reality of hell being consistent with God's mercy, and much else besides, regarding Church doctrine, Catechism of the Catholic Church, etc. These lengthier conversations tend to reveal what a student really thinks and believes – and this affords pedagogic opportunities. This confirms an earlier finding from previous research whereby a ‘...pupil had previously completed a short unit on the topic of abortion, but had given no indication that he held views on abortion contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church’ (Luby 2012: 63). The depth of these peer conversations reveals underlying misunderstandings that the teacher has an opportunity to remedy; otherwise, they go unobserved.

So, as demonstrated by extracts 10 and 11 at the psychological analytical level - it is fair to assert that this RE intervention can be termed dialectical and that it provides insight into students' learning that can go unobserved.

The third leg of this tripartite theme is that of the *cultural analytical level*. As discussed in the literature review, this dialogic RE intervention is intended to be a pedagogical foundation, such that a post-secular society creates a fortified secular realm as a porous buffer between the sacred and profane realms. This entails students from different traditions (religious and otherwise) learning how to converse seriously with each other's views. This will be a preparation for future discussions concerning controversial matters in the public sphere. For it is through developing the dialogic skill of exploratory talk that students become enabled not only to engage fruitfully with intelligent conversations, but also to begin to learn behaviours consistent with the “educated” discourse and the kinds of reasoning that are valued and encouraged in the cultural institutions...’ (Mercer 1995: 106)

As highlighted in the first leg of this tripartite theme, the dialogic RE intervention promotes an average of thirty-eight percent exploratory talk, where only four of the sixty-two conversations have returns that are either very low or negligible. Therefore, the large majority of students are already exhibiting behaviours consistent with the “educated discourse” spoken of by Mercer above. Given the links with a deep approach to learning outlined in research question 3, then this is propitious for the creation of a fortified secular realm in a post-secular society.

Notwithstanding these encouraging findings, a serious challenge still needs addressing; and this is the final theme. There is discussion in chapter two about *the threat of atheism* to the Catholic Church. In particular, from an Augustinian Thomist perspective, an alliance with liberal-minded thinkers to fortify the secular realm could prove to be a poisoned chalice. The neutrality of the secular realm could grant licence to such as the New Atheism “disciples” of Dawkins, Dennett and Hitchens. Whilst the principle of self-limitation applies to both the Catholic Church and to liberal thinkers, atheists need not concern themselves with this. Rather, they could seize this opportunity to pour further scorn on the Church’s teaching and actions. Moreover, this would be a Church restricting herself from the defence of divine revelation, and relying on reason alone. However, if pedagogy is the engine that drives society of the future, what types of conversation does the dialogic RE intervention evoke today between Christians and atheists?

There are eight conversations in this study between atheists and Christians. Five of these conversations rank as high quality (nos. 15, 16, 35, 36 and 62); one as mid quality (no. 18); and two as low quality (nos. 21 and 61). From the analyses of conversations between atheists and Christians, we ascertain the following (see Table 24):

Table 24
Atheist >< Christian Conversations
(n=8)

Conversation Nos.	Year	School Group	Total Words	Cumulative Talk %	Exploratory Talk %
15	Y13	City Catholic	2081	44.2	44.0
16	Y13	City Catholic	852	58.7	26.4
18	Y10	County C of E	1568	30.3	14.3
21	Y10	County C of E	844	24.6	11.7
35	Y9	Municipal Boro'	1518	44.2	51.0
36	Y9	Municipal Boro'	2150	58.8	31.1
61	Y10	Acacia Lane	428	1.6	44.9
62	Y10	Acacia Lane	778	7.7	84.3
<i>Average</i>			<i>1277</i>	<i>33.8</i>	<i>38.5</i>

This finding compares reasonably well with averages for all of the ten schools in this study - especially given the over-representation of the lowest performing school, Acacia Lane, in this sample.¹⁵² The overall average word count is 1368 with cumulative talk comprising 38.8% and exploratory talk 36.1%. Therefore, with this sample, the atheist >< Christian conversation returns are slightly lower for total words and percentage of cumulative talk; but slightly higher for exploratory talk.

More importantly, though, these levels of cumulative talk and exploratory talk are encouraging signs of creating a public sphere in which those from opposing backgrounds can converse with each other in a reasoned manner. A prime example of such reasoned debate is found in the opening chapter of *Religion and Atheism: Beyond the Divide*. This chapter

¹⁵² In the overall study, Acacia Lane accounts for 6 of the 62 conversations i.e. 9.7%. In this sample, though, it accounts for 2 of the 8 conversations i.e. 25%.

comprises twenty-one pages recording a dialogue on 17 July 2015 at Magdalen College, Cambridge, between self-acknowledged and eminent atheist, Raymond Tallis, and renowned Christian, Rowan Williams. Both cumulative talk and exploratory talk feature within their conversation. It begins with an invitation from Raymond Tallis that ‘...I’m bringing to the party all sorts of unacknowledged prejudices and assumptions that I am sure, and I hope, you will *expose and explore* [emphasis added]’ (Tallis & Williams, 2017: 3). Rowan Williams accepts this invitation when he speaks of ‘...redrawing the boundaries of our map, exploring the implications, the depths, the problems...’ (Tallis & Williams 2017: 4).

Their joint exploration considers such matters as the beginning of the Universe, with implicit criticisms of cosmologists’ assertions; and a ‘...shared worry about reductionism’ (Tallis & Williams 2017: 8). There is a highly sophisticated and engaging debate that is littered with affirmations of what the other is saying e.g. from Raymond Tallis, “absolutely” (p6), “that is a fantastic definition” (p8) and “I entirely agree with you” (p9). And from Rowan Williams, “Yes, yes, that’s right” (p8) and “exactly that” (p11). This consensual approach underpins their whole conversation as, with mutual respect, they engage in conversation about the topic ‘Science, stories and the self.’

At a lower level, the conversations taking place between atheists and Christians in this study nonetheless foreshadow that by Tallis and Williams. For instance, A-level students, James (atheist) and Prentice (Catholic) explore the concept of the soul as a form of energy and link this with near death experiences (NDEs), and even the existence of spiritual worlds in other dimensions (see extract 12 below).

Extract 12

James: ...I suppose you've got people that don't necessarily believe in God but do believe in a spiritual world. You don't need to have...I don't think you need to have a belief in a God as such. I suppose if you think about the soul which we don't know much about; we don't know where that comes from but in a scientific way you could sort of put that down to being sort of an energy field or something, and if you go with the fact that energy can neither be created nor destroyed, if the soul is an energy. Can that sort of transcend you in some way, or is there...does it become...when it leaves the body if that's what happens does it become like a radio signal? Just sort of floating around which on this question about some Christians think that heaven is all around us but we just can't see it, maybe not heaven, but a realm of energy possibly.

Prentice: That's true! That's true! I think that I've always been....like the question said I have always been quite interested in the fact that when some people die they...as they're on their death bed they talk about the light, and they're going towards the light, and they're going towards...I wonder if that there is starting the separation between this world and the next. If there is...maybe another world then once they see the light, if that's stepping into yet another fifth or sixth dimension. Um...I think that's something that could be explored but in that sense, like you say, we won't know until we get to that moment ourselves because the science isn't that advanced as yet...

James: But in a sense it's the kind of thing that like you...you feel that that's it because obviously they would see the white light coming out, and then that...they...I suppose if they had... But it's not its...a whole different existence possibly our death is the start of an even more amazing existence...

Prentice: That's true! That's true! I think that the next life is definitely...um...a high possibility... I think that...um...this world...I like to...I think Plato had a good analogy with the world of forms and the world of the appearances. I do think that we must have got this perfect idea of all these analogies and things from somewhere; and I think that even though we don't have the evidence for it in this world I think that when we do pass we will enter another world whatever that world maybe. Um...I'm a Catholic so I think it will be heaven and God however, I am open to the idea of maybe not God maybe just another spiritual world as such.

James: What my kind of thing is, even though...atheist agnostic, but I think that...it could be possible that God isn't necessarily the god that is in the Scripture; but God is in the Universe itself so... but it makes things change and everything. It's not a great analogy but like if you have uranium it causes things to change like its radiation, it causes mutation it doesn't know what it's doing because it's not live. That's a possible explanation...

(source: Luby 2018c: 19-20)

This is an imaginative conversation between James and Prentice in which they *explore* the possibility of heaven being a field of energy; and James even compares the actions of God with radiation emanating from uranium. They constructively build upon each other's ideas, moving from light at an NDE to death being entry into other spiritual dimensions. Their speech is hesitant and broken with dead-ends and changes of direction: and this exemplifies exploratory talk as defined by Barnes (2008).

Similar features are found in conversation no. 16, albeit to a lesser extent, when Eileen (atheist) and Lily (Catholic) similarly touch upon Plato's "world of forms." With conversation no. 18, GCSE students Megan (Christian) & Oliver (atheist) jointly question both the multi-dimensionality of the universe and the nature of time. In their second conversation (no. 21), their cumulative talk focuses on symbolism and miracles whilst their exploratory talk concerns myth making. During conversation no. 35 between two Y9 students, Megan (atheist) and Joe (evangelical Christian) seek agreement about the relationships between law and spirit, and science and miracles. With conversation no. 36, also featuring Megan, but this time with Sheldon (evangelical Christian), they question death as a 'stepping stone' to an after-life. The two final atheist - Christian conversations are between Acacia Lane's Y10 students: Charlotte (atheist) and Lachlan (Christian). With their

exploratory talk, they struggle to agree about the existence of other dimensions (no. 61); and they discuss free will, miracles and the Bible as a fairy-tale (no. 62).

Arguably, then, for this final theme, there is sufficient evidence of cumulative talk and exploratory talk to obviate concerns about the threat of atheism to Christianity. Rather, within a classroom context, it is plausible to contend that students can participate in atheist >< Christian conversations that do, indeed, lay the groundwork for liberals and Christians to create a secular realm for a post-secular society.

Part B summary

There are four thematic interrogations of the data; and the first of which concerns the pedagogical vision for intercultural dialogue advocated by the Congregation for Catholic Education. Underpinning this vision is the argument that schools should promote co-existence and dialogue. As attested by the evidence, this dialogic RE intervention promotes both cumulative talk and exploratory talk when twenty-seven conversations take place between students from contrasting faith and non-faith backgrounds (Table 22). Likewise, this dialogic RE intervention also promotes both cumulative talk and exploratory talk for the twenty-eight conversations that take place between students from similar faith and non-faith backgrounds (Table 23).

The second thematic interrogation is the desire from Education Scotland for dialogue in RE not ‘at a distance’ but, rather, that is robust and challenging. Sometimes, students can overstep the mark, as the conversation between two non-practising Catholics, Coraline and Leya, demonstrates. Their conversation is overly challenging, remonstrative and accusatory.

However, if one follows the recommendations from the literature that paired conversations should be between students who have a friendly relationship then, for the most part, an RE teacher should be alert but not overly concerned.

The third thematic interrogation is tripartite - linguistic, psychological and cultural analytical levels. Firstly, at the level of linguistic analysis, dialogic RE intervention promotes an average of thirty-eight percent exploratory talk within the sixty-two student conversations; and so satisfies the demand for robust RE conversations. Secondly, at the level of psychological analysis, dialogic RE intervention supports the argument of Mercer (1995: 108) that exploratory talk ‘...represents the more ‘visible’ pursuit of rational consensus through conversation.’ However, through conversational analysis, it suggests that with regard to the underpinning definition of exploratory talk as incorporating conflict and the open sharing of ideas, the word “disagreement” should replace “conflict”. Thirdly, at the level of cultural analysis, the students exhibit behaviours consistent with “educated discourse”. This behaviour is displayed primarily through exploratory talk and it is neither sporadic nor occasional, but consistent. Thus, they are learning ‘...the kinds of reasoning that are valued and encouraged in the cultural institutions...’ (Mercer 1995: 106). This is propitious for pedagogy aiming to create a fortified secular realm for a post-secular society.

The final thematic interrogation of data is the perceived threat of atheism within a fortified secular realm. Analysis of the eight atheist >< Christian conversations suggest this fear to be relatively unfounded. It is unlikely that RE classrooms will become breeding grounds for disciples of New Atheism. Nonetheless, given the concern of Conroy regarding ‘...the parlous state and continued erosion of professional knowledge, professionalism and professional identity amongst RE teachers’ (Freaty et al 2016: 112), there may be a degree

of wariness regarding the ability of RE teachers to maintain neutrality within the classroom. Hopefully, though, it is more likely that RE classrooms will become training grounds such that students will learn to converse in the fashion of Raymond Tallis and Rowan Williams: RE teachers would prefer this scenario.

Having analysed and interrogated the data, it is timely to draw conclusions from this study and to consider recommendations in the concluding chapter.

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CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION and RECOMMENDATIONS

‘The Religious Education curriculum is... a body of knowledge with its unique way of analysing culture and the human condition. The school is hence accorded a unique status as a place of intense dialogue between Christianity and “the world”’ (Franchi, 2017a: 117)

History

At the historical juncture of early modern Catholicism, ‘...church-state theory favoured a confessional state in which political authority was wedded to spiritual authority and the state supported, promoted, and in some cases even enforced the Catholic Church’s truth claims’ (Weigel, 2017: 46). This was termed the “thesis model” and with this model, the Catholic Church obtains both financial and legal patronage from the state.¹⁵³ The thesis model prevailed in the era of Christendom when almost all Europeans, at least nominally, paid lip-service to the authority and teachings of the Catholic Church. The Reformation, the Enlightenment, and now Western secularisation, have transformed the situation such that only a minority accept the authority of the Church and obey her teachings. The thesis model is no longer valid; and the current socio-political circumstances suggest that another model be sought.

Such a model may be the “hypothesis model” in which, dependent upon prevailing historical and political circumstances, the Catholic Church tolerates a confessionally neutral state.

Given the unreliability of the thesis model as a bulwark against the processes of the Reformation, the Enlightenment and Western secularisation, then the hypothesis model is

¹⁵³ A similar “integralist” model is put forward by Waldstein (2017) in his review of A W Jones’ book, *Before Church and State: A Study of Social Order in the Sacramental Kingdom of St. Louis IX*.

worthy of consideration. Especially so, given the favourable experience of the Church with this model in the United States. Indeed, according to Weigel (2017: 46),

...Catholic reformers began to think what had once seemed unthinkable: that maybe establishment is a snare and a delusion. If establishment sapped the Church's evangelical energies, perhaps the marriage of spiritual and political authority wasn't such a good idea after all...

Thomism

However, such separation of spiritual and political authorities is not without criticism.

Drawing upon the work of renowned Thomist, Alasdair MacIntyre, it is contended by Rowland (2017a) that such separation of the sacred from the secular leads to a narrowing of religion, a focus on secular matters, and ultimately the loss of faith. Indeed, as discussed in a preceding chapter, the secular values promulgated by the confessionally neutral state, such as tolerance, are perceived by Augustinian Thomists, like the aforementioned Rowland and Weigel, as being ultimately lethal to the Christian faith.

For Augustinian Thomists, then, the thesis model of sacred and secular can only work if the political authority is conjoined with the spiritual authority of the Catholic Church. Once they are rent asunder the political authority of the secular state becomes a threat to the Catholic faith. A more optimistic position, though, is adopted by the Whig Thomists. They perceive the Christian roots underpinning the liberal values of the secular state and believe there is an opportunity to re-Christianize these values. Augustinian Thomists side with Moreland (2012) and apply his criticism of American society to all of the Western societies, contending that there is little serious religious engagement with the public sphere. The Augustinian Thomists would assert that the Whig Thomists are overly optimistic; and that they underestimate the

Herculean nature of the task of re-Christianising the liberal values of secularised Western societies.

Reflecting upon her long history, the Church can have confidence that both self-limitation and collaboration with liberal thinkers can bear fruit. A prime example is her experience in the Occidental era with the classical Greek doctrine of virtue. Fashioned over the centuries, the doctrine of virtue has become a feature of the European consciousness (Pieper, 1966) with the four cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance being embraced by the sacred realm. Nor should the Church be overly concerned about liberal thinkers who are hostile to Christianity and found within the “New Atheism” movement. She can draw upon the treasure of writings from her theologians such as Henri de Lubac who wrestled with the arguments of the atheistic trinity of Comte, Feuerbach and Nietzsche. From such an examination we learn that there is a common desire to understand the universe and a shared appreciation for love, wisdom and justice: there is common ground.

Classroom pedagogy

Given this common ground, how might the Dominican Thomist vision of human reasoning at the heart of collaboration with liberal thinkers to re-create a secular realm be realised? This realisation begins with classroom pedagogy. Pedagogy is not only a means of a society reproducing itself (Carr, 1993); but also it can be socially productive and be at the forefront of social change (Hamilton, 1990). Given the concession of leading liberal thinkers, Rawls and Habermas, regarding the role that religious language can play in a common search for truth; then pedagogies of religious education appear to be the most apt. A strong claim for the efficacy of RE pedagogies in this regard is made by Freathy et al (2017: 428) who assert that ‘For pupils, classrooms can become places of cultural production, not reproduction, in which

they are empowered to make their own sense of the diversity and plurality encountered, and to develop their own voices within communities of enquiry.’

A note of caution, however, regarding the link between classroom RE pedagogies and students’ future practices. Commenting upon a report from the Benedict XVI Centre for Religion and Society, Franchi (2017b: 73) bewails that ‘...we must face up to the uncomfortable truth that attendance at a Catholic school does not seem to have had much of an influence on future religious practice.’ Franchi’s complaint is about confessional pedagogy and highlights the critique of Gearon (2013) concerning ‘incommensurable differences’ between RE pedagogies related to the religious life and those ‘related to secularity.’ Given the underpinning thesis of an alliance between Christians and liberals to fashion a procedurally secular society, it would seem to follow that RE pedagogy should have the robustness of engaging with liberal thoughts, as with Freathy et al above. As outlined in the opening chapter, there are many RE pedagogies fashioned from the engagement between religion and education in the service of a plural society. Among the most promising are Wright’s critical pedagogy and Castelli’s faith dialogue pedagogy. These pedagogies envision students having intelligent conversations about ultimate truth claims with an aim being that the students develop their own belief systems in response to the beliefs of others.

Such critical faith pedagogy resonates with the assertion of the Catholic Church that she is confident in holding dialogue with those of other faiths and of none. This pedagogy is in tune with the teaching of *Redemptoris Missio* that ‘Those engaged in this dialogue must be consistent with their own religious traditions and convictions, and be open to understanding those of the other party without pretense or close-mindedness, but with truth, humility and frankness, knowing that dialogue can enrich each side’ (Pope Saint John Paul II, 1990: 56).

Furthermore, it witnesses to the claim of Pope Francis (2013) in his first encyclical letter that the security of faith leads us to ‘...dialogue with all.’ And, indeed, this critical faith pedagogy mirrors the practice of Pope Francis’ “Argentine model of interreligious dialogue” that creates a civic space for matters of religious, political and societal importance (Ivereigh, 2015). Thus, developing a civic space through dialogue for the creation of a procedurally secular realm begins in the classroom with critical faith pedagogy.

Dominican Thomist pedagogy

This critical faith pedagogy bears the appellation *Dominican Thomist*. It is Thomist with its focus on reasoning and search for the truth; and it is Dominican in its engagement with the secular spirit of the age. As outlined within this study, Dominican Thomist pedagogy can be realised through the promotion of two types of talk i.e. the consensus-building dialogic skill of cumulative talk and the critically-constructive dialogic skill of exploratory talk. However, the three hallmarks of Dominican Thomist pedagogy – reasoning, truth and engagement with secularity - are also to be found within two other pedagogies namely, hermeneutical-communicative RE and critical RE to which we now turn our attention.

From the Catholic sector of schooling comes a hermeneutical-communicative approach to RE that has been fashioned within Continental Europe (Pollefeyt, 2007); and from the state sector of schooling arises critical RE pedagogy that has been formed within the UK (Wright, 2013). Notably, both pedagogies have a common root¹⁵⁴ and they bear the *Thomist*

¹⁵⁴ This common root is abduction – a bringing together of old and new knowledge in such a fashion as to generate new insights. Pollefeyt (2008a: 315) describes it thus: ‘The goal of abductive religious education is to discover new insights by bringing together the “already known” and new experiences, thought experiments, and explorations of alternative experiments.’ Wright (2013: 15) explains that ‘Abduction entails the intuitive generation of novel insights in response to encounters with new facts or the revisiting of old problems.’

hallmarks of reasoning and truth. For the hermeneutical-communicative approach ‘...religious education [is] characterised by... a joint search for truth and meaning...’ (Pollefeyt, 2008a: 313) and ‘...the task of religious education is to teach young people the necessary skills that allow them to take notice and critically evaluate...’ (Pollefeyt, 2008a: 314-315). Whilst critical RE pedagogy is ‘...designed to place questions of truth and truthful living at the heart of contemporary religious education... and promote appropriate levels of... judgemental rationality’ (Wright, 2013: 2). Both approaches to religious education also bear the *Dominican hallmark* of engagement with secularity. The hermeneutical-communicative approach to RE recognises that ‘...along with such secularization a religious pluralization is underway...’ (Boeve, 2016: 4) and this form of religious education is intended to ‘...prepare pupils for a culturally and religiously diverse society and still hold on its... Christian identity’ (Pollefeyt, 2008b).¹⁵⁵ Similarly, critical RE pedagogy has arisen in response to secularisation and its effect within RE classrooms of ‘...treating all beliefs as equally valid...’ (Wright, 2013: 2).

The central tenet of the thesis is advocacy for Dominican Thomist pedagogy that fortifies the secular realm to create a post-secular society. It is now possible to envisage two forms of Dominican Thomist pedagogy working “hand-in-glove” to realise this vision. This can be achieved by widespread adoption of a hermeneutical-communicative approach to RE within the Catholic sector of schooling; and greater promulgation of critical RE pedagogy within the state sector of schooling. At the core of these pedagogies would be the development of the consensus-building dialogic skill of cumulative talk and the critically-constructive dialogic skill of exploratory talk.

¹⁵⁵ Not possible to give page numbers for Pollefeyt (2008b) references as this refers to a copy from the author in which the pagination does not correspond exactly with article in *Journal of Religion Education* 56(1).

The thesis' findings suggest this reciprocity of hermeneutical-communicative RE in the Catholic sector and critical RE in the state sector to be feasible for both domains of schooling *if* there is a focus on developing the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk. Referring back to Table 22, one ascertains that there are twenty-seven conversations in which participants with a self-declared religious background converse with those students with a self-identified non-religious background. With no less than nineteen of these conversations being rated as "high quality" it is clear that students from *different* backgrounds, religious or otherwise, are comfortable and confident with a dialogic RE intervention designed to promote both cumulative talk and exploratory talk. Likewise, from Table 23, one ascertains that there are twenty-eight conversations between students of a *similar* background of which twenty are judged as "high" quality. And so, within the parameters of these fifty-five conversations, it is reasonable to conclude that this dialogic RE intervention does promote cumulative talk and exploratory talk for students from both similar and different backgrounds.

Moreover, confidence in this assertion is strengthened when one considers the final of the four thematic interrogations from Chapter 4b namely, conversations between Christians and atheists. As Table 24 indicates, the atheist >< Christian conversation returns record slightly lower totals cumulative talk but slightly higher totals for exploratory talk. Consideration of the other three thematic interrogations only but strengthens this confidence. The first theme regarding the pedagogical vision for intercultural dialogue advocated by the Congregation for Catholic Education is given credence by the evidence gleaned from conversations outlined in Tables 22 and 23 and discussed above. The second thematic interrogation is the desire from Education Scotland for dialogue in RE that has a degree of robustness. This is evidenced

through consistent levels of the constructively-critical dialogic skill of exploratory talk; it is not merely a sporadic occurrence. Indeed, as the first part of the third thematic interrogation (linguistic analysis) confirms - this dialogic RE intervention promotes an average of thirty-eight percent exploratory talk within the sixty-two student conversations. The second part of this tripartite thematic interrogation, psychological analysis, confirms that this dialogic RE intervention supports the argument of Mercer (1995: 108) that exploratory talk ‘...represents the more ‘visible’ pursuit of rational consensus through conversation.’ And finally, the third part of this interrogation, cultural analysis, affirms that the students’ conversations are consistent with “educated discourse” and so they are learning ‘...the kinds of reasoning that are valued and encouraged in the cultural institutions...’ (Mercer 1995: 106). This engagement with, and appropriation of, educated discourse, is auspicious for pedagogy aiming to create a fortified secular realm for a post-secular society.

Such a claim, though, rests upon twin pillars. First, the robustness of the research and, secondly, the indicativeness of the research to schools.

Research methodology

1st pillar

As with all research the findings have limitations. The sample of schools is limited to ten.

Nonetheless, this opportunity sample has a degree of robustness when analysed through four criteria,

- Types of school;
- Levels of attainment.
- Location of schools; and
- Affluence of location.

With regard to the first criterion, the ten secondary schools represent the three most common types of schools – academies, comprehensives and faith schools. Although both academies and faith schools are over-represented this is acceptable given the UK Government’s long term goal of “academisation” and the special focus for faith schools within the thesis. With respect to the second criterion of attainment levels, the sample skews towards the lower end of the spectrum with regard to attainment levels and, arguably, this enhances the robustness of the research findings. For the third criterion, there is a spread of locations for the schools across four types of city, town, semi-rural and rural. Finally, regarding the fourth criterion, the sample is skewed towards schools that have catchment areas containing neighbourhoods of deprivation. Again, though, this strengthens the robustness of the research findings. Overall, with respect to the first pillar, there is a broad representation of school types, attainment levels and locations such as to afford a fair degree of robustness to the research findings.

2nd pillar

The robustness of the research sample should indicate to schools that the research findings are worthy of consideration. More specifically, the opportunity sample provides sixty-five students for the fieldwork with all but four of them being in Key Stage Four or Five (S3-S6). In terms of indicativeness and relatability to RE teachers in the upper stages of secondary schooling, their first concern is likely to be the extent to which the students remain on task outwith the visible control of their teacher. Furthermore, given that on task activity is defined, quite demandingly, as being only cumulative talk and exploratory talk, then the first research question needs to be coupled with the second research question namely, ‘To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the

students?’ As Table 18 in the previous chapter demonstrates, no less than thirty-nine of the sixty-one conversations are deemed high quality; whilst twelve of the remaining twenty-two conversations are deemed mid-quality. These findings should indicate to schools that this dialogic RE intervention is worthy of consideration as it is likely to promote good levels of cumulative talk and exploratory talk by most students.

In order to sustain the academic thesis that classroom pedagogy can drive social change, there needs to be some evidence that such dialogic practices are deep and meaningful to the students. Hence the importance of the third research question which analyses the extent that dialogic RE promotes a deep approach to students’ learning. As Tables 20a and 20b in chapter 4 indicate, all ten of the test items from the questionnaire survey post positive returns that are statistically significant. So, it is fair to claim that in the estimation of the sixty-five students surveyed this dialogic RE does promote a deep approach to learning. Furthermore, the large majority of the students enjoy the experience of participating with such conversations. This is evidenced by their one-sentence written comments that reflect upon their experiences. Of the sixty-two responses only two are negative; seven are mixed; and fifty-three are positive. Various, the students cite value in learning about others’ opinions and thoughts; being granted the opportunity to speak freely; encountering unfamiliar and new ideas; the development of their own understandings; and the depth of discussion promoted by the conversations.

All of these features within the 2nd pillar should indicate to schools that dialogic RE is worthy of consideration as to implementation. And one crucial factor, yet to be discussed, reinforces this assertion.

Self-critical subjective perspective

Certainly, from the author's perspective, reviewing the transcripts from the paired conversations is a wistful experience. Reflecting upon a *lifetime* as a teacher of religious education, I acknowledge that I rarely achieved conversations of such quality. Classroom life is too busy and there is too little time: or so I thought. Such personal reflection is a worthwhile contribution to research since, with respect to research-based professionalism, it is a self-critical subjective perspective (Stenhouse 1975) '...that drives the enquiry and determines its usefulness for pupils and students' (Dadds, 2005: 31). Hence, teachers of religious education are more likely to engage with the findings and consider changes to their classroom practices - *if* other teachers adopt a similar self-critical subjective perspective regarding the value of dialogic RE. In this respect, the interview comments in the preceding chapter (extract 1) from the experienced head of department of RE at Municipal Borough are worthy of reiteration:

You are getting pupils to really engage in the topic and I think it's very difficult in a class situation where pupils can express their views clearly... I think honestly it's just excellent, it's so nice to see them doing critical thinking...

In her informed opinion, the Metropolitan Borough students are engaging with exploratory talk. Evidence for cumulative talk comes from another experienced RE teacher, an assistant head teacher at City Catholic School (extract 3) who declares that:

...I think that they bounced off each other quite well ...I think they listened [...] ...but I think they engaged with it well. Um...I think they were trying to have a genuine conversation about whether there is another world. Um... I think there was some attempt to build on each other's conversations as they went along. And to engage with the new ideas and move them forward...

It is difficult to underestimate the importance of respected teachers' opinions regarding a curricular reform: their views carry a lot of weight. That said, whilst it is encouraging that other experienced teachers of RE recognise the value of this dialogic intervention, it is important to note their reservations. The aforementioned HoD of RE is concerned that releasing students from the classroom will adversely affect her ability to meet Ofsted related assessment tasks (see extract 4a); and the AHT believes there is insufficient time to search through transcripts of students' conversations (see extract 4b). Additionally, the HoD of RE expresses concern with the logistics of not only finding suitable spaces within school for such conversations; but also providing adequate and appropriate supervision (see extract 5). If such practical concerns are not addressed then it is unlikely that schools and RE teachers will take on board dialogic RE.

Certainly, the latter two issues can be overcome for sixth-formers as they could adopt the practice of the Diocesan RE Adviser (see extract 2) whereby these students, not requiring supervision, find a suitable location within the school and engage in Twitter-speak. But, of course, this is not a solution for younger students and, in any case, both of the RE practitioners prefer the students' conversations to take place within the confines of the classroom – not outside of it. The HoD of RE suggests a promising route for pedagogic strategies that promote dialogic RE; and this involves the use of social media. She has just

begun to use the Edmodo app within her teaching of A-level students and this points to the final research question.

Final research question

Certainly, both the statistical evidence from the questionnaire survey and the students' subjective comments are promising. Indeed, examples of conversations that produce learning of a high order are likely to entice the interest of teachers of religious education. However, it may not suffice such that teachers will put dialogic RE into practice. Rather, given all of the pressures and demands that they face, they may need convincing that it is a relatively straightforward process to introduce dialogic RE into classroom practices.

The final research question seeks to address how the development of dialogic skills might become a regular feature within classroom life. As outlined in the previous chapter a small community of critical friends was established to consider this. It soon became apparent that the use of social media could be a means to address the practical concerns of the practitioners regarding logistics, time and covering the syllabus. In particular, three new technologies are identified that can promote the development of dialogic RE i.e.

1. The app Book Creator which creates a multi-media book in which students can share videos, texts and record conversations and these are subsequently saved to Cloud as an editable document.
2. Free software GarageBand that can be downloaded onto a suitable device for a teacher to share with students and co-edit paired conversations before sharing with the class.

3. i-Tunes University in which the classroom is set up to record students' paired conversation prior to sharing with the teacher for editing, and then with rest of the class.

So, the evidence gleaned in response to the first three research questions suggests that this form of dialogic RE intervention has potential to be of interest to RE teachers. However, there are practical concerns to be overcome with respect to classroom practices. It seems that new technologies such as Book Creator, Garage Band and i-Tunes U may offer pedagogic opportunities whereby students can share conversations with teachers and peers. Such technologies should feature in future research intended to promote the development of dialogic RE. And so we now turn to the two major recommendations based on findings from this study.

Recommendations

The central message of this volume is that Catholic education is primarily a cultural project. It is a means of communicating the Gospel message effectively with a view to enriching the cultural atmosphere of the pluralist society. To do so requires a deep and lasting commitment to dialogue with those who do not share the Christian world view. (Convery et al, 2014: xiii-xiv)

So write Glasgow scholars Convery, Franchi and McCluskey in their book *Reclaiming the Piazza*. This work is the fruit of their considerations about the Italian initiative *Progetto Culturale*. Of itself, this Italian cultural initiative is a confident response from the Catholic Church in Italy to the hope expressed by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI (2009) that '...the Church should open a sort of *Courtyard of the Gentiles* in which... in addition to interreligious dialogue, there should be a dialogue with those to whom religion is something foreign, to whom God is unknown...' Dialogue with those who do not know the Christian faith is now a pressing concern within the Catholic Church today.

In mid-April 2017, the Congregation for Catholic Education published *Educating to fraternal humanism*. Section 3 of the document is entitled ‘A culture of dialogue’ and, in paragraph 12 it speaks of “fraternal humanism” as ‘...a “grammar of dialogue,” as pointed out by Pope Francis, able to “build bridges and... to find answers to the challenges of our time”’.¹⁵⁶ As noted in the opening paragraphs of this thesis, secularisation is the spirit of this age or the “challenge of our time”. The response advocated here is to “build bridges” with liberal thinkers to create a three realms’ post-secular society – sacred, secular and profane – in which the secular realm is a neutral buffer between profane and sacred. Within the public sphere of this neutral, procedurally secular realm; all are welcome to contribute to the common good of post-secular society. In so doing, they should adhere to the principle of self-limitation.

The creation of such a post-secular society does not occur by happenstance; and the behaviours for such a society need to be learned. And such learning begins within the classroom as the Congregation for Catholic Education (2017: Para. 14) attests:

Education to fraternal humanism has the weighty responsibility of providing a formation of citizens so as to imbue them with an appropriate culture of dialogue. Moreover, the intercultural dimension is frequently experienced in classrooms of all levels... so it is from there that we must start to spread the culture of dialogue.

The argumentation and the evidence presented within this thesis indicate that the RE classrooms of UK secondary schools are appropriate places to begin to “spread the culture of dialogue”. Indeed, this is the very starting point for the author undertaking research into

¹⁵⁶ referring to Pope Francis’ address to the plenary session of the Congregation for Catholic Education, 09 February 2017.

dialogic RE. Faced with the unusual situation of teaching Catholic RE to Catholic students within non-Catholic schools, I came to the conclusion that ‘In order for Catholic pupils to engage in respectful dialogue it is necessary that both parties to the discussion, Catholics and non-Catholics, have competent dialogic skills: otherwise, how else can the dialogue be authentic and respectful?’ (Luby, 2014: 59) The research findings presented here are a beginning to the development of the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk within RE classrooms – but they are only a beginning.

As argued above, more work requires to be undertaken with respect to the use of new technologies for the implementation of dialogic RE. Most likely, teachers of RE will only consider dialogic RE if there is clear evidence that its implementation will be a worthwhile and relatively straightforward process. In order to ascertain whether or not this is the case, the *first main recommendation* from this thesis is addressed to the Pedagogy, Praxis and Faith research group at the University of the Glasgow.¹⁵⁷ Two of the aforementioned Glasgow scholars,¹⁵⁸ Franchi and McCluskey, are sited within this research group for which half of its six key themes are relevant for this study.¹⁵⁹

Given their concern with the RE curriculum and schools as loci for ‘intense dialogue between Christianity and “the world”’ (Franchi, 2017a), this research group should undertake or commission classroom-based research with respect to dialogic RE and new technologies. The research should determine how new technologies such as Book Creator, GarageBand, and iTunes University can assist teachers of RE with the development of dialogic skills within

¹⁵⁷ Until recently known as Creativity, Culture and Faith.

¹⁵⁸ The third scholar, Convery, is Director of Communications for the Archdiocese of Glasgow.

¹⁵⁹ i.e. Intercultural education; Religion, spirituality and education; and International comparative perspectives on Catholic and faith-based education. See

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/education/research/researchgroups/creativitycultureandfaith/>

their classrooms. The research project should use a variety of schools with a stratified sample using the criteria of types of school, levels of attainment, location of schools, and affluence of location. Financial assistance and other support can be sought from appropriate bodies such as Culham St Gabriel's, The Charles Plater Trust and Porticus UK;¹⁶⁰ the latter being a Catholic charity which supports efforts contributing to the common good and social change in areas such as education.

Such a research project could realise progress to developing a Dominican Thomist critical faith pedagogy that meets the desire of the Glasgow scholars to '...enrich the cultural atmosphere of the pluralist society' of the United Kingdom through a '...commitment to dialogue with those who do not share the Christian world view' (Convery et al, 2014). This would be a practical and necessary step on the road to creating a procedurally secular realm within a post-secular society.

The *second main recommendation* is addressed to both the Pedagogy, Praxis and Faith research group and The St Andrew's Foundation for Catholic Teacher Education within the University of Glasgow. This foundation cites its first aim as being to 'develop an international profile across a range of research and scholarship activities in the field of Catholic education'.¹⁶¹ The St Andrew's Foundation should seek common cause with the Enhancing Catholic School Identity Project based in Leuven, Belgium.

Convery, Franchi and McCluskey (2014) claim their central project to be that of enriching the cultural atmosphere of the pluralist society and, in so doing, they are prepared to make a

¹⁶⁰ see www.cstg.org.uk ; plater.org.uk ; <https://uk.porticus.com/en/home>

¹⁶¹ see <https://www.gla.ac.uk/research/az/standrewsfoundation/ouraims/>

deep, lasting commitment to dialogue with those whose world view is not Christian. A similar commitment has been demonstrated for more than a decade by the Enhancing Catholic School Identity Project. At present, a promising route to achieving such a culture of dialogue within Catholic schooling is to be found in the work of Belgian theologians, Boeve, Pollefeyt and Bouwens. Drawing upon empirical research in Australia, their model of a *Recontextualising Dialogue School* offers a road map by which dialogue may transform not only classrooms, but also the cultural atmosphere of a pluralist society.

At the heart of their research lie analyses of Vatican documents of import such as *Gravissimum Educationis* and *Dei Verbum*. From their analyses they argue for Catholic schooling to adopt the Recontextualising Dialogue School Model. This school model offers creative, open and reciprocal dialogue. At present, it is believed – but as yet unknown – that most Catholic schools in the UK sit within the Kerygmatic Dialogue School Model. That is to say, Catholic schools can be identified by:

- their firm conviction of the truth offered by the Catholic faith;
- the priority they give to the Catholic faith and Catholic practices;
- their affirmation of Catholic religion as part of school life; and
- the respect they afford to those with different beliefs.

However, the criticism levelled at the Kerygmatic Dialogue School Model is that in its traditionality it is ‘...more or less fixed and permanent’ and does not ‘...wish to change too much of the content or the form of the Catholic faith in order to let it... ‘resonate’ with the ever-changing contemporary cultural maelstrom’ (Pollefeyt and Bouwens, 2017). Instead, those who advocate the Recontextualising Dialogue School Model do so in the belief that in order ‘...to experience authentic Catholic belief in a multicultural society, we must take on a

seeking and interpretive demeanour’ (Pollefeyt and Bouwens, 2017). Such an interpretive demeanour aids one,

Because it is in this meeting... with the other that God opens Himself, new layers of meaning are opened and belief is *Recontextualised*. Here dialogue is reciprocal and both partners are vulnerable and susceptible to new and changing meanings. (Haers, 1999)

As discussed above, the type of dialogue envisaged within such a Recontextualised Dialogue School Model is a hermeneutical-communicative approach to religious education advocated by Pollefeyt (2008: 321), that ‘...gives young people the liberty to speak about their own ideological choices on certain existential themes [and] a diversity of opinions and choices is likely to appear...’ This is in accord with the dialogues that have been discussed and analysed in this study. Developed in Continental Europe, this hermeneutical-communicative approach to RE is apposite for the Catholic sector of schooling. Its “partner” pedagogy within the UK is that of critical RE and, together, they are pedagogies for a ‘...genuinely open pluralistic society harbouring a range of different traditions and contradictory belief systems...’ (Wright, 2013: 110).

Through bringing together of the aims of the St Andrew’s Foundation with the work of the Enhancing Catholic School Identity Project (ECSIP) and the findings from this study - three areas for future research emerge. First, ECSIP employs a range of empirical tools such as Post-Critical Belief Scale, the Melbourne Scale, and the Victoria Scale that enable research into the concerns, beliefs and attitudes of school leadership, staff, students and parents. Such research would prove most helpful with regard to the Catholic identity of education institutes within the UK. These quantitative methodologies could establish a baseline as to the various types of identity prevalent within Catholic schools.

A second emergent area for research is the extent to which the RCRE curricula within Catholic schools engage with hermeneutical-communicative RE pedagogy. If, as Convery, Franchi and McCluskey contend, 'Catholic education is primarily a cultural project', then hermeneutical-communicative RE pedagogy is a means by which Catholic schools can enrich the pluralist society which they inhabit. The extent of engagement with this pedagogy could be determined from documentary analysis of the RCRE syllabi and interviews with appropriate school personnel such as Heads of Department of Religious Education.

The third area of research concerns the extent to which the introduction of hermeneutical-communicative RE pedagogy into these classrooms can enhance the quality of the students' dialogue. As stated above, from the world of Catholic RE in Great Britain there has arisen a plea from Castelli (2018: 146) that 'we need to teach pupils how to dialogue...'. The research findings from this study demonstrate the value of both the consensus-building dialogic skill of cumulative talk, and the critically-constructive dialogic skill of exploratory talk. Both of these dialogic skills are crucial components of a 'hermeneutical belief attitude...in which critical reason plays a vital role' (Pollefeyt & Bouwens, 2009). The recording, transcription and analysis of students' paired conversations before and after the introduction of hermeneutical-communicative RE pedagogy can be used to assess the quality of the students' dialogues.

A central argument of this thesis is that Dominican Thomist classroom dialogue can be a seedbed for the creation of a procedurally secular realm within a post-secular society. Such a realm will be pluralist and those from all backgrounds will be encouraged to dialogue and to reason within the public sphere. The adoption of this study's two main recommendations by

the Pedagogy, Praxis and Faith research group in conjunction with the St Andrew's Foundation at the University of Glasgow, and in partnership with the Enhancing Catholic School Identity Project at the Catholic University of Leuven, will be a step in the realisation of this vision.

Ultimately, though, the realisation of this vision will – or will not – take place within the classroom. The genesis of this thesis began with the problem of teaching Roman Catholic RE with Catholic students attending state, non-denominational secondary schools. The revelation and proposed solution is that both sectors of schooling, state and Catholic, adopt a critical, dialogic approach to RE within parts of their syllabi. For the Catholic sector this will entail adoption of the Continental hermeneutical-communicative approach to RE; whilst for the state sector it will be British critical RE. For both sectors it will involve the inculcation and development of the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk. As ever, the success or otherwise lies in the hands of dedicated classroom teachers of RE. Over to you colleagues.

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APPENDICES

<u>Title</u>	<u>Location</u>
1 Letter to Head Teachers	Manuscript (MS)
2 Magdalene C of E Academy conversation analyses	MS
3 Metropolitan Borough School conversation analyses	MS
4 Municipal Borough School conversation analyses	MS
5 Angel High conversation analyses	MS
6 Lion Rampant School conversation analyses	MS
7 Templar High conversation analyses	MS
8 Acacia Lane conversation analyses	MS
9a Deep Learning – teaching focus	MS
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10 Students’ Comments –re Dialogic RE	MS
1-1 exhibit FJ, excerpt B	MS
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A Conversation 1 transcript analysis - exemplar “high quality” grading	MS
B Conversation 2 transcript analysis	USB
C Conversation 3 transcript analysis - exemplar “low quality” grading	MS
D Conversation 4 transcript analysis	USB
E {Blank} Conversation 5 corrupt	
F Conversation 6 transcript analysis	USB
G Conversation 7 transcript analysis	USB
H Conversation 8 transcript analysis	USB
I Conversation 9 transcript analysis	USB
J Conversation 10 transcript analysis	USB
K Conversation 11 transcript analysis	USB
L Conversation 12 transcript analysis - exemplar of “mid quality” grading	MS
M Conversation 13 transcript analysis	USB
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<u>Title</u>	<u>Location</u>
O Conversation 15 transcript analysis	USB
P Conversation 16 transcript analysis	USB
Q Conversations 17 & 19, original recording	USB
R Conversations 18 & 21, original recording	USB
S Conversations 20 & 22, original recording	USB
2-1 Application Approval College Ethics Committee	MS
2-2 College Ethics Committee Research Application	MS
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A-1 to A-6 Transcripts for Conversation nos. 23 - 28	USB
B-1 to B-6 Transcripts for Conversation nos. 29 - 34	USB
C-1 to C-4 Transcripts for Conversation nos. 35 - 38	USB
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APPENDIX 1



May 2016

Dear Head Teacher [insert name]

I am presently undertaking PhD Education Studies at the University of Glasgow under the supervision of Professor James Conroy and Professor Robert Davis.

The topic for study is *Developing Dialogic Skills in Religious Education for Secondary School Students*. The aim of the investigation is to develop students' skills in both cumulative talk and exploratory talk. With the former students build positively but uncritically on what the other has said; and with the latter they engage critically but constructively with each other's ideas. When I undertook this study with twenty of my students; they both enjoyed and benefitted from this approach to RE.

I am writing to seek your consent for your school to participate with this research study and, if granted, then I would request 10 students from Y8-Y11 (S1-S4) to participate. As the theme is inter-faith dialogue I would ask that half of the students be Catholic and that they choose a classmate with whom they feel comfortable engaging in discussion. I anticipate that there would be 4 sessions. The first session would be to fully brief the students about the topic and to both (a) confirm their individual consent for participation; and (b) answer any questions that they may have. For the remaining three sessions they would engage with paired conversations that would be recorded and later transcribed.

All of the students will remain anonymous and the name of your school will be changed to avoid identification. I hope to have 5 schools participating in this research programme: each from a different background.

In accordance with the *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* (BERA 2011) I will undertake the following procedures:

- electronic data (both recordings and transcriptions) will be stored on a password – protected computer;
- paper – based data will be stored in a locked cupboard to which only I have access;
- all electronic and paper data that identifies individuals will be destroyed after completion of the project; and
- 300eoples300ed electronic data which cannot be linked to any other data concerning participants will be kept for use by me or other researchers.

The research findings will comprise an important part of the PhD study and I will make a copy available to your school. Ultimately, I would aim to publish the findings in one or more educational journals. Previous work has been published in the journal *Educational Action Research* and I would be pleased to furnish you with a copy should you so wish.

I believe that the RE Department and your students would benefit from participation in this study; and I would welcome an opportunity to come and meet with you to discuss this further.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Antony Luby

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APPENDIX 2

School 4: Magdalene C of E Academy

MID QUALITY CONVERSATION

Conversation no. 23¹⁶³

Y10 GCSE Tamara (non-religious) & Chase (baptised, non-religious) 1

There are 2517 words in this passage of conversation and in terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk; the two students are on task for 47.5% of this conversation. Proselytisation and the nature of sin are both features of cumulative talk, which comprises 418 words or 16.6% of their conversation. Exploratory talk comprises 778 words or 30.9% of the conversation and they postulate about life after death and the apparent powerlessness of God.

HIGH QUALITY CONVERSATIONS

Conversation no. 24

Y10 GCSE Tamara (non-religious) & Chase (baptised, non-religious) 2

There are 2181 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 92.3% of this conversation. Cumulative talk comprises 1161 words (53.2%) of the conversation, which ranges across various forms of discrimination. Exploratory talk comprises 853 words (39.1%) of their conversation and encompasses the future demise of religious belief, judgement day, and the influence of society upon beliefs and actions.

¹⁶³ See appendices A1-A6 for full transcripts of conversations 23-28. These are to be found in the USB appendix.

Conversation no. 25

Y10 GCSE Shannon & Scarlett (both non-religious) 1

There are 1909 words in this passage of conversation and in terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk; the two students are on task for 98.0%. Their cumulative talk comprises 26.6% of the conversation and ranges from ghosts, aliens and Area 51 to the nature of proof and belief. With exploratory talk (71.4%), they consider the mystery of Easter Island, spooky encounters, the concept of gravity and the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross for the human race.

Conversation no. 26

Y10 GCSE Shannon & Scarlett (both non-religious) 2

There are 2183 words in this passage of conversation and in terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk; the two students are on task for 99.2% of this conversation. Cumulative talk comprises 22.0% of their conversation and they touch upon forms of prayer, proof, dreams and fate. With exploratory talk (77.2%), they consider proof, power, arguments for the existence of God, and the end of the universe.

Conversation no. 27

Y10 GCSE Jerome & Tylon (both baptised agnostic) & Tony (non-baptised Christian) 1

There are 1808 words in this passage of conversation and in terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk; the three students are on task for 88.2% of this conversation. With respect to cumulative talk (40.2%), they discuss the Schrodinger's cat experiment, alternative historical timelines and Stephen Hawking's "Theory of Everything". Their exploratory talk (48.0%) focuses on the relationship between magic and science from a mediaeval perspective, lived experiences and timelines as dimensions, and infinite possibilities.

Conversation no. 28

Y10 GCSE Jerome & Tylon (both baptised agnostic) & Tony (non-baptised Christian) 2

There are 939 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the three students are on task for 88.0% of this conversation. The cumulative talk (38.6%) encompasses Jesus as reality or ideology, whilst their exploratory talk (49.4%) pursues this argument and considers the power of prophecy and the Holy Spirit.

APPENDIX 3

School 5: Metropolitan Borough School¹⁶⁴

HIGH QUALITY CONVERSATIONS

Conversation no. 29

Y12 Alexander (atheist) & Barry (agnostic) 1

There are 921 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 96.3% of this conversation. Their 54.8% of cumulative talk (505 words) comprises discussion of heaven and hell, ghosts and spirits, other dimensions, pseudo-science and the power of science. Their 41.5% of exploratory talk (382 words) analyses the nature of dimensions, laws of the universe, and religion as a coping mechanism.

Conversation no. 31

Y12 Bruce (atheist) & Wally (agnostic) 1

There are 1440 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 90.2% of this conversation. Their 70.8% of cumulative talk (1019 words) discusses a shadow world, nature of scientific evidence, consciousness, and homophobia. Their 19.4% of exploratory talk (280 words) touches upon Schrodinger's cat and heaven.

Conversation no. 32

Y12 Bruce (atheist) & Wally (agnostic) 2

There are 1269 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 85.8% of this conversation.

¹⁶⁴ See appendices B1-B6 for full transcripts of conversations 29-34. These are to be found in the USB appendix.

Their 54.3% of cumulative talk (689 words) contains discussion pertaining to the nature of evidence, and proofs for miracles. Their 31.5% of exploratory talk (400 words) also analyses miracles and considers religion as symbolism.

Conversation no. 33

Y12 Warold (non-practising Catholic) & May (non-practising Christian) 1

There are 1237 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 73.3% of this conversation. Their 49.9% of cumulative talk (617 words) comprises discussion of opinion and proof. With 23.4% of exploratory talk (290 words); they consider briefly ghosts, advanced technology and scientism.

Conversation no. 34

Y12 Warold (non-practising Catholic) & May (non-practising Christian) 2

There are 804 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 70.9% of this conversation. Their 22.5% of cumulative talk (181 words) touches upon slavery and war. Their 48.4% exploratory talk (389 words) puzzles over the plurality of races and death.

MID QUALITY CONVERSATION

Conversation no. 30

Y12 Alexander (atheist) & Barry (agnostic) 2

There are 594 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 98.1% of this conversation. Their 59.9% of cumulative talk (356 words) discusses historical evidence and religion as a form of societal manipulation. Their 38.2% of exploratory talk (227 words) considers miracles as magic.

APPENDIX 4

Municipal Borough School

HIGH QUALITY CONVERSATIONS¹⁶⁵

Conversation no. 35

Y9 Megan (atheist) & Joe (evangelical Christian)

There are 1518 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 95.2% of this conversation. Their 44.2% of cumulative talk comprises 671 words and discussion of law and spirit, science and miracles. Their 51.0% of exploratory talk comprises 774 words, and queries evidence and the nature of God.

Conversation no. 36

Y9 Megan (atheist) & Sheldon (evangelical Christian)

There are 2150 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 89.9% of this conversation. Their 58.8% of cumulative talk comprises 1265 words and discussion of a new heaven and a new earth, science and religion, dimensionality and the after-life. Their 31.1% of exploratory talk comprises 669 words and an examination of a shadow world, death as a ‘stepping stone’ to an after-life, and evidence and belief.

Conversation no. 37

Y9 Monica (agnostic) & Joe (evangelical Christian)

There are 1553 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 92.4% of this conversation.

¹⁶⁵ See appendices C1 – C4 for full transcripts of conversations 35-38. These are to be found in the USB appendix.

Their 31.7% of cumulative talk (493 words) comprises biblical typology, evolution, and Christology. Their 60.7% of exploratory talk comprises 943 words and questions both evolution and the human & divine nature of Jesus.

Conversation no. 38

Y9 Monica (agnostic) & Sheldon (evangelical Christian)

There are 934 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 77.1% of this conversation. Their 39.5% of cumulative talk (369 words) comprises the nature of proof, faith, and the supernatural. Their 37.6% of exploratory talk comprises 351 words and questions the nature of the physical universe and of heaven.

APPENDIX 5

School 7 Angel High¹⁶⁶

HIGH QUALITY CONVERSATIONS

Conversation no. 42

Y10 Amy (agnostic) & Coby (atheist) 2

There are 823 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 79.8% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk comprises 288 words (35.0%) and they consider the possibility of heaven being a supernatural realm. Their exploratory talk comprises 369 words (44.8%) and they consider religion and science, and the unseen.

Conversation no. 44

Y10 Kacy and Taz (both agnostic) 2

There are 1270 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 78.0% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk comprises 811 words (63.9%) and they question the veracity of historical evidence, and miracles as magic. Their exploratory talk comprises 179 words (14.1%) and they question an assumption underpinning argumentation as evidence for the historical Jesus.

MID QUALITY CONVERSATIONS

Conversation no. 39

Y10 Raj (atheist) & Jess (Sikh) 1

There are 963 words in this passage of conversation, much of which is disputational. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 56.5% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk comprises 189

¹⁶⁶ See appendices D1 – D6 for full transcripts of conversations 39-44. These are to be found in the USB appendix.

words (19.6%) and touches upon science, religion and belief. Their exploratory talk comprises 355 words (36.9%) and discusses scientism, other dimensions, and higher beings.

Conversation no. 41

Y10 Amy (agnostic) & Coby (atheist) 1

There are 554 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 75.1% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk comprises 178 words (32.1%) and focuses on historical evidence. Their exploratory talk comprises 238 words (43.0%) and debates opinion and evidence.

Conversation no. 43

Y10 Kacy and Taz (both agnostic) 1

There are 828 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 65.1% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk comprises 526 words (63.5%) and they share their desire for heaven to be real, and they are intrigued by the possibility of scientific evidence. Their exploratory talk comprises just 13 words (1.6%) and raises the issue of other dimensions.

LOW QUALITY CONVERSATION

Conversation no. 40

Y10 Raj (atheist) & Jess (Sikh) 2

There are 1355 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 44.9% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk comprises 362 words (26.7%) in which they doubt Christian claims to Jesus being the Son of God. Their exploratory talk comprises 247 words (18.2%) in which they question the existence of God.

APPENDIX 6

Lion Rampant School¹⁶⁷

HIGH QUALITY CONVERSATIONS

Conversation no. 45

Y10 Assim and Amir (both Muslim) 1

There are 1417 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 83.4% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk comprises 656 words (46.3%) in which they share and build upon their Islamic beliefs such as Paradise. Their exploratory talk comprises 525 words (37.1%) during which they explore the nature of proof as it relates to the possibility of the existence of unseen dimensions of reality.

Conversation no. 46

Y10 Assim and Amir (both Muslim) 2

There are 1687 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 77.5% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk comprises 944 words (56.0%) and they share and develop their Islamic beliefs about the crucifixion of Jesus, and sin and punishment. Their exploratory talk comprises 362 words (21.5%) and they discuss miracles and the Day of Judgement.

Conversation no. 47

Y10 Holly and Zion (both Christian) 1

There are 1243 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 75.1% of this conversation.

¹⁶⁷ See appendices E1 – E6 for full transcripts of conversations 45-50. These are to be found in the USB appendix.

Their cumulative talk comprises 539 words (32.1%) and they discuss the Garden of Eden and heaven. Their exploratory talk comprises 494 words (43.0%) and they discuss humanity's need for belief, and creation through the Big Bang.

Conversation no. 48

Y10 Holly and Zion (both Christian) 2

There are 1237 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 94.5% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk comprises 955 words (77.2%) and they share their Christian beliefs about Jesus, Archangel Michael, and Lucifer the devil. Their exploratory talk comprises 214 words (17.3%) and they question the nature of evidence.

Conversation no. 49

Y10 Mia and David (both atheist) 1

There are 1083 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 83.9% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk comprises 643 words (59.4%) and they discuss theory, speculation and evidence. Their exploratory talk comprises 265 words (24.5%) and they refer to cultural influences upon morality.

Conversation no. 50

Y10 Mia and David (both atheist) 2

There are 1007 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 84.7% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk comprises 389 words (38.6%) and they criticise religious belief, both Muslim and Christian. Their exploratory talk comprises 464 words (46.1%) and they cite a lack of proof for religious belief.

APPENDIX 7

Templar High¹⁶⁸

HIGH QUALITY CONVERSATIONS

Conversation no. 51

Y12 Catherine (practising Christian) and Memphis (agnostic) 1

There are 1604 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 77.5% of this conversation.

Their cumulative talk comprises 770 words (48.0%) and discussion of the universe as supernatural, Plato's world of forms, and reincarnation. Their exploratory talk comprises 473 words (29.5%) and discussion of the location and purpose of heaven, energy and the soul.

Conversation no. 52

Y12 Catherine (practising Christian) and Memphis (agnostic) 2

There are 1198 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 84.2% of this conversation.

Their cumulative talk comprises 520 words (43.4%) and includes discussion about accuracy of the gospel accounts. Their exploratory talk comprises 489 words (40.8%) and discussion of the miracles of Jesus and his salvific role.

¹⁶⁸ See appendices F1 –F6 for full transcripts of conversations 51-56. These are to be found in the USB appendix.

Conversation no. 53

Y13 Frank (agnostic) and Ann (deist) 1

There are 828 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 83.2% of this conversation.

Their cumulative talk comprises 360 words (43.5%) and discusses the possibility of the supernatural. Their exploratory talk comprises 329 words (39.7%) and analyses evidential links between science and religion.

Conversation no. 54

Y13 Frank (agnostic) and Ann (deist) 2

There are 724 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 82.3% of this conversation.

Their cumulative talk comprises 220 words (30.4%) in which they question the role of Jesus as a miracle worker. Their exploratory talk comprises 376 words (51.9%) and a discussion of historical evidence outwith the Bible.

Conversation no. 55

Y13 Skye (agnostic) and Reginald (deist) 1

There are 2790 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 95.0% of this conversation.

Their cumulative talk comprises 742 words (26.6%) and discussion of nirvana, and ghosts as spiritual beings. Their exploratory talk comprises 1908 words (68.4%) and discussion of multiverse theory, cycle of life, spiritual energy, and religious conflict.

Conversation no. 56

Y13 Skye (agnostic) and Reginald (deist) 2

There are 2827 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 90.3% of this conversation.

Their cumulative talk comprises 525 words (18.6%) including discussion of psychology within religion, and the relationship between morality and religion. Their exploratory talk comprises 2028 words (71.7%) and discussion of magic and the messiah, the Book of Mormon, Shakespeare's Othello, superstition and Satanism.

APPENDIX 8

School 10 Acacia Lane¹⁶⁹

LOW QUALITY CONVERSATIONS

Conversation no. 57

Y10 Aiden (agnostic) and Hollie (Christian) 1

There are 588 words in this passage of conversation. There is no evidence of either cumulative talk or exploratory talk as the two students engage with explanatory talk¹⁷⁰ or disputational talk during this conversation.

Cumulative talk comprises 0 words of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 0 words of the above conversation.

Conversation no. 58

Y10 Aiden (agnostic) and Hollie (Christian) 2

There are 712 words in this passage of conversation. There is little evidence of either cumulative talk or exploratory talk as the two students engage again with explanatory talk or disputational talk during this conversation. Their cumulative talk is minimal and comprises 20 words (2.8%) of the conversation. Their exploratory talk comprises 218 words (30.6%) and ends mostly in disagreement.

Conversation no. 60

Y10 Elle (agnostic) and George (atheist) 2

There are 562 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 35.6% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk comprises 114 words (20.3%) and they

¹⁶⁹ See appendices G1 – G6 for full transcripts of conversations 57-62. These are to be found in the USB appendix.

¹⁷⁰ The students are re-processing and re-stating information that was used to set a context for their discussion

express sorrow for the death of Christ on the cross. Their exploratory talk comprises 86 words (15.3%) and, again, is limited and scattered.

Conversation no. 61

Y10 Lachlan (Christian) and Charlotte (atheist) 1

There are 428 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 46.5% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk comprises a mere 7 words (1.6%) and is restricted to comments of assent. Their exploratory talk comprises 192 words (44.9%) and they struggle towards agreement about the existence of other dimensions.

MID QUALITY CONVERSATION

Conversation no. 59

Y10 Elle (agnostic) and George (atheist) 1

There are 570 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 63.4% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk comprises 180 words (31.6%) and they tend towards agreement that heaven may exist in another dimension, and that it is unlikely that God exists because of the problem of evil. Their exploratory talk comprises 181 words (31.8%) and is limited and scattered.

HIGH QUALITY CONVERSATION

Conversation no. 62

Y10 Lachlan (Christian) and Charlotte (atheist) 2

There are 778 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk, the two students are on task for 92.0% of this conversation. Their cumulative talk comprises only 60 words (7.7%) and

touches upon the raising of Lazarus. Their exploratory talk comprises 656 words (84.3%) and they discuss the Bible as a fairy-tale, miracles and free will.

APPENDIX 9a

Deep learning – teaching focus

Table 1a
City Catholic School
Deep learning – teaching focus
(n=4)

<u>Item</u>	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>This approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
1. Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.	0	4	0	0	0
2. Is generally good at explaining things for me.	1	3	0	0	0
3. Generally helps me to make links between different topics.	3	0	0	1	0
4. Is generally good at showing how what I am learning is linked to everyday life.	0	1	2	1	0
5. Is good at asking questions which make me think.	4	0	0	0	0

There are sixteen responses in the “Definitely Agree” and “Agree” responses, and only four responses in the other categories. With regard to analysis for statistical significance, these are added to Apostle High’s responses in order to give an overall categorisation of Catholic Schools (see table 2a below).

Table 2a
Catholic Schools
Deep learning – teaching focus
(n=17)

Item	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>This approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
1. Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.	5	10	2	0	0
2. Is generally good at explaining things for me.	2	12	2	1	0
3. Generally helps me to make links between different topics.	8	5	1	1	0 ¹⁷¹
4. Is generally good at showing how what I am learning is linked to everyday life.	5	8	2	2	0
5. Is good at asking questions which make me think.	16	1	0	0	0

As one might anticipate, when the figures are subjected to a Chi Square Test *all* of the five test items are statistically significant (see table 3a below).

¹⁷¹ 2 no responses

Table 3a – Catholic Schools
Deep learning – teaching focus
Chi Square Test
(n=17)

Category	Observed	Expected	Residual= (Obs-Exp)	Component= (Obs-Exp) ²	(Obs-Exp) ² / Exp
----------	----------	----------	------------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------------------

Item 1a	5	3.40	1.60	2.56	0.75
Item 1b	10	3.40	6.60	43.56	12.81
Item 1c	2	3.40	-1.40	1.96	0.58
Item 1d	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40
Item 1e	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40

0.75 + 12.81 + 0.58 + 3.40 + 3.40 = 20.94; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
20.94 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 2a	2	3.40	-1.40	1.96	0.58
Item 2b	12	3.40	8.60	73.96	21.75
Item 2c	2	3.40	-1.40	1.96	0.58
Item 2d	1	3.40	-2.40	5.76	1.69
Item 2e	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40

0.58 + 21.75 + 0.58 + 1.69 + 3.40 = 28.00; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
28.00 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 3a	8	3.00	5.00	25.00	8.33
Item 3b	5	3.00	2.00	4.00	1.33
Item 3c	1	3.00	-2.00	4.00	1.33
Item 3d	1	3.00	-2.00	4.00	1.33
Item 3e	0	3.00	-3.00	9.00	3.00

8.33 + 1.33 + 1.33 + 1.33 + 3.00 = 15.32; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
15.32 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 4a	5	3.40	1.60	2.56	0.75
Item 4b	8	3.40	4.60	21.16	6.22
Item 4c	2	3.40	-1.40	1.96	0.58
Item 4d	2	3.40	-1.40	1.96	0.58
Item 4e	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40

0.75 + 6.22 + 0.58 + 0.58 + 3.40 = 11.53 Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
11.53 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 5a	16	3.40	12.60	158.76	46.69
Item 5b	1	3.40	-2.40	5.76	1.69
Item 5c	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40
Item 5d	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40
Item 5e	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40

46.69 + 1.69 + 3.40 + 3.40 + 3.40 = 58.58; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
58.58 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Therefore, it is fair to assert that in the estimation of the seventeen Catholic students surveyed; this dialogic RE does promote a deep approach to learning.

Table 4a
Anglican Schools
Deep learning – teaching focus
(n=14)

Item	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>This approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
1. Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.	0	12	2	0	0
2. Is generally good at explaining things for me.	4	6	4	0	0
3. Generally helps me to make links between different topics.	4	9	1	0	0
4. Is generally good at showing how what I am learning is linked to everyday life.	5	4	5	0	0
5. Is good at asking questions which make me think.	8	6	0	0	0

As evidenced by the Chi Square Test each of these test items produces a positive response that is statistically significant (see table 5a below).

Table 5a – Anglican Schools
Deep learning – teaching focus
Chi Square Test
(n=14)

Category	Observed	Expected	Residual= (Obs-Exp)	Component= (Obs-Exp) ²	(Obs-Exp) ² / Exp
----------	----------	----------	------------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------------------

Item 1a	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80
Item 1b	12	2.80	9.20	84.64	30.23
Item 1c	2	2.80	-0.80	0.64	0.23
Item 1d	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80
Item 1e	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80

2.80 + 30.23 + 0.23 + 2.80 + 2.80 = 38.86; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
38.86 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 2a	4	2.80	1.20	1.44	0.51
Item 2b	6	2.80	3.20	10.24	3.66
Item 2c	4	2.80	1.20	1.44	0.51
Item 2d	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80
Item 2e	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80

0.51 + 3.66 + 0.51 + 2.80 + 2.80 = 10.28; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
10.28 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 3a	4	2.80	1.20	1.44	0.51
Item 3b	9	2.80	6.20	38.44	13.73
Item 3c	1	2.80	-1.80	3.24	1.16
Item 3d	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80
Item 3e	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80

0.51 + 13.73 + 1.16 + 2.80 + 2.80 = 21.00; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
21.00 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 4a	5	2.80	2.20	4.84	1.73
Item 4b	4	2.80	1.20	1.44	0.51
Item 4c	5	2.80	2.20	4.84	1.73
Item 4d	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80
Item 4e	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80

1.73 + 0.51 + 1.73 + 2.80 + 2.80 = 9.57; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
9.57 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 5a	8	2.80	5.20	27.04	9.66
Item 5b	6	2.80	3.20	10.24	3.66
Item 5c	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80
Item 5d	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80
Item 5e	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80

9.66 + 3.66 + 2.80 + 2.80 + 2.80 = 21.72; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
21.72 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

And so, it is fair to conclude that in the estimation of the fourteen students surveyed in the two Anglican schools, this dialogic RE does promote a deep

approach to learning. Combining the returns from both Catholic schools and both Anglican schools produces a return for the category of “Faith Schools” as given below in table 6a.

Table 6a
Faith Schools
Deep learning – teaching focus
(n=31)

<u>Item</u>	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>This approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
1. Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.	5	22	4	0	0
2. Is generally good at explaining things for me.	6	18	6	1	0
3. Generally helps me to make links between different topics.	12	14	2	1	0¹⁷²
4. Is generally good at showing how what I am learning is linked to everyday life.	10	12	7	2	0
5. Is good at asking questions which make me think.	24	7	0	0	0

As one would anticipate, when the figures are subjected to a Chi Square Test *all* of the five test items are statistically significant (see table 7a below).

¹⁷² 2 no responses

Table 7a
Faith Schools – Catholic & Anglican
Deep learning – teaching focus
Chi Square Test
(n=31)

Category	Observed	Expected	Residual= (Obs-Exp)	Component= (Obs-Exp) ² / Exp
----------	----------	----------	------------------------	--

Item 1a	5	6.2	-1.2	1.44
Item 1b	22	6.2	15.8	249.64
Item 1c	4	6.2	-2.2	4.84
Item 1d	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44
Item 1e	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44

0.23 + 40.26 + 0.78 + 6.20 + 6.20 = 53.67; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
53.67 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 2a	6	6.2	-0.2	0.04
Item 2b	18	6.2	11.8	139.24
Item 2c	6	6.2	-0.2	0.04
Item 2d	1	6.2	-5.2	27.04
Item 2e	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44

0.01 + 22.46 + 0.01 + 4.36 + 6.20 = 33.04; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
33.04 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 3a	12	5.8	6.2	38.44
Item 3b	14	5.8	8.2	67.24
Item 3c	2	5.8	-3.8	14.44
Item 3d	1	5.8	-4.8	23.04
Item 3e	0	5.8	-5.8	33.64

6.63 + 11.59 + 2.49 + 3.97 + 5.90 = 30.48; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
30.48 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 4a	10	6.2	3.8	14.44
Item 4b	12	6.2	5.8	33.64
Item 4c	7	6.2	0.8	0.64
Item 4d	2	6.2	-4.2	17.64
Item 4e	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44

2.33 + 5.43 + 0.10 + 2.85 + 6.20 = 16.91; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
16.91 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 5a	24	6.2	17.8	316.84
Item 5b	7	6.2	0.8	0.64
Item 5c	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44
Item 5d	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44
Item 5e	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44

51.10 + 0.10 + 6.20 + 6.20 + 6.20 = 69.80; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
69.80 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

And so, it is fair to assert that in the estimation of the thirty-one students surveyed in four faith schools, this dialogic RE does promote a deep approach to learning.

Table 8a
Metropolitan Borough School
Deep learning – teaching focus

(n=6)

<u>Item</u>	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>This approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
1. Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.	2	1	1	2	0
2. Is generally good at explaining things for me.	2	4	0	0	0
3. Generally helps me to make links between different topics.	3	1	1	1	0
4. Is generally good at showing how what I am learning is linked to everyday life.	1	2	2	1	0
5. Is good at asking questions which make me think.	4	2	0	0	0

Table 9a
Municipal Borough School
Deep learning – teaching focus
(n=4)

<u>Item</u>	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>This approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
1. Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.	1	3	0	0	0
2. Is generally good at explaining things for me.	2	1	1	0	0
3. Generally helps me to make links between different topics.	3	0	1	0	0
4. Is generally good at showing how what I am learning is linked to everyday life.	3	0	1	0	0
5. Is good at asking questions which make me think.	4	0	0	0	0

Table 10a
Angel High
Deep learning – teaching focus
(n=6)

<u>Item</u>	<u>Definitely</u> <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Unsure</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Definitely</u> <u>Disagree</u>
<i>This approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
1. Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.	2	4	0	0	0
2. Is generally good at explaining things for me.	2	1	2	1	0
3. Generally helps me to make links between different topics.	3	3	0	0	0
4. Is generally good at showing how what I am learning is linked to everyday life.	2	2	1	1	0
5. Is good at asking questions which make me think.	6	0	0	0	0

Table 11a
Lion Rampant School
Deep learning – teaching focus
(n=6)

Item	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>This approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
1. Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.	0	3	1	2	0
2. Is generally good at explaining things for me.	1	5	0	0	0
3. Generally helps me to make links between different topics.	3	1	2	0	0
4. Is generally good at showing how what I am learning is linked to everyday life.	2	2	0	2	0
5. Is good at asking questions which make me think.	3	3	0	0	0

Table 12a
Templar School
Deep learning – teaching focus
(n=6)

Item	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>This approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
1. Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.	2	3	1	0	0
2. Is generally good at explaining things for me.	1	3	2	0	0
3. Generally helps me to make links between different topics.	1	4	1	0	0
4. Is generally good at showing how what I am learning is linked to everyday life.	0	5	1	0	0
5. Is good at asking questions which make me think.	6	0	0	0	0

Table 13a

Academies

Deep learning – teaching focus

(n=28)

Item	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>This approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
1. Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.	7	14	3	4	0
2. Is generally good at explaining things for me.	8	14	5	1	0
3. Generally helps me to make links between different topics.	13	9	5	1	0
4. Is generally good at showing how what I am learning is linked to everyday life.	8	11	5	4	0
5. Is good at asking questions which make me think.	23	5	0	0	0

Table 14a – Academies

Deep learning – teaching focus

Chi Square Test

(n=28)

			Residual=		Component=
Category	Observed	Expected	(Obs-Exp)	(Obs-Exp) ²	(Obs-Exp) ² / Exp

Item 1a	7	5.33	1.67	2.79	0.52
Item 1b	14	5.33	8.67	75.17	14.10
Item 1c	3	5.33	-2.33	5.43	1.02
Item 1d	4	5.33	-1.33	1.77	0.33
Item 1e	0	5.33	-5.33	28.41	5.33

0.52 + 14.10 + 1.02 + 0.33 + 5.33 = 21.30; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
21.30 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 2a	8	5.33	2.67	7.13	1.34
Item 2b	14	5.33	8.67	75.17	14.10
Item 2c	5	5.33	-0.33	0.11	0.02
Item 2d	1	5.33	-4.33	18.75	3.52
Item 2e	0	5.33	-5.33	28.41	5.33

1.34 + 14.10 + 0.02 + 3.52 + 5.33 = 24.31; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
24.31 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 3a	13	5.33	7.67	58.83	11.04
Item 3b	9	5.33	3.67	13.47	2.53
Item 3c	5	5.33	-0.33	0.11	0.02
Item 3d	1	5.33	-4.33	18.75	3.52
Item 3e	0	5.33	-5.33	28.41	5.33

11.04 + 2.53 + 0.02 + 3.52 + 5.33 = 22.44; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
22.44 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 4a	8	5.33	2.67	7.13	1.34
Item 4b	11	5.33	5.67	32.15	6.03
Item 4c	5	5.33	-0.33	0.11	0.02
Item 4d	4	5.33	-1.33	1.77	0.33
Item 4e	0	5.33	-5.33	28.41	5.33

1.34 + 6.03 + 0.02 + 0.33 + 5.33 = 13.02 Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
13.02 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 5a	23	5.33	17.67	312.23	58.58
Item 5b	5	5.33	-0.33	0.11	0.02
Item 5c	0	5.33	-5.33	28.41	5.33
Item 5d	0	5.33	-5.33	28.41	5.33
Item 5e	0	5.33	-5.33	28.41	5.33

58.58 + 0.02 + 5.33 + 5.33 + 5.33 = 74.59; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
74.59 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Thus, it is fair to assert that in the estimation of the twenty-eight students surveyed; this dialogic RE does promote a deep approach to learning.

Table 15a

Acacia Lane

Deep learning – teaching focus

(n=6)

<u>Item</u>	<u>Definitely Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Unsure</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Definitely Disagree</u>
<i>This approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
1. Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.	3	2	1	0	0
2. Is generally good at explaining things for me.	1	4	1	0	0
3. Generally helps me to make links between different topics.	2	4	0	0	0
4. Is generally good at showing how what I am learning is linked to everyday life.	2	3	1	0	0
5. Is good at asking questions which make me think.	2	2	2	0	0

Generally speaking, a positive response with no less than 25 entries in the ‘Definitely Agree’ and ‘Agree’ categories; and the remaining 5 entries are to be found in the ‘Unsure’ category.

APPENDIX 9b

Deep learning – pupil focus

Table 1b

City Catholic School

Deep learning – pupil focus

(n=4)

<u>Item</u>	<u>Definitely Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Unsure</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Definitely Disagree</u>
<i>With this approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
6. I often have to try to see the connections between ideas in one area and those in another.	1	2	1	0	0
7. I generally try to understand things, even when they seem difficult at the beginning.	3	1	0	0	0
8. I often ask myself questions about the things I hear in lessons or read in books.	2	2	0	0	0
9. I often try to relate what I learn to previous work.	2	2	0	0	0
10. When I am trying to understand new ideas, I often try to see how they might apply in real-life situations.	0	3	1	0	0

A positive response from the students with eighteen replies in the ‘Definitely Agree’ and ‘Agree’ categories; and only two in the ‘Unsure’ category. As stated above, these returns are amalgamated with the other Catholic school (see table 2b below).

Table 2b
Catholic Schools
Deep learning – pupil focus
(n=17)

Item	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>This approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
6. Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.	4	8	3	2	0
7. Is generally good at explaining things for me.	10	7	0	0	0
8. Generally helps me to make links between different topics.	10	6	1	0	0
9. Is generally good at showing how what I am learning is linked to everyday life.	5	12	0	0	0
10. Is good at asking questions which make me think.	6	7	4	0	0

Again, when the figures are subjected to a Chi Square Test all of the five test items are statistically significant (see table 3b below).

Table 3b – Catholic Schools

Deep learning – pupil focus

Chi Square Test

(n=17)

Category	Observed	Expected	Residual= (Obs-Exp)	Component= (Obs-Exp) ²	(Obs-Exp) ² / Exp
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Item 6a	4	3.40	0.60	0.36	0.11
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Item 6b	8	3.40	4.60	21.16	6.22
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Item 6c	3	3.40	-0.40	0.16	0.05
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Item 6d	2	3.40	-1.40	1.96	0.58
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Item 6e	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40
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0.11 + 6.22 + 0.05 + 0.58 + 3.40 = 10.36; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value

10.36 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 7a	10	3.40	6.60	43.56	12.81
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Item 7b	7	3.40	3.60	12.96	3.81
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Item 7c	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40
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Item 7d	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40
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Item 7e	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40
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12.81 + 3.81 + 3.40 + 3.40 + 3.40 = 25.82; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value

25.82 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 8a	10	3.40	6.60	43.56	12.81
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Item 8b	6	3.40	2.60	6.76	1.99
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Item 8c	1	3.40	-2.40	5.76	1.69
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Item 8d	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40
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Item 8e	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40
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12.81 + 1.99 + 1.69 + 3.40 + 3.40 = 23.29; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value

23.29 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 9a	5	3.40	1.60	2.56	0.75
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Item 9b	12	3.40	8.60	73.96	21.75
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Item 9c	0	3.40	-2.60	6.76	4.16
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Item 9d	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40
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Item 9e	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40
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0.75 + 21.75 + 4.16 + 3.40 + 3.40 = 33.46; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value

33.46 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 10a	6	3.40	2.60	6.76	1.99
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Item 10b	7	3.40	3.60	12.96	3.81
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Item 10c	4	3.40	0.60	0.36	0.11
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Item 10d	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40
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Item 10e	0	3.40	-3.40	11.56	3.40
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1.99 + 3.81 + 0.11 + 3.40 + 3.40 = 12.71; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value

12.71 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Therefore, in the estimation of the seventeen students surveyed in the two Catholic schools, this is further corroboration (see table 3a) that dialogic RE does promote a deep approach to learning.

Table 4b
Anglican Schools
Deep learning –pupil focus
(n=14)

<u>Item</u>	<u>Definitely</u> <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Unsure</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Definitely</u> <u>Disagree</u>
<i>With this approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
6. I often have to try to see the connections between ideas in one area and those in another.	3	9	2	0	0
7. I generally try to understand things, even when they seem difficult at the beginning.	9	5	0	0	0
8. I often ask myself questions about the things I hear in lessons or read in books.	7	7	0	0	0
9. I often try to relate what I learn to previous work.	8	5	1	0	0
10. When I am trying to understand new ideas, I often try to see how they might apply in real-life situations.	6	7	1	0	0

These responses are subject to a Chi Square Test for statistical significance (see table 5b below).

Table 5b – Anglican Schools
Deep learning – pupil focus
Chi Square Test
(n=14)

Category	Observed	Expected	Residual= (Obs-Exp)	Component= (Obs-Exp) ² / Exp
Item 6a	3	2.80	0.20	0.04
Item 6b	9	2.80	6.20	38.44
Item 6c	2	2.80	-0.80	0.64
Item 6d	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84
Item 6e	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84

0.01 + 13.73 + 0.23 + 2.80 + 2.80 = 19.57; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
19.57 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 7a	9	2.80	6.20	38.44	13.73
Item 7b	5	2.80	2.20	4.84	1.73
Item 7c	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80
Item 7d	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80
Item 7e	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80

13.73 + 1.73 + 3.40 + 3.40 + 3.40 = 23.86; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
23.86 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 8a	7	2.80	4.20	17.64	6.30
Item 8b	7	2.80	4.20	17.64	6.30
Item 8c	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80
Item 8d	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80
Item 8e	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80

6.3 + 6.3 + 2.8 + 2.8 + 2.8 = 21.0; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
21.0 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 9a	8	2.80	5.20	27.04	9.66
Item 9b	5	2.80	2.20	4.84	1.73
Item 9c	1	2.80	-1.80	3.24	1.16
Item 9d	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80
Item 9e	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80

9.66 + 1.73 + 1.16 + 2.80 + 2.80 = 18.15; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
18.15 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 10a	6	2.80	3.20	10.24	3.66
Item 10b	7	2.80	4.20	17.64	6.30
Item 10c	1	2.80	-1.80	3.24	1.16
Item 10d	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80
Item 10e	0	2.80	-2.80	7.84	2.80

3.66 + 6.30 + 1.16 + 2.80 + 2.80 = 16.72; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value

16.72 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

These fourteen responses confirm (see table 5a) that the students surveyed in the two Anglican schools indicate that this dialogic RE does promote a deep approach to learning.

Table 6b

<u>Item</u>	<u>Faith Schools</u>				<u>Definitely Disagree</u>
	<u>Deep learning – pupil focus</u>				
	<u>(n=31)</u>				
	<u>Definitely Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Unsure</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	
<i>This approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
1. Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.	7	17	5	2	0
2. Is generally good at explaining things for me.	19	12	0	0	0
3. Generally helps me to make links between different topics.	17	13	1	0	0
4. Is generally good at showing how what I am learning is linked to everyday life.	13	17	1	0	0
5. Is good at asking questions which make me think.	12	14	5	0	0

These thirty-one responses are subject to a Chi Square Test for statistical significance (see table 7b below).

Table 7b
Faith Schools – Catholic & Anglican
Chi Square Test
Deep learning – pupil focus
(n=31)

Category	Observed	Expected	Residual= (Obs-Exp)	Component= (Obs-Exp) ² / Exp
Item 6a	7	6.2	0.8	0.64
Item 6b	17	6.2	10.8	116.64
Item 6c	5	6.2	-1.2	1.44
Item 6d	2	6.2	-4.2	17.64
Item 6e	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44

0.10 + 18.81 + 0.23 + 2.85 + 6.20 = 28.19; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
28.19 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 7a	19	6.2	12.8	163.84
Item 7b	12	6.2	5.8	33.64
Item 7c	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44
Item 7d	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44
Item 7e	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44

26.43 + 5.43 + 6.20 + 6.20 + 6.20 = 50.46; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
50.46 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 8a	17	6.2	10.8	116.64
Item 8b	13	6.2	6.8	46.24
Item 8c	1	6.2	-5.2	27.04
Item 8d	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44
Item 8e	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44

18.81 + 7.46 + 4.36 + 6.20 + 6.20 = 43.03; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
43.03 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 9a	13	6.2	6.8	46.24
Item 9b	17	6.2	10.8	116.64
Item 9c	1	6.2	-5.2	27.04
Item 9d	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44

Table 7b contd

Category	Observed	Expected	Residual= (Obs-Exp)	Component= (Obs-Exp)^2	(Obs-Exp)^2 / Exp
Item 9e	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44	6.20

7.46 + 18.81 + 4.36 + 6.20 + 6.20 = 43.03; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
43.03 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 10a	12	6.2	5.8	33.64	5.43
Item 10b	14	6.2	7.8	60.84	9.81
Item 10c	5	6.2	-1.2	1.44	0.23
Item 10d	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44	6.20
Item 10e	0	6.2	-6.2	38.44	6.20

5.43 + 9.81 + 0.23 + 6.20 + 6.20 = 27.87; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
27.87 > 9.47 **Result is statistically significant**

These responses confirm (see table 7a) that in the estimation of the thirty-one students surveyed in the four faith schools this dialogic RE does promote a deep approach to learning.

Table 8b

Metropolitan Borough School

Deep learning – pupil focus

Item	(n=6)				
	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>With this approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
6. I often have to try to see the connections between ideas in one area and those in another.	1	2	2	1	0
7. I generally try to understand things, even when they seem difficult at the beginning.	3	2	1	0	0
8. I often ask myself questions about the things I hear in lessons or read in books.	2	1	1	2	0
9. I often try to relate what I learn to previous work.	1	4	0	1	0

10. When I am trying to understand new ideas, I often try to see how they might apply in real-life situations.	1	3	0	2	0
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Table 9b

Municipal Borough School
Deep learning – pupil focus
(n=4)

Item	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>With this approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
6. I often have to try to see the connections between ideas in one area and those in another.	1	1	2	0	0
7. I generally try to understand things, even when they seem difficult at the beginning.	2	2	0	0	0
8. I often ask myself questions about the things I hear in lessons or read in books.	1	3	0	0	0
9. I often try to relate what I learn to previous work.	2	2	0	0	0
10. When I am trying to understand new ideas, I often try to see how they might apply in real-life situations.	0	2	1	1	0

Table 10b
Angel High
Deep learning – pupil focus
(n=6)

Item	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>With this approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
6. I often have to try to see the connections between ideas in one area and those in another.	1	5	0	0	0
7. I generally try to understand things, even when they seem difficult at the beginning.	3	3	0	0	0
8. I often ask myself questions about the things I hear in lessons or read in books.	2	1	2	1	0
9. I often try to relate what I learn to previous work.	1	2	1	2	0
10. When I am trying to understand new ideas, I often try to see how they might apply in real-life situations.	3	1	2	0	0

Table 11b
Lion Rampant
Deep learning – pupil focus
(n=6)

Item	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>With this approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
6. I often have to try to see the connections between ideas in one area and those in another.	1	4	1	0	0
7. I generally try to understand things, even when they seem difficult at the beginning.	2	3	0	1	0
8. I often ask myself questions about the things I hear in lessons or read in books.	3	0	3	0	0
9. I often try to relate what I learn to previous work.	1	3	0	2	0
10. When I am trying to understand new ideas, I often try to see how they might apply in real-life situations.	1	4	0	1	0

Table 12b
Templar High
Deep learning – pupil focus
(n=6)

Item	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>With this approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
6. I often have to try to see the connections between ideas in one area and those in another.	0	3	2	1	0
7. I generally try to understand things, even when they seem difficult at the beginning.	0	5	1	0	0
8. I often ask myself questions about the things I hear in lessons or read in books.	1	3	0	1	0 ¹⁷³
9. I often try to relate what I learn to previous work.	3	3	0	0	0
10. When I am trying to understand new ideas, I often try to see how they might apply in real-life situations.	2	2	2	0	0

As discussed above all of the academies are being statistically analysed as one grouping (see table 13b below).

¹⁷³ 1 no response

Table 13b
Academies
Deep learning – pupil focus
(n=28)

<u>Item</u>	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>With this approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
6. I often have to try to see the connections between ideas in one area and those in another.	4	15	7	2	0
7. I generally try to understand things, even when they seem difficult at the beginning.	10	15	2	1	0
8. I often ask myself questions about the things I hear in lessons or read in books.	9	8	6	4	0¹⁷⁴
9. I often try to relate what I learn to previous work.	8	14	1	5	0
10. When I am trying to understand new ideas, I often try to see how they might apply in real-life situations.	7	12	5	4	0

These twenty-eight responses are subject to a Chi Square Test for statistical significance (see table 14b below).

¹⁷⁴ 1 no response

Table 14b – Academies
Deep learning – teaching focus
Chi Square Test
(n=28)

Category	Observed	Expected	Residual= (Obs-Exp)	Component= (Obs-Exp) ² / Exp
Item 6a	4	5.33	-1.33	1.77
Item 6b	15	5.33	9.67	93.51
Item 6c	7	5.33	1.67	2.79
Item 6d	2	5.33	-3.33	11.09
Item 6e	0	5.33	-5.33	28.41

0.33 + 17.54 + 0.52 + 2.08 + 5.33 = 25.80; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
25.80 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 7a	10	5.33	4.67	21.81	4.09
Item 7b	15	5.33	9.67	93.51	17.54
Item 7c	2	5.33	-3.33	11.09	2.08
Item 7d	1	5.33	-4.33	18.75	3.52
Item 7e	0	5.33	-5.33	28.41	5.33

4.09 + 17.54 + 2.08 + 3.52 + 5.33 = 32.56; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
32.56 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 8a	9	5.40	3.60	12.96	2.40
Item 8b	8	5.40	2.60	6.76	1.25
Item 8c	6	5.40	0.60	0.36	0.07
Item 8d	4	5.40	-1.40	1.96	0.36
Item 8e	0	5.40	-5.40	29.16	5.40

2.40 + 1.25 + 0.07 + 0.36 + 5.40 = 9.48; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
9.48 < 9.49 **Result is not statistically significant**

Item 9a	8	5.33	2.67	7.13	1.34
Item 9b	14	5.33	8.67	75.17	14.10
Item 9c	1	5.33	-4.33	18.75	3.52
Item 9d	5	5.33	-0.33	0.11	0.02
Item 9e	0	5.33	-5.33	28.41	5.33

1.34 + 14.10 + 3.52 + 0.02 + 5.33 = 24.31 Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
24.31 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Item 10a	7	5.33	1.67	2.79	0.52
Item 10b	12	5.33	6.67	44.49	8.35
Item 10c	5	5.33	-0.33	0.11	0.02
Item 10d	4	5.33	-1.33	1.77	0.33
Item 10e	0	5.33	-5.33	28.41	5.33

0.52 + 8.35 + 0.02 + 0.33 + 5.33 = 14.55; Degrees of freedom {df} is 4 = 9.49 critical value
14.55 > 9.49 **Result is statistically significant**

Thus, it is fair to assert that in the estimation of the twenty-eight students surveyed in the five academies; this dialogic RE does promote a deep approach to learning.

Table 15b
Acacia Lane
Deep learning – pupil focus
(n=6)

<u>Item</u>	<u>Definitely</u> <u>Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Unsure</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Definitely</u> <u>Disagree</u>
<i>With this approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
6. I often have to try to see the connections between ideas in one area and those in another.	1	2	2	1	0
7. I generally try to understand things, even when they seem difficult at the beginning.	3	3	0	0	0
8. I often ask myself questions about the things I hear in lessons or read in books.	1	3	2	0	0
9. I often try to relate what I learn to previous work.	1	2	3	0	0
10. When I am trying to understand new ideas, I often try to see how they might apply in real-life situations.	4	2	0	0	0

A slightly less positive response overall with 22 entries in the ‘Agree’ and ‘Definitely Agree’ categories; 7 in the ‘Unsure’ category; and 1 in the ‘Disagree’ category.

Table 16a

Academies & (Faith)

[n=28; (n=23)]

Item	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>This approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
1. Generally gives me enough time to understand the things I have to learn.	7(1)	14(18)	3(4)	4(0)	0(0)
2. Is generally good at explaining things for me.	8(5)	14(12)	5(5)	1(1)	0(0)
3. Generally helps me to make links between different topics.	13(8)	19(12)	5(2)	1(0)	0(0)
4. Is generally good at showing how what I am learning is linked to everyday life.	8(8)	11(9)	5(5)	4(1)	0(0)
5. Is good at asking questions which make me think.	23(16)	5(7)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)

Table 16b

Academies & (Faith)

[n=28; (n=23)]

Item	Definitely Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
<i>With this approach to learning RE through dialogue:</i>					
6. I often have to try to see the connections between ideas in one area and those in another.	4(5)	15(14)	7(3)	2(1)	0(0)
7. I generally try to understand things, even when they seem difficult at the beginning.	10(14)	15(9)	2(0)	1(0)	0(0)
8. I often ask myself questions about the things I hear in lessons or read in books.	9(13)	8(9)	6(1)	4(0)	0(0)¹⁷⁵
9. I often try to relate what I learn to previous work.	8(10)	14(12)	1(1)	5(0)	0(0)
10. When I am trying to understand new ideas, I often try to see how they might apply in real-life situations.	7(10)	12(10)	5(3)	4(0)	0(0)

¹⁷⁵ 1 no response

APPENDIX 10

Students' Comments –re Dialogic RE

Figure 10a

County C of E Academy

(n=6)¹⁷⁶

Positive – mainly Pedagogical

“This way of learning is good because it allows you to be open.”

“I think it’s a good way of learning & it helped to discuss & learn other things about what others believe.”

“It’s a good way of learning; it helps people voice their opinion and consider others.”

Mixed – Pedagogical

“This way of learning is a good idea because you are discussing things you wouldn’t normally think of; but I think some people might struggle with it if they don’t understand the topic.”

“I think this type of learning is well suited to higher level thinkers but may be challenging for some.”

Negative – mainly Pedagogical

“I feel like I need more time to understand the topic.”

A new category of ‘Mixed – Pedagogical’ added.

¹⁷⁶ There was 1 no response

Figure 10b – Students’ Comments

Magdalene C of E Academy

(n=7)

Positive – mainly Pedagogical

“I like this way of learning (as) I find debates good because I learn about the people around me; although small groups of people are better because expressing opinions is easier.”

“I think this way of learning is great because I can express my opinions and I know I won’t be judged.”

“It gets us thinking, exploring new ideas that we may not think of ourselves.”

“It gets us to communicate with each other in ways we wouldn’t normally; and see how other people view these ideas.”

“This activity was good to get us to experience new ideas and become enlightened.”

Positive – Pedagogical & Social

“I think it is a fun and a great way to learn and teach because you get to know what other people think.”

“I like this way of learning because it can involve everyone’s opinion and it is fun and interesting.”

Figure 10c – Students’ Comments
Metropolitan Borough School

(n=6)

Positive – mainly Pedagogical

“An open-minded test to what you already know and understand so you’re sharing you’re (sic) knowledge in a discussion where it is easily memorized and remembered.”

“This way of learning is more insightful and interesting than other methods.”

“What I think about this way of learning is that it is much more effective than learning textbook + teacher; the dialogue between students is more effective because each of their views can be put across which can then further develop ideas.”

“I think that this way of learning increases knowledge about the topic as different ideas are put forward from different people which help you to understand and create your own judgement on the topic.”

“I think this way of learning allows for a much deeper discussion about the topic which therefore allows more to be talked and thought about; which in turn makes the topic clearer and allows for you to make your own firm judgement about it.”

Mixed – Pedagogical

“I like this learning as a way of questioning my and others’ beliefs to build stronger understandings; but it’s very limited depending on how strong your beliefs are.”

Figure 10d – Students’ Comments
Municipal Borough School
(n=4)

Positive – mainly Pedagogical

“I think that learning RE through dialogue is very useful because explaining your own views help you question them and understand them yourself; and it brings you into contact with lots of other points of view.”

“I think that this is a good way to learn RE because I believe debate and discussion is the best way to analyse both sides of an argument; and to become familiar with formerly unfamiliar concepts.”

“I think this approach to learning works well because it allows you to make your own conclusion based on evidence; and to talk to people who might have different views to yours in a sensible way.”

Positive – Pedagogical & Social

“The experience is really good for coming to understand other people’s views and what information/sources can affect their views; and I really enjoyed this experience and found it a good way to understand the new concepts specified.”

Figure 10e – Students’ Comments
Angel High
(n=6)

Positive – mainly Pedagogical

“I like this way of teaching as it allows me to see my own and others points of view.”

“I feel this is very useful as I can get ideas from others.”

“I like this lesson plan of dialogue because you get to know what other people think and actually think about what you believe.”

“I think it is useful as I learn what others think.”

Positive – Pedagogical & Social

“I liked this way of learning its good.”

Mixed Pedagogical

“I found it difficult to get the conversation going at first but once we did it was a very effective method.”

Figure 10f – Students’ Comments

Lion Rampant

(n=6)

Positive – mainly Pedagogical

“I think it’s a good way to see how people of similar beliefs think (and) I would like to express my views with people of different faiths.”

“I think this is a great way to learn about religion because we get to have a conversation about other beliefs, compare and discuss our thoughts and share ideas.”

“I think this way of learning allows me to see and think things differently; I also think it makes me ask more questions.”

Positive – Pedagogical & Social

“I really love and support this way (of) learning; it needs to be used more often.”

Mixed – Pedagogical

“I feel this way of learning is highly unique and a great way to express one’s views as well as hear others: the only problem I would have with this is that we don’t know how long conversations may take which may result in a shortage of time.”

“I think that this approach to RE allows for a more informal outlook to learning, although at times text provides better structure in contrast to extemporaneous speech.”

Figure 10g – Students’ Comments

Templar High

(n=6)

Positive – mainly Pedagogical

“I feel like this type of learning through dialogue is useful in small groups or pairs as it allows people to have thought out, equal discussion; whereas in larger groups I feel certain characters would maybe dominate the discussion.”

“I think through discussion it is easier to retain information as you are associating a theistic, atheist and agnostic point of view towards a person; and you are also engaging with the discussion instead of passive learning.”

“I believe that this approach to learning and discussing is useful (as) it enables you to develop your own ideas and listen to someone else’s that may be a contrast to your own; (and) it also allows you to go into depth about ideas through discussion.”

“Very effective as it introduced various ideas and theories into a topic.”

“This is a very effective way of learning; allows new ideas to branch in my head.”

Mixed – Pedagogical

“I think this approach to learning seems more practical and realistic (as) ideas can be applied to everyday life; however, it is hard to learn new ideas as the dialogue is only between 2 people (and) so only 2 views come across.”

Figure 10h – Students’ Comments

Acacia Lane

(n=6)

Positive – mainly Pedagogical

“I think it is a good approach to RE because you get to understand people and their thoughts.”

“I think it is a good approach to learning RE.”

“I think learning by reading a text and talking is easier (sic) and it sinks in so I can remember it.”

“I think this approach to RE if it was for one lesson a week because it gets you thinking and other 353eoples (sic) opinions.”

“I think that this approach to learning RE is something I would definitely consider doing again; it helps to talk to other people about your views & opinions as well as others.”

“In my opinion I think this way of learning helps because you hear what they believe in and how passionate they are to the topic; and it helps me understand it a bit more.”

APPENDIX 1-1

Exhibit 'FJ', excerpt B

Evidence from history. John Robinson was an Anglican bishop, and famous for his critical views about Christianity. Robinson decided to take a fresh look at how the New Testament books were dated. He concluded that every book of the New Testament was written before the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE. The Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and even John he placed as early as the 40's – a few short years after the death of Jesus. Why should he think this? About forty years before the city was destroyed, Jesus prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem (Luke 19:43) – and the historian Josephus records how terrible a destruction it was – nearly three million killed and tens of thousands captured. It seems unbelievable that the Gospel writers would not refer to such a disaster if they had written after it had taken place. It would be like a British historian in 1950 writing a history of Britain and not mentioning the Second World War; or a New Yorker writing a diary of 2001 and not recording the terrible events of September 11. **A reasonable conclusion is that the Gospels were written down before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE.**

APPENDIX 1-2

EXHIBIT 'MIC'

Evidence from science. At the end of 1994 Carsten Thiede, a papyrologist... in Germany, announced his findings concerning three papyrus scraps belonging to Magdalen College, Oxford. The scraps contain phrases from the twenty-sixth chapter of Matthew's Gospel. A few decades earlier the scraps had been dated as coming from the end of the second century and therefore were thought uninteresting and were forgotten; but Thiede, literally taking a fresh look by using a newly invented high-power microscope, concluded that the dating was faulty. He said the scraps were written no later than the year 60 CE... As The Times of London said, this finding **'provides the first material evidence that the Gospel according to St Matthew is an eyewitness account written by contemporaries of Christ'.**"



APPENDIX 1-3

EXHIBIT 'HEB'

Evidence from language. Jean Carmignac, a translator of the Dead Sea Scrolls and an expert in Hebrew language, also reached a conclusion similar to Robinson's; even though he came at the problem from a different angle. He translated the Gospels 'backwards,' from Greek into Hebrew, and was astonished at what he found... Carmignac discovered the Greek translator of Mark had slavishly kept to the Hebrew word order and grammar... (and this being) true, **then we have Gospels written by eyewitnesses at a very early date."**

Evidence from history and language. Claude Tresmontant, a member of the university at the Sorbonne, wrote The Hebrew Christ, in which he takes, like Robinson, something of an historical approach; but also, like Carmignac, something of a language approach. He combines the two and comes up with this answer: all four Gospels were written in Hebrew first, and then translated. Hebrew **Matthew was written shortly after the Resurrection**, followed within a few years by a Greek translation. Hebrew **John was written by 36 CE**, and then also quickly translated. **Luke came next, being written between 40 and 60 CE**, and Mark probably came last..."



APPENDIX A
EXEMPLAR of “HIGH QUALITY” GRADING

Conversation 1 – Lucy & Alice
Y13 Apostle High (agnostic & atheist)
Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Lucy: Okay so this is excerpt B.

Alice: Except B I don't know I feel like I...I agree...well I don't know if I agree actually, I sort of...what he's saying, like he's chatting about...he's got these points. He's taken it from this recent scholarship but that makes me feel like its truthful because it's from a scholarship like university sort of thing but at the same time how...he doesn't really give enough...he gives what they've found...we don't know how can you...obviously this man obviously he believes pretty wholeheartedly in the whole...he believes the story about Jesus and everything. You can hear that from his argument but I do kind of feel like if he had provided information like how they'd found these out, like what research this scholarship has done that would be good because I feel like we're just sort of taking the word, like how did –

Lucy: Yeah we don't actually know why...where this evidence came from.

Alice: Yeah! Specifically and how they got this evidence in the first place.

Lucy: Yeah!

Alice: I mean what historical findings?

Lucy: Its suggesting as well it's not exactly like for sure.

Alice: Yeah I feel like...

Lucy: I guess they can't really say that anyway.

Alice: That's true I mean it is so long ago. I mean...what did they...yeah because like recent language studies...that makes sense because they would...the gospel would have been written you know pretty...they wouldn't wait hundreds of years so like...they would look at the –

Lucy: I don't trust eyewitness accounts.

Alice: No I don't trust them either –

Lucy: Because anyone...you can see anything and you can make up things, and people think they've seen things as well.

Alice: Yeah of course!

Lucy: And they don't actually know. [132]

]Alice: And plus like obviously these...how old are these fragments going to be? Like thousands and thousands of years old. [19]

Lucy: I know and they can't really like –

Alice: And they'll be degraded and then they've got to translate it so –

Lucy: And it could be from like anything.

Alice: It genuinely could be.

Lucy: And the eyewitness...because a lot of people...these could be people that perhaps through...it could all just...like what if they were paid to say that, or they wanted to believe what they say?

Alice: Yeah exactly!

Lucy: Because I mean...yeah what can you take from that?

Alice: I think they're trying to be really convincing here, like –

[Both talking at once]

Lucy: Enemies yeah! [219] [Laughter]

Alice: Like to make it seem that like everybody admitted that he was a powerful miracle worker. [35]

Lucy: Yeah I don't know if I really...agree with what he's actually trying to say because he's sort of...what he's saying obviously he's not actually trying to...he's just giving facts do you know what I mean?

Alice: Yeah!

Lucy: But he's not really...we're not being provided with what...where his facts are from so you can't...it's all like own opinion I think from what he's saying.

Alice: I mean och...how do they know they were writing about Jesus and not just their parent – [298]

Lucy: Yeah I know because...exactly because...I mean Jesus...like there is bound to have been like...there has bound to have been loads of people called Jesus. [59]

Alice: Exactly!

Lucy: What if they're talking about a different person. I feel like to say...he was a real person, there are bound to be thousands of real Jesus' like of course.

Alice: To be honest I think that there probably was a man that was very –

Lucy: I agree!

Alice: Sort of known as Jesus. I don't think like...[354] I think he was a very nice man and I think he maybe helped a lot of people but I do not think that he performed like miracles, supernatural stuff. [89]

Lucy: Yeah I don't believe that there is a Son of God per se [366]. I do think that for all...I don't believe that someone sat down and wrote the New Testament as a figment of their imagination; do you know what I mean? [119]

Alice: Yeah!

Lucy: Because the Old Testament I don't really know much about that but obviously that was written as the word of God so...whether...like where the inspiration for that came from, like whether it was like divine intervention, or whatever that came and they were like...wow I have seen this and I'm going to talk about it now. And um...and um...like...yeah I don't know I kind of feel like the Old Testament is what led to religion being taught. Like people practiced it from the teachings of the Old Testament and then I feel like Jesus was probably just a priest, a man who was religious. Whether or not...and then perhaps...whether he said he was the Son of God, or whether it was people who were like this man he must be...he's something special, whether it was the public that decided he was the Son of God, or like because there is really no way of telling do you know what I mean? [280]

Alice: There's no like physical evidence other than like word of mouth or something...like it could so easily be someone's imagination.

Lucy: That's true it could just be a story.

Alice: Or a dream, or a group of people that have maybe saw something that they thought was something else and because it's a group everyone thinks that oh it's definitely happened because more than one person has said it.

Lucy: Yeah exactly because obviously not really that much happened in their lives at that point in time, like they didn't necessarily have that much going on.

Alice: Yeah!

Lucy: And um...so yeah maybe like if someone came along and they did something this is the most exciting amazing thing they've ever seen. Like...even if like you know the story of him feeding all the people with the fish and the bread and everything like I highly doubt that he made this into...it's impossible!

Alice: Or like when the wall...what did they...the water or something?

Lucy: When they separated the water. Yeah.

Alice: The split, the sea, yeah.

Lucy: Um...I don't think that's possible. [542]

Alice: Yeah and why did these miracles only happen then why can no one do this now?

Lucy: Exactly! Yeah definitely!

Alice: I just feel like it's never...there has never been any record throughout history of anyone doing anything like that bar in this time. [319]

Lucy: In the past yeah like where is he now? What miracles is he performing now?

Alice: Yeah like even in more modern history like even if you go back to the Tudor years, there is literally no one or...whatever...that's ages ago and there is no record of anyone performing any miracles then so and even when there were like it was found to be cons or whatever. [612]

Lucy: I don't like people like...I don't like people using the excuse of like...like you know when you read stuff about Jesus and it's like oh you're supposed to take this as a metaphor and stuff and like you know the creation story for instance, it's like some people say oh it's supposed to be a metaphor. And then some people say like...take it literally like what are you supposed to take as metaphors throughout the whole Bible? Like since...you can't really pick and choose like if you don't agree with someone, something, and someone would say like oh I disagree with that and they say well it's a metaphor. You're supposed to take it – [433]

Alice: Yeah that's the thing who decided that it was a metaphor?

Lucy: And who makes it okay for some of it to be a metaphor and some of it to be completely true?

Alice: Yeah what...who is it to say yeah [651] like obviously because everyone has different opinions. I think it just depends who's in charge. Like if the person who was perhaps leading like the teachings or the ceremonies was a homophobic person they would maybe say like they take this bit literally. Like you never...even though it doesn't...I don't really know the Bible that well but I'm pretty sure it doesn't anywhere say a man can't lie with another man or whatever it is. I know its heavily implied that a man should be with a woman but I feel if someone homophobic was to be like this is...take this literally...but then they were like but other parts we can...they choose so I think it's all very...it's quite opinion...isn't it? It's all based on personal...what they think.

Lucy: I definitely don't believe most of the Bible to be honest. Like there are parts of it where I think oh that's a lovely story and that's a good lesson and good morals. [594]

Alice: Morals isn't it? Like a fable.

Lucy: Uh huh especially for young children and stuff um...who are like learning about like different things in life and maybe take the Bible as a little story to sort of help them put into different situations like maybe at school or learning definitely!

Alice: But how can you take that –

Lucy: But for a real story I really don't think it can be true.

Alice: No! Especially all the stuff in the Old Testament, like the creation story, and Adam and Eve, and all that I just think there is...zero stock in that. I believe it not at all! There is literally nothing there that I would take from that as truth.

Lucy: Definitely! [768]

Alice: I think that's what puzzles me because how can like what your man is saying here...like about how there is all these historical findings and how it's been proven or whatever, but how does a person like...even if they did prove the existence of this Jesus...he was just a preacher, or whatever, how do they then even prove the Old Testament? Like who – [658]

Lucy: They can't!

Alice: They can't! There is no way of saying.

Lucy: Its physically impossible therefore until they can physically show it I won't believe it I don't think.

Alice: Yeah how can you...I mean...how did it come to be, did someone...I mean... [808] I mean obviously you can look at it in the religious way, like someone was spoken to by God but...and then...they were like well I have to write this but then at the same time like what if someone just had a dream? [701]

Lucy: Exactly! Because...it could so easily be mistaken sometimes, or even people like...with like mental health, like hallucinations –

Alice: That's true!

Lucy: And stuff, schizophrenia and things like that. Maybe the person who thought of Jesus was schizophrenic!

Alice: Yeah exactly because there is no way of genuinely proving that the Old Testament, or the gospel is even true.

Lucy: They maybe thought they were seeing things and like thought there was a God.

Alice: Yeah did someone create this idea or is it genuine like we don't know, that's the thing. But like I said schizophrenia...you've got to put it down to like where it sort of originates from, so if it's a very...like out in Islam and everything um...its...it's like a hot country isn't it so people could...people could have been sort of...heatstroke do you know?

Lucy: Yeah!

Alice: It could have been as simple as that.

Lucy: It could have been something like that.

Alice: And people didn't know what dreams were, like its only recently –

Lucy: The reason for history.

Alice: Yeah exactly! And the scale of things, like relative, we've only just started to look into things like that and be like oh yes this is a dream and it's not real. [1004] It's like the concept of your brain working as you sleep. So people wouldn't have known that, they might have thought they've had this dream and its real, someone has said like this is a real thing so that's where it's kind of come from. So, I don't know to answer the question I think we've gone quite a long way to answer it but like no I don't really agree with what he's saying. Um...because I think...what he's saying he obviously believes to be true and these scholars have...they think they've proven it but I feel overall you can't really prove this do you know what I mean? [810]

Lucy: Yeah I'm exactly the same.

Alice: What's it saying next? No I don't think it is good evidence about Jesus because like we've said there could be 30 different Jesus that they're all writing about here.

Lucy: Definitely! Uh huh.

Alice: Someone from a family member or classmate.

Lucy: It's not reliable enough.

Alice: It's not I think the fact that it is just so...it's such an ancient thing like the timescale, and just...the whole thing is...and even how they've said where is it? Its saying that...historical findings suggest that the New Testament was written shortly after the events took place. But they didn't really in those times have a concept of time. They only really developed like it was more the Romans who properly developed like...the numbers and measuring times and stuff, and even that, that didn't happen until you know...that was sort of...when was that? It was meant to be –

Lucy: I think they're trying to say like shortly after so that like it seems that it wasn't like a long time so people forgot.

Alice: That's true! But I mean when is shortly after? A month, a year, 10 years, when is that?

Lucy: I know! Nobody can pinpoint it exactly!

Alice: No one can pinpoint it and they didn't really have a good system of measuring time I don't think. So, I feel like it's quite unreliable you can't really look at that and be like yes this...okay they've said its relatively close, that must be true. [1243]

Lucy: I do think there was a man called Jesus who was a great teacher. [824]

Alice: Yeah I agree! I feel like there is no way they just...invented some man.

Lucy: And he probably was religious but he wasn't...it wasn't this...Jesus. Not this one.

Alice: Yeah I agree. I agree with you. I do feel like...because obviously this also New Testament stuff [1287]. I think where my issues lies is with the Old Testament and with the Gospel because that just genuinely appeared out of nowhere. Like are we meant to take it literally, like there is a God and he did just be like...this is what happens or was it someone's imagination because this has never happened since, no one has ever been...no one has ever really come forward like we don't get it nowadays. Like you wake up and be like God came to me and like this is what I have to do now [918].

Lucy: I know like I could wake up one morning and be like I've seen God, I have seen the one! And yeah...I have seen the exact one person and this is it and you could believe me or you could not because its...

Alice: That's the thing like –

Lucy: Unreliable.

Alice: Yeah I don't know I just think the fact that no one...it's just not a common occurrence now, it does lead you to believe that it was just...people's imagination or people perhaps...like said schizophrenia its very –

Lucy: So in conclusion yeah I don't know I just...in conclusion yeah I would say we definitely both don't agree.

Alice: Well we kind of agree don't we, I'd say we agree with each other –

Lucy: We don't agree on this but agree to not agree!

Alice: Yeah! Mutualistic yeah! Um...I don't really necessarily agree with what he's saying. I do think it's –

Lucy: I don't think it was reliable evidence.

Alice: Not really! I feel like you couldn't really take that and be like I've won my case now because of what I've just said.

Lucy: Yeah!

Alice: Good! Grand! Finished!

END

Analysis

Research Question 1

To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?

There are 2536 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 86.9% of this conversation.**

Research Question 2

To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

The *first strategy* is to discount extraneous conversation such as declaratory statements which have been highlighted **thus**. The *second strategy* is to discount conversation that is termed “disputational talk” which Mercer (1995:104) describes as being ‘...characterised by disagreement and individual decision making... [and] short exchanges consisting of assertions and challenges or counter assertions.’ The *third strategy* is to identify conversation that can be construed as “cumulative talk” which takes place when students ‘build positively but uncritically on what the other has said.’ This type of talk is ‘...characterized by repetitions, confirmations and elaborations’ (Mercer 1995: 104). This type of talk is highlighted **thus**. **Cumulative talk comprises 1287 words i.e. 50.7% of the above conversation.** The *fourth strategy* is to identify conversation that can be construed as Mercer (1995: 104) contends that with “exploratory talk” in which the students ‘...engage critically but constructively with each other’s ideas.’ This is typified by ‘statements and suggestions [being] offered for joint consideration [and] these may be challenged and counter-challenged, but challenges are justified and alternative hypotheses are offered’ (Mercer 1995: 104). This type of talk is highlighted **thus**. **Exploratory talk comprises 918 words i.e. 36.2% of the above conversation.**

APPENDIX C
EXEMPLAR of “LOW QUALITY” GRADING

Conversation 3 – Leya & Coraline
Both non-practising Catholics
Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

LEYA: Do you think Jesus is real?

Coraline: Um...I do and I don't. I believe that...I believe that he does exist because there is so much evidence to suggest that he done all of these things. However, I don't believe it because there's not...there's not actual proof that he did exist.

LEYA: Oh there is evidence.

Coraline: What evidence?

LEYA: There is evidence. There's visual accounts, people from –

Coraline: Visual accounts?

LEYA: Like people –

Coraline: From whom?

LEYA: People that were alive when Jesus was alive, they have stated that Jesus was a real person. He didn't obviously die and come back to life –

Coraline: Have you met this person?

LEYA: No because they've been dead for hundreds of years.

Coraline: Have they told you this themselves?

LEYA: No but there has been testaments.

Coraline: So how do you know?

LEYA: Because there's evidence. Okay Coraline have you worked in NASA, do you believe that the moon is real?

Coraline: Um...well I can see it visually.

LEYA: Okay! Okay!

Coraline: Can you see Jesus visually?

LEYA: I've seen pictures. [29] Have you ever been on the moon?

Coraline: No!

LEYA: So how do you know the moon is actually real?

Coraline: **But where have you seen this visual evidence of Jesus?**

LEYA: **Pictures, the Bible, there are testaments of people.** [47]

Coraline: But they're not actual photos; they are actually drawn and printed into the Bible-

LEYA: So how do you know the moon isn't real? How do you know there is a moon? A photo shot.

Coraline: **Because I can physically see it through my own eyes.**

LEYA: **Yes; and I can physically see the Bible.** [18]

Coraline: But what you're looking at is printed pictures from thousands of years ago.

LEYA: It's not just pictures its stories.

Coraline: Well stories but the Bible was written by –

LEYA: I'm not saying that there is an actual man who died and came back to life and then went up to heaven, and turned water into wine, or had one piece of bread that fed a hundred people.

Coraline: So what are you saying?

LEYA: **I'm saying that there was an actual man, a real live man who believes so strongly about the word of God that he was a teacher, he told people and spread...it's like any religion.** [81]

Coraline: Yeah but there's no actual evidence to prove –

LEYA: There doesn't have to be –

Coraline: Forget about the evidence.

LEYA: Of course there does!

Coraline: No! There's not got to be evidence or anything.

LEYA: **In my opinion to believe something you have to have witnessed it yourself.**

Coraline: **I agree with that.**

LEYA: **You agree with that yeah?**

Coraline: I do agree with that [45] but I also think...I'm not religious, I'm not Catholic
–

LEYA: I am Catholic as well.

Coraline: Well this is really weird.

LEYA: I know.

Coraline: Um...I am saying that Jesus was a real man –

LEYA: How do you know that? How do you know that Jesus was a real man?

Coraline: Because there's been...look there's recent scientific studies of the gospel, fragments...no that's the wrong one! Recent language studies also indicate that the gospels were written close to the time that they actually happened.

LEYA: But how do we know that? [123]

Coraline: What...

LEYA: How do we know that the gospel was written, because no one is there...survived who was back then, no one is there now!

Coraline: The people that wrote it.

LEYA: The people that wrote it but how do we know it from that time?

Coraline: Fine! Take history for example, how do we know if any of history is real?

LEYA: We don't!

Coraline: That's what I'm trying to say!

LEYA: But we just...we learn it anyway because it's a subject and it's what you've been told.

Coraline: Yeah so why are we not –

LEYA: Do we believe everything that happens in history? No! But we have to learn it because it's a subject that we have taken.

Coraline: No forget subjects...forget subjects, forget about...forget that history is a subject we believe history because its written in the books. Yes or no?

LEYA: Um...not necessarily, you believe history because you actually get told...you can get told it by your grandparents, by great grandparents, and they've actually witnessed that.

Coraline: The Battle of Stirling Bridge, let's take the Battle of Stirling Bridge, okay William Wallace, there has been stories told that he was...you know this hero, this magnificent man who wanted independence for Scotland, whereas other records show that he was a thief, he was a Scotsman who just wanted independence. Which one are we going to believe? Neither or both? [209]

LEYA: It's up to you what you believe.

Coraline: Okay so you're totally contradicting yourself.

LEYA: I'm not because you don't...the William Wallace thing nobody actually knows if that happened. I'm not saying that I believe that that happened. I'm not saying that. I'm not saying that because there is no actual evidence to prove that that actually happened.

Coraline: So you're saying that the Battle of Stirling Bridge never happened?

LEYA: Nobody knows.

Coraline: The Battle of Stirling Bridge definitely happened.

LEYA: Well there you are then, how do we know that Jesus actually is real? Because you're saying...you're contradicting yourself.

Coraline: How am I contradicting myself?

LEYA: Because you're saying there is books and things to suggest...how do you know that Jesus was real?

Coraline: Because there is evidence, there are people who have written stories –

LEYA: Have you seen it yourself?

Coraline: Stories passed down from generation to generation.

LEYA: Have you seen it yourself?

Coraline: Did you see the Battle of Stirling Bridge yourself?

LEYA: I did not see it myself. Do I 100% believe it happened; no, I couldn't possibly believe –

Coraline: You don't believe that the Battle of Stirling Bridge happened?

LEYA: No I'm not saying that! I don't believe 100% it happened because I didn't...see it myself.

Coraline: This could go on for hours I'm telling you!

LEYA: I didn't see it myself so the way I am I don't believe something unless I actually see or hear it myself. Do I believe the moon is real yes I do because I can see it every single night.

Coraline: Have you ever walked on the moon?

LEYA: I haven't but I can visually see it.

Coraline: How do you know that's not a picture in the sky? [275]

LEYA: Do I believe that Jesus and the disciples were real? No I don't 100%. Do I believe...sometimes yes I do because I'm Catholic, do I believe in Jesus yes I do. No I don't. I believe when you die you don't just die and that's it. I believe...I believe, I don't. I believe when you die you don't just die.

Coraline: I know I believe in that but you believe...do you believe in heaven and hell?

LEYA: I do not believe heaven and hell –

Coraline: Okay we agree on that then! [59]

LEYA: I don't believe that there is just heaven or hell. I don't believe it because you could be a nice person but then Jesus actually says if you want to go this way, Jesus says give a second chance and everyone should have forgiveness so how can Jesus decide whether they go to heaven or hell?

Coraline: But it's not Jesus doesn't decide; God does?

LEYA: Well God –

Coraline: And Satan.

LEYA: God then. God.

Coraline: God!

LEYA: God! How can God decide if you go to heaven or hell because if you've been good and bad because you've got good and evil, what happens if you've been both?

Coraline: Have you heard of um...the levels of hell, what's his name –

LEYA: I don't believe that there is just heaven and hell –

Coraline: No, but there isn't just heaven and hell you've got...I can't remember his name but what is it 9...there are a certain number of levels in hell depending on your life. There is not just hell oh what's his name? What's his name? [332]

LEYA: I don't know!

Coraline: But have you ever heard of...I could research it. There is certain levels of hell.

LEYA: No all I'm saying is you've got...yeah that might be true, that's okay, that's fine! I just...I'm saying –

Coraline: Dante's Inferno! That's it have you heard of Dante's Inferno? [376]

LEYA: I have not heard of Dante's Inferno.

Coraline: Right; Dante's Inferno there are certain levels of hell –

LEYA: No matter what you say by the way you are never going to influence me that they're actually real.

Coraline: I'm not trying to influence you; this isn't about influence.

LEYA: No its not!

Coraline: I'm not trying to influence you there are certain levels of hell –

LEYA: There may be certain levels.

Coraline: This is what's been told, the Battle of Stirling Bridge –

LEYA: So there maybe such and such, you may die and that's it, but I personally do not believe that. I personally don't believe and God and Jesus decides on everything.

Coraline: Okay forget about God and Jesus just forget about them, you've got...let's talk about the afterlife because this is quite an interesting subject. Just take it from where... that's what he said. You've got the 9 levels of hell, Dante's Inferno – [412]

LEYA: You may have!

Coraline: No; listen to me you've got lust, limbo, gluttony, wrath, heresy, violence, fraud, treachery and avarice whatever that is.

LEYA: Yeah okay!

Coraline: Depending say you cheated on someone, you cheated on your husband you'd go to the second level of hell, which is lust. [102]

LEYA: How do we know this?

Coraline: This is....I'm not saying it's a fact but how does anyone know, have you died?

LEYA: They don't! They don't!

Coraline: Have you died?

LEYA: That's what I'm trying to tell you how can you 100% believe that the Battle of Stirling Bridge for example happened?

Coraline: Because that happened.

LEYA: How do you know?

Coraline: Because there is evidence, there are books, there are testimonies.

LEYA: Is there?

Coraline: Yes!

LEYA: Right yes, yes but I'm never going to 100% percent believe something happened unless I visually see it, or there –

Coraline: So from 1999 backwards you don't believe anything?

LEYA: I do because my grandparents lived at that time –

Coraline: What year was your grandparents –

LEYA: And great grandparents as well.

Coraline: Okay what stories did you great grandparents tell you?

LEYA: Well I never met my great grandparents but I'm just saying in general that's –

Coraline: What year was your gran born?

LEYA: 1945.

Coraline: So everything from 1945 backwards you don't 100% believe because –

LEYA: Oh yes I do! And I'll tell you why I do because there's...not printed drawn pictures, there's actual photographs of those...that time actually happening. There is no actual photographic evidence that Jesus done this, this, this, and this. There is no photographic evidence from that actual time of the last supper, of the disciples, it's just printed...printed pictures on a piece of paper, in a book called the Bible.

Coraline: So you don't believe any single written source...written sources you don't 100% believe them?

LEYA: No! Not 100% no, course you couldn't. I don't know how anyone could.

Coraline: Okay so say there was a zombie apocalypse. [595]

LEYA: Oh my god yeah! Oh my goodness I mean sorry!

Coraline: Cameras don't exist anymore, they're broken, we're like 20 years into the zombie apocalypse okay, everything is written down. The zombie apocalypse finishes, everything is sorted out and you've got the survivors and you don't believe anything that happened in the zombie apocalypse because there was no pictures, just stories – [645]

LEYA: No I don't; because I'll tell you why, it's called Wikipedia! Anyone can edit it, anyone can rewrite –

Coraline: If your sources are coming from Wikipedia then that's...I agree that anyone can edit Wikipedia.

LEYA: Anyone can rewrite history. [140]

Coraline: Wikipedia is the worst source anyone –

LEYA: That's why you don't go onto Wikipedia, don't go onto Wikipedia. I don't believe anything on Wikipedia.

Coraline: No, neither do I; but I'm just saying in general do I believe a zombie apocalypse happened 100%? No I don't! And because there is no visual evidence, it doesn't matter how many researches you do, how many quotes you see I could go and write a quote and it maybe 100% wrong but then if you put that on a website next to people who believe 100% things are right then people are going to start believing it. There is no visual evidence to say – [732]

LEYA: There doesn't have to be visual evidence.

Coraline: You can't use the moon because you can visually see the moon, do I believe –

LEYA: Okay did you believe that man walked on the moon?

Coraline: Yes I do; because there is visual evidence.

LEYA: People say that's fake though, that was shot in a studio.

Coraline: But there's visual evidence.

LEYA: But that visual evidence maybe wrong.

Coraline: I don't know like because like...the footage there was actual footage, there was voice recordings, it was on front page newspapers, um...on most newspapers I believe and there was actual visual evidence. No quotes, no...there was no...you know printed on pieces of paper, there was none of that it was visual pictures of that happening.

LEYA: But how do you know they weren't fake?

Coraline: Because there are visual pictures of it happening!

LEYA: Yeah okay the pictures could have been taken in a studio.

Coraline: Well I mean at that time I don't think modern technology would be that advanced. [868]

LEYA: Yeah! Yeah! How do you think they got to the moon?

Coraline: I'm meaning...no but I'm meaning if you could studio and make it look really realistic. When did the man walk on the moon?

LEYA: I don't know!

Coraline: Right well ages ago right –

LEYA: What year was it, what year was it then Coraline?

Coraline: I don't know myself I'm saying ages ago, if you look at films from ages ago how realistic are they? They're not! So if people...how many people do you think believe that Neil Armstrong was the first man to walk on the moon?

LEYA: Not a lot!

Coraline: A lot! A lot of people.

LEYA: There is a percentage of people who don't believe.

Coraline: There would probably be more people who believed Neil Armstrong walked on the moon than people that don't.

LEYA: There is theories and evidence that the flag, it was a picture of Neil Armstrong on the moon with the American flag in the background yeah? The American flag was down, it wasn't moving so people are saying if a flag was on the moon gravity...the flag would float!

Coraline: Well do you know what I would tell them to go and try and fly a flag on the moon themselves!

LEYA: But its evidence, its evidence, there is no gravity on the moon. [929]

Coraline: All I'm saying though is if you're saying that that happened on...in a studio, they could say it happened...they made that in a studio right? That happened years ago yeah? If you look at the modern...if you look at the technology back then do you honestly think that there would be this mass of people who believed that that happened, if it didn't look realistic, if you look at

films from that time they were not realistic. You didn't have smart boards, and all this technology.

LEYA: Yeah okay but what...I don't understand what you're trying to say.

Coraline: No one...what I'm saying is you're saying people believe it was fake because it could have been done in a studio. Loads of people wouldn't have believed it then if it looked like it was from a studio.

LEYA: Yeah but it was done really good that's what –

Coraline: Oh my goodness! There is no way...at that time technology wasn't that advanced!

LEYA: They made it to the moon!

Coraline: They made it to the moon yes but –

LEYA: The technology must have been advanced enough to make it to the moon, to fly through an atmosphere out into space –

Coraline: Yes; that's not what I'm saying.

LEYA: Land on the moon –

Coraline: That is not what I'm saying!

LEYA: The technology must have been advanced enough, surely they would have had video cameras –

Coraline: Yes; to get to the moon that's right yes but what...let's look at this then, if there was people going to the moon, if there were people going to the moon why weren't films that great then?

LEYA: But they were! They're not exactly as good as my iPhone camera –

Coraline: 18 something...hundreds of years ago films are as good as nowadays?

LEYA: We did not land on the moon hundreds of years ago!

Coraline: We didn't; but I'm over exaggerating.

LEYA: 1969 was the year Neil Armstrong landed on the moon!

Coraline: 19 what?

LEYA: '69!

Coraline: So why didn't you say that when I first asked you?

LEYA: Because I just remember –

Coraline: See now I'm not going to believe you because when I first asked you, you didn't know!

LEYA: No I've just remembered the man landed on the moon the year my dad was born because my dad wanted to be an astronaut.

Coraline: My dad was born in 1969 as well. I'm not going to believe you now because when I first asked you, you didn't know.

LEYA: Because I've just remembered.

Coraline: Right well that's not good enough for me. I think we've finished because –

LEYA: No we've not!

END

Analysis

Research Question 1

To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?

There are 2765 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 38.7% of this conversation.**

Research Question 2

To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

Cumulative talk comprises 140 words i.e. 5.1% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 929 words i.e. 33.6% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX L

EXEMPLAR of "MID QUALITY" GRADING

Y13 Lucy & Keira & Alexander (all agnostic)

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

ALEXANDER: Alright ladies and gentlemen.

F: Okay!

ALEXANDER: I don't believe in God but I believe in Jesus.

F: I believe there is a figure like Jesus, like back when the Bible was written; but I think God is more metaphorical than he is anything else. Like he's taken as a teaching rather than a real figure.

F: I think the whole thing is a metaphor really; like everything to do with the Bible I think is like metaphorical. I don't think any of its real. [28]

ALEXANDER: He made the blind man see which to me makes me think that he made the blind man see God. [68]

F: Yeah!

F: Yeah! Yeah!

F: Yeah! It's actually a clever point.

F: And like the parable like the one about Lazarus and the rich man. I think that's like...can be taken and interpreted into like modern day because there are loads of selfish people out there and like I believe in karma so I believe if someone is like cruel to someone then –

F: They receive it back.

F: Yeah they receive it back, it doesn't matter like when or how or where but they will receive it back at one point. [64]

F: I think the whole thing about like Jesus and his followers and stuff is a lot similar to like say like figures like Hitler and stuff like that because like they held like – [154]

ALEXANDER: They were good public speakers.

F: Yeah they were like...there was something in the way that they spoke and how they said things that they like made or influenced the way people thought and like I don't know he was –

ALEXANDER: Yeah but they could play...well not play mind games in a bad way as such but Jesus he would make people –

F: Believe in God, that there is –

ALEXANDER: Believe in God, that there is a God.

F: Yeah! [141]

F: Can't that be classed as being manipulative though?

ALEXANDER: Yeah but –

F: In a way.

ALEXANDER: In a way but I don't think he was meaning any harm. [180]

F: Yeah.

F: I suppose.

ALEXANDER: I think he was a very good public speaker and I think that he managed to win –

F: He had a lot of influence. [168]

ALEXANDER: And posed a threat to people higher up at the time. [191]

F: Yeah because they obviously weren't listening to the higher up people.

ALEXANDER: Well they said it in the Bible; Herod wasn't even worried about the fact that Jesus was trying to make people change religion or believe in a god. He was more worried about him becoming the King of Palestine.

F: Uh huh.

ALEXANDER: So maybe he just posed a threat to the Romans but then they ended up worshipping him in the end.

F: Uh huh. They were like threatened about their leadership, like because he was such an influence on like the Jews at the time they might have thought that he was going to come and like overthrow them; which is why they had so much hatred towards him and wanted to get rid of him. [294]

ALEXANDER: And I don't believe he rose. [197]

F: No! But you can kind of see like...see in modern day society like when they feel threatened like they just try and get rid of the problem. Like it's still a common like factor in society that it does still happen like –

ALEXANDER: Well in sort of like recent history like JFK got assassinated because he wanted to make a difference –

F: Martin Luther King!

ALEXANDER: Martin Luther King!

F: Even like when we learning psychology like the black protests and that they were trying to like...get rid of blacks and treated them like they were nothing, they were just trying to –

F: Yeah like they were a different species.

F: Yeah!

ALEXANDER: Well Donald Trump for example has slated everything Obama has ever done because he's tried to make a change.

F: Yeah.

F: Uh huh.

F: Yeah.

ALEXANDER: Which is ridiculous but that's what's happened for the past 2000 years. [438]

F: But in that clip that we watched yesterday in psychology there was a woman that she was like...she was a school teacher and she was like one of my like pupils that was black fell over and she didn't expect her to have pink underneath her skin! Like she thought it was going to be black, she was expecting her to be like...not human because of the colour of her skin.

F: And you would have thought since she was a teacher she wouldn't have such a narrow mind but it just goes to show just because of someone's status like –

ALEXANDER: Well police officers have been shooting black people because they're black.

F: Just because they're black.

F: But then you could also say everyone is branding police officers as all the same, that they're racist. That's the same with whites as well like the whole thing with...between like white people and black people. Like everyone that is white is seen as a racist or everyone that's black –

F: Is seen as like a criminal.

F: Is seen as a criminal or someone that does wrong, or someone that's a cheat, a liar, its...like...everyone is just so like...

F: Narrow minded.

F: And they just put people into categories even though they don't know the person.

ALEXANDER: But I think that um...the people...especially in the black community the word...I'm not going to say it the 'N' word.

F: Yeah!

ALEXANDER: Is thrown about as a casual greeting –

F: Yeah but if a white person was to throw it at them –

ALEXANDER: If a white person was to use that they would get into trouble but that word has been fought for, for the past god knows how long. Like so many people have died over that word and they just use it –

F: Like they relate it to slavery and stuff in their like communities' type of thing; it's like a –

ALEXANDER: Well it comes from the word negro.

F: Yeah.

ALEXANDER: Which means black in a different language but it's just...the fact that they use that word to greet their friends is...I think that's ridiculous.

F: Because it's just influencing white people especially young –

ALEXANDER: I trigger for violence.

F: Younger people to just use it as something –

ALEXANDER: And it's also used in the media in rap music and that so it almost becomes normal.

F: Its almost like its provoked like...if they're rapping about it or like –

F: And they know that they're doing it though.

F: People are going to assume that it's okay. Like even white people are starting to do it.

F: Yeah!

F: Like it's just becoming normal and it shouldn't because it's not a word that you should associate with being friends with someone like it was...

F: Its degrading, it's a degrading word.

ALEXANDER: Yeah.

F: Like there are some black people that don't use it at all and they find it really offensive but then there are other people that are...they find it offensive if white people call them it but they're okay to use it between their like friends or their groups of people that they are close with.

ALEXANDER: Its constantly used in mainstream rap music and that...like children –

F: Are being influenced.

ALEXANDER: Are being influenced by that. I seen a video on Face Book the other day of a kid and his mum found his Spotify playlist –

F: I saw that!

ALEXANDER: And it was just a load of rap music, like demonic rap music.

F: Like explicit stuff.

ALEXANDER: And he was like 10 and he was listening to it!

F: And I've seen a video...I've seen a video on Face Book of a little boy with his mother and his mum is like encouraging him to be racist.

ALEXANDER: Yeah!

F: Oh I've seen that and they're in the car and she's what are they? And then he starts shouting it.

F: Like it's scary how much influence parents have on their children when they have such a negative like viewpoint and things.

ALEXANDER: But then you look at the black church and the sort of the gospel preaching and you see them and they would never use that word.

F: Yeah!

F: In comparison to like Catholic churches in the UK like white...not white but you know what I mean like –

F: Mostly white communities.

F: Yeah! They're so...they're not like excited over it, they're not like enthusiastic over it, they're more like they just want to put the point across. Whereas like the gospel churches in America and that they're more...they want to interact.

ALEXANDER: Involved.

F: They want to make people –

F: I also saw this other video about this man that was like...it must have been like recent but there was these like kids that were lining up to like go see this Santa in a shopping centre or whatever –

ALEXANDER: Yeah I saw that and he tells –

F: And he was a pastor and he was going passed them and he was shouting saying you're lying to your children, you're making them believe in this when it's not true. You should be preaching the word of Jesus and all this sort of stuff and honestly like – [286]

ALEXANDER: Saying it's too commercial.

F: I don't think it's fair that you have to take away –

ALEXANDER: But at the end of the day Jesus and God's mission is to make people happy, and Santa and Christmas that makes children happy whether its commercial or not.

F: Yeah!

ALEXANDER: It's a time of the year where family comes together.

F: Like that other wee boy that passed away like –

F: Maybe Santa is like a metaphor because –

F: St Nick!

F: God like...isn't Jesus meant to be a gift from God like because he's the god and Santa provides gifts so maybe that's seen as like a metaphor.

ALEXANDER: Obviously it originated from religion. [553]

F: Yeah!

ALEXANDER: St Nicholas! I can't remember who he was the patron saint of.

F: He left presents on doorsteps or something for like deprived people.

ALEXANDER: Yeah he went around to the people who were poor to sort of lighten up that time of year because obviously its freezing outside, they had no heating and food, so he went around and helped people.

F: Yeah!

ALEXANDER: Which I mean...giving people happiness and gifting and whatever else that's the correct thing to do.

F: Yeah!

F: Uh huh. Yeah.

ALEXANDER: But then you get radical Christian groups like the KKK whose religion is an excuse –

F: And skin colour. [654]

ALEXANDER: And hate all the black people, but they use God, they say God doesn't like...you are the evil in the world and all that sort of thing.

F: Yeah but God is apparently meant to be the one that accepts everyone like...because he's omnibenevolent, he's all loving.

ALEXANDER: But then also God has to forgive the people who have done that but at the end of the day they have to ask for that forgiveness but they think they're doing it right but then you could also look at, well if that's how they've taken the bible then that's how they've taken the Bible. That's how it looks to them.

F: Yeah that's their own like...their own right.

ALEXANDER: They've just taken it a different way to mainstream religion. [779]

F: There's a tutor group in here in a bit.

ALEXANDER: Thanks for listening.

END

Analysis

Research Question 1

To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?

There are 1832 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 58.1% of this conversation.**

Research Question 2

To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

Cumulative talk comprises 779 words i.e. 42.5% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 286 words i.e. 15.6% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX 2-1



College of Social
Sciences

Application Approved

Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Research Involving Human Subjects

Staff Research Ethics Application

Postgraduate Student Research Ethics Application

Application Details

Application Number: 400150169

Applicant's Name: Antony Luby

Project Title: Dominican Thomist Pedagogy for a Post-Secular Society: Developing Dialogic Skills for Students in UK Secondary Schools

Application Status: **Approved**

Start Date of Approval: 01/07/2016

End Date of Approval of Research Project: 29/03/2017

Please retain this notification for future reference. If you have any enquiries please email socsci-ethics@glasgow.ac.uk.

There were some suggestions which merit consideration. Major concerns have however been addressed.

APPENDIX 2-2



College of Social
Sciences

Staff and Postgraduate Research Application Form

College Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Research Involving Human Subjects

Before completing this form, you should refer to the guidance notes available at:

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/colleges/socialsciences/students/ethics/forms/#d.en.191149>

This application form should be typed and submitted electronically via the Research Ethics System:

<https://frontdoor.spa.gla.ac.uk/login/>

Applications should be submitted **at least 6 weeks in advance** of the intended start date for data collection to allow time for review and completion of any amendments that may be required.

Please note that applications that require PVG Clearance or permissions to access participants will not be considered until the applicant can provide evidence of this.

1 Applicant Details

Staff Research Project	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postgraduate Research Project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Project Title	
Dominican Thomist Pedagogy for a Post-Secular Society: Developing Dialogic Skills in RE for Students in UK Secondary Schools	
Name of Applicant	
Antony Luby	
School/Subject/Cluster/RKT Group	
School of Education	
Student ID/Staff Number	
2051253	
Programme Title (PGR Applications only)	
PhD Education Studies	

2 Ethical Risks

This section should be completed and signed by the appropriate parties, commenting on the research ethics risks involved in this project.

PGR Applications – Supervisors should complete and sign this section, approving submission for ethical review.

Staff Applications – Applicant should complete and sign this section, confirming submission for ethical review.

It should be clear from the comments provided that the potential risks have been considered and information provided on what they are, with evidence of what is to be implemented to mitigate these. You are advised to refer to the Risk Guidance at:

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/colleges/socialsciences/students/ethics/forms/staffandpostgraduateresearchstudents/>

Potentially taping conversations carries the danger of subject identification. Since there is no proposal to mark any of the recordings with personal identifiers this should not present any difficulties. This research is of a standard type that does not identify participants and there is no intention to release any personal data. No personal data will be stored. The arrangements for storing the data are as follows:

- electronic data (both recordings and transcriptions) will be stored on a password - protected computer;
- paper - based data will be stored in a locked cupboard to which only the researcher has access; and
- all electronic and paper data that identifies individuals will be destroyed after completion of the project.

There is some risk to the participants in that they will need to discuss their religious beliefs. There are potential risks in having Catholic vs non-Catholic pairings; but given that are friendship groupings - previous research in this area (Luby 2014) suggests that this will not be problematic.

There are some modest questions around removing children from class to offer an alternative to the schools' mainstream provision but since the subject under scrutiny will be cognate and the differences are concerned with alternative pedagogies this should not present too many difficulties.

Signed:



Dated: 11th June 2016

3 All Researcher(s) including research assistants and transcribers (where appropriate)

Title	First and Surname	Telephone	Email (<i>usually UoG</i>)
Mr	Antony Luby	01330 822734	antony.luby@bishopg.ac.uk

All Supervisors, Principal first (where applicable)

Title	First and Surname	Telephone	Email (<i>usually UoG</i>)
Professor	James Conroy	01413307375	James.Conroy@glasgow.ac.uk
Professor	Robert Davis	01413303001	Robert.Davis@glasgow.ac.uk

4 External Funding Details

(NB: If this project is externally funded, please provide the name of the sponsor or funding body.)

n/a

5 Project Details

Start Date for Data Collection: 01/07/2016

(NB: This refers to data collection for the research covered in this application. This should be at least 6 weeks from the date of application submission.)

Proposed End Date of Research Project: 29/03/2018

(NB: This date should be when you expect to have completed the full project and published the results e.g. date of award of PhD, journal article publication, end of funding period.)

6 Justification for the Research

Why is this research significant to the wider community? What might be the impact on your practice or on the practice of others? *Please outline the reasons which lead you to be satisfied that the possible benefits to researchers, participants and others to be gained from the project justify any risks or discomfort involved.*

The use of dialogic skills within the classroom is a relatively undeveloped area for research; and so the findings should be of interest to the research community. It should also be of interest to

classroom practitioners across a broad spectrum of disciplines e.g. English, Humanities. In comparison with other subjects it is fair to say that dialogue is well used within the subject area of religious education (RE); but the underlying mechanics as how best to promote dialogic skills such as cumulative talk and exploratory talk are largely absent from the literature. Understanding how to promote *cumulative talk* - whereby students ‘...build positively but uncritically on what the other has said’ - and *exploratory talk* in which they ‘...engage critically but constructively with each other’s ideas’ (Mercer 1995: 104) – will be of interest to both practitioners and researchers of RE.

For heads of RE departments and teachers of RE who afford access to their classes there will be access to up-to-date research in this area of dialogic skills. Conversations with such colleagues should not only encourage and enable them to reflect upon current practices; but also afford them opportunities to try out different teaching strategies within their schools.

There will be minimal disruption as small numbers of students are removed from the classroom and so absented from the prevailing RE curriculum for a short period of time (4 classes). However, whilst removed from the classroom, the students will nevertheless be engaged, in depth, with the subject of RE. Upon their return to a normal RE timetable the students will be in a position to share their experiences and knowledge with both teachers and fellow students.

Reference

Mercer, N. 1995. *The Guided Construction of Knowledge: Talk Amongst Teachers and Learners*. Clevedon, Avon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

7 Research Methodology and Data Collection

a. Method of data collection (*Tick as many as apply*)

<p>Face to face or telephone interview</p> <p><i>(Please provide a copy of interview themes. This does not need to be an exact list of questions but does need to provide sufficient detail to enable reviewers to form a clear view of the project and its ethical implications.)</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Focus group</p> <p><i>(Please provide details: themes or questions. This does not need to be an exact list of questions but does need to provide sufficient detail to enable reviewers to form a clear view of the project and its ethical implications.)</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>Audio or video-recording interviewees, focus groups or events</p> <p><i>(Please ensure that permission is evidenced on the consent form. Details should be provided, either in theme/question information or separately.)</i></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Questionnaire</p> <p><i>(Please provide a copy of at least indicative questions, final questions must be submitted as an amendment if not provided in initial application) Example topics for discussion include Creationism, Intelligent Design, Miracles, The Anthropic Principle</i></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Online questionnaire</p> <p><i>(Please provide the web address/ or electronic copy if not yet available online)</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Participant observation</p> <p><i>(Please provide an observation proforma)</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Other methodology</p> <p><i>(please provide details – maximum 50 words) Involvement in participating in this project is entirely voluntary. Participation will involve attending an introductory session for approx. 40 minutes in which the research programme will be explained in detail. This is followed by 3 further sessions of approx. 50 minutes in which the participants engage in paired conversations for around 10-15 minutes. These conversations will be audio recorded and then transcribed.</i></p> <p><i>The transcribed conversations will be analysed quantitatively in respect of the four research questions:</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>5. To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?</i></p> <p><i>This will entail a quantitative analysis that comprises a word count of the conversations with respect to both on-task and off-task activity.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>6. To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?</i></p> <p><i>Quantitative analysis of the conversations will be conducted by discounting statements that are of a declaratory nature or which seek clarification. A word count will determine the percentage of the conversations that comprise either cumulative talk or exploratory talk.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>7. What is the impact of different resources upon the development of the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk?</i></p> <p><i>Again, through a word count, a quantitative analysis will determine the interventions that better promote the development of the dialogic skills of cumulative and exploratory talk.</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>8. To what extent does dialogic RE promote a deep approach to students' learning?</i></p> <p><i>A survey questionnaire will be administered that comprises ten test items pertaining to a deep approach to learning. Analysis for statistical significance will be undertaken through the means of a Chi Square Test.</i></p> <p><i>The fieldwork comprises a series of three teacher-led interventions into pedagogic practice. The pedagogic interventions comprise the student pairs being directed to read an excerpt from a text or watch a clip from a DVD prior to their discussions – this will take but a few minutes.</i></p> <p><i>The main resource for these interventions will be Blaylock's Science & Belief: The Big Issues. This is a set of teacher's notes to accompany DVD / You Tube presentations from Russell Stannard about various topics including:</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- *Creationism*
- *Intelligent Design*
- *Miracles*
- *The Anthropic Principle*

According to Blaylock (2012: 3) these ‘...notes and activities... combin[e] thinking skills approaches, games, discussion strategies, group work, dilemma and debate...’ The topic of religion & science features prominently in Religious Education (RE) syllabi and it is apposite for this study given that it lends itself well to a ‘...learning approach that takes the debates seriously, but gives a central place to the intellectual growth of the student doing the learning’ (Blaylock 2012: 225). Additionally, I will use two excerpts from the RE schoolbook *Trial of the Resurrection* (Luby 2006) as these proved effective at promoting exploratory talk with an earlier research study (Luby 2014).

Blaylock, L. 2012. Teaching religion and science: effective pedagogy and practical approaches for RE teachers. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 34(2) 224-226.

Luby, A. 2006. *Trial of the Resurrection*. Northants: First and Best in Education Ltd.

Luby, A. 2014. First Footing Inter-Faith Dialogue. *Educational Action Research* 22(1) 57-71.

b. Research Methods

Please explain the reason for the particular chosen method(s), the estimated time commitment required of participants and how the data will be analysed. Ensure that you include reference to methods of providing confidentiality as you indicate below in section 8.a

Based upon previous research in this area (Luby 2014) the completion of the questionnaire should take only a few minutes. There are 10 questions to which each participant is invited to select one of 5 responses. The participants are further invited to write a sentence or two in which they are encouraged to express their own point of view with regard to the process.

The most time consuming feature is that the participants are removed from their normal RE timetable for 4 periods (each usually comprising 50 minutes). This pedagogic intervention will comprise spending a few minutes reading a text or watching a DVD clip; and then approximately 10-15 minutes of paired discussion about said text and/or DVD clip. Thus, as indicated above in section 6, the students will still be involved with their subject of RE and will be in a position to share their experiences with fellow students and teacher upon return to the RE classroom.

The data from the questionnaires will be analysed by use of a Chi Square Test to determine the level of statistical significance of the findings.

Methods of providing confidentiality will be in accord with In accordance with the *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* (BERA 2011) i.e.

- electronic data (both recordings and transcriptions) will be stored on a password - protected computer;
- paper - based data will be stored in a locked cupboard to which only the researcher has access;
- all electronic and paper data that identifies individuals will be destroyed after completion of the project; and
- anonymised electronic data which cannot be linked to any other data concerning participants will be kept for use by me or other researchers.

References

(BERA) British Educational Research Association. 2011. *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*. London: BERA.

Luby, A. 2014. First Footing Inter-Faith Dialogue. *Educational Action Research* 22(1) 57-71.

8 Confidentiality & Data Handling

a. Will the Research Involve:

**You should select all options that apply to your (different) research methods (insert the name of the method in shaded box at top of each column, e.g. interview / questionnaire) and make clear in section 7b above how these will be applied.*

<i>Degree of anonymity</i>	(insert method)	(insert method)	(insert method)
	Questionnaire	Transcriptions	
De-identified samples or data (i.e. a reversible process whereby identifiers are replaced by a code, to which the researcher retains the key, in a secure location?)	X	X	<input type="checkbox"/>

Anonymised samples or data (i.e. an irreversible process whereby identifiers are removed from data and replaced by a code, with no record retained of how the code relates to the identifiers. It is then impossible to identify the individual to whom the sample of information relates)?

Complete anonymity of participants (i.e. researchers will not meet, or know the identity of participants, as participants are part of a random sample and are required to return responses with no form of personal identification)?

Use of Names

Subject being referred to by pseudonym in any publication arising from the research?

 X

Participants consent to being named?

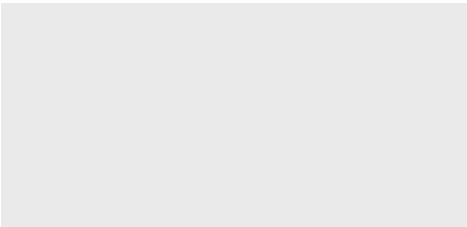
Any other methods of protecting the privacy of participants? (e.g. use of direct quotes with specific, written permission only; use of real name with specific, written permission only):

provide details here:

Participants being made aware that confidentiality may be impossible to guarantee; for example in the event of disclosure of harm or danger to participants or others; or due to size of sample, particular locations etc.?

 X

Participants being made aware that data may be shared/archived or re-used in accordance with Data Sharing Guidance provided on Participant Information Sheet?



b. Which of the following methods of assuring confidentiality of data will be implemented

(NB: The more ethically sensitive the data, the more secure will the conditions of storage be expected to be.)

<p>Location of Storage</p> <p>Storage at University of Glasgow</p> <p>Stored at another site</p> <p><i>Home address: Carlin, 15 Heath Row, Banchory, Kincardineshire AB31 5UZ</i></p> <p><i>Work address: School of Teacher Development, Bishop Grosseteste University, Longdales Road, Lincoln, LN1 3DY</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Paper</p> <p>Data to be kept secure in locked room/facility/cabinet</p> <p>Data and identifiers to be kept secure in locked room/facility/cabinet</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Electronic</p> <p>Access to computer files to be available by password only</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Other</p> <p>Any other method of securing confidentiality of data in storage:</p> <p><i>(Please provide details here)</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>

c. Access to Data

Access by named researchers and, where applicable, supervisors, examiners, research assistants, transcribers

Access by people **other** than named researchers, supervisors, examiners, research assistants, transcribers

Please provide details of others who will have access; and if relevant, of data management and sharing policy or protocol

d. Retention and Disposal of Personal Data *

Please explain and as appropriate justify your proposals for retention and disposal of any **personal** data to be collected.

No collection of personal data.

* *“(personal data means data which relate to a living individual who can be identified –*

(a) From those data, or

(b) From those data and other information which is in the possession of, or is likely to come into the possession of, the data controller, and includes any expression of opinion about the individual and any indication of the intentions of the data controller or any other person in respect of the individual.” Data Protection Act 1998 c.29 Part 1 Section 1

Further Information on the Data Protection Act (1998) is available on the webpages of the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Office:

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/dpfoioffice/>

e. Retention and Disposal of Research Data

Please explain and as appropriate justify your proposals for retention and disposal of **research** data to be collected.

All electronic and paper research data that identifies individuals will be destroyed after completion of the project; and anonymised electronic data which cannot be linked to any other data concerning participants will be kept for use by me or other researchers.

For Postgraduate and Staff research University of Glasgow Research Guidelines expect data to be retained for 10 years after completion of the project.) Please see University Code of Good Practice in Research for guidance,

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/postgraduateresearch/pgrcodeofpractice/>

9 Dissemination of Results

a. Results will be made available to participants as:

(NB: Intended method of dissemination ought normally to take account of the age, capacities and situation of participants.)

Written summary of results to all if requested

Copy of final manuscript presented if requested (e.g. thesis, article)

Verbal presentation to all (e.g. information session, debriefing)

Presentation to representative participants (e.g. CEO, School Principal)

Other or None of the Above

(please provide details here)

b. Results will be made available to peers and/or colleagues as:

Dissertation

Thesis (e.g. PhD)

Submission

Journal Articles

Book

Conference Papers

Written summary of results to all if requested

Other or None of the Above

(please provide details here)

10 Participants

a. Explain how you intend to recruit participants. Provide as much detail as you can, including what age/type of group will be used for each research activity involved (e.g. Interviews)

For both questionnaires and transcribed paired conversations the participants will be school students at the upper end of secondary school (S2-S6 Scotland; Y9-Y13 England). Target schools will be in the area where researcher currently works (Lincolnshire) and has recently worked (Aberdeenshire); and also schools with whom supervisors have previously liaised.

These schools will be of a mixed background (selective; faith; comprehensive and academies). An invitation letter will be sent to headteachers and this will be followed up by conversations with school staff: usually, heads of RE departments. The students will be paired as Catholic with non-Catholic and they will be given a high degree of choice as to who will be their selected partner. Written consent will be sought from both participants and their parents/guardians/carers.

b. Target Participant Group

- Students or Staff of the University
- Adults (over 18 years old and competent to give consent)
- Adults (over 18 years old who may not be competent to give consent)
- Young people ages 16-17 years old
- Children under 16 years old

If you require information on the age of legal capacity please refer to the Age of Legal Capacity (Scotland) Act 1991 available at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1991/50/contents>

c. Incentives

If payment or any other incentive (such as a gift or free services) will be made to any participants please specify the source and the amount of payment to be made and/or the source, nature and where applicable the approximate monetary value of the gift or free service to be used. Please explain the justification for offering payment or other incentive.

n/a

d. Number of Participants (if relevant give details of different age groups/activities involved)

50 participants.

This will comprise 25 paired conversations – a series of three conversations about a different topic - each on a different week and lasting approx. 10-15 minutes.

e. Dependent Relationship

Are any of the participants in a dependent relationship with any of the investigators, particularly those involved in recruiting for or conducting the project?

(For example, a school pupil is in a dependent relationship with their teacher. Other examples of a dependent relationship include student/lecturer; patient/doctor; employee/employer)

Yes

No

If yes, please explain the relationship and the steps to be taken by the investigators to ensure that the subject's participation is purely voluntary and not influenced by the relationship in any way.

f. Location of Research

University of Glasgow	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outside Location <i>(Provide details here of outside locations, including as much information as possible.)</i> <i>Secondary schools (different types) in Aberdeenshire, Glasgow and Lincolnshire.</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

11 Permission to Access Participants

a. Permissions/Access

Permission is normally required to gain access to research participants within an organisation (e.g. Private Company; school; Local Authority; Voluntary Organisation; Overseas institution)

Is this type of permission **applicable to** this application?

Yes

No

If Yes: Is evidence of this permission **provided with** this application?

Yes

No

If No: Please explain any reason why you do not require permission to gain access to research participants.

b. Does this application involve contacting University of Glasgow students directly (either via email or within classes) for the purpose of your research?

Yes

No

If yes, separate permission to survey student's needs to be obtained prior to any such survey being undertaken. Normally this permission should be sought from the appropriate authority after ethical approval has been granted.

See <http://www.gla.ac.uk/colleges/socialsciences/students/ethics/informationforapplicants/#d.en.191190> for details

(NB: Once obtained, a copy of this permission must be forwarded to the Ethics Administrator.)

Please list the participants that you intend to contact (e.g. 30 students from X course)

c. Is this application being submitted to another Ethics Committee, or has it been previously submitted to another Ethics Committee?

Yes

No

(If yes, please provide name and location of the ethics committee and the result of the application.)

12 Informed Consent

a. Have you attached your Participant Information Sheet (Plain Language Statement) for participants?

Yes

No

If no, please explain:

(You must consult the guidance at the Forms and Guidance Notes section of the College ethics website:

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/colleges/socialsciences/students/ethics/forms/#d.en.191149> for information that you are required to provide in this.)

The Participant Information Sheet is written information in plain language that you will provide to participants to explain the project and invite their participation.

b. Please note that a copy of this information should be offered to the participant to keep unless there are specific reasons for not doing so. These must be clearly explained below.

c. Are any participants likely to require special consideration in the preparation of the Participant Information Sheet/Plain Language Statement to ensure informed consent?

(Eg. the use of child friendly language, English as second language)

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details here:

d. How will informed consent by individual participants or guardians be evidenced?

(NB: In normal circumstances, it will be expected that written evidence of informed consent will be obtained and retained, and that a formal consent form will be used: a copy of which should be provided.)

Signed Consent Form

Recorded Verbal Consent

Implied by Return of Survey

Other

(please provide details here)

Justification if written evidence of informed consent is not to be obtained and retained:

13 Monitoring

Describe how the project will be monitored to ensure that the research is being carried out as approved (e.g. give details of regular meetings/email contact).

Regular email contact and meetings with both PhD supervisors.

14 Health and Safety

What are the potential issues of personal safety for you, other researchers or participants involved in the project and how will you manage them? (*Other than lone field work – refer to Section 15 for this*)

Minimal. Experienced teacher working within school environments.

Only equipment is that for recording purposes.

15 Risk

a. Does the activity involve lone field work, lone working or travel to unfamiliar places?

(E.g. Carrying out interviews alone and off-campus) (You should refer to the Risk Guidance at:

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/colleges/socialsciences/students/ethics/forms/#d.en.191149>)

NB: This does not apply to working within an institution such as a school.

Yes

No

Please give details of arrangements to minimise risks pertaining to this.

n/a working within schools

b. How will you ensure that you minimise any possible distress caused to participants by the research process?

Previous research suggests that this is unlikely; however, guidance staff and teaching staff will be near at hand.

- c. **What procedures are in place for the appropriate referral of a study participant who discloses an emotional, psychological, health, education or other issue during the course of the research or is identified by the researcher to have such a need?**

As (b) above – school staff will be near at hand.

- d. **Does this research involve any sensitive topics or vulnerable groups? You should refer to the Risk Guidance at:**

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/colleges/socialsciences/students/ethics/forms/staffandpostgraduateresearchstudents/>

Yes

No

Please give details of arrangements to minimise risks pertaining to this

16 Insurance

Does this research come under the exclusions to the University insurance cover for research?

Yes

No

If yes, please explain and detail how you intend to cover the insurance needs for this research

The University insurance cover is restricted in certain, specific circumstances, e.g. the use of hazardous materials, work overseas, research into pregnancy and conception and numbers of participants in excess of 5000. Please refer to the Insurance and Indemnity advice on the website given below. Advice or authorisation given must be included with this application.

Information may be available at this link:

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/finance/staffsections/insuranceandrisk/>

17 Protection of Vulnerable Groups and Disclosure

Does this project require Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) clearance?

Yes
No

If Yes, evidence that this has been obtained **MUST** be provided with this application.

If PVG registration is held, please provide details here:

PVG clearance obtained whilst Chartered Teacher of RCRE with Aberdeen City Council (2004-2014) and also for teaching Confirmation classes with St Columba's RC parish, High Street, Banchory.

<http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/>

The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 came into effect on 28 February 2011. This replaced the previous Disclosure Scotland checking system for individuals who work with children and/or protected adults. The University is a Registered Body under this legislation.

Please consult the University Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme webpages for guidance:

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/humanresources/mgrs-admin/mgr-guidance/pvgscheme/>

Further guidance is available from: <http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/> (Disclosure Scotland)

18 UK and Scottish Government Legislation

Have you made yourself familiar with the requirements of the:

Data Protection Act (1998) <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/>

Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 <http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Law/FOISA.aspx>

Yes

No

If no, please explain here:

See Application Guidance Notes available from:

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/colleges/socialsciences/students/ethics/forms/staffandpostgraduateresearchstudents/>
for further information.

In addition visit: <http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/dpfoioffice/> for University guidance on Data Protection

The **Freedom of Information Act 2002 (FOI)** provides a general right of access to most of the recorded information that is held by the University. The Act sets out a number of exemptions/exceptions to this right of access.

NB: Declaration over page must be signed/completed.

19 Declarations by Researcher(s) and Supervisor(s)

The application will not be processed if this section is blank or incomplete.


- The information contained herein is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate.
- I have read the University's current human ethics guidelines, and accept responsibility for the conduct of the procedures set out in the attached application in accordance with the guidelines, the University's Code of Conduct for Research and any other condition laid down by the University of Glasgow Ethics Committee and the College of Social Sciences Ethics Committee.

NB: Full details of the University's ethics guidelines are available at:

<http://www.gla.ac.uk/research/aims/ourpolicies/committeestructure/>

- I and my co-researcher(s) or supporting staff have the appropriate qualifications, experience and facilities to conduct the research set out in the attached application and to deal effectively with any emergencies and contingencies related to the research that may arise.
- I understand that **no** research work involving human participants or data collection can commence until I have been granted full ethical approval by the College of Social Sciences Ethics Committee.

This section MUST be completed to confirm acceptance of Code of Conduct. If there is no scanned signature then please type the names (or use GUID) and date into the boxes below.

	Signature	Date
Researcher (All applicants)	Antony Luby	19 th April 2016
Principal Supervisor (Where applicable)		27 th April 2016

Applications should be submitted electronically as follows:

Please upload the completed form, along with any other required documents by logging in to the Research Ethics System at: <https://frontdoor.spa.gla.ac.uk/login/>

NB: PGR students are required to upload their application which is then forwarded to their named supervisor for approval and submission to the Ethics Committee.

APPENDIX 2-3



Pullar House 35 Kinnoull Street Perth PH1 5GD Tel (01738) 476200/476211 Fax (01738) 476210

Contact Alana Dawson Direct Dial (01738) 476349 Email: ADawson@pkc.gov.uk
Website: www.pkc.gov.uk

Our ref PD/AD Your ref Date 9 June 2016

Mr A Luby Bishop Grosseteste University School of Teacher Development
Longdales Road Lincoln LN1 3DY

Dear Mr Luby

Developing Dialogic Skills in RE for Students in UK Secondary Schools

Thank you for your request to undertake research in Perth and Kinross.

I am pleased to confirm that your research has been approved in principle by Education and Children's Services Senior Management, subject to the conditions enclosed.

The final decision to permit the research in their establishment lies with the Headteacher/Head of Establishment and you will be required to provide a copy of this letter.

We look forward to receiving a copy of the findings of your research. Yours sincerely

Paul Davison Corporate Research and Information Manager

Enc

Copy to: Peter McAvoy, Head of Education – Secondary and Inclusion Headteacher,
St John's RC Academy





Where approval in principle has been granted by Education and Children's Services Senior Management, the final decision to permit the research in their establishment lies with the Headteacher/Head of Establishment. The Headteacher/Head of Establishment will be responsible for ensuring, where relevant, the following conditions are met. Headteachers may also require to consult with the Parent Council if the project specifically relates to an area where they have a statutory function.

Conditions of Approval

1. There will be no unsupervised contact with children/young people or access to confidential information held by Perth and Kinross Council.
2. Researchers must obtain appropriate parental/carer permissions where required. The requirement for parental/carer permission must be agreed with, and facilitated by, the Headteachers/Heads of Establishment prior to the research starting.
3. Strict observation of confidentiality must be respected and in particular the researcher must comply with the terms of the Data Protection Act. The researcher must be able to satisfy the Council that all research will be carried out in a manner which complies with both the Data Protection Act and any ethical research standards relevant to the research being carried out.
4. The methodology involved in conducting the research does not in any way impair the educational process or health and wellbeing of children/young people.
5. The involvement of all Council staff with research projects is understood to be entirely voluntary.
6. All relevant details of the research project are disclosed on the attached application form.
7. No disclosure of the findings of the research project is to take place before a date specified at the outset of the project, unless with the specific permission of the Director of Education and Children's Services.
8. A copy of the findings of the research project should be sent to the Research and Performance Team, free of charge, on completion of the project.

APPENDIX 2-4



College of Social
Sciences

Consent Form

Title of Project:

Developing Dialogic Skills in RE for Students in UK Secondary Schools

Name of Researcher: Antony Luby

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the Plain Language Statement for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.
3. I understand that my parent/guardian/carer is being asked for consent. I further understand that the conversations will be recorded and transcribed and that transcripts of these conversations will be returned to me for verification. If the conversations are referred to in subsequent research I cannot be identified by name and will only be referred to by a pseudonym.
4. I agree / do not agree (delete as applicable) to take part in the above study.

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Person giving consent
(if different from participant, eg Parent)

Date

Signature

Researcher

Date

Signature

APPENDIX 2-5**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

Researcher: Mr Antony Luby
Senior Lecturer Teacher Development
Bishop Grosseteste University
Lincoln LN1 3DY
Email: antony.luby@bishopg.ac.uk
Tel: 01522 585649

Project: Developing Dialogic Skills for RE in UK Secondary Schools
PhD Education Studies, University of Glasgow

Research:

The purpose of the research is to determine teaching interventions that can promote the development of the dialogic skills of cumulative talk and exploratory talk. Cumulative talk encourages students to ‘...build positively but uncritically on what the other has said.’ Exploratory talk enables students to ‘...engage critically but constructively with each other’s ideas.’

Involvement in participating in this project is entirely voluntary. Participation will involve attending an introductory session for approx. 40 minutes in which the research programme will be explained in detail. This is followed by 3 further sessions of approx. 50 minutes in which the participants engage in paired conversations for around 10-15 minutes. These conversations will be audio recorded and then transcribed. Participants are invited to contact the researchers should they have any questions regarding this research.

Benefits and risks – a risk of involvement in this project is that participants will be removed from the RE timetable for 4 periods. However, a corresponding benefit is that participants will be able to share their experiences with fellow students upon their return to the RE classroom. Participants will need to make each other aware of their different religious backgrounds.

Withdrawal - Participants have a right to withdraw at any time and without providing a reason.

Data use:

Methods of providing you with confidentiality will be in accord with the 2011 *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* produced by the British Educational Research Association i.e.

- Electronic data (both recordings and transcriptions) will be stored on a password - protected computer.
- Paper-based data will be stored in a locked cupboard to which only the researcher has access.
- All electronic and paper data that identifies individuals will be destroyed after completion of the project.
- Only anonymised electronic data which cannot be linked to any other data concerning participants will be kept for use by me or by other approved researchers.

It is intended that upon successful completion of the project the findings will be presented in a PhD thesis to the University of Glasgow. It is hoped that the findings will subsequently be published as journal articles and conference papers. Upon request a school will be given a summary of the findings and/or copies of subsequent publications.

Confidentiality guarantee:

“Please note that assurances on confidentiality will be strictly adhered to unless evidence of wrongdoing or potential harm is uncovered. In such cases the University may be obliged to contact relevant statutory bodies/agencies.”

Making a complaint:

Anyone with concerns regarding the conduct of the project is advised to contact:
College of Social Sciences Ethics Officer,
Dr Muir Houston,
email: Muir.Houston@glasgow.ac.uk

APPENDIX A1

Y10 GCSE Tamara (non-religious) & Chase (baptised, non-religious) 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Chase: I'm Chase!

TAMARA: I'm Tamara!

Chase: It's like...I don't know I think about the universe, like obviously there's different things that are going to be there; but I think that they're just about like the same place and time that we are because if like they were more developed than we were then surely they would have like reached out to us by now.

TAMARA: Like the Mandela effect and ghosts, and time travelling. [67]

Chase: Yeah like...I don't know like I think...there's definitely like there are obviously things out there because there is so much space that we haven't discovered yet.

TAMARA: And like I think we can't see things because obviously 0.9 recurring percent of an atom is nothing.

Chase: Exactly! Like I just think that like we're not capable of it and we're not capable of seeing because we're not that developed yet.

TAMARA: I think further on in time we'll be able to like break boundaries and like discover new things but I don't think we're at that stage yet. I think...

Chase: I don't know like that voice is always in the back of your head that's like are you sure you want to do that? Like maybe that's somebody from a different dimension.

TAMARA: Maybe!

Chase: Maybe that's you from another dimension.

TAMARA: Yeah it's like...what he was saying before about like heaven being everywhere because they say that like when you die you can see people but people can't see you so maybe that's what it is. [171]

Chase: Yeah! Like...like I watched this thing...it was... but they switched places in their sleep through dimensions and it turns out she was...she was dead and he had to try and save her and he was the little voice in her head that was trying to save her. It was really interesting because it was like...that could actually be happening, that's probably what our dreams are. That's what it was to them, like their dreams were the other person's life.

TAMARA: Like the theory of reincarnation like what if that's what the voice in the back of your head is, like your past person. [169]

Chase: Yeah.

TAMARA: And it's like what peels back...the universe to like...show us those things like is it one person dies one day and suddenly everything changes?

Chase: Maybe everything changes for that one person and they don't know that they're dead and they carry on their life normally, and they don't know that they're dead but the people that they've left behind in the shadow of that world...know that...

TAMARA: It's like they say that like they've found a cell of life on whatever planet it was in like ice, it's like life could have been there before we were, like we don't know what happened before so we can't prove that its right. [279]

Chase: Well they can't look at the moon anymore can they its illegal apparently, that's what I've heard and its...basically because there are things on the moon like things that have been built there and we haven't built them. I think aliens are real as well.

TAMARA: I think they're definitely real, like I think that like some tales in the past where they were like...they say that they saw sky people, I don't think that that's real because I think if they could have contacted us they would have contacted us more than just in the past.

Chase: There's also things where people have apparently been taken by aliens and they've woken up miles from where they live after people have witnessed bright lights and flashing, and then somebody has gone missing and woke up about 10 miles from their house.

TAMARA: Like I was watching this thing last night on the history channel and it was like about this mountain somewhere and like this man went up there once and he disappeared after people saw bright lights and then more people went up and everyone that went up disappeared. And it was like people don't dare go up there anymore.

Chase: But like I don't understand how people can say that like that's not real because there is so much evidence to say that it is real.

TAMARA: Like the Bermuda Triangle.

Chase: Exactly!

TAMARA: Everyone is like oh it's just where like...where there are bad storms and everything -

Chase: Yeah but we don't know that because no one has ever gone there and survived.

TAMARA: Like Amelia Earhart she went there and never came back, she was a pilot, it couldn't have been the water she was flying.

Chase: Maybe that's like the void, you go through that into a different dimension.

TAMARA: Yeah maybe that's like how you get there and she's in like another dimension where she made it around the world and like she made it through that. [200] There's got to be more than 11, there's got to be. There's got to be like thousands and probably millions because there are just too many possibilities. [319]

Chase: Depending on which dimension you're in there's other dimensions coming off of it.

TAMARA: Exactly! There's got to be too many for like anyone to fathom. There are just too many -

Chase: Exactly! Like the Mandela effect, it trips up, it's so weird. My mum couldn't understand the Mandela effect. [249]

TAMARA: Like today, you know *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* that's changed. The name is *Sorcerer's Stone* now not *Philosopher's*.

Chase: Its always been *Philosopher's Stone*.

TAMARA: Exactly! But they changed it because we were in ICT this morning and it came up as that and I was like that doesn't make any sense, it's the Mandela effect. Its changed all of a sudden and in the Queen song, *Champions of the World* at the end its meant to be that of the world at the end, it's gone. Its only on live shows that they say of the world at the end of it. Everywhere else its gone.

Chase: That's really weird! The thing with *Snow White* trips me up, she always says magic...no not magic, she always say mirror, mirror on the wall.

TAMARA: Exactly!

Chase: But you watch it back and she says the magic mirror, throughout my childhood that was the only movie I would watch. She's always said mirror, mirror.

TAMARA: Like people say it's because of time travellers going back and changing things and I think that's right because if you had the chance to go back and change the thing you would. So I think that's what it is and I think that more things are just going to keep changing.

Chase: Oh that's another thing that's changed in people -

TAMARA: Oh in *Star Wars*.

Chase: Yeah that tripped me up definitely!

TAMARA: He says know I am your father but everybody seems to remember its Luke. People have merchandise where its Luke I am your father.

Chase: Exactly!

TAMARA: Even the guy that voiced it said that that's...he said Luke I am your father.

Chase: Its just weird!

TAMARA: And there's that thing about Seth McFarlane, his name.

Chase: Yeah!

TAMARA: I seen that, I was dead confused because on my DVDs that I have where he's in it its always been that. I could have sworn Mila Kunis was Mia to start with, to me she was.

Chase: To me she's always been Mila.

TAMARA: Because I remember watching *Family Guy* and at the end credits it said Mia and then next time I watched it, it said Meela.

Chase: And it's like I feel quite uncomfortable like not because of any of that stuff, but like religion, because there's like been so much conflict about it. I'm just like...obviously it's like...we've never like vocalised our beliefs but I'm like a little bit like wary about saying it.

TAMARA: Yeah!

Chase: Because there's so much to argue on. Like I find it hard to get my opinions across with...so they make sense so it's like somebody will say something, and I'm like yeah but it's this and it won't make sense and everybody would be like what! And then by the time you've sorted it out people interrupt you.

TAMARA: Like even though I'm baptised; I'm not a believer.

Chase: Yeah me...I think there's definitely something up there 100% but everyone is like he's...God is all knowing and all powerful but I think that he has got a lot of stuff messed up because there is so much...obviously he gave us the choice supposedly to do whatever we wanted but I see it as he's messed up and he's lost control because too many children are dying. There are too many diseases in the world, people haven't made the diseases, he has. If it's even a he like, God has supposedly. There's too much death in the world. There's just too much bad in the world and I think that it's just because whatever is up there has lost control. [529]

TAMARA: Like there's way too much anger and hurt in the world for it to just be blamed on our sins. Like...the only reason we sin is because that's what they make us do if there's anybody up there.

Chase: Exactly! Like...um...I think they just say it's our sin as an excuse -

TAMARA: Because they can't explain it.

Chase: Exactly! Like what they can't explain they will just blame on everyone else. [321]

TAMARA: Like I believe everything happens for a reason, because everything that happens has an effect on something, like a leaf falling from a tree that could affect a bug or something, just because it doesn't affect you as a person it doesn't mean it doesn't affect the world in some way.

Chase: No, I think there are some things happen for the wrong reasons 100%. Everything happens because it has a knock on effect and most of those things are just wrong blatantly. Like you walking down a place that's been deserted. You see a rock in front of...in front of something so you can't get around. You don't move the rock it's there for a reason. You know that. Somebody has purposely put that rock there or that rock has fallen there for a reason because you never know what's down there. You move that rock something bad could come and get you.

TAMARA: But we as human beings still go around the rock and we will carry on because we're just too suspicious, we're just too like nosy in a way.

Chase: It's like I don't really know what to think anymore because so many people have so many beliefs and you can't exactly cut them off and say that's absolutely not right because there's no evidence for or against them. But obviously the creation there is evidence against that, the Big Bang theory. But you can't go against everything that they believe in because that is that person's life. [778]

TAMARA: Yeah like...it annoys me when you're trying to argue something that you believe in, somebody is like don't tell me what I believe, I know I'm right. And I'm like...I'm not saying that you're not, I'm just saying this is what I believe and I think that what you believe is wrong. You're telling me to stop telling you what to believe but you're forcing your beliefs on me. Don't do that, like...you tell me don't say anything if you don't like what I'm saying but yet you didn't like what I put, and yet you commented. [418]

Chase: Like there's so much like anger and hate in the world, it just...it just makes everything worse, like people are like absolute hypocrites and it's just makes me so angry.

TAMARA: People are ignorant. If it's like not affecting them in a bad way or if it doesn't fit with everything that like they want it has to be wrong. If they haven't been through it or know somebody who's been through something like that its

wrong, it doesn't exist. That's not real. People go through that every day. Like people say that like they have a hard life but like people have worse and that's what they need to realise like yes to them it might be bad, to others its worse.

Chase: Like another thing is yeah people have a worse life to somebody but you can't really compare people's lives to each other's because that one person...to that one person um...like...I don't know say somebody was beat up and left for dead, and somebody self-inflicted pain they both have a bad life for them to be in a state like that. Like...the person who got beat up could have a really good life, but for them to be beat up in that place at that moment in time for whatever reason that gives them a bad life. They're going to be forever living their life in fear of that happening again. They could even die, like that's a bad thing but the person who's self-harming or something, or suicidal like something has got to them for them to be in that place, in that time to do that to themselves. Like...they could die as well, they could take it too far and like...so you can't really compare people like...based on somebody's perspective of it. Yeah they do have a worse life but to them you can't say...people have a life worse than you. Yeah they do there's people out there without water and food and I've got that but...you've no idea what I'm going through.

TAMARA: And it's like sometimes people have...you're not even grateful and like just because I have it, it doesn't mean I'm not grateful for it. Like I'm ignorant towards it because I don't really want to think about that because me as a child, there is nothing I can do like obviously there are things I can do but like I can't fix it on my own. And like...they belittle you for having those things and you're like yeah but if they had those things would you belittle them? Like no they wouldn't.

Chase: It annoys me because you will tell people your problems and they're like oh people have it worse. Yeah okay they do and its making me seem ungrateful for what I have because other people don't have it but don't tell me that I'm not going through a bad time because I am going through a really bad time.

TAMARA: Yeah it's just like...I dunno...I just feel like...people...obviously people are going to be passionate about their views, and people are going to be like this is what I think. And that's what you think and we'll just have to agree to disagree. But at the same time that makes room for insolence. Like agreeing to disagree about certain things, like not with everything, but with certain things it will just make people think yeah it's okay to be like rude about...like if you have your opinion that's your opinion and that is okay but don't force it on other people.

Chase: Yeah because I just think like that's just...adding insult to injury in a way. Like yeah express your opinion and say what you believe and say that you think that you're right but don't...try and tell somebody that what they believe is wrong because at the end of the day if they're not saying that to you then you don't have a place to say that to them.

TAMARA: Exactly! It makes everything really uncomfortable.

END

2517 words

Analysis

There are 2517 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 47.5% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 418 words i.e. 16.6% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 778 words i.e. 30.9% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX A2

Y10 GCSE Tamara (non-religious) & Chase (baptised, non-religious) 2 Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Chase: I'm Chase!

TAMARA: I'm Tamara!

Chase: It made me laugh because on here it says that they wrote about him...they wrote about him because he was annoying. It was just like okay! Because usually you hear about Jesus being like loved by everybody.

TAMARA: Oh he's amazing, everyone loved him like no that's why they crucified him.

Chase: It's like I dunno...I just think it's a bit weird that people are actually writing about him as like a bad thing.

TAMARA: And it's like people are like...I've forgotten what I was going to say!

Chase: Like um...I don't know because it says that they were written around the time that they actually happened and that they wrote about him because he's annoying but...it's been proven apparently but...how?

TAMARA: I don't think they could write until like the Romans took over because obviously the Romans came and that's how the medicine stuff happened; but it's like how did they know how to write?

Chase: I get that they could write Arabic but it was very little amounts of people, like rich people.

TAMARA: And according to the Bible those people loved him to be fair so...

Chase: But couldn't some of his disciples write, I swear to God they could.

TAMARA: I think so. [113]

Chase: Um...and then the chief prosecutor was like no and...it's just annoying. I mean it says he worked miracles and even his enemies admitted that but how do we know?

TAMARA: Yeah like...for all we know they could have been like really easy to impress.

CHASE: Or like whoever wrote that part of that bit they could have just done it to praise him.

TAMARA: Exactly like walking on water nowadays is just like a magician's trick.

CHASE: I feel like when Jesus supposedly because he's meant to, when he comes back for the judgement day and like if you're like people that don't believe him, aren't going to believe him because we're not...also as a generation because of everything that we've developed since then I think that we...we've come to expect more from him. [119]

TAMARA: Yeah.

CHASE: So I feel like the people that don't believe are still not going to believe.

TAMARA: Its going to be very hard to convince people that don't believe to believe.

CHASE: Because anyone could claim to reincarnate, like anyone could do it.

TAMARA: Yeah!

CHASE: Because like he turned water into wine, magician's trick, everything is a magician's trick.

TAMARA: Yeah! Like at the end of the day unless I see somebody flying down from the sky -

CHASE: If somebody was to walk up to me and go to me I'm Jesus -

TAMARA: You'd just assume they were drunk really wouldn't you?

CHASE: Yeah!

TAMARA: But this day and age no matter what you do it's not really going to impress people to the point thinking you're Jesus.

CHASE: Exactly! I feel like he could do anything and people would just be like no its just a magician's trick. Magician's... everyday so I feel like people wouldn't be impressed at all. I think that like...although obviously the religion of Christianity and all the other religions are still going I feel like we've kind of outlived the stories if you know what I mean.

TAMARA: Yeah! [300]

CHASE: That might seem disrespectful; but at the same time like we are not going to be the same as the people back then were. We change our opinions and we change every day so like what says that we're going to agree with that. Like even Christians I think would look at Jesus and think but are you because it says that like in the Bible, you're not meant to like...God will test your faith. So it's like well if I believe that anybody is Jesus he's going to punish me. [210]

TAMARA: Exactly! And like anybody can...like anybody can walk up to somebody...use the Arabic name for Jesus or the messiah or they could just genuinely say oh I'm Jesus. Anybody can do that and anybody can...if you

know magic and you've read the Bible like you're going to be able to do that but...nobody is going to know. And in this day and age like you said its mainly the adults that believed the most because kids...throughout history it's been proven that God hasn't done the things that we all thought that he did.

CHASE: And it's like um...because adults believe it more I feel like because when our generation grows old I feel like eventually like religion is going to be gone because people are just going to think well it's not done anything like...like because it says that judgment day will come but when? Like us as human beings aren't patient. Who says we're going to be patient enough to like wait that long? You see people and they sell their soul apparently to the devil or they'll do Ouija boards and things and...how do I know that that's real? I'm never going to experience one, I'm never going to sell my soul or do a Ouija board. I don't want to do that, I don't want to take that risk but I want to know. I want to know if it's real.

TAMARA: But you can't unless you do it, and if you do it and it ends up bad...what are you going to do then? It's not like you can sit in the same room as somebody whilst they're doing a Ouija board because you still put yourself in as much danger as what they are. [451]

CHASE: Things like...there is so much evidence like against everything that religion stands for, there is so much evidence and people will just refuse to like listen to it which I suppose is a good thing because they're staying strong in their faith and like they're being adamant that its right. At the same time it's like there is so much stuff, like we could move on from there because there is so much conflict with other religion, we could move on from this but everyone is refusing to do so. [440]

TAMARA: Yeah like...racism and homophobia, like...yeah homophobia was in the Bible that's the main reason why most people are homophobic but like racism...you're saying that you're following this religion and you're saying that you're following what Jesus would want but at the end of the day Jesus wasn't white Jesus was black.

CHASE: Exactly!

TAMARA: He was from Israel.

CHASE: Yeah but people depict him as how they see themselves, because we were all made in God's image.

TAMARA: Its like even the first people on the earth ever were black or of a different race. Nobody started off white fully. [547]

CHASE: Nobody started off human so in a way we should be racist towards everyone.

TAMARA: Hmm!

CHASE: Because we are not...as...we are not the original people, we are not the original like breeds...there is evidence towards that so we should all be like against ourselves in a way. Because you can't judge someone for the colour of their skin or their gender, or what they believe in, or their -

TAMARA: Sexuality. [464]

CHASE: Sexuality, you just can't do it because just because they're different from you, like you're different from them, they could discriminate against you. They choose not to because they know what it's like because if you are the -

TAMARA: Victim.

CHASE: If you are the victim and the different one from like the majority, you are going to be seen as different from everyone. But just because like for instance, you're different from me, I could discriminate against you and at the same time you could discriminate against me. Like...people...like the KKK they're against people because they believe that they are like a Christian group supposedly. And it's like but...at the same time the black people could turn around to them and they could hunt them down, they could harm them but they don't. And it's like in a way they're the better race because you are taking it upon yourselves to harm another person.

TAMARA: Yeah it doesn't mean that they can't help.

CHASE: Exactly! Like its...nobody chose to be brought into the world and like...nobody chooses to have to live in...you can choose when you want to die. You can end your life as soon as you're able to but...you don't choose to live and it's like what...what God would bring somebody into the world to just take them away?

TAMARA: Exactly! And it's like to me skin colour is no different to the hair colour that you're born with. Like you can't help that, like you can try and do whatever you want but in the end you would still have been that colour. You can't change. It's like people...like Michael Jackson for instance, he was black and then because he didn't like himself he changed. And after that he ruined himself and I feel like that that's the way that the world is. I feel like Michael Jackson was an example.

CHASE: Yeah! Like if we were all made in God's image and Jesus and God love us why is it that we have society rules?

TAMARA: Exactly! [882]

CHASE: Why does a man have to have muscles? Why does a man have to have short hair? Why does he have to have tattoos? Why is it seen wrong for a woman to have short hair? For a woman to be seen...like why is it wrong to be slightly over weight? Why is that wrong? Its...better to be bigger than it is to be small.

TAMARA: Like um...in a way like because we've created these like society rules we're kind of like playing God in a way; because we're saying you're wrong and we're going to punish you for this. But that's God's job supposedly so if you're a Christian and you're taking on God's word, you're like putting words in his mouth in a way because of like one book, with the New and the Old Testament you're like if you take the Bible literally and you're like coming up with your own ideas from it and you're like putting things on society you are playing God and you are going against your own religion. [639]

CHASE: And like you're going on a book that was written thousands and thousands of years ago. It's like...because they didn't have all that we had, they didn't have people that would speak up, like they didn't have people that would sit there and say you know what I'm gay. Or you know what like this isn't right, this isn't right, because they just didn't have the knowledge that we have today.

TAMARA: They didn't know. You can't do something about something that you don't know about.

CHASE: Exactly! It's like... [970] I've forgotten what I was going to say.

TAMARA: Well done!

CHASE: It's like society will tell you, you have to look a certain way, act a certain way, do certain things, but then society will tell you to be yourself. How can I do that? How...it just...there's no person, there's no person that will not discriminate against anyone because...I would say to anyone, I'd be like don't judge anyone but to me if I see like a certain person acting a certain way in my head I will be like what? That's because society has taught me to. But like if you kept someone in a room on their own, you let them make up their own mind, you never like let them be influenced by society's views, you never told them society's views, you just told them the information about people and then you set them into the world they would be the only pure person because they have never lived in a world of corruption, like they have not been told to think or act a certain way. [808]

TAMARA: Like you said we all play God and we all do this, we all have prejudice against people but it's like you can't...when judgment day does come we're all going to hell, everybody, every single person on this earth is. [1010]

CHASE: I'm really sorry my throat hurts.

TAMARA: That's okay!

CHASE: Are you getting a cold?

TAMARA: I dunno! I dunno! It's just hard to make up your own views in a way because...if you do people are going to go against you.

CHASE: Yeah! It's like God and Jesus apparently test your faith, you try and express your faith and your beliefs, and views and you... [853]

TAMARA: It's like some people are scared of confrontation like me but sometimes if you don't speak out it then who will?

CHASE: Exactly! Like confrontation and having to talk about things petrifies me but -

TAMARA: You've got to do it otherwise who is going to? History has taught us if nobody spoke out about things, things got out of hand. You can't live in a world where it's wrong for me to be alive. I can't...

CHASE: You just can't, I couldn't live in a world where I was told that I had to be a certain way. You can't be anything but yourself. I just couldn't live in a world like that. Like...judgement day is going to come around and -

TAMARA: A lot of people are going to realise how stupid they were. Everyone is going to regret it and everyone is going to say sorry but...it's not going to change anything. [1161]

END

2181 words

Analysis

There are 2181 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 92.3% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 1161 words i.e. 53.2% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 853 words i.e. 39.1% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX A3

Y10 GCSE Shannon & Scarlett (both non-religious) 1 Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Shannon: Hi I'm Shannon!

SCARLETT: Hi I'm Scarlet! This is a transcript of court proceedings. I don't know if 11 dimensions exist.

Shannon: I feel like it's a bit too much.

SCARLETT: I mean we've got 4 but it's really...you can't really touch it. You can't prove...like I think there are something's that you can't prove are real but -

Shannon: Yeah it's like supernatural like ghosts and...

SCARLETT: Except with ghosts you can see them sometimes; well if you believe you see them you see them and then sometimes you'll...hear or...it's like a voice. You don't know if it's there but you feel like it is. It's very hard to describe though because...it's like...you can tell it's there but you can't physically see it or prove it.

Shannon: Yeah I think the same like things...people believe in things that they haven't seen or have no proof of.

SCARLETT: Yeah like everyone has an encounter with...an encounter with ghosts or something and they'll say oh yeah I believe this because I've seen it, I've heard it or oh I believe it because of this, or that and then the other person will say but I don't believe it because I didn't see it. That's why I don't believe you. It's very controversial because you can't really...explain it but you can...you have something in the back of your head that's telling you it's there. It's like...very...very hard to describe isn't it? Why does everyone always try to prove other things and then...say that...oh there's this there. We've got 7 fingers or...9 toes or something like that and then say oh yeah but look. If you notice there's this one but we can't notice...we can tell they're there but we don't...see them as an object or...we just see them as a state.

Shannon: Like supernatural things like aliens that people think...like Area 51 and things, people say there's proof in there but how do we know if they won't show us?

SCARLETT: Yeah if you look at...some ancient markings in Greece and stuff, there's like ships or something, or something...that they didn't have in that time but somehow they...scribed it down on something. It's very...controversial because you could say that they did exist, but you could also say that they didn't, you could say that that was just...it means something else. Do you agree? [299]

Shannon: Yeah! I agree. [57]

SCARLETT: But if you look at the...Easter Island and the heads they reckon that everyone seems to think that they're like... They think that the bodies are underneath the soil and we can't see them. And the question is that's an island, they made them like somewhere else, how did they get them from one place to the other and people say aliens. But you can't necessarily say that, maybe they managed to put it on something...or something like that. You can't really say one thing and then...

Shannon: Why does science like contradict itself so much?

SCARLETT: Yeah I've noticed that too. Like...it's very...weird!

Shannon: Yeah! It's like hard because...because people could say one thing and agree because they feel like they want to agree and then say something else and they could be agreeing or disagreeing in their head. It's very hard because you want to say that it is there but you can't prove it which makes it harder.

SCARLETT: Or if you know something is real like you just have a feeling, how do you know like some people believe in the past life, how do you know you haven't experienced that in the past life, and that's why you believe it so much? [439] People ask you to prove it but you have no proof because you just believe in it because it's there. [140]

Shannon: Yeah! It's like...um...say a slice of cake, you can smell it, say you can't see it but you can smell it, you can hear it popping, or...whatever, like you can see the heat evaporating from it but you can't see it. But you know it's there how can you explain that? It's there...but you can't explain it.

SCARLETT: Yeah! It's like...

Shannon: People expect too much. Do you believe in aliens and ghosts?

SCARLETT: I do! Only because I feel like I've had some encounters like when you're walking home or when you're in the house you can hear something going off upstairs but there's nobody...it's like the other day I was sat in my house and there was just me, my dog was outside, so were my cats and I heard singing and laughing upstairs so obviously I went upstairs and there was nothing there. But it always scares me because you feel like you're alone but you feel like you're not. But you can't explain it to other people because they'll be like oh you're just saying that to get attention or this, or that. Like you are alone but you don't feel alone. [618]

Shannon: Yeah you feel like a presence so I believe in some ways but in some ways I don't, do you?

SCARLETT: Yeah! I believe in aliens and ghosts and stuff, I don't know why I just feel like there is something people are hiding. I've had encounters with ghosts like my...me and my auntie go ghost hunting in places. Sometimes we don't see anything but last time we went there was a weird feeling of presence and

we recorded something and we said if there is something here go into the bathroom and on the video you can see like an orb. [248]

Shannon: Yeah that's the thing I don't agree with that. If you see an orb it could just be like dust or something like a bug flying, but then if I experience it myself I'll believe it, it's so hard just to...explain how...I can't make sense of it because it's like...you can see it, you can catch it on recordings but you can't...prove its actually there. [683]

SCARLETT: Yeah prove it.

Shannon: And then you get frustrated because you know it's there but nobody else knows. [263]

SCARLETT: There's...we have like a state, we have the state of like physicalness and there's non-physical you could technically say that um...that...the sky doesn't exist because you can't touch it, you can fly past it on a plane but you can't touch it. You can go out...you can go into space but you still can't touch it because you see it as the sky but it's just the layer...the ozone layer. You can see it but you can't touch it. [762]

Shannon: You'll never be able to touch it because it's just small particles. It's the same with air you can't touch anything that's in air but you know it's there from wafting your arm or...like...steam evaporating, you know it's there but you can't see it which pushes you till breaking point because you're like I know it's there but I don't think it's there at the same time.

SCARLETT: It's like time, there isn't really a concept of time.

Shannon: Yeah because you're aging every single second, every single minute, every single hour, every single day. But you don't believe it because you can't see it yourself.

SCARLETT: The only time you see it is like every few years like next year I could look exactly the same but be a year older. But in a few years I will look completely different and be so much...prettier! [Laughter] But not that much older. Can you remember when we were little...well we always used to argue over what's there, what's not. And then now that you're older and you can think more you're like...you can't really explain it. It's so hard to put it into right words and then when you think you've got it right somebody knocks you down and tells you no it's not there. It's never happened. It's so hard because you know that you're capable of doing it but you can't do it in a sense just as...just as you say that...there's...there's...it's really hard to explain. [507]

Shannon: Like we're coping with this concept of age and time and things, but before this concept, before anyone figured this out, how did they cope? How did they know what was happening?

SCARLETT: See I don't agree with that, I think that they knew in the back of their minds just like...it's just a natural instinct but you didn't...know what it was called

or what happened. So you really...you can't really...say...it's there but I thought that they would have a feeling, like when you move your arm again, I know I've used this already but when you move your arm again and you feel the air you can feel the air like wafting. But you can't touch it. You could genuinely be touching it but it doesn't feel like anything. You can smell it, it doesn't smell like anything, you can even taste it but it doesn't have a taste. Whereas if you boiled uh...chicken soup and the...you can...the evaporation you can still smell the smell of chicken soup. You can taste it but you can't feel it and then you get...you get the sense that it's there but you have a sense that it's not there and you...you want to say yes it's there, I can prove its there but you can't. There's something stopping you from saying that. And it's very, very frustrating because you can say something that's...completely opposite to what you're talking about but you can wish that what you were saying was true but it can't be sometimes. You may wish for money or a good life, or whatever...whatever you wish that wish could come...that wish is what you want. It's just...it's the same as you don't know if that wish will come true. It's like...you don't know if air is there or not, even though we all know it's around us you can't tell so you could physically not be able to tell that...that there's rain falling without like...gravity, again gravity, you can't feel it but it's there. Its keeping you to the ground and without that we would all be floating. We'd be floating but this force is strong enough to pull or weights down which means it's there because we wouldn't be able to do what we're doing right now. Even sitting on this chair it would be physically impossible for us to sit on this chair; but then you get stories in science fiction saying oh yeah there's anti-gravity, yeah but without gravity we...it would basically be like floating on the moon. And you would struggle for steps, you'd feel very tight and it's just so hard to understand that some people think oh...in 20 years' time we'll have shoes that can walk themselves. Well we don't know that. We don't know...anything, it's like *Back to the Future* films everyone thought that whatever they put in those films was going to happen and it gets to the year 2015. Nothing like that has happened. There's been phones, there's been holographic stuff, but there's not actually been hover boards or anything like that. And we're only just starting...we as a race are so young but so old in a way because we've gone through so much. We've watched Jesus be put up on a cross, we've watched Jesus die for *our* race and our race is practically worthless to anything but ourselves, because the world could have still moved on. The world wouldn't be facing pollution or anything if we weren't here. The world could be...a thousand years old and it would still be able to deal with not having humans on it so... [1363]

M: Can I stop you here?

END

Analysis

There are 1909 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 98.0% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 507 words i.e. 26.6% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 1363 words i.e. 71.4% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX A4

Y10 GCSE Shannon & Scarlett (both non-religious) 2

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Scarlett: Hi I'm Scarlett!

SHANNON: Hi I'm Shannon!

Scarlett: I think that maybe Jesus has been real, it's like if you can...if you think the proof that people have is real then you believe it, that is your opinion. People can't like prove it properly though. There's no physical evidence just...I disagree because there is evidence because there's actually a man that lived in those times that...was called Jesus, he lived and died the same...the same area of time that the supposed Son of God did.

SHANNON: But how do you know that he's not just making it up?

Scarlett: Yeah he could...for all you know Jesus could have been a lunatic, just running around going oh there's a giant floating cloud in the sky and I sit on it. It...you can't really trust it but it's in your gut so trust it. It's like...we...people in other times when...before the New Testament was written Jesus...only a couple of people could read, only a couple of people could write, and then for some reason after Jesus died and was resurrected and then...went back to heaven after he did that they sort of...it was like oh we'll write down all this but only a couple of you know actually how to write. So for all we know these could have been written in the 1700s or something like that and then made up...they made up the date and – [226]

SHANNON: Yeah and passed just by speaking first when no one could write, so how do you know they haven't been manipulated just...

Scarlett: Yeah... conversation for all we know...we can't actually prove that he existed, the proof that we have is in our...guts, in our conscience, but we physically as human beings are not able to prove it. Yet everyone around the world I say everyone, every religious person around the world believes that there is a God and that there's a messiah. But...then you get people going yeah but that messiah couldn't have existed because this messiah existed. It's like I don't understand why there are so many religions because you're all worshipping the same God but you have so many arguments and wars over worshipping this God, worshipping that God. At the end of the day...this God is the same God isn't it? Because there's only one God and he created everything so it's a bit going against your own religion saying oh there's other gods. [371]

SHANNON: It's like different religions argue how to worship the same thing but if you can worship everything in your own way it doesn't...it doesn't matter how as long as you worship it in your personal way there's no set way to worship. [412]

Scarlett: To be honest with you, you could worship...like right now I could think oh Jesus is great, he was such a great guy all of this, that can be my prayer for all you know.

SHANNON: Yeah you could worship anywhere at any time.

Scarlett: Anytime! Yeah I could just...I could be in the middle of um...a history exam or something in the hall and get down on my knees and start praying, at any point, I can pray or worship in some way, shape or form. By writing...on the board the prayer or reading out the prayer in assembly you're worshipping God and Jesus.

SHANNON: Yeah or even just listening to the prayer, or thinking about it, while its being spoken.

Scarlett: It's so contradictory though because religions will say oh he existed, there's proof but the proof...we can't necessarily say what has been said is true because for all we know as I said earlier it could have been written in 1800, 1700 in the 16th, 15th, 14th century even. It could have been written at any of those points and then for some reason someone has gone oh yeah we'll make it sound like it was written in that time because it will be more believable.[227] The whole world has a function, the world functions around life and religion I think, because no one can get along with...one thing that God...any God wants us to do is be loving and respect each other but then they say that you get ISIS fighting us because...or fighting whoever because we're not following the right religion. Well technically we're all following the same God just in our own ways.

SHANNON: Yeah like I think there is a higher power but we might not have proof but I believe in it. I'm not religious or Christian but I think there is a higher power. We just don't have any proof.

Scarlett: Yeah like another one that I think...if you have the power...right answer this question, you've got the power to...give a million pounds to a charity or you've got the power to take that money and burn it what would you do – [562]

SHANNON: Give it to the charity.

Scarlett: Yeah! So technically...in a way Jesus is like that one million pounds he is the thing that helped people, so technically -

SHANNON: But he had the power to help people or he could have just wasted it all and he chose to help people. [254]

Scarlett: Yeah we waste all of our time on technology, on celebrities, on social media, when at the end of the day we should be thankful because God could have wiped us out at any point after Jesus' death or before having Jesus but he didn't because he wanted to give us a chance. We are his children, we are his creation, he wants us to have the best possible life but we go and ruin people's lives. Like I was watching a film and so a bunch of teenagers with a Ouija board and they're like is God real? The Ouija board moves like yes God

is real but this ghost could...it could be just one of them. We can't prove that those ghosts exist so you can't prove that Jesus exists, you can't prove that we actually exist. For all we know we could just be a program on the TV. [735]

SHANNON: Like how do we know God didn't wipe us out and just start over again?

Scarlett: Yeah this is our dream. [274]

SHANNON: Because we're already really selfish, how do you know there wasn't millions of prototypes before that were more selfish?

Scarlett: And we're -

SHANNON: Like the default.

Scarlett: Yeah and he just put us on another world and we're living away happily, merrily doing whatever we want. It's like if you look on Mars there's been signs of life, that life could have been a prototype that died out years ago because they died out oh there's a spare planet, let's go and stick them on that planet over there, because the prototypes...even though we're prototypes he still wants us to live happily doesn't he? He grants us with technology and stuff like that but yet people still doubt it. I am not a religious person but I strongly believe there's a power. I'm just like you. There is a certain way, you're born, you're born as you not as anyone else. You're different, you're...you live your life, you have your own thoughts, you have your own experiences and you can prove that you exist. But nobody else can. Well they can but you can't prove that they exist. You see your life, you don't see their life so you don't know what they're thinking, what they're doing, anything. You don't know. For all you know you could just be like a computer or something. You could genuinely be Jesus just living in...but you don't know it because...you're seeing through somebody else's eyes. You're seeing through your eyes but they don't feel like yours. [966]

SHANNON: We can prove spiritually that we exist but how do you know we haven't made up everyone else we know in our minds just for company, or -

Scarlett: Yeah because we could be the last humans but I...if we take you out of this, I could be the last human and I could have just made everyone up because I'm so scared I'm alone and this is just my dream and I'm never waking up because I'm too afraid to.

SHANNON: Like we're all in a coma.

Scarlett: And this is just the dream that God wants us to have. [382] Maybe we're all...maybe God has given all of us a different goal and we've just got to try and achieve it before we die.

SHANNON: It's a very, very strong and upsetting thought. At any point I could...I could...say...you get someone that's murdered someone and you've got a court trial. They're still a human, no matter what, they may have took another life,

they may have done something that they shouldn't have, they're still human. They still have human rights, but is it fair for us to say oh we're talking your human rights away because you...you did something wrong? Or you committed a crime that you shouldn't have done, is it fair for us because we don't have the power Jesus did. God does. But we can't say that we have the power, we don't even know if...if the power that we think we have exists. This could all just be made up for us. Why...why is it...why is it...horrible and wrong that you don't have to be...you could...you can be the opposite gender, you can do whatever you want in this world, whatever you want you can try or...you can try to do or you can do it. And then you get punished for doing something that you think...that you wanted to do but in other people's eyes its wrong. Like...say for example, you've got a cancer that's...terminal, it's going to kill you and you're...you're 10. You want to get married, you want to have a child before you die and you've only got 5-6 years to live so what's the first thing you're going to do? Get married and try to have a child because you want to say that that's...that you've achieved that. [1252]

Scarlett: But how do we know God didn't give them that fate, like that journey they've got to take. Someone...something must have happened that decided that. It's like that if you be good to something...to someone or do something good it's going to come back around for you. But...what if we do something bad like you're put in prison but...will anything bad ever happen back to you again, like... [450]

SHANNON: I don't agree but in a way I do...it's like...cutting off a finger you don't know that that's going to affect your life for the rest of...you don't know if it's going to affect you at all, and then one day maybe you want to...do something that needs you to have all fingers that you have, and you may be limited. People may say you can't do this because of that but you can push...it's a strong point of discrimination but Jesus again he was discriminated...he wasn't liked, he was hated by most people that he met and then he'd got the 12 disciples and his mum and Joseph, they did everything for him. Just like our parents do everything for us, our family loves us.

Scarlett: It's like no one had proof that he was real he had to try and prove it himself and prove that he was powerful and that God existed and is powerful. But we still don't have that proof like some people say God can't be real because if he has that much power why didn't he abolish racism and sexism, and everything bad that's happening?

SHANNON: Because he wants to make us experience the stuff before we ultimately come to our demise, or do something that blows up the universe, or just stop existing as a species like every single second a species disappears. It's like we could be one of those species at some point. We don't know when our last breath is going to be. It's like if one person does something wrong God has the power to get rid of us all just because of that one person's mistake. [1529]

Scarlett: Technically though, you're one person, you're against everything and everyone. When you get to...judgement for all you know this could be our judgment and we've been going through this for ages and ages and ages, if life

is just...just a judgment then what's the point of having Jesus because he didn't...he's not going to help us complete what God wants us to be able to complete. If...we've got this judgement over us and we're battling this one thing, and we're never going to be able to win unless we try our best, it's like my brother, he gets put down for anything. Like he really likes to dance, he likes football, but he's told he can't do dancing because he's a boy. And that's like saying to Jesus oh you can't do this because you're the only person in the world that thinks this. You're the only person in the state, the city, whatever that believes that. [1686]

SHANNON: It's like how do we know if... is real this could just be us reliving everything all over again.

Scarlett: The world for all you know could just be a dream. [480]

END

Analysis

There are 2183 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 99.2% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 480 words i.e. 22.0% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 1686 words i.e. 77.2% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX A5

Y10 GCSE Jerome & Tylon (both baptised agnostic) & Tony (non-baptised Christian) 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Tylon: Hello my name is Tylon.

Jerome: I'm Jerome.

Tony: I'm Tony.

M: Right so what we were discussing in the -

M: Excerpt!

M: Excerpt is that um...basically the judge was agreeing with the defendant saying that um...he's not going off topic by explaining about how something we can't see; the television signals doesn't necessarily mean it's not there. Um...and the prosecutor was claiming that it was going off topic. I think I do agree with the judge in saying that, that he's...he's right because there is a lot of things around the world that just are there that we can't see.

M: Like I said if a tree falls and you know there's is no one to hear it or see it, did it really feel?

M: Yeah! It's like...it's like Schrodinger's cat as well, it's like -

M: The cat in the box is it alive or is it dead? No one knows.

M: Its not dead if you haven't seen it.

M: Yeah!

M: Yeah it's not alive if you haven't seen it either because you don't know.

M: Yeah exactly!

M: So does that mean it doesn't exist?

M: Yeah it doesn't mean -

M: So if we haven't seen it, does it exist?

M: I think that's what..

M: That's the argument that most people go with, but is that technically the case?

[67]

- M: Hmm! Yeah...I do agree with the fact that there is a lot of things around the world that we don't see but do happen. I think we can all agree on that.
- M: I do!
- M: Hmm!
- M: Yeah! [115] Um...and another thing is that when it comes to this idea of the supernatural world and magic and so on and so forth, remember that like the medicine that we have now compared to what would have been...800 years ago seems like magic. It literally looks like magic. [115]
- M: Yeah especially the magic bullet, that was literally called the magic bullet.
- M: It was just pills, like the first proper -
- M: But that idea didn't exist so...
- M: Exactly so it seemed new and magical. [149]
- M: So something you've never seen; does that exist?
- M: Yeah, so does that mean just because magic isn't science; does that not mean it isn't real you know?
- M: But is magic not science? [147]
- M: Exactly! Its magic just -
- M: A science we don't understand yet.
- M: That's...well that's the point I wanted to bring up, its...this whole religion thing and the whole other missing seven dimensions as stated in the extract -
- M: What are the other dimensions?
- M: Well exactly! We don't know. We don't know.
- M: So how do we know there are more than just four dimensions?
- M: There might be more, there might be less which poses another question, how many are there?
- M: Yeah how many actually are there?
- M: I mean it's like...um...is everyone's individual experience a dimension? Do we all perceive the world in slightly different ways? [194]
- M: It reminds me of - [178]

[All talking at once]

M: Surely every single person's -

M: With this argument you're saying that there's not eleven dimensions, there is more than 7.5 billion dimensions?

M: Yes!

M: So you're going with the...the dimensional theory that there is no limit of dimensions?

M: Yeah!

M: Possibly! Possibly! I mean I think that there is a lot of things which we don't know yet and could be explored. [220]

M: Is it not just...what about the theory that everything like...everything has an equal and opposite reaction.

M: Yeah!

M: Yeah!

M: So if you're going along a timeline um...there will be some many timelines; one time line might be doing this, while another timeline might be doing that but its [256]

M: One...in this timeline for example, England won the second world war, in another timeline possibly Germany won.

M: Or America was still part of...it was still an English colony, and so on and so forth.

M: There is also like I don't know...um...William the Conqueror came to England 2 years earlier -

M: William the Conqueror last maybe.

M: Yeah! [276]

M: It would have just changed the world so...if you think about a dimension, like just a world that has that has -

M: Or possibly even a genetic decision that evolution shows to take...that it didn't take for us in this dimensional timeline. But really what is the difference between that? Between a timeline and a dimension.

M: There isn't. A dimension is... different timeline going so it's so many timelines going at the same time. If you back in time you change something, you're

basically creating a new dimension so if there are so many dimensions there must be a dimension that has time travel in it meaning that someone in one of these dimensions can go back in time creating more dimensions. So if that is real whatever happened there is always going to be more dimensions because...it's also the idea that a dimension doesn't exist until you think of it. So...if you're sitting there and you're just thinking about the ideal world or the ideal thing to happen that's a new dimension that you're creating for yourself. [434]

M: Like UV rays, we didn't know they existed until someone thought about it, therefore that's where the idea that that was a dimension came into play. [302]

M: It is an interesting concept and how this all does in fact relate to religion um...because it seems like another world...well...recently there is like a severe separation between science and religion, between science and magic effectively.

M: It was bound to happen if you just randomly brought in science to replace something, there has to be something to keep religion going.

M: But I want to remind us that quite a few of the great scientists and mathematicians were religious. [512]

M: Einstein was Jewish.

M: Exactly! And often times -

M: I think the only non religious one that I know of is Stephen Hawking.

M: And then again, if you've seen *The Theory of Everything* you can see um...Stephen Hawking deal with religion in a religious way, kind of like...well I feel like some of these ideas they could be true but I have to stick with what I believe in. I can't just -

M: Its like the idea that religion and science go against each other, they don't. They actually link quite close together.

M: You can't have science without religion.

M: You can't have religion without science.

M: Like similar to how you can't have light and dark without each other.

M: You can't have heat and cold.

M: Exactly! But there needs to be those 2 existing, opposites to exist so you can make a distinction. [443] Similarly, do you think that perhaps there is a complete opposite dimension.

M: What if there's unlimited dimensions?

M: What about mirrors? [532]

M: Yeah!

M: What about mirrors, reflective surfaces, they're reflect an opposite image to -

M: Yeah the old um...

[Interruption]

M: We're mid conversation actually.

M: Like the...if reflective surfaces reflects something as an opposite to what we see then the dimension within that reflective surface must be an opposite.

M: That old ideal of when you...what you look at in the mirror isn't actually just your reflection it's another thing looking back at you.

M: Its another version of it.

M: I have always thought about that -

M: And its...the idea of that is actually really quite old I believe.

M: Its very weird as well.

M: Yeah! To perceive that there is an entire other existence through this window. [550]

M: This also reminds me of um...again the flash actually, um...it doesn't have to be a timeline that's different, it could be the way the world is created so let's say another earth has gravitational pull or something like that so...obviously not everything is the same – [578]

M: There could be another earth where gravity doesn't exist.

M: Yeah!

M: Yeah which is totally weird but there could also be a dimension where people don't need gravity, maybe humans don't colonate earth.

M: There could be a dimension where we don't need air.

M: Yeah!

M: It could just be any dimension.

M: Inside the earth, we live somewhere else, we live on Neptune. We could live on any planet in any other place – [620]

- M: If they're posing an idea of infinite possibilities it opens that door to have everything possible, which it...its...it's difficult to truly comprehend the scale on that between one person's existence but if you really think about all the things which have happened in history beforehand yeah, some of the things which actually occurred just seem impossible, truly impossible. Um...and...is it any wonder with that impossibility people would call...questioning it as fate or magic really?
- M: Its...
- M: At the same time, this world that we're in right now has unlimited possibilities already. We have so many possibilities, simply these dimensions are just...a timeline where we take these possibilities. We're just on a timeline where we're taking an ongoing possibility, we're taking these new tree...branches so we're born, in fact before that there could be a dimension where the timeline is just simply going on because we don't have our own timeline, it's easy to forget that the timeline isn't just our timeline. The timeline is the whole of existence timeline, and obviously what happens to people there is just small branches.
- M: Small steps in possibly an over 2 billion year old thing.
- M: Our birth could have been that simple branch coming off, another branch coming off another branch of a family tree and then our life. [656]
- M: That also links back to uh...following that back then to the very first moments of creation yeah, which one you want to believe, um...either the big bang or how um...most religions paint it as a creator – [793]
- M: The theory of creation.
- M: Yeah! A painter taking...making stone to form the mountains and the water -
- M: Crafting the earth by hand.
- M: Yeah or it just popping and exploding into existence.
- M: Well technically it didn't pop it would have just expanded outwards slowly from one single point.
- M: Yes! Um...but...the idea of that is that perhaps maybe in one existence that never happened. Neither of them ever happened. Perhaps they both happened.
- M: In this existence neither of them happened.
- M: Exactly!
- M: Perhaps in truth in these existence they actually both happened just in different times. [726]

M: I've just had a thought about um...Christianity so if we have a timeline the only thing that can't change is God in Christianity because God is out of time. Does that mean...there's only one timeline? Because God is the only person that can create timelines. Is he creating more than one timeline? [868]

.....

Researcher: Finished?

M: No not yet!

Researcher: I'll need to bring it to a halt.

M: Right!

M: Okay!

END

Analysis

There are 1808 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 88.2% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 726 words i.e. 40.2% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 868 words i.e. 48.0% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX A6

Y10 GCSE Jerome & Tylon (both baptised agnostic) & Tony (non-baptised Christian) 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Jerome: Hello my name is Jerome!

Tylon: Hello my name is Tylon!

Tony: Hello my name is Tony!

M: Right does Jesus exist that is the question we are posing and wondering about? Um...well the evidence that's been given to us about uh...in the Bible, it not recording the fall of Jerusalem and the fact that many of Jesus' enemies bothered to claim that he was a miracle worker as well, does give quite a lot of evidence to suggest that he was real.

M: We also know that...do you mean is he real spiritually or is he real real?

M: He's definitely real.

M: How we are real.

M: We don't want to know if he's real, we want to know if -

M: The Bible -

M: There is good evidence towards -

M: We know he's real because it's a historical fact that he existed.

M: But here's a question I want to pose, is it that he was real as himself -

M: Or his ideas and philosophy?

M: Exactly! Was -

M: Was his name really Jesus?

M: Exactly!

M: It might have be Hezus.

M: Exactly! Was the...was Jesus an idea -

M: His real name was actually Joseph.

M: Was Jesus an idea? Was he a...um...a collection of people all claiming the same title to carry it on through, carry on these ideas. [154]

- M: You mean...you mean...like...the *Mandarin in Iron Man 3*?
- M: Yes!
- M: Originally it was thought one person, but it was the collection of people surrounding that idea that the Mandarin proposed, that was revealed to be the Mandarin.
- M: Exactly! [46]
- M: He wasn't...like it was just an actor in the end, still out there.
- M: Either way back to topic. Um...but it's an interesting idea that, that possibly he could manage to do all these things because it was not one person. Perhaps it started out with one person with the birth of Jesus and the whole uh...idea of the nativity scene and so on and so forth, um...but maybe he went onto share it, or so on and so forth. Maybe he...um...said something and then someone wanted to copy him to carry on that legacy of his wise words. And that snowballed into being what it was.
- M: I mean...the thing is it's hard to believe until you've actually seen the work of what people believe is the Holy Spirit and Jesus uh...and like I have seen that and a lot of people have. So what's the...like...there's proof to me and other people that Jesus and the Holy Spirit is real because I've prayed in the Holy Spirit's name for someone else and they have been cured. Or at least been better, for example, there was a kid with a broken arm and um...the only times he's had it out of the cast...well walking around um...was when he was at West Point which is where I was and um... he got prayed for because um...you know... [360]
- M: He was injured and so on and so forth.
- M: Um...and he was sort of walking around after with his arm up so I kind of just approached him and was like so your arm is okay at the moment? He was like yeah I'm able to take it out of my cast for at least 2 hours at the most and feels like my arm is free for at least a while because when it's in a cast for so long it's just there, you can't do anything. Like he's got a free arm for at least while. He can remember how it feels to have that arm back. [155] And it's the same with um...the idea of um...prophetic um...words. How are people able to guess what's going on. Like...someone walks on to a stage and says I've got a prophecy um...I think that someone in this crowd maybe right there...someone right there has an injury on their leg and someone right there goes I've got an injury on my leg. You can't tell they have an injury its...and they -
- M: It's like with mediums in the spiritual church, they can't actually...they...how would they actually know what you're thinking, what you've been through if they don't know you? The answer would be religion. [464]

M: But this kind of links back to my question that I posed, that was Jesus real as a person and not just an idea? Like because...there wasn't...I'm sure there was doctors and so on and so forth helping that child, to make it better, but there wasn't like someone that was -

M: But at that time...it happened to people in that time and its just gone -

M: Just...but it's like...um...the idea of an instantaneous cure and so on and so forth, the instant miracle working. Um...all the ideas of loving thy enemy rather than returning their aggression.

M: Reconciliation rather than revenge.

M: Yeah! The idea of that, perhaps that was always an idea. Sort of...a spreading of the word that the kindness, the hope that this will eventually become better yeah, was that what Jesus was and people were killed because of that idea.

M: Maybe Jesus is just like an acronym for a collection of ideas that many people supported and that's why they got persecuted for it and that's where the idea of being free after you've been persecuted comes from. People witnessing that, seeing what happened, and thinking they fought for something in their life, they deserve to be with someone they love, God.

M: And – [362]

M: Why was it um...why would there be...

M: I know!

.....
Researcher: Right I'll need to finish you there as well. Still talking hey?

END

Analysis

There are 939 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 88.0% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 362 words i.e. 38.6% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 464 words i.e. 49.4% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX B1

Y12 Alexander (atheist) & Barry (agnostic) 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Alexander: Do you think heaven is all around?

BARRY: I wouldn't say all around us but it's there I suppose. Not necessarily heaven in the sense of [someone coughing] heaven as in -

ALEXANDER: Just a place you go when you die.

BARRY: Something you can perceive when you die.

ALEXANDER: Something that is a comfort because you have to go somewhere don't you? Or would it just be like sleeping? What it's like before you were born.

BARRY: Its weird how they've just put heaven because its...

ALEXANDER: Every religion has a place you go when you die don't they?

BARRY: Most of them, conventional ones. One place for good people and one place for bad people.

ALEXANDER: I would say we're just like asleep or the exact same as before you were born or maybe reincarnation.

BARRY: Maybe, or like it says maybe it all is there and things do hang around we just can't see them.

ALEXANDER: We can't perceive them in anyway -

BARRY: Maybe its heaven, maybe it's...

ALEXANDER: Radio waves and -

BARRY: 75th dimensional whatever - [70]

ALEXANDER: Radio waves and stuff can be picked up by radio but there's nothing to measure dead people or spirits.

BARRY: No there have been reports of people, old radios and their dog dies and it haunts the radio.

ALEXANDER: I think that's just people...that's just people chatting. [133]

BARRY: Maybe there is a way but...we haven't figured it out yet because there's been radio waves since the dawn of time. We just didn't pick them up until the

past 100 years. So maybe there is this ninth dimension where the dead people hang around.

ALEXANDER: There are 7 other dimensions we don't know about apparently.

BARRY: And people have kind of proved 4 dimensional shapes.

ALEXANDER: Yeah because they're the ones we can see.

BARRY: No they're like...a 3 dimensional shape or have high depth and width. Or like a 4 dimensional shape kind of folds in on itself into the fourth dimension. And then...its...like you know how a cube would be a square?

ALEXANDER: I do!

BARRY: Well it's kind of how that...it's kind of the cube is the square, a four dimensional shape.

ALEXANDER: I don't think its heaven so to speak I think it's just...it was a way of explaining death is scary to people but when you don't have science to explain it to you they make stuff up.

BARRY: This is kind of a fringe that science kind of ends, it's not pseudo-science. Like you said maybe we could invent stuff to perceive spirits and that's not scientific.

ALEXANDER: People used to think the devil was in television. People still do.

BARRY: Maybe those dimensions are separate from our own, maybe instead of having...we've got four dimensions here maybe there's a separate four dimensions that are different.

ALEXANDER: Maybe! Maybe there's another -

BARRY: Maybe there's an infinite number of universes.

ALEXANDER: Maybe there is another separate world of the same four dimensions here.

BARRY: Yeah.

ALEXANDER: Pretty strange.

BARRY: How do we know the rest of the universe doesn't follow different laws of physics from our own? [267]

ALEXANDER: Yeah!

BARRY: We've had to change a few things about how to...change what do you call it don't we? [221]

ALEXANDER: What?

BARRY: Like we had to -

ALEXANDER: Rewrite the -

BARRY: Standardise, standardise the speed of light, and if the speed of light changes we have to change everything else instead.

ALEXANDER: Yeah! Small changes like that could change the rest of the universe.

BARRY: I don't think it is heaven around us. I just think there's more to what you see like...

ALEXANDER: Do you think religion is what shows us that?

BARRY: I don't think its religion no I think religion has just been...one of 2 things.

ALEXANDER: An unscientific way of explaining things.

BARRY: A way to cope with things like loss and morality and a way to exploit people through belief and fear.

ALEXANDER: Old time kings and stuff like that.

BARRY: And Cassius... fight wars against people we don't like.

ALEXANDER: Yeah so...it's been used as a...mechanism of war as much as it as a mechanism of peace.

BARRY: Well then science gives us super weapons so its like...

ALEXANDER: Science could destroy the entire planet with the weapons that science has given us so...

BARRY: Yeah but we'd have no reason to use them perhaps.

ALEXANDER: If you think about maybe a different religion has got the right idea.

BARRY: Which one?

ALEXANDER: Think about Buddhism that's got reincarnation. [356]

BARRY: That's the one that's probably more likely.

ALEXANDER: More likely yeah.

BARRY: Yeah. [330]

ALEXANDER: If you stick around.

BARRY: Maybe their idea of...is being stuck in the same four dimensions until you reach enlightenment. A way to kind of step into the fifth dimension maybe. [382]

ALEXANDER: Maybe that's where you're going a different dimension.

BARRY: You just kind of become a radio wave.

ALEXANDER: That people can't see and...maybe. Maybe they have ways of coming into our dimension and that's where the idea of ghosts comes from.

BARRY: Maybe!

ALEXANDER: That would explain why they say some certain radios can pick up dead people or dogs can see them but we can't.

BARRY: Because dogs are different, dogs can't see the same spectrum of light as us can they?

ALEXANDER: No! [413]

BARRY: They can't see like orange and reds. Its why if you hide an orange toy in the grass they can't see it.

ALEXANDER: Yeah!

BARRY: Maybe something like an animal could smell heaven. Maybe that's why all dogs are good boys! [Laughter]

ALEXANDER: Maybe there is a way to see into heaven but not quite. We're just really narrow minded in a sense.

BARRY: Our brains are totally logical.

ALEXANDER: Not totally!

BARRY: They're more like computers aren't they but there are things that we can't understand.

ALEXANDER: That's when the emotional response kicks in, that's when God is real, ghosts exist. [505]

END

Analysis

There are 921 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 96.3% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 505 words i.e. 54.8% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 382 words i.e. 41.5% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX B2

Y12 Alexander (atheist) & Barry (agnostic) 2

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

ALEXANDER: So what do you think about Jesus then? If he existed?

BARRY: I don't know to be honest.

ALEXANDER: Well I think -

BARRY: The magical powers are probably exaggerated.

ALEXANDER: I think that the person Jesus was real, I think the extent of his miracles so to speak were not entirely true as the Bible says it. It's quite easy to deceive someone with magic quote unquote. Especially back when being literate wasn't common. Not everyone could read and write so...

BARRY: Right what's the evidence for Jesus?

ALEXANDER: Like I think he probably did a few slight of hand tricks to swap a glass of wine with a glass of water. Probably!

BARRY: What about these historical findings do you reckon then - accurate?

ALEXANDER: Well...anyone can write about anything, nowhere does it say these...what book do you read, it says at the front this is fiction or this is non-fiction, especially back in the day.

BARRY: Back in the day.

ALEXANDER: Back in the day when you know I could write a book now, in 1,000 years people could read it and go *Oh Lord of the Rings*, this is a story about how the great...the great ring and stuff happened back in the year 2,000.

BARRY: They won't have the technology to record that and know it was a film and not real.

ALEXANDER: Yeah but if we apply -

BARRY: Whereas they didn't back -

ALEXANDER: Yeah but I'm applying that concept to history.

BARRY: It's just not credible is it really?

ALEXANDER: No I don't think... [51]

BARRY: Its been used for so much evil. [193]

ALEXANDER: I think religion is...I think that is what religion is at the end of the day.

BARRY: To an extent yes but...that's...

ALEXANDER: It's easy to manipulate people.

BARRY: It is very easy to manipulate with religion; people are scared of what they don't understand. [93]

ALEXANDER: What about the miracles?

BARRY: The miracles I believe were...I think were magic tricks. I think -

ALEXANDER: Prehistoric magic tricks.

BARRY: I think he had a slight of...he had some fast hands. He had fast hands, he had a few stooges and he just...you know he got Jebediah to pretend there were no fish in the river, and then when people came around like there was no fish, Jesus had caught all the fish and...maybe he did use that platform for good, maybe he did actually teach some people some valuable lessons. But I feel like...he wasn't the all powerful all righteous demi god that we thought he was. I think he was another person who had - [204]

[Both talking at once]

ALEXANDER: Some people claiming his powers gave them the devil instead of God. What if he was evil? Well it's the same concept isn't it? It's really a matter of perspective. [227]

BARRY: Turning water into wine is a good thing unless you know...you're anti alcohol.

ALEXANDER: You're an alcoholic.

BARRY: You know catching all the fish in the river is good and...he didn't catch all of them. At the end of the day the people in power would have thought he was evil anyway because he was going against their power. He had this holy -

ALEXANDER: Following

BARRY: Magic.

ALEXANDER: He had a following.

BARRY: He had a following yeah that went against them.

ALEXANDER: Like a preacher.

BARRY: That's essentially what he was a preacher. [290]

ALEXANDER: That got a bit too popular.

BARRY: Hmm! A preacher that got really popular yeah.

ALEXANDER: Do you reckon any preacher with a different name could have done the same thing?

BARRY: Yeah with the right techniques.

ALEXANDER: Then it wouldn't be Jesus it would be whatever his name was.

BARRY: It's how fame works. Do you think someone could have done what Michael Jackson did if they were someone else? [356]

END

Analysis

There are 594 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 98.1% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 356 words i.e. 59.9% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 227 words i.e. 38.2% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX B3

Y12 Bruce (atheist) & Wally (agnostic) 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

BRUCE: So what point is Calvin trying to make?

WALLY: That there's dimensions that aren't visible to us.

BRUCE: Yeah I agree. He says seven extra dimensions like shadow...he talks about a shadow world where there is dark matter which we can't see is how he explains it. Do you agree with the judge's comment?

WALLY: Which one of the judge's -

BRUCE: On the contrary I think he's making his point rather well do you agree he was making point well?

WALLY: Yeah I think he was making well. He uses evidence from the book written by Stephen Hawking.

BRUCE: Yeah he gives evidence...well scientific evidence and some say its speculation but others say that its fact so...

WALLY: Do you think there's 11 dimensions?

BRUCE: Yeah! Yeah I do it makes sense.

WALLY: I think it makes sense.

BRUCE: Because like there is so much stuff that we don't know and this is like proof that...well not proof but its...it explains where it could be.

BRUCE: Yeah it definitely gives evidence for it.

WALLY: Yeah like the shadow world is a cool concept.

BRUCE: Everything that we can't see. It's like first dimension -

WALLY: The four originals were height, length, depth and time, and then there are new ones, there are seven others but there's no like...they talk about dark matter and shadow worlds.

BRUCE: But at the minute we're in the third dimension?

WALLY: We're in the -

BRUCE: Are we in the third one?

WALLY: We live in the shadow world and everything else is the seven missing dimensions I think. [194]

BRUCE: I'm pretty sure the fourth dimension is everything that we can't see or is that everything -

WALLY: I think Calvin says that above there is seven missing dimensions which are outside are vision so we're in the...the shadow world... four dimensions we can see, but there are seven more we can't see. [248] So like...so...however some Christians think that heaven is all around us but we can't see it. What do you think?

BRUCE: I don't know about the heaven is all around us thing but its...

WALLY: Because that's based on a religion and it depends if you believe in religion to believe that that's true. So...uh...I don't really know because there is no scientific evidence to back up religion but there's no...do you think science is the truth?

BRUCE: Yeah science is the truth. [302]

WALLY: Yeah! Whether it exists or not science works anyway so...its backed up by mathematics, and physics, and science and stuff like that.

BRUCE: I agree there's no...if we had proof of heaven I'd believe it but I need physical proof that the shadow world stuff kind of gives some evidence for there being some sort of heaven but there's no like...there's no like proof of God or Jesus or anything like that, or after life.

WALLY: To be honest I don't think heaven exists. After life does definitely exist because when we die we rot down and we turn into carbon, and carbon gets recycled. So then we become other things.

BRUCE: I dunno! I don't think there is ever any true after life, I think like the second you die that's it, there is nothing. Yeah there is nothing but then as soon as all your stuff goes on your body then you turn into something else...

WALLY: Oh yeah; [459] but there's no like consciousness about it.

BRUCE: True yeah there's no consciousness.

WALLY: You live in a way...until you get put...there may be a chance that there's like...I don't know I always feel like once you die you might come back as someone else but you have no idea at all.

BRUCE: Yeah!

WALLY: Your consciousness kind of gets moved because you're just carbon floating around the universe.

BRUCE: That's quite a cool idea. [522] Anything else you want to say about it?

WALLY: Not really! Um...about the dimensions well there's definitely different dimensions.

BRUCE: It's the same as asking if aliens exist I mean if you say that aliens don't exist I think you're kind of like stupid. [64]

WALLY: Yeah you might not be able to see it, like he talks about not seeing television signals but they're there, that could be like aliens, we might not see aliens but they might be there. We can't see heaven but it might be there.

BRUCE: Even there is no physical proof like our elements in our body is so common throughout the universe that we could just be someone a billion miles away.

WALLY: Yeah!

BRUCE: But we could like look dolphins or whatever.

WALLY: Yeah!

BRUCE: We probably would if we were on like a water planet something like that.

WALLY: But then yeah definitely with the dimensions...

BRUCE: It makes sense because it's just empty out there, the second you leave earth everything disappears into like...there are planets and the stars, but everything else is just empty.

WALLY: But then it's the same with dimensions that...like the same with parallel universes, we don't really have physical proof of parallel universes but there is definitely -

BRUCE: Yeah there was...[671] is it Schrodinger's box with the cat, have you heard it? [89]

WALLY: Yeah that's like...that's his evidence for dimensions that you don't know what's happening in the box until you open it.

BRUCE: I agree with that. With the parallel universes though it's like even though there is no physical proof...if there is there's an infinite amount so...

WALLY: Anything can happen. But we don't know it's happening.

BRUCE: True!

WALLY: Yeah its pretty good. [730]

BRUCE: Is there 'owt else?

WALLY: I don't think so.

BRUCE: Anything else you want to say?

WALLY: No not really!

BRUCE: I think we've talked about all the points but -

WALLY: What does the Chief Prosecutor...oh the Chief Prosecutor doesn't agree, think there is evidence, which I guess you could agree with.

BRUCE: But he doesn't agree.

WALLY: Yeah he says as my learned colleague reminded us yesterday we deal with facts, with evidence.

BRUCE: It's not true though, we don't need facts to be honest.

WALLY: Yeah I think as long as it's like...he kind of gives evidence in a way -

BRUCE: Or you don't need physical proof as long as its logic.

WALLY: Sometimes you can't prove things that are true.

BRUCE: Exactly!

WALLY: But then that kind of contradicts the thing we said about Christians where we don't think heaven is real.

BRUCE: Yeah I guess...yeah...I hadn't thought of that. [773]

WALLY: But the thing about heaven is, it's always said to be such a big mighty power however like...and that everyone who dies...well everyone who dies who is allowed to go there goes there. But there's never any...no one knows because you've got to be dead to know. Like the supernatural, about ghosts and stuff, there is still no proof, no one has ever really proved to talk to any ghosts or anything.

BRUCE: But with heaven it's kind of just like one religion saying right you can't do this, or else you won't get this. It's kind of just a form of blackmail. [221]

WALLY: Yeah it feels like...yeah...the Bible seems to say that you can only do certain things to get into heaven.

BRUCE: It used to be back -

WALLY: So then the Christians will follow it.

BRUCE: Back in the 20s - [809]

WALLY: I think religion is more of a cultural thing to be honest. [233]

BRUCE: Yeah back in the 20s or whatever when...or back whenever, the 1800s when people were gay and they didn't...people -

WALLY: Oh yeah they were outcasts then.

BRUCE: They were outcasts and sometimes people would kill them and stuff like that because it was seen as a sin. But then you revert to like nowadays, and it's like people are celebrated for it because -

WALLY: Yeah there's a whole movement for it.

BRUCE: Yeah exactly! But religion is more of a cultural thing than it is I don't know a logical thing.

WALLY: Its just what believe in and stuff.

BRUCE: Exactly! Depending on the time period or the acceptance of different people.

WALLY: Yeah! Yeah!

BRUCE: In society.

WALLY: It's kind of the same with what's going on with Trump right now, I mean...Trump now he's been elected it's just sparked a big movement in...kind of a racist and homophobic movement within America. There are people rioting, there are people beating up gay people or whatever.

BRUCE: Yeah! [969]

WALLY: And it's all because of how people react to different situations. And it's their beliefs acting on society, when it's not true. But sometimes they're provoked by religion as well. It's more of how you should act than...how you should depending on society rather than your morals. [280]

BRUCE: Do you overall agree with supernatural ideas, like ghosts -

WALLY: Yeah of course.

BRUCE: Myths?

WALLY: Yeah, like...supernatural.

BRUCE: Yeah of course. I think it exists for definite.

WALLY: Yeah there's always speculation, some of the proof, like some of the photos and stuff they're always...considered to not to be true. They feel like they are... coming into contact with it at the time.

BRUCE: Yeah! [1019]

END

Analysis

There are 1440 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 90.2% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 1019 words i.e. 70.8% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 280 words i.e. 19.4% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX B4

Y12 Bruce (atheist) & Wally (agnostic) 2

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

BRUCE: To what extent do you agree or disagree that this is good evidence for Jesus?

WALLY: Uh...well I don't really know to be honest because there is no actual physical proof, it's sort of just like old stuff from old times that people are trying to transcribe and all this stuff.

BRUCE: Yeah and a lot of the evidence focused solely on dates but it could be for all we know that someone has just exaggerated it as well and that they just...because you can't really trust word of mouth if that makes sense.

WALLY: Yeah I get you.

BRUCE: But um...weird because there's kind of real evidence for it but then it contradicts the fact that there is not evidence for it, that there is no like...evidence that Jesus existed and did what he did.

WALLY: Yeah at the exhibit CCT one, where it's on about the Bible actually being wrong, so that could also mean it's wrong about Jesus as well because it justified like slavery and stuff and then history judged it as wrong, therefore it could be judged wrong about Jesus as well. [132]

BRUCE: Do you think he is real or he was real?

WALLY: Uh...I think he was real but not to the extent that the Bible said, I think he was a person that went around teaching and stuff but never did any miracles, they were just kind of – [36]

BRUCE: What would have been more realistic is like he would have been like the Martin Luther King of his time -

WALLY: Like he would have been a good person and a public figure.

BRUCE: Yeah! [166]

WALLY: But then since back in the day they were like uh...they over emphasised like the role of certain people, like they worshipped different people. There was no Jesus, there was no God back then. If it was happening then, that might have been reason that everything about him has been over exaggerated like the fact that he could turn water into wine and he did this, he did that, he died for us and he went to heaven all this stuff.

BRUCE: What do you think about the people such as Tacitus, Josephus and... talking about him. They all said he was real.

WALLY: Well they say he is real, but they never said that the stuff that he did was real.

BRUCE: The third quote says he performed miracles.

WALLY: That might have just been to conform to society. [151]

BRUCE: Yeah it might have been like...he might have been like -

WALLY: Or he saw something happen which he didn't think could happen before.

BRUCE: True!

WALLY: He might have been like oh yeah this guy says that he turned water into wine so I reckon its true. [211]

BRUCE: Do you think that he rose from the dead?

WALLY: Uh...I don't know he might have not been dead. There could have just...that's the thing you don't know.

BRUCE: Yeah there's no proof at all is there? There's the Bible but that's it really.

WALLY: It's kind of the same as like scientific stuff, like we know that dinosaurs existed from bones and stuff but we don't know what colour they were. [196]

BRUCE: Yeah you can't conceive what they actually looked like.

WALLY: Exactly! So we're just filling in the gaps that's what society does.

BRUCE: Yeah which is kind of what it feels like at the minute. I don't think he rose from the dead, I think it's pretty impossible. I think he was crucified though.

WALLY: Yeah because the Romans would have hated him. They would have hated a public figure, they wouldn't have like the sway of the public, they would have wanted them on their side. [310]

BRUCE: The enemies have even admitted that he was a powerful teacher and a miracle worker.

WALLY: But a miracle worker that can be interpreted in different ways. [207]

BRUCE: That could just be that he worked out certain cures for things that no one else -

WALLY: A doctor is a miracle worker.

BRUCE: Yeah! Yeah! [335]

WALLY: And depending on what they do I mean his words could like make him a miracle worker but not his actions. He could have made people believe they could do something which led to them actually doing it.

BRUCE: Yeah I know.

WALLY: What are your views about Jesus?

BRUCE: Uh...I don't know I'm not really that religious but I think he's more like a symbol of hope for people to be honest. I believe he was real but I don't believe he was some powerful talker, kind of like...I'm trying to think if there is anyone else back in history. Like um...

WALLY: He wasn't a god.

BRUCE: Yeah. Do you believe in God as well?

WALLY: No not really.

BRUCE: Well there's got to be something I mean I think I believe in Jesus more than God. Like Jesus was a real – [324]

WALLY: Yeah there is more proof that Jesus existed.

BRUCE: Person that walked amongst us yeah. Whereas God's hypothetical, maybe he did this, or maybe he did that, or...Jesus is a lot more he did do it.

WALLY: I feel like it's more persuasion, like its...a thing used to make people behave, like oh yeah God wouldn't like you doing that.

BRUCE: Yeah I think all religions are a bit like that though. They all have certain rules.

WALLY: True!

BRUCE: Some have their...what is it...is it Lent?

WALLY: Yeah!

BRUCE: Things like that. [425]

WALLY: Is that the one where they don't have to eat -

BRUCE: Yeah they don't eat while the sun's out, it's all rules like that. Each religion has it.

WALLY: You'd just get a bit peckish wouldn't you?

BRUCE: Yeah! But yeah I'm trying to think if there is anyone else in history like Jesus that could be seen as not being meaningful.

WALLY: As what?

BRUCE: That could be seen as like not being...like being real but not being as a real as the stories say.

WALLY: Yeah true!

BRUCE: I'm trying to think if there is anyone else like that. [361]

WALLY: There are all these people like Alexander and the Great, and things like that, all the people that you hear invaded countries like...

BRUCE: You weren't there.

WALLY: Yeah.

BRUCE: Its all word of mouth.

WALLY: They're all stories. People's opinions. It's basically just a big game of Chinese Whispers to be honest.

BRUCE: Yeah its passed down, and down and down to the point where none of its real anymore.

WALLY: Yeah it's all -

BRUCE: As is depicted he's a white guy with a beard, but he's from Jerusalem.

WALLY: Yeah there is some people from the Middle East they made a...not a sketch like a computer generated image of what he'd actually look like and he was much darker skinned. He looked like...

BRUCE: A bit yeah.

WALLY: So that makes him more believable, like things like that which makes sense. [561]

BRUCE: Yeah but it's just...I think like the...the American and British cultures have adopted him as their own figure. [379]

WALLY: Yeah!

BRUCE: As they did back in the day because they wouldn't have known anything whenever it was, 2000 years ago.

WALLY: Yeah I guess no one in Britain or anywhere apart from really Jerusalem might not have known about - [599]

BRUCE: No one from Jerusalem would have just sent the UK a letter saying yeah we've got this guy that turns water into wine. It would probably have been a much bigger event as well. He would have been more celebrated to be honest, he wouldn't have been killed if he was. If he was a god I think he would have persuaded -

WALLY: That's why the Romans killed him because he annoyed them.

BRUCE: Exactly!

WALLY: But that kind of counters the fact that he was a miracle worker.

BRUCE: Yeah the religious teachers didn't like his teachings. [400]

WALLY: Yeah I don't know...I believe about the person but not about what he did.

BRUCE: Exactly yeah! [689]

END

Analysis

There are 1269 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 85.8% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 689 words i.e. 54.3% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 400 words i.e. 31.5% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX B5

Y12 Warold (non-practising Christian) & May (non-practising Catholic) 1 Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

MAY: So I think Calvin is trying to say that...even though you can't see things it doesn't mean they're not there and you need to not focus on facts as much and just kind of believe things.

WAROLD: Alright so do you agree with this?

MAY: I agree with what the judge is saying because you can't just...change your whole beliefs on myths but then again if you don't open your mind to things you'll never know what's out there.

WAROLD: Yeah I agree with that last sentence because you don't know what you do after you live, so where you go, do you just like disappear or go to heaven? I think Calvin is trying to say that there's more dimensions so I agree with him.

MAY: Yeah I agree but there's no evidence of it, you can't...I don't understand where it all came from, surely before all this, before there was science to prove or disprove things where did the first idea of it come from? [56]

WAROLD: Well me personally I'm not sure and I can't prove it because I'm not a scientist so...its only our opinion though isn't it? And...because there's so many dimensions like Stephen Hawking was saying, there are 11 dimensions, so...he's a scientist and he's obviously done some research into it and the chief is saying...he objects but he's got no proof that there isn't on the other hand.

MAY: Yeah and the judge goes on to say that he thinks Calvin makes his point well because he's not giving evidence of it, he's just explaining his opinion in a different way which is changing the judge's view of it so I think he does that well too.

WAROLD: Yeah! So some Christians think that heaven is all around us but we can't justify that it actually is. [197] What do you think about that?

MAY: I think that it's a good way of thinking about the world because it can imply that there's goodness all around us and around everyone. So even if someone was tempted by something bad, the goodness of heaven would change them but...then again there's no proof of that either.

WAROLD: Yeah there's no proof it's just that optimistic...it would be a nice thing to go there because everyone says oh you'll meet your family up there. It's so it could be really nice to be honest. Yeah! Um...

MAY: It's nice to think of it but um...I think it's more -

WAROLD: Supernatural? [297]

MAY: Yeah there might not be proof of it but its...if people want to believe it then they will because it makes them feel better.

WAROLD: Yeah I think it helps people with their life as well, they don't think of where their parents, or family members have gone, they think of it as where they are and the nice things about them.

MAY: Yeah and that they've gone to like a happy place?

WAROLD: Yeah! Safe and happy place yeah. [374] So do you believe in ghosts?

MAY: I do but I don't...it depends...I don't know, do you?

WAROLD: Yeah I believe in ghosts yeah because there's got to be someone there, that's got to be someone around us because things don't happen for a reason, so someone has to change things, what's happened to everyone. [93]

MAY: So you're like taking on the view that things can't just -

WAROLD: Happen for a reason.

MAY: They've got to be -

WAROLD: Yeah they've got to be like tampered with.

MAY: So they've got to have proof?

WAROLD: Yeah!

MAY: Right so then that comes back to the point Calvin is trying to make then.

WAROLD: Yeah exactly! Calvin is trying to make that...there is someone there, there is something out there, there are more dimensions. He's trying to say like...there are things like we can't hear, for example, a dog whistle.

MAY: Yeah! But they're always there.

WAROLD: Yeah.

MAY: So even though we've not got any actual proof of them -

WAROLD: Yeah they're still there because -

MAY: Offer an explanation for things. [490]

WAROLD: I think in a couple of years or however many years, there will be an explanation for them because as like we're getting advance technology things like this, what we've just been saying, there are lots of things around us right now that we can't see. And this proves that there are other things that could be

living...like he was saying about signals for radio, that's all around us but say a ghost that could be all around us we don't know. The same thing.

MAY: Yeah I think it matters where you are and who else is around you because um...opinions are based on other people's views too.

WAROLD: Yeah so oh god...so May I was just thinking about the world's population and the size of how its grown over the years, do you think that's had an impact on what we're saying here? [213]

MAY: I think it has because the more people there are in the world the more views there are about things and then there's likely to be more arguments about it or debates about it.

WAROLD: I agree. Um...so what can we do to lesser the opinion could we lesser the population somehow?

MAY: Maybe not lesser the population but just give everyone an opportunity to speak their mind on topics like this. [583]

WAROLD: Because people for example, in the early days with the blacks for example, they got racially abused didn't they, they didn't let them have opinions, so like now everyone has their own view and opinions, it's like everyone is treated equally isn't it? [256]

MAY: Yeah!

WAROLD: So then that backs up like what the chief could say or Calvin.

MAY: Yeah I agree. [600]

WAROLD: If he was you what could he do...what would you do to the population of the world? I know this is going off topic but...?

MAY: Yeah um...not really sure on that. I think again without any scientific proof coming back to the discussion...you'd struggle to do anything. But then if you don't open your mind to it you're going to struggle too.

WAROLD: What I would do I would try and create a disease and make it spread around the world because I believe that there is someone with like that power to do that and maybe we can't see it in them which is referring back to these.

MAY: Do you think that links to the supernatural too?

WAROLD: Yeah! Because someone has the power to do this and like you know the fictional superheroes like that, I know its fictional...yeah...and things like that but I think there is something out there which can do to the same effect as that. Yeah I think it's a weird subject because like there are so many views and so many different various things can happen. We don't know where to look, we

don't know where to...how to discover it. We don't have the technology to discover it. We don't have the technology to look around us, we can't see.

MAY: I think people when you ask people about this topic, they judge their views on other people so if someone had heard about, Professor Hawking's research they might then agree with him because he's a respected scientist whereas if they'd not heard of him they might...have a completely different view.

WAROLD: Yeah exactly! I agree with that because people like...are compliant so...and they'd conform they'd agree with everything they're saying because he's so high at what he does so they'd just copy what he's doing. [290]

MAY: Because they believe it's right.

WAROLD: So they believe it's right.

MAY: Like social desirability and stuff.

WAROLD: Exactly yeah! [617]

END

Analysis

There are 1237 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 73.3% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 617 words i.e. 49.9% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 290 words i.e. 23.4% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX B6

Y12 Warold (non-practising Christian) & May (non-practising Catholic) 2 Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

WAROLD: Do you believe in Jesus?

MAY: I do to an extent because there's clear research to show that at least people are thinking he's real; but then again the technology today it could be fake.

WAROLD: Right the technology has proven that.

MAY: But how do you know that?

WAROLD: No I'm saying that the technology has proven that...what's happened, like Jesus and everything like that its more than likely fake because if you think about it, you think about it in your head um...he just magick'd a world out of nowhere. What about every other world, like thousands and billions how did he make all them?

MAY: Yeah it's a lot for one man to do.

WAROLD: Can you justify slavery?

MAY: Slavery from Jesus.

WAROLD: No just slavery.

MAY: Um...I don't see the point in it, I don't understand why it happened. I don't get where the idea came from that one race is better than another.

WAROLD: I agree! I agree!

MAY: Why do you ask?

WAROLD: No it just came up in the text that I read saying how to justify...he said the Bible can justify slavery and I disagree with that because nothing can justify slavery. It's the wrong act no one is better than any other and anyone should know that Jesus so if he's saying it's all about equality, everyone is the same why would he write something... Bible. [164]

MAY: Yeah maybe that could go against the evidence to say...no that could go for the evidence to say that he's real because if people are so religious and have been for hundreds of years and slavery actually happened maybe they were just following what he said.

WAROLD: In the Bible no one talks about another race, for example, a black person; do you know what I mean?

MAY: That could maybe show that it was like white supremacy then because if any other race wasn't mentioned and its meant to be this whole...um...like religious book and its meant to be like what Christians are all about – [113]

WAROLD: But where did they come from then? Where would it start? Would he just magic it out of nowhere?

MAY: What the Bible?

WAROLD: No a different race.

MAY: Oh no...it's like different areas isn't it? Like different places in the world.

WAROLD: Yeah but it was all one place. If you think about it...so if Jesus created the world or God created the world they would have made everyone Christian Catholic wouldn't they? Why is everyone Jewish, Muslim, different races and all that?

MAY: Maybe they had like...the belief that people can choose their own religion and they weren't going to force people to be Christians if they didn't want to be because then they wouldn't have the same morals as everyone else and that could like divided the religion.

WAROLD: So people have a unique background?

MAY: Yeah!

WAROLD: Yeah but its created millions and millions and millions of deaths, why would he want that, why would he want to create that many deaths? [282]

MAY: Yes I don't know but -

WAROLD: It can't be justified can it really?

MAY: Religion seems to be the cause of like every war and why would someone who's saying that peace is like the best thing and wants it let all them people die? It's not fair really. [162]

WAROLD: So do you think he's still around or...you can tap into it?

MAY: I don't know its...it's one of them questions isn't it that's like...its yes or no but there is an in between.

WAROLD: I agree. Do you do any sport?

MAY: No!

WAROLD: Do you not I thought you played football?

MAY: No!

WAROLD: Do you not?

MAY: I did not any more.

WAROLD: Oh do you support anyone?

MAY: Um...not really.

WAROLD: Oh fair enough!

MAY: You could link sport to evidence because there's like statistics and that nowadays to show that one team is more likely to win than another but...when...when analysing data were there papers real from that data, they've still got the technology to do that but it's not down to probability it's down to actual science. So you can say that a piece of paper is actually from that time because they can date it with the paper, it's not down to chance. It's there in these extracts, they're saying that it's actually proven that the papers are from that time but they can't prove that Jesus wrote it. [389]

WAROLD: Yeah because it's just...

MAY: Yeah it's gone back to probability that he did write it but it's not certain. [181]

WAROLD: So...do we know what these Bibles were written in? For example, if they were written in pen, pen wasn't like developed then, it would have been...I don't know what it would have been back then.

MAY: I would say back then like quills and ink and stuff.

WAROLD: Yeah definitely!

MAY: So -

WAROLD: Blood!

MAY: In like a little stone.

WAROLD: Yeah exactly, Yeah if we just stop it. Goodnight!

END

Analysis

There are 804 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 70.9% of this conversation.**

***Cumulative talk comprises 181 words i.e. 22.5% of the above conversation.
Exploratory talk comprises 389 words i.e. 48.4% of the above conversation.***

APPENDIX C1

Megan (atheist) and Joe (Evangelical Christian) Y9 Municipal Borough School Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Megan: So to what extent do I agree or disagree that this is good evidence about Jesus?

Joe: I believe it's good evidence, a lot of it is eyewitness so people could have just come up and said this isn't true. And there would be lots of opposition to it. Language studies that's good for dating it, but it doesn't necessarily show that it's anymore true apart from eyewitnesses were still alive. Um...and I think it's quite telling that the enemies of Jesus admit that he was powerful and he was a miracle worker and that people can deny this because he performed so many miracles so they had to say that his power came from the devil. So I think that's quite...

Megan: Yeah, but I think it's interesting here that there is genuine evidence of him being a real person because it says that they wrote about him because he annoyed them, but people wouldn't write about an imaginary made up person so he's obviously that's a lot of evidence that he was real. [156]

Joe: Yeah! So if you take...you can't deny that Jesus is a real person?

Megan: No!

Joe: So you have to either really believe that either he is who he says he is, he's just manipulative, or he's just a bit crazy because he claimed to be God; he couldn't have just been a good person.

Megan: But then if it was just him saying he could work miracles then maybe you would believe that he was just a bit crazy; but then there's like all this evidence here where his enemies have said he can do it. [236]

Joe: Yeah!

Megan: I can see your friends saying you could perform miracles because they're your friends, they don't want you to look stupid, but then if your enemies admit that as well then it seems pretty clear that it must be at least partly true.

Joe: I think it also shows that so many people witness the miracles that they can't just deny it they have to come up with some of the answer to it.

Megan: Yeah, but then also the thing about how each of the books has been written much earlier than what people thought, if they were written that early then they can't miss many details and they probably didn't have much time to like create new details so fairly accurate accounts. I think it's interesting that religious leaders didn't like his teachings. [370]

Joe: Yeah it's because...well...obviously Christians believe that Jewish...because they've got the god of Judaism so it was all...everyone was Jewish at that stage before Jesus. So they didn't like firstly someone claiming that they were God because today if someone came around saying – [412]

Megan: They would not be received well.

Joe: Yeah! Also he said...he wasn't particularly complimentary about them he called them like...he called them snakes or something. So...because they were...a lot of them were just following rules but not really spiritually, morally doing the right thing, they were just following the rules and that was it.

Megan: I should imagine they partly didn't like him then because he followed the rules but also spiritually believed in them and came out with new rules and stuff. Also he was...they couldn't pin anything against him which would have been quite frustrating. [95]

Joe: I would imagine so, if someone went around today claiming to be God and then they literally had nothing to put against them they'd find it very annoying. They'd probably like make some case up, also it...he sort of went...he wasn't what they thought God was like because they think God is this glorious person; religious teachers are the only people that are important, and it's all glorious and everything but Jesus wasn't like that. I mean he was born in a stable and he frequently ate with taxpayers and sinners that...social outcasts. He rode into Jerusalem not on a big horse, on a donkey. So it was about showing how humble he was and about how he was human and we could relate to him.

Megan: I find it interesting that obviously Jesus as a person changed people's views of God so much; because if we hadn't had any of this evidence people would probably see God as a very different being than we do now. [578]

Joe: Also Jesus has probably had the biggest impact of any person in history -

Megan: Yeah, because Christianity is a massive religion now.

Joe: Yeah, the rest of the world was governed by the Church for ages. [130]

Megan: Yeah and...

Joe: So there must have been....a lot of the evidence must have been trustworthy if so many people believed it and changed so many people's lives.

Megan: I mean it must have been believable for that many people to just...listen to it because you know nowadays we have lots and lots of evidence that proves certain things but people still don't believe in them because some people maybe don't think the evidence is correct; whereas this everyone seemed to agree with it. [185]

Joe: So what are your views about Jesus?

Megan: See personally I've never really...I do believe he was a real person; I don't believe in the whole miracles thing but I find it interesting here that it says that it seemed to be highly recognised that he did perform miracles. Maybe people don't believe in that because you've never seen it happen; and that's probably maybe just why because you've never seen people perform those miracles before. [646]

Joe: Yeah! It's interesting how people say oh miracles happen, don't happen. I've never seen a miracle therefore they can't happen. But there are plenty of things that I haven't seen and I still believe that they are possible.

Megan: It's like science isn't it? People...you've never seen an atom but everyone still believes they're there. Like you get told that in science, you just go oh yeah okay! But then if you get told by someone oh yeah miracles are real you just go no they're not! It's stupid why are you saying that?

Joe: Also then if you believe that he performed miracles what's the next step after that? How did he perform miracles I guess because if there's no God how can miracles be possible?

Megan: Yeah! I suppose the fact that he did perform miracles could be one of those things which would go into proving the existence of God. And in that case I suppose science would help you there quite a lot because people do argue that how did the Big Bang happen if there's no such thing as God; like how is our universe here? [373]

Joe: What went bang?

Megan: Exactly! So I think that's interesting that actually this could back up a lot of things that people have been claiming for a long time. [398]

Joe: So yeah as a Christian I believe Jesus is the Son of God and got resurrected for a lot of this evidence. [420]

Megan: I mean I never believe in it; but the thing is if there is evidence there to say yes this happened, well why shouldn't you believe in that if there are people there with scientific claims and back up; and then there's a religious back up as well you may as well believe it. There's no evidence to suggest that it didn't happen.

Joe: Also then if it did happen what does that mean about how he claimed to be the Son of God. If he...if he...performed miracles and everybody saw that and then he also came to be the Son of God, which you can't prove -

Megan: No!

Joe: How does that...do the miracles mean he's the Son of God or does it mean he's got...he is a prophet or something? [774]

Megan: I mean either way I think the miracles mean there's obviously something there because people can't just perform miracles out of nowhere, it's not like you wake up one morning and you're like oh yeah I'm going to go and perform some miracles now. A normal day! It's like there's obviously something that allows you to perform miracles, whether that's God or not, it's different, but its more the fact that God is a possibility and that claim is now backed up by science which interestingly people believe.

Joe: Yeah a lot of people say that oh yeah scientists proved religion, how can you still believe in it? Its old fashioned but interestingly they go hand in hand most of the time.

Megan: But the thing is science is...like 300 years ago the scientific belief system was completely different to what it is now, and people believed it because it was science. So like if 300 years ago someone came up to you and said the world is flat, if you sail too far you'll sail off the edge, everyone believed it. They were like okay fine! But now if you said that people would just laugh at you and go that's completely ridiculous! So I think it's one of those things that you know we think miracles can happen now, we think none of this real now, but maybe in like a few hundred years we'll all agree with this and go oh that's ridiculous people didn't believe in that back then. [671]

Researcher: Okay I'll need to bring it to a halt; alright.

END

Words = 1518

Analysis

Research Question 1

To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?

There are **1518 words** in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 95.2% of this conversation.**

Research Question 2

To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

The *first strategy* is to discount extraneous conversation such as declaratory statements and the *second strategy* is to discount conversation that is termed “disputational talk” which Mercer (1995:104) describes as being ‘...characterised by disagreement and individual decision making... [and] short exchanges consisting of assertions and challenges or counter assertions.’ The *third strategy* is to identify conversation that can be construed as “cumulative talk” which takes place when students ‘build positively but uncritically on what the other has said.’ This type of talk is ‘...characterized by repetitions, confirmations and elaborations’ (Mercer 1995: 104). This type of talk is highlighted **thus**. **Cumulative talk comprises 671 words i.e. 44.2% of the above conversation.** The *fourth strategy* is to identify conversation that can be construed as Mercer (1995: 104) contends that with “exploratory talk” in which the students ‘...engage critically but constructively with each other’s ideas.’ This is typified by ‘statements and suggestions [being] offered for joint consideration [and] these may be challenged and counter-challenged, but challenges are justified and alternative hypotheses are offered’ (Mercer 1995: 104). This type of talk is highlighted **thus**.¹⁷⁷ **Exploratory talk comprises 774 words i.e. 51.0% of the above conversation.**

¹⁷⁷ When young people are trying out ideas and modifying them as they speak... their delivery will be hesitant, broken, and full of dead-ends and changes of direction...Exploratory talk is hesitant and incomplete because it enables the speaker to try out ideas, to hear how they sound, to see what others make of them, to arrange information and ideas into different patterns. (Barnes 2008: 5)

APPENDIX C2

Y9 Megan (atheist) and Sheldon (evangelical Christian)

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

SHELDON: Okay what do you think?

MEGAN: I think it's interesting. It's interesting that the idea that a lot of people have dismissed as like oh it's not real, could actually be real.

SHELDON: Yeah I guess for some people heaven just seems so unrealistic you know? Like...for me...in the Bible it just...it's all pointing to heaven and this world is just like first and then there will be heaven when God remakes it.

MEGAN: Yeah but I find it interesting that there is... scientific evidence to actually back up the point of this could just be like a little stepping stone onto something else.

SHELDON: Yeah it's just...yeah normally just science and religion just clash so much and then you've got this which is -

MEGAN: Literally proving -

SHELDON: Backing it up I guess but yeah...

MEGAN: Like 11 dimension that's a lot in it?

SHELDON: It is but then I suppose it's like...it does say that there are things you don't hear, it's like yeah you don't hear a dog whistle and you never really think about that. ...and then dogs do. Very strange!

MEGAN: I guess its kind... a lot bigger, like a whole new earth, a whole new world. There's something like radio waves or something and I guess you can see how its similar you know?

SHELDON: Yeah and it's like -

MEGAN: A similar concept.

SHELDON: It does work as a point as well, the point of like there could be a different world that could last forever, it actually does work with the evidence. [187]

MEGAN: Yeah but then the question is like...for me this new world would be heaven but like...for you say do you believe in heaven? What would you think that...what do you think the other dimensions would be or this new world would be?

SHELDON: But then the thing is there is like the concept of the afterlife as a whole and - [115]

MEGAN: Yeah I guess so. I guess this would change the minds of people who think right after death that's it, end of life altogether. I suppose it proves that there's something else because why would there be a whole universe like around us if we're just going to live and die and nothing else is going to happen.

SHELDON: And I mean if this is a shadow world then there must be a way of getting to the other world otherwise why would this just be a shadow of that? So...I suppose death is...like as good a way as any to get to the shadow world really.

MEGAN: Yeah that could be like...say this world is a stepping stone to the next world, death could be a stepping stone to our new life maybe. But I think it actually does...like all of the points laid out here do genuinely make a lot of sense because it's like yeah it sounded really confusing but -

SHELDON: Then you read it and it actually works so well. Yeah. [312]

[Reading something out here]

MEGAN: Okay so...I guess it's questionable because there are a lot of things that scientists think that...like aren't necessarily true.

SHELDON: Yeah think back 200 years and everyone was like convinced the world was flat and we're quite sure that's not true now so...they could be wrong about that but it's interesting that there is evidence that can back it up now even if it's not real. [198]

MEGAN: Yeah I agree. Yeah it's just...it's really exciting that...yeah it's just being back up by it I think.

SHELDON: I find it interesting that people have put a lot of research into like trying to prove that there is no such thing as heaven and then here comes a load of research that proves that actually maybe there is.

MEGAN: Yeah I agree with that.

SHELDON: I think it's interesting because people have devoted their entire life trying to prove that everything laid out by religion isn't true and then someone has gone well actually that might be wrong.

MEGAN: Yeah! I guess like for people who have tried so hard to prove that heaven isn't real, Christianity is all fake, this is all we've got and stuff, I guess for them like what evidence would they have had to prove that you know?

SHELDON: Because the thing is you could say oh its science but then it's like it's not because if -

MEGAN: This is also science. [475]

SHELDON: If heaven is an afterlife how do you know that there's no such afterlife? Because the only way of getting to that would be dying and like how are you supposed to record your findings if you're dead?

MEGAN: Yeah I guess so.

SHELDON: I don't really know how they've figured out there's 11 dimensions and then immediately 4...okay what do we already know about religion, about science, about this world that could possibly link to there being more than just 3 or 4, or however many it is.

MEGAN: I think it's strange to think that we are generally living in 3 dimensions because you only really see it as one, and then you go wait a minute no it's not just one because if it was one everything would be flat.

SHELDON: I definitely see it as 3 because if you think...if you just think about 3D then I guess -

MEGAN: Yeah! The aspect of time and stuff, and then...it's a bit confusing really. [600]

SHELDON: I find it interesting because then all of the stuff here talking about like multiple dimensions could mean that things people have completely ruled out as scientifically impossible like say the existence of like ghosts or supernatural beings could actually exist and its sort of science contradicting science in that sense.

MEGAN: I guess so but personally I wouldn't believe that ghosts are real. [299]

SHELDON: No the same but it's interesting.

MEGAN: But yeah it could be a possible theory for like one of the dimensions really. Maybe it could be like our 4 and then time, oh no time is one of the 4. And then like the kind of middle bit between that and the new world which could be like...the kind of afterlife bit.

SHELDON: I do think it's interesting the entire thing because like you don't think of the world as 11 dimensional but now apparently it is.

MEGAN: Well the universe is 11 dimensional.

SHELDON: Oh it's just really...its baffling really. [697]

MEGAN: I don't understand how you'd figure out there's 11 dimensions it's like how would you get from a point of just thinking about something to thinking oh yeah the universe has 11 dimensions. How does your train of thought go into that?

SHELDON: How do you think they've proved that its 11 dimensions do you think it's just a theory? [358]

MEGAN: I think you'd have to do maths and stuff.

SHELDON: Does it say it's just a theory?

MEGAN: I dunno' because I think you'd actually have to do like maths and all that to try and make the dimensions real but I don't know how that would work?

SHELDON: Oh yeah look it says Stephen Hawking says that we may live in a 11 dimensional universe so it's not proven.

MEGAN: I don't really see how you would prove that because it's like...you can't -

SHELDON: You can't exactly travel to the universe.

MEGAN: You can't just be like I'm going to go to the seventh dimension and prove everyone is real. [796]

SHELDON: Do you think people could be converted to Christianity through knowing this?

MEGAN: I think it is possible if you look at it and go well here's...you've been told all your life that heaven is impossible but now here's some evidence that actually maybe it is.

SHELDON: Would you re...

MEGAN: I think I would reconsider some of my beliefs.

SHELDON: What are your beliefs at the moment?

MEGAN: I'm an atheist at the moment but I think it could make you reconsider some of your beliefs along the lines of maybe there is something else after death. Maybe death just isn't the end of it because...because always say that living forever sounds weird. But then the concept of nothing forever is also equally weird. [430]

SHELDON: Yeah!

MEGAN: There kind of has to be something.

SHELDON: I feel like if we've lived this whole life, it can't just stop there you know?

MEGAN: No because if you think about everything people do in the course of their lives there's no way that nothing happens after death. I think something has to happen and this is like just evidence that maybe there is something else after death and that maybe what everyone has been told about oh yeah when you die there's no afterlife it's just sort of that's it, it's actually not true.

SHELDON: Yeah!

MEGAN: Which is again science contradicting science which is quite funny.

SHELDON: I just...feel that it's a change of mind... its really...just baffling really. I personally think it would change the minds of a lot of people about what happens after death. Just stuff like that you know? [937]

MEGAN: But then the things on this sheet would make you think because it does say here like you know when earthquakes occur you hear nothing but then when you think about it, there must be a noise because that much movement like it's all the plates moving around underneath the earth, that must make a lot of noise but you don't hear a thing. And then it also talks about dog whistles which could suggest that maybe the dogs hear more than the humans. Maybe there is like 5 dimensions for dogs but only 3 for humans.

SHELDON: What do you think about you know how in Christianity its heaven, this other world, what is it in other religions?

MEGAN: Most religions have a concept of an afterlife where it's like a good afterlife and then there's a bad one, I think that does seem to be running through most religions.

SHELDON: But then you've got the...you've also got the concept of all religions heading to the same place. I don't really know about that really.

MEGAN: I think it's interesting to see how people would perceive this because if you gave it to someone who was Christian they'd obviously perceive it as heaven; but then if you gave it to someone who maybe had a different belief they might not perceive it the same way. They might see it as evidence of a different thing.

SHELDON: I don't know. I think this people should definitely be told about this kind of stuff because I think – [562]

MEGAN: Yeah I think in terms of religion people can be converted, in terms of just normal people, thoughts on death, and like even how in a practical sense even how they would like conduct a funeral for example?

SHELDON: Yeah I just think it would change a lot of things that people have been told because you've always been told that death is it, there's no afterlife, but then people are saying maybe there is an afterlife and maybe a lot of the things that you've been told are wrong because again a while ago people thought the earth was flat and that was it, everyone believed that and suggesting that would have just been the stupidest thing ever. So I suppose we think now suggesting an afterlife would be the stupidest thing ever but maybe in 200 years' time everyone just takes that for granted.

MEGAN: Well this is...this is what they've proven now I guess but maybe in the future it will change, you never know really. I guess ideas and theories just kind of develop through time. There are even theories that have developed fairly

recently, this theory of evolution wasn't really around like what 100 years ago and everyone just completely believes it now and just goes yeah that's what happened.

SHELDON: It just takes one person to have a theory about something, get a bit of evidence to prove it and then kind of pitch it to people I guess and to kind of grasp it. [1185]

MEGAN: Because its science people believe it, I just find it really interesting, people don't believe religion when you say oh there could be an afterlife but the minute someone has scientific evidence they all go oh yeah of course that's true. Even though scientists don't really know. Its obvious scientists don't know everything about this world but the minute you say oh scientific evidence for an afterlife, everyone goes oh yeah there's an afterlife.

SHELDON: Its just such a massive divide between science and religion sometimes. Not all the time, obviously like in this sense sometimes -

MEGAN: Its sort of meeting.

SHELDON: They meet each other but yeah if you say to someone oh this is true, its backed up by science they will generally believe you more than saying this is true look in the Bible.

MEGAN: But if you say that to people they go oh but that's not science is it? But what proof do we have that science is more true than the things in the Bible?

SHELDON: I don't know.

MEGAN: Just because its scientific doesn't mean it's right. Scientists theories change a lot. [669]

SHELDON: Yeah they do! [1265]

MEGAN: Shall we stop recording?

END

Analysis

There are 2150 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 89.9% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 1265 words i.e. 58.8% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 669 words i.e. 31.1% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX C3

Y9 Monica (agnostic) & Joe (Evangelical Christian) Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

MONICA: So would this change our mind about believing in Jesus like slightly?

JOE: I don't um...that's a really good question because I think this does kind of persuade me a bit more than...that there might have been you know...the Bible might have been you know written in a proper time. I think that the fact that the papyrologists found the scraps of paper going back you know from...was it to at the time that the gospel written by contemporaries of Christ. So I think this makes me more...I still don't believe that there was...you know...a person...like I don't believe that there was a person like God who was controlling everything. I think there was a creator but that doesn't...I think that there was a time...there was a time of that, of when all this happened and I think that maybe the gospels whatever is you know...might have been true but I don't believe that God put Jesus on the earth. [147]

MONICA: Okay!

JOE: Yeah! How do you feel about that anyway?

MONICA: About this?

JOE: Hmm!

MONICA: Well personally you know I believe that Jesus was real, I believe he came to earth, and this kind of just...kind of backs up my views I guess but...I guess what I kind of feel is that this is like we were talking about with the other one, like once people say that oh science backs us up, oh history backs up, oh...this...scientific evidence that this was written at this time, as soon as that backs it up then people will start to believe more than it just being in the holy book.

JOE: I think...I don't know I think...I can understand and comprehend elements of that, but I think that you know the pattern of evolution is just...is too strong really and I think that you know evolution might...will have led up to this point and I think that you can kind of link...you can link them both in. [296]

MONICA: So would you say that maybe evolution happened to a certain point and then the Bible was written, and then now they've found the evidence for it you believe that, believe evolution and you wouldn't believe that Jesus was the son of God, but you would believe he was a powerful man? [64]

JOE: Well personally I think that you know we evolved and obviously the people in the Bible are all people so you know they've evolved into human beings. But like...I believe in elements of it, I don't believe in the whole story like for example, Noah filling an ark with animals, that doesn't...that doesn't make sense to me. [353]

MONICA: Okay!

JOE: But do you not think...

MONICA: I can believe in elements of it but I think some of its just...it doesn't work with me.

JOE: Okay! Have you ever like read the Bible?

MONICA: No!

JOE: If you saw how many links there were, if you saw with...you know about Moses parting the sea for the Israelites?

MONICA: Vaguely!

JOE: Parting the Red Sea for them to escape Egypt?

MONICA: Okay yeah.

JOE: Yeah! Yeah! If you see that and how it links to when Jesus was baptised and how they went through the water but they didn't get wet, but they were saved, and now Jesus is going into the water there are just so many links throughout the Bible and it's just so...so well written it's just impossible for a human to write it.

MONICA: But then couldn't you say that there are too many links with evolution? Like the fact...if you look at Bonobo apes for example, how lifelike they are to us, how has that happened? [218]

JOE: But how is it that now, how is that they now aren't continuing to evolve into humans?

MONICA: Because we've reached our...we've reached our genetic optimum. [378]

JOE: Not us like -

MONICA: The apes; are you say the apes? Like why are apes...haven't like...have stopped...why they've stopped developing?

JOE: Yeah!

MONICA: I don't know I think you know they've evolved to us and once we've reached our optimum they've reached theirs.

JOE: Fair enough. Good point. I just... [261]

MONICA: What's your view personally about Jesus though like...?

JOE: Jesus as a man or Jesus as God?

MONICA: Jesus...how God put him on the earth and about Jesus as a man? [407]

JOE: Well Jesus is 100% man, 100% God.

MONICA: Yeah -

JOE: Okay so -

MONICA: As a Christian you believe that God was the first...person in the universe, was the first like thing in the universe?

JOE: Not the first he's just always been there. Yeah.

MONICA: So you're saying he was there at the very, very start?

JOE: Very, very start before anything else. [320]

MONICA: So if he was...if you're saying that he wasn't...if he wasn't a person how could...how could he put another person on the earth?

JOE: Jesus was God as well. God is the father, son and spirit and the son came down to earth as a man to save us from sin, so that we can go to be with God and he is still a man in heaven now. So 100% man, 100% God.

MONICA: But how can he be...how can Jesus be 100% man when you're saying that Jesus and God are the same?

JOE: Well...it's just...it's confusing, like its...its baffling really. But Jesus is God.

MONICA: But what I'm saying is just for the sake of argument, being agnostic how can...how can Jesus and God be one when Jesus is man and God, you're saying that God isn't. You're saying God is...is something magic.

JOE: Magic.

MONICA: How would you describe God because you've said that you don't think he's a person, like...?

JOE: God is not a person he's a higher being.

MONICA: Yeah okay so him being a higher being, how can him being a higher being and Jesus being a person, how can they be one? [600]

JOE: That's the part of Christianity that confuses everyone yeah but okay the way I've heard it explained that makes the most sense to me right, if you have like 3 matches -

MONICA: 3 matches.

JOE: 3 matches, you light them all, and they're all like separate things right? So if you put them all together like hold them in one hand, they would look like one flame right?

MONICA: Yeah!

JOE: Yeah? That's like what God is.

MONICA: Because they're attached to 3 separate matches. [401]

JOE: I don't think that technically...

MONICA: Looking at it technically is...

JOE: Just think of it as you have God and then within God you have the father, the son, and the holy spirit. So you wouldn't say you gave God -

MONICA: Okay so Jesus is the holy spirit because you said he was like the spirit that came down to save our...to like save us.

JOE: He came down as a man.

MONICA: He came down as a man okay but he's the holy spirit in the form of a man. [678]

[Both talking at once]

JOE: He's God in the form of a man.

MONICA: He's God in the form of a man. [417]

JOE: It doesn't make sense to you at all does it?

MONICA: Like I think with that element of the Bible, like this evidence that's been brought up papyrologists or whoever you say it, I think that...I believe...I can see, I can understand elements of it but the fact of God being...I don't think...I don't think...I think there was a creator but I don't think there was one in the form of God. I think there was a higher being but I don't think it was in the form of God sending down Jesus if that makes sense? [764]

JOE: What you said just makes no sense at all.

MONICA: No I think what I believe, there's a higher being that created the universe but he didn't send down like -

JOE: He didn't send down Jesus?

MONICA: He didn't send Jesus down or anything, he just created...he created the world -

JOE: So what about sin? What is your opinion on sin?

MONICA: Sin; it's a metaphorical concept.

JOE: What? Okay...

MONICA: Its all how you think of it in the mind. Your sin, your sin might be different to someone else's because you follow a different code.

JOE: Okay! So metaphorical but what do you think about like bad -

MONICA: It's an abstract concept.

JOE: Like good and bad?

MONICA: Good and bad; well they're also abstract because how do you define good and bad?

JOE: Well, say I slapped you on the face -

MONICA: So you slap me around the face.

JOE: Good or bad?

MONICA: Well that's bad -

JOE: Say I murdered someone...say I murdered someone good or bad? [863]

MONICA: Well okay that's taking it to the extreme, we'll go for the slapping example, you slapped me -

JOE: Around the face.

MONICA: You slapped me around the face okay that...you could say that's bad but you could say that's good.

JOE: Why would it be good?

MONICA: Because you might be slapping for -

JOE: A very good reason.

MONICA: I might be hitting you back, I might have like...I dunno I might have been racist to you or something.

JOE: Okay! [493]

MONICA: Yeah so um...

JOE: But would being racist be a bad thing?

MONICA: Well in my opinion yes but then to someone else...but then to someone else it might not be. So how can you define good and bad?

JOE: Good and bad, good and bad, if there is no God, if there is no God right how is there good and bad at all? How is that even a concept in the first place?

MONICA: Because the human mind -

JOE: The human mind, the human mind is tiny. The human mind is like...that big.
[943]

1553 words

Researcher: I need to bring a halt to your conversation okay.

END

Analysis

There are 1553 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 92.4% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 493 words i.e. 31.7% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 943 words i.e. 60.7% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX C4

Y9 Sheldon (evangelical Christian) & Monica (agnostic)

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

SHELDON: Okay so I think the point that Calvin is trying to make through this is that there's lots of things in our physical universe that we can't physically see that we might be aware of but that we can't visually kind of be immersed in with our senses.

MONICA: Yeah also something's sort of you can't really prove.

SHELDON: Yeah I mean like Stephen Hawking thinking about like the 11 dimensions, I think there's more to our physical universe than we can even begin to comprehend. Like we can only...we can only experience 3 dimensions because obviously we've got -

MONICA: 4 with time.

SHELDON: Well yeah but the 4 dimensions, so we've got height, length, depth and time.

MONICA: So a lot of the universe is...you can't see so...it's like a lot of things in religion just because you can't like see it or prove it doesn't mean it's not real.

SHELDON: Exactly yeah like...thinking about things God or whatever there is no way you can prove it. But...

MONICA: Yeah well -

SHELDON: But then there's no way you can prove these 11 dimensions.

MONICA: It depends on how you mean prove it because if you prove it with mathematics or science, or is it through human experience, because most human isn't through science and maths it's through observation and people's experiences. So...but something's like this you just can't prove at all really. [167]

SHELDON: No! Like I think with the judge's comments as well, on the contrary I think he's making his point rather well. I think I agree with him because you know he's saying that we can only experience 4 dimensions but obviously these great scientific minds like Stephen Hawking are telling that we live an 11 dimensional universe and that we maybe just acting out our lives on the biggest canvas in the universe. I think...I don't know I guess unless you've...you've physically experienced them yourself you can't...with different... [68]

MONICA: Yeah it also shows that even according to Stephen Hawking religion is not like that farfetched -

SHELDON: Exactly!

MONICA: Both things rely on you...believing in something that you can neither see or prove with your sense or science so...both things rely just as much on faith—

SHELDON: You're saying in here that extraordinary isn't it, for thousands of years religion has spoken of a supernatural world above and beyond our vision, but then we've got people who kind of maybe discount this or whatever, thinking this makes kind of no sense. This has no logic -

MONICA: And then they think it's a massive discovery.

SHELDON: But then it's a massive discovery when top scientists you know are saying well you know...this isn't actually far off. But...the supernatural...the supernatural is real. [237]

MONICA: But then does all this stuff, all the extra dimensions that...does that make miracles more realistic, or – [86]

SHELDON: I don't know I think...because...I dunno they're both abstract concepts but I don't think that necessarily means that you can compare them.

MONICA: Hmm!

SHELDON: Like I mean to us they're abstract, they're abstract concepts but I mean I suppose it would be an abstract concept up until you have conclusive proof. [287]

MONICA: Shall we go onto the third question?

SHELDON: What that heaven is all around us? Heaven is all around us. What's your view on that?

MONICA: I would say that heaven is all around us, it's another dimension.

SHELDON: What would you kind of define heaven as being?

MONICA: Well...there's not like a literal descriptive view of heaven in the Bible but it just says firstly it is in unison with God, its paradise, so you don't have to have a kind of distanced relationship with God you can chat to him like he's a person next to you -

SHELDON: I think for me as well, that I think heaven its different to...every different person, it's what obviously what they think it to be but for me I think heaven...I think heaven might be all around us because I think heaven represents like eternal happiness and being a content person and kind of – [190]

MONICA: Which isn't really possible on this earth.

SHELDON: Yeah I mean although you know all the bad stuff that's happened you can't – [308]

MONICA: In Revelation I think its 20 something, chapter...it says there will be no more tears or blood, all those things will pass away, it will be so...we couldn't comprehend...from being on our earth we couldn't comprehend what heaven is like because we can't understand how no suffering...how can people not be sad? It's like trying to explain a cube to someone in a 2D world. [255]

SHELDON: Yeah!

MONICA: Like in Mario or something. You can't...we can't comprehend it as humans.

SHELDON: Yeah I think...I think the human brain generally as well I think its...maybe its shut away to kind of maybe discount abstract concepts.

MONICA: Yeah. [345]

SHELDON: Unless you know you've been...maybe...from a younger age, whatever you've had that...

MONICA: Anyway what does it mean by dimensions on this, does it mean like different worlds?

SHELDON: In 4 dimension...um...a 4 dimensional universe I think it's like...I think it means like different universes with a different amount of dimensions, say like a one dimensional, or two dimensional universe, three dimensional universe etc.

MONICA: Yeah -

SHELDON: Which we live in...we live in the 4 dimensional but -

MONICA: I dunno yeah its confusing what it means.

SHELDON: Do you think that there would..the other you know...not humans but other beings that are contemplating the very questions that we are you know? Are there you know...are there uh...other dimensional universes except ours?

MONICA: Yeah well...I dunno! [369]

SHELDON: Its big questions isn't it? Its big questions. I think...its going back to the start I think it's all...it's all stuff that we as humans can't comprehend. [351]

MONICA: Hmm!

END

Analysis

There are 934 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 77.1% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 369 words i.e. 39.5% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 351 words i.e. 37.6% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX D1

Y10 Angel High Priya Jess (Sikh) & Raj (Atheist) 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

RAJ: Hello my name is Raj, and I am not sure if God is real or not but I'm pretty sure he isn't!

JESS: Um...I'm Jess and I'm a Sikh.

RAJ: Alright so...what point is Calvin trying to make?

JESS: Um...

RAJ: You know what I think yeah, he's saying that a bit of science and bit of like religion going into, like there is a God but its scientific.

JESS: Yeah!

RAJ: You're a great conversation...let's delete that. That was great there Jess. So...Jess what is your point of view?

JESS: Its just trying to say that not everything we...there might be stuff that we don't see but it don't mean it's not true. [51]

RAJ: Do you believe in that then? Like do you believe in all that?

JESS: To be honest I don't know.

RAJ: You don't know? I thought you were a Sikh weren't you?

JESS: Yeah but I don't know if I believe in it because... people.

RAJ: So you're a Sikh but you don't believe in what they say?

JESS: No I do but I don't it's kind of...like half.

RAJ: Elaborate!

JESS: What do you want me to say; I don't know.

RAJ: Right; do you believe that there's a God or not?

JESS: I don't know.

RAJ: You don't know. Where do you think you'll go after death?

JESS: I think you just die.

RAJ: You just lay in the ground rotting?

JESS: Yeah!

RAJ: You don't think there's a heaven or you're reborn?

JESS: Or you could reincarnate.

RAJ: Do you believe in that?

JESS: Yeah! Yeah!

RAJ: Do you believe in like that circle thing where like if you have a bad life you come back as like a grass? If you have a good life you come back as like a pig or whatever.

JESS: Yeah kind of.

RAJ: Because Sikhs worship pigs don't they?

JESS: No that's Hindus.

RAJ: Hindu's worship pigs yeah.

JESS: No I don't...

RAJ: Oh no; is it Muslims can't eat pigs or something like that?

JESS: Sikhs don't eat meat.

RAJ: You don't eat meat? Are you a vegetarian?

JESS: Yeah!

RAJ: I find out new things about you everyday Jess.

JESS: Since April.

RAJ: Since April! [Laughter] How long have you been a Sikh?

JESS: Since I was born!

RAJ: You're doing very well here. Right. I'm not sure I sort of agree with this but I sort of don't. Like I know there is like out there. I want there to be a God and to be like other worlds and that but I don't think there is honestly. I think science and atoms, and molecules, I think that's the truth. [108]

JESS: I think...that science has truth but not like science is proof so...

RAJ: Yeah I agree yeah like most of it they just make up off the top of their head. Like -

JESS: Yeah they just say this is how you do it but there's no actual -

RAJ: It could be wrong.

JESS: Yeah! [53]

RAJ: Like the same with religion though in it? Because they say there's a God; where is there proof?

JESS: Yeah and it could be just like...what...to try and teach people to right and wrong, it might just make this idea of God. [148]

RAJ: Yeah exactly! That's quite a good point. Go on Jess alright! So some Christians think that heaven is all around is but we just can't see it. No! No!

JESS: Well I don't know.

RAJ: Heaven is all around us I'm pretty sure it isn't. If it is then I think I don't want to die because I want...if I want to die I want to go to a good place, you know what I'm saying. This ain't the best place in the world is it? Well...this ain't the best place in the universe I bet. Well it's pretty bad everyone just dies, if heaven is all around us then ain't that basically reincarnation? Because we die, and then we come back to life in the same world. [241]

JESS: And this ain't exactly dead good.

RAJ: Exactly! I mean we've got Donald Trump as President! Best world ever! [100] So Priya...what else is there?

JESS: This better be recording because I'm not doing this all again.

RAJ: Is it recording? Yeah we're on 4 minutes nearly 5. Do you know what Stephen Hawking said yeah, do you believe that to be true then that 11 dimensions and that?

JESS: I think there is more dimensions; it isn't just this.

RAJ: But I think that's out of reach. I think that's too incomprehensible for us. That's for like higher people, like higher beings and all that I don't know. Like we're not smart enough to know about that yet. I think we should just stay with what we know.

JESS: And not like found out anything else. [306]

RAJ: Well we should but I think that's just going to mess us up. What's on the back of this one? Various cosmological observations strongly suggest that there should be much more matter in our galaxy. I think that's dark matter because

you can't see dark matter and red matter. I think it's like black or dark matter but it's there and that's a powerful energy source and like they're trying to harness that but I think we should just leave that where it is.[355] Priya Jess, how do you feel?

JESS: Yeah!

RAJ: Oh by the way her nickname is Priya Jess! That's the code name. So Priya Jess yeah look the supernatural world that's what religion has been saying. I think scientists should focus on science and not religion.

JESS: Yeah because religion is just a belief it's not -

RAJ: Exactly! It's not meant to be -

JESS: There is no exact evidence for it.

RAJ: I think religion should just be in someone's mind making them...a willingness to make someone happier. It's not to mess up people is it? So yeah I believe that science is real and I don't really believe in all that.

JESS: Yeah! [189]

RAJ: Oh thanks Priya Jess you're putting loads of input in here! Is that it? Alright decent!

END

Analysis

There are 963 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 56.5% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 189 words i.e. 19.6% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 355 words i.e. 36.9% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX D2

Y10 Raj (atheist) and Priya Jess (Sikh) 2

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

RAJ: I am Raj and I don't know whether I believe in God; I'm more leaning towards the science side of things. But yeah I hope there is a God sort of.

JESS: I am Priya Jess and I am a Sikh; but I'm not entirely sure if God is true, like if its real.

RAJ: Are you a full Sikh though, would you classify yourself as a Sikh or are you not sure whether Sikhism is the right way forward?

JESS: No the teachings...religion basically I believe is just teachings and then -

RAJ: You don't believe the back story and all that?

JESS: No I do. But -

RAJ: You believe the back story, ain't the back story like he rode in on a giant turtle and all that? So you believe that...what is the back story like? If you're a proper Sikh -

JESS: I'm not a proper, proper Sikh because I cut my hair, and -

RAJ: Are Sikhs not allowed to cut their hair? Yeah but it's still quite long in'tit?

JESS: Yeah!

RAJ: So you're like half Sikh?

JESS: Yeah but...yeah...

RAJ: What about your family then Priya Jess; are they like half Sikh?

JESS: What do you mean like as in their belief or they eat meat or...?

RAJ: Everything! Do they fully believe it?

JESS: Yeah! But they do cut their hair and stuff.

RAJ: Like your little brother Priya Rajik; he cuts his hair don't he?

JESS: Yeah.

RAJ: Alright so...to what extent do you agree or disagree? I believe that there was a person called Jesus and I believe he did start a new religion but I don't believe he was the Son of God. And I don't believe he did miracles. [36]

JESS: I don't believe he's exactly the Son of God but they...I think they gave him that name because he...

RAJ: Of his religion.

JESS: He said that he could do -

RAJ: Miracles!

JESS: Miracles like they believed God does.

RAJ: I reckon they just staged them.

JESS: To make them believe?

RAJ: To make them believe him, to make himself look better because there's nothing about him being a kid, like if a kid saw a man's like broken leg or something, you know he's a miracle worker. But as a kid there is nothing about him. [127]

JESS: Yeah but it's not just in like Christianity, it's in all different religions.

RAJ: Because was a Jew wasn't he?

JESS: No; the kind of founders of religion say they perform miracles like -

RAJ: All of them do apparently yeah.

JESS: Like in Sikhism there's a guy who cut his head off and walked so far...

RAJ: That's like a chicken in'tit? If you cut a chicken's head off they don't realise for like 40 minutes! Its brilliant! I went to a bonfire party and they killed a chicken to eat it and they cut the head off and it kept running around.

JESS: That's horrible!

RAJ: No because how else are you meant to kill it. Oh yeah you're a Sikh!

JESS: Yeah but if you're going to kill the animal -

RAJ: No its dead! It don't feel pain it just chops off its head but its nerves and that still think it's running.

JESS: Yeah but you don't know if it feels pain. Oh no that's horrible!

RAJ: Are you crying because I've cut off a chicken's head?

JESS: I just imagine it running around.

RAJ: Without a head! [Laughter]

JESS: That's horrible.

RAJ: Right Priya Jess let's get back onto it, do you agree or disagree that this is good evidence about Jesus?

JESS: I don't think there's that much evidence really.

RAJ: No other than that thing that says it was written...yeah it might have been written about that time because I bet the guy was alive around that time. I bet the guy called Jesus was around at that time, alive. But I don't think he did all the stuff everyone says he does.

JESS: Yeah but he might have because they say that like...I don't know if I believe this but they say that like because you think you can't do something you don't actually do it, do you know what I mean? [227]

RAJ: No! Please explain. [3]

JESS: I don't know how to explain but like...like if you say oh I can't walk and then -

RAJ: You walk?

JESS: Yeah but then if you say oh yeah I can walk and then eventually you walk....

RAJ: Oh I know what you mean!

JESS: Do you get it?

RAJ: Yeah! A placebo effect.

JESS: I don't know.

RAJ: Yeah it's what we got taught basically like if you felt ill and then they'd give you a fake drug...and suddenly you'd feel better.

JESS: Yeah like that. [304]

RAJ: They would know you were faking it. Like my mum whenever I try to skive off school she'd like say oh let me spray some magic powder on it and I'd feel better. So she knew I was faking it. It was just water by the way!

JESS: What now?

RAJ: No! No! [Laughter] Yah! Yeah! I'm going to spray some magic water on my hurt tummy! What are your views about Jesus come on I've explained mine?

JESS: Um...

RAJ: Do you believe he is the Son of God or the devil?

JESS: I don't...I don't believe he's like the Son of God if there is a God but um...

RAJ: Well you don't believe in God do you?

JESS: I don't know if I believe in God.

RAJ: I want there to be a God like my auntie recently died yeah? So I want to know that she went up to like a better place and she's not rotting in a hole and she's going to be burnt alive soon. No she's not dead. Do you know what I'm saying.

JESS: Yeah I know what you mean?

RAJ: I want there to be a place to go afterwards but if there was a God and there was a Jesus then why is there all this famine? [83]

JESS: Because people do bad actions and then its just -

RAJ: People do bad actions is that why there was Ebola and cancer?

JESS: Yeah!

RAJ: Yeah?

JESS: Yeah! But like we find out more things and then we kind of bring more...like -

RAJ: But if there wasn't...if there wasn't like disease and famine then imagine how many people wouldn't have died, like there would be...the earth would be so much busier. It would be over populated.

JESS: Over populated. So you kind of need there to be diseases for - [345]

RAJ: Death yeah but surely God would make it...so only a few people could have like children do you think? Surely there is better ways than putting people through pain and hunger, and death, and misery.

JESS: To be honest I think the God idea is just to teach people right from wrong. [167]

RAJ: How did we get onto God; we're talking about Jesus.

JESS: What are my views about Jesus? Jesus is a person...I think he was just like the founder of...was Christianity before Jesus?

RAJ: Christianity was not before Jesus.

JESS: He was just the founder of Christianity and he just like -

RAJ: He was a Jew wasn't he though? He didn't make Christianity.

JESS: He disagreed with...I don't know he might have disagreed with like the Jewish religion to then create this Christianity.

RAJ: I think maybe he was like schizophrenic I'm trying to put that in the nicest way, schizophrenic. It's like you know when you go crazy, you see people like...like they think there's dancing zebras on the wall and that, like when you're high basically that. But like you see people, and you hear voices in your head, and I reckon that he thought he was God. But back in those times they didn't have like medical health issues and that. [247]

JESS: No one realised it.

RAJ: They'd have just thought...oh God is speaking to him or the devil is. [362] So then Priya Jess how do you feel about Jesus and being God's Son?

JESS: I've just answered that like 20 times!

RAJ: Well Jess how do you feel about Jesus performing miracles?

JESS: Um...

RAJ: Other than the placebo effect because like turning water into wine, like how did he do that then? And how did he come back from the dead?

JESS: I don't know maybe it could be true. I don't know.

RAJ: Or do you think they could be lying?

JESS: Yeah could be to like make them believe it.

RAJ: Yeah! Good talk Priya Jess!

JESS: Okay!

END

Analysis

There are 1355 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 44.9% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 362 words i.e. 26.7% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 247 words i.e. 18.2% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX D3

Y10 Amy (agnostic) and Coby (atheist) 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

AMY: I'm Amy and I'm agnostic.

COBY: I'm Coby and I'm an atheist. So then Amy what do you think?

AMY: Well...I think...it does show different people's points of view, the enemies of Jesus which could give a bit more unbiased opinion because if you just pick people that liked him they could make it more...make it seem better for him. And then if you didn't like him they'd try and make it worse, so you might get a balance. What do you think?

COBY: I think that um...I agree because if people that didn't like him were admitting that he is um...a great teacher, and a miracle worker then that means that he really must have been if even people that don't like him will admit that he is.

AMY: Yeah! What are your views about Jesus?

COBY: Um...personally I do not believe in Jesus or God, or anyone like that. What about you Amy?

AMY: I...I'm not going to discount it and say it's not ever been real but I think that it did exist, and I believe in like what he's trying to tell people, tell people to live like...be good to people, and stuff like that but I can't...I'm not saying that...that it didn't happen because of somebody, because it wouldn't...it would just be a bit sad if the creation of the world and everything was like...a massive accident.
[139]

COBY: I see where you're coming from. [52]

AMY: Do you have a problem or question that you want me to think about?

COBY: Um...not particularly, what about you?

AMY: What...well...do you think this is good evidence about Jesus?

COBY: Um...I think that it could be perceived as good evidence although personally it's not enough to swing my views on whether I believe Jesus is real or not because I still don't believe he's real, and I don't think I ever will. But this is still good evidence. [187]

AMY: Where's it from? [...muttering here]. What's Calvin's point of view? Calvin believes doesn't he?

COBY: Yeah I think so.

AMY: Yeah! And the prosecutor is an agnostic, not an agnostic and atheist.

COBY: Yeah!

AMY: Because he doesn't believe that somebody that would be an enemy of a person would say nice things about them.

COBY: Doesn't he believe that Jesus is real but he don't believe that he's like a miracle worker and all that?

AMY: Yeah he doesn't...yeah he doesn't believe that what is said about Jesus is true because he's like...if you were an enemy you wouldn't...even if they were you wouldn't make them out to be like the best, because if you were a great teacher and a miracle worker your enemies wouldn't prove that unless it was true. [108] Do you think that the person ever existed?

COBY: Who Jesus?

AMY: Yeah!

COBY: I think he probably existed but I don't like...maybe he was like the pope or something but I don't believe that he could do things like walk on water or anything. [238] What about you?

AMY: Well he existed because didn't he have the...because a person called Jesus did get crucified around Easter or whatever it was. But then I think there being Christianity like...the sort of...even if he did these things they're not helping themselves by changing when everything happened because they adopted when the pagan festival was for it to be easier, but then it's not...it's not actually when it happened.

COBY: Yeah! I agree! [178]

AMY: Do you want to stop it?

END

Analysis

There are 554 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 75.1% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 178 words i.e. 32.1% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 238 words i.e. 43.0% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX D4

Y10 Coby (atheist) and Amy (agnostic) 2

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

COBY: My name is Coby and I'm an atheist.

AMY: My name is Amy and I'm agnostic.

COBY: So then Amy what point is Calvin trying to make?

AMY: I think he's trying to make...that...there are things around that we can't just dismiss, that things aren't there if we can't see them because things like dog whistles work and we can't hear them. But other people can. Dogs can hear them. And then I think that how religious people believe in things that they can't see but then they dismiss the science because they can't see it. Even if they believe in something they can't see.

COBY: Yeah I agree, saying that um...he's saying that just because you can't see something it don't mean it's not there and then he gives examples like television signals, and radio signals and things like that. Just because you can't see them or hear them it don't mean they're not there does it?

AMY: Um...what...do you agree with the judge's comments?

COBY: I do because he says that um...he says that...he says that he's making the point well and I agree because I think that he is making the point well because he's just saying about...he's basically proving that things are there, like radio signals and TV signals even though you can't see them. They still are there so that backs up his point. What about you?

AMY: I agree because he's...he's playing on how religious believe in like gods and everything that they can't see and so they're using everyday examples that we can't see but we know are there because otherwise how would televisions work, and mobile phones and everything like that, and radios. They wouldn't work unless they were there. [172]

COBY: What do you think about Christians thinking that heaven is all around us but we just can't see it?

AMY: Well because...if...if you think about all the things that we can't see that are out there it could be there...around us but we just can't see it. And then...because we can't prove it if we can't see it. Unless there's some sort of...because some science things like dark matter and everything you can detect for it. But then obviously this is something you can't detect its more spiritual. Um...so it could be around us but we just can't see it. But you can't just dismiss it, what do you think? [167]

COBY: Uh...personally I don't believe in heaven but I can see that they're making a point by saying that um...it's all around us but we just can't see it

like...they're saying um...basically they're saying the same thing about like the TV and the radio signals even though you can't see them they're there so why can't heaven be there? But I still don't believe it is personally but I can see what they're saying. [245]

AMY: Well...so about heaven and everything what do you think happens then, do you just sort of die?

COBY: Just you just die and then you're a body in like a coffin aren't you in the ground?

AMY: Or ashes.

COBY: Yeah! I don't think you go on [...very muffled] just there.

AMY: So what do you think about you know how um...other religions and...religions think about like...obviously you don't believe in heaven, how about like reincarnation, souls and stuff?

COBY: No I'm an atheist so I don't believe in any of it I just think that you get buried or you get into ashes or whatever.

AMY: Cremated.

COBY: Yeah cremated. What do you think?

AMY: Well I think that there could be something but we just don't know because obviously no one can come back and tell us and I wouldn't dismiss the idea because I've got no proof. I like...my decisions on like proof because we've got not proof that it's there, but we've also got no proof that it isn't. [224]

COBY: Yeah! I see what you're saying.

AMY: About the judge, because with these everyday examples...he could...Calvin could have like...instead of like picking...he could have used...he appealed to the jury because of it being normal but he could have used like more...where they talked about Stephen Hawking I think he could have like...used like...looked at it more in the science sense because there's like...about the other dimensions, what do you think about the dimensions?

COBY: I don't really like...I sort of get what he means like...but I don't get what he means about the 11 dimensions you know, where are the missing 7 or anything.

AMY: Like the dark matter could be one of them, like some atomic particles and all...basically what space is made out of because you can't reach the end of our universe because if we try and explore it its always getting bigger and then it will turn and collapse in on itself. [334]

COBY: Yeah! [282]

AMY: So we can't exactly explore everywhere because we haven't got the lifespan to be able to do that so...there could be...actual physical spiritual beings that you can see but we just can't get to it. [369]

COBY: Yeah I get what you mean. [288]

END

Analysis

There are 823 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 79.8% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 288 words i.e. 35.0% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 369 words i.e. 44.8% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX D5

Y10 Kacey and Taz (both agnostic) 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

KACEY: My name is Kacey.

TAZ: My name's Taz!

KACEY: Yeah so what point do you think Calvin is trying to make?

TAZ: Well obviously Calvin is trying to make a point there is more dimensions than a human can see.

KACEY: Yeah but here the judge says that he thinks he's making the point well; but obviously they're in court so it's all meant to be about like law and stuff and they have to put their hand on the Bible. So I don't know if it's like slightly religious but the judge is like agreeing with Calvin.

TAZ: I agree with that point Kacey.

KACEY: Um...why do you agree with it though?

TAZ: I agree with it because um...it's kind of like contradicting science versus religion so...someone is like coming with science views against religions views and then the religious -

KACEY: There is actually a bit here where it says um...for thousands of years religion has spoken of the supernatural world but now scientists are confirming it and the chief prosecutor keeps saying like he doesn't agree with Calvin and that it's all about law and stuff but he's actually...Calvin is making the point of saying that it was religion that first spoke about the supernatural world but now scientists are actually proving it yeah?

TAZ: So it let's other people have views on it as well which is probably better if its proven.

KACEY: But I do kind of understand where the chief prosecutor is coming from because obviously we can only see so many dimensions -

TAZ: Yeah the 4 dimensions, length, width, and stuff like that but in time....scientists say that there is 11 dimensions but 7 we can't see. [173]

KACEY: They said its floating above us but I don't quite understand that because-

TAZ: All I see is a light in a roof!

KACEY: When you go outside you don't see like a load of different things up there, and we've even gone into space and you can't see -

TAZ: ...endless for what scientists know, it doesn't stop. [207]

KACEY: So...um...do you agree with what the judge said when he said I think he's making his point rather well?

TAZ: Well I do because I believe more in science than religion because I'm kind of agnostic, I don't really believe in God or I don't know what to -

KACEY: Have you always been agnostic?

TAZ: Yeah I've always been...I've been christened but...I've never truly known how to believe in God or why I believe in him.

KACEY: No me too I was christened, and my mum was brought up on the religious side of the family, and my dad wasn't but my mum was brought up religious, but my mum is not religious. I'm on the verge of atheist and agnostic like I don't believe it but there are certain bits of it that I almost hope are true. You know stuff like heaven and stuff like that. Like you actually hope that would be real. Um...it mentions here some Christians think that heaven is all around us, but we just can't see it. What do you think?

TAZ: Well...do you to like people in my family passing away I would like to believe that um...heaven is a real thing because its...kind of reassuring knowing that they'll go to a better place. [337]

KACEY: Yeah! No I get that. Um...I don't quite...I don't think when it says heaven is all around us because I know that like in the Bible it says stuff about Jesus is always with you and I don't quite believe that but I think of heaven as being like a far off place. Like when you're there you're there. You're not like here, you are there. But...it's just better than...that's the bit that I kind of wish is true because it's like it's better than believing that nothing happens after.

TAZ: Normally you'd think that heaven is like above the skies and stuff like that but...obviously scientists have gone into like...space and obviously it's not there but -

KACEY: But then they're saying that these 7 dimensions are hanging over us so maybe the other 7 dimensions are what we find after we've died.

TAZ: Exactly yeah!

KACEY: When you go to heaven, you go up in the other 7 dimensions. Wouldn't it be so weird seeing a world in 7 dimensions, I don't even understand how that could happen. [513]

TAZ: I don't even get dimensions anyway.

KACEY: Its like...things are 4D, it's like when...have you ever seen a 4D film? [13]

TAZ: Yeah! It comes out and you can feel it and stuff like that. [526]

KACEY: They do stuff to you that's kind of like what it is like you can actually feel it rather than just see it so that's like 4D but I just...

TAZ: What other 7 dimensions could there actually be?

KACEY: I don't know I mean like we understand 2D and we understand 4D and 3D but...5D could there really be any more to it?

TAZ: Exactly!

KACEY: But hopefully if that's what heaven is then hopefully...

TAZ: Hopefully heaven is a good place and good people go there.

END

Analysis

There are 828 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 65.1% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 526 words i.e. 63.5% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 13 words i.e. 1.6% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX D6

Y10 Kacy and Taz (both agnostic)

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

KACY: Right so um...to what extent do you disagree or agree that this is good evidence about Jesus?

TAZ: Um...well...you kind of say it's good evidence for Jesus because traditionally you would think that Jesus was supernatural and he could do anything and he like led big crowds and had massive followers. It just shows that what he did was...you could never do it, its inhumane, rising from the dead and stuff like that. [55]

KACY: It is but I don't know it seems very farfetched, it's like...it's like he seems so...he seems to please everybody and like -

TAZ: No one can please everybody.

KACY: Nobody can please everybody. But it seems that even the people...because its saying that the religious leaders who didn't like these teachings, they argued against him but then here even the enemies of Jesus admitted he was a powerful teacher and a miracle worker. You wouldn't explain somebody that you don't like as a miracle worker.

TAZ: Exactly!

KACY: Or a great teacher because what they're teaching you don't agree with. So it just seems so farfetched to say that everyone loved him and everything.

TAZ: And today you'd never think that Jesus couldn't...a person in this world could ever do stuff like that. They could never rise up from the dead from dying. They could never get so many followers. There is always someone that will disagree and not like you.

KACY: Yeah!

TAZ: But for Jesus it sounds different.

KACY: Yeah! And like the fact is here it's like the New Testament was written shortly after the events took place, well we can't really know that because it was that long ago but -

TAZ: It was maybe just like get a scrap piece of paper or something, make it look like-

KACY: Like we do know because of like actual like information like records that there was a guy called Jesus, and he did get crucified but for all we know he got crucified because he actually committed a bad crime and that was it. And somebody turned it into this big deal and some of the events have been proven

to be true but not like the ones that are hard to believe like him coming back to life. Like there is no actual like official record of him coming back to life and becoming a citizen again. So...so when its...so...I don't really agree that its good evidence about Jesus because it's not particularly specific, it's basically saying everything about him, taking out the...all the like almost magic bits, like him coming back to life but I still don't think...you can't...no person could actually be that likeable. Like...you can't please everybody.

TAZ: And it's kind of saying like he's the perfect person, there is never a perfect person, there's always a bad thing about you. You can't change that.

KACY: I know religious people say that...like Christians will say that um...he was like equal to everyone even though he did all this stuff he was just...he treated everyone as an equal but if someone actually could do all that stuff they wouldn't get treated as an equal. And they wouldn't...they would be way more highly regarded than to be even allowed to walk the streets alone and things like that. So...I just don't understand how –

TAZ: Like people would be jealous of him, the Romans I think, they were jealous of him and obviously killed him. So...it...it disproves that even evil people thought he was a miracle worker, and a powerful teacher and they wanted to kill him.

KACY: They wouldn't kill a person they thought was a miracle worker because they might need his help eventually. [115]

TAZ: Exactly! [468]

KACY: So what do you think overall about Jesus, like about the whole thing?

TAZ: Well...I think it was a bit...twisted like...I'm pretty sure he would not have rose from the dead but if people believe that then they believe it. I'm not going to stop them from believing it and...I just...it must be something supernatural if he had to, and I don't believe in supernatural stuff so...

KACY: No! No I tend to just believe things I see like...I know how the world works around me and at the end of the day some people believe this, and some people don't but not believing it is has never affected me. So...I don't believe in supernatural stuff particularly because I've never witnessed it and I have nothing to tell me that it should be real. Um...so when it comes to Jesus I'm not saying there wasn't a person who was highly regarded and helped people but it's so...overly explained and overly...he is so overly praised that I just think it actually couldn't be real because there are that many religions all based off people's like...for Christianity, Jesus and god but nowadays that never happens. There is no body that is that highly regarded that somebody would create a whole religion over it. [611]

TAZ: You could believe that that science would never be able to bring someone back from the dead. It's just not...it's not...

KACY: Even with science like I know that next year they're doing the head transplant on somebody, and so...obviously our scientific advances are getting bigger and bigger every year -

TAZ: Which scares me a little bit -

KACY: Yeah it does! But...

TAZ: I still believe that they will never be able to bring someone back from the dead.

KACY: I just don't...I just...because there is no scientific reference to him when he comes back to life, there is no scientific reference to it, it's all just...it just magically happened and nobody had an explanation. It was a miracle -

TAZ: Like how he moved the rock.

KACY: Yeah! That is the bit that...like we know from...our own lives in today's day and age that if someone...even if somebody was dying...had died, their heart stopped and they got their heart reworking again they wouldn't then be able to stand straight up and move a boulder like that. Even a regular man who was okay wouldn't be able to move such a big boulder.

TAZ: You can't even call it a miracle its more than a miracle its...

KACY: Its unbelievable but like not in a shocking way, in a...ridiculous way. So...I'm not saying he didn't exist. I'm just saying I don't agree with a lot of the things said to do with him being so well liked and him rising from the dead and everything like that. [784]

TAZ: Because like even in today's society um...like for example, the American elections, there's already been people starting riots and stuff because Trumpet...Trumpet [laughter] Trump got elected as president so I mean everyone will have a different view. Like if Jesus said a view and came into...however powerful he was...like there's a lot of people who wouldn't believe the same as he does. I mean if everyone believed it then...I think that story its lies, or...

KACY: I mean the two candidates obviously Trump and Clinton, and even...and...everything I've seen towards Trump ever since he was elected has all been so negative but there had to be enough people to vote for him who liked him, so...even if Clinton had won there's...there would still be people who were angry about it. And that's the same thing with Jesus. There's going to at least be some people who were angry about it and I just don't believe that even the people that were angry would call him a miracle worker because it's not something you say about somebody who teaches something completely against what you believe. [179]

TAZ: Yeah I agree with that because it's just...you could never think of it happening. You could never even imagine something like that happening. It's just...not...possible.

KACY: Yeah! Okay! [811]

END

Analysis

There are 1270 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 78.0% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 811 words i.e. 63.9% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 179 words i.e. 14.1% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX E1

Y10 Assim & Amir (both Muslim) 1

Transcription by Karen Stewart

Usef: Hello my name is Usef.

Hamza: And my name is Hamza; and we're going to be talking about the dimensional beliefs, both us personally, and what we've seen in these excerpts. So the point of Calvin I think we're trying to make is he believes in 4 dimensions; but he doesn't understand the rest of them... the other 7 come from. In terms of the scientific theory of 11 dimensions. I kind of agree with his point; what do you Usef?

Usef: I do agree with what he says when he says about... about things that we can't see but they are there, like the radio signals of a TV or a dog whistle. We can't hear it but they can, that doesn't mean it's not there is still there.

Hamza: It's kind of like the question if a tree was falling in a forest would that make...would there be a sound? I feel as though there would be.

Usef: But we wouldn't know about it.

Hamza: Exactly yeah! Because you know how like... I don't know about you Usef but I believe in God even though I can't see him.

Usef: So do I! So do I!

Hamza: Yeah, even though I can't see him, I can't see him, I know he's there you know? He's all around us and everything. Because that's just the way I've been brought up to think.

Usef: I feel the exact same, it's part of our religion isn't it even though we don't know what Allah looks like, what he is, or even if it's a he but we believe in him. We know he's there for us.

Hamza: So we don't really need dimensions to prove something like that.

Usef: No!

Hamza: If we already believe that in itself...so moving on the judge says that he's actually making a decent point, even if the prosecutor I object. The judge kind of agrees with Calvin and wants him to go on with his claims of his argument. Again, it kind of just links to what we've just said it doesn't really matter about dimensions and even if we can't see or hear, or feel things they're still there. Electricity you know, different states of matter, I feel as though they're still there. You don't need proof necessarily.

Usef: No! And the third point says so Christians think that heaven is all around us but we just can't see it; what do you think? Well I'm not Christian so I don't believe heaven is all around us. I think heaven is an afterlife given to us as a reward.

Hamza: I've heard that.

Usef: As deeds from this earth.

Hamza: Yeah I've heard that from family members and stuff that earth is where we go; and then when we did its essentially a good thing because then we have a chance to go to heaven: and that's like paradise.

Usef: I was taught that this world we live in now is our test so we're going through our test right now and on the day of judgment Allah is going to -

Hamza: Exactly! Yeah!

Usef: Give us our results if you like if we're either going to hell or heaven based on our deeds of this world.

Hamza: Yeah exactly! So this isn't this is just the life we can live to like -

Usef: This is our chance.

Hamza: Yeah to pass all those tests and prove to ourselves worthy of paradise essentially.

Usef: And I was also told that in the grave, your grave can either be a garden of paradise or a pit of hell depending on who you were as a person.

Hamza: Exactly!

Usef: Yeah so some Christians think that heaven is all around us um.... I think you know I personally... you can't see heaven right now but we will be able to see it once we die and it's not here.

Hamza: Heaven isn't around... it's a destination, its somewhere where you want to go; but you're going in that direction or you're going in the other direction which is hell. But we don't know what direction we're going in; only Allah knows.

Usef: Exactly! So would you say that heaven is abstract or do you think it's real?

Hamza: It is real. It is real definitely!

Usef: Yeah. So in terms of heaven obviously there's hell; where do you think hell is?

Hamza: I can't say I don't know where it is. I know some people tend to believe it's under the ground, the very -

Usef: I wouldn't say its underground.

Hamza: Yeah I know. But... I don't believe it either but... I don't know where it is; and I can't tell you where it is either.

Usef: Yeah!

Hamza: Because I don't know where it is.

Usef: So, in terms of going back to the dimensions um... they mentioned 11 dimensions; but the thing is for example, electricity we can't necessarily see TV signals and stuff; but we have states of matter you know like solid, liquid gas -

Hamza: But the thing with electricity we know it's there because we use it.

Usef: Yeah that's proof -

Hamza: Think about these dimensions, we know, we know they're there; but how do we know because we're not using them, we're not there, we can't see them, we can't hear them.

Usef: It's kind of like that thing you can like eat bread without knowing how to make it; you can use electricity without knowing where it comes from.

Hamza: Yeah! And like this dog whistle thing it's just... that's just it, isn't it?

Usef: Because things happen in the world and although we might not necessarily be able to explain it; we know that they're there. Like for example, here it says earthquakes, the occurrence of earthquakes. I mean they happen and whether or not we hear them or not, or feel them, that's irrelevant. The fact that they happen is you know more -

Hamza: That's more than enough proof that it's there.

Usef: It's like its high priority in terms of understanding.

Hamza: So how are we going to prove these other dimensions are real? How are they going to prove the dimensions are real?

Usef: Well the thing is I don't think we need to because I mean we have proof of our world right here. I mean here's a computer, I can press keys and things happen on the screen. I don't need some sort of dimension to exemplify that or prove that in a sense.

Hamza: As long as it happens it happens. You don't need to know why.

Usef: Exactly! Yeah!

Hamza: So... in terms of I guess the entire excerpt from the court proceedings; do you have any additional thoughts Usef?

Usef: That's enough from me. You Hamza?

Hamza: I'm good I think.

Usef: I think we're done.

Hamza: The thing is can I just talk about the Chief Prosecutor for a second?

Usef: Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!

Hamza: Your Honour I object, excerpt; I feel as though...I don't know what he's prosecuting you know? Because it seems as though he's trying to prosecute -

Usef: The scientists.

Hamza: Exactly! He's trying to prosecute the scientists and say, hey; but then again isn't he agreeing with the scientists?

Usef: Who, the Prosecutor?

Hamza: Yeah! He's saying um...

Usef: Oh yeah, he is, because Calvin is trying to prove them wrong as in saying there is no other...or if there is, prove it. This guy is saying, the Chief Prosecutor, there is its just you don't need to know about anything else.

Hamza: Yes, so contextually what is he trying to prosecute? I don't understand that. Is he trying to prosecute the fact that he... that Calvin doesn't believe in the other 7 dimensions or is he trying to prove a point? I'm a bit confused about that. I feel as though you know that should be like a chief defence rather than a prosecutor. Like this maybe relevant, a court case has to have some sort of you know subject or idea for debate; and I don't understand why um...not believing in 11 dimensions is the topic here. What do you think Usef?

Usef: Why is this a court case, this should not... this is something that shouldn't be a court case.

Hamza: I feel as though maybe it's just a story.

Usef: Yeah. No I think the reason it's a court case is because -

Hamza: Oh yeah; exemplary yeah.

Usef: So he can give 2 sides of an argument because these guys -

Hamza: Literally yeah, they're doing it just as we may be able to but... I think we have similar beliefs anyway, seeing as we're both Muslims.

Usef: For life right.

Hamza: Yeah. Yeah I think that's all I want to say in terms of -

Usef: Okay this is Usef - goodbye!

Hamza: See you - this is Hamza! See you!

END

Analysis

Research Question 1

To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?

There are 1417 words in this passage of conversation. Apart from introducing themselves, a pause towards the end, and their farewells [81 words in total] then the two students are On Task for 94.3% of this conversation.

Research Question 2

To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

Following the procedure of Luby (2012) the *first strategy* is to discount extraneous conversation such as declaratory statements typified below:

Usef: Hello my name is Usef.

Hamza: And my name is Hamza; and we're going to be talking about the dimensional beliefs, both us personally, and what we've seen in these excerpts.

The *second strategy* is to discount conversation that is termed “disputational talk” which Mercer (1995:104) describes as being ‘...characterised by disagreement and individual decision making... [and] short exchanges consisting of assertions and challenges or counter assertions’ e.g.

Douglas: So what religion are you?

Craig: I am an atheist.

Douglas: OK. So...why are you an atheist?

Craig: Because I don’t believe that a single man would have made everything which exists today.

Douglas: Ah but I do!

Craig: Yeah but...why would you think that, like...

Douglas: Because he did! What do you think that meteorites are going to crash and make plants and human beings?

Craig: Well no its...that’s not a meteorite, it didn’t actually crash it was two planets that collided.

Douglas: OK; so how are people made?

(source: Luby 2012)

The *third strategy* is to identify conversation that can be construed as “cumulative talk” which takes place when students ‘build positively but uncritically on what the other has said.’ This type of talk is ‘...characterized by repetitions, confirmations and elaborations’ (Mercer 1995: 104). This type of talk is highlighted **thus**. **Cumulative talk** comprises 656 words i.e. **46.3%** of the above conversation.

The *fourth strategy* is to identify conversation that can be construed as Mercer (1995: 104) contends that with “exploratory talk” in which the students

‘...engage critically but constructively with each other’s ideas.’ This is typified by ‘statements and suggestions [being] offered for joint consideration [and] these may be challenged and counter-challenged, but challenges are justified and alternative hypotheses are offered’ (Mercer 1995: 104). This type of talk is highlighted **thus**.¹⁷⁸ **Exploratory talk** comprises 525 words i.e. **37.1%** of the above conversation.

¹⁷⁸ When young people are trying out ideas and modifying them as they speak... their delivery will be hesitant, broken, and full of dead-ends and changes of direction...Exploratory talk is hesitant and incomplete because it enables the speaker to try out ideas, to hear how they sound, to see what others make of them, to arrange information and ideas into different patterns. (Barnes 2008: 5)

APPENDIX E2

Assim & Amir 2

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Assim: Amir and Assim back at it again with excerpt B.

Amir: So now we're looking at excerpt B it's a court transcript so its continuing I think from what we read previously. The bottom line is Calvin believes in evidence about Jesus existing and the prosecution doesn't... yes, Assim? Oh I'm sorry I must have cut you off there. So, what do you think; do you agree or disagree?

Assim: From my religious point of view Jesus was real, we didn't call him Jesus but I don't believe in him the way people in Christianity do. I believe Jesus wasn't crucified in Islam but a look alike was. I don't want to go into too much detail but Jesus was not crucified, Jesus didn't die on this earth, he was just lifted through the heavens by God. Um...anything else you have to say?

Amir: Yeah I would agree because in... we share the same religion, although we might have different beliefs, Jesus is said to be prophet of our religion you know. In charge of one of the holy books; so I wouldn't necessarily say that he was crucified. I wouldn't necessarily say -

Assim: The gospel.

Amir: The gospels yeah... I wouldn't necessarily say that he was um...you know crucified, I mean sure...like in terms of miracles though, I don't think he performed miracles; but he was a prophet so he sent messages to other people which I guess could be seen as a miracle. [99]

Assim: Oh I have to disagree with that Amir, Jesus in Islam did perform miracles actually. You know the disease or leprosy?

Amir: Yeah!

Assim: I think this is Christianity as well, he did cure some people with leprosy in his day, so yeah he was a miracle worker as well as a messenger as you say. [53]

Amir: Okay um...and it also to be risen from the dead but I don't think he was risen from the dead. And furthermore I don't think he was written about in the Bible either. Obviously I don't study the Bible very closely. What do you think Assim?

Assim: About what?

Amir: About like in terms of the Bible, in terms of Jesus being written in there?

Assim: Well I haven't personally read the Bible myself. I haven't really studied it so to say if he's in there or not it's not my place because I don't know.

Amir: Okay! Anything else you want to say on this topic before we move onto the next one?

Assim: It says that even the enemies of Jesus admit he was a powerful teacher and a miracle worker, that he was crucified and believed to have risen on the third day. Well I admit the enemies will say he was crucified because they crucified him; and I think everyone in the story of Jesus I was taught was a witness of his rebirth. So they could say that; but I want to know how they can say it was him, it could have been a look alike as we say in Islam. [145]

Amir: Yeah I agree. And I find that he is spoke so highly of in this transcript, kind of like its more towards Christianity in terms of the religion than a belief we share. So the next thing is what are our views about...we've kind of already said a bit about that. We see Jesus as a prophet, we don't necessarily think he was crucified. You believe he performed miracles, but we both agree on the fact that he didn't rise from the dead. He died peacefully I'm sure but – [188]

Assim: Not died; he was raised to the heavens alive if that makes sense? [158]

Amir: Yeah.

Assim: So this is the story I was talking about, so the Romans although their enemies were hunting him down as they were and he ran into this house right, and you know how there was a traitor, even in the Christian story there was a traitor wasn't there; who gave him up?

Amir: Yeah! Judas -

Assim: Was that his name? He um...pointed out to the Romans that Jesus was there and that's when Allah...god Allah raised Jesus from the...from where he was in the house to the heavens and made...what's his name? Judas! Judas look like Jesus so now when the Romans come looking for him they see Jesus which is actually Judas so they take... turned into Jesus. Jesus face so they take him and crucify him, so it wasn't Jesus who was crucified. It was this look alike. [326]

Amir: Yeah it's like the juxtaposition between religions, I feel like Islam has a very different outlook in terms of good and bad. If you're bad then you will get punished; and that's like some sort of thing -

Assim: But you can't be forgiven.

Amir: You can't be forgiven yeah. But in terms of the traitor in this story he was punished immediately, that's the sort of thing, like Allah is merciful but at the same time if you do something wrong then without forgiveness -

Assim: You are going to get...you will get punished.

Amir: Whereas in like...in the Bible, Jesus was crucified regardless, he was going to die, he was a good person, but even then Judas...I don't think Judas was punished. Maybe by God but not by Jesus.

Assim: And Christians don't they also believe that um...Jesus died for everyone else's sins so no matter what you do you basically go to heaven if you're a Christian right? [482]

Amir: I'm not sure it's like that but it's like Judas for example. Judas might have gone to heaven I think because Jesus, his death was like...something that allowed Jesus to go to heaven even though he was... I feel as though that's the message in the Bible. I'm not saying that all Christians go to heaven but what do you think about that?

Assim: It's not my place to say if they're going to go to hell or heaven, like I say I'm not God. But um -

Amir: I'm not saying that either I'm just saying if I had to assume something, I wouldn't judge.

Assim: Definitely! Definitely! [577] What's next?

Amir: Um...so...yeah our views in terms of Jesus as to whether he's a prophet or whether he's God. Obviously I don't believe he was God but I would say he has some significance both in my religion and in terms of this excerpt, specifically in this excerpt. [606]

Assim: It says here an exhibit, CCT, the Bible...no... time is demonstrated in each case that this view of the Bible did not succeed, the Bible has also been used to justify slavery, segregation and apartheid.

Amir: Apartheid yeah.

Assim: Once again history's judgment has been that the Bible was wrong, the sacred book has been used to oppress women and to oppose birth control.

Amir: Because I know that the Bible...obviously people stereotypically think that the Koran is quite harsh in its teachings. For example people in...I don't know where it is, I think its Iraq or somewhere, if you steal then they cut off your hand.

Assim: Yeah they do that in Arabian countries don't they?

Amir: Arabian countries yeah. But the thing is the Bible actually says stuff like that as well, people have taken those as euphemisms in the past and just not used those sort of rules and laws so I feel as though this thing here about justifying slavery and oppressing women, opposing child birth, I kind of...I think I know what it's trying to say. You know what I mean?

Assim: I heard a story one time, you know in the time of the prophet people then were scared to do crimes and sins because... right, but still these 2 men did a

horrific crime, I can't remember what it was. And they were punished... Islamic law which is said to be the right way. And then so they were hung, they had the death penalty basically and then some people of the prophet they were talking amongst themselves, look at these 2 they've messed up so badly from the prophet, but a prophet stopped them and said no, no, no, because they'd been punished the right way on this earth they are going to heaven in the next. [838]

Amir: Really!

Assim: Uh huh. So -

Amir: Its about like serving your punishment rather than trying to escape it that gives you...that grants you a passage to heaven, or is it -

Assim: It's better to escape punishment though isn't it by doing good deeds.

Amir: But if you've done a bad deed then I think the moral is -

Assim: Repent!

Amir: Yeah take your punishment and then you might be forgiven, it's not to say that all murderers will go to heaven, I'm not saying that. I'm saying if you commit a crime regarding the fact that you are forgiving and you're sorry, you take the punishment you deserve Allah might be able to... [944]

Assim: I disagree with that because on the day of judgment depending if you go to hell or heaven, you know the scale...

Amir: True!

Assim: If the good deeds are heavier than the bad deeds you're going to heaven aren't you? So if you've done a bad deed that's not the end of the world is it? You can do more good deeds, do more things, repent, ask for forgiveness and you will eventually maybe go to heaven.

Amir: But I still believe that murderers deserve to go to hell.

Assim: It's not our place to say. It's not my place to...I don't think...you can't go around saying this guy is going to go to hell, this guy is going to go to heaven because you can't -

Amir: I'm not saying that, I feel as though Allah would judge people in that sort of way, I'm not... it's what I've been told really. So yeah that's why I personally...I don't personally think, that's what I've been taught you know that Allah would judge people in that sense and were they to commit a major crime then that would be something that you might not be able to be forgiven for. Obviously depending on like the scenario and stuff but...[362] anyway I think that's all I want to say.

[Researcher: Is that you finished there guys?]

Amir: Anything else to say finally?

Assim: No I'm good.

Amir: Alright, this has been Amir and Assim.

END

Words = 1687

On Task for 1230 words i.e. **72.9%**

*** from this point onwards in the conversation the two students go off-task in that they have an 'internal debate' about Islam that is difficult to reconcile with the substance of the text which they have read.

Cumulative talk comprises 944 words i.e. **56.0%** of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 362 words i.e. **21.5%** of the above conversation.

APPENDIX E3

Y10 Holly & Zion (both Christian) 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

HOLLY: Hi my name is Elizabeth.

ZION: My name is Isaiah and what we're going to be talking about today is the...whether or not there is 11 dimensions in the universe. So what do you think?

HOLLY: So first I'm going to say what point is Calvin trying to make, I think that the point that Calvin is trying to make is that just because you can't see something does not mean it isn't there. For example, God; the reason why people don't believe in God is because they can't see him. But what if the world is actually 11 dimensional then we can't see stuff that is actually around us?

ZION: I get what you mean like I'm not sure...I might be wrong but like butterflies, you know how we see these certain colours like red, green, blue, butterflies can see more colours. They can see more colours so like us as humans we're basically blind, we basically can't see nothing and like so how are you going to sit there and tell me that there are things in the world but because you can't see that really you can't really -

HOLLY: For example, oxygen, you breathe it in, you release carbon dioxide or is it the other way around? [136]

ZION: Yeah you breathe in oxygen and release carbon dioxide.

HOLLY: Yeah and you don't see it but how are you still living if that's what you're breathing in? So technically that point isn't really valid.

ZION: But like...say for people...when people don't believe they sort of just like narrow minded. I know I'm getting off track here but like you're sort of narrow minded if you're not believing because you pick up a phone and you talk to someone, you media and you communicate with someone that could be across the world. But you've never sat there to think how is that happening? Of course science can explain how that is happening but you know -

HOLLY: Isaiah! Isaiah! Sorry!

ZION: Just carry on!

HOLLY: I think that I kind of agree with your...what your point is; [21] but I also think that humans always believe that they have to see something to believe it, like they always need a...they always need something to believe it. They need to think how was the world created because I don't believe that it was created with a Big Bang because that makes no sense in my opinion but they always

feel like they need to see something. But did they see the Big Bang? No! So why do they believe in that? [218]

ZION: ...

HOLLY: Zion! Sorry!

ZION: But like the only thing that I would disagree with you on that is the Big Bang. The Big Bang did happen but they wouldn't say it was a Big Bang, it just happened like there was a bang, when there was an explosion there was light. He created that Big Bang, God said let there be light and there was an instant bang, a massive bang, that is the Big Bang when God said let there be light.

HOLLY: It says some Christians think that heaven is all around us but we just can't see it, what do you think?

ZION: I feel like...I am a very strong believer in thinking that there is people around us, I really do believe that people with mental illness can actually see the world for what it truly is. So you know when they're like oh there's a demon there, or there's an angel there, like some cases, I genuinely do believe that they can see angels, they can see demons, but I don't think anyone can see heaven until they die.

HOLLY: I honestly...I don't...from my point of view I don't think heaven is around us I think that when...this doesn't make sense...it made sense in my head but I think that when you die you go somewhere like towards God but you're not actually at heaven yet until judgment day. That's what I think. [428]

ZION: I do get you. Like...when...what I'm saying is like when Armageddon comes and you die when judgment day comes like you're going to be in your own eternal heaven. Like this is your own personalised one but I feel like...here's the bit, I get confused because I want to have a personalised heaven but I want my family to live with it, I don't want to be dead with my own personalised heaven but my mum has also got her own personalised heaven. I want it to be like a heaven that's just heaven – [494]

HOLLY: Yeah that's what I think. I think that what God does is when we go to heaven it's going to be a personalised heaven but everyone will be there. So they will be living in their personalised thing but you still have everyone with you. So he's going to make it suitable for everyone to be with who they want to be. [112]

ZION: You know like the Garden of Eden...the Garden of Eden like that was...that was basically paradise, that's paradise on earth and you...I've heard so much things about heaven and paradise on earth, like I hear that. You can go to paradise on earth and then you can also go to heaven, they're 2 separate different things people say. I don't know really what to believe, I feel like I'm just...I'm weird you see I'm very open-minded. I listen to what everyone has to say but when we're talking about heaven I'm Christian, I love God, I love Jesus Christ, I love

everything about the Christian faith. I literally have no idea when it comes to heaven.

HOLLY: I've actually never heard about that paradise on earth thing. I think that what I've always thought was heaven is like the Garden of Eden but better, like its...um...the Garden of Eden was what we had on earth, but once we die we get something better than that. We would get what we should have got let's say if Adam and Eve had never -

ZION: What I'm thinking of is like...paradise on earth because Jesus rises you from the ground, but like I'm not sure like...I might be wrong, he could have maybe like risen from your soul, like our new soul like anyway. But like all I know is that Jesus is going to - [344]

HOLLY: Yeah the bit where I get confused is when you die where do you go until judgment day? Or has judgment day already come and we're just too blind to see it? I just get really confused on that but...

ZION: I know I'm sorry I'm like all about conspiracy theories like I swear by the Mandela Effect, I like listen to all of them. I know for a fact that the devil is on earth -

HOLLY: Yeah I know that, I feel like the devil comes in all forms and all shapes, and we don't know that it's actually that.

ZION: Like the music culture -

HOLLY: Yeah he uses music to get to people.

ZION: Yeah because when he was an angel he was Lucifer - [467]

[Both talking at once]

ZION: Like I feel like this world...since Eve bit the apple the world just went -

HOLLY: Yeah. What I always wonder is what if she never did.

ZION: What if she never bit that apple? But then you have to wonder would you be...would you be human?

HOLLY: Yeah -

ZION: Because then -

HOLLY: Would you have had your own individual thoughts, be able to make mistakes?

ZION: Could you be open-minded, or could you be narrow-minded? [539]

1243 words

Researcher: Would you like to finish there please?

ZION: Yeah sure!

END

Analysis

There are 1243 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 75.1% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 539 words i.e. 32.1% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 494 words i.e. 43.0% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX E4

Y10 Holly & Zion (both Christian) 2

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

HOLLY: Hi its Elizabeth.

ZION: And its Isaiah.

HOLLY: And we're going to be doing excerpt B the court transcript. So the question is to what extent do you agree or disagree that this is good evidence about Jesus Isaiah?

ZION: Well Holly um...Elizabeth...like I agree with it, I'm sorry I actually agree with it.

HOLLY: Okay why?

ZION: Well how are you going to sit here...I'm sorry...people believe...his enemies believed he was a powerful great teacher. Like you weren't there, I wasn't there I know I wasn't there and I know that like people can bend the truth but I don't think they're bending the truth with Jesus. I don't know why I don't think that but I don't think that they're bending the truth with Jesus. I feel like he was that powerful. People not necessarily feared him but his enemies you know...they were... [87]

HOLLY: Yeah um...in this excerpt it says...the excerpt it says that oh how would his enemies even agree that he was a great teacher and miracle worker? And I think that they would say that because he was such a great teacher that they couldn't even lie about it. And they knew that he was great, they were just jealous of him. And I agree with everything that this statement said, and I think...I honestly do believe that yes because I'm a Christian, but I honestly do believe that Jesus came on this earth and he rose for us and I do think that there were people that saw this and this is where songs came from like gospel fragments... which are songs and stuff like that, this is where it came from because some songs speak about how he rose from the dead, how he did miracles, and stuff like that. Yeah!

ZION: They're close to the date as well, like these...the writings even if they're... even if they're gospels, they are close to the date when this actually happened. Like this could be eye witness accounts. But the one thing I just don't understand is like the Muslim religion also believed that he...like Jesus was alive.

HOLLY: A prophet.

ZION: A prophet, how are you going to sit there and tell me he was a prophet, I'm sorry in heaven his name is Michael, he is an archangel, he came down because he wanted to free us from our sins and we could cleanse and start again. And I know he basically brought Christianity to earth because before

Christianity he was Jewish. And I'm not going to lie when I say Jesus was a Jew. [283]

HOLLY: Yeah Jesus is a Jew and he founded the religion of Christianity but Jesus was a Jew and when he was put on the cross he was given a head thing saying King of Jews. Yeah!

ZION: You mean the thorns? Like the thorn crown?

HOLLY: Yeah that. [329]

ZION: Yeah like I just...I would respect anyone's decision but it will irk me...you know like offend me...no it irks me yeah, like first of all Jesus is Jesus and its like that seeing and believing thing. So are you going to tell me that in 1066 there was a war. Were you there? Holly was you there in 1066? How are you going to sit there and tell me that anyone...how are you going to tell me that apes were humans? Did you see that evolution take place? No so why are you going to believe that but you can't believe that Jesus was alive?

HOLLY: Also they're saying that his miracles that they...the power was from the devil; but do they know where the devil comes from? [214]

ZION: Now that does annoy me.

HOLLY: Because the devil used to be -

ZION: An angel.

HOLLY: An angel from God; so if there's a devil there's a God.

ZION: So you...it just annoys me, first you want to say that there's no God, then you want to say there was a Jesus but his powers were from the devil. The devil was a fallen angel and his name was Lucifer. Who was...he was the music...he was basically a music boy, he was God's servant. Don't be telling me that that's not true. [418]

HOLLY: What are your views about Jesus?

ZION: Do you want to go first?

HOLLY: No you can.

ZION: Okay well...Jesus...me and Jesus we're tight, me and Jesus are cool, we are friends, I love Jesus, he is...like...its like...when you're annoyed, or when you're feeling down or anything you can just turn to Jesus. Say a prayer, everything will be fine and I truly...I truly like...know that Jesus is there. I know he's with me.

HOLLY: Yeah I'm not one to go to church all the time but when I can go to church I do. And I'm not one that prays every single time that I do but...I know that like

Jesus, God, will answer my prayer and my view on Jesus was that he was the son of God, he is a miracle worker, he did do everything that he did...he died for us and he rose again on the third day. And that's what I believe in, and people that don't believe that then that's their problem; but how can you not believe in Jesus after everything...there have been so many sources, so many proofs that he is alive. Saying that you never saw...you've never seen him...but have you see...did you see Bloody Mary no you did not because you weren't alive. So how can you say that you haven't seen Jesus?

ZION: That's preach...that's actually like you're preaching but like...what annoys me is you have the audacity to still do Christmas. I'm sorry -

HOLLY: People have forgotten the real -

ZION: You've forgotten the real reason I'm sorry Christmas is when he was born. I don't understand why you need presents, why you need Santa, why do you need another person to distract the true meaning of Christmas?

HOLLY: The thing is you can...obviously people know that Santa is fake but you can lead your children to believe that Santa is fake...I mean you can lead your children to believe that Santa is real. But you won't let them know that Jesus is real.

ZION: That's stupid. I'm sorry if you're an atheist and you celebrate Christianity I find that...if you're atheist and you celebrate Christmas I find that highly disrespectful. Because you want to sit there and tell me that he does not exist and you want to say that Jesus never existed -

HOLLY: Yet you celebrate the day that he was born.

ZION: He was just a person, yet you want to celebrate the day he was born because there's a person called St Nicholas who rides around on like a sleigh, with deer that fly, you want to believe the unbelievable of a deer flying; but you can't believe in a man that could turn water into wine?

HOLLY: Yeah!

ZION: The most stupid thing I've ever heard! So stupid!

HOLLY: And I just think that people they only believe what they want to believe; and not what is right in front of them, and that's what...this comes back to the point about humans are really, really blind. Like the truth will be right in front of them, you still won't see it.

ZION: I know you can be...you can be as intelligent as you want to be, you can be as smart, intelligent, beautiful, but people just don't see the true meaning and they do not see what's in front of them and it really annoys me.

HOLLY: Yeah! [955]

END

Analysis

There are 1237 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 94.5% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 955 words i.e. 77.2% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 214 words i.e. 17.3% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX E5

Y10 Mia & David (both atheist) 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

MIA: Okay its started, okay what's your name?

DAVID: Jordan!

MIA: I'm Mia! So what point do you think Calvin is trying to make Jordan?

DAVID: Uh...Calvin is saying that there are a lot more things that we don't see in the world and -

MIA: ...

DAVID: No one cares! [Laughter] Um...and like 96% of the universe isn't actually...hasn't actually been discovered by scientists yet. And he is basically saying there's a lot more in the world than we can actually see or feel. Um...what do you think?

MIA: That's what I think he is also trying to say.

DAVID: Do you agree with what he is saying?

MIA: Um...I can't say I do; do you mean the judge's comment?

DAVID: The...Calvin's comments?

MIA: Um...I cannot say that I agree with Calvin because um...what...he is saying just can't be substantiated, like it's a theory, so like I mean I can't shoot someone down for making it like a simple theory but at the end of the day I can't agree with it because I don't think I've got any proof to kind of back that up myself so...for me if something can't be proved then it can't be considered correct. [76]

DAVID: Yeah I agree with that, he makes a point that um...radio waves and things we can't see like the dog whistle, or hear like the dog whistle sound um...they kind of don't exist either but we can prove that they do because we have the equipment to actually -

MIA: I've forgotten what it was called the actual equipment. Oh well...

DAVID: The sound can be measured with equipment that can...our ears can only hear a certain -

MIA: Yeah that's been proven that, it can only hear a certain amount of tones.

DAVID: Yes! And with equipment better than our ears we can prove that the dog whistle actually works. [96]

MIA: Yeah like picking up...sound is obviously in sound waves.

DAVID: Yeah and with radio waves it's also -

MIA: Yeah; so sound as in like the waves caused by vibrations.

DAVID: Yeah so all that can be proven except like -

MIA: This is just a theory so it just can't really be proven until he has the evidence and he hasn't actually given any evidence he's just kind of given...he's just kind of said that you can't prove it right, you can't prove it wrong in a way but he hasn't actually said anything to properly substantiate that.

DAVID: Yeah he kind of identifies it as just speculation; but he also said the world's top scientists' speculation.

MIA: But that doesn't mean anything, just because someone says it, it doesn't mean that it's inherently correct. Like I could be Albert Einstein but it doesn't mean I would be inherently correct. [241] What's the next question? Um...do we agree with the judge's comments? The judge's comment...um...that essentially?

DAVID: Um...he is making his point well but I'm...he doesn't bring any evidence, that's the main point of the -

MIA: Yeah I think he's structured his argument well, it's just the fact that the argument itself isn't being substantiated.

DAVID: Or backed up by an evidence. [285]

MIA: Yeah essentially. Some Christians think that heaven is all around us but we just can't see it. What do you think? I...well obviously being an atheist myself and Daniel over here...not Daniel I meant Jordan... [Laughter] Jordan I have to disagree with that because I mean it links back to your point, I mean you can say that and you can also say oh it can't be proven right, but it can't be proven wrong, but at the end of the day there is no evidence at all to support it and I feel that if you have to believe something there should be at least something there to substantiate it.

DAVID: Yeah and that's the whole point of religion because most of it is based on gods and hell -

MIA: Like prophets.

DAVID: Yeah prophets, and hell, heaven, stuff we can't see but the reason I'm an atheist right is because I just don't believe in all that stuff because it can't be proven, there is no evidence that um...any of that actually exists so...uh...

MIA: Yeah! Um...the reason I'm an atheist [laughter] is I actually used to be a Christian, like I was raised as a Christian but I'm not anymore, and the reason

for that is for me there's just nothing to believe. I mean...it just doesn't make sense to me because there's -

DAVID: It doesn't make sense and it doesn't add up. [482]

MIA: There is a lot of contradictions if you've ever read the Bible, you'll find that, it will say one thing and then in a different passage it will say the exact opposite and it's like...there's no way to follow it to a 'T' and I just feel that with religion if it's made from like prophets, in those days you could see that mental illness was rife and undiscovered so there was nothing to treat it. [152]

DAVID: That's a good point because -

MIA: Oh thank you!

DAVID: If uh...the Bible was written by humans it wasn't like written by the actual God so...like those people who wrote the holy books for different religions, they may have just been...they may have just been insane actually. Not mentally stable and because um...people didn't know about mental illness they may have actually believed them and that's how religion may have started. But we can't prove that of course because we don't have evidence - [564]

MIA: I think it ultimately boils down to the fact that I mean for me I am quite a fact over feelings person if that makes sense? Um...I feel that feelings, with feelings there is no objective moral high ground so with that in mind there's no objective right or wrong so...with facts like...they're completely objective, you can't really argue with it, there's evidence to back it up. But with feelings like...for Jordan here, um...my idea of right and wrong might be different to his and you know obviously there was cultural implications things like that, upbringing, people don't have the same opinions on things and with facts you can't really argue with it. [265]

DAVID: Well I was brought up as an orthodox Christian in my family and slowly over time I realised that uh...I actually didn't believe the stuff that my parents always told me and taught me, they didn't really force it on me I just kind of...

MIA: Yeah me neither.

DAVID: I just kind of realised that uh...it doesn't make sense, it's not logical, it doesn't have any evidence, uh...and...yeah it just can't be proven basically is what I'm trying to say. [643]

END

Analysis

There are 1083 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 83.9% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 643 words i.e. 59.4% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 265 words i.e. 24.5% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX E6

Y10 Mia & David (both atheist) 2

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

DAVID: Okay this is Jordan and Mia again with the second task. Excerpt B court transcript yeah. So this bit is about um...the existence of Jesus and whether he was real or not. Calvin makes a point that Jesus was...Jesus did exist and um...he was a great teacher and he makes a big point...a big deal out of the fact that his enemies also said he was a great leader and teacher and all the facts about him written in the Bible are actually true and they happened. He also says that they were written...they were written close to the date that they actually happened so...those are his arguments for the Bible.

MIA: So how much do you believe of the existence of Jesus; do you think there's good evidence?

DAVID: I don't think there is enough evidence for me to believe that he actually existed. As we've mentioned in the past um...uh...I'm the kind of person that only believes in something that there is actual evidence to support it. Um...and...with Jesus I just don't see that because again the Bible it could have been written by someone who wasn't sane and uh... [62]

MIA: That's a point; can you imagine if it was like a prank that would be so funny.

DAVID: It is possible essentially.

MIA: Yeah it is. It actually is as well.

DAVID: Because it could just be like a piece of poetry at the end of the day.

MIA: Yeah a really really long one! [35]

DAVID: Yeah! And...uh...people say he rose from the dead, that I think is the worst point of all of them.

MIA: Have you even started recording? Yeah you have!

DAVID: Imagine! Anyway...um...yeah so it's really impossible for someone to just...get up from a grave and walk, that's just...that's definitely made up. It just can't be real.

MIA: Also the point he's made um...he just kind of said oh even his enemies agreed but like we don't even have proof of his enemies right? We can't...essentially there is nothing we can substantiate because what we have, the evidence that we have of Jesus, no witness accounts, the only thing is a Bible, it's a piece of text written in Hebrew, 2000 years ago back like...we've mentioned before could have been written by someone who was not all there mentally. And...like I just don't think there is enough evidence... [212]

DAVID: It all comes back to the evidence again because...like at the moment uh...most of the world is either Christian or Muslim right, and there's....all those people believe something that they don't have actual evidence for. I think that's just absurd.

MIA: Yeah like...essentially you can make anything up and say I believe in this, I could be like...give me something that sounds ridiculous. [97]

DAVID: You're God.

MIA: Yeah I could just I'm a god; and like I could say oh if you don't believe that I'm a god you're going to hell and it's that element of fear that causes people to convert to religions because I mean to be fair when you hear someone saying oh if you don't believe in this you're going to hell. It's got no proof behind it but it's like it relates back to facts over feelings, I feel like religious people often exploit feelings, especially fear in order to kind of get their point across because there is no other way they can; because there is no facts. [320]

DAVID: We've recently studied um...Judgement Day in religious studies and the bit in the Koran -

MIA: It says non-believers go to hell, that would concern me because um...I don't think that everyone would have a fair shot at it because think of the people in like African tribes that could have never heard of Islam.

DAVID: Exactly! And I think it's just really sad that um...uh...like in the Koran and in the Bible both books state that God is all loving and all powerful yeah? All loving, how can he be all loving if he wants to send all the non-believers to hell. [406]

MIA: Yeah that just seems narcissistic to me.

DAVID: Yeah he should be considerate for those people because maybe...

MIA: Yeah!

DAVID: Yeah basically...

MIA: Because like if you want to damn someone to a place where they will experience extreme pain, that is not um...benevolent in anyway. [141]

DAVID: That shouldn't be based on your beliefs, it should be based on what you've done in life, your actions, your -

MIA: Yeah, like I understand that some people use religion as a moral compass but when it says that if you don't believe a certain thing that you'll go to hell, it just seems so backwards to me. [464]

DAVID: Its ridiculous yeah.

MIA: Yeah completely ridiculous to me.

DAVID: And again about the contradictions there is a big point about...in the Bible it says that God is all loving, yet like...Christians are supposed to be homophobic at the same time -

MIA: Yeah like there's so many contradictions in the Bible. Like again I used to be Christian and it would say things like you can't kill someone, it would forbid that; but it also says you can stone people to death. You know...it's been...there is something in this source where it says it's been...that one here, the excerpt where it says it's been justified...it's been used to justify inequality for ages, and that was one of the main reasons that I chose atheism.

DAVID: Yeah and a lot of um...Muslim aspects are to do with sexism, like for example, women aren't allowed to pray, not pray...go to mosques right? They're not allowed to go to mosques.

MIA: On their own I think.

DAVID: Yeah on their own.

MIA: They're not allowed to go anywhere on their own, like if you take a look at Sharia counties there is so much there that I just can't...I just can't agree with it. I mean you say not to kill people but there are people in the Sharia countries who are found out to be gay and they'll be thrown off a building. Its mad! Like...oh no...so I just think there is a lot of contradictions and it's impossible to follow it to achieve that way.

DAVID: Yeah! [389]

END

Analysis

There are 1007 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 84.7% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 389 words i.e. 38.6% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 464 words i.e. 46.1% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX F1

Y12 Catherine (practising Christian) and Memphis (agnostic) 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

CATHERINE: What point is Calvin trying to make?

MEMPHIS: Um...like Calvin is saying that there are things around us that we can't see or hear, not detect. But they exist.

CATHERINE: Like I think it says about...where is it? Where is it? Radio signals and dog whistle.

MEMPHIS: So like there could be so many other natural things that exist in the world around us.

CATHERINE: He speaks about how um...Stephen Hawking says there might be an 11 dimensional universe whereas...no Stephen Hawking about the 11 dimensional universe -

MEMPHIS: Whereas we thought there was only 4.

CATHERINE: We know we exist in a 4 dimensional universe but he's suggesting that there are 7 more that we can't see.

MEMPHIS: They talk about dark matter and 96% of the universe...mass that's missing.

CATHERINE: That we can't detect which links back to Calvin's point of like trying to -

MEMPHIS: Trying to discover things that we can't even notice because so many of these things like TV waves we wouldn't have even known existed like 100 years ago.

CATHERINE: Years and years ago because of scientific...what's the word? Scientific-

MEMPHIS: Discoveries?

CATHERINE: Progress! Progress in science that we could discover new things like...pulsating...TV signals.

MEMPHIS: I guess that means in like 100 years in the future they could have discovered something that -

CATHERINE: We can't see now.

MEMPHIS: That we don't even have a clue -

CATHERINE: Another dimension so in a few years we might discover like a 5 dimensional – [45]

MEMPHIS: Yeah they might and they could discover like...I dunno some...because all the things they've discovered now seem quite plausible do you know what I mean? But they could discover something...I dunno supernatural or weird because there are those photos and it's like, we did them in science last year of universe and one of them is taken with like a light camera and one is take with infrared and they look so different. It's like 2 things...

CATHERINE: So maybe there is a lot more to this world than we've like contemplated.

MEMPHIS: Yeah we just don't know it yet. We're too focused on something else to be able to discover it because...what's...what are they trying to discover now? [117]

CATHERINE: What do you mean?

MEMPHIS: I don't know there's like...I think there is ongoing research in something they're just not doing research on.

CATHERINE: Yeah I know what you mean they're like focusing on certain fields so there could be a lot more going on because there's so much like...smaller than what we could ever seen that we now know exists. It could be so much larger. I guess that's the point about supernatural you could argue it's just not supernatural at all.

MEMPHIS: Its just supernatural to us because we haven't discovered it.

CATHERINE: Its undiscovered nature not something that's -

MEMPHIS: Extraordinary out of the universe.

CATHERINE: I think that's probably what lots of things that they said were supernatural in the past were, like things we can probably describe now. We can understand.

MEMPHIS: ...like mere speculation.

CATHERINE: He says there isn't any evidence, in a court of law there should be evidence rather than just -

MEMPHIS: Speculation!

CATHERINE: Yeah and just saying it exists and not having anything to back up that existence.

MEMPHIS: Yeah we need to have...justification for like what you're saying. I think with stuff like this it's not that there's necessarily no justification but the justification might not be -

CATHERINE: Its the whole debate. [288]

MEMPHIS: Yeah because they want it...they want evidence they don't just want logic saying that there could be more because I guess logically you could say the opposite.

CATHERINE: Was it Stephen...do you know the Evil God Challenge?

MEMPHIS: Yeah that's what I was about to say. Yeah. [324]

CATHERINE: The Evil God Challenge like everything can be switched and still be logical when it comes to a good god and an evil god; I can't remember which philosopher it was. [82] Was it Stephen Law?

MEMPHIS: Oh I don't have a clue! I can't remember!

CATHERINE: I can't remember!

MEMPHIS: Something like that.

CATHERINE: So it's like you could flip all of the arguments for us having 11 dimensions.

MEMPHIS: You could flip it and say – [345]

CATHERINE: Just say there was one because I guess somebody would argue that the only world...the world of our senses is it...like what we can see around us, what we can hear and touch. They would say that that is all there is to life.

MEMPHIS: Is that Plato or Aristotle that said that?

CATHERINE: Aristotle!

MEMPHIS: Aristotle and Plato is all logic.

CATHERINE: And there is a world of forms.

MEMPHIS: Yes which it does say in this ...shadow world. [142]

CATHERINE: Yeah well that is true, that is what he said actually, there is a world of shadows, maybe Plato was right all along. [369]

MEMPHIS: So it's like...Calvin could represent Plato, chief prosecutor. Aristotle...

CATHERINE: Yeah just because...yeah the shadow world that could back up what Plato thought. But I think it's probably a bit different Plato was saying there was like -

MEMPHIS: But like loose ends linked to -

CATHERINE: [Mumbles as reading something out] That's interesting! So that is like Plato was saying, right now we're living in a shadow world and the other world is -

MEMPHIS: Above us.

CATHERINE: The true world and I guess some here would say that was...you could say that of heaven.

MEMPHIS: Yeah!

CATHERINE: Like the missing...bits make up heaven. [416]

MEMPHIS: Because heaven is meant to be like this perfect harmony after death.

CATHERINE: So once we die maybe our matter floats off to another world.

MEMPHIS: Or the real world.

CATHERINE: Yeah!

MEMPHIS: Not the shadow world.

CATHERINE: Which means that...they say our soul is linked to the thingy don't they?

MEMPHIS: The forms? [185]

CATHERINE: The forms. The world of the forms, they say...which is why we know things.

MEMPHIS: So maybe that is why.

CATHERINE: And inventors only know what to invent because their soul remembers that from the world of forms.

MEMPHIS: Yeah so maybe if there was anyway...I don't know how on earth we would gain access to the massive world, but that might like contain all the lost...answers to all the questions. Yeah because that's true. [493] Some Christians think that heaven is all around us, but we can't see it, what do you think?

CATHERINE: I'm not too sure. I haven't really thought about it.

MEMPHIS: No I haven't because -

CATHERINE: I'd always just thought maybe if heaven is all around us why is there so much prejudice and - [204]

MEMPHIS: Yeah it doesn't make sense. [498]

CATHERINE: Destruction.

MEMPHIS: Because if heaven is all around us then surely heaven is just the world we live in?

CATHERINE: Yeah the heaven can't be this... [522]

MEMPHIS: It's not heaven then is it?

CATHERINE: Perfect divine – [212]

MEMPHIS: Like place if it's what we're in right now because...and then if you were in heaven and this is heaven this wouldn't be -

CATHERINE: Oh no if ghosts do exist it might explain why if this is heaven and heaven is around us -

MEMPHIS: Maybe! Yeah because if you were like...

CATHERINE: They do say there's like demons that come to earth so it's sort of suggesting that they're in heaven as well.

MEMPHIS: Yeah maybe... [575] maybe because like if heaven is all around us maybe you could argue that actually all the evil and suffering that we're seeing right now is like our perception. If we were in a heaven form but still in this world; we would have seen it differently because maybe...if you were dead...say there was an earthquake and lots of people die would you think that was...a good thing if you were already dead? [306]

CATHERINE: I don't...I get what you mean.

MEMPHIS: Do you get what I mean?

CATHERINE: Yeah! But I don't know I'm not too sure. Its...

MEMPHIS: I've only ever really thought of heaven as like an external thing. You don't like to think of it as something the same -

CATHERINE: I think because you are meant to go to somewhere -

MEMPHIS: Better! [588]

CATHERINE: Better...like...better...I guess you could call it better in the real world because you're meant to do like your suffering and get over them aren't you? Not get over them but like learn from them.

MEMPHIS: It's like this world is where you suffer and then as your reward for this you would go to somewhere better, and if you didn't...if heaven was just this

then it wouldn't be much of a...reward. You wouldn't have felt like you'd achieved anything to end up where you came from. [414]

CATHERINE: Yeah!

MEMPHIS: I guess...I think...I think you could scientifically argue that heaven is all around us.

CATHERINE: I mean if there's actually 7 dimensions that we can't see maybe there is a heaven.

MEMPHIS: Yeah!

CATHERINE: Around us. [608]

MEMPHIS: Somewhere! My dad said because like all the atoms in our body when we rot will just go into something new like if your essence -

CATHERINE: Like an energy transfer.

MEMPHIS: Yeah like if your...soul...your essence or somehow part of you...it would like diffuse into something new. [473]

CATHERINE: Yeah!

MEMPHIS: You'd be part of the air or whatever wouldn't you?

CATHERINE: Yeah! Or something else. The air -

MEMPHIS: Like reincarnation but a bit different.

CATHERINE: Yeah because there is one thing that dies and another thing...lives.

MEMPHIS: Lives! Like as one person dies one person is born. One baby is born.

CATHERINE: Yeah! And it will just pass on through and there's like...if there are more people in the world than there is...like the amount of people born is greater than the amount of people that die; then a tree or something has died instead to make way for us to live.

MEMPHIS: Yeah! But also if it's the idea of um...atoms being...well being reincarnated then there are too many people being born unless your atoms are like split off into 2 people. If there is more people being born than dying then -

CATHERINE: Yeah I get what you mean.

MEMPHIS: I don't know how to explain it but...

CATHERINE: The atoms are going to have to come - [770]

1604 words

Researcher: Finished?

MEMPHIS: No!

END

Analysis

There are 1604 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are on task for 77.5% of this conversation.

Cumulative talk comprises 770 words i.e. 48.0% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 473 words i.e. 29.5% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX F2

Y10 Catherine (practising Christian) and Memphis (agnostic) 2 Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

MEMPHIS: So the exhibits are showing us that the gospels were written at the right time to be like accurate to what had happened.

CATHERINE: Yeah, it seems to provide some sort of evidence to suggest that the gospels were written as an eyewitness account rather than written years and years after it happening; and somebody just being like oh yeah I'll -

MEMPHIS: Because if they were written years and years afterwards then it would be pretty unbelievable. [15]

CATHERINE: Inaccurate ...exhibit MIC says that they found 3 piece of papyrus scraps that contained phrases and at first they dismissed it but then someone who got a microscope.

MEMPHIS: Dated them.

CATHERINE: Yeah dated them as being no later than the year 60BCE.

MEMPHIS: So that's pretty consistent with the times that the gospels were written and it links; it's almost a...I can't think of the word it links to the Bible and what's written in the Bible and its pretty -

CATHERINE: Its showing that like the Bible is accurate to the times, which makes it more believable because if it wasn't written anywhere near the times [noise on recording] dismiss it. Generally, its quite consistent. [113]

MEMPHIS: To what extent do you agree or disagree that this is good evidence about Jesus?

CATHERINE: I think its...quite good historical evidence. I mean obviously I'm a Christian so I'll be a bit biased but...

MEMPHIS: It's got some -

CATHERINE: Like for history its -

MEMPHIS: Pretty valid, reliable one of the two or both.

CATHERINE: Both!

MEMPHIS: So its...it's got...I don't want to say meat do you know what I mean it's got something behind it to suggest that it could actually be a thing.

CATHERINE: Yeah so its...the fact that they were written at the right time means you're more likely to actually believe what - [180]

MEMPHIS: Its dated, it's like saying that...like taking...is it...the Magna Carta, we know that that's a thing because its dated and its written down. So because these are sort of...we can date them and they're written down we can...because we're not going to say oh yeah the Magna Carta doesn't exist because we've got it there. So it does give some evidence about the whole Jesus -

CATHERINE: I would say that the fact that...even the people that didn't like Jesus but wrote about him, would show that it's not just some like weird group of people.
[110]

MEMPHIS: That are like oh my god! Our saviour! If someone that doesn't like him wrote about him it must suggest that he both had supporters and people that didn't support him.

CATHERINE: And that he at least existed and must have done stuff to make people not like him.

MEMPHIS: Yeah!

CATHERINE: Because otherwise they wouldn't have written about him if he wasn't that-

MEMPHIS: If you didn't believe in something you just wouldn't...and you didn't like that idea you just wouldn't write it down.

CATHERINE: Just like dismiss it.

MEMPHIS: Rather than writing it down and saying – [273]

CATHERINE: Because I mean it says like in the gospels like things that Jesus did that the Jews and Romans didn't like; and I'm sure quite a lot of the things that he did are like valid things. I guess the question about like miracles is something that's probably a bit more hard.

MEMPHIS: The enemies of Jesus also said that he performed miracles as well as his supporters so that suggests something that they said that he came from the devil and not God.

CATHERINE: Still all believing in like a supernatural -

MEMPHIS: Not a superior being but – [318]

CATHERINE: Something else behind it like even if they don't think its God they're thinking that it's something that we can't describe and so maybe you could argue that if those things happen nowadays there might be...a way of describing them. I mean I don't think there probably is but...I don't know how could you walk on water? [219]

MEMPHIS: Yeah!

CATHERINE: I don't know.

MEMPHIS: You can walk on custard!

CATHERINE: You can walk on custard that's true!

MEMPHIS: But just not water.

CATHERINE: So I don't know I guess...I don't know how people get around that problem. Do you just say that they're lying or like...

MEMPHIS: I've never seen anyone walk on water.

CATHERINE: No me neither! I mean I would say that he did walk on water and it was like the power of God but...I don't know how else you can explain it.

MEMPHIS: Yeah! Yeah! [362]

CATHERINE: What are your views about Jesus?

MEMPHIS: So yours are going to be very -

CATHERINE: Yeah all about Jesus! I mean yeah I think Jesus is a great guy.

MEMPHIS: I don't really know. I don't...I don't not hold views but I don't feel...because I'm not very religious I don't feel like I have very strong views about Jesus.

CATHERINE: Yeah I get what you mean.

MEMPHIS: Like sometimes I might be like oh yeah he is there, maybe in a different form as to what we think he is.

CATHERINE: Yeah I get what you mean.

MEMPHIS: Like...maybe he's not...maybe he was a saviour but does that mean he was the Son of God as well? [238]

CATHERINE: Hmm! I get what you mean. [403]

MEMPHIS: Because there's been...people have claimed that someone is a saviour and they didn't...they weren't the Son of God if that makes sense.

CATHERINE: Yeah you could be saved through methods other than like supreme being. I mean I think the fact that he is the Son of God like is the reason that he's capable of saving us because he...like powerful above all things, and if the saviour was just...a normal person then I feel like they couldn't actually do anything to – [329]

MEMPHIS: They couldn't do the things that Jesus would have done yeah that makes sense.

CATHERINE: To like change the world.

MEMPHIS: Yeah! I just don't think I have been able to explore it enough to be able to gain a proper view because I tend to just be like oh yeah! Just chill you know? [456]

CATHERINE: I think I only started exploring it like properly in like the last 2 years because I think I realised that its more to me like...almost more of a...I don't know if a state of mind is the right word but like if you're...I think it could work like a coping technique. If you're thinking that your troubles...you're asking like...hoping that someone else is behind it and that there's something greater to whatever is happening, I think it's more of a meaning to this world. But...it makes you feel better. [419]

MEMPHIS: Yeah and I know I listen to a song and um...one of the lyrics this is going to sound like...okay one of the lyrics says it's like...I mean if it was you that made me you probably shouldn't have made me atheist.

CATHERINE: Oh yeah!

MEMPHIS: What do you think about that kind of thing?

CATHERINE: Hmm! I don't know because this is like the freewill argument, because we were doing about this at church the other day, because if God had made us as puppets then there would be no satisfaction for him to have us like believe in him. If we had no choice but to believe in him. So he would have to have given us some freewill because if we hadn't had – [489]

MEMPHIS: So choose whether to believe or not?

CATHERINE: The choice then they wouldn't have made like any argument at all.

MEMPHIS: Yeah! [520]

END

Analysis

There are 1198 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are on task for 84.2% of this conversation.

Cumulative talk comprises 520 words i.e. 43.4% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 489 words i.e. 40.8% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX F3

Y13 Frank (agnostic) and Ann (deist) 1 Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

ANN: What point is Calvin trying to make?

FRANK: I think he's trying to make the point that um...science and religion is trying to like combine maybe.

ANN: Coincide with each other.

FRANK: Coincide with each other yeah.

ANN: But what point do you think he's trying to make ...religion and science?

FRANK: Um...that there is a possibility of another world that we can't see.

ANN: Yeah!

FRANK: Quite similar to Plato or something -

ANN: Plato the world of the forms. Even though they're like different worlds they're still like a reflection of the forms or like in this case God within the world.

FRANK: He's trying to combine science into it though by quoting people like Stephen Hawking by saying there is a 11 dimensional universe but we only see 5 so...there are things in the universe we can't see. Um...that obviously are there. [62]

ANN: Yeah also I think like what he's trying to do is um...you know how like...I think it's trying to suggest that religion has the conclusions with like God and stuff like that whilst science...do you receive this evidence and therefore make an assumption to that while religion has the conclusion and science provides an evidence for it. [93]

FRANK: Yeah! Well yeah, yeah I can agree with that I suppose. I just think that obviously he's trying to make like you said science and religion coincide. But...I think he makes some good points the way he analyses it with the dogs and the whistle. So...to agree with the judge's comment that...well the only judge's comment is that he's making a point oh well I assume it is, is it?

ANN: Yeah!

FRANK: Well I think he does because he does back it up with evidence and I think it is a well thought out point.

ANN: Yeah because even though we can't see it, it doesn't mean it doesn't exist.

FRANK: Yeah! [171]

ANN: Yeah!

FRANK: So I do believe that that is a good comment for that reason. Not to say whether I 100% believe in it because I don't know whether there is actually -

ANN: A god.

FRANK: Not a god as such just that...a -

ANN: A deity. [215]

FRANK: An eleventh dimension or like a world of other forms, I don't think its necessarily trying to prove the existence of heaven or God exactly. It might point to it but I think it's just trying to say that there could be evidence that there is a different or higher world out there. [146]

ANN: Yeah! I do think like he's trying to make a point towards religion though.

FRANK: Yeah! Towards religion -

ANN: Not specifically which religion but -

FRANK: Yeah exactly! That's what I'm trying to say. Not specifically heaven. But just that there might be...there could be something else above us that we can't see that's out there.

ANN: Yeah like...maybe it's not a god maybe it's like some sort of like stereotypical Judeo Christian guy, but like a deity.

FRANK: Yeah!

ANN: Like a deity that is like...oh like a prime mover [sounded like] maybe.

FRANK: Yeah! Maybe or just something we can't see, or fathom, or comprehend. [303]

ANN: Like see I thought like when they were talking about things that they can't see or...like a ghost, like spirits. Do you know what I mean?

FRANK: Not really! What are you trying to say?

ANN: No because like I thought you know talking about things that can exist and they're talking about like different dimensions and stuff there is a lot of speculation within the media about ghosts and spirits, and the supernatural world.

FRANK: I don't think that's the point he's trying to make though. [241]

ANN: I know but that just reminds me of it.

FRANK: Oh okay!

ANN: Okay some Christians think that heaven is all around us but we can't just see it, what do you think?

FRANK: So what...I'm not a firm religious believer or...so I don't really know. I don't think I can believe in something until like...it's been proven.

ANN: Are you like agnostic or...?

FRANK: Yeah!

ANN: Atheist?

FRANK: Agnostic.

ANN: Okay!

FRANK: I don't really know.

ANN: Yeah but like -

FRANK: What about yourself? I don't know if I could believe in it um...

ANN: Some Christians think that heaven is all around us but we just can't see it. There is you know suggestion with like people believing in miracles and miracles do occur. So...maybe that's like what they consider heaven, but like what would you consider something that's like...

FRANK: Well I would consider heaven the afterlife, somewhere where you go to be eternal because that's what the Judeo Christian...it's what I think it is where you go somewhere to live after you've lived your physical life on earth, somewhere where you live internally in union with god. I don't...know whether I believe that or not because - [329]

ANN: It's a bit like -

FRANK: I think it might just try to appease people with the idea of dying.

ANN: Yeah I think...I think it's a bit ironic, like the undead dead isn't it because they're undead. But they're really dead. I feel like that's a concept that I am like...hmm iffy about. Yeah?

FRANK: Yeah I think that's... [360]

END

Analysis

There are 828 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are on task for 83.2% of this conversation.

Cumulative talk comprises 360 words i.e. 43.5% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 329 words i.e. 39.7% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX F4

Y13 Frank (agnostic) and Ann (deist) 2

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

FRANK: Okay um...so this is basically trying to argue that Jesus was a real person which I agree with. There is like evidence of him being around from documents and stuff. Um...it's trying to say he's a miracle worker, great teacher, and that he rose from the dead. So what do you think about that?

ANN: I mean...personally if you're like a criticiser of Jesus right I don't think you'll be saying he's a great teacher, nor was he a miracle worker because then you'd be criticising him. So, I feel like Calvin is like trying to make it sound like that's what they're trying to say but maybe it's not...maybe like Jesus did exist but I don't think his criticiser would like mention any great characteristics of him. Rather than just make him look evil.

FRANK: Right so you're trying to argue that Jesus was real but he didn't do anything miraculous?

ANN: To be honest I don't know what I'm trying to argue!

FRANK: Okay! Um...do you think this is good evidence about Jesus? I think...I think it...it holds weight. I think there is evidence we can see that...it can be reinforced by evidence so there is multiple evidence that shows he was a real person. He was alive. I don't know whether there's evidence that he actually rose from the dead or not because I don't think you'll find evidence...correct me if I'm wrong, evidence of that from anywhere but the Bible. And I don't know how much of that is actually true.

ANN: There is a question like...especially with the point that they made like how the Bible can suggest as sort of like witness statements. [209]

FRANK: I feel that Jesus was a real person but I feel like he's greatly over exaggerated in the things he did, I don't know if he did create so much...so many miracles.

ANN: Yeah! I mean like...I think he is a real person but it's very debatable whether he performed miracles.

FRANK: Yeah!

ANN: Like maybe you know...

FRANK: For example, the miracle when he turned -

ANN: Water into wine.

FRANK: Water into wine or when he filled empty baskets with bread and fish.

ANN: Yeah or like um...he didn't fill the baskets though he portioned it out to the people. And somehow it just never ended. Or like...I mean there is like...statements with the Bible that says Jesus walked on water.

FRANK: Yeah it seems a bit over exaggerated. [123]

ANN: Yeah because like if you take into consideration what the Bible is trying to say and what is the Bible's main aim which is I think in this case is to believe that there is a God and Jesus is the Son of God.

FRANK: Yeah so would you say you'd agree or disagree with what Calvin is trying to say?

ANN: I mean I would agree with him to an extent.

FRANK: What that Jesus was a miracle worker and a great teacher?

ANN: No! That Jesus was a real person.

FRANK: Yeah I agree with that. Um...I think something's you might be able to argue were miracles. It depends what you class as a miracle -

ANN: Yeah but are they true?

FRANK: Well we'll never know will we?

ANN: Yeah I mean like if he's saying that you know...when people witnesses Jesus' miracle, there were sort of like eyewitness statements but then you could argue that someone who truly wants to believe in something would see anything.

FRANK: Yeah but it says even his enemies admitted that he had...he was a wonder worker and that he performs miracles.

ANN: Yeah but where is the evidence. I mean is it there? Evidence from history...yeah but this is like Bishop, you know he's a Bishop. Obviously he is.

FRANK: So you feel like people are biased, Christians were biased towards Jesus' miracles? [376]

ANN: I mean like if you're talking about Jesus especially...specifically in the Bible and regard him as the Son of God then yeah obviously because the Bible was created by this group of people. I forgot what time it was but like they chose and picked -

FRANK: It was over a long period of time wasn't it?

ANN: Huh?

FRANK: It was over a long period of time wasn't it? [189]

ANN: Yeah they choose and pick what to put into the Bible. That's why there is like scriptures left out that was found and now new denomination of Christianity.

FRANK: Uh huh.

ANN: Yeah. [220]

FRANK: Right so I think that's it.

ANN: Yeah!

END

Analysis

There are 724 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are on task for 82.3% of this conversation.

Cumulative talk comprises 220 words i.e. 30.4% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 376 words i.e. 51.9% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX F5

Y12 Reginald (deist) & Skye (agnostic) 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

REGINALD: Yeah I think basically what he's trying to say is that there must be some form of heaven because scientists have proved that there is a missing seven dimensions. That's like things that are out of our sight and then he uses the example, I think it's on that page of like the fact that -

SKYE: Television signals.

REGINALD: Radio signals, television signals and stuff like that so...then the judge is making his point really well so I think this is trying to relate itself to heaven being around -

SKYE: Yeah because it says that religion is talked about and now scientists -

REGINALD: And how it's shocking now the scientists can do it.

SKYE: But do you believe in that though?

REGINALD: I don't think it's some kind of heaven style thing I think it's just...the fact that obviously we've got the spectrum of colours everything and we've only got a tiny bit of all those like waves that we can actually see so all things out of it, it's merely just because our eyes don't have the capacity to see them, that they're not there. But really they are there and if our eyes were better we would see them and stuff.

SKYE: So do you think they're like a part of this lifetime that we just can't see or do you think it's something that happens like spiritually after death?

REGINALD: I think it's probably something that happens in our lifetime to be honest. I think it's just things that are around us that we're just able to see.

SKYE: Right so it could be like...Buddhists and how they meditate and reach that point do you get what I'm trying to say? [159]

REGINALD: Yeah I know but it's like because Buddhists because when they meditate it's to get peace of mind inside their own head. They don't try and -

SKYE: Yeah but they do it to reach a certain point don't they?

REGINALD: Yeah! I think its nirvana isn't it that Buddhists...but that's like after death because they will be reincarnated until they achieve nirvana.

SKYE: Right! But...I agree with you but I don't agree with you. It's like I don't think that's going to happen in this lifetime but I think it's something that could happen spiritually. That doesn't necessarily mean I believe in like a heaven.

REGINALD: The same to be honest. [108]

SKYE: Just something else because I don't think that...like our universe is the only thing that exists.

REGINALD: No it can't be. I mean there's so much evidence for a multi-verse theory so because I have explained to you already that whole weird thing that I thought the universe created stuff. If you want me to go...because its like you've got like nuclear power plants which work on uranium and how that works and everything but when we run out of uranium we could move onto things like plutonium and everything but that would cause so much nuclear waste that it's probably not good. So instead it's likely that we'd go onto nuclear fusion of fission whatever it is. Where you've got like the big chamber with the particles going around you get the energy of that. And the Big Bang was 2 particles crashing together and creating the universe. So...what if that happened in our future inside this thing where there was a malfunction because its new technology. And there was a massive explosion caused by 2 particles crashing together. Big Bang created inside the universe, the universe created itself because as soon as you get outside the space time continuum everything that has happened, will happen, is going to happen, is already happening, has happened and will happen because you're outside of time. So the universe created itself and it goes around energy which I also backed up with the idea that like we can't use up energy and we can't create energy. It goes around, it's something that goes on, and I think that's the same with like our life. When we die all of the energy we've got must go somewhere so maybe that's spiritual, we go into another animal, maybe reincarnation is a thing. Maybe the universe reincarnates itself in this big cycle so maybe heaven is on earth because we are heaven. We create it ourselves and after we die we are – [487]

SKYE: Right so you believe in a cycle. [115]

REGINALD: So it's like there is a cycle but it's never ending but it's not like a weird infinite regress torture kind of thing because we never know because everything that's happened is going to happen again and again. Like this conversation its probably happened billions and billions of times before and will happen billions and billions times more. That rhymed! But...it's like we'll never...we're never going to know that because to us right now this is our one life. But this could be –

SKYE: So do you believe in like different dimensions and different like forms of reality?

REGINALD: Well yeah I mean we know for a fact that there are different dimensions just in the simple way that we can draw a square on a piece of paper, we could also draw a cube because our eyes can comprehend the 2D, 3D, 2 dimension, 3 dimension and I think...I can't remember which scientist it was that proved that there could be up to 25 dimensions overall. And it's like...each one of them is probably a different reality maybe in a different universe which in itself has got more and more cycles. Everything is just going round and round and round.

SKYE: So you think it's quite possible for there to be eleven dimensions and seven that are missing? [704]

REGINALD: Yeah for us yeah, in our universe that we can't observe because we right now don't have the technology to do that.

SKYE: Because you know how animals can sense things that we can't see do you think that they are in like tune with the other dimensions that we can't know? [755]

REGINALD: I think they might know other things, like have you ever had pet dogs and stuff?

SKYE: Yeah!

REGINALD: Sometimes without warning they will go and they will just stand and stare at the corner, and they'll growl, and they'll bark -

SKYE: And cats!

REGINALD: And cats as well and you're thinking why have they done that? And they'll do it for ages and then suddenly it stops and they'll go off. [184] My mum she's a Mormon, she's always said maybe they're aware of a spirit or some sort. [772]

SKYE: Yeah that's what my mum says.

REGINALD: And that's what I'm thinking, yes maybe...maybe there is completely new dimensions in everything that we just can't observe because our eyes aren't evolved enough. Our eyes aren't powerful enough or anything like that. It's just everything is there but we just can't see it so most people believe it's not.

SKYE: I understand that.

REGINALD: But I don't believe in the whole...the fact that ghosts can kill you -

SKYE: Yeah I don't believe in that.

REGINALD: It's not like they're ghosts, it's like they're just other beings.

SKYE: A ghost is something that was a human that's died and has unfinished business as some people say, so it wouldn't really be logical if they were there purely to harm us would it?

REGINALD: Well no even if a ghost was the embodiment of...like the spiritual embodiment kind of thing of the passed away human, humans aren't just going to go around killing everyone. But then...it's like I don't believe ghosts are actually how we believe they are.

SKYE: Yeah I believe in spirits but I don't believe in like ghosts as humans walking around just doing what they do.

REGINALD: Yeah! [375]

SKYE: But I believe in spirits who may like...because you get loads of stories about like war people who come back as spirits or they visit their loved ones something like that. But I don't believe in like how you see in like horror films and stuff of ghosts like that.

REGINALD: That's because...you know when I was on about the energy thing?

SKYE: Yeah! [437]

REGINALD: Because our energy a lot of it...you've got like obviously different types of energy like the kinetic, elastic, and everything but I think there's one that isn't scientific basically which is your spiritual energy. And that's how some people are like they're more inclined to be open minded and stuff like that because they've got more spiritual energy so I think maybe because your spiritual really can be bigger than you are. Like your spirit could be like 20 foot tall but you're a midget you know so it's like - [862]

SKYE: Thank you!

REGINALD: Yeah! [Laughter] Um...it's like...so like your spirit needs to find another thing to get energy in which is why the cycle goes around, so when we pass away our spirit might be around as us for a little while before it goes into something else.

SKYE: Right! Okay! So do you believe in stuff like psychic abilities, and crystals and stuff like that? [497]

REGINALD: I don't believe in the whole telling the future thing. I do think crystals have a kind of medicinal value but not in the way that the psychics believe, because they believe it's the energies within the crystals, whereas I think it's just placebo because obviously we like give someone a sugar pill and tell them it's a headache tablet their headache will go. I think if you give someone crystals and say these will help you -

SKYE: So it's all psychological?

REGINALD: So its psychological when it comes to...

SKYE: I don't necessarily believe in psychics in the form of how you said like telling the future but I believe in like the energy of like the world. Like nature has its own energy and animals have their own energy. But I don't believe in being able to like...control that energy to see future events. But...I do understand where you're coming from, from the whole Big Bang thing and like we had a conversation about God and how that could be God but do you think that there is a God? Like one God? [1045]

REGINALD: See like...it's like I said in philosophy the other day it's like I either see God as literally just a collection of every single element that is possible, like

throughout all of the universes, not the ones we've just discovered but literally all of them because there might be more compacted into particles. Compacted and then that is how the Big Bang...because God is what made everything, the world is God. And therefore we are God for ourselves because we are creating outward elements because that's what makes up everything, so we're God to ourselves. So it's like...if you get an average person who hasn't been living in a place where people discriminate and stuff, where they just live in an open-minded place they are likely to be open-minded and stuff because they're a god unto themselves; so being a god unto yourself is working for other people and yourself. Like my rules that are really simple, do literally what you want as long as you hurt no one else; and that's just the rule I live by.

SKYE: I don't believe in like how we perceive God now to be like a being. I just don't think it's realistic that there is some sort of higher being like the whatever. That's sitting there somewhere in another dimension, that's controlling everything and it's just going to happen because then how would you explain like all the negativity and destruction that happens in the world because if this God is so high and mighty and all good and loving and whatever how can it allow stuff like cancer, how can it allow like rape, and deaths and stuff like that. It just isn't realistic.

REGINALD: Because I hold things like that up to my mum and her one thing is basically that humans were given freewill and that annoys me. It's like -

SKYE: Everybody says everything happens for a reason. [1361]

REGINALD: Yeah it's like...well...does it though because well I mean I suppose it does because I mean if someone rapes someone then there's a reason and it's...obviously not good. The victim, nothing good. The person who did it, good for like 10 minutes kind of thing so it's like...so it's like kind of...it does happen for a reason but whether that reason is like good or not is...it's like we said the whole God thing is... I think the only reason we perceive it to be human is because we manage to evolve another part of our brain which allows us to like think and -

SKYE: I think it's because we...it's the simplest thing for us to explain isn't it because it's hard to explain like a spiritual being but if you like put it into humans...because we're all human so we know what the characteristics of humans are so it's just easier to explain like that but I mean how do you explain like Jesus, the Son of God? [636]

REGINALD: I think I honestly...because there is so much evidence that Jesus existed like it annoys me when people say Jesus didn't exist and it's like yes he did! There was more evidence for Jesus than there is for Julius Caesar! Whether he was the son of God or not...son of God or not I dunno. I reckon he was just a really good physician, like he knew a lot of medical stuff so when it came to all the magical healing all it was, was he was using like plants and things like that, that he knew would heal people and people were just seeing it as magical and stuff. And maybe...maybe one person might have described him as a

Godly physician or something and it got taken out of proportion. I don't think he was the son of God. [1531]

SKYE: Because people were very religious.

REGINALD: Yeah obviously I mean -

SKYE: And superstition was a huge thing. [652]

REGINALD: Yeah superstition is pretty big now still and I mean Jesus, 33AD is when he died so it's like...still...I mean because obviously we've got this whole decreasing faith and it's like 2000 years ago, how big was it if it's as big as it is now? So it's like they would have taken things...obviously without proper science they needed to explain things and they'd explain it just by saying it. People would say that makes sense, I believe that, they'll say it to other people and it goes round and round.

SKYE: I think it's also the church's fault that religion has been so mixed because the church uses a lot of their policies and uses it as you will go to hell if you don't or you'll go to heaven if you do. So I think that's how religion has got a lot worse and why there are so many like religious wars and religious conflict because us as humans have changed what it is to be religious.

REGINALD: Yeah I think because religion putting it down to its a basic definition is just a belief system, so like for example um...Mormons you pay tithe, and its ten percent of your wage and you give that to the church and they'll use it to build temples and stuff. But then the prophet of the Mormon Church is one of the richest men in America! So if he's spending all that money on temples for his religion why has he got so much money? It's like...what...what I see religion as, is they've gone...there is a few people who have a belief system so we can make money out of this by scaring people into paying us money, or they think they'll go to hell. So religion should just be belief not pay to get to heaven so it's like that's just been blown out of order.

SKYE: Do you believe in like heaven and hell?

REGINALD: No because well...God is the earth reincarnated and stuff like that, it's like...we make our heaven or hell with our decisions because if God is within us and the earth is God and everything around us is God our hell could be earth and our heaven could be earth. It depends on the decisions you make and how you influence people around you. [1908]

SKYE: Right!

REGINALD: So you could make hell for yourself by I dunno' being like...Donald Trump, racist, bigot, um...like pretty much everything, sexist, he's living in hell because he's made people around him believe in that. And how can you live in heaven if everyone is like not free? He's created hell for himself. Whereas

SKYE: Yeah okay I understand. [710]

REGINALD: Whereas in other countries where it's all freedom, equality everything like that they're living in a heaven country because everyone there is allowed to be who they are.

SKYE: Okay I get that. [742]

END

Analysis

There are 2790 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are on task for 95.0% of this conversation.

Cumulative talk comprises 742 words i.e. 26.6% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 1908 words i.e. 68.4% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX F6

Y13 Reginald (deist) & Skye (agnostic) 2

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

SKYE: So what do you think about this then?

REGINALD: Well...it's like I was saying earlier it's just that there is tons of evidence that suggests that Jesus did exist.

SKYE: Yeah!

REGINALD: But it's just whether or not he was actually the Son of God.

SKYE: I think it's quite interesting how they've got information from his enemies as I put it, which does also suggest that he was real. But in order to say if he was the Son of God or not it's quite a stretch isn't it?

REGINALD: We know from Elizabethan times and stuff that witches got burnt but all a witch was, was someone who knew about plants, and all they'd be able to do is make potions, but all the potion was, was like a type of tea, a medicine or anything like that. So what if Jesus is just that? [100]

SKYE: Just a guy who knew -

REGINALD: Who just knew about the plants.

SKYE: So he was too early for his time?

REGINALD: Yeah! So instead of him being called a witch when they didn't know much about the magic and stuff, instead they...called him the Son of God. [46]

SKYE: Yeah and I think people don't understand that the Bible is written by a man so a lot of that's in the Bible can't be put down to fact can they? You don't even know what happened in that time.

REGINALD: It's like when I was Lincoln there was this...one of the preachers I went to speak to him, I was like so where's your actual evidence? He picked up the Bible. I went *Spiderman* was also a book! Does that mean it exists? Um...and then he started going on and on about all this stuff but he always referenced the Bible. I pointed out every single time that the Bible is a book. [213]

SKYE: Written by man. It's the same way how I could go and write a book about philosophy and just change a lot of stuff and then publish it, and then somebody makes religion out of that.

REGINALD: Yeah! [83]

SKYE: And Jesus was Jewish so shouldn't the whole thing be Jewish? Not Christianity, because Jesus was a Jewish man who knew a lot for his time so shouldn't...there shouldn't even really be Christianity should there?

REGINALD: But the only reason Christianity was set up is because you have the Jewish religion which is obviously the same God as the Christian God and all that happened is they were looking for a second coming or the first coming of Christ and they believed it to be Jesus. And...that's why its Jesus Christ because he's Christ the Son of God. So all it was, is people were a break away from the Jewish religion so they saw him as the actual first coming, the Son of God and then they created a religion out of that. Like the only reason Jesus actually became Christ and Christianity came is because the Jews believed there was going to be a coming of the Son of God. And it maybe just happened that he knew about the plants and everything, they thought he was magical. They were like he must be the Son of God we've been waiting for. [406]

SKYE: So it was just coincidence?

REGINALD: Just coincidence. [90]

SKYE: So what do you think about the whole New Testament and the Old Testament thing?

REGINALD: Well...I still just see it as a book, it's like...its full of contradictions as well.

SKYE: Doesn't it just confirm how easy it is to like...change religion?

REGINALD: Yeah!

SKYE: Because if you can write a whole New Testament and still get people to believe its fact shouldn't that just show how easy it is?

REGINALD: One of the things that the Mormons have...the Book of Mormon...but that was founded by Joseph Smith, in the in Pennsylvania and it was on gold and it was carved in. And what it was, was it was native American script from the... who were seen to be like the main worshippers of God right? And Joseph Smith gets which is basically the way...it was given to him by God basically, but it was a stone that he looked through and he could see the native American script in English. So he would be able to just read it, go straight through and do that but...even if he did manage to translate stuff like that what he's then done is incorporated native American religion or stories into religion that's Christian. So...again it's like you now got a whole system of people, Mormons who follow this book that was found in a hill in native American land based on a religion begun in the Middle East and was then changed in the Middle East, and then brought over to a little bit of the western world. A little bit of Russia got some forms of Christianity and they've just banged it together. So it's like all these religions you've created just because people have gone oh well I did...I know God exists. [663]

SKYE: Its just material evidence, and material evidence is very easy to misinterpret for one, because there's a lot of stuff in the Bible that people misinterpret.

REGINALD: Othello by Shakespeare, when Othello killed Desdemona it was because Desdemona's handkerchief was found in Casio's room. That was evidence enough because it was material, but Iago put it there. So...it just shows that material evidence isn't enough to know exactly what happened. So therefore the Bible isn't enough to prove that Jesus was the Son of God even if there is historical findings proving that Jesus was a man. [759]

SKYE: And it says his followers believed that Jesus rose from the dead what do you think about that? It's just a belief isn't it?

REGINALD: I think it's just a belief mainly because -

SKYE: They wanted to keep the faith alive therefore making -

REGINALD: Because he only first appeared to disciples of his and then miraculously went to heaven and then apparently supposedly showed up...I think it might be full Christians but I think it's mainly Mormons, he also showed himself to the native Americans and then he disappeared again.

SKYE: So do you think it was a psychological thing?

REGINALD: It might be because how would the native Americans know that it was Jesus, surely it was just a white man, but a Jewish man at the time, like Jewish man just appeared and they were like...he must be the Son of God and then he disappears again. [807]

SKYE: So it could just be psychologically wanting to keep your faith and needing to explain how - [108]

REGINALD: People look for everything to keep their faith. I remember when I was trying to break away from being a Mormon and my mum said I know God is real and I was like well how do you know? She went because you just do! And then a couple of days later she lost her glasses so she said I pray to find my glasses and then she finds them! She clung to that to believe in God! But that don't make sense because you just find your glasses where you left them. You just forgot where you put them. So they're just clutching at straws. [913]

SKYE: So you think that is just...people wanting to keep the faith open and try to convince as many people as possible by using insignificant things basically?

REGINALD: Yeah even more convince themselves because -

SKYE: Right yeah!

REGINALD: If you ask any religious person they'll have some doubt about their religion at some stage in their life. And then because they're still going to church everyone around them who has already gone through that doubt is saying nah

God is real we all notice. And then psychologically you start noticing little things and you're thinking thank God that's happened. And then you start believing in God again, it's a psychological thing that people used to keep their religion...when they noticed the little things that happen to everyone but put it out of context. [238]

SKYE: Yeah I think going back to what you said about tribes they're more efficient than the religion that we have now because tribes were very much in touch with nature. It wasn't like a superstitious thing, well there was some superstition but the majority of it wasn't so out there that it could not be like listened to or believable because religion is just based on miracles that happen and stuff that has happened to other people. Like you get people who say I've experienced going to heaven during a near death experience but how do you know that heaven is actually heaven?

REGINALD: Exactly! Maybe what's happened is your eyes have opened ever so slightly near death experience and you've seen the world around you and in your head when you've finally been knocked out you start REM maybe. So when you see all this you feel like you're there. But it's like with the religion thing, again with the tribes there was a native American tribe that used to use fetishism where they'd collect like little objects that keep hold of them and they would be like luck objects that were basically given by God. It was them that gave them the idea to carve them so....these luck objects were supposed to help with like hunting, cleaning, cooking, everything but what they believed it was because of this model that they could do it better than they used to be able to. Rather than thinking in their head no its because I've trained my skill, because people just...clutch onto straws, people -

SKYE: I think what it comes down to is people can't get their head around the fact that there might not be something greater than earth so they need a reason to be here and to do what they do or else they wouldn't know what to do with themselves. So I think it's a sense of security more than anything.

REGINALD: It's like if a dog learnt how to speak it wouldn't question religion because it doesn't have the extra part of its brain that we do to make us question things like that. So...the only reason that we're sat in this room having this conversation right now, the only reason the entirety of human history has happened, everything that comes down to all the wars and everything like that is because we evolved with a little bit more in our brain that asked us why? If humans didn't have that, if we were still acting like monkeys just in the trees eating what we could find and stuff like that, we would never question it. All of the problems that come down into earth is just because humans question why because that little bit of our brain tells us to. [1376]

SKYE: Okay so you've got the idea of God and you've also got the idea of the devil so what do you think about the devil? I just think it's kind of like a horror story that you tell your kids to get them to do what you want them to do.

REGINALD: Yeah I think when you go into the Christian sense of the devil...when I went through my whole Goth stage thing I actually got into spiritual Satanism

and its...how I would describe it to someone who didn't know about it is sort of like...satanic Buddhism in a way. When it came down to it Satan when you come to religion normally is a fallen angel which was actually castaway by God. [1473]

SKYE: By God yeah! [241]

REGINALD: But what actually happened according to spiritual Satanism is through mistranslation of people what actually happened is Satan created the world. Satan created the universe but through misinterpretation it was God or Jehovah who got the credit for it in the end. So that's why Satan is seen as bad because God has taken away that but when you actually go down to Satanism, Satan is someone who says you need to make sure you hurt no one else. I don't want any sacrifices to me, I want you to live for yourself so that you can be as happy as you can and make sure everyone around is as happy as they can. And they believe in some form of magic as well where it's like the energy that we have we can focus and obviously like a lot of their magic is seen as like black magic. Which...its normally only called black magic because how to do some of the magic goes against the Christian faith. Like there's a weird one where its lost basically and if you want someone to lost you because that would make you happy as well as consent for them so they're happy as well. Because they're against all forms of like rape, everything like that, because they'll get consent and stuff, its black magic. But the way you get that lost energy is you have to be chanting while you pleasure yourself. That's genuine black magic. [1717]

SKYE: Zero to 100.

REGINALD: Yeah and so it's like it seen as black magic because Christianity says its bad. People say Satan is bad but when you actually look into Satan he's not bad. But then he says God is bad which again comes down to human creation. We only ask why? That's why it all happened.

SKYE: So do you think that the devil is just a thing to explain how there is bad stuff in the world?

REGINALD: Yeah! [319]

SKYE: So do you think it's just purely that reason?

REGINALD: Yeah and the people who are worshipping the devil say that God is an explanation of bad things. And it's just goes vice versa, all it is -

SKYE: So it's just misinterpretation and superstition?

REGINALD: Yeah every religion needs something opposite, every religion. I think Buddhism doesn't...I think Buddhism is the only one that doesn't. [1737]

SKYE: Yeah Buddhists just focus on themselves and getting enlightenment.

REGINALD: Yeah because the Buddhist temptation is wanting. If you want something then that's the bad thing so you're supposed to -

SKYE: It isn't a natural thing.

REGINALD: It's like yeah... [348]

SKYE: Because you like want to survive so is that bad because you want to survive, you want to live, is that selfish?

REGINALD: That's the thing though, it's odd when it comes to that. I mean I think Buddhists mainly...I think what they want is you need to have the basics so you eat, you sleep, you drink, and that's it. That's all you need -

SKYE: And you meditate to receive -

REGINALD: You need clothing, and then you...basically throughout your spare time instead of thinking oh I want that new iPhone or whatever that's come out, you're actually thinking I'm happy with what I've got because I am surviving so I'll meditate and get my inner peace.

SKYE: But could that be a false consciousness? [1853]

REGINALD: Yeah to be honest it makes sense that.

SKYE: So do you think the world would be better if we just didn't have religion whatsoever?

REGINALD: No!

SKYE: Do you not?

REGINALD: Religion keeps the world together as well as tearing it apart.

SKYE: Right and how does it do that?

REGINALD: Well the crusades for example, you...Allah is the same as the Christian God and all it is, it's gone two different routes which is why if you read the Koran, you read the Bible there are billions of similar - [1910]

SKYE: Very similar yeah. [359]

REGINALD: Billions of them! And people have had wars over this, however if it had stayed with this one original God and everyone had gone the same way then it would have been peaceful. Because religion gives moral values that when another religion gives other moral values that's where the conflict happens. People need religion it's not like you can't have morals without religion. You can have morals without religion but it's like most people will look to seek like religion for their morals so when you have 2 different sets of morals that's when

war breaks out. And then a new thing is created in the religion that says war is fine as long as it's for God. [2028]

SKYE: Yeah as long as you're protecting the name of God.

REGINALD: If everyone had one religion and we all believed in the same thing, we all had the same moral values then it would be completely fine.

SKYE: That results in anarchy though because you could have a war for anything if you like in the name of God which has happened a lot. So you've got ISIS that are in the name of God.

REGINALD: Yeah its one of those odd ones because it's like religion brings morals and religion destroys morals. Religion brings peace and religion brings war you know what I mean so it's like...you've got to do...I don't know I think if religion never happened in the first place and we all stayed with political systems it would be good but then if religion stayed as one thing it would probably work out alright as well. It's just the fact that there are tons of different denominations which has caused distress.

SKYE: Yeah okay I agree! [525]

END

Analysis

There are 2827 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are on task for 90.3% of this conversation.

Cumulative talk comprises 525 words i.e. 18.6% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 2028 words i.e. 71.7% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX G1

Y10 Aiden (agnostic) & Hollie (Christian) 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

AIDEN: What point is Calvin trying to make?

HOLLIE: Calvin is trying to make the point that within our universe there are things that we can see and things that we can't, and people are trying to change the way that we think through scientific ideas that don't go with the fact that science is supposed to point to evidence and facts rather than speculation.

AIDEN: Yeah I kind of agree but...

HOLLIE: But?

AIDEN: [...0.40 muttering here] gone. Yeah science...religion has a connection with the science as well so they're very close, but I don't think religion is fully right. That's what I was trying to say.

HOLLIE: That's why I disagree with you because even though you think that religion isn't right you are an atheist. I'm a Christian and I believe lots and lots of things that the Bible, and Jesus and God have been saying is true because there is a God. God created the world and even though people who are atheist like you, they think that it's the Big Bang that created the world. I believe its God because God made our world and God make us in a four dimensional universe with heaven and hell to the side that we can't see until we die.

AIDEN: I just think religion is a form of science and they just look at it a different way.

HOLLIE: Okay! And so do you agree with the judge's comment why or why not?

AIDEN: I think he was making his point very well but I just think he thought religion was the only one that was the right answer.

HOLLIE: I believe that the judge is right. He's trying to make his point rather well that one of the best scientists in our world that's still alive, he's trying to make the point that there is 11 dimensions but there are 4 that we know of. There's height, width, depth and time, and then you've got 2 more which is heaven and hell but only Christians believe in that, or Muslims, or any other religious people however, other people like you they just believe in the four dimensions and think there is no more. However, you can get yourself to leave a body, and yeah you can travel to different dimensions but it is risky.

AIDEN: I just think it's all the ones you can see, if you can't see 'em...well actually no because of oxygen.

HOLLIE: As I say oxygen you can't see oxygen, you can't hear taste, smell, or touch but it's there, we breathe it, we have to have oxygen to breathe.

AIDEN: But has anyone ever seen heaven or tested that heaven exists? Because oxygen they know it exists because they've tested it but heaven or hell has anyone seen...?

HOLLIE: Well...when you make your soul leave your body as long as you've still got that silver string connecting you then you can travel to different dimensions. I'm not saying you'll be able to travel to heaven or hell because that's where you go once you've died, but places like limbo and purgatory these are all places around us that no one knows about because they didn't see it until they are dead.

AIDEN: What's limbo? [Whispers]

HOLLIE: Limbo...limbo is a place where you go when your soul is trapped and you don't go to heaven or hell, you're just trapped in a space of basically eternal doom forever.

AIDEN: Oh okay! I don't even know what limbo was. So I don't really know how to disagree with you.

HOLLIE: Any why is that?

AIDEN: Because I never knew about limbo.

END

Analysis

There are 588 words in this passage of conversation. There is no evidence of either cumulative talk or exploratory talk as the two students engage with explanatory talk or disputational talk during this conversation.

Cumulative talk comprises 0 words i.e. 0% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 0 words i.e. 0% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX G2

Y10 Aiden (agnostic) & Hollie (Christian) 2

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

AIDEN: To what extent do you agree or disagree?

HOLLIE: Um...for being a Christian I do agree with what he's saying and I do agree with everything about it, from the fact that it says that the New Testament was written shortly after the events, and that the gospels were written around the time that they actually happened. I also agree that Jesus was a real person, and that he was crucified and came back to life. How do you agree?

AIDEN: I kind of agree. I believe he was a real person but I don't think he did all the things that the Bible said he did. I just think he gave people hope.

HOLLIE: He performed miracles even his enemies admitted it.

AIDEN: Yeah but they might have just seen it not in the right way.

HOLLIE: But what do you mean by in the wrong way?

AIDEN: Like he might just have been a very clever man and did things that no one else could do back then.

HOLLIE: Back then when he was on the earth for the 33 years of his life as a human being he...I don't know how to explain it...he performed miracles and nobody else could because he was the Son of God. He was the Son...we're all children of God and God is everyone's father. But Jesus was the human being of God, he was the human embodiment and because of that he was able to do stuff that nobody else could. [131]

AIDEN: Yeah but no one really heard him say...only he said that...oh actually I don't really know what I was trying to say!

HOLLIE: Have a look at the... see what you think from them.

AIDEN: Okay, have you looked?

HOLLIE: I've looked at the first one. What are your views about Jesus?

AIDEN: Uh...I believe that he was a normal man who was very clever and gave people hope, and hope to follow a religion that would give them meaning.

HOLLIE: He didn't just give them hope, he cured everyone who was hurt, or injured, and he didn't ask for anything back, he just wanted to make people have a better life. [189]

AIDEN: Yeah I think he wanted people to have a better life but I think some people miss saw what happened, I think they just took it too far like...when he cured people he just made medicine and things like that. [218]

HOLLIE: He wasn't just someone who performed miracles, and just a real person but he was a great teacher, he attracted large crowds to listen to his teachings, even though the religious teachers didn't like his teachings they did argue against him but people still preferred his methods to the religious leaders. Why do you think that is?

AIDEN: Uh...because he gave them hope and -

HOLLIE: He taught them and they chose because they have freewill, they had freewill all the time and they chose to listen to Jesus, the human embodiment of God rather than listen to the religious leaders because they're only doing what they think is right, whereas um...Jesus knows exactly what's right and wrong because he is basically God, just in the human form.

AIDEN: Uh...I kind of agree but I still just think he was a normal man, he was very clever, and gave people hope in following the religion.

HOLLIE: Okay well...um...

AIDEN: Do you think this is good evidence about Jesus?

HOLLIE: Well in all fairness I should ask you that question because as a Christian I believe no matter what, whereas you're...I can't remember what they're called. You are someone who believes in God but doesn't believe the rest -

AIDEN: Ego...Egoist? Egoist? Yeah I know what you mean?

HOLLIE: And um...what happened was he just...changed I guess and he...its good evidence for me but I believe that anyway, and the Bible shows you that its good evidence but what about you?

AIDEN: Uh...I don't really know really. I need to read through them quickly.

HOLLIE: Quickly, it's not going to be quickly to read through like 8 -

AIDEN: I will skim read!

HOLLIE: You skim read then. [Pause] Its our recording.

AIDEN: It is recording.

HOLLIE: I said it's our recording I didn't say it isn't recording!

AIDEN: Yeah so stop laughing. I'm trying to skim read quickly. Yeah I don't really know how to...if I agree or disagree on that statement that you just turned onto me.

END

Analysis

There are 712 words in this passage of conversation. There is little evidence of either cumulative talk or exploratory talk as the two students engage again with explanatory talk or disputational talk during this conversation.

Cumulative talk comprises 20 words i.e. 2.8% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 218 words i.e. 30.6% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX G3

Y10 Elle (agnostic) & George (atheist) 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

GEORGE: Recording!

ELLE: What point is Calvin trying to make?

GEORGE: He's trying to say that the universe is made of 11 dimensions instead of 4, do you agree?

ELLE: I don't really know to be quite honest.

GEORGE: We can't see 7 can we?

ELLE: We're missing 7 dimensions according to Stephen Hawking's.

GEORGE: Yeah but we've got UV rays and we can't see them except through a special camera?

ELLE: Hmm! Yes I agree. Do you agree with the judge's comment or why not?

GEORGE: I'm not sure. Can you read to me what they said again?

ELLE: Yes I can! On the contrary I think he is making his point rather well.

GEORGE: Is there anymore?

ELLE: [Laughter] No I don't think so. I think like he's agreeing with Calvin to be honest and the chief prosecutor is like...

GEORGE: Getting it wrong.

ELLE: Well like he doesn't believe that there's more like...he thinks we're in like 4 dimensions.

GEORGE: Yeah! Do you think he thinks God made 4 dimensions and that's it, not 11?

ELLE: Yeah. But like scientific views. [55]

GEORGE: But in the Bible it only says God made earth that's it, it doesn't say about any other planets, any other universes.

ELLE: Some Christians think that heaven is all around us but we just can't see it, what do you think?

GEORGE: I think when you die you die.

ELLE: No I don't. I think that like...I don't think heaven is around us I think you go to a different dimension and I think that's where the ones that we're missing, the 7 that we can't see I think that's probably like heaven or something.

GEORGE: Well there has been evidence of reincarnation though.

ELLE: I believe you can go to heaven and if you want to stay up there you can stay up there, but if you want to come back again you can choose. I think that's what happens. [96]

GEORGE: Yeah because there's a little 3 year old who remembered their...bank codes and everything... she was, I watched it on UTube.

ELLE: Oh right! Yeah but I think heaven is in these 7 dimensions that we can't see. I don't think it's all around us because it's a special place to go. You have to earn your place.

GEORGE: Ticket!

ELLE: Yeah your place in heaven. I think. [120]

GEORGE: I still don't think it exists.

ELLE: Why not?

GEORGE: Because when you die you just die and there's no evidence of heaven existing. But there's evidence of the Big Bang theory.

ELLE: Well no because...no but if there was evidence of heaven existing you wouldn't have that like...sort of...like what's the word?

GEORGE: I dunno!

ELLE: You wouldn't be so intrigued in religion if like you knew that you were going to go to heaven.

GEORGE: I think someone just made it up a long time ago to keep everyone calm and think there was a better life ahead.

ELLE: That's quite a good point actually.

GEORGE: See I'm full of good points!

ELLE: I don't actually...I don't...I believe that there's something like a power, I don't believe that he can stop wars and stuff. [181]

GEORGE: Like what we were doing... all powerful, all knowing, ...something else, we wouldn't be suffering. [141]

ELLE: Yeah I don't really know what to believe because like sometimes I think like if there was a God none of this would happen.

GEORGE: Yeah no cancers would be around.

ELLE: We'd be like living in a -

GEORGE: Paradise!

ELLE: Yeah! [180]

GEORGE: Eating chocolate every day. Not having diabetes.

ELLE: No! I don't know that's a hard one.

GEORGE: Are we done?

ELLE: Yeah.

GEORGE: Okay!

END

Analysis

There are 570 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 63.4% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 180 words i.e. 31.6% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 181 words i.e. 31.8% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX G4

Y10 Elle (agnostic) & George (atheist) 2

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

GEORGE: Recording!

ELLE: So to what extent do you agree or disagree?

GEORGE: I disagree that the Bible was real; and I disagree that he came back from the dead and that he was all powerful because I don't think someone can come back from the dead. I think he planned it out because everyone -

ELLE: But you just said that -

GEORGE: No but everyone has an identical twin.

ELLE: But you've just said that people can reincarnate. You've just said that.

GEORGE: Yeah but in different bodies.

ELLE: No but...I think the Bible is real but -

GEORGE: Its real, it's a book.

ELLE: It is real yeah; but there is so much evidence to like prove that Jesus was a real man.

GEORGE: Yeah Jesus was a real man, I do think that; [19] but you can't come back from the dead by hanging off a cross.

ELLE: You can if you're the Son of God. [79]

GEORGE: Really!

ELLE: Yeah!

GEORGE: I don't think...no but everyone has an identical twin, they probably wouldn't have known that back in their day.

ELLE: Do you think this is good evidence about Jesus?

GEORGE: No!

ELLE: I think it is.

GEORGE: Why?

ELLE: Because...because...historical findings suggest that the New Testament was written shortly after these events took place, recent language studies also

indicate that the gospels were written close to the time that they actually happened. Recent scientific studies of possible fragments could be material evidence of eye witness accounts of the life of Jesus. And even the enemies of Jesus admit that he was a powerful teacher, and a miracle worker and that he was crucified and believed to have risen on the third day.

GEORGE: Maybe he could be a time traveller. [86]

ELLE: But then you're...you're just going back on what you've just said because -

GEORGE: No!

ELLE: You can't time travel.

GEORGE: How do you know? Can you see into the future?

ELLE: How do you know God is not real?

GEORGE: Because there's no evidence.

ELLE: There's no evidence for time travel.

GEORGE: Yeah because it hasn't been invented. It might be invented in the future because think of some of the things he's done.

ELLE: What?

GEORGE: I dunno! Walking on water.

ELLE: No one can walk on water.

GEORGE: I know they can't but in some place the land is about 20 centimetres under water, then there's a river, if you get what I mean?

ELLE: No! Not really!

GEORGE: It's like on that advert about perfume.

ELLE: Oh yeah, yeah. What are your views about Jesus?

GEORGE: I think he died on a cross and that's it; and wore a crown of thorns.

ELLE: I feel sorry for him.

GEORGE: Yeah I feel sorry for him because he died on a cross and that seems very harsh.

ELLE: No I think because no one listened to him and like he still carried on with what he believed like...I feel sorry for him, he shouldn't have died. I think...I think

probably that's one of the main reasons why we have so much suffering now because God's like sort of...punishing us for what we did to Jesus. [114]

GEORGE: I didn't do anything to him.

ELLE: No! What the Romans did to him but like you know we're all like descendants of the Romans.

GEORGE: Yeah but that wasn't us that did it, it was our ancestors.

ELLE: I know!

GEORGE: So why did my Nan get cancer and die of it?

ELLE: I don't know it makes you question...like if there really was a God, if...I don't know.

GEORGE: Are we done?

ELLE: Yeah!

END

Analysis

There are 562 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 35.6% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 114 words i.e. 20.3% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 86 words i.e. 15.3% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX G5

Y10 Lachlan (Christian) & Charlotte (atheist) 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

CHARLOTTE: What point is Calvin trying to make?

LACHLAN: Well it seems like he's trying to make a point that um...things that we...there are loads of things that exist but we can't hear them, or see them, and they're like all around us. Like television signals and things. Like religion for example, like me for example, I believe that there's a God yet we can't necessarily see him, or touch him, yet he's there.

CHARLOTTE: Do you agree with the judge's comment?

LACHLAN: Yes!

CHARLOTTE: Why?

LACHLAN: Because it is a very...it's a very valid reason and as the judge said, he says...he's making his point rather well. I have to agree with him because he has some very good points to back up the fact that there's...like there's a quote saying how there's television signals flowing through the room and through us yet we can't see or hear them. And I'm going to refer back to religion, it's quite similar to that.

CHARLOTTE: Okay and some Christians think that heaven is all around us but we just can't see it, what do you think?

LACHLAN: Yeah well it's like what he's saying about the other dimensions, when we um...leave our body we are then linked to the dimensions, so it is there but because we're still in our mortal body we can't see it unless we are linked to the other dimensions.

CHARLOTTE: Okay!

LACHLAN: Yeah! What do you think?

CHARLOTTE: Um...I don't know I think Calvin is just trying to tell us that maybe we're not as developed as people think we are, like people say that we're like the more developed species in this world and considering that we think there is only 4 dimensions then Calvin is trying to say that there's 11 might just mean that we're not as developed as we all say and think we are. [141]

LACHLAN: Not bad. Okay. Cool. So what do you think about the judge's comment?

CHARLOTTE: Um...the judge's comment I think...I think I agree with him just because he's...admitting that his point is well...he says on the contrary it could mean that he doesn't agree with it fully, but he sees where Calvin is coming from.

LACHLAN: Okay! So what is your opinion on the whole heaven speculation?

CHARLOTTE: Um...to be honest I do believe that there is some place to go but I don't believe in heaven in a way because I'm not very religious. I believe that you might have a place to go but that could just be in a different body. But not as in a specific place. [192]

LACHLAN: Oh okay!

CHARLOTTE: Yeah!

LACHLAN: Is that everything? Okay cool!

CHARLOTTE: Okay!

END

Analysis

There are 428 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 46.5% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 7 words i.e. 1.6% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 192 words i.e. 44.9% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX G6

Y10 Lachlan (Christian) & Charlotte (atheist) 2

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

CHARLOTTE: To what extent do you agree or disagree?

LACHLAN: Well I actually...being a Christian I agree fully to some of those statements about Jesus because there has been scientific proof that he has existed and as it said earlier, there's been loads of reports that he did perform miracles and he was quite an outstanding person. Although we may never actually know fully because again it's another spiritual religious thing, but we just have to go with the facts for those who don't believe. But...I think that there was a Jesus and he was part of God, and the Holy Spirit.

CHARLOTTE: So do you believe that this is good evidence about Jesus being real?

LACHLAN: Yes!

CHARLOTTE: Okay what are your views about Jesus?

LACHLAN: Well, being religious I think that He saved many people's lives and the world was filled with sin and loads of wrong doings and God made Jesus...He created Him for Him to save the world and He did do that. And He saved many lives.

CHARLOTTE: Okay then.

LACHLAN: What about you?

CHARLOTTE: Um...I kind of disagree with this just because they said that the Bible got it right, but to me a Bible is just basically like another fairy-tale, like *Cinderella* where it's the godmother performed miracles to make her a dress, and a glass slipper. It just kind of sounds like that with all this rising from the dead, it's kind of like a *Sleeping Beauty* kind of thing, where she was put to a sleeping death and just awoke kind of thing. [205]

LACHLAN: **Wow okay!** So do you think this is good evidence about Jesus then or not?

CHARLOTTE: Not really! Just because even if they do have this scientific evidence it could just be some random person in the world millions of years ago that was called Jesus and he might not have been able to perform miracles, he was just a noble person like all of us.

LACHLAN: Well I'm going to have to disagree to that because he was the embodiment of God, as I said earlier He saved many people and even though some of the facts may not be clear and the records may not be there, I still

believe that there was someone who saved many people and performed miracles. [311]

CHARLOTTE: Again I'm just going to say that miracles aren't exactly a thing; because if miracles were a thing there would be no such thing as war, and hatred and everyone would be able to get along with each other quite well. Nothing bad will happen to people so if there was something called Jesus and he did perform miracles how come all this stuff happens today?

LACHLAN: Well that's purely based on freewill isn't it, it's our own fault. If we weren't given freewill then life would be filled with happiness but we wouldn't be able to make our own decisions and suffering and war is what makes us, us. And if there wasn't any then there wouldn't be really much point for religion because we wouldn't have someone to turn to or something to turn to when times are bad and we're struggling through many things.

CHARLOTTE: But if we had all that indecision how come so many people just follow what everyone says and believes them so quickly if they're not taking their own decisions and believing others?

LACHLAN: Again I purely think that's down to freewill and it's up to us to make the decisions whether we want to go with the bad stuff and kill people, or decide to be like Jesus and save the people that we can.

CHARLOTTE: Okay if Jesus was able to be resurrected from the dead that means he would have been able to perform miracles on other people who were close to death, or were dead, do you believe in that?

LACHLAN: Yes because he did. In the Bible there is someone called Lazarus who he resurrected, he was unjustly killed, he died and Jesus said the words "Lazarus arise!" And he arose.

CHARLOTTE: But isn't that some sort of like fairy-tale that they want you to believe though? Like we all get told if you do all this, all these bad things, it's basically like karma, is that basically just trying to convince you saying if you do good then things will go back for you, in this case Lazarus [says the name wrong]? [656]

LACHLAN: Lazarus!

CHARLOTTE: Lazarus was risen back from the dead because he did good things. Is it just basically an example of that?

LACHLAN: Could be; but he followed God, he followed everyone, he did the right stuff and he died of an illness and God told him to resurrect him so...Jesus did.

CHARLOTTE: Okay then! Do you think that's it?

LACHLAN: Yeah!

CHARLOTTE: Okay! [60]

END

Analysis

There are 778 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 92.0% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 60 words i.e. 7.7% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 656 words i.e. 84.3% of the above conversation.

Appendix 2-6

Gillian Georgiou

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Int: So 1st March 2017, and I'm speaking with a diocesan RE advisor. So Gillian I mean what I'm interested in is let's assume that this dialogue, RE is beneficial and works for the kids in upper secondary school. To me there is a lot of practical problems. The first one is that teachers letting children out of the room unsupervised is an obvious one.

F: [Laughter] Yes! Yeah! Definitely!

Int: There's a big fear factor there so...I mean in these more modern times are teachers more comfortable at letting kids leave the classroom?

F: Not in my experience um....I think on top of that um...there is a physical issue of space, where do you send them to? Particularly in the context of increasingly detailed safeguarding policies. Everybody is a bit nervous about safeguarding and the idea of sending children off to find a space in the playground or you know...we used to do that. It doesn't happen as often anymore. Um...I would say there is a distinction to be made there between Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. I get the sense that teachers would feel much happier sending Key Stage 5 pupils off. There's a sort of...an assumption of personal responsibility that happens between those 2 phases. And they'd be happier to send them off. Where the school has access to a good learning resource centre, or school library or something of that ilk, where you could actually book spaces I think that would make it easier at Key Stage 4 level. But that's dependent on physical space.

Int: I would agree with that in my experience of doing the project would be you say Key Stage 4, they have to be in the library, they were covered because I was supervising, I was outside. That took care of that. Whether a librarian by herself or himself would be so keen...down to the school. And yes the Key Stage 5 in some schools with uniforms...they didn't have uniforms and they were much more freer about yes they're adults now. So as you said we'll trust them to be like that. So...probably if I was going to try to roll this out in the school then Key Stage 5 would be the easier place to start.

F: Yeah!

Int: Because you're dealing with adults.

F: And I think as well I mean certainly the last school I taught in with Key Stage 5 we had particularly in that transition between Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5, we had the challenge as teachers to try to communicate to the students that we were trusting them more, therefore they actually had to do the work if that make sense? And so I used to use things like Twitter and blogging to give them freedoms away from the classroom but have a facility whereby I could check that they were actually doing what I'd asked them to do.

Int: Okay so did your students then have Twitter accounts?

F: They did yes.

Int: So if they went away for conversation you could say to them I'd like you to sum up the main points of conversation in a tweet or go into a blog and write an entry?

F: Yeah absolutely!

Int: So we can then all see what you've been doing, what you've been talking about?

F: And that would be for the whole class, that wouldn't just be me checking the blog or checking the Twitter account, that would be the whole class live in various different areas of the school checking what each other are doing.

Int: At the same time?

F: Yeah essentially so say I have group A in the library, I have group B in the canteen, I have group C in my classroom, group A might tweet oh we've just realised that we both strongly agree X. My groups B and C have the option as do I to respond to that if we wish to.

Int: If they want, if they want to.

F: If they wish to. So that would be um...a kind of a quick live way of ensuring that they are actually doing the task that has been set. But then they can then go away and I can say right I'd like you to write a summary of the conversation that you've had and a couple of bullet points of questions that that's raised for you. And that would be their homework task, very easy for me, I don't have to wait to be physically handed a piece of paper. I can just click onto their blog and check that they've done it. So that...that...that worked quite well for me at Key Stage 5.

Int: I really like that, that was Key Stage 5?

F: That was Key Stage 5.

Int: That sounds really good. I did that...something similar with younger kids, I would have them all around the school doing something but they were all...so they would be unsupervised for a large part of the period but they are all working towards a presentation so they had to make public their knowledge. On Hattie's terms make visible your learning so they knew they were aiming...they eventually did get to see what they were doing and I just...I trusted them. And that's a step in faith you have to make that you trust them when they're out of your sight that they're actually going to do the work.

- F: I suppose there partly that's probably the cynic in me that for certain groups I wouldn't necessarily have trusted them so if I did have as the summative of this is a presentation, there are students I could almost guarantee would be desperately trying to pull something together the morning of whichever lesson they're due to present. Um...but I think as well communication with colleagues would be crucial in achieving that so whether they're Key Stage 3 or Key Stage 5 some form of communicating with probably SLT to say there will be kids out and that is planned, and do I have your permission to do that. That process I think would need to be in place before you could actually have the impact that you want to have.
- Int: You'd have to know where they're actually going, where they would be, and there would have to be a responsible adult nearby who is aware of this in case something happened.
- F: Yeah! Yeah! It depends on the school. I mean the secondary I last worked at was a sort of a lock down secondary school, so you know no way in, no way out, not even into the grounds of the school without pass codes and electronic swipes and all of that. So to that extent as long as I am able to let a member of staff know that there will be kids generally in this region it wasn't felt that they needed an additional member of staff to actively supervise them.
- Int: No I think as long as they're in the vicinity.
- F: Yeah!
- Int: And then the children know that and the adult knows that.
- F: Yeah!
- Int: I think that would be taken care of. I mean it would be good...the other side of the coin is okay its easier with Key Stage 5, but in a sense you want to train them earlier. You want it to be part and parcel of their daily life, this is what we do in RE. This is how we express ourselves, this is how we understand, this is how we learn. So...at a teacher level I'd be keen that younger children were engaged with this and took it onboard. In terms of the project the first thing to actually analyse is when they have a conversation are they on task or off task?
- F: Yeah!
- Int: Its to make sure they actually discuss...the fact that they're doing what we're doing on the recorder there and the children know that it gets written out and copied and teacher sees it. In most cases it does help.
- F: Yeah accountability, someone is listening yeah.
- Int: Some of them don't...in the project I did find there were some who were just getting involved in quite a heated argument and one example they just talked basically nonsense. It was a nonsensical discussion. So it doesn't deter everybody. But then maybe in that case they knew I wasn't going to discipline

them because it was a research project, whereas if I'd been their teacher they wouldn't have "chanced their arm", so to speak, because there would have been repercussions.

F: Yeah!

Int: So it's important...I understand the discipline bit and I understand that teachers have got to have confidence that actually they're on task. I think you can overcome that through the recordings and the transcriptions. The next bit then is equality and to me it's a case of you had some really good discussions, how do share it? Now you've given one already, by this Twitter blog thing, you can actually share it at the time. Um...I hadn't thought of that so thank you for that!

F: That's alright. I mean we also used a podcast um...so we had little...you know like the flip cameras?

Int: No, what's a flip camera?

F: A flip camera is a tiny little USB about the same size as your Dictaphone, and it would record sound but you could flip it up and it had a little lens to record video. Just very, very, short snaps of video and so we used to quite often particularly set as summatives or as homeworks um...to produce a podcast on a top which was precisely that. It was a conversation. So it was...you'd have a -

Int: Was it 2 pupils engaged...talking with each other?

F: Yes!

Int: Or was it one...right...

F: And it could be that you had...so for example, you might say you know we'd like you to produce a radio program for this target audience on the Hajj and give them quite a lot of freedom as to how they want to do that. There might be interviews, there might be some kind of information transfer, or it might be a conversation between two different people who've been on Hajj whatever it might be.

Int: Sorry what's that called Hudge?

F: Hajj! The pilgrimage.

Int: Oh Hajj sorry!

F: Hajj sorry!

Int: I beg your pardon!

F: Its the London accent! [Laughter] And actually...they really engaged with that, there was something about feeling like their voices were being heard, having the freedom to do it without me there.

Int: Uh huh. Yes.

F: And using technology. Those ticked 3 very definite boxes for them and the fact that they were being heard but not being listened to directly if that makes sense?

Int: It helps doesn't it?

F: It really, really, did help yeah. Yeah for sure. So again that's something whereby it's not necessarily just a case of having a Dictaphone in order to create a transcript, but to have a Dictaphone or have a flip camera to record something that will actually be submitted and assessed. Um...

Int: No I can see that being better, I could see them enjoying that more than just this is being used almost as a checking mechanism, but you're talking more as a pedagogic intervention.

F: Yeah.

Int: Its an interesting piece of teaching and learning. Uh huh.

F: And it does mean as a teacher you hear the voices that you don't always hear in that larger setting.

Int: Uh huh that's right. I mean that's one thing I'm finding; you'll have children who are maybe less articulate will voice what they think. One thing you notice with the dialogue they have is that there's a lot of broken thought and broken thinking going on...they'll express to a friend their half formed thoughts but you wouldn't do that in a classroom.

F: No.

Int: You'd be quite inhibited to stand up in a classroom and think on your feet and you're not really quite clear what you're saying.

F: See now this is partly why I'm interested in how the children are grouped together and I think that does need to be considered because you are largely focusing on teenagers and that is not the most exciting period of your life. It sort of can be quite stressful being a teenager. Now in the context of a large group those who have low self esteem or low confidence are less likely to speak up and therefore their voices aren't heard. Yes, I do agree with that. However, in a paired situation or a small group situation that same child if they are paired with somebody who has confidence or appears to have confidence still may not speak up.

Int: Still be inhibited.

- F: Yeah! And so I think for this to have impact that needs to be considered how the children are grouped needs to be considered.
- Int: I agree with you, I mean I think early in my career a colleague in Modern Studies which is like Modern History, Ian Smith, he used to spend ages working out his groups for his class. I mean really a long long time, he would change it maybe 3 times a year but it paid off. And he was into very much what you said the personality types, will wee Jeanie work with wee Jimmy, and how will Harry and Bob...he put an awful lot of thought into it. But it certainly paid off and I agree with you, I think you would probably have to be prepared that some pairings wouldn't work out as you expect. Well we'll have to change it and they worked with a different partner, that would be partly a trial and error process to some extent.
- F: And that's good for the teacher to get to know their individual students better as well because as a secondary RE teacher I mean I had...on average I would have 550 students that I'm trying to produce -
- Int: Oh I could trump that easily.
- F: But do you know what I mean? And you're being asked to produce six weekly progress reports on 550 kids and you don't see them often enough to learn their names!
- Int: I know! I know! I know the embarrassment of sitting there with a class and one of the greatest inventions for me was the photographs.
- F: Yes!
- Int: In the sense I could sit with a class sheet and have a seating plan and a photograph of the child.
- F: Yeah! Yeah!
- Int: I know this, and you go to the parents' night and I still took the photographs with me. So I actually was confident this who I'm talking about. I know the feeling.
- F: And I do think that this process could really help that member of staff get to know who that pupil actually is and therefore better assess their progress and all those other things that they're needing to think about yeah.
- Int: So...in terms of schools you cover quite a big area.
- F: Yeah!
- Int: I mean do you go into Nottinghamshire?
- F: I don't no. I go into Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire, and Northeast Lincolnshire.

Int: You drew the short straw there Gillian!

F: [Laughter] Yeah its fine! I love them all!

Int: I go there as well. Scunthorpe and Grimsby.

F: Yeah!

Int: As the practicalities, I'm just thinking ahead, if we wanted to introduce this, you kind of have to work with people who you think will be on-board with it. Why make life difficult for yourself? Do you think there would be schools...because the problem is obviously the curriculum. The first thing teachers will say is oh I'm teaching 'A' Level. I can't give up time to this, I've just got to get through the course.

F: Yeah I would pitch it...I would pitch it...I'd probably try to pitch it at Key Stage 5 first for those practical reasons of engaging because in my experience, my personal experience but also working with schools in this region, teachers are willing to think more flexibly about pedagogy at 'A' level.

Int: Okay right.

F: Um...there aren't a huge number of schools that offer 'A' Level in this region to my knowledge. So that could potentially be a bit of a stumbling block, but to pitch it as something that enables the work to be done, to be got through at a deep level so that they can be getting those raised expectations at Key Stage 5 now in terms of analysis and evaluation. Um...in such a way that the teacher doesn't physically have to be there and so can get on with something else. That's the button I would press personally. Yeah. And I think actually as a teacher when I have 25 essays to mark or a little bit of a blog to read, or something to listen to that's easier, the blog and the listening is easier than the marking in my head, just as a mental block thing. Um...that might help as well.

Int: Okay! So the things you mentioned at the beginning about the blog and the Twitter...that was 'A' Level students?

F: That was 'A' Level students but we started...I do think you have to think about Twitter and safeguarding, so if there is an alternative platform that can be used um...other than Twitter because it's so public. When I was doing this, this was when Twitter was really just starting to take off in terms of education. And I know there other things out there that you could use now. Um...but the blogging in particular was hugely effective because the pupils and that was Key Stage 5, the pupils didn't feel like it was work. But they were doing writing for me and it often started a stream of consciousness but because all of the blogs were linked to each other and I set homework that required them to read each other's blogs and write comments on the blogs, they were doing peer assessment without really thinking about doing peer assessment. And I was very quickly able to access what they were doing and drop a few hints and my marking dropped because I wasn't scribbling comments on essays, I was writing maybe

one summative comment at the bottom of a blog piece, which meant that I had to articulate really clearly what was the key piece of feedback they needed to improve. Um..so...yeah -

Int: Can I ask you...so is this one particular school you're thinking back to?

F: Yeah that's -

Int: Could you maybe just describe the circumstances of that school for me?

F: The school was a large state comprehensive, over 2,000 students.

Int: Oooph! Is this in London?

F: This is in London and the students were drawn from quite a mixed background, so we had some extremely wealthy...it was BBC land, so lots and lots of kind of actors, and producers coming up at parents evening, that sort of thing. And yet the catchment of the school also landed on some very deprived estates. So we had quite a mixture, it was ethnically extremely diverse as well. Um...it had no school uniform, it had always had quite a liberal reputation but during the time I was there it got a visionary head teacher that tightened things up considerably. And it became one of these kind of London power schools that was shipped out to help all the other schools in the local area.

Int: Was this like the London Challenge was it?

F: Yeah it's that kind of thing. So it was...um...

Int: So in terms of the background of the pupils it was diverse, the intellectual spectrum, but also working class...was it quite spread across the whole spectrum, truly comprehensive?

F: I would say that...no I would say that the majority of our students from a deprived background tended also to be from ethnic minorities. Not universally but -

Int: So you had quite a large tail then I suppose?

F: Quite a large sorry?

Int: Tail in the school?

F: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Int: That's fascinating because you've come up with a lot of ideas right away. They've got me thinking. I found that really helpful. Um...

F: Yeah I think...the...I mentioned earlier my PhD research and this literary critic had 2 words that I found really helpful in my teaching practice, krugazor which is your horizon, so it's the things you can see from there to there within your -

Int: This sounds like Andrew Wright?

F: Yeah! Quite possibly! And then your *okruzhenie* which is the environment that you are in. And when we are talking I can talk from the perspective of my horizon but you can talk from the perspective of *my* entire...sorry I can talk from my horizon you can talk from *my* environment if that makes sense?

Int: Okay could you -

F: You can see the back of my head.

Int: Can you spell those 2 Russian words for us please?

F: Yeah okay so *krugazor* which is the horizon word would be K-R-U-G-A-Z-O-R and the environment *okruzhenie* would be O-K-R-U-Z-H-E-N-I-E.

Int: I'm glad you're a Russian linguist!

F: [Laughter] But I found that helpful because when I have 2 students in the classroom engaging in dialogue, child A speaks from the perspective of their horizon which includes all their experiences, their economic background, their ethnicity, all of that. Child B talks from child A's whole environment, because as the other child B can see of child A what child A cannot see of themselves. Does that make sense?

Int: Aye it does its quite deep though.

F: But very helpful.

Int: Is that because they're friends?

F: Not necessarily. No. No not necessarily. Let me give an example, so if I have child A who is from a white middleclass secular background, and child B who is from quite a deprived family and is a Muslim and child A is talking about science and religion, and of course science has all of the answers, and religion is just superstition, and we've moved on from this and dah-de-dah-de-dah, child B will be able to draw child A's attention the fact that they are speaking from a perspective, because child B has a different one. And is able to say well actually I very much think science is very important and I understand science to be something that Allah has placed there for us to investigate so that we better understand the world and we ultimately better understand Allah and the straight path that he wants us to follow. So yes I absolutely agree, science is really important but I don't divorce science from my faith. And actually child A may never have realised that they have a perspective. Particularly with teenagers, they often think that what they state is the objective.

Int: It comes across in quite a few of the comments they really enjoy getting somebody else's perspective.

F: Yeah.

- Int: That's a word that comes up fairly frequently.
- F: Yeah and actually what they're learning there is not so much I have now learnt the Muslim understanding of science, and creation and so on. But I have learnt that I have a perspective that I didn't acknowledge was a perspective from which I am functioning. And that's -
- Int: They just thought it was the truth?
- F: Yeah! Absolutely!
- Int: Everybody thinks like this. This is the way things are.
- F: Yeah absolutely and -
- Int: Then you find out oh actually no there are other ways to look at it, there are other ways of being...
- F: Yeah and you would have thought that that would only function where there is ethnic diversity or where there is economic diversity, or whatever, but actually it can be as nuanced as the different kind of phone you have. Do you know what I mean? Those tiny little crucial differences that really matter when you're going through puberty. That you can still benefit from having that conversation because person B can see more of you than you can see of yourself. And that as teacher then means that actually it might be worthwhile me participating in some of these conversations with the pupils as an equal.
- Int: That's very deep.
- F: Hmm!
- Int: Especially in RE though because you don't get that um...time for relationships to develop, you have time in that you see the child year after year, you effectively can see them through 6-7 years of secondary schooling but that's kind of rare because you do change classes and don't see them for a year or two. And you have such little time with them as well until such time as they do GCSE/'A' Level then you really start to kind of get to know their backgrounds. I've very much enjoyed the conversation.
- F: Yeah I think...just one last thing, I think um...one thing to be got over here is the teacher's fear of controversy because teachers are frightened in RE at the moment of someone saying the wrong thing. Really frightened! The students aren't so much and I think it's crucial they have that space to say things that might be horrible [laughter] and express it and learn from it and you know all of that. But to have a teacher actually participate in a conversation of this sort with the pupils obviously you have to think about things there around equality, and authority in the classroom and all of that. But actually that could be something that could challenge some of these concerns they have about controversy.

Int: Uh huh. Well there was an HMI report in Scotland a few years ago that raised this point actually, it was challenging teachers to allow there to be more controversy in a classroom, to say you can't mute it all down. And also my [...24.52] Catholic tradition when it comes to dialogue you're encouraged to have a frank exchange of views. None of this playing down what you believe just to accommodate the other person. No you've to say and they've to say as well what they truly believe, but you say it with mutual respect and tolerance but you really get to the heart of the matter.

F: And I do wonder whether this might be sticking point for you as you push this forwards is that where you have very enthusiastic, engaged RE leaders, they'll jump on this. Where you have leaders who are exceptionally harassed maybe, this isn't their field of specialism, which we're increasingly finding obviously, um...in secondary schools. I know of one secondary school where the head of department is an English teacher and the only teacher in the department is a PE teacher. For those people they do not feel confident enough. They would not feel confident enough to implement this, not at the moment.

Int: Hmm! Well one way around it might be that this dialogue is not just for RE.

F: Yeah!

Int: Because there are lots of other subjects, you just mentioned English, history, even science, you can see almost all subjects can have this kind of debate.

F: Yeah definitely!

Int: Well thank you very much for your time.

F: You're very welcome.

Int: That was great!

END

Appendix 2-7

HoD Municipal Boro

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Int: A conversation with Fiona, Head of RE, Municipal Borough School. So looking at their transcript their Fiona, you're talking about opinions and questions, can you explain that a wee bit further.

F: I think some of the pupils here, they're kind of trying to state facts, their opinions, but they're not really questioning each other. They're not using like um...what's the word like rhetorical questions I suppose you know to promote further discussion. It's almost like they're trying to compete with each other. I suppose it's like um...what's the word I'm looking for? They're trying to win it, win the debate I think. Hmm! Yeah.

Int: What about page 4 when Sheldon says do you think people could be converted to Christianity through knowing this? That strikes me as a good question.

F: It is a good question. But then have you noticed the response. I don't think it's that detailed.

Int: Do you not think it's interesting she states the fact quite clearly she's an atheist but she would reconsider some of her beliefs because of the evidence?

F: Yeah I do think that is interesting. I do. And I think it's a good thing as well that it does make people reconsider the fact of questioning, well you know my views, I just don't think there is such a thing as atheism anyway. Like you say semantics and so on.

Int: So I'm interested, I mean I've just kind of thrown this particular paper at you. You had a chance to look at one between Megan and Joe, the atheist and evangelical Christian. You know...what's your comments on the conversation that they had?

F: I thought it was quite in-depth actually. I thought it was quite good. Quite good. Probably not as detailed as this one and I would have to have another look again if you've got a copy of it, that one.

Int: I mean the thing is as a teacher right if you send 2 children out of the class 15 minutes or whatever, by the time they travel and then come back, and later on you get a transcript like that of the conversation would you be happy?

F: I'd be incredibly happy actually. Very happy because -

Int: Why?

F: You are getting pupils to really engage in the topic and I think it's very difficult in a class situation where pupils can express their views clearly, they might have them hidden within them but they're too scared to show them, they're

scared of being nerdy for example. I think honestly it's just excellent, it's so nice to see them doing critical thinking in a way. Critical thinking skills.

Int: How long have you been teaching RE?

F: Uh...since 2002.

Int: So your fifteenth year of teaching?

F: Yes! Yeah!

Int: My teaching career was double that and I would agree with you. Putting my teaching hat on you know that...I thought if I got a conversation like that from my kids I would have been delighted.

F: Absolutely delighted by it.

Int: Yeah I'd be delighted. The thing is now though that okay this is a special situation, they're removed from this classroom, they had the conversation, so the problem I'd like to look at now...I think we're agreeing a quality conversation, how can we share it and use it with the rest of the class?

F: Um...when I was looking at that Talk Wall website I thought yes in principle it's a great idea you know where you can share parts of you know...transcripts that say, or the pupils responses to questions. But there are so many issues with it because first of all, content time, in order to get assessments done for OFSTED according to um...how you've got to show progress um...you just haven't got the time to really engage pupils in a debate and engage everybody, because you've got to show progress with every single child. Every child needs to be involved and you just...OFSTED would despise that you know? They would say well why isn't that child participating? You're getting key individuals here who can talk but what about the other pupils? And um...yeah so OFSTED would hate that for starters. Um...because you need to show progress with every single pupil.

Int: I think we'd agree that you could show progress with those 2 pupils?

F: Oh absolutely! But to show progress of a whole class of 30.

Int: So would one possibility be that just say at some point in the year every pair of children gets that opportunity? Like even if it's just once in the year they're released for that 15-20 minutes to go away and have this in-depth conversation, just to have that in your RE curriculum that at some point in your curriculum these pupils do engage in-depth to that level?

F: I agree with it but what...how could you monitor it? You know...

Int: You get the transcript, there's a software like Dragon Naturally Speaking that automatically produces a transcript, so you would actually see what they've talked about just like you're looking at just now so that's the way to monitor it

and they would know that. The [...6.28] see what they've written...sorry what they've spoken about.

F: And would they still have to be...they'd have to be supervised wouldn't they in some respect?

Int: Like a library, like your pupils were. The librarian ended up staying actually.

F: I just wonder about the mentality of the kids you know, are they mature enough to deal enough with a topic like that?

Int: Your kids!

F: Yeah but that's the thing -

Int: That was your kids.

F: I think it would work with the higher ability groups and also Year 10 and Year 11, 12, 13 yes.

Int: Yeah to be fair all the other pupil participants were in Year 10 and above. I thought your children engaged really well because I could see the 2 through in the room they seemed to get quite passionate about it.

F: Yeah [laughter] they did!

Int: They did get passionate about it but they clearly engaged with the topic so one way to use these dialogic skill then might be at some point one or two points in the year, pupils are released in the classroom to engage in a topic just in a sense for this year, educational pleasure of having an in-depth conversation.

F: I think what I do within RE is actually the topics that I teach are very thematic so its...for example, Year 8 are doing is it right to eat animals? We're doing...we're going to be doing in the next unit, where did the universe come from? And we look at these from a religious perspective from multiple religions, or from a selection of 2. And...but also we look at a humanist perspective or a non religious perspective as well so we kind of...I encourage what's known as hot questions which is higher order thinking questions within that so when we talk and debate um...I get them to ask why, why is this morally correct? So it's the why, the how, and answer that really. You know and -

Int: We're agreeing you don't get that in the classroom, you don't get that depth of conversation.

F: No we don't get that depth in the classroom.

Int: I see looking at the hot wall what you could do is lift extracts from that conversation. You could look through it and think right here are 2 or 3 really good points that I'd like to share with the rest of the class. And so they could be prompts for the rest of the class to discuss. That would be one way to share

it, I do know from talking to the academic at Cambridge, that he said that they're finding at the minute a lot of the conversations are somewhat shallow.

F: Yes shallow I'd say.

Int: When they're sharing what they're doing and they're not getting that kind of depth.

F: I agree. I agree with that definitely! They are shallow. Me personally, I don't think teachers are doing enough of this dialogic at all across the board, across all subjects because you know we're so having to get content drilled into these kids, they must learn this this this this this. Its taking away the critical thinking completely. It's almost like you're just drilling them with knowledge, and you're not giving them that time to respond and reflect and I think that's incredibly sad.

Int: But you're telling me that you think that your older pupils, obviously your 'A' level students they could engage with this.

F: They can um...and I believe especially in 'A' level, my philosophy group, they love that, they really do enjoy these debates, they love 'em. We had a great one in fact the other day about black lives matter and gay pride events. And should we actually be protesting or doing these marches? And the...the arguments that they were coming up with were fantastic. It was really detailed like these scripts. And they love to do that, they love to engage yeah, they absolutely enjoy it but it's the content that you have to drill them in. It's not expanding them at all.

Int: What's not expanding them?

F: The...you know...they're not getting the chance to question, they're not getting the chance to evaluate, yeah it's so sad.

Int: I would think you know maybe you should take a bit of a risk and see it in the sense that um...this could be a way for them to learn the content. I know what you mean, you've got a syllabus to get through step by step I've got to get through that syllabus. Oops you get to the end and there's no time left for in-depth conversation.

F: No there isn't.

Int: But somehow I'm suggesting that in-depth conversation has to be a part of the syllabus and if it is there -

F: I agree.

Int: I think the students would still do really well.

F: But then you've got the demands then of you know all the other OFSTED requirements, I say OFSTED in inverted commas, but they want you to do target tackling time, you know -

Int: My understanding of OFSTED though, is that they don't tell you your teaching approaches.

F: No, they don't; but the school policy does!

Int: So it's not OFSTED it's the school?

F: Its...its fulfilling an OFSTED framework where you have to show pupils making progress on what they've previously learnt. And unfortunately it has to be in written form because that's what OFSTED look at which is in books but you've got such...okay if...it would take a long time for kids to go out for 20 minutes and...when you teach all the kids in the school, each kid to do 20 minutes of that you know that's a lot.

Int: In a way it's not it just means that every period you have RE its somebody's turn, Jimmy and Jeanette it's your turn, you've to go out and do your 20 minute conversation and I'll have a wee look at it and maybe chat about it next week, and we'll share it with the class.

F: But I think there's logistics there as well with places for them to go. So...in our school I know we are very short of classrooms and the library is very often used for other lessons. So its finding that quiet place to go.

Int: You mean like this?

F: The Humanities office shouldn't be used because they are staff -

Int: But assuming the logistical part can be overcome, the logistical parts are important, you find a quiet space so we're kind of taking that for granted. A quiet space can be found, adequate supervision of a teacher or an adult nearby like a librarian can be found. I mean there are problems but they could be overcome, the fact that the conversation is recorded and transcribed, it's done through software. In fact one of the students was telling me you can do it on your iPhone, there's an app called Siri, they speak into it and it automatically transcribes what you're saying. So I only found this out a couple of weeks ago, that sounded great. So let's take it these things can be done so...if you're sitting in a class at the beginning of the year of 30 and you see them for 30 weeks well its 15 pairs so it's only for half the time that a pair would have to be...a pair would go out to be released for the conversation. But I think we'd agree the value of the in-depth conversation, you'd want it to link to curriculum they're actually doing. You want it to embellish what they're actually doing and that...so that would take a bit of working out, where and when people go. It might be not everybody gets the opportunity, you might have to decide to start with well I can only allow or I'm only able to allow a few to go. So that might be a starting point.

F: Yeah it could be a starting point. I could probably do it with one year group, to do it throughout the school would be a nightmare for me personally but I think you know finding somebody to in a way quietly supervise would also be a

nightmare. Um...I think it could be done. I do think so. It does depend on the pupils as well.

Int: Some teachers would claim that they can actually do this in the class within the normality of a large class.

F: If you had a whole lesson to do just one debate you could do it, you could absolutely do it. No problem!

Int: I would disagree with that, I wouldn't be able to get 30 kids -

F: Not 30 kids to participate.

Int: No you would get a few who would dominate the debate and the rest would benefit from listening to it but I think for me having done this research the beauty is it allows...you said at the beginning it gives the children the chance to engage with somebody they're friendly with in an in-depth conversation and especially for those who maybe are shy, or uncertain and insecure, I think it's a real...for me I just perceive it as a real benefit if the kids engage in these conversations.

F: I think it depends as well on the pupil that they're with because some pupils are very much like when they were in lessons they're just like sponges where they just absorb what's being told to them. And...they haven't got that critical mind to question things. They are just like sponges.

Int: See what I don't know see...I'm interested the pupils you selected on what basis did you select them?

F: Of my pupils um...quite honestly because they love to engage in talking but after speaking to their parents at parents evening, you know what the parents were saying was that they do actively have discussions at home. They sit around at the table when they're having their food and they talk about current affairs. So they're used to questions, they're used to having to think but I think in a school environment these days it is...you're not able to do that unless you're in RE or Citizenship. I was speaking in fact to the Head of English just a minute ago and she said that the speaking and listening exam which they used to do carries on weighting now. It carries no weighting at all to their final GCSE grade. And I think that's actually quite sad that you know originally it used to be 20% but now they still have to do it but there's no...there's no importance to it. And...I asked her about well what do they have to do? She said they have to do a presentation and we have to ask them questions. But she even said there's no specific questions they have to ask, I said but do you ask like why or how, or anything like that. She said no, no, and I just found that, that in English is awful. I think its despicable because that's where you should be learning to articulate and to express opinions, views etcetera.

Int: So there's a kind of interdisciplinary role here because you can offer that as the RE specialist.

F: Absolutely!

Int: For the English Department, to say well you're not really addressing this because for various reasons perhaps that's something that we could offer. But that's the other thing, these dialogic skills for RE aren't just for RE.

F: No they're not. No.

Int: You've mentioned philosophy, you mentioned English, you mentioned history, there are lots of subjects you could see the children sitting down and having these conversations so maybe it would be a case of you just alluded to the fact that you've got so many kids so maybe they would say well in RE it's only going to be a small percentage of your class because they're going to do it in science, because they're going to do it in maths, because they're do it in English, they're going to do it in history so maybe it will be a whole school responsibility. Do you think other subjects would be interested in this approach?

F: Well our school policy has said that we have to ask like pupils a series of hot questions every lesson. So we've got like what's the hot question for today? And it must start with a how or why. So...and then by the end of the lesson the kids would be able to answer that question. Or even they can ask each other and that is supposed to be a policy but I doubt it, that it gets followed consistently because it's all content content content that they have to learn. And you have to assess it and it's just the whole rigmarole of it. Yeah I just find it frustrating that these kids don't get the chance to really question things. Yeah. Um...with regards to Talk Wall um...I personally didn't think it was a good way of doing it. I think...first of all there's a safeguarding issue with that and you have to trust the pupils wholeheartedly on that. I think certain groups of pupils will abuse the system which again causes a safeguarding problem. Um...and the time it takes for pupils to develop a response I think they would verbally get it out more. I think it encourages in a way a shallow response just judging on how the pupils text and Face Book each other. I don't think it gives you that in-depth response.

Int: Face to face conversation.

F: Exactly! Exactly! Face to face and also the skills that you develop from a face to face conversation. Reading body language etcetera, getting confidence you don't get that off Talk Wall. It's a bad sad really and also I think especially within RE it would be difficult with teachers if they've got so many groups. I think it would be difficult to manage personally. I think...I've got something similar but with...have you heard of Edmodo?

F: Ah right okay, I can show you that if you wish which is um...it's like Face Book, social media, but in fact its where you can get responses, I'm doing this with sixth form so if I just log onto that Edmodo. There we go! Connect with students. I'm only doing this with sixth form at the moment uh...log in...here we go.

Int: Is this free?

F: Free, totally free, absolutely free and you can have your students to join up with it. Hopefully I can get onto it now! There you go so I've developed a Year 12 philosophy and ethics group. So it's all on their apps on their phones if you know what I mean?

Int: How many have you got in the group?

F: Only got 4 so its manageable but I just share them like little videos, I give them like little heads up on what they need to do, bring in. And again just...get them to do that wider reading and then they can discuss it amongst each other as well so they can write replies to each other you know. I've got some likes. [Laughter] Which is quite nice but I only set this up last week so...as you can see -

Int: I remember doing something similar as a student, that's what you would do, we'd link up so we could talk to each other and respond to what the tutors put up. But it never got to a great depth. They never got terribly...its back to the Talk Wall problem. That tended to be a surface [...23.06].

F: But even if you know...let's say for wider reading purposes so...let's say...they were to look at that, that attachment there so it's a video, theological problem of evil. Um...which we will be doing very soon and then we can have a discussion once they've seen that. Right what's your views on that.

Int: But then it's a case of how do you capture discussions, so you have that discussion, and you go away but none of its recorded.

F: No! None of it at all. No.

Int: Would it be good to have it recorded?

F: It would be good to have it recorded I agree but I think....what you would find is that the teacher would dominate it.

Int: I would agree with that, teachers can stand back for a while and let the kids engage but you're always kind of watching...I look back and think well if the conversation broke down or they started to struggle I would step in. Both exploratory talk...the idea is that you're encouraging them really to have half formed broken thoughts because you're wrestling with something and you're trying to think it through and you can't string your words together properly because everything in your head is kind of half formed. Um...so the classroom situation you'd be really brave to do that and if you started to do it the teacher might step in to try and finish off the sentence, or to complete what they're talking about and you wouldn't be allowed to actually...go on with your struggling with these new conceptions you've got. So...

F: I do think sometimes teachers have that fear of losing control as well.

Int: Always! Probably always it's at the back of every teacher's mind -

F: Yeah that they're scared of yeah losing control or scared somebody is going to come in and do a learning walk, or...you know..checking that the kids are on task and I think sometimes they feel...well we feel as teachers that if they're not writing something down you know, oh well they're not making progress by the SLT, the leadership team. If they were to come in for any reason and they're there talking I think we've scared oh you know stop the conversation. Right okay guys back to this.

Int: Its a very kind of narrow conception of education isn't it?

F: Hmm!

Int: Its all about outcomes.

F: It is its outcomes outcomes outcomes!

Int: I go back...very influential for me was Wilfred Carr's work, he's at the University of Sheffield and he has this great pedagogical model and the first level is about skills and outcomes because that's important. You want children to develop skills, you want them to learn, you want them to make progress. But the next level so to speak is about relationships, it's about exchanging information and ideas in the classroom. It's not about keeping tabs on each other. It's about building networks of relationships across kids, between teachers and children, and a lot of teachers are happy with that because that's what makes teaching enjoyable. The kids like to be there and they enjoy what they're doing. And then there's a higher level to that where you're really challenging what's going on around you. And you look at the system and you would say things you've said already. OFSTED wants this, OFSTED wants that, the school policy is another thing, actually the teacher and the pupils have to be able to say no. Our education is too important, our education is more important. We're doing things like this, we sit and have this 15 minute dialogue and we're learning so much from each other. And we're coming away from it enthused and we want more of that kind of education. You've got to be able to be brave and somehow challenge the system.

F: I've got to be honest, I have been doing that with my philosophy group, my Year 12s because we're doing the new spec um...and again you know these new specs it's so much content, content, content all the time. And I've actually just taken a step back and I'm just letting the kids talk and discuss probably...I dunno...I dunno how you can quantify it, whether it's too much, too little I don't know. But I'm behind where I should be right now, I'm about 5 weeks behind. And because you know you have to set yourself a plan, right you're going to do this by then, this topic by then etcetera. So I'm behind but it's because I'm encouraging them to debate, to discuss, to question and...they enjoy it you know. We have a packet of biscuits every lesson, they have their water drinks and we discuss these things and we're able to talk so freely, there are 4 students. And it's lovely, and they've said to me that it's their favourite lesson because they're able to do...to discuss etcetera. And of course we're getting the work done as well I'm not saying we're not. We're doing the essays, we have to do you know the set things of target tackling, revision mind maps, all

the other stuff. But...they enjoy that discussion that they're not getting in other classes because it's so content content content heavy.

Int: Well...I would agree with you, I would say you're doing the right thing. I'm just thinking in terms of the practicality, is this an exam syllabus whereby the kids have a degree of choice, because you've lost content from what you're saying are the kids going to lose out when they come to the exam?

F: No!

Int: Does it mean they have a bit less choice when they come to the exam?

F: No! No! Um...I'm planning to...I'm just going to rush it at the end. Rush it because you need to engage them to get them liking the course first. Getting them to like it, that sounds awful but -

Int: What about flip learning, have you looked at flip learning?

F: What's flip learning?

Int: Flip learning is where the reading that has to be done in the classroom is done before you go to the classroom?

F: Oh yes, no they do that, yeah. They do that as well.

Int: So that would then allow you to cover the content, the content actually comes your homework.

F: But some of them...

Int: The classroom gives you the chance to debate and discuss, analyse it -

F: But some of the kids...some of the kids still don't understand it. Its...for some of them it's that difficult and especially when they haven't done something like philosophy before. I know one of my pupils didn't even do the GCSE RE. You know so she's got no background at all in RE um...I can tell you she was a forces child so she's travelled here, there and everywhere. Um...and she wanted to do philosophy, I think because she loved the sound of it, but when you get into the nitty-gritty of it, she's finding it quite difficult. So I have to go over the texts again and that's taking more time.

Int: Is there a mock exam at all?

F: There will be a mock exam in July but I'm constantly assessing them on essays.

Int: I see so its July and then they sit it -

F: Yeah! Yeah Year 13.

- Int: You would imagine that you would probably pick up...you said rush it, I think you'll probably pick up the pace, maybe by the end of Year 12 you'll be behind where you want to be but those kids are going to become more adept at this kind of thing. It will make them more skilful at doing it. I find you probably pick the pace up and over the course of Year 13 -
- F: I'm hoping! Yeah I'm hoping so because I've noticed already that their essays are so much...they're more...they're better basically, the quality of the content is better. It's just getting them to learn the structure so it's like a point...counter point...counter point, it's getting them to do that rather than all the knowledge and then all the counter arguments at the end.
- Int: Well allow them to express themselves, allow them to share in dialogue, and then you can start...just what you're saying then you can start talking about okay so you're good at discussion, sharing your ideas, you learn from each other. Okay when we come to the exam these are kind of techniques that will help you.
- F: Yeah that's what we do. Yeah. But see I've got another class, Year 13, that just say nothing. There are supposed to be 3 pupils but one of them just is such a poor attender um...but 2 of them just will not talk at all. Everything is insular.
- Int: There's only 2 that's -
- F: I know but you'd think with 2 that they...and they're friends as well, you'd think they'd want to talk but they just don't. It's like getting blood out of a stone! We have tried everything, me and my colleague because she teaches the ethics. You just can't get anything, nothing. He just prefers to write it all on paper and he's good, he's an 'A' student. But he's so...oh terrible! But he's always been like that. [Laughter]
- Int: What if you got this in Years 7, 8, 9 this dialogic approach?
- F: Again I think some -
- Int: That might have helped then because obviously that's a few years ago.
- F: But see even...I'm just thinking when that boy was in Year 11 and Year 10 because he was in fact in my tutor group, he considered himself...how can I put it? What's the word -
- Int: Was he above the rest was he?
- F: He was -
- Int: Academically.
- F: Academically he was above the rest of them definitely and I think that's a shame that he felt that he couldn't talk to somebody else about any issues, philosophical issues.

Int: So...just to kind of finish it off how would you...is there any way you perceive you could this approach in this school?

F: In this school...I think we're already...I think the smaller the number the better it is I think because Year 12, Year 13 absolutely! I'm doing that now with 12, um...Year 10 at the moment I'm doing it with...I've got a class of 10 in fact and we do use this dialogic approach. We do discuss, we do debate, we do question each other's responses and they question each other as well. They're like oh well why do you think that? You know and...then somebody will go on to answer that. So yeah we do -

Int: So why are you not worried about getting through the content with Year 10?

F: Um...because I've had more lessons with them in Year 9 so Year 9 for example, I had 3 lessons a fortnight, and now we're down to...because Year 10 is a twilight class I have to teach it after school for an hour and a half every week. Um...that's how I'm able to you know kind of have a bit of a gap so to speak. Um...but with the current Year 11's I've just had to drill because 2 lessons which is 50 minutes a week um...to get through all the content heavy stuff. We just don't get the chance and it's such a shame. It's such a shame because you've got to make sure they understand it, you've got to assess them, they want regular assessments. They've got to make sure they know exam techniques, its...it's all the usual school stuff really you know?

Int: I think [...34.28] was right then.

F: What's that?

Int: He said you learn (?) more from those you talk with rather than those who teach you because teachers are too concerned with drilling in content and assessing what you're doing. Whereas those who talk with you will share with you, and you learn from them.

F: Absolutely! And I agree, I wish I was able to just...have a lesson, 2 lessons you know where we just talk about religion and science. And I know it's a GCSE topic that I teach but I just wish we could just go off on one. Like the eleventh dimension...the eleven dimensions, you know I've got pupils that would just *love* that. They would so engage in it you know and even now I've got pupils in Year 11 who in a way they are strict atheists etcetera. Um...and they think oh religion is pointless, it's a set of beliefs that are supernatural blah-blah-blah and I would just love to have time to have that debate with them and then get them to question their own sets of beliefs. Maybe not, there's no way I would want to convert them or persuade them but just show them that there is another point of view. Have you looked at it from this way, have you looked at it from that way? Because these 2 kids do dominate the class discussion and it always seems to be like a negative of RE.

Int: That's the advantage of this approach isn't it that you...that you can take other kids out of the class and give them a real chance to debate rather than being

dominated by 2 particular individuals. It doesn't matter what background they are you know?

F: I think with those 2 particular individuals they...because they're so similar that they wouldn't...they wouldn't question about why their beliefs are...so rigid. I don't -

Int: The one here, the one -

F: Yeah the one there yeah.

Int: The one between Sheldon and Megan, they are open despite one being agnostic and one being atheist, they were clearly very open to what you've just been talking about, the eleven dimensions that prompts them to think oh...I hadn't considered this before. As one even says it makes the link to Christianity you know?

F: Yeah absolutely! Yeah! It's just...I remember telling my Year 10's about this boy that I taught and in fact it was quite mean, he had to be told off about it, that...we were doing about religion and science and uh...this is when they were in Year 9 and this boy who's related to the other boy that I've just told you about in Year 11. That he could not understand why um...there were 3 girls who were Christian, you know not...I think they were Methodists and he could not understand their approach to science because they were saying yeah we do believe in the big bang theory, but we think god created it. And in fact he was...his demeanour, his whole attitude was that well your stupid you are! You're stupid! And some of the kids were laughing at his comments but I felt sorry for the girls and in a way he was actually making the whole discussion so negative that he had to be pulled out by myself, and he was spoken to by the Head of Key Stage 3 about his...I dunno if it's a lack of empathy, but he just was so rigid that he just couldn't understand that people could believe in religion and science. It's a shame.

Int: He's the one with the problems really.

F: Yes! But the rest of the class were loving it. When we were talking about um...the whole big bang issue they were so engrossed by it and even like the creation story, and the order of it, it's so similar to what scientists have discovered. And they're like oh right okay, yeah. You could see the light switch on you know? And then for that negative person to slap them down like that it was cruel. It was cruel and you know...but at least you could see the other...the rest of the class was switching on to that, that you can have them both. You can believe in both so yeah...

Int: Okay on that positive point we'll finish.

F: Okay!

Int: Thank you very much!

F: No problem! No problem!

END

Appendix 2-8

C McGrath City Catholic Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Int: We're now live with Assistant Head and Head of Religious Studies in City Catholic School. So I'm interested Caroline in how do you see Catholic religious education?

F: I think Catholic religious education is quite strong at the moment. The point of it is slightly different to what you would expect to achieve in a state school because in a state school you're teaching very much about the phenomenon of religion. You're teaching about a multi faith approach generally, with some moral issues weaved in and trying to make it as contemporary as possible and try and make it applicable to their lives.

Int: Have you taught at a state school?

F: No! Um...but...except on my teaching practice when I was training but from a Catholic point of view that's only one of 3 aspects of RE um...so you've got the religious education from a phenomenological point of view, but you've also got the catechesis aspect and the evangelisation and as far as Catholic RE is concerned there is a lot of emphasis on helping the pupils to understand about sacrament, sacramental practice, and what the symbolism means, but also asking them a lot about what they learn from religion. Now I think...that is one of the assessment objectives in state schools also but I think possibly we emphasise that a little bit more here because it translates not just to RE lessons but also translates over to assembly let's say so in the assemblies you'd have your religious teaching in there, you'd have your scriptural reading and then a message will be drawn out from that and there's a lot of emphasis then on what we can do to live out faith.

Int: So in many ways you're at the heart of the school aren't you Religious Education. I mean people in the state sector in some ways are envious because they look at the resources and time they have compared to what a Catholic school normally has and are actually quite envious.

F: In state schools you often have an hour a week and you'd be repeating the lesson a lot and you'd be fighting an uphill battle because it's a compulsory subject but the pupils aren't necessarily getting a GCSE in it. Um...so...a lot of them would probably rightly ask why are we doing it then?

Int: Oh they do, believe me! I spent most of my career teaching in the state sector and yes they do ask why am I here, and what's the point of RE? It's very much seen as a Cinderella subject.

F: Yeah!

Int: Last in the line when it comes to getting resources. In fact my supervisor, Jim Conroy wrote a book *Does RE Work?* quite recently and...I think [...2.53] you

get the equivalent certainly in my time, resources for a year per capita were a Mars bar, the amount of money you got. I think at times we got 60p or something for a Mars bar and that was what I had to spend on students.

F: And did the students opt out? Were they allowed to opt out?

Int: Well no certainly in Scotland religious education is compulsory for the first four years of secondary. So...but...you just have to make the most of it but Catholic RE I'm a catechist myself, I take confirmation classes, so I can see the catechetical element. I could see that could be difficult for a Catholic school because I'm assuming you have a lot of people here who are not Catholic?

F: Our school is quite unusual actually because it's got a very high percentage of Catholics. I think its 94%.

Int: Really! 94%?

F: Yeah of the whole population of the school is Catholic um...and so...we don't have to fight that uphill battle that some schools do thankfully, and it's become so embedded in who we are as a school that the pupils don't really rail against it. Um...they accept that they are doing RE um...and they know that our style within our department is a sort of style where they are free to ask questions. And they're free to challenge the Catholic faith as well.

Int: And do they do that?

F: Yes!

Int: And they're quite comfortable doing that?

F: Yeah.

Int: That's good. I read an article, was it the *International Journal of Catholic Studies*? And it was about Catholic dissension and almost saying this is not allowed. You are not allowed to be a dissenting voice; you kind of have to accept the truth.

F: I think adults are probably...I think that's probably true of adults but I don't think its necessarily true of teenagers because their whole MO is to dissent. Um...so they challenge things like...especially things to do with sexual ethics um...so anything to do with contraception, sex before or outside or marriage. Homosexuality, bisexuality, and as its coming into the media and its becoming more widely spoken about transgender issues as well. Um...we had -

Int: So how do you deal with that then, so if somebody challenges and says to you well I think the attitude towards homosexuality is wrong, I totally disagree with the church's view on it?

F: Well the first thing I'd say is why? Get them to speak about what their ideas are in terms of their acceptance of other people, and sometimes they actually

use religion against the church's position. So they might start off by saying everybody is equal and you should be allowed to do what you want and they're talking generally about autonomy there, but then they sometimes think well how am I go to beat Miss McGrath, well the way they're going to beat her is by giving a religious answer. So they will say something like well we're all made in the image of God and you're supposed to love your neighbour. And you know they'll talk about being true to yourself um...

Int: So if at the end of the lesson they're still quite steadfast in their belief do you just leave it, or do you somehow take it further?

F: Well I would explain what the church's beliefs are and how its founded and the idea of what sex is and what it's for. And the idea of purpose, because their ideas of sex tend to be that it's about pleasure first and foremost and then procreation secondly. Whereas obviously the church's position is the other way around. I would articulate it as best as I can and then I would say to them but ultimately everybody has got a conscience and they've got to decide for themselves and I'll say to them as you're growing up you've got to decide for yourself what you think is right. I can tell you what the church's position is. I'll try to explain it to you as carefully as I possibly can and you've got to decide whether you think it's right or not. Because ultimately they are kingdom values and they're ideals, and children will take away from that like a standard which is perhaps too idealistic and doesn't deal with the realism of life. Um...and they've got to try and reconcile the two. Especially when it comes to something like contraception. Because I would say isn't it ideal that this would happen and that a man and a woman would meet, and they would wait until they were married, and then they would have children and so on. And they would say yeah but that's not really how it works is it Miss? And they're right and I would say well that's the difference between ideals that we try to live up to and the realities of life and you wouldn't expect the church to say it's okay to steal, or its okay to kill in the same way that they have an ideal about sexual ethics as well.

Int: So I mean if there's only 6% are not Catholic they must be quite brave to want to challenge what the church teaches. I can't imagine that happens too often?

F: Its the Catholics who are doing it.

Int: Its the Catholics is it so...so that Catholics are...are some of them like really just nominal Catholics, cultural Catholics? Catholic family but they themselves aren't...don't see themselves as practising Catholics?

F: Some will be, some will be, see what they will take from their Catholicism is that they believe in God. Some will be practising Catholics but a lot won't be. I don't actually know the numbers for how many would be practicing but I'd be surprised if it was more than 20% really who are going to mass regularly on a Sunday. Um...

Int: So you really are in the job of evangelisation, you're evangelising people who are on the fringes and edge of the faith.

F: Yeah! Even the priest would say to us that we're the parish, the school is the parish now and that's why they're so keen to try and find ways to kind of come in. Just in the lesson before that, one of the parish priests came in to say what are we doing for Ash Wednesday and how can we help, how can we come in...and help because if the pupils don't go to the church the church has to come to them. And that's either by the priests physically getting themselves in here which can be quite intimidating for them because they don't necessarily know how to...reach out to 15-16 year olds. Or we have to bring...we have to bring the church to the kids through liturgy and prayer.

Int: In Scotland they have a national syllabus called This is Our Faith and its quite clear in its confessional nature, in fact they've even disallowed the phenomenological approach you talked about. It doesn't allow for that. It's a straightforward confessional approach to Catholic RE; how would you feel about that?

F: I think it's quite old fashioned and I think...I think it...will polarise people because religion now has to engage with people where they are. Otherwise it's just going to be meaningless. If you can't show the more personal face of Catholicism then I think that kids will choose to reject it. Because they've got other things to do with their time and other more interesting glamorous pursuits to spend their energy on. Um...

Int: That's a good educational principle you've stated, I can remember back...when I did my teacher training, an educational psychologist [...10.43] ascertain what the learner already knows and teacher her or him accordingly. So you've got to start where the learner is already at rather than the stuff that's out there that I'd like you to get into your head. Its flipped them around and said no I'm starting from where you're at just now, I like the way you talk about its got to be personal.

F: Well, we still have that confessional aspect, I feel we still weave that in but its more open these days, I think the climate of learning is more open so that pupils do question the meaning of things and we try and help them to understand their...when they go to mass yes it is always the same. They all come in and go I don't go to mass because it's boring. And then once you explain the symbolism and you explain what's happening with the readings, and they're slowly working through a gospel, so that actually over a 3 year cycle you've read all the key readings from the gospel that they start to see some rationale behind it. Instead of just going there expecting to be entertained. Pupils when they go to mass think that they're the audience and I think one of our big jobs is to get them to understand that God is the audience.

Int: And they're the participants.

F: Yeah!

Int: One thing that strikes me though is in a sense it seems to me that...and I'm really talking from a Scottish perspective, the [...12.02] education has failed because you think of the number of schools we have which are Catholic and you think of the number of Catholics which they produce, I think the last figures

I saw was less than 17% of children leaving Scottish Catholic secondary schools were practicing Catholics. So it strikes me that whatever the Catholic schools are doing hasn't worked. The numbers of people in the church have dropped, they've only been kind of stabilised because of immigration. Um...so why is that?

F: But would you not say that that's reflective of society as a whole?

Int: Well it is, but the Catholic church is not there to be a reflection of society it's there to change society.

F: No but...I suppose what I'm trying to say is, is it not the case that adults are falling away from going to mass as well? So...if you're a thirteen year old you are probably not going to take yourself to mass. If it's not embedded in family practice -

Int: But my experience would be different to that, it's actually that I look at my uncles and aunts who are lifelong Catholics, go to mass, they've devoted their life to the church, and yet when you look at their children almost a man and a woman, none of them go to church. And they just have this vague belief in God, some kind of humanist spirit that's behind everything, looking after everything, but they don't go to mass. They've done nothing wrong, they've set a good example but the next generation haven't picked it up.

F: Right as adults you know when those kids grow up...have they also had kids?

Int: Those kids won't go to church because it's all getting diluted.

F: Right okay because I've found certainly with my two sisters...I'm the middle of two sisters, I was the one who kind of maintained mass practice throughout university and then as an adult. My other 2 sisters not so much, they kind of fell away from it but when they had kids they started to bring them to church more frequently. I'm not saying every week, I wouldn't expect that they would go every week actually. But they do...they've got much more involved in it partly because they've wanted the...the kids to understand our cultural identity as a family I think. But also...wanting them to go to a Catholic school so there might be a little bit of that.

Int: You mean take on board Catholic values?

F: To take on the Catholic values yeah.

Int: Your Catholic history and heritage and so on.

F: Yeah.

Int: Uh huh.

F: And unfortunately some people do that of course to get them into a Catholic school because they're achieving -

Int: [...14.50].

F: Yeah. And of course we're susceptible to that as well! [Laughter] We expect sometimes that the priest must be hosing them down with a hose because they seem to get baptised at 10, suddenly they've found the faith!

Int: I'm a confirmation catechist and as they say sacrament of confirmation is the sacrament of exit. [...15.11] confirmation if you can get them to confirmation before they're gone.

F: That's quite interesting in itself though confirmation because the priests themselves are quite keen that the kids don't just have confirmation as a rite of passage, that they actually have confirmation because they've made a commitment to being an adult Christian. And I think in the past um...priests have just wanted them to do it because you've got to that age and everybody does it at that, whereas more it seems to be they want to have their kids have an active choice.

Int: That's kind of an Anglican or a Protestant idea that somehow you choose to be confirmed, confirmation is god confirming his choice of you. Its god that's making the choice, its god that's confirming you.

F: Yeah I think the angle is then more going towards the Anglican point of view [laughter] that you can recommit because you're remaking your baptism vows. So...the emphasis does seem to be much more now on the 14-15 year old who's getting it because that's roughly the age they get at -

Int: Speaking of 14-15 year olds or ones slightly older, what did you make of the conversation between was it James and Prentice?

F: I wasn't quite sure what the question was that they started off with.

Int: Right they looked at science and the supernatural, they read a text which pointed out taking Stephen Hawking's *The Universe in a Nutshell*, right that scientists tell us [...16.42] string theory that they universe is 10 or 11 dimensional but you and I obviously only experience 4 dimensions, height, breadth, depth, or 3 dimensions of space and one dimension of time. So where are the other 7 dimensions? They're telling us its real, they're telling us that's how the universe...that's what it's made of, well where are they? So it's this idea of things existing which are real but we can't experience. And then when you think about it, it becomes almost obvious like oxygen, what do our 5 senses tell us about oxygen? Nothing! You don't hear, see it, taste it, smell it, touch it. It doesn't exist but we know it's real. Things like solar [...17.21] coming from the sun, there's tens of thousands passing through our bodies just now. Well where are they? But they're real. So it's a scientific way to open up their minds and idea that there are other realities out there. There are other dimensions out there which are real but you don't experience them.

F: When I read it they actually both showed the kind of open mindedness that I would expect from them because I know those 2 lads quite well. And they were both quite willing to engage with the idea I thought, although one was saying where is the evidence? Where is the empirical evidence for it? But of course the other who is the sci-fi buff um...he was the one who was I thought more willing to engage with the idea of lots of different dimensions. Um...

Int: Its a scientific way to open up to the supernatural because science is like the religion of the day now, it's the scientists in the white coats that people in a sense bow down to and listen to and they're the authorities, so if they're the ones who are saying well reality is greater than what you can see, there are dimensions out there which are real, which you're unaware...then it maybe opens a bridge like here to discussion about okay funny how religion has always taught us all the dimensions, heaven, hell, purgatory, limbo. [...18.45] not given them the same names, they don't name them, and we're told that heaven is literally all around us. And at the end of the world it will be revealed, [...18.58] see that, its always been there. So it's open, so its scientific route into a discussion to open up minds about the possibility reality. There are other things, the scientists also tell us that this is a shadow world. There's a greater world elsewhere. We're a form of virtual reality, obviously this is real. You can feel that, this is real but they're saying yes but there's actually...the way the universe is composed it tells us its but a shadow reflection in a sense of a greater world. Now -

F: Somebody has already had that idea haven't they Plato?

Int: Yes. Uh huh. Those who have done philosophy, you see that in some of the conversations, it's the same with another conversation from your students, they mentioned talking about Plato, the world of forms and so on. But its...in a way it's also a gift for Christians this idea that there is a greater world which is the spiritual world which obviously lasts forever, and this world's physical temporary passing away. So it's those kinds of things. So...so what did you think of the conversation...did you think it was...they had a valuable conversation?

F: I think they did, um...I think that they bounced off each other quite well...I think they listened, well it's hard to know without hearing the speed of things, and how the interruptions actually happened. Because sometimes you get the odd word which is just yeah, or well, something like that...um...but I think they engaged with it well. Um...I think they were trying to have a genuine conversation about whether there is another world. Um...I think there was some attempt to build on each other's conversations as they went along. And to engage with the new ideas and move them forward. I think -

Int: As a teacher are you happy with that? If you analyse through your eyes as a teacher.

F: Yeah I mean there is something in teaching called think, pause, pounce, bounce, have you heard of that? [Laughter] So...its...a method which is used in the classroom with lots of people in there where you pose a question, and

give them time to think. You pose the question, you pause and then you pounce on somebody...so you ask somebody...you ask somebody what they think and then you bounce it onto the next person. So...so...person A would give their thoughts and then you say well person B what do you think of that, how do you think...and if they say don't know...well do you understand what they were trying to say? And they usually can repeat it back so do you agree with that or not, or...how could somebody challenge that opinion? So...we do quite a bit of that in class anyway, um...and even when you're just doing pair work you would encourage the kids to kind of share their answers so they've got a little bit more confidence in actually voicing their ideas because it's not just coming from them, it's coming from the pair. Um...but...then...I think a lot of teachers now are trying to look at questioning techniques to try and get the pupils to be a little bit more expansive on their responses.

Int: Yeah I mean being expansive on the responses, the way I look at this is I look at the conversation they have and I think well I never managed that as a teacher. I never had the kids talking like this in depth, you know it would be more like the way you are describing it, you would maybe kind of scratch the surface. You would have able pupils who would be quite willing to speak. The difficulty was getting the people who are shyer or less confident, less articulate to speak. So you could use snowballing like you mentioned there, or you could talk to your partner and the pair talks to another pair. And then they share it to the class, you're right it's got the mark (?) of 4 people it's not one person's thoughts. But when I look at this I think they're thinking deeper here because this exploratory talk you're expected to be broken in your speech. You're expected to pause and to um and to ah, and to think and speak half formed phrases and so on. Which is a sign you're really grappling with what you're thinking about. Whereas I never managed that in the classroom, I never really got that level of dialogue in the classroom, so I'm wondering I look at this and think this is rich to me, how could I get it in the classroom, how can you...and one way would be that everybody gets an opportunity to leave the classroom and just have the conversation. You know they just do what your pupils are doing, they go out of the classroom for 20 minutes, half an hour, conversation takes place. It can be recorded, you're actually handed the transcript, that's what they talked about. So it's a case of okay so how do I use this? First of all how can I share it with the rest of the class? I suppose you could pick phrases, ideas, and say well members of your class were talking about...what do you think? This pause bounce you were talking about, here's a statement from people in your own year group, in your own school, what do you think about it? So that maybe a way to use the conversation because I think the thing is...I mean Augustine talks...this is one of Augustine's famous phrases he says I learnt most from those who talked with me not from those who taught me. It's to get this conversation that you can really relax, like when I mentioned [...24.28] conversation so that we can just sit and have a chat, and really kind of learn from each other. But my problem now is how do you put that into the classroom? That's maybe one way that you take phrases and you can share it with the rest of the class, that's a possibility. Have you got any ideas? [Pause] Or would you see that as being a waste of time, would you think 20 minutes and that's what they talked about?

F: No I wouldn't see that as a waste of time but I would wonder how I could do that in practical terms. Having transcripts is nice but if you are going to reproduce that kind of exercise several times over with a group that's a lot to...a lot of conversations to sift through. Um...I just wondered you know much like the link that you sent me, was it Talk Wall?

Int: Talk Wall uh huh.

F: Um...I wondered whether you could do something which is even simpler than that which wouldn't necessarily involve iPads and sending things up....why not just have Post-It notes and they literally stick on the wall. Um...it would be difficult actually to bring in the recording and the transcripts and so on, and then bring the ideas back because in terms of...I think in terms of the outcomes the word you used there was richness, I think you probably could get really good outcomes with it but its whether or not in practice you could actually deliver the syllabus in the amount of time that you had available while making those opportunities available.

Int: So maybe the focus then should just be not on sharing it with the class because I know from talking to other people that they're finding that if you share it with a class the responses tend to be shallow. Its back to this texting phenomenon. They're just used to writing short passages and they don't seem to get a great depth of response. So we could then focus on okay they've had a conversation and the benefit of the conversation is for them. We're not actually worried about sharing it with the class, we're just glad that we have found the time so that once a term or whatever, you get a chance to leave the classroom and engage in this conversation that hopefully will enrich your knowledge and your understanding, and again hopefully will feed through into your essays. So there's a bit of a gamble there but I think...do you think it would be justified taking that gamble?

F: It might be with the older kids, like with the kind of age group that you were working with, so with the sixth formers in particular, because in practical terms you could let them be outside the classroom without supervision. Um...and...at 'A' level let's say you can probably build in opportunities where people could go out and come back in and so on, or have these long conversations. Um...so I think that would be worth doing, and you'd have to practically manage who you're putting with...with their pair. I've got...for example, the pupils that I chose for you to work with were quite chatty pupils but I've got another class who wouldn't say boo to a goose. So I could see...a limited range of success with them compared to the others. Having said that, I could be proven wrong and it could be the very thing that brings them out of their shell.

Int: Uh huh because they actually get a chance to talk away from the presence of a teacher and they can be comfortable with each other?

F: Yeah!

Int: So that...that's...to me having done the research I've done I would say that's a gamble worth taking. It's a gamble worth taking and I think you're right, I was

speaking to head of RE at another school in Nottingham yesterday, speaking of similar points, it's a state school but [...28.33] syllabus but she also was focusing in on the more able pupils at the higher end of the school. But yes for 'A' level and so on you could fit this in, they do...there's a depth to their conversation and thinking that you don't get in normal classroom chat. I think her problem is finding the time to do it because you've got to get through the syllabus.

F: Its always quite encouraging though because I think when the pupils are grasped by something they keep talking about it outside of lessons, because sometimes they come back into class and they say we were talking about this in the common room and we were saying this. And that always tells you that they've been grabbed by the neck by a topic or two and it's nice to think that they are still talking about it. I don't know exactly what the content of the conversation would be there. But they are...they are willing to talk about it, that's why there's a possibility that it could work because they are willing to talk. I think it depends on the topic. I think you gave them a good topic there.

Int: Uh huh. Well I've used it before, I did it for my Master's degree and I was actually thinking of changing the topics then I kind of just thought, well actually it worked for the previous students, 20 of my own students, so...I'll just use it again. I've got confidence that it does provoke a good conversation, and the point we made was a good one about the planning that goes into it. I mean I remember a colleague, Ian Smith, many years ago, I taught in the Borders, he used to spend...like 2 or 3 times a year he spent ages working out who to put into which groups. He really put an immense amount of thought into it but it paid off. It paid off because he had groups who would tend to work really, really well together. So you're right about the conversations, the literature tells us and the previous research does say you need to pick people who are friendly with each other and at ease with each other. So it's likely to be an enjoyable conversation. So there is a bit of thought put into that.

F: Would your thinking then be that the conversations would be recorded and you would have a transcript, and would you give it to the teacher, or would you give it to the students?

Int: Well...at that age you could give it to the students and you could let them see what they've talked about. The fact that they know that they're being recorded and its transcribed is a help for the teacher, the confidence that they will actually stay on task because at the end of the day I can see what they talked about. And they'll know that. But it doesn't seem to work that way. It just seems to be they enjoy the conversation and they just kind of seem to get on with it. You can ask them to pick something...you could say to them well there you are that's what you talked about, from your conversation what would you like to share with the rest of the class? And give them the job...or say you don't want to share it that's fine! That's up to you. You could do that. But...this conversation is part of a series I'm having with a couple of other heads of RE and an RE advisor, an academic at Cambridge, it's just to begin...it is just to begin to think about okay if this works, how we define works, I think it works. But how do you do it in a normal everyday reality of classroom practice? It's a case of bouncing

about ideas and thinking well maybe we could try this, maybe we could try that. We have to be prepared to take a bit of a risk you know?

F: Certainly when I was teaching pupils lower down in the school because I tend to have exam classes now but certainly lower down in the school um...there were times when I just told them to close their books and they quite like that. They knew they weren't going to be doing any writing and I would say right we're going to have a chat, that would be a whole group chat, so I'm not saying it's exactly the same as what you were talking about, but I've always felt like if they can say it they can write it. So...the more I can get them to talk about what they think um...and even you know...even if you've got somebody who's advocating for the church or somebody who's advocating for an atheist or a humanist you know I think that's always quite useful. And also then getting them to use the right language as well, while they're talking. I mean there is a bit of a teaching involved there it's not really as free flowing as those types of conversation that you were talking about um...

Int: You're recognising what I'm recognising that this type of conversation doesn't really happen in a classroom. And you're not actually going to be able to replicate this conversation in a classroom, they're going to have to leave the classroom and you're just going to have to trust them. But...it's not a leap in the dark because it's getting recorded and transcribed and if they're at that level of school, doing 'A' levels and so on they're probably pretty committed. So the hardest bit might be the organisation of going out the classroom, going to the library, making sure the equipment is there, and making sure it's the right pairs. And if you have some degree of follow up...you would want to look at it I would think. We've let them out of the classroom what exactly have they been talking about? It doesn't take long to read. A few pages, it doesn't take long to read.

F: And in terms of transcribing it did you say there was a program?

Int: Yes! Its Dragon Naturally Speaking it's called.

F: Oh yes you did put that on the email.

Int: The software uh huh. Apparently it transcribes it, they do a wee test and they speak into it and it picks up their voice and then it transcribes it and then I was told by a student just 3 weeks ago you can...something called SIRI (?) on your iPhone will record and transcribe.

F: I didn't know that it actually transcribed.

Int: Is it just record is it?

F: Well yes.

Int: You've got it have you?

F: If I can find it now. Um...my problem is I throw it into my bag...

Int: I'm kind of assuming that that...because the Dragon Naturally Speaking would take care of that, it can be done. You can send them off and they would come back and then later on you'd pick up a transcript of what they spoke about. Um...

F: I've got it here. So...

Int: So do you have it on your phone?

F: Well SIRI is just...there you go -

[Plays recording]

F: But I don't think it really transcribes as such but you can speak to SIRI and SIRI will answer your question using the internet. Um...

Int: That's good! That's handy!

F: Its good when you say "call mum".

Int: Is there a...is there a network of like Catholic teachers in Nottingham, or the Midlands, or whatever?

F: In the diocese?

Int: In the diocese, which diocese are you?

F: This is the diocese of Nottingham which actually includes Nottingham, Derby, Leicestershire, and Lincolnshire.

Int: Ah right its funny that because the Anglican diocese of Lincoln I think includes this area.

F: Right well that's strange isn't it?

Int: [...36.13] size of the cathedral I'm not surprised.

F: Yeah that's true actually its huge isn't it?

Int: Isn't it?

F: Um...we have diocese advisors um...and we have a primary advisor for RE and we have a secondary advisor for RE. Um...the secondary advisor is actually head of RE at Christ the King so she has a day away from school a week to actually coordinate...one day yeah!

Int: One day a week!

F: So if there's any meetings or anything, national meetings she'll go to that and feedback -

Int: So do you have regular meetings of heads of RE?

F: Yes! Once a term.

Int: Once a term.

F: So we get together and just mainly talk about kind of syllabus changes and things like that. Key Stage 3 assessment levels, when it was all the thing, and life without levels now that it's not all the thing! Um...so...and just generally kind of keeping up to date with each other in terms of -

Int: Oh I know the value...I know the value of those meetings, they're really important, just chatting to people in the same position as yourself.

F: Yeah and it's also because heads of RE in Catholic schools tend to take a lot of responsibility for kind of the Catholic life of the school, they also bring in people from CAFOD or Justice and Peace groups and things like that just to let us know what the latest is with what they're doing as well.

Int: So do you think they'd be interested in exploring this further, talking about dialogic skills in RE?

F: I think it's probably too rare that we meet because its only once a term for them to actually do a project -

Int: So much business to get through.

F: Yeah!

Int: So it would have to be like a special event?

F: I think it...well...it probably would. But...I don't know whether...it would be easy to sell people on attending the event because you'd almost have to be convinced of what it is -

Int: Its worth your while.

F: Yeah! Just purely because everybody is stretched so thinly aren't they so...its finding that time because you've got to justify a day away from 5 classes so...

Int: That's why I was asking about your network because that seemed the best place to pitch it so to speak, to say you know take half an hour of their time and just explain this is the kind of thing that's been going on, what's been doing, just to raise awareness levels.

F: Perhaps something written might be better from their point of view.

Int: What do you mean like an academic paper?

F: No -

Int: A journal paper?

F: No not necessarily that even, just something that was sent out to the schools, to the Head of RE. It could be 2 or 3 sides, 4 sides of A4.

Int: It would get lost.

F: Well...there might be -

Int: It would get lost.

F: But the thing is people...the people who are interested in that type of thing anyway would be the only people who would go anyway. And the people who are not really interested in that won't go so...I think people make their mind up before they've been.

Int: Yeah we have to get the people not interested as well.

F: That's the difficulty! But I think a lot of the teachers who are coming through now anyway are much more inclined to have talk in lesson. Rather than just kind of your traditional kind of book work. Um...I think it's more weaved into the style of teaching now anyway.

Int: So what about the teachers who are not Heads of RE do they have a forum, a gathering, a place to meet?

F: No not really. Um...we would obviously have our normal department meetings within the school but they don't gather together as just kind of general teachers of RE. That would be a real poaching ground for the head teachers as well, there's a shortage of RE teachers. If we put all the RE teachers in one place they'd just go and poach them! [Laughter] I don't think that would work.

Int: Do you think they would want to come though?

F: I think they'd struggle to justify it with the timetables to be honest. I think something needs to go to them.

Int: I think what I'm thinking is the next step would probably be...I'd have to do some kind of larger scale project. Once I write the thesis up um...it would then be a case of right okay so...we've researched...it would suggest this is worth pursuing. This is worth taking onboard, how do you sign up more schools? It wouldn't just be Catholic schools it would be all schools. So...I think that will probably be the next step. So I might come back to you.

F: Right well you've got my email address.

Int: At some point in the near future.

F: Yeah you've got my email address haven't you?

Int: So before we finish is there any final point you want to say or...?

F: No I don't think so. I think it's been quite interesting reading what they say when I'm not there! [Laughter]

Int: That's good to hear! Thanks very much!

F: You're welcome!

END

APPENDIX B

Conversation 2 - Jasmine (agnostic) & Tilly (practising Catholic) [1]

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Tilly: Okay so what is your opinion on this, do you believe that there is good evidence that Jesus existed?

Jasmine: I think so. I think he probably was a real person at some point in time although I kind of wonder whether some of the stuff that he did so sort of like the miracles he performed, whether they may have been actual miracles or whether they were just something that the people at the time couldn't explain; like people who thought that science was like magic sort of thing. If they didn't understand it; they might have called it a miracle.

Tilly: I think that's possible but I think a whole big thing about Christianity and like being Christian is to have faith; and I think that quite a lot of this is based off of like these miracles aren't proven but I think that in a way that does test your faith.

Jasmine: Yes!

Tilly: So...its...quite a key part of being a Christian so...I like to believe that these miracles were miracles although sometimes when you are given proof and things it makes it a big challenging.

Jasmine: It is nice to believe in something like that especially when it was sort of a miracle when he healed someone or helped someone.

Tilly: Yeah you can definitely see back in the day it was viewed as one because...you know there wasn't much else to go off of. Um...yeah I definitely believed that he was a real person because there was all this proof about him actually living and um...yeah and its saying here that there was...like people did witness him performing these miracles.

Jasmine: So it was...it guides towards that he was more...he was an actual person that existed rather than there were a few people that claimed be lived and then...sort of trails off from there sort of thing. [286]

Tilly: Yeah! I think you know with the Bible in general; like are you religious?

Jasmine: I am; and I'm not so like I think it depends on whether...it depends on the story; it depends on how realistic it is sort of thing.

Tilly: See I like to view myself as a liberal Christian so I know that's kind of a bit controversial because most Catholics are...well not most but a lot of them believe the Bible word for word but I think that all the stories have a moral behind them; and I think that some of them are just metaphors like for example, Adam and Eve, I can't believe that that's...what really happened but I think perhaps like the Genesis story was a metaphor for the likes of evolution or

something because that's...definitely been proved to exist. I believe that that's the way things work. [67]

Jasmine: Yeah!

Tilly: Um...so but...I also like to believe that perhaps it was God who caused it all to happen.

Jasmine: Yeah, I see what you mean. [310]

Tilly: Just because I think it's really...it just discomforts me to think that the world just came from like a random fluke in science, like a random occurrence. I just...like the world is too amazing and too intricate, and too like developed just to come from just – [114]

Jasmine: From nothing.

Tilly: A random occurrence yeah, just like a little chemical reaction, I'm like well...hardly a little one but [laughter] anyway I just...I think it's like there...I think there has to be some kind of meaning or there's not really any point.

Jasmine: Yeah I think along a similar sort of line like I do think that there is some sort of greater being who can like control the beginning, it does influence the world, and that evolution as well is another thing that I do think has played a part but I don't think it was just sort of...I think maybe there was another part in it and that maybe even perhaps the first humans evolved maybe like if it was God. God influenced...it was the first man and the first woman it could have been Adam and Eve.

Tilly: Yeah. I just cannot believe that Eve was made out of Adam's rib like that is just -

Jasmine: No!

Tilly: The chances of that actually being possible is so unlikely and I know people view it as like another one of these miracles but it's just...I can't see how that's scientifically possible you know? Like it's like a rib it's not even like an embryonic stem cell or something you know? It's not even...oh...

Jasmine: Maybe God was like the father of science so he's managed to do that somehow. [537]

Tilly: I know! Just go against every single law ever! Yeah but...back onto the topic of these miracles I think a whole big part of being Christian is that it's like faith in Christ and that he was...this kind of...miracle performer. Like he was...he had God in him you know so he was...almost like a super...whatever you call them like a super -

Jasmine: Super human?

Tilly: Not really that it kind of makes it sound like a superhero but like um...oh...like a kind of deity whatever figure in a human body. [203]

Jasmine: Yes! Yeah! I see what you mean.

Tilly: In that sense I think it could be possible because like...

Jasmine: There has to be something to explain like the supernatural side of life.

Tilly: Yeah and like...they believed that God is all powerful and he's capable of anything, then if he was in the body of Jesus he would be capable to do all this water into wine, healing the leper and all that stuff you know; so yeah.

Jasmine: Maybe part of it...I don't know if you find this but maybe part of being a Christian and the miracles is seeing the sort of moral to it like seeing what this means like aside from the fact that he managed to cure someone. It shows that maybe you should help others more because even if...no matter who they are you should still help them sort of story.

Tilly: Yeah definitely! Yeah! It's a difficult...kind of subject to touch upon isn't it because...it's like...it's like well there is um...we've been given evidence that he existed but there isn't evidence that he performed the miracles. [716] So it could just be like Jesus son of Joseph, who was a carpenter, he lived his life as a carpenter, and like people have just interpreted it into it being the Son of God. So...

Jasmine: He had enough faith to be pictured as that sort of person. They had all the...like if they have the evidence from those who are friends and sort of foes then maybe it sort of hints towards that he was a real person who did manage to perform these miracles whatever they were at the time. They managed to make a difference.

Tilly: I think it is difficult to believe but then I think that because its difficult that makes it um...like a test of your faith. So if you can believe it then your faith must be strong enough. I don't know! [341] Um...I think that's kind of where I'm standing on this so...can we pause it? Is there a pause button?

Jasmine: That one.

Tilly: Okay um...I think...like similarly to this about being a test of your faith and things, I think also believing in an afterlife, like whether we go to heaven or not is also a big...key problem. So...I know personally my views on the afterlife is that...I believe that there is one, whether its heaven or hell, or just an abyss I have no idea. But I like to believe that there is a heaven because it just brings you comfort to think that you're not just going to die and that's it? That's...quite sad.

Jasmine: I like to think that...I agree like I like to think you go on to a better place once you've passed away, I don't so much like to believe – [838]

Tilly: It brings peace to people.

Jasmine: Yeah I don't really like to believe that somebody goes somewhere like to hell if they were...even if no matter like who they were, what bad things they'd done, if they were given perhaps a second chance like they went on and they had to start again and then eventually when they get it right they get to go to heaven.

Tilly: So in a way you're kind of...is that not like similar to a Buddhist view?

Jasmine: Yeah!

Tilly: The way...it's like you live your life and if you don't achieve enlightenment in that life you get to live another one. I think that's how it works I've not done Buddhism -

Jasmine: Yeah! No I think um...-

Tilly: Its similar to that.

Jasmine: Similar in a sense but I don't know whether you'd come back as like an animal or a plant or something like that. But you'd probably come back as a human being. I have no idea. [998]

Tilly: Personally I think that your body and your soul are 2 different things, and I like to think that your soul only lives on earth once and that's it. I just think...I don't believe in reincarnation or anything. Like obviously in a way you kind of...your body is reincarnated because like all the -

Jasmine: It goes back to the earth.

Tilly: Tissues and everything it goes back into the earth and then into all the plants and everything. I mean in that way your body is regenerated by the earth, but I think your soul is solely yours and it can only belong to you in one lifetime. And I think...I believe that your soul does go on once you die, I think it does. Although I really do disagree, I do disagree that um...hell...like you go to hell if you commit sins in your life. I don't like believing that because...it's just...I just think it's very, very cruel; a cruel kind of...it's a tricky one because I mean I like to think that rapists and horrible murders and things get sent there but the majority of people will commit what the Bible considers a sin in their everyday lives. And I just think that that would not be fair at all for those people to be sent to hell because they committed these sins. When in like modern day life they're not really considered as sin like as they were like when the Bible was written. So yeah...

Jasmine: I think certain things are in a sense sort of...very...as a sin it's very difficult not to commit with certain things, like obviously very small ones we would consider insignificant - [620]

Tilly: Like things like lying, and being jealous, things like that, people do that all the time even with adultery, I know like I believe cheating is wrong but I think um...

Jasmine: Someone doesn't deserve to go to an eternal suffering because of that sort of thing.

Tilly: No! I think...because in the Bible, in the Testament, I think like in that time people believed that you...like you had your one soul mate and that was the first person you married and you stayed with them forever, and that was considered a good marriage. But in reality that person that you like first married might not be...you just might not get along. There is no point staying in an unhappy marriage for that sake so I think...like sometimes people cheat and it's wrong to cheat you're right but then again if it's an unhappy marriage I don't see why you should be forced to stay together if you're not getting along. So things like that, I just think they don't really work in today's society so...I don't think people should be eternally punished for doing stuff that's just considered normal you know?

Jasmine: Yeah! Yeah! Definitely! I think as well such things like that because depending on...I think there are so many different factors of whether somebody...how somebody should be judged, I just don't think...I don't think anybody should be judged like that so whether they should be sent to eternal suffering in hell or eternal peace in heaven, you should be able to keep trying. Maybe like...I don't know in what way, whether it was something like reincarnation or maybe your soul goes on to somewhere else to sort of repay that in a...I'm not saying it wouldn't be like eternal, it would be somewhere to lead them onto a better place maybe.

Tilly: Yeah! And another belief I have about heaven is I don't know whether this is what's believed in the Bible but...or maybe it's just come from my family but I like to believe that when you die you get reunited with the souls of loved ones.

Jasmine: Yeah that's lovely!

Tilly: I like to think that. Just...because...I think maybe it was my mum who kind of gave this mindset to me but she definitely believes that when she dies she will be reunited with her family, like her grandparents who died. And she misses them so much its clear to see and I would like to believe that when I die I would get to meet them as well just because I've heard so much about them. And I wished they'd lived long enough for me to be able to meet them um...so it does...it brings me a bit of hope and you know...to think that we can be able to meet them there. [1461] Okay so another issue with like Christianity that's really controversial is the topic of abortion so...I think...

END

Analysis

Research Question 1

To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?

There are 2215 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 94.0% of this conversation.**

Research Question 2

To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

Cumulative talk comprises 1461 words i.e. 66.0% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 620 words i.e. 28.0% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX D

Conversation 4 - Sunny & Harambe 1b (non-practising Catholic & agnostic) Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Sunny: So what Calvin is trying to say is that Jesus isn't real.

HARAMBE: What?

Sunny: Is he Catholic or is he Christian?

HARAMBE: I don't know.

Sunny: I think he's trying to defend him because nonsense and stuff. Oh he was a great teacher and miracle worker but like how come...how come God if...if this was real I think God would put another person -

HARAMBE: Above him like.

Sunny: Yeah like why doesn't he get another son to help us now because...because there is lots of sickness, the world...we're running out of oil and stuff you know? [69]

HARAMBE: Kanye West!

Sunny: Jesus come back!

HARAMBE: Jesus! You know he's running for president, 2020, that's the comeback of Jesus 2020! [Laughter] Oh man!

Sunny: See Jack if you were coming this Saturday it would be much more fun.

HARAMBE: How do you mean?

Sunny: To the sleepover with the fun fair and Blair.

HARAMBE: You said you couldn't go... But we need to get back on this conversation. [Laughter] So, there's this guy trying to get facts out of a children's book.

Sunny: Or Bible.

HARAMBE: The Biblé!

Sunny: The Biblé!

HARAMBE: Yeah it's a religion, people -

Sunny: Yeah its hard facts; but you're going to get people that don't believe it and they're going to -

HARAMBE: Some people want more proof.

Sunny: If this guy is dumb enough he'll take straight facts out of this and someone will counter it.

HARAMBE: **No! It feels real where is his bones?**

Sunny: **If he was real why is he dead?**

HARAMBE: **Because it was 2000 years ago!**

Sunny: **But Jesus has the power to stay alive forever because he's Jesus.**

HARAMBE: **Yeah and its God like you know; why isn't God a physical being if he's powerful enough -**

Sunny: **Why has he not been brought back as another life form.** [63]

HARAMBE: **Yeah! Why isn't there another life form like God?** [78]

Sunny: Like a hamster!

HARAMBE: Or who created God if -

Sunny: Like the VIP hamster!

HARAMBE: Then with luck he's going to end up killing it! [Laughter]

Sunny: He'll buy it from Pets at Home.

HARAMBE: And then goes Joe you can walk on water. What!

Sunny: Imagine if it had the voice of Sunny, what are you talking about?

HARAMBE: The voice of -

Sunny: Then he kicks over his water, oh shit Ben is going to kill me!

HARAMBE: Okay!

Sunny: Oh no!

HARAMBE: Oh my goodness it's the most beautiful thing I've ever seen!

Sunny: So we don't agree with Calvin this time.

HARAMBE: No we don't! We don't!

Sunny: Calvin Harris!

HARAMBE: Calvin Klein!

Sunny: I make underwear!

HARAMBE: Yeah I make underwear for a living.

Sunny: I make money but I make underwear.

HARAMBE: I remember when Mitch bought Calvin Klein underwear, I was like bro you're not going to look sexy in those!

Sunny: Stick your Diesel!

HARAMBE: Or some Under Armour!

Sunny: I want to post them up Jack! [Laughter]

HARAMBE: Oh it's raining. Jesus is coming back.

Sunny: You can Calvin come back here! Let's go!

HARAMBE: Jesus is coming back its training.

Sunny: Jesus is taking a piss!

HARAMBE: Its a sign!

Sunny: I really want to see that video of James Corden going... I know he's doing it on purpose but he's so funny! We've gone completely off topic.

HARAMBE: Yeah! Let's try and talk about stuff. I did this equation in maths. I need help but I still solved it.

Sunny: No; but like um...you know there was Adam and Eve like they took a bite out of the apple -

HARAMBE: How are folk supposed to believe that?

Sunny: Yeah, because how did their children...does that mean that they...that's kind of gross you know, that's inside their family. I know they had to...couldn't God take one of their ribs again and make another person? So they would have...a mate.

HARAMBE: Imagine Adam and Eve as like the whole world.

Sunny: Yeah why would you take that apple from that tree, there are so many different trees. I know you couldn't eat the animals but there are delicious fruits around you plus you're immortal. Like... [186]

HARAMBE: Imagine if Adam and Eve knew about KFC? Chicken!

Sunny: There would be no more chickens left in the world.

HARAMBE: Yeah like you need animals instead, instead of the apple from the tree that they weren't even supposed to go near. Silly Eve!

Sunny: Silly Adam and Eve!

HARAMBE: Okay who is Adam right? Eve is Eve. Who is Adam? Because James is a snake. No who was Eve's next boyfriend after James? I can't really remember.

Sunny: Do you think Johnny goes to Boxing Club?

HARAMBE: Yeah he does! He does! Who is that girl in our design and man class that left? The one that supposedly Callum liked?

Sunny: Carys?

HARAMBE: Yeah Carys! They go to the same boxing thing. I think sometimes Carys goes to Blair.

Sunny: Her sparring partner!

HARAMBE: I think Carys would win man! Johnny has guns.

Sunny: She has bigger guns! Her boyfriend used to bully me. I was like hey now.

HARAMBE: The video with the gorilla.

Sunny: It's because of the way the gorilla walked, he walked like that.

HARAMBE: I don't think they'll want us to come back here.

Sunny: No!

HARAMBE: Dumb yeah, smart no!

Sunny: I thought he was going to come back and just to look at us.

HARAMBE: How is he supposed to know when we're done?

Sunny: Do we just got hey! Hey you please we've finished!

END

Analysis

Research Question 1

To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?

There are 847 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 29.4% of this conversation.**

Research Question 2

To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

Cumulative talk comprises 186 words i.e. 22.0% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 63 words i.e. 7.4% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX F

Conversation 6 - Jasmine (agnostic) and Tilly (practising Catholic) [2] Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Jasmine: So do you get the film?

TILLY: Yeah! We have no freewill.

Jasmine: You have no freewill. [Whispers something here]

TILLY: **Destiny, fate, I believe that there is a plan for everyone.**

Jasmine: **Do you?**

TILLY: **Yeah! I believe that everything happens for a reason and like if something bad happens then there is always going to be...the outcome is always going to be something that will help you later in life.**

Jasmine: **However, I don't really believe in fate because I don't believe that everything happens for a reason because what about children who have died like in a car accident. Was that meant to happen? [83]**

TILLY: Obviously no that's not what I'm meaning by fate like if -

Jasmine: But like everything happens for a reason do you think that -

TILLY: **Yeah like in my life, me...like...growing up with 2 autistic brothers I believe that happened for a reason because -**

Jasmine: **Do you?**

TILLY: **Yeah! I believe that that was part of my plan. What happens if my kids are autistic? Then I've grown up with 2 autistic brothers and I know how to deal with them because I've grown up...I believe that that happens for a reason.**

Jasmine: **But what about if you were involved in a car accident then would you think that has to happen for a reason?**

TILLY: **Well...maybe my organs went to save someone's life. What happens if my heart was used in a transplant and I saved someone's life?**

Jasmine: **So you were meant to die -**

TILLY: **To save someone else.**

Jasmine: **Right!** [206] I don't really think that's how life works.

TILLY: I think it does.

Jasmine: Do you?

TILLY: Yeah!

Jasmine: Hmm!

TILLY: Say it then?

Jasmine: I don't really think so. No I don't believe in fate because people say oh you know you bumped into each other and then that's your fate. That is not fate that's just -

TILLY: So you don't believe in like...there is someone for everyone?

Jasmine: Um...there is...yeah there must be someone for everyone because there's -

TILLY: Do you believe in like the one true love?

Jasmine: No!

TILLY: Do you not?

Jasmine: Nah!

TILLY: I do.

Jasmine: Love at first sight! Nah!

TILLY: Do you not?

Jasmine: Absolutely not!

TILLY: Why? What happens if you bump into someone and you're like...and you feel it instantly, it's like not like...like an attraction it's like oh my god.

Jasmine: No!

TILLY: You feel an instinct connection.

Jasmine: Nope! Yeah you can have an instant connection but you can't...there's no such thing as love at first sight because you can't...you don't even know that person or you might not even know that person as much as you think you would. So what happens if you've heard of people who have love at first sight and then a few months down they turn out to be someone who is...abuses you.

TILLY: Well then they're not the one. [315]

Jasmine: Well but then you thought that was love at first sight, how could it possibly-

TILLY: You might have thought that but they're not the one, there is one person for everyone in this world.

Jasmine: I just don't agree with that either.

TILLY: You might think that there's people like...that you thought were the one but then obviously they're not because they've cheated on you or...

Jasmine: I just don't believe that there is someone for everyone because how do we know like what we're looking for? You don't!

TILLY: Well you don't that's exactly it!

Jasmine: I just don't believe that there's someone for everyone.

TILLY: But its fate, it's not your personal preferences, its fate.

Jasmine: I don't believe in fate.

TILLY: So when you meet your husband and you marry him and you spend the rest of your life with him -

Jasmine: Well I believe it's...it's not fate that's brought us together its...it's not love either...no...it's -

TILLY: It's not love that's brought you two together? [359]

Jasmine: No it isn't!

TILLY: What's brought you together then?

Jasmine: It would have been...him there at the right time.

TILLY: So right place right time?

Jasmine: Right place right time, getting to know them, and then that's - [31]

TILLY: So you don't believe in like the love of your life?

Jasmine: I don't believe that you glance over and there's your fate and destiny standing right in front of you.

TILLY: Do you not?

Jasmine: No! Absolutely not! Absolutely not! How could you possibly believe that you're meant to be with that person when you don't even know them?

TILLY: You don't have to know them. It doesn't have to be instantly...that's really annoying me sorry! It doesn't have to be instantly, you could like get to know them and then over time you start to realise that they're the one.

Jasmine: Right so it's not fate that's brought you...it's not fate that's brought you to that decision.

TILLY: It is fate.

Jasmine: It's not!

TILLY: Because fate is the one that's brought youse together.

Jasmine: No it's not; it's chemistry and connection.

TILLY: No but fate has brought you together in the first place and then over time you've started to realise that they're the one.

Jasmine: No!

TILLY: Yeah!

Jasmine: I don't believe it. I just don't believe it. It's not fate that brings people together. It's...connection and chemistry. It's connection.

TILLY: So my mum and dad...my mum and dad it was fate that put them both in the same university.

Jasmine: It was connection! It was connection!

TILLY: Okay so what connection put them in the same university?

Jasmine: Well that's what I'm saying right place right time. Both of your parents went to the same university that is normally how people meet, when they're both at the same place.

TILLY: But that's fate! Fate...it was a life plan; life has a plan for everyone.

Jasmine: No it doesn't.

TILLY: Yeah they do.

Jasmine: So...do you know where you're going to be in 10 years' time?

TILLY: Well I don't get told the plan everything that happens is part of a plan.

Jasmine: No it is not part of a plan.

TILLY: It is!

Jasmine: There isn't any plan for anyone.
TILLY: There is!
Jasmine: There's no plan for anyone.
TILLY: There is!
Jasmine: There's a plan for an essay that you write, there's no plan.
TILLY: There is.
Jasmine: There isn't! It's not fate. There is no plan. There's nothing. So there's no fate.

END

Analysis

Research Question 1

To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?

There are 997 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 94.0% of this conversation.**

Research Question 2

To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

Cumulative talk comprises 31 words i.e. 3.1% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 359 words i.e. 36.0% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX G

Conversation 7 - Sunny (non-practising Catholic) and Harambe (agnostic) [2] Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

- Sunny: Okay he was given a choice of taking the blue pill or the red pill -
- HARAMBE: Obviously we're going to take the red pill because you want to explore -
- Sunny: Yeah you would want to explore the world.
- HARAMBE: Not just wake up in your bed.
- Sunny: It's like I've seen it and I want to see more of it you know?
- HARAMBE: You've told me about this; I'm interested.
- Sunny: Yeah! It's not like you told me something interesting and I'm not going to be interested in it.
- HARAMBE: No I don't want to do that.
- Sunny: If it erased my memory then maybe because I mean like...
- HARAMBE: But it wouldn't; you would still want to explore more.
- Sunny: You're like oh I'm just in my bed now what happened?
- HARAMBE: What happened?
- Sunny: I think it's kind of weird like so...what if we're in a dream like that? What if we had to take a red pill?
- HARAMBE: This is confusing.
- Sunny: Yeah!
- HARAMBE: Because we didn't see the start of it or how we got there you know?
- Sunny: All because of a movie we're interested in knowing if we actually live in a - [184]
- HARAMBE: Or take like...which pill to take. Do I want to take this pill?
- Sunny: No!
- HARAMBE: Be like Ben... [Laughter] At least you have a pen and a toy.
- Sunny: Yeah like it's kind of weird to think that what if we're like that. What if you're actually bald...

HARAMBE: This is real! But what if?

Sunny: Yeah! Yeah! There is always an if you know?

HARAMBE: What if this isn't real, we're just living on -

Sunny: A simulation or something like that because on a computer...for all we know Mario could think he's a real person! But in reality we're controlling him. [44]

HARAMBE: Yeah!

Sunny: You know would be good though if we had basketball... What to keep in mind is though like...we feel pain maybe they don't in that simulation because it doesn't really show us -

HARAMBE: We know that you can eat and drink you know because he just ate that pill.

Sunny: What I don't get is why did he wake up bald? Did he shave his hair or something?

HARAMBE: Yeah because I thought his hair would be like...much more longer because he-

Sunny: He's been there.

HARAMBE: Like nearly all this -

Sunny: It looks like Freddie Krueger's testicles.

HARAMBE: Silly old dream. [Sounded like]

END

Analysis

Research Question 1

To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?

There are 379 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 60.1% of this conversation.**

Research Question 2

To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

Cumulative talk comprises 184 words i.e. 48.5% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 44 words i.e. 11.6% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX H

Conversation 8 - Jim (agnostic) & Tom (practising Catholic) [1] Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

TOM: Right I think what Calvin is trying to say is like how heaven...they're saying that heaven is about but then science is also saying that um...there is other stuff that we can't see but still exists. Stop laughing! Stop that! Right so what Calvin is trying to say I think is that Christians...stop it! Christians believe that um...heaven is all about us but people could doubt that, but then it does make sense that there is stuff like radio signals that we can't see but they're clearly...they clearly exist because we've got um...like you said with the TV getting turned on. Like we know it exists because it works. Um...stop laughing! No I'm not pausing it. But...I think...see the thing is see like...because he's saying...stop laughing its annoying me! Sorry! His argument is that stuff exists that we can't see um...so then why can't heaven be a possibility but I think kind of like you have the evidence of the radio...no one would believe the radio thing if the radio wasn't turning on and...playing so there's...I don't know what evidence there is to...believe other than I don't know whatever the Bible is saying which is like not...concrete evidence, it's not like that was ages ago. Um...if someone like demonstrates...you know how you can demonstrate with a radio, it gets turned on, then it goes...but then you can't really demonstrate with heaven like oh look at heaven sort of thing. So that's probably my opinion on that but do you agree with the judge's comment that he's making his point well? [220]

Jim: Well um...kind of but with like radio signals in heaven you can't really...go up to heaven and you know...I don't know what I'm trying to say here. Um...he is making a point like we can't see stuff but -

TOM: Yeah! It's still getting used and -

Jim: There are effects of it. You can't show the effects of heaven.

TOM: I agree with that part. Yeah I agree with that part, he was saying like stuff does exist that we can't see so it's basically making...saying like there is a possibility for that to happen and you know that's true because look at this example. Um...

Jim: How do we know? For example the radio, like we know that works so then like...but we also know that we can't see it so...by him saying...by him like basically referencing that it kind of...it opens the...the opportunity, the possibility that heaven is also real and we just can't see it. Um...some questions; heaven is all around us but we can't just see it. What do you think? I just don't see the...like - [178]

TOM: How can it be all around us?

Jim: Yeah how does that work like people in heaven can see us but we can't...or they can interact with us but we can't interact with them. Like there's no...I don't know the typical understanding is that you go up for heaven - [268]

TOM: Yeah it's in the sky not like around us.

Jim: Yeah! Yeah!

TOM: So...is that edging on like if you like horror movies where it's like there's...someone sitting in the corner sort of thing. If they can't interact with us what would be the point in this kind of life...it's all about us. [229]

Jim: We've got dark matter as well, it's all around us. Like the scientists like – [283]

TOM: 93% of the mass, the planet, the thingy...universe! [238]

Jim: I repeat scientists are unable to locate 96% of the known mass in the universe, what does it mean by known mass? Like...like what does there need to be this dark black matter if it doesn't do anything. It's not impacting on us. [311]

TOM: It's kind of like heaven though isn't it? It's not really impacting us they just think it's there.

Jim: But it definitely is there sort of thing.

TOM: Yeah!

Jim: It would be good to know about this dark matter then. If like...it must exist then I don't know about it but it must exist so then...I think basically the whole excerpt is just saying it's not proving it it's just...suggesting why can't it exist. And that's the only thing that I can really take from it I think. [324] Should we just ask to go onto the next one?

TOM: Hmm!

Jim: Unless there's anything else to say? Obviously this is from sort of court of law I think that's ridiculous. You could never argue, never argue like -

TOM: Would you take the Catholic church into court anyway?

Jim: Yeah well that's probably kind of -

TOM: But like for this reason.

Jim: In this fictional example.

TOM: Yeah! [Mumbling as he reads something out] Its just also...we've said it again but it's just...there is no demonstration of...you could demonstrate that that radio goes on but you can't demonstrate that...there is a soul or a heavenly person.

Jim: It could have been metaphorical though.

TOM: But I think this is saying it's not.

Jim: It depends how much you believe in it I guess. [380]

TOM: Do you think that...this is maybe going off, do you think that when you die you're still conscious, well when I say conscious you go to heaven and you're conscious that you're in heaven?

Jim: Nah!

TOM: You don't?

Jim: Nah!

TOM: Do you think it's like you're dreaming?

Jim: Nah!

TOM: So you just think like...I'm unconscious? [351]

Jim: Sleeping. Sleeping.

TOM: Just unconscious.

Jim: Yeah!

TOM: And not dreaming. I think that's what I feel like it would be because then it's also like who would judge that you go to heaven sort of thing? Like...you've done these good things or these bad things you go to heaven -

Jim: You can't say you can't go to heaven because how do they know it even exists?

TOM: Yeah I don't think there is any...[451] I don't think there is any demonstration of heaven so it's kind of an abstract idea that's ever been thought of. It was probably more like...ken like ISIS and you get your 7 virgins in heaven right its-

Jim: What?

TOM: Do you not know that so they say that if you do like a suicide bombing for Allah...actually I could be lying, but it's like...you will get your reward in heaven. Like it kind of sounds like it could have been born from we want you to do this which costs you your life but why would you do this? We'll make up heaven. [454]

Jim: Twist the rules as well.

TOM: That to me seems where it would have come from in the first place.

Jim: This thing Allah says that he can only take away life.

TOM: Do they? I don't know about that.

Jim: Yeah I done an essay on it.

TOM: Right we'll stop now. The one...to start off I think...um...the thing that they've all got in common was that its...it's from the past right, they've only got writings or stories.

Jim: No pictures?

TOM: Yeah no images...like maybe someone drew him but there's no like evidence that it would be what's the words admissible in court to convict something. Its only writing it's not um...like CCTV...that didn't exist but that's...what all these points have in common and therefore I don't think it's good enough. It's not a good enough argument.

Jim: Muslims they have the...portrait of Allah, they've got his face.[520]

TOM: Do they?

Jim: Yeah! They've got like pictures of him in like mosques and stuff. They've not got his face painted on.

TOM: Yeah that's what I'm saying you can't draw...even so that's not for it to be proven you need...actual...actual evidence. But no joke did I tell you when I was in Dundee this guy came up to me and said look at this, I am...this is going off topic right, this guy came up to me, I'm Bishop so and so look at this website. I went and looked at it when I got into the cafe and it was like supposedly...by the end of the conversation he said World War 3 has started. This is not like...not joking, World War 3 has begun but um...it was a video or whatever of some sort of light thing like shining down and then...but again that's like concrete evidence but you'd still just be like...are you having a laugh sort of thing? You would just completely ignore it.

Jim: Was he part of a cult or something? The End is Nigh?

TOM: It was that sort of thing when he said like um...World War 3 has begun um...right so...I would like to make 4 points [mumbles as he reads something out]. So that's what this thing was saying, with scientific evidence they found out the paper I don't know came from...that time ago. Um...which means there is truth that this document... was that long ago.

Jim: I wouldn't say the evidence is good. It doesn't prove anything where Jesus...it just says it's been made at the time that Jesus could have been alive.

TOM: Yeah it's also...it also would follow that like...I don't want to say trickery, like science wasn't that good, if...see its back in this time, right you could just basically...well not assume you could maybe theorise that like...you could trick someone quite easily back in the...like back that long ago um...it would be like oh it would be easier to commit a crime when there wasn't forensic evidence sort of thing. It's easier to trick people into believing that there is a greater

person when medicine wasn't as advanced sort of thing. And you could...do you know what I mean you could heal someone.

Jim: They give like some hallucinogenic drug or something.

TOM: Yeah stuff like that. Like...they wouldn't have known it back in the time but maybe would be more aware of it now sort of thing and information couldn't be passed as well so...do you know what I mean it could...yeah...so yeah do we both agree then that there's not fantastic evidence whatsoever. [641] Let's look through these things. Um...many appeared to be oblivious in the last 150 years of biblical scholarship that had shaped western Christianity, there seemed to be no recognition of the fact that [mumbles as reading something out].

Jim: Also being used to justify slavery.

TOM: Where is he saying that?

Jim: It's kind of like you're the servants of God; would it not be?

TOM: Again I don't know, I've never read the Bible so...I couldn't reference it or nothing.

Jim: What do you think of Jesus?

TOM: What like...the last question what are your views about Jesus?

Jim: Yeah!

TOM: Um...one thing that I have said recently...or thought to myself is that um...its God that...it could offend folk but uh...God is the perfect excuse really for why you can't prove God is there but he is there. It's like yeah he gave you it at his own freewill, God gave people freewill right, but he wants you to do good. But you have this choice if you want to do it or not. Um...so you know when it's like um...but why is there so much pain in the world sort of thing? It's because God gave you freewill so it's not God; it's you sort of thing. But then if God wants good then...do you know what I mean? That maybe doesn't make sense. Um...stuff like...one of the one things I know from the Bible I don't know if it's the Old or New Testament was this thing where there was a city that was so corrupt God turned everyone...no he didn't turn people to stone, he like burned the city and whoever looked back turned into stone. Um...God...why was that necessary, why couldn't he just stop them doing back sort of thing if he's got that power. Like...again not the greatest but its...it's a good excuse for why like things happen but you can't blame god sort of thing. Um...what else...there is another example, I think it came out of *Bruce Almighty*. [753] What are your views about Jesus?

Jim: Um...just lies I don't think it's real, just because...there is no evidence, yes there are some fragments of a book from that time but there's nothing about him.

TOM: Its all debatable.

Jim: There's just nothing. Yes you could probably get a time machine and figure it out but it's still going to take some time to actually make...I wonder how that works. [708]

TOM: Um...that's fine you've got all these other religions right and they've got their own evidence or whatever. Like...like what is it...Buddhism...it would be so much better if you were educated for the purposes of this, um...but like Buddhists like I think there was a man like that genuinely did exist that basically just preached...it's not...it's more like a way of life I think, and that's better evidence than Jesus to exist. Like...and again not half the time, I think a lot of the time you're born into religion like its...you're Catholic because -

Jim: My family is Catholic.

TOM: Yeah that will be the majority of...followers would be like...people won't have converted, they won't have made their mind up. Like...the majority, obviously people will convert but um...I think the majority it's just part of your...technically you could say its brainwashing do you know what I mean like...it's like going...people born on the other side of the world just believe certain things just because that's where they were born. Like so you could just argue that Christianity...and that's another thing like the reason that we kind of accept Christianity um...is because it's not got as ridiculous...what's the word like...cultures whereas like see that ISIS and that they're like...like stoning folk to death and that's extreme. And that's why we don't accept that but then stuff to do with Catholicism, like to do with sperm or whatever, and like embryos, like...because it's not as extreme as like...murdering someone that's why it's somewhat accepted but at the basis of it...at the route of it um...it's still kind of like...not a ridiculous idea, it's kind of like a...unlikely idea, it kind of seems like without evidence, without...well without like...with the same amount of evidence as plenty (?) of other religions. [1043]

Jim: I had a crazy idea when I was in church, it was like...what if like Catholicism is like a cult.

TOM: I swear that's something like *Angels and Demons*.

Jim: Yeah it doesn't sound very...

TOM: I remember Mr O'Brian said something like you know scientology?

Jim: Yeah!

TOM: This man set out to prove that religion is basically a business, I think...he went and...he wrote a book or whatever and then off of that the Church of Scientology came about which is not a multimillion...multibillion organisation sort of thing. It could...I've seen a documentary like Reggie Yates goes to Nigeria and there is this guy going about buying like crocodile skin shoes and that because he's got all these people believing in him.

Jim: Oh yeah Catholic...church and stuff?

TOM: Yeah basically like -

Jim: And they treat him like a celebrity?

TOM: Yeah! He profits from saying he's...from the position that he holds.

Jim: Yeah he like blesses people's underwear.

TOM: That's the one that...I saw. Yeah!

Jim: It's so weird!

TOM: Is there anything more to say?

Jim: The scientology thing, it was like someone was talking about lizards and stuff.

TOM: Yeah it something bizarre -

Jim: Tom Hanks believes in it. Not Tom Hanks no, Tom Cruise!

TOM: That's it! And it's like how can...we obviously see that as ridiculous and that...why not... if you're saying that there is people all about us like heaven and that, are we going to pause it unless we've got anything else to say? Views on Jesus? Maybe he existed in history but he wasn't a miracle worker.

Jim: No the scientology thing if they believe in like lizard people and stuff like that then what do they think of Christianity? If we think that scientology is weird – [792]

TOM: They must think that we're just...like...

Jim: The same views as well, like on high being, you know it's pretty weird. It doesn't exist we've got lizard people and stuff like that.

TOM: Okay! Let's end it then.

END

There are 2606 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 70.4% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 792 words i.e. 30.4% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 1043 words i.e. 40.0% of the above conversation

APPENDIX I

Conversation 9 – Y13 Jim (agnostic) & Tom (practising Catholic) [2]

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Jim: So what do you think of fate? Right...what its saying here, right do you believe in fate and it says no I don't like the idea, I'm not in control. I think probably fate and freewill conflict each other. So if you think that you can do what you want, you have the ability to make decisions that will impact on your life, then you can't really believe that fate exists I don't think. So no I think your actions are what your fate is it's not like someone has already decided that you're going to do this. Like...I think it would just be that...if I threw myself off a roof no one -

TOM: You'll die!

Jim: Yeah I will die basically! And then I suppose you could say oh its fate, it was already pre decided that he was going to jump off...but then that's not fate, that's just...do you know that this was going to happen? Like...

TOM: Can you predict the future? [163]

Jim: Yeah!

TOM: Your actions have consequences basically.

Jim: Yeah! So its...yeah you make your own decisions like of course...if you've got option 1, option 2, option 3, you go for option 1, like...then its...its stats. Like you take one route and then it gives you a different option. You couldn't say that fate is...I don't think that fate is...he had these 3 options but he was always going to go for A. I don't think that's fate.

TOM: Its more like...what you do is what you get out of it so fate is what you get out of the action.

Jim: Yeah! But it's not like a pre...it's not like a pre decided fact or whatever. I think.

TOM: You can still believe that if you want. [122]

Jim: Illusion. Matrix is a world that's been pulled over your eyes to blind you to the truth [...mumbles as reading]. Um...illusion like...it's our world isn't it? Like...that we see so...it doesn't really...like see all these people that live in that world and they're content, when I say content like they're not aware of being in... What like...what is wrong with that, if you like...believe that then...like you genuinely believe that that's your understanding, your knowledge of it then there is no issue with that being an illusion I don't think. What about you?

TOM: You know he said it bugs him like a splinter in his mind so that could be one way you know, you just can't be bothered with the illusion you just...want the truth and everything like that.

Jim: Alright yeah so its...you're saying that it's like...you've got a feeling that you just want to know the actual answer?

TOM: Yeah it's like...is God real? [298]

Jim: Yeah so it's not like oh it doesn't matter to me it's more like I'm intrigued so I want to find out? Is that what you're saying?

TOM: Yeah! [150]

Jim: Its stuff like as well, well see red pill versus blue pill its stuff...what was it red pill shows them the truth, like once you find out the truth it's kind of like I was speaking to Louis yesterday, I was like see Conor McGregor before his fight against Aldo he was like so pumped that he was so like...saying all these things do you know what I mean? I was saying at the time he had to have believed it, obviously say I was in a fight I could say that I'm going to dig your head in, like...you could say that but it's what do you genuinely believe? I think when you fight...if you were to find out the truth you can no longer genuinely believe...you can't have your own theory basically. You...

TOM: And your own freewill.

Jim: Even though you say like...even though you say...say I found out that God is real, even if I said God isn't real I know myself whenever I'm carrying myself around, like wherever I go I know that he is real so...once you find out the truth you can't...you can't stop believing in it even though you could express that it's not there if you know what I mean?

TOM: ...of freewill, not freewill fate.

Jim: Say that...I don't get that. [515]

TOM: Because you know like the Conor McGregor fight he said he was going to win and everything and if you know you are going to win. It's kind of like your fate, its telling you you're going to win.

Jim: Because obviously he didn't like go into the future and had a definitive answer but he believed so much that he was...that it was like...that gave him the confidence, that was part of the reason that he did win was that he was so...he genuinely believed that he was going to win.

TOM: Maybe took a red pill. Freewill you're a slave is that...

Jim: I think its saying like God has given us freewill. Then there are people like oh god they decided your fate.

TOM: Yeah! No I don't think that's -

Jim: Contradicting itself.

TOM: Yeah if they're saying like God has a plan...he has a plan for us all then what you're saying is you don't have freewill because whatever decision you make will result in the same um...consequence and therefore, what's your freewill?

Jim: Like...

TOM: The baptism thing is weird.

Jim: Yeah I didn't get that really. [334]

TOM: Is it saying that once you find out the truth um...you become reborn or something like that.

Jim: You become the new you. [537]

TOM: I didn't catch on to that. I didn't get it. Like a babe in the mother's womb he is then born into the real world.

Jim: It could be kind of like Kevin though, that could be that the real world.

TOM: The truth.

Jim: So you get accepted into heaven when you...us dying is us waking up.

TOM: Being reborn.

Jim: Getting accepted into heaven. I think...what was the other thing I was trying to say the red pills, the truth I don't know if that's supposed to be like the red pill is the Bible. The Bible is the evidence of the real world because I feel like that would be a weak metaphor. Mind we said last time...I don't think...we both don't think that the Bible is strong enough evidence to be like definitive. [466]

TOM: Jesus and stuff.

Jim: Yeah!

TOM: Are you hearing that yeah.

Jim: Yeah!

END

Analysis

There are 1038 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **on task for 96.6% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 466 words i.e. 44.9% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 537 words i.e. 51.7% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX J

Y13 Leya (practising Catholic) & Alexander (agnostic) Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

LEYA: Okay! So what do you think about this 11 dimensions?

ALEXANDER: Um...I partially agree.

LEYA: And why is that?

ALEXANDER: Because there is a lot of things that are not understood by humans.

LEYA: Yeah! I quite agree on that too, I think that's a fair point. Um...so...just because you can't see something doesn't mean it doesn't exist.

ALEXANDER: To an extent because something's are more realistic than others.

LEYA: Yeah! Yeah I kind of see where you're going because like there is some stuff that you can't see like a radio wave or a television signal but...

ALEXANDER: There's always proof for it.

LEYA: Yeah!

ALEXANDER: Just theoretically. [100]

LEYA: I guess the likes of things like religion like is there a God, is there a heaven, like you can't prove that.

ALEXANDER: There is no evidence in a 2,000 year old book. [32]

LEYA: Yeah! Um...so...I think it's like a weird kind of topic because I don't know like it says that there is like seven missing dimensions but it's not saying what they are. Like because you know like the first four are like...I dunno like 2D and then your 3D and then your time, and space and all that.

ALEXANDER: Scientists say that there is 96% of the world missing and we have no idea what it is which means we've only figured out 4%.

LEYA: Yeah but how do they know that? That's like...what I'm a bit confused about like how -

ALEXANDER: I think it's in order for life to be...the standard model of physics, in order for that to be correct there is 96% of the facts missing. But I suppose the standard model of physics changes almost every day.

LEYA: Yeah so there's sort of like a bit of uncertainty there like whether these theories are actually true because they change all the time.

ALEXANDER: Yeah!

LEYA: And I guess like with the likes of religion it's pretty much the same over like thousands of years so in a way it could be a bit more reliable to an extent really. [296] Yeah so do you think that this would help like you decide whether you think there is an afterlife?

ALEXANDER: No, because I think that to believe there is a creator and somebody who has gifted you life I just find it quite radical. [75]

LEYA: Okay! That's quite interesting! [300]

ALEXANDER: Although I do agree with the values of religion but I find the...the need to forgive sins and things like that...somebody needing to give you that forgiveness I just find it kind of off-putting.

LEYA: Do you think?

ALEXANDER: Yeah.

LEYA: See I quite like that. I kind of disagree there. I like forgiving people. I think it kind of makes...takes off like a burden instead of having to hold grudges forever.

ALEXANDER: I don't agree with holding grudges but I feel like praying to somebody to be forgiven -

LEYA: Yeah! No I don't...in a way...although like to an extent I do think there is some kind of higher power I don't necessarily like...I don't necessarily pray to this higher power in order to like improve myself, like I think I can do that of my own accord. [209]

ALEXANDER: Yeah!

LEYA: Like I don't think I need someone to do that for me but...yeah its quite interesting.

ALEXANDER: The idea that we carry original sin -

LEYA: I don't like that.

ALEXANDER: I don't like that fact because I think that we had nothing to do with that, I'm not Adam or Eve.

LEYA: Oh no I just...I can't bring myself to believe that story at all.

ALEXANDER: And that's the reason why there's so much evil from humans not like natural disasters and things but things that we do is because of Adam and Eve, I don't agree with that.

LEYA: I don't think it's because of Adam and Eve I think because of like the way you were brought up and also like the type of person you are that...and like the choices you make in life that determines whether you're sinful, or if you're innocent. I don't think it's got anything to do with Adam or Eve personally.

ALEXANDER: I feel like religion can be used as an excuse sometimes.

LEYA: Yeah!

ALEXANDER: Especially for sort of radical...religious believers.

LEYA: Definitely! Yeah just taking some contexts that...taking things they read and putting it out of context.

ALEXANDER: But that's a human thing to do twist things, manipulate it to suit yourself.

LEYA: Yeah like to your own personal agenda.

ALEXANDER: Uh huh. [512]

LEYA: It could be argued like if they think they're doing what their god wants of them does that make them right or wrong?

ALEXANDER: Well nobody knows because the religious books are years and years old, they don't suit this time anymore for example, churches have allowed gay marriage whereas 2,000 years ago when the Bible was written they would have been killed if they tried to do that. [277]

LEYA: I know I think it's like really controversial though because you have like all these famous quotes and that being like oh yeah well God forgives everyone, God loves everyone.

ALEXANDER: But you're still not allowed to do certain things.

LEYA: Yeah so I don't...yeah it's just like...

ALEXANDER: In the Old Testament as well God said that was it that Eve will worship Adam and all that sort of thing. He was basically saying that the man is more powerful.

LEYA: That she's inferior to him yeah and that's just not true at all in today's society.

ALEXANDER: No! The Bible needs to adapt which I think churches are trying to do but by doing that they're contradicting the thing that has the proof for them -

LEYA: The teachings yeah. Yeah.

ALEXANDER: So it's like a physicist changing a formula. [647]

LEYA: It's like saying yeah well gravity is old fashioned it doesn't exist anymore! We've got this new thing and what you've believed for like ages -

ALEXANDER: If you want to believe it you can't change it.

LEYA: Yeah! Yeah it's a tricky subject.[689] I think like a lot of it though is to be like a test of your faith really because it's so radical and so unbelievable that it is there to be a test and like...I think that's kind of what religion is about because there is no proof and that's kind of the point of it. [333]

ALEXANDER: I do feel that um...something's would probably be better left un...what's the word not found by scientists and things like that. I think the big question how was the world made and that sort of thing should just be speculated because I think people waste their life trying to find that answer.

LEYA: I think instead of worrying too much about all these things that happened in the past people should just focus on making the world a better place in the future. That's like my viewpoint on all of this.

ALEXANDER: I feel like uh...you should enjoy life more rather than trying to answer questions that maybe will never ever be answered because every year we get further and further away from when the world started. It's going to be even harder.

LEYA: You can see like people obviously do get enjoyment and satisfaction out of like learning and finding out information about this but it's almost like...like its highly improbable that its ever going to...like there is a reason why these haven't been answered for ages.

ALEXANDER: I feel like curiosity is one of our biggest downfalls but also one of our biggest strong points as well.

LEYA: Uh huh yeah because I guess like a lot of the discoveries that have been made like people didn't think they were true and then they have been proven so I guess there is that, and that kind of motivates people to keep searching. Searching for answers.

ALEXANDER: So maybe they will find the fifth and then the sixth dimension I don't know.

LEYA: Maybe! Or maybe it will just be one of the world's big mysteries!

ALEXANDER: Again! [960]

LEYA: Yeah! Do you think this has got something to do with ghosts? Like I don't know, like the ninth dimension is like dead people? [357]

ALEXANDER: Possibly!

LEYA: Like...that's quite interesting! [965]

ALEXANDER: Stephen Hawking says that there could be parallel universes so there could be another universe which is sort of the same as ours but I could be a millionaire in it or – [389]

LEYA: That's quite cool! I think like the coincidence of there being like a universe that is pretty much an exact replica but people's life situations are just slightly different, I think the coincidence of that happening is just so like tiny.

ALEXANDER: But there is theory behind it and it does actually pan out, it's like...if I were to go to Mars at the speed of light and then come back or even further sorry not Mars, that's quite close, if I was to go like round the universe at the speed of light and it would take me 7 years, I would come back and you would be 14 years older but I'd only be 7 years older. So it's almost like I've...changed time.

LEYA: Oh that is interesting!

ALEXANDER: Its to do with the speed of light and things like that. [1105]

Researcher: Are you still talking or are you finished? I'll come back.

LEYA: Alright!

Researcher: I've got something else for you to talk about.

LEYA: Okay!

Researcher: If you're finished?

ALEXANDER: Yeah!

LEYA: Yeah we've kind of talked -

END

Analysis

Research Question 1

To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?

There are 1503 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 99.4% of this conversation.**

Research Question 2

To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

Cumulative talk comprises 1105 words i.e. 73.5% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 389 words i.e. 25.9% of the above conversation.

Appendix K
Y13 Apostle High Lucy & Keira (both agnostic)
Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Lucy: My name is Lucy!

KEIRA: My name is Keira!

Lucy: What point do you think Calvin is trying to make?

KEIRA: I think what he's trying to say is that there's many things around us that even though we may not see them they still exist. [25]

Lucy: Yeah I agree with you there. Yeah! Because like it states you can't exactly see like television signals, or radio signals, there must be things around us that we can't actually see.

KEIRA: I think it's quite clever actually because it makes you think that does heaven really exist?

Lucy: It makes you like wonder as well like what actually is around you because -

KEIRA: That you can't see.

Lucy: Even though like scientists and their technology is like advanced and everything.

KEIRA: They don't know everything.

Lucy: They don't know everything. There is still more to be learnt and found.

KEIRA: Yeah! [97] Do you agree with the judge's comments why or why not?

Lucy: I don't really...I think the judge is like making good points like he's like taking into account what Calvin is saying without doubting him he's giving him the benefit of the doubt almost. [69]

KEIRA: Yeah the chief prosecutor just thinks what he's saying is fabricated and made up on the spot type of thing. And he doesn't understand what he's talking about yet it looks like he's looked into it with a lot of depth and this is what he's interested in.

Lucy: It looks like the chief is being like narrow minded as well he's not taking into account what is trying to be conveyed because Calvin is making like strong points and it does make you think whereas like the chief is just like being narrow minded and not taking into account what he's saying.

KEIRA: Because it just seems that he believes only in the things that he can sense whereas Calvin is more open minded towards stuff and he sees more than just the things that he can obviously sense.

Lucy: Yeah it's like he's willing to like not branch out but you know what I mean like he's willing to take into account like other possibilities.

KEIRA: Like he's not even saying that you need to be like religious to believe in or like a scientist to believe in this type of thing. Like because to have related it to heaven like we can't see heaven but there are things in the Bible that state that it's all around us. Like it's like we can't see God but there are still people that believe in him and that he...is...looking on everyone really.

Lucy: Yeah! Some Christians think that heaven is all around us but we just can't see it, what do you think? [356]

KEIRA: I personally don't...I don't necessarily like have a view, like a proper view on religion like because I don't know, like I don't have an opinion, I don't know whether I believe in it or not. I believe there's something.

Lucy: Yeah I do think there's something. I don't think it's like what its described to be like its...I don't think it's like -

KEIRA: I think the Bible is metaphorical like I don't think -

Lucy: Its literal.

KEIRA: Yeah! I think it's more metaphorical.

Lucy: I don't think the Bible is there to be taken literally though. I think it's just there to be -

KEIRA: Like used as a guide.

Lucy: Yeah like teachings and you choose what you want to like follow and believe in but not take it to the full extent as to what it says because when it was written it was written thousands and thousands and thousands of years ago.

KEIRA: And like society has changed over the years.

Lucy: Yeah like we're living in the modern world so -

KEIRA: Obviously things have like developed and are more advanced.

Lucy: Because the teachings and that they probably don't...are not relevant to like today's society.

KEIRA: Yeah! [509]

Lucy: Whereas like some of the quotes in the Bible you can't...use them today like they are metaphorical and they are easy to like interpret into like modern day society events.

KEIRA: Yeah you just have to adjust it.

Lucy: You have to take into account that these were like written thousands of years ago so you don't...so things have changed like nothing is the same, like everything is constantly like becoming more advanced -

KEIRA: Developing and changing.

Lucy: And stuff.

KEIRA: Yeah!

Lucy: But like I don't...have an issue with Christians believing that heaven is all around us because that's their opinion, like but my opinion is I don't -

KEIRA: Right now you don't.

Lucy: Yeah! Like I know there must be something but I don't -

KEIRA: I'd like to believe that there is something like I don't...I don't want to die and that to be it like I don't...I'm not sure like I think it's more calming to believe that when you die that that's not it and you're not just...you're reincarnated or something but like you're...sort of...there is like...

Lucy: An afterlife as such yeah because I think for some people that brings like comfort as well to know that that's not necessarily the end like once your time is up.

KEIRA: And gives them purpose.

Lucy: Yeah! It might bring them like comfort as well because they might believe they're going to see like past relatives or...like something along those lines.

KEIRA: Yeah!

Lucy: But personally I don't really know yet about -

KEIRA: I don't have...yeah a belief, like a set in stone belief that...but that can always change.

Lucy: Like you know some Christians believe that it's like...when you die you're in a waiting bit before you get decided. [793]

KEIRA: Is that not in Islam?

Lucy: No I think that's in Christianity, it's like the...

KEIRA: Because in Islam you um...have the Day of Judgement. [92]

Lucy: Yeah so does Christians. Yeah Christians have that as well. [803]

KEIRA: Yeah um...

Lucy: But yeah...

KEIRA: I think that's all if you're done?

Lucy: Yeah that's fine!

END

Analysis

There are 965 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 94.0% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 803 words i.e. 83.2% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 92 words i.e. 9.5% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX L

Y13 Lucy & Keira & Alexander (all agnostic)

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

ALEXANDER: Alright ladies and gentlemen.

F: Okay!

ALEXANDER: I don't believe in God but I believe in Jesus.

F: I believe there is a figure like Jesus, like back when the Bible was written; but I think God is more metaphorical than he is anything else. Like he's taken as a teaching rather than a real figure.

F: I think the whole thing is a metaphor really; like everything to do with the Bible I think is like metaphorical. I don't think any of its real. [28]

ALEXANDER: He made the blind man see which to me makes me think that he made the blind man see God. [68]

F: Yeah!

F: Yeah! Yeah!

F: Yeah! It's actually a clever point.

F: And like the parable like the one about Lazarus and the rich man. I think that's like...can be taken and interpreted into like modern day because there are loads of selfish people out there and like I believe in karma so I believe if someone is like cruel to someone then -

F: They receive it back.

F: Yeah they receive it back, it doesn't matter like when or how or where but they will receive it back at one point. [64]

F: I think the whole thing about like Jesus and his followers and stuff is a lot similar to like say like figures like Hitler and stuff like that because like they held like - [154]

ALEXANDER: They were good public speakers.

F: Yeah they were like...there was something in the way that they spoke and how they said things that they like made or influenced the way people thought and like I don't know he was -

ALEXANDER: Yeah but they could play...well not play mind games in a bad way as such but Jesus he would make people -

F: Believe in God, that there is –

ALEXANDER: Believe in God, that there is a God.

F: Yeah! [141]

F: Can't that be classed as being manipulative though?

ALEXANDER: Yeah but -

F: In a way.

ALEXANDER: In a way but I don't think he was meaning any harm. [180]

F: Yeah.

F: I suppose.

ALEXANDER: I think he was a very good public speaker and I think that he managed to win -

F: He had a lot of influence. [168]

ALEXANDER: And posed a threat to people higher up at the time. [191]

F: Yeah because they obviously weren't listening to the higher up people.

ALEXANDER: Well they said it in the Bible; Herod wasn't even worried about the fact that Jesus was trying to make people change religion or believe in a god. He was more worried about him becoming the King of Palestine.

F: Uh huh.

ALEXANDER: So maybe he just posed a threat to the Romans but then they ended up worshipping him in the end.

F: Uh huh. They were like threatened about their leadership, like because he was such an influence on like the Jews at the time they might have thought that he was going to come and like overthrow them; which is why they had so much hatred towards him and wanted to get rid of him. [294]

ALEXANDER: And I don't believe he rose. [197]

F: No! But you can kind of see like...see in modern day society like when they feel threatened like they just try and get rid of the problem. Like it's still a common like factor in society that it does still happen like -

ALEXANDER: Well in sort of like recent history like JFK got assassinated because he wanted to make a difference -

F: Martin Luther King!

ALEXANDER: Martin Luther King!

F: Even like when we learning psychology like the black protests and that they were trying to like...get rid of blacks and treated them like they were nothing, they were just trying to -

F: Yeah like they were a different species.

F: Yeah!

ALEXANDER: Well Donald Trump for example has slated everything Obama has ever done because he's tried to make a change.

F: Yeah.

F: Uh huh.

F: Yeah.

ALEXANDER: Which is ridiculous but that's what's happened for the past 2000 years. [438]

F: But in that clip that we watched yesterday in psychology there was a woman that she was like...she was a school teacher and she was like one of my like pupils that was black fell over and she didn't expect her to have pink underneath her skin! Like she thought it was going to be black, she was expecting her to be like...not human because of the colour of her skin.

F: And you would have thought since she was a teacher she wouldn't have such a narrow mind but it just goes to show just because of someone's status like -

ALEXANDER: Well police officers have been shooting black people because they're black.

F: Just because they're black.

F: But then you could also say everyone is branding police officers as all the same, that they're racist. That's the same with whites as well like the whole thing with...between like white people and black people. Like everyone that is white is seen as a racist or everyone that's black -

F: Is seen as like a criminal.

F: Is seen as a criminal or someone that does wrong, or someone that's a cheat, a liar, its...like...everyone is just so like...

F: Narrow minded.

F: And they just put people into categories even though they don't know the person.

ALEXANDER: But I think that um...the people...especially in the black community the word...I'm not going to say it the 'N' word.

F: Yeah!

ALEXANDER: Is thrown about as a casual greeting -

F: Yeah but if a white person was to throw it at them -

ALEXANDER: If a white person was to use that they would get into trouble but that word has been fought for, for the past god knows how long. Like so many people have died over that word and they just use it -

F: Like they relate it to slavery and stuff in their like communities' type of thing; it's like a -

ALEXANDER: Well it comes from the word negro.

F: Yeah.

ALEXANDER: Which means black in a different language but it's just...the fact that they use that word to greet their friends is...I think that's ridiculous.

F: Because it's just influencing white people especially young -

ALEXANDER: Its a trigger for violence.

F: Younger people to just use it as something -

ALEXANDER: And it's also used in the media in rap music and that so it almost becomes normal.

F: Its almost like its provoked like...if they're rapping about it or like -

F: And they know that they're doing it though.

F: People are going to assume that it's okay. Like even white people are starting to do it.

F: Yeah!

F: Like it's just becoming normal and it shouldn't because it's not a word that you should associate with being friends with someone like it was...

F: Its degrading, it's a degrading word.

ALEXANDER: Yeah.

F: Like there are some black people that don't use it at all and they find it really offensive but then there are other people that are...they find it offensive if white people call them it but they're okay to use it between their like friends or their groups of people that they are close with.

ALEXANDER: Its constantly used in mainstream rap music and that...like children -

F: Are being influenced.

ALEXANDER: Are being influenced by that. I seen a video on Face Book the other day of a kid and his mum found his Spotify playlist -

F: I saw that!

ALEXANDER: And it was just a load of rap music, like demonic rap music.

F: Like explicit stuff.

ALEXANDER: And he was like 10 and he was listening to it!

F: And I've seen a video...I've seen a video on Face Book of a little boy with his mother and his mum is like encouraging him to be racist.

ALEXANDER: Yeah!

F: Oh I've seen that and they're in the car and she's what are they? And then he starts shouting it.

F: Like it's scary how much influence parents have on their children when they have such a negative like viewpoint and things.

ALEXANDER: But then you look at the black church and the sort of the gospel preaching and you see them and they would never use that word.

F: Yeah!

F: In comparison to like Catholic churches in the UK like white...not white but you know what I mean like -

F: Mostly white communities.

F: Yeah! They're so...they're not like excited over it, they're not like enthusiastic over it, they're more like they just want to put the point across. Whereas like the gospel churches in America and that they're more...they want to interact.

ALEXANDER: Involved.

F: They want to make people -

F: I also saw this other video about this man that was like...it must have been like recent but there was these like kids that were lining up to like go see this Santa in a shopping centre or whatever -

ALEXANDER: Yeah I saw that and he tells -

F: And he was a pastor and he was going passed them and he was shouting saying you're lying to your children, you're making them believe in this when it's not true. You should be preaching the word of Jesus and all this sort of stuff and honestly like – [286]

ALEXANDER: Saying it's too commercial.

F: I don't think it's fair that you have to take away -

ALEXANDER: But at the end of the day Jesus and God's mission is to make people happy, and Santa and Christmas that makes children happy whether its commercial or not.

F: Yeah!

ALEXANDER: It's a time of the year where family comes together.

F: Like that other wee boy that passed away like -

F: Maybe Santa is like a metaphor because -

F: St Nick!

F: God like...isn't Jesus meant to be a gift from God like because he's the god and Santa provides gifts so maybe that's seen as like a metaphor.

ALEXANDER: Obviously it originated from religion. [553]

F: Yeah!

ALEXANDER: St Nicholas! I can't remember who he was the patron saint of.

F: He left presents on doorsteps or something for like deprived people.

ALEXANDER: Yeah he went around to the people who were poor to sort of lighten up that time of year because obviously its freezing outside, they had no heating and food, so he went around and helped people.

F: Yeah!

ALEXANDER: Which I mean...giving people happiness and gifting and whatever else that's the correct thing to do.

F: Yeah!

F: Uh huh. Yeah.

ALEXANDER: But then you get radical Christian groups like the KKK whose religion is an excuse -

F: And skin colour. [654]

ALEXANDER: And hate all the black people, but they use God, they say God doesn't like...you are the evil in the world and all that sort of thing.

F: Yeah but God is apparently meant to be the one that accepts everyone like...because he's omnibenevolent, he's all loving.

ALEXANDER: But then also God has to forgive the people who have done that but at the end of the day they have to ask for that forgiveness but they think they're doing it right but then you could also look at, well if that's how they've taken the bible then that's how they've taken the Bible. That's how it looks to them.

F: Yeah that's their own like...their own right.

ALEXANDER: They've just taken it a different way to mainstream religion. [779]

F: There's a tutor group in here in a bit.

ALEXANDER: Thanks for listening.

END

Analysis

Research Question 1

To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?

There are 1832 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 58.1% of this conversation.**

Research Question 2

To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

Cumulative talk comprises 779 words i.e. 42.5% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 286 words i.e. 15.6% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX M

Y13 A-level Prentice & Lily 1 (both practising Catholics)

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

PRENTICE: So I believe that the evidence is good about Jesus because as it says in point one historical findings suggest that the New Testament was written shortly after the events took place; and this means that there wouldn't have been a lot of time for the story to get muddled up and mixed up and it would have been a true event.

LILY: I agree; but these accounts of what happened could be very biased. They were written by individual people, they weren't reviewed by anyone and they were a matter of opinion that could have been like Chinese Whispers where the story gets changed as its passed on. And maybe it wasn't written on first account, we have no evidence that those people were there at the time of these events.

PRENTICE: That is true however, it says...as it says in point four, even the enemies of Jesus admit that he was a powerful teacher and a miracle worker; so like you said if it was a game of Chinese Whispers then it would be his supporters making him sound more powerful than he was. However, as it says, even his enemies were shocked and had to express the power of Jesus.

LILY: I agree that if the enemies did agree that it must have been true. However, we still don't have evidence of who these people were. We're not always going to believe the Bible, that these people didn't like Jesus. The Bible has been proved wrong on other occasions where science has proven it wrong about creation and about other things like that. It's been proved wrong on many other occasions for other accounts, so why should we believe it for the resurrection?

PRENTICE: You see, you say that the Bible has been predicted wrong however, in the exhibit given to me now it says that in 1994 papyrologists in Germany found 3 scraps belonging to the College at Oxford; and basically to cut a long story short it was the scraps from Matthew's Gospel. And it has been proved that it provides the first material evidence of the gospel from St Matthew; and an eyewitness account written by contemporaries of Christ which clearly shows that that is evidence that the Bible did exist.

LILY: I think that's a good point. The Bible obviously did exist, we've got the Bible now; but there is no proof that Matthew was a close accomplice of Jesus is there? He may have written this but who's to say that he's not just a fantasist that made up some stories and everybody else joined in; and that Jesus was just a normal man and the resurrection is just a fantasy story. There is no physical evidence apart from the writings of individuals that have no evidence to back them up.

PRENTICE: That's a fair point [36] however, that's where faith comes in and I find it hard to believe that this whole story, the whole Bible, every story in the Bible there are thousands of stories, countless chapters, I just can't believe that this was all someone...someone made it up and the whole faith that's been going

on for 2,000 years came from one person saying oh let's make this up and it just went from there. I believe it has to be real.

LILY: I believe it's real as well. However, I do sometimes doubt it because these people may have just been looking for a faith because they were scared of death. They were scared of the end of their lives and they wanted to look for something that showed them that the end wasn't really the end. If they created a fantasy that allowed people to live without fear of death and people have believed that to this day, just...mainly some people just because they were scared of dying and not existing anymore they wanted to believe in Jesus resurrection and the fact that we will live in heaven.

PRENTICE: You see whenever people say that I just think they're depressing people that don't want to believe in anything because I believe that we first got the idea of going to heaven and God through religious experiences such as mystical experiences where um...where...say like the first known religious experience was when the Angel Gabriel came to Mary and came to Joseph and told Mary...told them Mary was pregnant and to stay with her. How do we know that instead of...instead of people saying it's something to go with in a time of need, how do we not know that it's actually just a religious experience that has caused people to believe in life after death.

LILY: Um...religious experience has never been proved. Sometimes it is individual and those people are believed because obviously it's an individual account and they have no proof of it. And yeah obviously sometimes its corporate and other people know about it as well; but a corporate experience is criticised by saying that it may just be people feeling peer pressure to agree with what happened and the resurrection is a form of corporate experience where people may have just agreed because they felt peer pressure from other people to say that it happened when it might not have. They just wanted to kind of jump on the bandwagon and agree that that event happened because other people said it did.

PRENTICE: Fair enough but would you agree that a miracle is a type of religious experience?

LILY: A miracle is a type of religious experience but again there is little evidence of that. Yes – [74]

PRENTICE: No but it has been proved, many miracles have been proved by scientists that have looked at the situation for 2 plus years, and have said that there is *no* other explanation for it. And therefore where else would that miracle have come from if it wasn't Jesus, or God, or some type of faith?

LILY: Because we haven't discovered every single scientific explanation there is in the world yet. We can't. Yeah we can't fully explain creation. Scientists have some theories of how it came about; but science isn't fully developed and who's to say that in 10 years, 50 years, 100 years we won't find a scientific explanation for things that we previously called miracles. Things that happened at Lourdes that have been named miracles. Who's to say that in a few years' time they

won't discover a reason for that. We can't just right now say oh we haven't got a reason, let's put it down to religion because that's just a get out clause.

PRENTICE: I don't believe it is because think back to the start of man, they would have believed in God; but where would they have come up with that idea?

LILY: Just a very inventive mind.

PRENTICE: We have got more intelligent over the years and right now if there was no...I didn't get brought up in the background of God, no one in the world knew about God, I wouldn't be able to sit here and think of this whole Bible story by myself and think of this whole God by myself. I wouldn't be able to make that up even if I had people with me which then I believe that no one else would be able to make it up and therefore, how would someone...there must have been an experience or something like Jesus' resurrection for the whole story to have come about. It couldn't have just been someone's imagination.

LILY: No I disagree because how do you believe that fantasy stories, films, books, everything that is a fantasy has ever come about? Do you think J K Rowling had an experience with a wizard that set a spell to come up with *Harry Potter*? That's what you're saying about God, is that somebody must have experienced that to create it in their mind; but the greatest storytellers just come up with a story to tell to create a fantasy for people to follow.

PRENTICE: No you see that's different because...things like *Harry Potter* are actual fantasies and people know that it's a fantasy because they know that it's not possible. Whereas no one has an explanation for God, no one knows if God is real or not. No one can neither prove that God is real or not prove that God is real. It's just...it is...one of the only things on earth that can be neither explained or not explained and just from that alone the power of the story of Jesus and of God should just...make people believe that it was real.

LILY: I agree that we can't explain it; but who's to say that at the time that the Bible was written, that people in society didn't just believe that it was a fantasy. People could have believed that and now its...elaborated into one of the greatest faiths there is and now we take it very seriously, but back then it could have been mocked fantasy like any film is now. And...who's to say that was just a fantasy and now it's not. We don't have proof for it always being a true story that everybody had faith in and everybody believed in. So...it says that people agreed with it but this is still a very small proportion of the world. Just a few people that lived at that time with those people, and back to my earlier point that could have just been peer pressure.

PRENTICE: That's true; [83] but could it not be true that maybe other religions such as Muslims and Jews at the time as Catholicism was coming about from Jesus resurrecting, they didn't want to know that...they didn't want to come to terms with the fact that their religion was false, and so they came up with all these...devil's advocate sort of points to make people not believe in the...the life of Jesus and the resurrection so that they can still believe in their own God.

LILY: Yeah I agree people wanted to be in denial and create their own faith; but there are so many different faiths in this world that we believe in one God, we believe in the resurrection; other people believe in multiple gods and they believe in different people, and there must have been somewhere along the line where the stories have mixed, where something...somebody has to be wrong. We can't all be right. We believe in the resurrection but other people don't and who's to say that we're right over them? Yeah there is accounts of it but they also have accounts in their own faith. Other people don't read the Bible; they read other books that they believe to be word for word true. How do we know that we're the ones that are right?

PRENTICE: That's the thing we don't know that we're the ones that are right. [110]

END

Analysis

Research Question 1

To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?

There are 1809 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 96.6% of this conversation.**

Research Question 2

To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

Cumulative talk comprises 110 words i.e. 6.1% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 1637 words i.e. 90.5% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX N

Y13 A-level James & Eileen (both atheist)

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

EILEEN: I don't think it proves anything.

JAMES: No I don't think it can prove that miracles and Jesus rose from the dead.

EILEEN: Yeah I'm not sure if I don't believe in... I think maybe there was someone called Jesus who did a lot of good things, I think he probably did exist but I'm not convinced by him rising from the dead and other such miracles.

JAMES: I mean it's kind of like he's saying look at this evidence but not really offering any evidence.

EILEEN: Yeah! [43]

JAMES: You can say oh here's some evidence from a book, I mean obviously...it says historical findings, in scriptures and things, but that isn't historical documents really. It's kind of written to present something, to present an account of what they want to believe.

EILEEN: I don't understand why he's using the fact that they were written close to the time that the events took place as a...like a form of proof. [105]

JAMES: I mean the Egyptians writing in Ancient Egypt, it doesn't mean their gods are real.

EILEEN: Yeah exactly! [59]

JAMES: They've got hieroglyphics.

EILEEN: What are your views about Jesus?

JAMES: I dunno I mean like you've said um...about...there could have been someone there you know, I think all good stories have a basis in something. But whether that...its exaggerated. Miracles can just mean some good things, its exaggerated from what actually happened. Yeah I don't know I mean the actual...the purpose of Jesus is to...as a character is to be a religious symbol that people can look at and take inspiration from and I suppose in that, it gives hope and gives that sort of inspiration to people. And you know whether or not he's real doesn't have to mean that you don't take inspiration from that. People take inspiration from book characters, film characters, and it's still useful, it can still have a purpose.

EILEEN: Yeah and I know we're talking about the New Testament here, and we're explicitly talking about Jesus, but if we go back to the Old Testament you've got huge problems with this God who seems arbitrary. [266]

JAMES: Is contradictory.

EILEEN: Yeah!

JAMES: It's kind of a force that's...I dunno... [70]

EILEEN: Um...I mean I know I sound very cynical now, but where's the hard evidence that it was the enemies of Jesus who were writing this, do you know what I mean, where...I know that is being really cynical but... [305]

JAMES: Yeah I mean anyone could have wrote this and passed it off. Um...you can...if you want a biased account of something you can do that, especially in this time. I don't imagine that many people were reading and writing. It's not that easy to make that account. Yeah I dunno' I think...like I say religion has a source of inspiration for life um...then obviously when it gets to the point of you know killing people -

EILEEN: Yeah I think religion has done more damage than it has good.

JAMES: Yeah! If it was just individual...if individuals just practiced their religion and...to a greater extent many do, but then you get you know like the crusades, I think often history it's been used as an excuse to get power.

EILEEN: Yeah! Yeah definitely! I think that's a lot of what the Bible is centred around. Its people - purpose and it helps people um...and I think you know in my personal opinion I think it would be nice to believe in something like that. In the sense that it gives you that hope but I can't see it. So...while its misleading to people it's good for people to believe that if it gives them hope. If that's where they find that

JAMES: You can manipulate people with it.

EILEEN: Yeah exactly!

JAMES: Because people are afraid, afraid of God, afraid of the devil, afraid of hell then they will listen and all leaders have to do is make the point that if you don't follow us... God and then you can sort of amount... your power then.

EILEEN: If you just read the Old Testament you'd be scared of that God.

JAMES: Yeah!

EILEEN: Because really really... properly evil.

JAMES: I think that's even the God...like up until 200 years ago that's still sort of the God that they'd present, the God of... not the God of love. I mean it is now. Um...and obviously now we don't have many religious wars as such and I mean obviously you've got terrorism but that's not really... [266]

EILEEN: Not so much because people aren't really practicing a religion are they?
[317]

JAMES: Yeah! Um...but I mean yeah...I mean I suppose now you could say that its...corruption has just moved on obviously because religion is not so much of an excuse anymore.

EILEEN: Yeah! Maybe that has always been the issue, I think people just use religion as...is that what...witness going on Palestine, I don't know the exact logistics of it but...

JAMES: Its the excuse.

EILEEN: It's all about land isn't it, it's all about power.

JAMES: Yeah people would use that, use anything that works, religion worked...now not so much but it's still...people will still um...mount behind it, like with the terrorism, people particularly in this country, worry...that they should be worried about Muslims and then...there has been some sort of reports saying that Christianity is actually on the increase really because of people uniting to be against the Muslims. Which isn't obviously the way...

EILEEN: That you're supposed to do it! Yeah because it just creates groups doesn't it?

JAMES: Yeah divisions.

EILEEN: Yeah it's like it just creates divisions.

JAMES: I think that people...I think almost like division in a way. [440]

EILEEN: People like having a source of identity don't they? [326]

JAMES: I mean it sounds a bit sort of...I don't know if it sounds silly but like we like division because it almost gives us something to do. Like if there's no conflict then what is there?

EILEEN: Yeah has there ever been a time throughout history where there hasn't been a conflict?

JAMES: Yeah we like...

EILEEN: Of some sort. We do we love it. It's human nature. [505]

JAMES: That's why America has just elected Trump!

EILEEN: Yes!

JAMES: To shake things up. They don't like how it's going. Brexit, to shake things up. I mean that...obviously that's not...that's not a religious thing but it's

the same kind of...the same reason why people are willing to fight and die for God, in the name of God. Um...so... [529]

EILEEN: Slightly off topic! Marginally! We drifted there. Um...

JAMES: Yeah people do rely on...they cite this kind of evidence, but it's not really evidence. And I know it might be a bit sort of um...patronising and atheist to say you're just silly... But at the same time you've really got to think because a lot of people...well not a lot, some religious people will just take what they've read in the Bible and you know just...go with it completely. Like um...the interpretation that it gave people on evil and that kind of thing, like there's not an openness to change there. Whereas the world itself and nature proves – [375]

EILEEN: Yeah that's the problem because you go into the New Testament and you read some of St Paul's letters, the women are completely inferior to men.

JAMES: Yeah.

EILEEN: And that's not how we live right now is it?

JAMES: No!

EILEEN: I hope not! [570]

JAMES: If you look at like...you know the species, like the lioness does the hunting and everything, like its...its...as you say its arbitrary to um...to make these rules and I think that was...what the Bible was written for at the time. To sort of solidify the rules, the status quo of what was happening which included women being subservient. Gays not at the time. That's what it is like it's that control of things to make people... follow their version of how things should be. That moves on and obviously from today from how...the majority of people in the West anyway would back behind women's rights, gay rights, right to choose, that kind of thing. It just shows that you know we are nature as people but we're not...if we disagree with that then really is the Bible going against the natural order of things by trying to give you a different order of how it should be? [532]

EILEEN: Yeah the Bible can't...it's a text that's there it can't...I mean I know people say the big message is that God loves you, but God constantly is condemning things... people does God love them do you know what I mean? The Bible is not...able to move with the times.

JAMES: I think it's a comforting thing because change is a difficult thing for people-

EILEEN: It's just an excuse for –

JAMES: Who don't like change.

EILEEN: People to um... [645]

JAMES: Yeah to get their hatred...

EILEEN: Solidify is the wrong word but their opinions.

JAMES: Yeah people like an outlet for that and yeah I think we're kind of inclined a little bit to throughout history there has been religion, Christianity, Greek gods, Roman gods, Egyptian gods, like pagans, we've always...[694] I think part of the reason for that is because we...as humans we know that we're going to die so we know that life is going to end but our primal instinct is to survive and we need which is what the afterlife is so I question if there wasn't really an afterlife, that wasn't in the belief of god would people really be religious? [597]

EILEEN: Because it's comforting isn't it?

JAMES: Yeah.

EILEEN: The idea that you've got 70-80 years here, that's at the end. I suppose it's a motive to be a good person in this life, and I suppose that's the way it was for authority figures you know if they behave, there was a reward at the end of it.

JAMES: Yeah, its using that belief as well to abuse people, because they do want to...people want to believe in this, they want to...they want to be comforted and if leaders kind of use that and say you know comfort is doing this, comfort will be going to war and winning then that's bad. Um...but...yeah its complicated.

EILEEN: It's all very complicated. [810]

JAMES: We don't know if there's anything after the afterlife. [606]

EILEEN: I mean there are people who've had near death experiences obviously a lot of accounts that they see these bright white lights; but like a lot of the time its explained by science.

JAMES: I mean it's possible that there is more life in the sense that we can't say there isn't but at the same time we can't prove it, we shouldn't be relying on it. Like I keep saying the Egyptians but like if you look at them, they spent their whole lives building pyramids for the afterlife, building things for that. They didn't think about their own life here because yeah okay you might...obviously no one can prove that there is an afterlife but I don't think you should be um...sort of obsessed with that and worrying about life on earth. I suppose a belief in the afterlife and wanting to get there means that people try and act better in this life.

EILEEN: But you know that man who walked the Nile? I can't remember anyway, he went to Mexico and he went scuba diving and underneath in the sea there were loads of scores of people who had sacrificed themselves to the gods thinking...obviously this isn't recent, thousands of years ago, but these people honestly believed that was the way to get to the afterlife. [1028]

JAMES: Yeah! Yeah they had some crazy ideas. But like...you know...how we say that those ideas are crazy and these ideas now if people are still basically doing what they want for it.

EILEEN: In 100 years' time they'll be like it was absolutely crazy thing, there was an afterlife, because science will probably be able to prove there isn't one. [1087]

JAMES: I mean yeah its...it's a difficult thing I mean there are questions in science obviously that you can't...you won't be able to answer for a long time if ever. Why do we exist? What happened before the big bang; was it just a continuous series of events? Maybe there was...maybe the Big Bang um...you know...some scientists say that at the end of the Universe it shrinks back and then another Big Bang happens. Well if it shrinks back into oblivion, so imagine it shrinks back into nothingness so it...the universe is sort of blown out of time, the Big Bang that restarts from our universe could have happened in that oblivion at the time. So that Big Bang at the end of our Universe could be able the start off our Universe; because if its outside of time there is no time. So that could be the start, it could revert back, there could be a loop, it loops back around. An infinite loop that this Universe existed to create this Universe if you get what I mean? Which is... Yeah. [787]

EILEEN: Who knows?

JAMES: But you know we can't say, where did all the matter come from? Just an infinite sort of dense...spec...

EILEEN: I think it's even harder to believe the idea that God had been there, has always been there. [805]

JAMES: Yeah I'd be more inclined to believe in aliens.

EILEEN: Yeah! [1118]

END

Analysis

Research Question 1

To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?

There are 2181 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 89.7% of this conversation.**

Research Question 2

To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

Cumulative talk comprises 1118 words i.e. 52.8% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 805 words i.e. 36.9% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX O

Prentice (practising Catholic) & James (atheist)

Y13 City Catholic School

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

Prentice: I think the point that Calvin is trying to make is that although we can see 4 dimensions there are many other things in the universe that we can't see or hear, or use our senses to experience but they do actually exist.

James: Yeah! Um...I mean even if...you can go with a religious aspect and say spiritual world or other worlds, like I don't know if it's quite what it could be suggesting, but you've got the idea of parallel worlds and things stacked against each other. That's quite a popular thing in science fiction um...so you could say it's a spiritual realm or anything else that we can't possibly understand.

Prentice: Yeah! That's true. [71] I wonder though with the evidence like how do we...how have we come to the conclusion that this is real, did someone experience it and then they've looked into it because they must have got the information from somewhere, it's not just like someone has thought of it on the spot and then gone this is -

James: Information about what?

Prentice: About the other dimensions, like I wonder where they came from like the evidence.

James: Well...I suppose I mean...I'm not religious though I would...I can understand and I can be open to the possibility that there is more to what we can see. [102]

Prentice: Yeah!

James: Um...I don't know I mean I suppose scientifically or non-scientifically there's been a lot of ideas that seem to come from sort of nowhere, whether that's because they've had an experience of something, or they've just thought about something. I suppose obviously 3 dimensions; height, width and depth, I suppose that can be worked out and then you can the fourth dimension time, or...is it really talking about time because I'm sure the fourth dimension.

Prentice: Um...well...

James: I'm not really sure what...

Prentice: It says its talking about time. I can understand how that's the fourth dimension. But...um...I can understand where the judge is coming from because I think the judge is just open to what Calvin is saying. I think the chief prosecutor is trying to disregard it. The judge is just being very open minded and just listening to the argument as it comes along.

James: Yeah I think it's not enough for...the chief prosecutor or anyone to just sort of deny and reject because even if it's...even if it's not spiritual, if it's some scientific thing people have rejected it and then it turns out to be true. I think you have to listen to what people are arguing and then you know...don't just shoot it down but actually think about it. Think about where they're coming from, whether there is any sort of truth or...that could be explored.

Prentice: Yeah! That's true. But I think that it's not...something that could be definitely proved with the evidence but I think where the evidence is given it's not something that can be just disregarded by the chief prosecutor – [256]

James: We'll never know.

Prentice: ...happen.

James: Um...I mean I don't...until such point as we can invent interstellar travel then we don't really understand much about that sort of physics really. [126]

Prentice: That's true! That's true!

James: So I don't know I mean Steven Hawking is obviously a very intelligent person and like I said before, like the 11 dimensions I don't know if they do have to be spiritual but also I suppose you've got people that don't necessarily believe in God but do believe in a spiritual world. You don't need to have...I don't think you need to have a belief in a God as such. I suppose if you think about the soul which we don't know much about, we don't know where that comes from but in a scientific way you could sort of put that down to being sort of an energy field or something and if you go with the fact that energy can neither be created nor destroyed, if the soul is an energy can that sort of transcend you in some way, or is there...does it become...when it leaves the body if that's what happens does it become like a radio signal? Just sort of floating around which on this question about some Christians think that heaven is all around us but we just can't see it, maybe not heaven, but a realm of energy possibly. [323]

Prentice: That's true! That's true! I think that I've always been...like the question said I have always been quite interested in the fact that when some people die they...as they're on their death bed they talk about the light, and they're going towards the light, and they're going towards...I wonder if that there is starting the separation between this world and the next. If there is...maybe another world then once they see the light, if that's stepping into yet another fifth or sixth dimension. Um...I think that's something that could be explored but in that sense like you say we won't know until we get to that moment ourselves because the science isn't that advanced as yet. [435]

James: Yeah! I mean I suppose it's possible that this life um...and death is just going into some other place, like it's not quite the end as such. Like I like the example, obviously I'm a *Dr Who* fan, where they talk about um...what if babies could talk to each other in the womb and all they'd know is being inside the womb and then 9 months later when they come out is that the end? No its

just...being born again into a sort of...a life. Um...because obviously we don't know what's going to happen, we don't know how...when we die what...what actually is there, do we just end up in some spiritual world or is that...obviously that brings into question the whole purpose of existence.

Prentice: That's true! I like the example of the babies because then it could just been seen as when we die...like when we die in the womb we just come out and we like...[414]

James: I mean obviously I suppose the issue with that analogy is obviously you don't die there you -

Prentice: Yeah! Yeah!

James: But in a sense it's the kind of thing that like you...you feel that that's it because obviously they would see the white light coming out, and then that...they...I suppose if they had...obviously its babies they don't know anything, but if they were intellectual then they'd probably think that would be it. But it's not its...a whole different existence possibly our death is the start of an even more amazing existence but obviously like the chief prosecutor is saying um...its speculation at this point because we don't know but that doesn't mean that it should just be shot down.

Prentice: That's true! That's true! I think that the next life is definitely...um...a high possibility...[527] I think that...um...this world...I like to...I think Plato had a good analogy with the world of forms and the world of the appearances. I do think that we must have got this perfect idea of all these analogies and things from somewhere; and I think that even though we don't have the evidence for it in this world I think that when we do pass we will enter another world whatever that world maybe. Um...I'm a Catholic so I think it will be heaven and God however, I am open to the idea of maybe not God maybe just another spiritual world as such. [534]

James: What my kind of thing is, even though...atheist agnostic, but I think that...it could be possible that God isn't necessarily the god that is in the Scripture; but God is in the Universe itself so... but it makes things change and everything. It's not a great analogy but like if you have uranium it causes things to change like its radiation, it causes mutation it doesn't know what it's doing because it's not live. That's a possible explanation – [604]

Prentice: No, that's true yeah!

James: For a god. Um...yeah so you believe in heaven...is that...is that a strong...belief?

Prentice: I think part of it is because the way I've been like brought up, like I've been socially conditioned to believe that a God is a real. I've been to mass every week since I was younger, so I think that's part of it but also part of I think when I try and wrap my head around when I die it's just black and that's it I can't seem to fathom how that would work so...part of it is then the fact that with all

the experience I have on earth I believe that it can't just stop there. It can't just be a cut-off point. I believe that maybe I've lived before and I will live again. So then therefore heaven is therefore real.

James: Yeah! I'd like to...I kind of would like to believe in that kind of thing um...obviously it's a comfort but for me I just feel that as...as...people or animals our primal instinct is to survive and this is why we've had religion throughout our history because we know that we're going to die and we need a fix for that which is the afterlife. Um...and I just wonder yeah is it really wishful thinking, while it's nice um...does it get us anywhere? I mean I suppose today um...Christians don't so much...they don't think on it so much but like in the olden days you'd got the Egyptians building massive pyramids, they seemed to spend most of their lives thinking about the afterlife. [852]

Prentice: That's true! Yeah.

James: Why not...enjoy this life? You don't know really.

Prentice: Yeah! But to that point though I will bring up the question of what about...things like the supernatural. There is some evidence even though the evidence may not be the most persuasive, evidence of like ghosts and supernatural beings entering this world and I think that...I do believe in that but um...what's your take on the stuff? [916]

James: Again I mean...I don't think you need to believe in God or anything like that, or the afterlife, I think like I said about the energy thing, how the soul or whatever it is...if there is something that encapsulates you it could exist in some form. Maybe not as a proper personality but almost like some sort of you, that's not quite you but sort of like...its...it's a reflection and that...it's a possible explanation. I mean I suppose...I don't know I mean you get the people coming through with those things saying God has let us down, or something, people have been really bad, and the devil exists and all that. Um...whether that's just these energy beings just trying to scare us for fun...

Prentice: That's true! [660]

James: Or there is something in that, obviously we can't...we can't really prove them um...I don't know it's a difficult thing because there does seem to be something that happens but to what extent is it...can you give it validity and why doesn't it happen more often?

Prentice: Yeah!

James: Um...

Prentice: I've always thought...I've always thought maybe how people think of this...when they think of like heaven they think it's like say...the real world is like England and heaven would then have to be like all the way over in China, so separate. In terms of like distance, but like the question says is it all around us? But the whole point of like the supernatural and ghosts and stuff like that,

that people experience, maybe that is just heaven and spirits around us and then we just get a brief viewing of that world and the spirits maybe pass into this world when they're not supposed to, or they pass back. Maybe heaven is just all around us, we just...don't...our senses just can't see it or we can't experience it using our five senses.

James: I mean some people said like they've seen things like my mum and sisters have said that they've seen like a cat go by or something that's not there and my Nan said that in her room she'd seen like this little girl playing. People see stuff and...which could be...I suppose that could be a sign, you might see it as um...a look into that world, or heaven, or something like that. I mean there are other explanations like a temporal sort of shift where time sort of bleeds into...like the present or something like that so...um...what you're seeing is the past or the future or something. If that's some sort of...I don't know quantum (?) explanation.

Prentice: That's a good idea, that's a good point. [919]

James: I'm open...I'm open to things but...sceptical but open.

Prentice: Yeah. That's fair enough!

END

Words = 2081

Analysis

Research Question 1

To what extent do the students remain on-task when their conversations take place out with the visible control of the teacher?

There are 2081 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 88.2% of this conversation.**

Research Question 2

To what extent does this intervention promote participation in cumulative talk and exploratory talk by the students?

Cumulative talk comprises 919 words i.e. 44.2% of the above conversation.
Exploratory talk comprises 916 words i.e. 44.0% of the above conversation.

Y13 Lily (practising Catholic) & Eileen (atheist)

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

LILY: I think Calvin is making some really good points about things that we can't necessarily sense, what about you?

Eileen: I think that's right the point that he makes about dog whistles and television signals we obviously can't see or hear, but they do exist; we know they exist, so they must exist in another dimension.

LILY: I don't know actually if you could transfer that to they like believe in like a God as such. [55]

Eileen: Yeah, because we have evidence that TV signals work because our TVs work, we have no evidence of a God acting on us. So how can we prove that he exists but we can't sense him?

LILY: And also it is just...there is no evidence, hard evidence to prove that these other 7 dimensions do exist. So...

Eileen: But it is argued by top scientists.

LILY: Yeah I suppose it is, isn't it? I still don't think it serves to prove that Heaven exists.

Eileen: No its only for things...its only for scientific things that we have already proven not for illogical mystical things that we can never physically prove. And the idea of a shadow world I don't think is very plausible because this is the only world we've ever known so we can't prove that this is a shadow world of another set fixed form.

LILY: Because all this what he says about dog whistles and earthquakes are all things that exist within this world. But there is an assumption that Heaven has to be in another world and we haven't got enough evidence to prove that.

Eileen: Yeah! And this says that Heaven is all around us but we can't prove that, if we go out of our...if we go out of earth then we just...we don't find Heaven. We can never prove where it is or whether it exists. Even if we can't see it we can't recognise how it would exist.

LILY: No! That's right! [Laughter]

Eileen: Um...I think that religion has relied heavily on belief in something that has never been proven. [195]

LILY: Yeah!

Eileen: And no religion is based on pure fact and none of his is pure fact apart from the stuff that exists here, like the earthquakes. [146]

LILY: I mean I know these are top scientists now but there were top scientists 400 years ago that believed the earth was flat so as time progresses -

Eileen: Who's to say we're not going to realise that they were wrong. Stephen Hawking maybe the best professor right now but he might not be in years to come.

LILY: Hmm! I think while we have nothing to prove that these other dimensions exist-

Eileen: We shouldn't believe in them.

LILY: Yeah!

Eileen: We shouldn't just believe in them because they seem like the best explanation.

LILY: Yeah!

Eileen: We should wait to see what -

LILY: And I think there's a big leap to go from these 7 dimensions to Heaven.

Eileen: Yeah! Just because there's a lot of the Universe that we haven't explored, we can't just presume there is a Heaven and that there's a God, just because we don't sense a lot of other things.

LILY: I agree with your points.

Eileen: Yeah I agree with your points. I would love to know how they found out that 96% of the Universe was missing. [Laughter]

LILY: Yeah how do they know, how do they know that that's everything. They don't. That's like physically impossible to work out.

Eileen: Yeah! Yeah it's all based on assumptions isn't it?

LILY: Yeah which we can't trust.

Eileen: Much like Heaven is.

LILY: Unfortunately!

Eileen: You can't trust anything really. [368]

LILY: I mean Steven Hawking has just appeared on *The Simpson's* so...

Eileen: *The Simpson's*.

LILY: Can't trust that guy!

Eileen: Yeah and how do you work out that we can only see 2 centimetres or 3 billion?

LILY: How do they know there's no other light forms that we haven't yet discovered? That's got to be a massive assumption.

Eileen: Yeah! [407]

LILY: Like we don't fully understand how the Earth came about; so how can we understand everything that's within it or around it?

Eileen: Shadow world sounds a bit um...Platonic to me. [225]

LILY: Yeah! The shadow world and the world of forms. I think this is the world of forms.

Eileen: Maybe he was right, maybe Plato after all that was right, can you imagine?

LILY: That's basically what this is saying.

Eileen: Yeah maybe he was right, that would be unbelievable. [453]

LILY: I don't trust Plato.

Eileen: No! I think the prosecutor is saying that he went off point because Calvin wasn't making a point about God or Heaven.

LILY: Yeah! So he wasn't really making...he wasn't really arguing for what he wanted to. He does make the point well but it's not relevant.

Eileen: Yeah! [500]

LILY: Can dogs hear dog whistles? I don't want to make an ignorant comment. Is that the point with a dog whistle, only they can hear it?

Eileen: I think so.

LILY: They do exist to dogs so they do really exist, that sound does really exist but it's hard to say Heaven really exists.

Eileen: And we can sense a TV signal and we can feel an earthquake.

LILY: Yeah!

Eileen: So...and there's no way we could ever sense a Heaven or a hell. Well hopefully when we die we can!

LILY: Um...yeah....

END

Analysis

There are 852 words in this passage of conversation. In terms of cumulative talk and exploratory talk the two students are **On Task for 85.1% of this conversation.**

Cumulative talk comprises 500 words i.e. 58.7% of the above conversation.

Exploratory talk comprises 225 words i.e. 26.4% of the above conversation.

APPENDIX Q

Toby & Greg 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

M: Okay! Hello my name is Greg.

M: And my name is Toby.

M: Okay and we're going to be discussing excerpt A. [Pause] What point is Calvin trying to make?

M: That there's 11 dimensions but he's not said what they are, who said it, he said that top scientists minds, like Stephen Hawking have disagreed with it because of the star of the Simpson's but they've not told us what that is. Why it tells us that.

M: I dunno but I think what he's probably trying to like get across, I dunno...is he saying that there's more than like we appear to see or hear because he's like trying to expand our horizons but...I dunno it's not that well explained.

M: Oh yeah he goes on about radio signals, just switch on a TV or radio and the signals are converted into pictures and sounds and he's trying to say that that's a different dimension because we can't see it.

M: Yeah but we can see it.

M: Yeah you can see it, if you like...if you get proper like...what is it telescopes or whatever? You can see it, it's just zoomed in.

M: Yeah a microscope.

M: Atoms and stuff.

M: Just because its smaller, just because its smaller it doesn't mean that we can't see it.

M: Like everything in this world is 3 dimensional, if you zoom into an atom it will be 3 dimensional.

M: But well I think he's just trying to argue his point in some way though because he feels that there is more than what he can see.

M: Well yeah because...humans don't see...

M: No we've not got that great eyesight because that's just how we live. Like we don't need to see small animals like dogs or anything.

M: Yeah they went on about that dog whistle but dogs hear higher frequencies than us.

M: Yeah that's because of like our origins and stuff.

M: Some people will be able to hear that if they have like super hearing or some sort of deformity.

M: Some people with disabilities or something can hear that. That's like people -

M: That's more of an ability though.

M: Yeah I suppose but people with hearing deficiencies they can't hear like them things but it doesn't mean like -

M: That's it's not there.

M: Its not out there yeah. Just because they can't hear it doesn't mean it's not there.

M: Do you agree with what the judge said?

M: The judge doesn't really talk, the judge just said on the contrary I think he's making his point rather well. So that's sort of showing that he agrees but you can't not agree.

M: I don't think he is making his point very well though.

M: No!

M: He's bringing up stuff that can be easily pointed out as wrong.

M: Yeah but do you agree?

M: I don't agree with what the judge is saying no.

M: He's not really making a strong point is he? For a judge wouldn't you expect to get better points, it's not very like...deep if you like it's just there really. Shall we move on?

M: Yeah we've already talked about 3 dimensional stuff...4 dimensional stuff, they've just never talked about what the 11 dimensions are.

M: No like is there any specifics, do we get any further or is that just like a vague name like just saying...oh 5 dimensions because it's just rough...there are loads, you could see there are hundreds of dimensions but why...what 11? We can talk about this for ages -

M: Some Christian's think that heaven is all around us but we just can't see it, what do you think?

M: Yeah it depends what you believe.

M: It depends what you believe but -

M: What you've been taught.

M: Science can't disprove heaven.

M: Its not disproven no.

M: But religion can't disprove science.

M: Yeah you can't prove or disprove this because -

M: Like religion is the most subjective thing in the world.

M: Because heaven is the afterlife so no one has actually physically died properly and come back and actually said what they saw.

M: What do you mean?

M: Like no one has actually died okay and then come back to life and said I've been in heaven without it being proved, and you can't prove it because no one is going to support that.

M: I mean you have those people like Bibiani (?) when his heart went for like an hour and he said that when he was dying he saw like a bright light or something, he felt calm.

M: Muamba said something like that.

M: Yeah! But...

M: But that's like...does that mean that there's a heaven, who is going to...you're not going to disagree with them are you, because you're not going to say you're lying because he died, or his heart stopped beating.

M: I mean a lot of people have said that though.

M: Yeah a lot of people but you can't back it up because no one...no representatives from heaven are going to come down and say...

M: Yeah Bibiani (?) is telling the truth mate!

M: But like Christian beliefs, it depends because if they believe that they've got a heaven to go to and a hell, then they're going to like behave but...behave, they're just going to like go about the right ways of life, but it depends like what you believe, because if you're like an atheist then you're not particularly going

to think oh heaven is there. You're just going to say no it's not real, it's a fantasy. It's just how you've been taught.

M: I suppose they would argue one of the dimensions would be heaven or like god -

M: But in heaven surely you lose dimensions because like everything becomes lighter or whatever.

M: I dunno!

M: Do...we can obviously feel but what do you feel?

M: I have no clue!

M: Like it depends of their belief, because what if they just think that your soul just lives on in heaven, does that mean that you lose your touch, what, are you just a floating blob or something -

M: He said that your -

M: Like your spirit goes up but you don't come with it.

M: No your body just stays there. Does that mean that you lose your touch, do you generate into something else, like what?

M: Wouldn't that mean that it's not just heaven it's us as well?

M: Yeah!

M: That's with heaven, like spirit and everything, oh spirit that's another one it could be.

M: It could be, it could be your spirit, your soul, your being whatever. But it depends because...it just depends on your belief.

M: Yeah because -

M: Like we were never really pushed to believe in god.

M: Different people believe that like...like their body goes with them as well, but like different people like...but the body is here so does that mean that...there must be still a heaven so the soul goes up instead, or a spirit.

M: I mean there is no logical reasoning you can give for this though.

M: No there's not.

M: It depends how you term logical, you could say that it's an endless argument.

M: Its never going to end is it?

M: No its always going to have someone that disapproves or agrees.

M: As we said no one can -

M: Prove!

M: Prove it.

M: They can't! Unless like...some spirit comes down and just says yeah its true.

M: Since it's so subjective nobody is ever going to have a discussion that comes out, the other person agreeing with the other person really if they have such opposing beliefs.

M: No because if you've got like say a Christian, a Muslim, and Islamic person, an atheist and a Catholic or something for example, and you stuck them all in a room together they'd all think different things.

M: Yeah pretty much every religion says different, and they say like if you don't believe in our religion then -

M: Its wrong.

M: You're wrong and you're going to hell or something.

M: Yeah or you're going to like be punished or something.

M: Yeah what is it Jehovah's Witnesses believe in the promised land so they would disagree with heaven. Muslims...where do they go? I think it's like the promised land as well isn't it?

M: Yeah something like...because they do it in like the name of god so god will love them or whatever.

M: But Jews...they spend their whole like trying to be good but they only have hell I think.

M: Yeah they -

M: So they're not rewarded for it -

M: No but they're punished is what they believe but...I suppose if they've got evidence then I suppose...you can't really get hard evidence. Yeah.

M: I think we've discussed that.

M: Alright well that must be all the...I dunno...that's all the starters done.

END

Toby & Greg 2

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

M: Hello Greg!

M: Hello Toby!

M: This is excerpt B.

M: Its B mate.

M: Sorry I was going to say 2 its B. Do you agree or do you disagree?

M: It doesn't have to go...what we agree with or disagree with, like do we agree with Calvin or the Chief Prosecutor? But Calvin is trying to infer, he's trying to say that the bible was written after. Some people say it was written when they actually were...then he said scientific discoveries -

M: Saying its relevant.

M: Eye witness accounts of the life of Jesus. Even the enemies of Jesus admitted that he was a powerful teacher and a miracle worker so...

M: Its confusing in it? It's like...because he's got quite deep evidence if you like, he's saying all this history, recent language studies, so like translations, and like even people that supposedly didn't even like him are like...like verifying this but are they verifying that there was a man like this or whether it was different men because...I dunno its difficult to believe because like if you're strongly religious then you believe it but...

M: I don't know if I agree though. I don't know what to think.

M: Recent scientific study of the gospel fragments could be material evidence of eye witness accounts of Jesus, but that's what it's believed to be isn't it?

M: Like Mark, Matthew, Luke and John are sitting down and writing about Jesus.

M: Yeah the concept.

M: But then...I think after a while it says that...I think in one of these it says that it could be written 40 years after Jesus died. But wasn't Jesus like...probably like 30 or 16 or something -

M: I dunno he was hung so he wasn't old.

M: He was either 16 or 30 probably in that ball park. So 40 years after Matthew, Mark, Luke and John sat down, if you were like...so that's like 50...at least 70 you were not surviving until then back then.

M: Well he may have done but it's very unlikely in it? But like...if he was such a miracle worker then he couldn't have cured them because he would have been dead so it's not as if -

M: What do you mean cured them?

M: Well like kept them alive, like I don't know if he could stop old age or not but like...I....like 40 years on most people wouldn't have survived -

M: They would have definitely been dead back then.

M: The environment, just like the -

[Both talking at once]

M: The average in like the Tudor time what was it? Probably like 40, 30 or something.

M: Yeah so -

M: They would have been dead by then.

M: It wouldn't have been higher.

M: So it couldn't have been an eye witness account.

M: So it's probably just rumours, like folk tales, like them songs by the campfire that -

M: I mean he said it was scientific evidence.

M: But like -

M: But then the same scientific evidence says here that its eye witness accounts.

M: But you could say evidence of something happens like a caveman drawing on the wall or something, what's that evidence of?

M: What do you mean?

M: Well like you could say oh its evidence that there was a bear fight or something, but how do you know that was what it was inferring or something? When they drew like you could say it was an eye witness, someone probably just wrote a story, made it up.

M: Oh so you're saying reading into the evidence?

M: Yeah you're probably going too deep maybe it's just what it is.

- M: I mean if we read into all of this evidence we'd have no clue what to think because Calvin's...Calvin is saying everything. Saying everything from...I mean he keeps on saying that Jesus is a miracle worker and everything but...we only have eye witness accounts to prove that.
- M: And you can't exactly pick someone up now and ask them to be a source because it was so long ago. But the 40 years on thing I don't believe because I just...frankly don't think that people would have remembered. Even if they were like 2 or 3 years old you're not going to remember him. Not at 2 or 3, loads of things happen and you're not going to remember. You'll probably pretend to remember but you're not going to, you're just going to hear stories and guess. Maybe like it will change because maybe you can say oh he's a miracle worker, maybe he did one thing good, like someone saw him I don't know stop them from falling over or something for example.
- M: Yeah!
- M: And someone changed it and said that he cured lepers, leprosy.
- M: Here it says Jesus was a great teacher, he attracted large crowds to listen to his teachings. And some people just believe that he was a great teacher.
- M: So maybe people started off with he's a great teacher, then someone brought in he had lots of people.
- M: Maybe he was just a really clever guy, they're just literally words on a page that say Jesus did this. But there's also words on the Koran saying that Mohammed is the prophet to Allah or whatever and he has all the power in the world instead of Jesus.
- M: Its just someone else's opinion though because I could say that you for example, are a fantastic speaker but someone else could say that you're not. So someone could say that you're a quiet individual or something. Different...you've just got different people's things. You'd have to have like thousands, maybe hundreds, just loads of evidence just like...stacked up just to say like...like stats just to say what's more...what [...6.11] that he had loads of people or not? It's all over the place.
- M: I mean this was like from a documentary or something that they said that like Mary Magdalene had a...like a gospel or whatever, like...she wrote about Jesus and everything. They destroyed a fair few amount of gospels because they didn't depict Jesus in the way that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John depicted Jesus.
- M: Like in a bad way.
- M: So even back then there was contrasting beliefs about Jesus.
- M: But they only wanted the good ones so what if he was actually just a normal person and Mary just wrote he was just normal, doing what normal people do,

just walked around, went about his life in the normal way? Spoke to people that was it! People would think oh maybe he was just Jesus like Toby or Greg. Like a normal person.

M: I mean if you think about um...like the birth of Jesus just...came out of nowhere from god, but even like...Miss Gerovey (?) says that she doesn't understand how -

M: Like it don't make sense because -

M: How someone can be a virgin but also -

M: No because it's not as if they had like...like...oh what's it...they didn't have sperm banks or anything did they?

M: I'll just pop it in while she's sleeping!

M: Yeah! No they didn't have that back then its...fertility treatment is a newly formed thing. So it's not as if that's what they did.

M: If you look at um...this is kind of going off topic. If you look at like Jesus and what was his....what was Mary's husband called?

M: Joseph!

M: Joseph! Joseph and Jesus look an awful lot like each other in practically every single painting.

M: Yeah!

M: I don't think that's a coincidence.

M: No and all this evidence maybe this was the story twisted, so she said like um...oh thank god for me having a son or something, then someone could twist it and say -

M: People were so dumb back then.

M: Its the son of god because she thanked god. So...like you could quite easily twist a story because it's not really possible.

M: I mean it's going to sound a bit weird but if you think about Hitler right, he was a great speaker, and he brainwashed people into believing that the Jews were disgusting. Like surely someone back then...most people would have been like nearly brain dead stupid, like prepared to what we would be now.

M: Yeah education wise...education wise they believed that the earth was 2D.

M: Yeah -

M: That it was flat.

M: If someone was more intelligent than most people in the world back then, they would have been able to work out oh I can make everybody believe I'm the son of god and get all these things and people will worship me. I'm not sure what exactly you might gain from that.

M: Like when he went to the king and he had that thorn crown put on his head or whatever, because he said that god is someone new or something...he was just asking for attention but like...

M: Yeah Jesus was an attention seeker!

M: Well in the stories he had disciples that just followed him around and he went into crowds and made speeches. It's not as if he went in trying to be quiet is it? Even when he died -

M: Yeah in that sense he's an attention seeker but don't you think he was doing it for the right reasons to help people?

M: Possibly! But...that may have been his intention but even when he died it was like in the eyes of the public wasn't it? It wasn't like...it wasn't just normal causes he got himself hung on a cross. Like in front of everyone who he lived or he'd seen or met. Disappointed or happy...

M: It says he rose from the dead but I don't know.

M: Maybe...a look alike, maybe his dad popped out.

M: I simply can't...I can't believe it.

M: He either did die or didn't die, maybe he just fainted.

M: To be fair they were probably too dumb to know whether or not he was dead. Bash him over the skull with a brick.

M: Or...or in hindsight yeah he was asleep. Oh...like they didn't have the healthcare to like work out whether his heart had stopped, he was probably covered in blood and they -

M: They used to think it was the brain that...no...wait...no they used to think that the heart was like what the brain did.

M: Yeah and vice versa.

M: And the heart was the most important thing.

M: Yeah! But like he could have been sleeping and just got up and walked out -

M: This is a massive if though!

M: Yeah this is a big if!

M: You'd have to be pretty dumb to think oh is this guy dead? Oh he's alive.

M: Yeah but that's how controversial everything is. Um...with regard to the second bit, like is this good evidence about Jesus? How can you say if its good evidence because...because what can you compare it to?

M: What do you mean?

M: Like...you could say right here's the evidence, this is like...I don't know say...um...Mark said this, but how can you say if its good evidence. He could have been a best friend to Jesus.

M: Yeah!

M: Or he could have been an enemy so...

M: Massive bias or massive uh...disillusion.

M: Yeah because like...

M: Disillusions over Hitler, people used to think Hitler was the greatest but Kim Jong-un like Korea, they worship him as a god and they don't think he shits.

M: Sorry I'll need to stop you.

M: Huh?

M: I'll need to stop you okay.

END

APPENDIX R

VERY NOISY RECORDING!

Megan & Oliver 1

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

M: Do you want me to explain it to you then?

F: Yeah!

M: Right basically what he's trying to make out is that there's...uh...11 dimensions because you know there is the 4 dimensions?

F: Yeah!

M: Yeah right and he's trying to make out that there's more that we just don't know about which to me is a load of old cobble. It's like someone has just said -

F: Yeah but how do they know that?

M: Exactly! I mean what he's trying to say is that there's...there's um...so it's like...so like things...you know things we can't see basically. He said something about radio signals.

F: Yeah you can't see them but you know they're there because like your radio works.

M: Yeah but I think ...yeah...but then it's like...the reason we can't see them is because they're not...they're made of something to different to like...it is invisible, you can't see...you can't...actually it could probably be because light doesn't go into it like atoms or whatever. But like it doesn't absorb the light. We didn't introduce ourselves either did we?

F: No!

M: Go on then!

F: Megan!

M: Oliver! But basically -

F: But Calvin is trying to tell us that there's more than 4 dimension but the judge does not agree with him.

M: Pretty much!

F: Who's that person?

M: The Chief Prosecutor. Don't worry about it, it's just the third person that they had to throw in there.

F: Oh right!

M: But uh...

F: Well there's no proof of them so...

M: Yes there is, there is proof.

F: Not of the others ones is there?

M: Well yeah but it says like what is it...something about how much of the universe that we can actually see. There you go no less than 96% of the known universe is missing, I repeat scientists are unable to locate 96% of the known mass in the universe where is it?

F: That could be like...water around...no it couldn't be water around the earth could it because that's not the earth, actual earth?

M: But like I think it's something to do with like how light travels faster than the expanding universe I think that's what it's trying to say and because of that we can see more than there actually is which...makes no sense whatsoever.

F: Yeah!

M: But uh...it's there. But it's not there yet. So...light has gone passed it before we know it's there.

F: Yeah!

M: But then it's also like...like he's saying that there's like 10 or 11 dimensions but then what...he doesn't even say -

F: He hasn't got proof. Like he hasn't backed up his...he hasn't really has he?

M: No he hasn't. But it's like...he said that there's like 10 or 11 dimension but what are they? We know that the 4 which...I actually disagree with that there is even 4. There's 3 to me there's...X, Y and Z but then time is just...a measurement of the movement of them relative to everything for the time it takes for something to get somewhere is...the movement of that object is relative to everything else so...

F: I'm sure people would like have found out about these before...anyway [...4.00] when they discovered the other 4.

M: Yeah exactly!

F: Like the 96% of like the earth that's missing it's not going to be actually dimensioned is it to be honest?

M: Yeah we just haven't...seen it yet. We haven't...it hasn't got there yet.

F: It hasn't go there, we haven't explored it.

M: But then it's like...

F: I agree with the judge.

M: The judge.

F: Do you?

M: I don't even think the judge even said anything did he?

F: He does, he just says -

M: Oh wait it says on the contrary I think...oh no...the judge is agreeing.

F: Oh no I don't agree with the judge! Who was the person that said it was a load of nonsense? [Sounded like]

M: Calvin! No Calvin was the person -

F: No I thought he was the person that -

M: There's no one saying against it, there's -

F: I'm sure there was.

M: If anything the Chief...no because...ah it doesn't matter! I don't think anyone -

F: So they agree with him?

M: Well no I'm not sure if its necessarily -

F: They probably only agree with him because he's got like a scientific mind.

M: I don't even think it's a real person. But we're off topic now.

F: Are we?

M: Yes we are!

F: [...5.15] said what point is Calvin trying to make, he's trying to make the point that there is 11 dimensions when we only know 4 and he's got no evidence to back it up.

M: Even though I don't even believe that there's 4. In my opinion there's only 3 dimensions because you've got X, Y and Z which is basically like...basically like height, depth, and width basically but time is the measurement of them in space basically in my opinion so it's like the time it takes for one thing to get to another thing that's just...but then again they're all measurements so I guess you could say it's kind of a dimension. But...but then...like what are...he's just said that there's like 10 or 11 dimensions and hasn't even said any of them.

F: But he probably believes that there is 11 but he still hasn't found out what they are yet.

M: So it's an educated guess basically?

F: Yeah! Because like -

M: Did he just throw a random number out there?

F: And he used Stephen Hawking's to back him up.

M: Where is the Stephen Hawking's part?

F: I'm sure I read about Stephen Hawking's on this.

M: Yeah I know [...6.36] it says Stephen Hawking, Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge University -

F: May live in a 11 dimensional universe.

M: Tells us that we may live in a 11 dimensional universe.

F: So he believes it as well so I think that...Calvin is only backing it up, like saying this because he's got...Stephen Hawking said it. Well that's what I think.

M: Right yeah but [...7.03].

F: These people aren't even real. This didn't happen.

M: I don't think so as far as I know.

F: Well I don't really know but anyway...

M: Hang on transcription...it could be real because it says...it doesn't matter.

F: Stephen Hawking's he's like predicted everything hasn't he.

M: He hasn't predicted everything.

F: No he's gave us like -

M: He has come up with...come up with several theories about space and time.

F: Yeah but he's quite accurate. So...and is like really clever.

M: Yeah! No but it's like...just because he said it doesn't mean it's necessarily true because I mean everyone [...7.50].

F: He said that we may so he doesn't really know.

M: Yeah he doesn't know himself.

F: I don't think anybody can know until it gets revealed by like...till we actually know, and then we [...8.03] know about it because how do we know that time is real?

M: I know because people say that time is the fourth dimension but I don't believe there are four dimensions, that time is a dimension because...like...I've explained it already but then like he...I'm pretty sure he's just throwing a random number out there saying like 10 or 11.

F: Yeah but who came up with time?

M: Time...

F: How do you know time is an actual thing?

M: Well time is just...relative to everything isn't it because...because right...

F: Yeah but it couldn't have been time, like it could have been something else and we've just called it time because -

M: Well no because time is manmade isn't it like measurements are manmade like height, depth...

F: These dimensions are manmade maybe.

M: Well no they're dimension themselves aren't they but like the way we're...measurements are like a thing that we've made up isn't it?

F: Yeah!

M: But then it's like...if...so yeah basically the four we do know about -

F: We've made.

M: Are basically just -

F: Well we haven't made but -

M: We haven't made them -

- F: Humans discovered it, well how did...they haven't discovered them really have they?
- M: Yeah there is no evidence for them but uh...but it's like...it's like...uh...if...there are...because the 4 dimensions we do know about is all just measurements of things. Then if he's going on saying that there are other dimensions we don't know about like...whatever it was...radio signals -
- F: What's that got to do with it?
- M: It said something about radio signals going through whatever...that's just...that's not even...like...radio signals aren't made of atoms or anything they're made of waves, like light is made of photons and things so it's like they're not even...part of the...so they're not really physical things. So it's like...so...I don't know what do you think? What do you think about this whole thing because I've just been ranting so far?
- F: I think they've just gone off something that they believe is true and made like all this about it but they've got no evidence for it at all. There are probably not 11 dimensions, I don't even know what signals and everything has got to do with it.
- M: I know because he's saying that uh...that there are signals uh...are just part of another dimension basically.
- F: How do they know that?
- M: He doesn't that's the point! Its speculation pretty much. So...it's not even a theory or a hypothesis at the moment it's an idea.
- F: You sound so scientific and I'm not! [Laughter]
- M: Ah!
- F: They've just put me with you in here and you're just adding all these big words and everything! [Laughter]
- M: I'm not that smart! No its -
- F: I think there is 4 dimensions but I don't think there's any more. Like the other 96% of the mass of the universe is something else and we'll discover it one day.
- M: Pretty much but...we'd better stop recording it now.

END

VERY NOISY RECORDING!

Megan & Oliver 2

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

M: Introduce yourself.

F: Megan!

M: Oliver! So what do you think about it?

F: Well I think it's just like somebody's opinion, anyone could have a different opinion on this. Like...you don't know what I'm on about do you?

M: Yes!

F: I'm saying like anyone can have an opinion and it could have been different to this so...we're going on some random opinion than actual...actual evidence instead of an opinion.

M: Basically what someone has just written down, what he's done...what he's done -

F: It could be like...they say that Jesus did miracles but he could have...there is no evidence to him actually doing it.

M: He could have just done something which he knew worked and then just done like something to do with um...he like basically just tried to make it look as though like it was a miracle so like making two fish and however much bread it was into like...and it could just be the way that people word it or people making it up even. Like we don't know that it happened.

F: No it could have just been like a rumour that's just gone round and round or it could be like they said earlier, that it...like a story for us to like understand the world.

M: Yeah pretty much, yeah like it's not real -

F: Like Adam and Eve, that was just like a story to kind of...like a myth.

M: It was symbolical basically.

F: Yeah symbolical like to make us believe where he actually came from in like a religious term [...1.50] scientific term we basically come from like...come from the big bang and like we evolved from like monkeys is it? The monkeys?

M: The apes yeah.

F: Apes that one. So...I think it depends what you believe. If you are religious then you believe in the bible and you don't believe in nothing else. But if you're scientific in some way then you'd believe in like the big bang and things like that.

M: Well personally I'm an atheist and I believe that um...I believe that Jesus probably was a real person and he probably tricked them into believing that it was all miracles and things like...and that...like most of the stuff that Jesus actually has done either his disciples have just gone hey you know what let's make this guy seem like a good guy and just made stuff up about him [...2.54] different time periods.

F: I'm different to you, I actually do believe in god but then I also do think about the other stories, like is it really true? I do believe in him.

M: Yeah I mean I...

F: I believe in him himself but I don't believe in some of the things that he did because it's not even possible to make a man out of like out of the earth and make Eve out of a rib. We've got the exact same ribs so...

M: Yeah it's like there was a whole myth about men having one less rib and that was because god took it from Adam but that's a myth. Its...but...but...I think this is mainly about Jesus antics though. I think its...yeah I think its...but then even his...like we don't even know [...3.53] birth either, like Christmas and all that. Like...you know he was born in a manger, I actually want to say you know he was born in a manger, do you actually know what a manger is?

F: Yeah!

M: What?

F: Its a hay thing where you have all your hay put in it for like cattle.

M: [...4.07] yeah okay then that's extremely unhygienic isn't it?

F: Yeah but then like that was the olden times wasn't it so...

M: Yes! And then...okay and how about...how man wise men were there?

F: 3!

M: Were there?

F: Yeah!

M: Does it say that in the bible? Does it say that there were 3 wise men?

F: That's the creation...not the creation...the Christmas story.

- M: Yeah but in the bible it doesn't actually say how many wise men there were. But I think its gradually just been shortened down to 3 because there were 3 presents, or 3 gifts that he was given.
- F: Yeah but um...if you think about it that could be like a symbolic story because -
- M: Jesus' birth was symbolic?
- F: Yeah! Because that was like the birth of the star was it? Yeah! And -
- M: Jesus Christ Superstar?
- F: Yeah! And then we have like stars on our Christmas tree and we think about god on Christmas. That could be like a symbolic event to form Christmas, or some person just wanted Christmas and they made Christmas...
- M: I agree with that.
- F: [...5.25].
- M: I'm pretty sure I heard something like...that Jesus Christ might not even have been born on his...on like the 25th December basically, and that people just needed this story in the bible or something so they just took something from other religions and put it in.
- F: I think the bible is mostly symbolic to try and like build us a picture of what this actual world is.
- M: Yeah! I would say that the bible has just tried to explain things. But it doesn't do it very well in my opinion.

END

APPENDIX S

[BACKGROUND NOISE!]

Spencer Hannah Alison 1a

Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

- F: This is Alison, Hannah and Spencer.
- F: Okay so we've all read this extract about Calvin in court talk about a multi dimensional world. The fact that he uses Stephen Hawking and other scientists shows that he clearly believes in this. What do you guys think about that?
- F: Um...I think that it's likely that there is more than the dimensions we know considering if you think about like years ago everybody thought the world was flat and then they discovered that the world actually wasn't flat so like years from now people will be like ah do you remember when people thought there was only like 4 dimensions?
- F: Yeah because like technology is evolving and they discover more things everyday so kind of like aliens, there's probably something else out there.
- F: Yeah!
- F: I agree! We can't just limit ourselves to like our 5 senses can we?
- F: Yeah I guess so.
- F: I think that the fact that he does use Stephen Hawking shows he does kind of know what he's talking about.
- F: He's done his research.
- F: And he can quote him off the top of his head.
- F: He's very clearly done his research, he's very clearly researched this, he hasn't made this up, he's not...just going with something he's read online.
- F: Yeah! I think that he's making a good point but...I think if he was trying to make this point to someone that didn't quite understand like all these books that he's talking about he'd be kind of stuck as to what to say.
- F: But if you [...1.51] you've got the Chief Prosecutor who is literally saying that it's just speculation, you can't use this.
- F: Yeah but I think it's a bit more than speculation because like they have got...proof sort of, within the information that they've found but it's like the big

- bang. People...some people still think that's just speculation because there's no solid evidence.
- F: The same with evolution.
- F: Yeah!
- F: When...he says everything at the beginning of it was speculation wasn't it? Like saying something is speculation is just like saying it's an idea, everything comes from an idea even religion.
- F: That thing we were talking about religion, around how um...people like...about heaven and how...what did he say about heaven?
- F: He said that um...it's the same principle as heaven that people...that Christians believe that heaven is all around us yet we can't see it, smell it, touch it, taste it -
- F: Feel it.
- F: So the religious people say that there's 4 and scientific...like I kind of see what the scientists are saying about there being how many? 11.
- F: Yeah I think he said that there was a link between religion and science because both of them agree that just because we can't hear, touch, see, or smell something it doesn't mean it's not necessarily there. Like the point he made about oxygen.
- F: I feel like oxygen has been backed up more, like you can back up oxygen and we know that it's a thing whereas religious people like there's no proof with heaven.
- F: Yeah but you can oxygen to back up the religion.
- F: Yeah but then again like you say there is not a lot of proof for religion but for religious people there's tonnes of proof.
- F: It depends -
- F: Like miracles that happen every day. I guess if you truly believe [...3.51] then you think it's there.
- F: At the end of the day we only believe oxygen is there because we've been told since we were little that oxygen is what you breath in.
- F: We have like the proof like we could be shown -
- F: We've been told that proof, how do we know that's real?
- F: Exactly!

- F: Oxygen -
- F: How do we know?
- F: Yeah how do we know that it's actually oxygen that we breathe in. How do we know that oxygen isn't poisonous for all we know? Because like as soon as you're born you're told what's true and what isn't.
- F: And if you think about it you've got all those things that kids are told don't you?
- F: Like Santa!
- F: Yet...and then when you're older you realise -
- F: And religion.
- F: Yeah but there are people that still believe in religion.
- F: Yeah but at the end of the day religion is...you're -
- F: Brought up.
- F: She's got a point, religion is literally how you're brought up. If you're brought up to believe something it doesn't matter what somebody shows you that's what you'll believe in.
- F: Its like if you think someone is a good person even if they've done something terrible you will look passed that if you really care about this person and believe they're a good person.
- F: So I think relating it back to this I think that the point is in the future people might...this idea of being 11 dimensional might be the only thing that people know yet some people may still believe that there's only 4 dimensions no matter how much...evidence gets put in front of them.
- F: Its like conspiracy theories some people believe in them and some people think they're complete rubbish.
- F: I think the idea that its only speculation though, he literally says about the supernatural, if he's then calling them supernatural...what's going to be next werewolves and vampires?
- F: True!
- F: When he says supernatural what does he mean, does he mean the dimensions, does he mean heaven, hell, does he mean ghosts?
- F: Yeah and if he says supernatural does he mean that that's something outside [...5.46] then that nature only exists in 4 dimensions and these other dimensions is nothing like what we know.

F: Like um...alternate (?) timelines and stuff like that.

F: Yeah like ultimate universes and the Mandela effect and stuff like that.

END

Spencer Alison Hannah 2
Transcribed by: Karen Stewart

- F: Conversation between Hannah, Spencer and Alison.
- F: Right so we're looking at excerpt B which is another court transcript but this time discussing the existence of Jesus. So...to what extent do you agree or disagree, so I think that the evidence that we have here, the idea of...especially the one that says about...this one from Bishop [...0.32] article the idea that um...the bible has been used to justify slavery, segregation and apartheid, and the fact that he mentions that the sacred book has been used to oppress women and oppose birth control. I kind of agree with what he's saying that...Christians are kind of embarrassed to recall that like the bible has been used to...in such a negative way throughout the past.
- F: I agree!
- F: I agree with like that. So what is the...evidence saying that...what did the bible used to say about like contraception and all that, what were the other things?
- F: Its saying that like throughout history um...its saying once again history's judgment has been that the bible was wrong, this sacred book has been used to oppress women and to oppose birth control. Both the church and society have moved so far away from these [...1.30] ideas of Christians today. So I think what its saying is that the church has moved with society. I don't think it's quite moved as fast as society has but I think the idea that gay marriage is now legal I think that it is starting to move a bit more but I agree that in the past the bible was kind of used as an excuse to condemn the principles but I just...I don't think its moved quite as far as society has.
- F: Because there's such a set of rules.
- F: Yeah like how they used to make some laws according to what the bible was in each country, because obviously in England the majority are Christians, like that's the country's main religion so they based their law around the Christian beliefs. But now they're embarrassed -
- F: Yeah but like they've changed a lot of -
- F: They do alter it a lot.
- F: Yeah they altered a lot so...
- F: I think the evidence is...if you are religious I think this evidence just confirms your religion even more.
- F: Yeah!

F: Do you know what I mean? Like the fact that it was written in Hebrew and but just like a few short years later everything was translated into Greek, I think that that's...very good evidence that it was written near the time.

F: Yeah!

F: That's the thing it said about Jerusalem falling as well.

F: The fact if it had been written after that date they would have commented on like the fall of Jerusalem and that.

F: Even if they were just saying that Jesus was right in predicting the fall of Jerusalem then even if it was just something like that but they didn't.

F: They didn't comment on it at all which means that they must have written it beforehand.

M: Sorry I'll need to stop you.

END