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Appreciating metaphor for participatory practice: constructivist inquiries in a children and young people's justice organisation

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Appreciating metaphor for participatory practice:
constructivist inquiries in a children and young
people's justice organisation

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Abstract

This thesis is framed as a first person action inquiry into participatory inquiry and practice. The context of the inquiry is a national voluntary organisation working for social justice for children and young people.

The thesis is developed in four connected Inquiry Strands: 1) the implications of researching within a constructivist epistemology; 2) the implications of self-aware research through inquiry into the history and traditions of the researcher; 3) how appreciating metaphor can help in researching understandings of participation;4) how appreciating metaphor can enhance participatory practising.

In connection with the first two Inquiry Strands the thesis identifies implications for epistemic and ethical practice. In connection with the third Inquiry Strand, the thesis first develops a theory of metaphor as *relational* and *participative*. This is then incorporated in a participatory methodology that can be applied in research with children, young people and adults and that embodies the output from the first two Inquiry Strands.

The methodology includes elicitation of stories and pictures in conversations and activities, exploration of the contexts of the inquiry, the identification and exploration of metaphors in the stories and pictures, and the development of criteria for judging these metaphors for the enhancement of practice.

In developing the methodology the researcher draws on her experiencing of the fourth Inquiry Strand within the social justice organisation. The methodology is then used as a *framework* for explicating the fourth Inquiry Strand. This inquiry leads to the proposal of a set of metaphorical conditions for participatory practice: 'purposeful activity', 'space for change', 'a safe place to learn' and 'reciprocal recognition'. The thesis concludes by reflecting on the four Inquiry Strands to identify learning concerning participatory inquiry in conditions of complexity and uncertainty and issues of power. Invitations are offered concerning changes in practices within the organisation, and for further research.

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Chapter 1 Introduction to the thesis and the development of the research questions

1.1 Background and contexts[1]

My PhD thesis is the story of a CASE studentship between The Children's Society (TCS), and the Open University (OU). TCS is a voluntary agency that was working for social justice for children and young people in England and Wales during the period of the research. My research has been supervised within the Systems Discipline in the Faculty of Technology of the Open University. CASE studentships are collaborative partnerships between an organisation and an academic institution to support doctoral research of interest to the organisation. The research funding body, the ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council) provides a grant for the student, and the organisation also contributes some additional money.

The idea for the studentship arose from the mutual interest in participative action research of people in the Systems Discipline of the Open University and people from The Child in the Neighbourhood Group (CIN) in TCS. An account of the CIN Group is given in Chapter 6. This joint concern was

discovered through the sharing of a conference paper that drew on the work of a PhD student within the Systems Discipline. His research indicated the particular possibilities for participative research of an appreciation of metaphors (McClintock and Ison, 1994b). The relationship was further developed in 1995-6 through the commissioning of research into the experience of TCS practitioners developing participatory decision-making with young people. This was conducted by Paul Maiteny, a researcher from the OU Systems Discipline(Maiteny, 1997).

My thesis develops David McClintock's work, taking up his ideas on how metaphors can inspire researching with people, particularly in contexts characterised by many actors and different activities or 'diverse stakeholder contexts' (McClintock, 1996). David's research was concerned with agriculture, and specifically *"how future countrysides in the UK can come about"*. I have taken his work into a different kind of stakeholder context. I have also adapted and extended the methods he used to bring forth metaphors by including pictures and stories in my researching.

Both Paul Maiteny and David McClintock connected their research practice with participative and cooperative inquiry, that is, researching *with* people rather than *on* people (Heron, 1996, Reason, 1994). Specifically David endeavoured to *"lay some groundwork for a dialogue regarding metaphors and researching with people"*(McClintock, 1996; p. 272). Two of David's conclusions about how metaphors inspire researching with people were of particular relevance in my inquiry. These were that metaphors *"provide a way to reflect on research itself"* and *"provide ways of creating space for understandings to emerge"* (ibid. p. 10, 193, 217). By knitting David's work on metaphor with inquiries into 'epistemologically aware' researching and 'self-aware' researching I developed a methodology in the practice of my research which can be used in other contexts.

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[1] My choice of the plural *contexts* relates to the epistemology of my researching, and the

The positive relationships that Paul Maiteny formed with project teams in TCS have benefited my researching[2]. Problematic issues concerned with the dissemination of his report provided some helpful learning, both about communication processes in TCS, and for the conduct of this research. A question for one of my inquiries in this thesis is *how* Maiteny's conclusion, that TCS could improve its effectiveness "*by bringing organisational relations and processes closer into line with the participatory practice of its projects*" (Maiteny, 1997; p. 25), might be achieved.

Participation has become a 'buzzword' for social care organisations in both the statutory and voluntary sectors in the UK (Singleton, 2001). Roger Singleton, the Chief Executive of Barnados, the largest children's voluntary organisation in the UK, suggests that participation has come to have a special sort of meaning, specifically describing the relationship between social care organisations and service users. In the limited sense of the influence of service users on the activities of practitioners, the "*rhetoric of participation*" has entered the discourse of social care (Shaw, 1997).

Participation in development contexts, and in service evaluations has been claimed to lead to better planning, implementation and evaluations ((Cooke, 2002; Chambers, 1997). Participation is also seen as empowering in giving people control over decisions which concern them, and over their environments, and in transforming consciousness.

The United Nations Charter on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), ratified by the UK government in 1991 provides powerful and comprehensive support for wider interpretation of children and young people's participation in society. Children and young people's active involvement in

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possibility of many realities and ways of seeing, as does my preference for *histories* rather than *history*, and *understandings* rather than *understanding*.

[2] In the thesis I use *researching, experiencing* and *languaging* to reflect these as processes and activities rather than *research, experience* and *language* which are the

local environmental issues and decision-making processes has also been seen as a way of tackling cycles of deprivation in communities. Children's sense of control over their environment and positive sense of self have been identified as key determinants for their successful development (Rutter, 1975, Rutter, 1979, Rutter and Rutter, 1992, Hart, 1998, Hart et al., 2000b).

Participation can just mean 'filling in a form' or 'turning up' (see Chapter 7, Section 7.3). Dick (1997) identifies seven 'dimensions of participation' in research, including participants as informants, as interpreters, as planners, as implementers, as facilitators, as researchers, as recipients. Therefore, I use McClintock's (1996) term *researching with* in the thesis to indicate that something more than, for example, *participation as giving or receiving information*. One reading of the thesis could be as an inquiry into what the *'something more'* could be.

The CASE studentship was set up in 1996. I was looking to change career from university teaching and responded to an OU advertisement for CASE students in 1997. I carried out the research between 1998 and 2002. My histories, traditions and roles are the focus of one of the Inquiry Strands in the thesis.

1.2 My ambitions for the research

In this section I discuss my ambitions for my research at the start and for the thesis at the end, the slippage between these, and what I claim is exciting and new in the thesis. This involves some issues of *alignment*, that is, characterisations of research that I have used in the thesis to make sense of what I did. This section is a *meta-reflection* on the sections following in this chapter. I am placing it first because this reflection is also a

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outcomes of processes and tend then to be talked of as things independent of those involved in the processes. This is discussed further in Chapter 2, section 2.2, Claim 8.

background and context for what follows, and threads through to the concluding chapter.

At the end of the first year of the CASE studentship, when I had developed the initial research questions which are discussed in Section 1.4.1 below, I quoted in my report to TCS and my research supervisors:

> All good research is *for me, for us and for them*; it speaks to three audiences, and contributes to each of these three areas of knowing. (Reason and Marshall, 1987 p. 112).

I saw these audiences reflected in the ambitions with which I started the research:

(i) to improve my understanding and practice of research with people;

(ii) to say something useful about practice designed to enable children and young people's participation in matters which affect them for people in TCS with whom I would be researching;

(iii) to say something new about participatory research for the research community.

At that time these ambitions appeared to me to be unproblematically connected. I did not, for example, consider the differences between '*for*' and '*with*', and between establishing warranties of *usefulness* or *improvement* for other people – the *you's* and *they's*, and for myself. I expected the research methods to include an action learning group, of which I had had some previous experience (Helme (1996), see Section 1.4.1). I thought this and development of the metaphor methodology proposed by David McClintock would enable me to claim my research as 'participatory'. In the distinction made by Peter Reason, my ambition was that my research would be (at least) "*first and second person action research*":

• First person action research/practice skills and methods address the ability of the researcher to foster an inquiring approach to his

or her own life, to act awarely and choicefully, and to assess effects in the outside world while acting.

- Second person action research/practice addresses our ability to inquire face-to-face with others into issues of mutual concern-for example in the service of improving our personal and professional practice both individually and separately ...

- Third-person research/practice aims to create a wider community of inquiry involving persons who, because they cannot be known to each other face-to-face (say, in a large, geographically dispersed corporation), have an impersonal quality (Reason, 2001).

Reason goes on to say *"first person inquiry is in many ways the experiential and practical foundation of all other forms of inquiry"* (ibid.). As I discuss below in Section 1.4, as my understanding of the research unfolded I saw "first person inquiry into participatory practice"- seeing myself *in* the research, as itself requiring to be grounded in an explicit epistemology – how and what can I claim to know, how can I know others' knowing, how can my knowing be knowledge for other people? As I started to explore a constructivist epistemology for my research – at the same time as designing and undertaking the 'participatory' research with TCS presented in Chapter 7, I was also questioning my understanding of research and widening boundaries, *"swimming into an unknown current"* in Moustakas' (1990) metaphor.

In Section 1.5.4 below I describe the struggles in writing the thesis in terms of finding a voice, the emergence of meanings in the writing and problems of selecting what to include from the mass of material. The context for these struggles was the problem of setting out the research questions and creating a transparent structure for the thesis that would show the different threads and connections, and outcomes, and hold different kinds of 'messiness' and uncertainties. The constructivist epistemology of the thesis reveals the complexity of any endeavours with other people. The messiness, unpredictability and emotional rollercoaster of participative practice and the experience of participation threaded through the empirical research with

TCS and children and young people (see, for example, pictures 27 to 29 in Appendix 5). Action research is *"bumbling change"* (Cook, 1998, Mellor, 2001) as is indicated in my metaphors for my research Chapter 5, Section 5.3).

As I write in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.10, *"closure occurs when we accept a satisfying explanation, in terms of the contexts as we construct them at that time"*. The structure in which the research is presented emerged in the contexts of writing a PhD thesis, as I understood this. This structure is outlined in Section 1.4 below and embodied in Chapters 2 to 7 as four interconnected Inquiry Strands. In the Inquiry Strands I establish:

- An constructivist epistemology that provides a basis for understanding what would count as ethical and participatory practising[3], including self-awareness and is the grounding for the inquiries in the thesis;

- A methodology which draws on the participatory qualities of metaphor for researching *with* adults, young people and children;

- A set of conditions for the emergence of respons-able participatory practice with children and young people, that is practice aimed at increasing opportunities for the possibilities of participation (given that whether their experience is participatory is a judgement that other people can only make for themselves).

But the outcome of the thesis is a 'first person inquiry'; in the thesis writing, and in the later stages of the research, the voices of other people – the 'you's' and 'they's' were lost. It was as if others' voices and the messiness of *researching with* were 'structured out', marginalised in

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[3] This is contrast to Chambers' (1997) conclusion that *"the issues are more ethical than epistemological [in Participatory Rural Appraisal]"*(p. 208).

illustrations or relegated to the appendices. Thus a further 'meta' question arose from the thesis as structured in four inquiry strands which is:

> What would need to have occurred for this research to be second person action research, or to *embody* research *with* others?

This question is carried through the four Inquiry Strands to the last chapter.

1.3 The Inquiry Strands, thesis questions and outcomes

I give an account of bringing forth the thesis questions in Section 1.4. There are four preliminary questions which each relate to a different Inquiry Strand in the thesis:

- What are the implications of epistemologically-aware research for *researching with* (Inquiry Strand 1)?

- What are the implications of self-aware research for *researching with* (Inquiry Strand 2)?

- How can metaphors help in researching understandings of participation (Inquiry Strand 3)?

- How can understanding metaphors of participation in TCS help to improve participatory practising (Inquiry Strand 4)?

By 'epistemologically-aware' I mean research in which inquiry into the epistemology – what it is to *know, understand* and *learn* is included in the research, and not a 'given'. A premise on which the epistemology of my thesis stands is summed up by Fell and Russell (1997a) as:

> We humans are self-regulating organisms who live from the inside out (p. 5).

From my inquiry into the constructivist epistemology of my thesis I identify requirements for ethical and participatory practising in research. The epistemology of the thesis requires the researcher to be 'self-aware' in her researching. Thus the epistemology forces the second Inquiry Strand.

By 'self-aware' I mean research in which the researcher inquires into her own traditions – the intellectual background with which she interprets and acts, and histories – the personal experiences which contribute to meaning making. Self-aware research involves self-reflection and attention to the researcher's construing of her experiences in the unfolding of an inquiry. In Inquiry Strand 2 I identify the implications of being self-aware for *researching with*, and the implications of my histories and traditions for subsequent inquiries in the thesis.

Inquiry Strand 3 includes firstly an inquiry into a theory of metaphor which draws on a constructivist epistemology, and secondly an inquiry into the embodiment of this theory in a research praxis. The second part of this inquiry draws on my research experiences in Inquiry Strand 4. This is explained further in Section 1.3. There are two outputs of Inquiry Strand 3: a transferable methodology and a reformulation of the last two research questions. These become:

> **How can appreciating metaphors in stories and pictures enhance ethical and responsible *researching with* (Inquiry Strand 3)?**
>
> **How can appreciating metaphors in stories and pictures illuminate and enhance children and young people's participation and participatory practising with children and young people in an organisation working for social justice (Inquiry Strand 4)?**

Inquiry Strand 4 is an inquiry into the second of these questions, using the methodology developed in Inquiry Strand 3. The output of Inquiry Strand 4

is 'a set of conditions' which if fostered lead to the emergence of respons-able participatory practising with children and young people. These conditions are in the form of metaphor clusters that can be interpreted in terms of participatory practice with children and young people.

A question raised in the course of Inquiry Strand 4 is:

What would it take for an organisation to embody participation in its practising and managing?

This question is taken forward into the last chapter and connected with my responses to draws upon the 'meta' question identified above in Section 1.2:

What would need to have occurred for this research to be second person action research, or to *embody* research *with* others?

In the responses to these last two questions I reflect on the 'structuring out' and 'reifying out' of mess and unpredictability, the muting of multiple voices in texts, and the effects of power in participatory inquiry. Drawing on the relational and participatory qualities of metaphor, the distinctions in judging metaphors proposed in Inquiry Strand 3, and metaphor as a heuristic, I propose a set of questions for participatory practising in TCS and for *researching with*.

1.4 The Inquiry Strands and how the thesis is organised

In this section I present the organisation of the thesis following the definition of organisation put forward by Capra and Flatau (1993):

> The pattern of organisation of any system, living or nonliving, is the configuration of relationships among the systems components that determines the system's essential characteristics (ibid. p. 3).

The organisation of the thesis emerged in my writing it. I want to make the processes of its development transparent for the reader and to engage the reader in the story of my researching. I had difficulty in presenting processes which were essentially recursive and reflexive in the linear form of the thesis as document. Writing the research into the thesis as four sequenced Inquiry Strands was only one of several possibilities. I reflect on the advantages of my choice in Chapter 8.

Figure 1-1 shows the organisation of the thesis in terms of the Inquiry Strands and chapters.
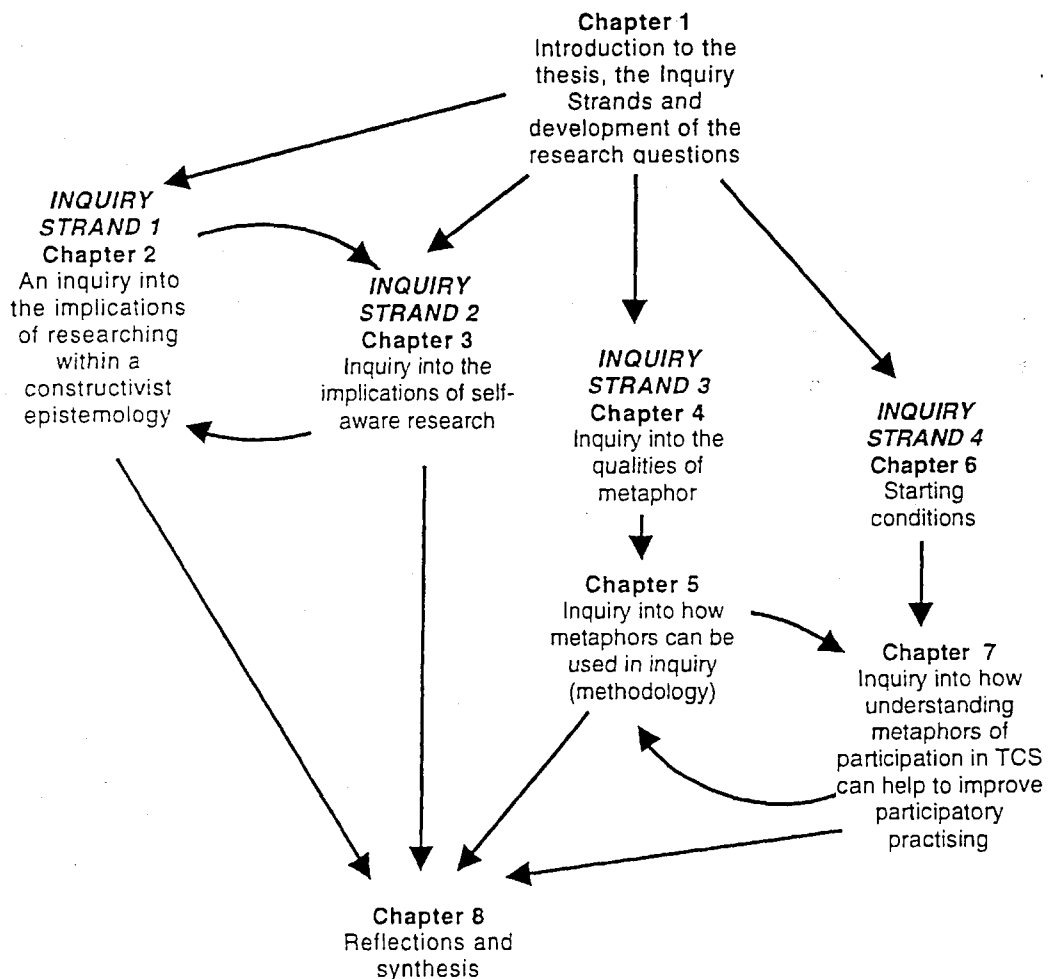
Figure 1-1 A relationship diagram showing the organisation of the thesis as constituted by the relationships between the eight chapters.

In Chapter 2 I articulate the constructivist epistemology of the thesis in ten claims, and inquire into their implications for participatory practice and research. My epistemology locates the researcher **in** the research, as a constructor of knowledge rather than an objective discoverer. Thus the epistemology entails accounting for myself as the constructor of the thesis, particularly the pre-understandings, values and assumptions I brought to my researching. At the same time, self-aware research involves inquiry into what and how I *know*. There is a recursive relationship between *epistemologically-aware* and *self-aware* research.

In Chapter 3 I inquire into my histories and traditions as I judge they are significant for my research. The term that Norma Romm uses for this necessary accounting is a 'trusting constructivist view'. In this view

> ... people cannot desist from offering their own constructions (that embody their particular concerns) in processes of inquiry .. .But they need to recognise the choices they are making as they create constructions, so they can account for these in relation to alternatives in social discourse. as a way of earning others' trust in their ways of seeing and acting (Romm, 2000).

Chapter 4 of the thesis is the first part of Inquiry Strand 3. This is an inquiry into the qualities of metaphor in order to appreciate how metaphor can be helpful in researching understandings of participation in constructivist research. Metaphor is a process of sense-making of experiences that can also trigger enthusiasm and engagement with other people. Metaphors as verbal or pictorial expressions of that process can be instruments of research and data for analysis. In my inquiry I attend to the relational qualities of metaphor, the ambiguity of metaphor use and how metaphors themselves can be 'participative'. The outputs of this inquiry are a summary of metaphor qualities and four questions to structure the development of a methodology.

Chapter 5 is the second part of Inquiry Strand 3. The purpose of Chapter 5 is to draw out a methodology from the output of the metaphor inquiry in conjunction with the mass of my experiencing in Inquiry Strand 4. There is thus a *recursive* relationship between Inquiry Strands 3 and 4. My justification for this is that the *design* of a constructivist inquiry *unfolds* in the process of the inquiry. McClintock (1996) proposed an approach for using metaphors in participative inquiries which was a starting point for Inquiry Strand 4. This approach was substantially adapted and developed in response to the contexts of Inquiry Strand 4 as they emerged.

Inquiring into the methodology of a constructivist inquiry is a way of enabling the inquiry to be *recoverable*, and for the methodology to form the basis for further inquiries. Inquiry Strands 3 and 4 do not reflect the *temporal order* in which the research with TCS was carried out. In writing the thesis, conducting the inquiries in this order has been extremely useful because I could then use the methodology to provide a coherent and structured account of my research in Inquiry Strand 4 in terms of five sequential steps:

1. *engage with people in conversations and activities to elicit stories and pictures;*

2. *explore the contexts of conversations;*

3. *identify metaphors in the stories and pictures and cluster them;*

4. *explore and judge metaphor clusters;*

5. *judge combinations of metaphors.*

In terms of judging metaphors I distinguish between *attractor* and *alternative* metaphors. This is a development of McClintock's (1996) distinction between *appropriate, disabling* and *alternative* metaphors. *Attractor* metaphors are those that in TCS contexts represent powerful and useful ways of thinking about participation, but which become taken for granted and sedimented in formal descriptions of practice. *Alternative*

metaphors are those that arise in everyday talk of experiencing and practising of participation and in the depicting of experiences of 'doing something together'. A further development of David McClintock's research is that *combinations* of metaphors are more likely to bring forth new possibilities than single metaphors.

Chapter 6 is an account of the 'starting conditions' for Inquiry Strand 4. These include the CASE Studentship partnership with TCS which supported my research, an outline of TCS and an introduction to some of the discourses within which participatory practice with children and young people is situated. These discourses include those challenged by participatory practice, for example objectifying and problematising discourses of childhood and youth, and those which participatory practice draws on, for example children's rights.

Chapter 7, Inquiry Strand 4, addresses the question: How can appreciating metaphors in stories and pictures illuminate and enhance children and young people's participation and participatory practising with children and young people in an organisation working for social justice?'

Following the five steps of the methodology, I include in the Inquiry:

1. An account of my engaging in conversations and activities with people in TCS and children and young people, to elicit examples, stories and pictures of participation.

2. An exploration of TCS as the contexts of my research through exploring 'grounded metaphors' evoked in my experiencing.

3. The identification and clustering of metaphors of participation in the stories and pictures, taking into account feedback from research participants on the metaphors and clusters chosen.

4. The exploration and judging of the metaphor clusters in terms of what they *reveal* and *conceal* about participation, and the implications of the metaphors for participatory practising in TCS.

5. The development and application of criteria for judging a combination of metaphors, which leads to the output of Inquiry Strand 4: my proposal of the combination of metaphors:

   Participation as purposeful action

   Participation as space for changing and owning

   Participation as a safe place for learning

   Participation as recognition and respect

as a set of conditions for the emergence of participatory practice.

In Chapter 8 I explore different ways of synthesising the processes and outcomes of the four inquiries. Firstly I review the connections between the inquiry strands and reflect on the effects of this structure on the presentation of the research in the thesis. Secondly I critically evaluate the embodiment of *researching with* in my thesis, using as guidance a set of questions concerning "*ecological narratives*" (Krippendorff, 1998). Thirdly I draw on this evaluation and the Inquiry Strands to offer invitations to TCS concerning embodiment of participatory practice in the organisation.

1.5 The structure of the thesis

In this section I give an account of the development of the research focus, the emergence of the research questions in the Inquiry Strands and the writing of the thesis. This is a plot summary from the point of view of the researcher as author and 'trusting constructivist' (see section 1.3 above), recognising the choices I have made in respect of the epistemology, ethicality and coherence of the research. This is presented as four 'passes'. By using 'pass' I mean to reflect the passing of time, the changes, iterations and the lunges, but in the telling also to show the interconnections and complexities.

At the beginning of the research I was concerned to construct a way of research with metaphors from the vast and multi-disciplinary body of literature on metaphor that would lead to 'enhancement' of practising in an organisation rather than introducing new euphemisms. I also needed to design a process for 'getting to know TCS' as a social justice organisation. This was the first 'pass'.

The second pass – a shift in epistemology, arose from my questioning how it was and what it was that I would <u>know</u> about TCS, and about participatory practice and about research from eliciting stories and metaphors. Until I could make sense of metaphors and stories as ways of knowing I could not make judgements about what would count as 'illuminating and enhancing' practice. I was for a time stuck in a trap of thinking that since I could not know <u>everything</u> about TCS I could not know <u>anything</u> about it for sure. At the same time I was starting to explore 'children' and 'childhood' as discursive constructions and the implications for participatory practising. My exploration was triggered by Adam Phillips' evocative description of children as 'beasts in the nursery'(Phillips, 1999). This resonated with my ambivalence about *researching with* children which I discuss in Chapter 3. I realised I needed to do some personal excavation of the source of this ambivalence.

The third pass – involving children and being ethical – marked that I had at last taken in what TCS people had been saying in our meetings about the need to involve children and young people in my research. In this pass I drew up a Statement of Ethics in Research with Children and Young People but started to question whether this was sufficient to count as being ethical in researching.

The fourth pass was my struggle to write up the research. I recognised that this was my responsibility as a researcher but I was concerned about how to write about my researching in a way that was congruent with doing it. The metaphor of *bricolage* offered ways of inviting readers into my text.

1.5.1 First pass: constructing a research focus and appreciating metaphors

Research, or at least the record of it, has to start somewhere. The starting point for me, after deciding to leave teaching and do a doctorate, was the text of the CASE studentship details, and specifically that which emphasised the topic "**Children creating their environment: metaphors for organisational change, learning and evaluation in TCS**".

I was drawn to the research by the prospect of exploring metaphors, and the opportunity for critical inquiry into an organisation - getting to know it from both the inside and the outside. I was familiar with metaphor theory applied to organisational management through the work of Gareth Morgan (1985; 1997) from studying for an MBA and through teaching management courses. I had reservations about whether looking at metaphors led to enhanced management practice, particularly from the viewpoint of those who were managed. Can people really choose the metaphors, or combination of metaphors, from an almost unlimited selection, "*to suggest an appropriate future*"(Morgan, 1985), the framework for action for

organisations, or for themselves? It appeared to me that this was a complex and very difficult dialectical process, requiring the uncovering and challenging of existing ways of seeing. This was the starting point for Inquiry Strands 2 and 3.

In the last twenty years metaphors have been extensively used in qualitative research[4], in organisational research and development and in therapeutic contexts to the point that consideration of metaphors has become almost ubiquitous (Packwood, 1994, Kay, 1991, Paprotte and Dirven, 1985). However, *pace* Morgan, my starting position was an appreciation of the evocative power of metaphor in literature, and as a heuristic in making sense of a new experience, and sharing with others experiences and emotions and ideas. I was also concerned to investigate how "exploring different metaphors is a way of addressing differences in understanding" (McClintock, 1996).
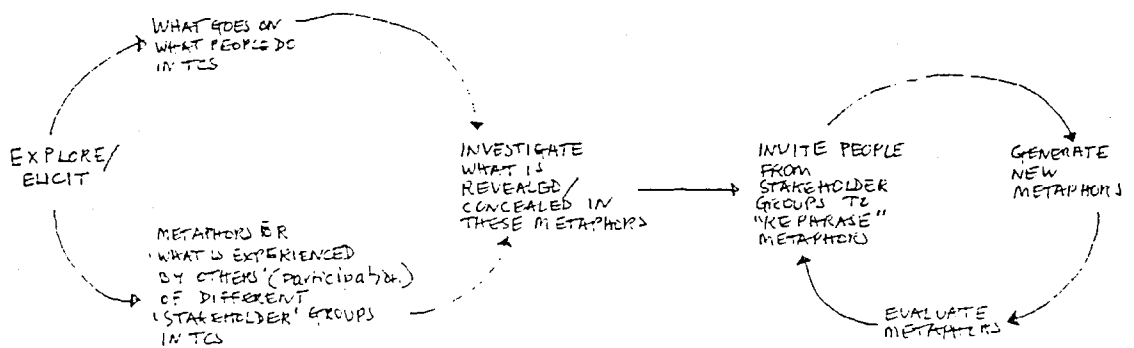
Figure 1-2: Pass one model for my research

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[4] By the term 'qualitative research' I mean research around questions such as 'how and why?', 'what did it feel like?', and processes and meanings. This is in contrast to 'quantitative research' which is concerned with questions such as 'how many?', 'how often?', and correlations, associations and statistical inference (Fuller,and Petch 1995) . Quantitative research can be characterised as within an objectivist/positivist epistemology (see Table 2.2 in Chapter 2, Section 2.3). Characteristics of qualitative inquiry are outlined in Chapter 5.

In the first model (Figure 1-2) I conceived the research as a three-stage process. The first stage would involve an investigation of 'what goes on' in TCS, thinking in terms of TCS as a case study. This would particularly focus on the practice and management of those projects that aimed to "*[facilitate] children's participation in their environments*" and "*[respond] to children's participation in constructing its own roles and tasks*". These italicised phrases are taken from the original research proposal. I saw this as 'critical organisational research' rather than as 'managerial research' (Stablein, 1999), and concerned with the questions 'How can practitioners practice as they see best in a managed environment?' and 'How can practice be best managed?'

I anticipated that at the same time I would elicit the metaphors of different stakeholders within TCS, including practitioners, managers, children and others, through conversations about participation.

In the second stage these "metaphors of participation" would be explored in the context of TCS. This would draw on an appreciation of metaphors as:

(i)   having entailments "through which they highlight and make coherent certain aspects of our experience" (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; p. 156) and therefore implications for actions

(ii)   highlighting and suppressing aspects of experience (Goatly, 1997) (or 'revealing and concealing' (McClintock and Ison, 1994a, McClintock, 1996)).

Metaphors can be classified in terms of '*root metaphors*' (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). For example, common root metaphors in Western culture are that argument is war, and time is money. In using metaphors in therapy Zimmerman and Dickerson (1994) refer to '*deep metaphors*' which structure family relationships. Krippendorff argues that "metaphors *organise their user's perceptions and*, when acted upon, *can create the*

realities experienced" (Krippendorff, 1993; p. 5, emphasis as original). From texts I saw that the surfacing of different metaphor might help different groups of people to communicate and facilitate organisational change (Marshak, 1993; Barrett and Cooperrider, 1990; Vince, 1996; Morgan, 1993, Morgan, 1997).

But I was interested in inquiring further into what metaphors 'do', why and how we choose or take for granted metaphors and how different or new metaphors get accepted as 'valid' (McClintock and Ison, 1994a). From my own experiences of being unable to provide a metaphor to order, I perceived that invitations to develop metaphors of participation might not be taken up. I also wanted to avoid what (Alvesson and Wilmott, 1996) refer to as a 'supermarket', or 'pick and mix' approach to the collection of metaphors in which metaphor mastery is a matter of quantity. This was the starting point of Inquiry Strand 3.

I hypothesised that people from different groups in TCS would have different root metaphors for participation, from their different experiences and perspectives. Research by Maiteny (1997) and (Gabriel (1998a) into the experience of practitioners and managers in TCS indicated that some felt there was incongruity between the participatory work that was being done with children and young people and the organisational structures and processes within which this was being practised. My early discussions with some practitioners and managers revealed differences in views of organisational changes and concern about communication in the organisation.

In the third stage of the research (Figure 1-2) I originally planned to initiate an iterative cycle of action learning. Some of the 'metaphor-makers' would be invited to consider their own and others' metaphors, highlights and suppressions, roots and masters, meanings for practice and organisation, and to generate new shared metaphors, and then re-evaluate them in the

light of practice experience. This stage referred to the original research proposal, and

> the potential [of the research project] to trigger other cycles of learning and action through children's participation and through critical reflection on practice (Appendix 1.1)

It also reflected my perspectives on the research at the time. I had incorporated into my teaching practice cyclical theories of learning. I appreciated action learning as a recursive process of planning, acting, observing and reflecting (Carr et al., 1986, Stringer, 1996).

In the iterations of my first pass model I developed two 'research questions'. These were included in the information about the research circulated within TCS. They were also sent out to people with whom I arranged to talk about their role in TCS and their examples of participation.

> Question One: What are the distinctions in constructions of participation, participating and being a participant, and children and young people's participation in TCS?

This question reflected my learning from two workshops I had conducted with practitioners from TCS. This was that helping others to participate, or providing the contexts for them to do so, was easier to talk about, and somehow different from what it was to be a participant oneself.

The second research question reflected my understanding that my conversations with people in the organisation were an intervention. As such these might offer the possibility of change and learning, but I could not direct what the meaning of my research might be for others.

> Question Two: How can the eliciting and communication of these constructions of participation provoke change (through learning and evaluation) in TCS?

During the first pass I worked on a way of researching in which I could get to know TCS as the contexts of my research and in which the different understandings of participation could be surfaced. However the third 'action research cycles' stage became problematic as the research unfolded. There were logistical and resource issues related to events in the organisation which are outlined in Chapter 7 step 2. More significantly, I was uncertain how this last stage might be done within the context of this research. Managing my own understanding of constructivist researching in the process of the first two stages proved difficult. The face to face action learning group, which I had originally planned, was replaced with various strategies to 'carry on conversations' started in the first stage. These included letters, short papers and meetings with individuals.

1.5.2   Second Pass: moving from outside to inside the research

In the second pass I struggled to move from seeing myself outside the research to including myself as researcher in it. This was a shift in epistemology – what I understood by *knowing* in research.

In an early meeting about the research with a small group of project leaders I proposed two contrasting metaphors for what social work was about – filling the cracks in the wall, or taking the wall down[5]. I asked which they thought described what they did. The immediate answer from one project leader was that they[6] were not social workers {02b/notes}[7]. At the time this was a reminder for me of my being 'outside', that I did not know this organisation. The offer of a metaphor stopped rather than helped the flow of

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[5] This distinction reflects comments such as "Charities are not the sticking plaster of the welfare state ... but the cement that binds our society" (The Guardian 26 May 1993)
[6] I use 'they', 'their', 'them','themselves' as singular as well as plural pronouns, instead of the gender specific pronouns 'he', 'she' etc., as a stylistic preference and towards protecting the anonymity of respondents.
[7] Throughout the thesis I use original data. Numbered references in { } brackets refer to a chronological list of all data sources in Appendix 2. Referencing protocols are described in Chapter 7.

conversation. Although another project leader then took up the metaphor, it was as if the energy had temporarily left the conversation, although I was thinking furiously how to proceed.

In the context of TCS the question and response were politically charged. My question, which had drawn on projects being in the Social Work Division[8] of TCS, evoked a history of public debate about what TCS 'does'. As I discuss in Chapter 4, metaphors generate new ways of thinking and engage people. They also constrain, and determine 'how people do (and don't do) things here'. And in conversations they can produce disorder. My question and the response also evoked a history of oppositions between social work and community work and youth work. I note that in subsequent discussion about what the project leaders would call what they did, for example *community work, or community development* I did not need to ask what the differences were between these and social work: I 'took them as shared'[9]. What I 'notice as difference' and 'take as shared' is to do with who I, the researcher, am and my understanding. This was a reminder of the need to be 'self-aware' in my research.

In the first pass model I proposed various roles for myself, as researcher, including 'research designer', 'metaphor elicitor', 'organisation explorer', 'metaphor investigator', 'reflection group facilitator'. My understanding of these roles and how I undertake them reflects my previous experiences and understandings and these also form the basis, or 'pre-understandings', from which I make sense of my learning from researching. Being a reflexive researcher

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[8] Renamed 'Children and Young Person's Division' in 2001.
[9] This is a phrase that von Glaserfield quotes Paul Cobb as using in his work on constructivist teaching in mathematics (von Glaserfeld, 1996) . This is not the same as 'taken as if shared', which implies some sort of deliberate decision-making process.

> ... requires researchers, to the extent of their ability, to analyse and display publicly their history, values and assumptions, as well as the inter-relationship with their participants (King, 1996; p. 176).

Recognising the legitimacy of this was not easy for me. The process of self-questioning was painful, and had some personal consequences outside the research. This was the starting point of Inquiry Strand 2.
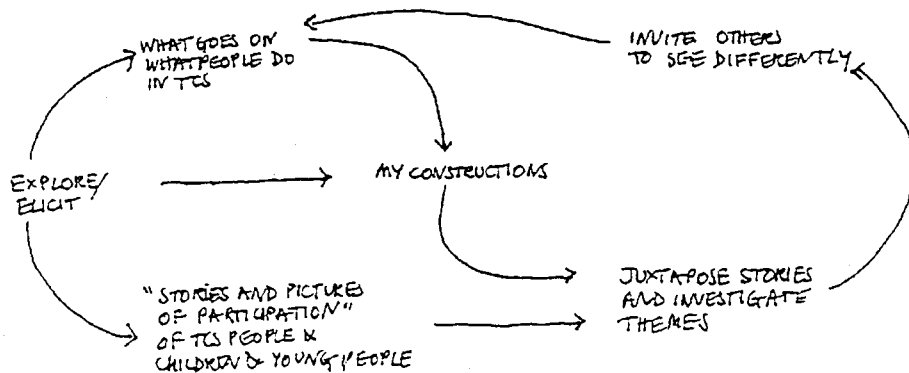
Figure 1-3: Pass Two research model

In the second iteration of the research model I located myself as *my constructions* within the research as shown in Figure 1-3. I moved from a 'first order' position of seeing myself as an objective independent observer outside the research, to a 'second order' position of recognising *"there is no observation without an observer. There is nothing spoken without a speaker, there is no action without an actor"* (Glanville, 1998; p 85). I took the position that all research is an intervention, and there are different forms of interventions. In conversations with my research supervisors and with CF we discussed the distinctions between missionaries and colonists, and between 'poking with a stick', and 'rubbing up against' as metaphors for research interventions and for being a 'participant researcher'.

Instead of an action learning set, I conceived the third stage of the research
as leading to invitations to 'see differently' what goes on in the
organisation and what people do.

The emergence of the epistemology of the research was interwoven with the
development of my ideas about the methods. I interpreted 'children
creating their environment' as a metaphor for organisational learning,
change and evaluation in three different ways. Firstly, it can imply an
understanding of children as essentially creative, imaginative and playful,
turning boxes into houses, ships, and almost empty spaces into universes, as
Hart illustrated from his research in the 1970s (Hart, 1978). This
interpretation is an invitation to see organisational learning as achieved
through the same processes. Thus David Cooperrider invokes the metaphor
"the child as the agent of inquiry" as one *"where wonder, learning, and the
dialogical imagination will be modus operandi"* for the practice of
organisational development, and asks,

> Why is uninhibited wonder something we generally restrict to
> children? If doing good inquiry is at the heart of [Organisational
> Development], why then so little talk of things like awe, curiosity,
> veneration, surprise, delight, amazement, and wonder - in short,
> everything that serves to infuse what OD has traditionally referred to
> as the "spirit of inquiry (Cooperrider, 1996)

I found Cooperrider's metaphor problematic, especially for an organisation
in which practitioners work with the realities of children's lives, and the
complex and often conflicting constructions of children and childhood
which suffuse actions and writings, theories and policies[10]. But his ideas of
appreciative inquiry and the valuing of imagination in organisations were
helpful to me in developing the research methods. Appreciative inquiry
focuses on looking for what works, because success is seen as energising

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[10] The complexity can be captured in the difference between 'childlike' - presumably
what Cooperrider was thinking of - and 'childish' which might result in a different
organisation. There was an echo of Cooperrider's metaphor in the view of a research
participant that the involvement of children and young people might revitalise TCS as an
organisation. This is discussed in Chapter 7.

and inspiring (Hammond, 1996, Srivastra and Cooperrider, 1990). I was
concerned that in my research with TCS I should focus on positive example
of participation to maintain my enthusiasm, and as a way of validating other
people's experiences.

A second interpretation of the research focus is to understand 'children
creating their environment' as an epistemological metaphor for
organisational learning. In this sense, knowledge of our environment is not
a process of developing a more or less accurate picture of the 'real' world,
which is separate and independent from ourselves, like holding up a mirror.
It is a process of making sense of experiences through constructions and
classifications which themselves also constitute the experience. Children
get to know their environment through constructions derived from the
interaction between them and the environment. For Edith Cobb, the
environment is 'fingered over' by children, and *"interpreted through
personal, social and cultural lenses, and the outcome is never a copy"*
(Cobb, 1977 in Matthews, 1992).

Inquiry into the metaphor 'children creating their environment' as an
account of what is knowing also has other entailments for thinking about
organisational learning. Children's environments change as children grow
and change. As they develop physiologically, their environment expands
too. But for this process to make further development possible, some
stability in their surroundings is needed together with familiarity and
comfort in *"adventures of the senses"*, that Erikson refers to as 'basic trust'
(Erikson, 1965; p. 239). I connect this with the need for anyone or any
organisation to conserve their identity to fit with their environment (Gash
and Kenny, 1991).

The epistemology claims in Inquiry Strand 2 were developed during the
second pass of my research. Many of the ideas were not new to me, but I
reread with much greater understanding texts I had encountered as a

philosophy student. I could connect the ideas to new reading and I could embody them in my researching. The themes of childhood as constructed, children's relationship with the environment, trust and place and space which I referred to in this section recur in the Inquiry Strands. The next two passes concern the ethics of my researching, and the writing of it.

1.5.3 Third Pass : involving children and young people and ethical researching

A further interpretation of 'children creating their environments: metaphors for organisational, change, learning and development' is as a metaphor of ethicality, an 'ought' statement. As a matter of social justice or of emancipatory practice, children ought to be able, or enabled, to construct their own environments, have a voice in decision-making, be heard in matters which directly concern them. Thus perhaps, organisational learning and change and evaluation should also be considered matters of social justice, processes achieved through the redistribution of power and recognition of difference. A practitioner's question in one of my early research conversations was, *"How can practitioners work to empower and involve clients in decision-making processes if the decision-making in the organisation excludes them?"* (see also [Mainteny, 1997; Gabriel, 1998a).

As recounted in Chapter 6, working for the participation of children and young people had become a key issue for TCS. Children's participation was no longer just concerned with their participation in their neighbourhoods, in political and environmental decision-making and those issues which concerned them personally, but also in the governance of The Society. After some personal reservations which I discuss in Chapter 3 I wanted to involve children and young people in the research. The question for me was

> How can I include children and young people in the research, in such a way that their stories and metaphors of participation can be put

> alongside those of adults in TCS, rather than as a special corner for 'children's tales'? {Helme, DM7}

As I planned research sessions with children and young people, the research data was expanded to include other 'ways of talking about and picturing participation', including drawings and rich pictures, and some group activities. These are detailed in Chapter 5. As a result of the process of relationship building with TCS a commitment was generated that I would draw up a Statement of Ethics in research with children and young people. This would reflect not just good practice, but also The Society's duty of protection in respect of those with whom it was working. I write about this in Chapter 7. My Statement, which is included in Appendix 4 reflects the usual concerns in respect of research with people.

I was aware, however, that codes of ethics designed to protect certain groups from exploitation on the grounds of their special vulnerability, may also perpetuate a system in which their views are given less weight. Morrow and Richards point out, *"an overly protective stance towards children may have the effect of reducing children's potential to participate in research"* (Morrow and Richards, 1996; p. 97), with the consequence that there may be areas of children's lives about which they cannot be heard[11]. This pointed to the importance of inquiring into the implications for ethical research of a constructivist epistemology in Inquiry Strand 1.

In a short paper setting out my ideas for involving children, which I circulated for discussion I wrote:

> I don't want to set up a particular corner of the research that is 'just for children and young people', so that their views are thought of as 'special' or somehow separate from the rest of the research, so it is

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[11] Morrow and Richards actually write *"the consequence ... may well be that there are various aspects of children's lives that we simply know nothing about"* (Morrow and Richards 1996 p. 97). I am uncomfortable with this. Ought we (adults, researchers) to know about all aspects of children's lives? Even if it is to develop beneficial interventions? How this question is answered reveals different perspectives on research, and about children.

> important that the questions I would like to explore are the same as for the other people (individuals and groups of adults) involved in the research, and that I can put the 'answers' side by side. (Helme 1999/{DM7})

Including children and young people alongside adults in this way had implications for how I selected the data and what I considered in the analysis. I took a holistic approach to the presentation and analysis of the primary data, rather than an analysis of fine detail, as a way of dealing with several 'dimensions of difference'. These do not just include differences between children and adults, managers and project workers. For example these dimensions of difference include relative age, power, linguistic or artistic competence of those whose stories and pictures are the data for the research. Differences also include the variety of contexts in which the stories and pictures were elicited and observed: including one to one conversations in offices, group discussions and presentations, facilitated groups, primary school classrooms, and mountain biking through a forest.

Guba and Lincoln write that constructivist inquiry actually involves greater ethical risks than conventional 'scientific' inquiry (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). The risks they identify concern face-to-face contact, the difficulty of maintaining confidentiality and privacy, and in the constraints of the short time period of inquiry, of violation of trust and the need for open negotiation, and finally, the risk inherent in case studies and participative research, in the selection for presentation of multiple constructions.

George Kelly argued that rules, e.g. moral laws, ethical codes, are *"handy for the morally near-sighted"* (which he also claimed included most of us) (Kelly, 1969). I found this metaphor helpful for inquiring into what it is for a researcher to be responsible in research, which I understand as a second order appreciation. A second order perspective locates what is seen as to do with the observer. Being near sighted is good enough in many everyday situations. However it limits the potential for movement, and perhaps

relationships with others. To see better involves both improving the quality of your own vision and moving closer to that which you wish to see. To do that you first have to be aware of your own nearsightedness and the limitations. In an infinite universe perfect sight of everything is unattainable, but you need to see as best you can that which you want to see.

The third pass introduces developments in my understanding of the ethics of researching, triggered by the inclusion of children and young people and the drawing up of a Statement of Ethics. This became part of Inquiry Strand 1.

1.5.4 Fourth Pass: writing up the thesis in ways congruent with the doing of the research

In my thesis I wanted to write about the research and about TCS as I have experienced it. My experience has been as a participant in conversations, with observations and feelings. As a thesis it has had to be written in a way that meets the requirements of 'the relevant research community' (Altheide and Johnson, 1998, Alvesson and Skölderberg, 2000) and within the spirit of the CASE studentship. The thesis is also a constructivist and self-aware account of personal learning. An aspect of Inquiry Strand 2 was my struggle to find a voice of my own in which to write a thesis that met my perception of these requirements.

The writing in its final form is at least for the reflexive writer, a freezing, a snapshot of a movie. The contexts of the research – those parts of TCS and the Open University and my personal life impinging on the research - are not static, but constantly changing. The process of writing forces stasis upon the dynamics of research as it is lived, in the same way that Burrell writes of (organisational) conceptualisations *"performing an imprisoning*

act", and stasis *"through which the mobile, the dynamic, the restless are forced to offer themselves up to the gaze of the observer"* (Burrell, 1999).

A second issue is that the act of writing up research is also theorising the practice of research. Writing and rewriting the practice brings forth the theory. Different interpretations and meanings are always possible.

> One writes about the meanings in practice and through writing creates the meanings of practice. Practice is itself always changing hence there are always new meanings to be written about. At the same time, through writing, the meaning of practice is re-created, always cast anew (Usher, 1993; p. 100, in Bolton, 2001).

The process of writing has seemed to me at times an endlessly recursive trap, each draft a new level of emergent order *"in which things of all sorts become designated and thus made meaningful"* (Krieger, 1999).

Writing up the research is also selective. Van Maanen writes of the ordering of 'realist' tales of research working by synecdoche, a form of metaphor in which the part stands for the whole (Van Maanen, 1988). In a conversation with me about the difficulty and additional work involved in an online system for projects to give information about their work, a project leader said that it was as if the people in headquarters had an idea of one specific project when they developed these things, which unfortunately did not resemble any of the actual projects {67b}. Thus 'TCS', 'practitioners', 'managers', 'children and young people' of which I write, could be considered as synecdoches, standing for my limited and partial knowledge but including all. But within the epistemology of this research, what it is to know, is just that. It is important to signal the particular perspective, the experiences that are being drawn upon, and I have tried to do this in writing the thesis.

A metaphor for the process of both doing and writing up the research that captures my experiencing is 'bricolage' and the researcher as

bricoleur/euse. The appropriateness of this term for qualitative research has been questioned, most notably by Hammersley (1999). He suggests its louche origins and dubious associations (Levi-Strauss included) are completely inadequate to represent the rigour and non-partisanship for which qualitative research should aim.

However, Denzin and Lincoln offer a definition with resonances for my researching:

> The *bricoleur* produces a *bricolage*, that is, a pieced-together, close knit set of practices that provide solutions to a problem in a concrete situation .... The qualitative researcher-as-*bricoleur* uses the tools of his or her methodological trade, deploying whatever strategies, methods, or empirical material as are at hand... If new tools have to be invented, or pieced together, then the researcher will do this. The choice of which tools to use, which research practices to employ, is not set in advance ((Denzin and Lincoln, 1998c; p. 3)[12].

A related metaphor which could be put alongside Hammersley's alternative metaphor of boat building is that of weaving. The researcher is a weaver, threading different yarns into something both useful and aesthetic, in which the different colours and textures are enhanced.

Mountains and gaps are different kinds of challenges in writing up. I have taken Rodwell's advice that narrative is the most appropriate technique in writing constructivist research, in *"conquering a mountain of material"* ((Rodwell, 1998 p. 174). As a researcher, I am aware of the 'one that got away' - the unrecorded conversation when the tape failed, the key meeting that was cancelled, the projects too far away to visit, the mislaid (or never obtained) documents, the questions I should have asked and did not, comments from others that were left unexplored. But I am also aware of the boxes of papers and tapes, the excitements and surprises, and the

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[12] Thus *"in the creative stage of ideas you are allowed to use anything and everything to get things going"* Segal, L. 1986: p. 162).

authority with which I can speak of what I know, and want to convey this to the reader.

In working with these metaphors, of the reader 'following in my footsteps', and researcher as bricoleuse/tricoteuse, my aim was to weave events and ideas together, and to invite the reader to see the research both as an emergent process and as systemic whole in which the 'entities' and their relationships are identified. However these have involved reworkings of chapters and the relationships between chapters. Specifically in first drafts the gap became apparent between the constructivist epistemology of the research and metaphor theory, and the application of the research methods. Theories make sense of practices and practices make sense of theories.

1.6 Summary of Chapter 1

In this chapter I introduced the four Inquiry Strands in the thesis and their associated questions:

- What are the implications of epistemologically-aware research for 'researching with' (Inquiry Strand 1)?

- What are the implications of self-aware research for 'researching with' (Inquiry Strand 2)?

- How can metaphors help in researching understandings of participation (Inquiry Strand 3)?

- How can understanding metaphors of participation in TCS help to improve participatory practising (Inquiry Strand 4)?

I also identified a 'meta question' to take forward to the last chapter:

- What would need to have occurred for this research to be second person action research, or to *embody* research *with* others?

I introduced myself as knowledge producer, and the background of the research, and gave an account of how the construction of the thesis as shown in Figure 1-1 addresses the thesis questions.

I distinguished the processes of knowledge production in which the thesis questions emerged as four 'passes' in Section 1.4. The three main issues that surfaced in the passes were:

- the importance of the epistemology of the thesis in terms of how my research would count as knowledge;

- the implications of a constructivist epistemology for the researcher in accounting for herself in the thesis;

- metaphor theory as a field of study in the thesis.

These are what I cover in the next three chapters.

Chapter 2 : An inquiry into the implications of researching within a constructivist epistemology

2.1 Introduction: the place of epistemology in my thesis

In this chapter I inquire into the epistemology of my thesis and the
implications of the epistemology for 'researching with'. This is Inquiry
Strand 1. Epistemology is concerned with questions such as 'what is
knowledge', 'how do we know that we know', 'what do I take to be
evidence about what I know'. It is the study of *"how we know and what
the rules for knowing are"* (Scheurich, 1996; p. 29)[13]. These rules are our

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[13] There are different interpretations of epistemology as a branch of philosophy, as
Scheurich points out. For example, epistemology has been restricted to the study of
'scientific' knowledge. Wider interpretations of epistemology, particularly in the
philosophy of language, were a bone of contention in mid-twentieth century Western
philosophy - *"epistemology has kidnapped modern philosophy and wellnigh ruined it"*
(Durrant, W. 1962: p. 13). He also hopes *"...the study of the knowledge-process will be
recognised as the business of the science of psychology"*(ibid). On this view epistemology

claims for what counts as knowledge. The criteria for evaluating the quality of the research must also take account of the epistemology of the research to be meaningful (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998a). The epistemology of my thesis is summarised in ten epistemological claims. These are explored in Section 2.2 of this chapter and connected with the thesis questions.

Désautels and Roth (1999) describe epistemology as a practice operating and interacting in language, and enacted in conversations. They illustrate this in analysing high school students' conversations about scientific knowledge. Questions, such as the teacher's 'What <u>do</u> we see?' about magnetic field experiments trigger conversations about whether magnetic fields are being perceived, or patterns in iron filings, or whether what is seen is spoken into being in the classroom. In the unfolding of the conversations *"different positions are discursively constituted"* which students can work out and identify themselves with (ibid. p. 37).

Désautels and Roth's account has two different resonances for me. The first is a reminder of a small, half forgotten epiphany in an undergraduate epistemology class when we looked at a shadow on a screen and some of us saw a revolving object and others a changing shape. The second resonance is between the classroom conversations and conversations I have had with my research supervisors and critical friend in their invitations to me to inquire into my experiences; these conversations formed the basis for the Inquiry Strand 2 of the thesis into my traditions and histories. More specifically these conversations provided space for inquiry into different epistemological positions. Since I articulated these positions in

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is only a subsection of metaphysics, distinct from ontology (the nature of reality) and ethics, rather than epistemology entailing understandings of what it is to be and to be ethical.

metaphors[14], these conversations were important for the third Inquiry Strand, and developing my understanding of metaphor as a way of knowing.

As well as general epistemological questions concerning my research, such as 'How is my research bringing forth knowledge?' and 'What is it that I am claiming to know from my research?' I had a set of epistemological questions specific to the area of my research and the thesis questions. These included:

(i)   What have metaphors, stories and pictures to do with knowing?

(ii)   What will I take to be evidences of people's knowing of participation and my knowing of TCS in my researching?

(iii)   How is my knowing knowledge for other people?

(iv)   Is children's knowing different from adults' knowing, and in what ways?

(v)   How can organisations be said *to know* and is this different from how people know?

All these questions require an explicit inquiry into the way that epistemology influences research.

Definitions of research terms such as 'research methods', 'data' and 'empirical' draw their meaning from the epistemology in which they are situated (Scheurich, 1996). In part answer to questions (i) and (ii) above, my epistemology leads me to consider that asking for examples or stories of participation is asking an epistemological question (Marta, 1995). The example-giver's knowing of participation is implicit in their example of participation.

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[14] Some of these metaphors are discussed in Chapter 5.

The epistemology of my thesis emerged from this inquiry and in the practice of my researching. Désautels and Roth describe how " *the process [the teacher] started for transforming the epistemological context for learning physics also changed the epistemological context of his own practice, and thereby his pedagogical practice*" (ibid. p. 42). However as they note, these transformations take time and do not necessarily lead to changes in the students' epistemologies. They also note that these class conversations were among many other conversations going on for those involved. Teachers and students probably imported new topics into the classroom setting from other conversations they were participants in. The complexity of the evolving process cannot be determined. Bringing forth my epistemology was not a sudden illumination, or epiphany of the sort I write about in Chapter 3, but a struggle with different sorts of dizziness.

2.1.1   The constructivist metaphor and connections with systems thinking

The epistemology I brought to the research was a broadly constructivist one. I was challenged to articulate this further, hence this Inquiry Strand. I was also challenged to connect this epistemology to systems thinking as this was important tradition in my new context, and more particularly to metaphors. Much of this is explored more specifically in the third Inquiry Strand. This section is for thinking more deeply into a constructivist epistemology and connecting it to systems thinking.

Abstract ideas like epistemology, theory and metaphor can only be talked of in metaphors[15]. Von Glaserfeld (1984) claims that Giambattista Vico , the eighteenth century historian, was the first "true constructivist" in arguing that *verum ipsum factum* - the truth is the same as the made, or in Spivey's (1997)'s translation, "*we know it [truth] because we made it*". Piaget may have been the first to use the metaphor of the *construction* of reality

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[15] This is discussed in Chapter 4.

(Piaget, 1954). However 'Konstruktivism' was already in use with regard to a post-revolutionary Russian art movement of the 1920s. This movement considered architecture the supreme aesthetic form, and included artists such as Nabo and El Lissitsky. In his printed book of symbols and words 'A Suprematist Tale of Two Squares in Six Constructions' El Lissitsky inscribed (in Russian) "*built 1920 Vitebsk*" (Steiner, 1999). Thus he considered this book as 'built', rather than written or drawn, in Vitebsk. However 'building' is often just seen as the process of assembling bricks and mortar between the design stage and the use of the building – which may not be what the designers or builders had in mind. To indicate a more dynamic and holistic interpretation of the metaphor of construction I link constructivism with systems theory.

In his book, *The Social Construction of What?* Ian Hacking (1999) writes of there being "too many metaphors" in constructionist/constructivist[16] discourse. Construction is both "*trendy*" (p. 35) and "*stale*" (p. 49).

> Uttering the very phrase 'social construction' seems more like standing up at a revival meeting than communicating a thesis or project (ibid. p. 36).

The trouble is, according to Hacking, that constructionism has become part of the discourse it is trying to undo. He calls for the metaphor of construction to keep one element of its literal meaning in order to be 'refreshed', that of building or assembling from parts (Hacking, 1998). Thus for him a book which is a "*paragon of fairly literal constructionism ...*

presents a history of crafting various parts which are in turn assembled into

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[16] Although Hacking is primarily writing about 'social construction' I consider what he has to say is relevant for constructivism too in terms of the root metaphor. There are overlaps and fuzzy boundaries (Rodwell and Byers, 1997), between the 'n's' and the 'v's' as Papert(1990) refers to them. But in contrast to some authors (for example Parton and O'Byrne (2000) and Velody and Williams (1998)) who slip between n's and v's I think there are significant differences. A discussion of these is beyond the scope of my thesis, but I would point to differences between the processes of construction (Claims 5, 6, 7) which may be viewed as socially negotiated and primarily linguistic by social constructionists, and Claim 10, human interaction which social constructionists might see as a process of linguistic coupling.

larger structures" (Hacking, 1999; p. 52). Buildings are also always more than the sum of their parts (ibid.).

The second metaphor that Hacking advocates is constructionism as an *unmasking turn of mind.* " *'The unmasking turn of mind' does not try to refute ideas but to harm them by exhibiting their 'extra-theoretical function'* " (ibid. p. 94). Thus inquiry based on constructionist ideas reveals ideologies or "*vision[s] of underlying reality*" in social and scientific practices (ibid. p 95). In my interpretation this involves the surfacing of patterns of connections, and 'standing back' or abstracting from the practice, and seeing the practice in its contexts. All of these I associate with systems thinking.

The definition of a *system* or *system of interest* as I use the terms in the thesis is that:

1. A system is an assembly of components connected together in an organised way.

2. The components are affected by being in the system and the behaviour of the system is changed if they leave it.

3. This organised assembly of components does something.

4. *This assembly as a whole has been identified by someone who is interested in it.*

5. *Putting a boundary around this organised assembly of components distinguishes it from its context or environment.*

(The Open University, 2000; p. 40-41, my italics)

I have emphasised the fourth and fifth points to indicate connections with my constructivist epistemology. In the above definition, systems are not *in the world* but are constructions of someone, or 'an observer' (see Table 2-1 below). Identifying a system – setting a boundary - involves making epistemological judgements of what knowledge and way of knowing are considered relevant. Boundary setting involves ethical judgements

concerning who are the knowers to be included – who is in and who is out – and what counts as improvement or enhancement in this system (Midgley et al., 1998, Flood, 1999). I refer to boundary setting and boundary maintenance as useful concepts for exploring participation in Chapter 7.

2.2 Making epistemological claims

In exploring my epistemology I was able to articulate ten epistemological claims. These are set out in Table 2-1. Although I set them out separately in the table, my epistemological claims are interrelated and I move among them in the discussion. These claims form the starting point for my inquiry into the implications of adopting this epistemology in the research.

Table 2-1: The epistemology of my thesis summarised in ten claims.

1. Knowledge is a process of construction in which we make sense of our experiencing.

2. When we experience something as real, it is real to us. We each construct our own reality in experience.

3. Knowing is a process of making of distinctions and we make sense of our experiences through categorising.

4. Meanings are generated within a context to which we have also given meaning.

5. Knowing, the making of distinctions and the process of categorisation are embodied processes.

6. Knowing, the making of distinctions and the process of categorisation are imaginative processes.

7. There is no one way of knowing

8. Our constructions – of the 'things' in the outside world, including objects, people and their understandings, are brought forth in language.

9. In conversations and dialogue with other people and writing we do not exchange meanings, but present opportunities and constraints for interpretation.

10. Knowing is a recursive process: in making sense of our experiences we distinguish those ways of knowing which enable us to achieve closure.

Claim 1: Knowledge is a process of construction in which we – irrespective of age, make sense of our experiencing.

My first claim is particularly associated with Piaget's 'genetic epistemology' (Piaget and Inhelder, 1969, Piaget, 1954). (The term 'genetic' does not refer to heredity, but to the genesis or generating of cognition). Thus:

> knowledge for Piaget is never (and can never be) a 'representation' of the real world. Instead it is the collection of conceptual structures that turn out to be 'adopted' or 'viable within the knowing subject's range of experience' (von Glaserfield 1989).

Von Glaserfeld (1990) refers to this claim as 'trivial constructivism'. This is that knowledge is not 'out there' to be acquired, but brought forth in our experiencing. Knowing is an active construction rather than a passive reception of sense data. How we come to know is more like working in our own construction yards than mirroring what goes on outside us in the world (Potter, 1997).

Theories explicitly and implicitly structure our constructions. These constructions also constitute what it is we know – they shape our subsequent experiencing and have implications for actions. Theories of childhood, for instance, frame what we think children can and should know and do.

To connect Claim 1 with the thesis questions, and show how recognising constructions is 'unmasking' (Section 2.1.1) I discuss interpretations of Piaget's developmental theory of childhood. This theory was based on genetic epistemology and Piaget's further assumption that cognitive organisation was achieved through increasingly complicated and integrated ways. From his research on children's accomplishment of specific tasks Piaget concluded that "*this process of growth does not take place*

haphazardly but forms a developmental sequence" (Piaget, 1970; p.5). He elaborated this sequence as four major stages in the child's cognitive development from birth to adulthood, the point at which the child develops the capacity of abstract reasoning.

Harden et al.(2000) claim that developmental theory based on Piaget's ideas is at the core of the construction of childhood in Western societies, embedded in everyday thinking, having material and practical effects on social interaction and organisation. A way of understanding how theories become unquestionable is that they become in Kuhn's (1970) term 'a paradigm'. That is, developmental theory of childhood has become one of

> those universally recognised scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners (ibid.)[17].

A paradigm *"... governs, in the first instance, not a subject matter but rather a group of practitioners"* (ibid.) p. 180. Replication of Piaget's research indicates that his research methods were based on under-estimations of children's abilities and therefore his conclusions are questionable (Spencer and Darvizeh, 1995, Butterworth, 1987). However Piaget's conclusions are still influential in teaching methods and testing in education, and in research involving children (Arksey and Knight, 1999, Lloyd-Smith and Tarr, 2000).

Stainton Rogers and Stainton Rogers argue that because ability is seen as a series of *"transformational leaps"* rather than a continuous process, in Piagetian theory the child

> is not merely lesser (qualitatively inferior in understanding) to adults, but a lesser alien (qualitatively inferior in kind of

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[17] Rhodes, C. (2000) *Organisation*, 7, 7-29. points out that, of course, *paradigm thinking* is itself a construction and leads to a particular way of thinking. We are tempted to think we can compare paradigms from a no-paradigm position.

understanding)[18]... Piaget's theory is intrinsically 'adultist' and educationally elitist. Piaget's child like Freud's is constructed out of the goal for adulthood (Stainton Rogers and Stainton Rogers, 1992), see also James and Prout, 1997)).

Piaget's stage model of child development has been interpreted as support for the view of children as intrinsically vulnerable, dependent and incompetent (Lewis and Lindsay, 2000). On this view the role of adults is to protect children. Practices and policies in respect of children indicate they are also viewed as 'lesser aliens' to be isolated and controlled.

> Protection is mostly accompanied by exclusion in some way or the other; protection may be suggested even when it is not strictly necessary for the sake of children, but rather to protect adults or the adult social orders against disturbances from the presence of children. This is exactly the point at which protection threatens to slide into unwanted dominance (Qvortrup, 1997; p. 87).

A specific implication for my first thesis question is that inquiry into understandings of children and young people's participation is also an epistemological inquiry into what people understand by *childhood.*

Exploration of Piagetian theory also shows the power of underlying metaphors in theory construction. As Soyland (1994) argues, metaphors can be used as a way of bringing philosophical presuppositions into a text. Presuppositions assume the existence of the subject being discussed and bring with them a particular view of the subject and a way of talking about it and analysing it. *"Taking some assumptions for granted is the first step in rendering alternatives irrelevant"* (ibid. p. 56). To exemplify her argument Soyland examines different concepts of development in texts of psychological theories, including those of Piaget. She shows how Piaget uses the language of logical structures and logical symbolism to describe the cognitive structures in the child's mind. Thus *"development* [is seen] *as*

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[18] The pervasiveness of this view can be demonstrated by the choice of the title 'On Becoming a Person' for a 1990s textbook written for an Open University Course on child development. This title was changed in 1998 (Martin Woodhead, personal communication).

changes in logical systems" and stages are in strict sequential order (ibid. p. 75). Soyland suggests this connects with other aspects of Piagetian theory, for example that the child develops alone and that language is not a tool that enables development but a symptom of development (ibid. p. 76)[19].

The implications of my first claim for researching in general and for my researching are that researchers need to explore their own pre-constructions in their researching and to surface the metaphors in which their understandings are expressed. For this reason I attend to this in Chapter 3.

2.2.1   Claim 2: When we experience something as real, it is indeed real to us. We each construct our own reality in experience.

My second epistemological claim arises from the first. For Piaget, individuals construct knowledge through their actions on the world; to understand is to invent. However he considers objective knowledge of the world feasible, even if only in terms of a best approximation at a given moment.

> The theory of knowledge is ... essentially a theory of adaptation of thought to reality, even if in the last analysis this adaptation (like all adaptations) reveals the existence of an inextricable interaction between the subject and the objects of study (Piaget, 1970; p. 18).

What makes von Glaserfield's own theory of constructivism 'radical', and which I echo in my epistemology is his claim that we <u>cannot</u> know an independent reality. Paul Watzlawick gives compelling examples to illustrate how

> ... our everyday, traditional ideas of reality are delusions which we spend substantial parts of our daily lives shoring up, even at the

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[19] This view of language is substantially different from the understanding I present in Claim 9, and would imply that children use metaphor in a different way from adults.

considerable risk of trying to force facts to fit our definition of
reality instead of vice versa (Watzlawick, 1976; p. xi).

Things are indeed real, but they count as real to us not with reference to an
external objective world, but with reference to our experiencing of them.
For Fisher (1991) reality is *"the ongoing unfolding of our experience"*. My
knowing of TCS was brought forth in the flow of my experiencing in
research conversations and activities. I encountered many different TCS's
in my research conversations through the experiencing of other people, and
thus many contexts of my inquiry into the thesis questions. This is more
fully discussed in Inquiry Strand 4, Chapter 7.

An illuminating distinction made by von Glaserfeld (1996) is that when we
speak of ourselves we *"refer to the totality of permanent objects and the
relationships we have abstracted from the flow of our experience"*.
However when we focus attention on a particular item, or person, the
environment is the surroundings of the item or person. Both the item or
person, and their surroundings are part of our experiential field. We should
not assume that what we see is there for another. Research with children
about their perception of their environment often reveals how very
differently from adults they experience and use it (Jones, 2000, Breitbart,
1998). Even the reality of the position of objects in respect to our observing
of them is constructed through experiencing, and languaging and culture
(Pederson et al., 1998).

The implication for researching is that judgements of difference of
linguistic or intellectual competence must always be questioned, and
differences between the researcher and research participants identified as a
matter of good practice and ethics in researching. This claim constitutes a
major theme throughout the thesis and is taken up in Chapter 5 in relation to
researching with children and young people.

2.2.2 Claim 3: Knowing is a process of making of distinctions and we make sense of our experiences through categorising.

We make sense of our experiences in making distinctions, not by processing information received from a pre-given external world. The making of distinctions is not a process of constructing dualisms or differences but a process in which we *"mainly [distinguish] a unity from its background, e.g., a tree from the forest. Every time human beings refer to something, implicitly or explicitly, a 'criterion of distinction' is specified"* (Krogh and Roos, 1995; p. 53). Thus distinction-makings is a process of *bringing forth a in and from b* - a 'duality', rather than *drawing a line between a and b* - dualism. People's knowing or experiencing is revealed in the distinctions they make. Self-awareness, for example is brought forth in the process of distinguishing ourselves from others.

Out of these distinctions we construct categorisation processes. These are not defined by objectively given shared properties but constructed by us in our experiencing:

> ... the being of structures consists in their coming to be, that is, their being 'under construction' ... there is not structure apart from construction (Piaget, 1977, quoted in Fosnot, 1992).

These structures – *"frames, schemas, perspectives, filters, lenses, interests or mental sets - ... influence what aspects are salient and [are] a means of ordering and interpreting the experience"* (Spivey, 1997). Thus distinctions develop knowledge, and knowledge enables distinction making.

When people experience a mismatch between their experiencing and what they are told is happening, they make sense of this by making a further distinction. The making of further distinctions can indicate fragmentation, or lack of coherence in organisations (Morgan, 1985), as I discuss in

relation to TCS as a 'social justice organisation' in Chapter 6. In constructivist researching it is the researcher who brings these distinctions forth in the mass of her experiencing, thus this claim reiterates the need for the researcher to reveal her sense-making structures as far as possible.

Racial categorisation and other forms of stereotyping imply relations of superiority and inferiority. A connection between Claim 3 and the thesis questions concerns distinctions drawn between adults and children. (Alderson (1994 relates the discounting of children's views and perspectives to the understanding of adults as 'whole' human beings and children as physically and cognitively immature. Within this understanding children's identities are perceived as fragmented and undeveloped, and thus they are seen to have no physical or mental integrity – *"if there is no real self there cannot be any invasion, or integrity to violate"* (ibid.).

2.2.3   Claim 4: Meanings are generated within a context to which we have also given meaning.

Meaning is not an inherent quality of a word or gesture or an experience. Neither are meanings *caused* by contexts. Wittgenstein wrote *"We want to say: 'When we mean something it's like going up to someone, it's not having a dead picture (of any kind).' We go up to the thing we mean"* (Wittgenstein. 1999; par. 45-47). Meaning for Wittgenstein was interactive, living and playful. Meanings draw on our histories and traditions.

Bruner (1986) quotes the story of Heisenberg's account of what Bohr said when they came to Kronberg castle:

> Isn't it strange how this ...castle changes as soon as one imagines that Hamlet lived there? As scientists we believe that a castle consists only of stones, and admire the way the architect put them together. The stone, the green roof with its patina, the wood carvings in the church, constitute the whole castle. None of this should be changed by the fact that Hamlet lived here, and yet it is changed completely.

> Suddenly the walls and ramparts speak a different language (ibid. p. 45)

The meaning we give to a context informs the meaning we give to an event and *vice versa*. Fisher (1991) gives the example of a practitioner being asked to come to a meeting with a supervisor. The context of the invitation for the practitioner includes how they evaluate their own work, their perception of the relationship with the supervisor, what they should have done and have not, and so on. The meaning of these contexts will account for whether the practitioner is anxious or cheerful in going into the meeting.

Milligan's (1998) explanation of attachment to place provides another illustration:

> Every interaction bestows some form of meaning on its stage, transforming that site into a known place. But when the interaction involves a higher degree of meaning, whether or not that meaning is perceived at the time, the place becomes the site of place attachment (ibid. p. 28).

Clandinin and Connelly (1998) point out that temporal duration is important in the meaning we make of events. Some of my experiences have greater meaning for me than others because they have been retold, and relived through several conversations. The research activities I undertook with children and young people in Inquiry Strand 4 were developed collaboratively over a period of months. I had to wait for them to happen in a way I did not for many of the one off conversations with adults. *"Pauses heighten the impact of what is about to happen"* (Rickett-Young, 1996).

Maturana argues that when we want to know if *another person* has knowledge in a given environment or domain we look for their adequate, or effective behaviour or action in their domain, through asking a question, implicitly or explicitly. Thus,

> ... knowledge is behaviour accepted as adequate by an observer in a particular domain that he or she specifies ... when we say 'I know' we mean 'I am able to act or behave adequately' in some particular domain (Maturana, 1988; p. 60).

In terms of what counts for us as effective actions,

> we human beings live in cognitive communities, each defined by the criterion of acceptability of what constitutes the adequate actions of its members (ibid.).

One of the implications for the thesis questions of knowing in relation to specific domains concerned my appreciation of metaphor and the juxtaposition of adults' and children's metaphors. Metaphor-making and comprehension has been linked to linguistic competence. However, understanding metaphor in relation to domains of experiencing rather than linguistic ability provides ways of juxtaposing metaphors from children, young people and adults and exploring these metaphors in terms of each other. I discuss this further in Chapter 4.

The implication for the researcher and for Inquiry Strand 4 is that it is never possible to gain a systematic overview of a situation or problem or field of knowledge by rising above it. Borrowing Rorty's (1992) metaphor, there is no objective observation platform to which a researcher or anyone else might repair to check the truth of her observations in the field.

2.2.4 Claim 5: Knowing, the making of distinctions and the process of categorisation are embodied processes.

The essence of this claim is that there is no mind independent and separate from the body, and our capacity for thought is shaped by our bodies and our bodily interactions (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999). Thus consciousness and emotion are not separable (Damasio, 2000, Damasio, 1994, Pert, 1999):

> People first feel things without noticing them, then notice them with
> inner distress[20] and disturbance, and finally reflect on them with a
> clear mind (Vico, 1744/1999; p. 94 , paragraph 218).

There are several different meanings of *embodiment* in cognitive theory
([Rohrer, 2000 #1633] identifies at least nine). For example Lakoff and
Johnson (1999) describe the embodiment of concepts in terms of three
levels:

(i)   Neural circuitry – a concept only arrived at through interpretation of
        scientific investigation (see Pert, 1999, Damasio, 1994));

(ii)   The phenomenological level, which is *"everything we can be aware
        of, our own mental states, our bodies, our environment and our
        physical and social interactions"* (Lakoff and Johnson,1999; p. 103).
        This is the level of my inquiry.

(iii)   Cognitive unconscious, which is a hypothesis to explain conscious
        experience and behaviour that cannot be explained in its own terms.
        This is *"the massive portion of the iceberg that lies below the
        surface, below the visible tip that is consciousness"* (ibid). As
        cognitive unconscious, *embodiment* refers to the ways in which our
        conceptual thought is shaped by many processes below the threshold
        of our active consciousness, usually as revealed through
        experimental psychology. Cognitive unconscious includes linguistic
        processes such as metaphor.

In my discussion of this claim I only attend to those aspects of knowing as
an embodied process that have implications for the thesis questions as I
have identified them, that is in relation to adults and children's knowing,
and participatory endeavours. There are also connections with metaphor,
which I discuss in Chapter 4.

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[20] I take 'distress' to mean 'occupied or perplexed' which is the meaning of the Latin
word *districtus*, the root of the English word 'distressed' Collins (1989) ; The Shorter

For Lakoff and Johnson, universal meanings in cultures and the public nature of the meaning of language are made possible because of the commonality of embodiment, that is in the physical nature of our experiencing. That is, that the workings of our bodies and bodily sensations are assumed to be shared. Thus, for example, Lupton (1998) claims that *"space and place are central features of the experience of 'being in the world' as an embodied subject, for embodiment is always experienced through spatial dimension"* (p. 152). From the centrality of spatial experiencing open space is seen as *"freedom, light, the public realm"* and enclosed space as *"security, privacy ..."* (ibid.).

Embodiment also refers to the role of our bodies in shaping our self-identities and our culture, *"through acts of conscious and deliberate reflection on the lived structures of our experience"* (Rohrer, 2000). In the developmental processes and bodily changes between being born and adulthood our knowing of ourselves and others changes too. How people *know* other people, and particularly how children *know* adults, and how adults *know* children is as differently sized bodies moving in different spaces in the world. The distinction of wholeness (Claim 3) also refers to health. Thus people with a physical disability are often *'known'* in terms of their different embodiment. This is reflected in languaging, for example in the distinctions of 'little ones', and 'grown-ups', and 'disabled people', and 'wheelchair-bound people'.

Learning as an embodied process is illustrated in a conversation between bell hooks[21] and Ron Scapp concerning classroom learning. Bell hooks reflects that *"the person who is most powerful in the classroom [the lecturer] has the privilege of denying their body"*, by for example standing behind a podium. She argues that this hinders learning with students and efforts are needed " *to disrupt the notion of professor as omnipotent, all-*

Oxford English Dictionary (1975). In the next paragraph Vico is translated as writing of passion and emotion rather than pain or anguish in this way of knowing.

knowing mind". A way of doing this is to leave the podium and move around, and then "*suddenly the way you smell, the way you move becomes very apparent to your students*" (hooks, 1994; p. 138). Thus learning becomes an embodied process for students too.

Children, as Wittgenstein (1969) points out, do not learn that books *exist*, "*they learn to fetch books, sit in armchairs etc.*" (par. 476, p. 62e). *Learning* and *knowing* are enacted (Bruner, 1990).

The implications for participatory practising and *researching with* relate to the responsibility of the researcher and other people to recognise the legitimacy of embodied knowing. Firstly, this involves not disqualifying people's knowing on account of their perceived physical differences. As a child was reported to say, 'Just because I have a smaller body it doesn't mean I have smaller feelings' (source unknown). (See also Prout (2000) who charts the shifts from seeing children as outcomes to social agents in attending to constructions of children's bodies). Secondly it requires the researcher to attend to the bodily nature of her knowing, as I argue in Claim 7, and to attend to "*emotion displays ... [as] embodied expressions of judgements*" (Harre, 1995).

This Claim requires the researcher to recognise how her engaging with other people, and the engagement of other people in participatory practising is an embodied process.

Attending to the embodiment of what appear to be uncontestable and pervasive concepts such as power can challenge and rearticulate concepts so that they can be 'undone'. Krippendorff (1995) argues that the 're-embodiment' of power by "*distinguishing between physical power and its metaphor and treating each in a manner appropriate to its embodiments ..*

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[21] 'bell hooks' chose not to capitalise her name in her writings.

in nature ... and in languaging" (p. 118) can speak against *"general theories of power and , instead, for rather specific and locally practicable emancipatory or therapeutic articulations"* (p. 128)[22].

2.2.5   Claim 6: Knowing, the making of distinctions and the process of categorisation are imaginative

To support this claim I turn to William Blake,

> And I know that This World Is a World of imagination & Vision. I see Every thing I paint In This World, but Every body does not see alike. To the Eyes of a Miser a Guinea is more beautiful than the Sun & a bag worn with the use of Money has more beautiful proportions than a Vine filled with Grapes. The tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the Eyes of others only a Green thing that stands in the way. Some See Nature all Ridicule & Deformity, & by these I shall not regulate my proportions; & some Scarce See Nature at all. But to the Eyes of a Man of Imagination, Nature is Imagination itself. As a Man is, So he Sees. As the Eye is formed, such are its Powers (Blake, 1799; pp. 448-9).

Vico (1744/1999) argued that imagery, metaphors and stories are the means by which we communicate, innovate and learn. He wrote that 'poetic wisdom' – felt and imagined knowing– preceded abstract knowledge in the history of mankind. He supposed that people took their own bodies as a model in order to make sense of their environment. Thus imagination is fundamentally an embodied experience:

> ...metaphysics draws the mind away from the senses, while the poetic faculty sinks the whole mind into them (ibid. p. 369).

He associated with this the existence of a creative faculty of invention or the creation of novel images - *ingenium*. By this faculty people could order

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[22] See also Mitchell (1990), who proposes an alternative way of understanding domination - 'enframing' - to examine how *"domination works through actually constructing a seemingly dualistic world"* (p 547).

and reorder things and thoughts so that new relationships emerged – or in the terms in which I discuss Claims five and six, observers make distinctions.

Wenger (1998) gives the example of two stone cutters who are asked what they are doing. He argues that the difference in their responses of *"I am cutting this stone in a perfectly square shape"* and *"I am building a cathedral"* reflects a difference in the stone cutters' experiences of what they are doing, their sense of self in doing it and their relations to the world. *"This difference is a function of imagination"* (ibid. p. 176, my emphasis). In this sense, imagination *"refers to a process of expanding our self by transcending our time and space and creating new images of the world and ourselves"* (ibid.)

> I remember once standing with my children around a globe and pointing proudly: "This is where we live." They were duly impressed – not for a moment doubtful, yet a little puzzled – and I started to reflect on the kind of process by which it made sense to indicate a point on a globe and claim it is where we live ... It was very different from entering a *house* and saying "we live here"... At issue was constructing a picture of the world such that it did make sense to point to a globe and say we live "there" (ibid. p. 177.)

Imagination is the process by which we know how other people are thinking and feeling, and as Wenger points out, imagination is one of the ways in which we *belong*, or see ourselves as being part of a larger community or organisation.

Imagination as a way of knowing has implications for metaphors; what Morgan (1997) refers to as *imaginization* – the bringing forth and articulation in metaphors and pictures of images which influence behaviour – is a way of knowing. Thus I claim the rich pictures and drawings brought forth in my research as ways of knowing participation. I further claim that understanding of self and others are constituted through the process of narrative; this is discussed in the next chapter and Chapter 5.

2.2.6   Claim 7: There is no one way of knowing

In everyday life, in our thinking and actions, we draw on many different 'epistemologies of knowledge practice' (Désautels and Roth, 1999), for example, the *poetic* knowing of feelings and empathy (Claims 5 and 6), the knowing which is brought forth in communities of practice (Brown and Duguid, 1994), the *objective* knowing of science and the tacit knowing of *practice wisdom*.

Different theories of knowing involve different actions. If I thought of knowledge in my research only as propositional - that is as objective, verifiable facts about the world - then I would proceed differently in my inquiry. For example I might attempt to produce an objective checklist of criteria against which to evaluate different participative interventions. This is not to say there is not value in this sort of research. However without a recognition that there are many ways of coming to know a situation, checklists as the codification of practice may become the practice, or the only reality against which situations are assessed (Berger and Luckman, 1967). Alternatively checklists may be discarded as irrelevant by practitioners because of the uniqueness of each practice encounter (Fisher, 1991).

When I was determining the relative financial position of The Children's Society from published data, my 'knowing' how it stood in relation to some other voluntary organisations was, I suggest, drawing on an understanding of 'knowing' as a rational, logical, computational process. By contrast, my 'knowing' what was wrong with my computer when it would not turn on even though I could not fix it myself, was like the practice knowing that Brown and Duguid describe in communities of practice (Brown and Duguid, 1994). This happens through processes of narration, collaboration and social construction. A very important aspect in the computer example, which is implicit but not emphasised in Brown and Duguid's telling of a

similar story, is that knowing what was wrong with the computer includes knowing what was not wrong, or what corrective actions do not work. Kolb's theories of cycles of learning would also provide an epistemology, in the sense of a theory of 'coming to know', for this example, and also include a way of 'knowing what does not work' in the stage of 'active experimentation' – trying something out (Kolb, 1995).

These epistemologies are not necessarily complementary or coherent. Sometimes knowing is 'the truth of imagination'. For example, in the course of the research I said to CF[23] during a lull in our conversation, "I know you are thinking about your doormat". This was because of an earlier, incidental comment about him expecting an important letter, and he confirmed this with pleased surprise.

What makes the truth of the imagination 'knowing' is a conversational response within the context of the dialogue - "*a system of coordination of actions in language braided with coordination of emotion*" in Maturana's (1988) words. There are different flows of emotion in conversations. Recognising changes in intimacy in conversations is a way of knowing. Depending on CF's response, he or I might experience a change in our intimacy during the conversation. He might have replied, "No, I'm thinking about what we've just discussed", or "I'm actually wondering where we'll go for lunch". The sense of rapport comes from feeling understood without saying what you mean (Lakoff, 1973, referred to in Tannen, 1996). It is easy to make mistakes about this sort of knowing, or *rapport* as I discuss in my problems with working with young women and my own children in Chapter 3.

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[23] 'CF' was my critical friend who supported me in my researching. He had been involved in setting up the research with TCS, but took an independent role to support me during the research. His role is explained in Chapter 3.

Maturana distinguishes different classes of conversations. Among others there are conversations of co-ordinations of present and future actions, for example questions, requests and responses. There are also conversations of command and obedience, which *"consist in co-ordinations of actions that an observer sees as taking place in an emotional background of mutual- and self-negation in which some participants obey ... and others command"*. Some of the conversations I observed between the teacher and children in his class appeared to me to be like this.

My conversation with CF was a *"conversation of valuing"* which consists in

> ... co-ordinations of actions in a domain of discourse, descriptions and opinions that the observer sees as taking place in a braided emotioning of acceptance and rejection, pleasure and frustration according to whether the participants who listen perceive they are properly seen or not by the participants who speak (ibid. p. 53).

Shotter (1993) claims that relationships between people are based on a special kind of knowledge – not knowing *what* or knowing *how*, but *knowing from* (a social situation). This sort of knowing only appears in moments of interaction, and it is something we need in order to get along with other people (Riikonen and Madan Smith, 1997).

Writers about participatory research similarly claim for there being many ways of knowing (Park, 2000 #1843; Heron, 1996, Reason and Marshall, 1987, Reason, 1994). In particular, propositional knowing is inadequate to account for how people can 'know' each other in their participating. Heron (1992) adds *"presentational knowledge"* as a bridge between propositional and experiential knowing. This way of knowing has particular relevance for my thesis questions in claiming the imagery in art forms such as pictures and stories as knowing through experiencing, as evidenced in Appendix 5 (see also Claim 8).

> Presentational knowing emerges from and is grounded on experiential knowing. It is evident in an intuitive grasp of the significance of our resonance with and imaging of our world, as this grasp is symbolized in graphic, plastic, musical, vocal and verbal art-forms. It clothes our experiential knowing of the world in the metaphors of aesthetic creation, in expressive spatiotemporal forms of imagery. These forms symbolize both our felt attunement with the world and the primary meaning embedded in our enactment of its appearing. (Heron and Reason, 2000, see also Reason and Heron, 1995).

In recognising the legitimacy of different epistemologies I expand the idea of validity in relation to the research. As well as the techniques and procedures for qualitative research suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) in the term trustworthiness, I include those recommended by Braud and Anderson (1998), such as 'bodily wisdom' (attending to bodily sensations), emotions and feelings in the process of doing the research, and aesthetics.

2.2.7   Claim 8: Our constructions are brought forth in language

In this claim I am asserting that language, or *languaging* is how we make sense of our experiencing in distinction making and category construction. That is, language is not just a transparent and value-free conduit for thoughts, or a representation of 'reality', but it is how we think of the 'things in the outside world', including objects, people and their understandings (Reddy, 1993, Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). In this way, knowledge is brought forth in conversations and dialogue. *"It is by languaging that the act of knowing, in the behavioural coordination which is language, brings forth a world"* (Maturana and Varela, 1998; p. 234.

Désautels and Roth's example of the magnetic field experiments that I gave at the beginning of this chapter shows how epistemologies are brought forth in conversations. Dean and Rhodes (1998) describe a very similar process in the constructivist teaching of social work students. The students are

helped to articulate different interpretations and responses to a "case" (sic). In these interpretations *"the students understand more fully the meaning and dilemmas inherent in taking a particular position"*. In the examples given these are moral dilemmas, for example when there are value conflicts between social worker and client. Ethical issues are brought forth in epistemological conversations (Désautels and Roth, 1999). Dean and Rhodes point out that constructivism is not itself 'value-free', and they identify *"equality, openness and tolerance"* as ethics that lead to *"one story being better than another"* among interpretations.

Languaging brings forth a world because *"language is addressing itself to somebody else"* (von Foerster, quoted in Segal, 1986), and this holds for self-other communication, and self-self communication. Of particular relevance to my other inquiry strands in the thesis is that our constructions of who we are – our *selves*, and of other people are brought forth in conversation (Taylor, 1991; Jopling, 1997, Neisser and Fivush, 1994). The *self* is not like a homunculus, a little person sitting in your brain who is in charge of your knowing, and from whom emanate stories about who and what you are from images stored in your brain;

> Nor is the story really told by *you* as a self because ... [the conscious] *you* is only born as the story is told, *within the story itself*. You exist as a mental being when primordial stories[24] are being told, and only then; as long as primordial stories are being told, and only then. You are the music while the music lasts. (Damasio, 2000)

Annette Baier writes of dialogue as *"the means by which we are "talked into" selfhood through elicitative speech acts"*.

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[24] By 'primordial stories' Damasio refers to his argument that firstly 'wordless storytelling' – *"the imagetic representation of sequences of brain events"* preceded language in the evolutionary development of human beings' awareness of self, and secondly that telling stories in this definition is a condition for language. However he uses a narrower definition of 'language' - as 'words and sentences' than I do in this claim (Damasio, 2000 p. 107).

> The second person *you* plays a critical role [in dialogue], because it
> has the elicitative locutionary force: As the pronoun of mutual
> recognition and response, it calls a person forth and situates him or
> her in a space where the first-person and third-person pronouns also
> become appropriate (Baier, 1985 p, 257, quoted in Jopling, 1997)

The mutuality of I/you constructions has implications for how researchers
think of and refer to other people and to their engagements with other
people in constructivist and *researching with*. For example Steier (1991)
chooses to refer to other people involved in researching - those *"with whom
I interact, that make my research possible"* as 'reciprocators'. This is
because *"it is only by their hearing me and answering me that a 'me' can
emerge as an I who does research"* (p. 165).

The term *interview* as a process in which the researcher gets information by
'tapping' interviewees is inappropriate. *Conversation* as a complex braiding
of language, body and emotion is to be preferred (Barnes, 1994)[25]. In their
use of the term Maturana and others have reclaimed usages of *conversation*
as "the act of living or having one's being in or among"(The Shorter
Oxford English Dictionary, 1975; Maturana, 1988; Riikonen and Madan
Smith, 1997). *Conversing* from its Latin root *con + versare*, 'to turn with'
implies intimacy and familiarity and being and <u>doing</u> things together with
others. Thus we live together in language and via conversations. Learning
goes on <u>in</u> conversations as well as <u>from</u> them as distinctions are brought
forth in people's engaging with each other.

The grammatical structuring of language also structure ways of thinking. In
the English language verbs tend to be turned into nouns (Kowalski, 2000).
In this process *"an activity* [becomes] *expressed in terms of having; that is,
a noun is used instead of a verb"* (Fromm, 1995). Fromm observes that

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[25] Using Barnes'(1994) definition, Broekstra (1999) suggests 'conversation' as a metaphor
for organisations.

> to express an activity by 'to have' in connection with a noun is an erroneous use of language, because processes and activities cannot be possessed; they can only be experienced (ibid. p. 47).

Turning an ongoing process into an event, or some *thing* that some people can possess, can be a way in which people lose confidence and power (Kowalski, 2000).

How people are spoken of in expressions and metaphors used in conversations reflects the constructions of the speaker and constitutes the position of those spoken of. Hawkins et al. (2001), writing about social workers' use of the language of social justice, argue that in practising with others how people talk about their practice is part of that practice. They found in their research that most social workers spoke of their practice in terms of welfare, care and issues such as poverty, rather than in terms of empowerment and justice. They suggested that their findings reflected an awareness of social environmental issues but an ambivalence towards social action. Awareness of the terminology and how it is used *"can be critical in determining whose view of 'reality' we are accepting"* (ibid. p. 3).

Claim 8 brings to the forefront the forms in which interactions between researchers and practitioners and participants take place in language, and the meaning of constructing this as an interview or a conversation. In addition, constructivist researchers and practitioners need to attend to their own languaging in conversations, and particularly how this constitutes other people. Languaging, for example, that constitutes the researcher or practitioner as 'expert' may constrain the participation of other people in conversations.

This claim also brings out the main forms of languaging involved in world-making and communicating including body language, pictures, sounds and other sensory ways of engaging with other people.

2.2.8   Claim 9: In conversations and dialogue with other people and writing we present 'opportunities' and 'constraints' to one another for interpretation

Claim 9 concerns how people relate to each other, and it draws on the idea that human beings as living systems are autopoietic systems[26] (Maturana and Varela, 1998; Kersten, 1995). Autopoietic systems are autonomous and organisationally closed. That is, the product of the organisation is the organisation itself. Changes in living systems are determined by the structure. This means that perturbations in the environment, for example interactions with other people, may act as triggers for changes of state in the living system, but cannot determine what those changes are. Any event may be construed as an opportunity or a constraint, or have elements of both (Fisher, 1991). How people interact with each other as autopoietic systems is shown in Figure 2-1.

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[26] This is a foundational idea in my epistemology, but I introduce it here because I see it as 'coming to the surface' in Claim 9, although the idea stands under the other claims too. For example as autopoietic systems, human beings cannot directly 'know' an external objective world (Claim 2).
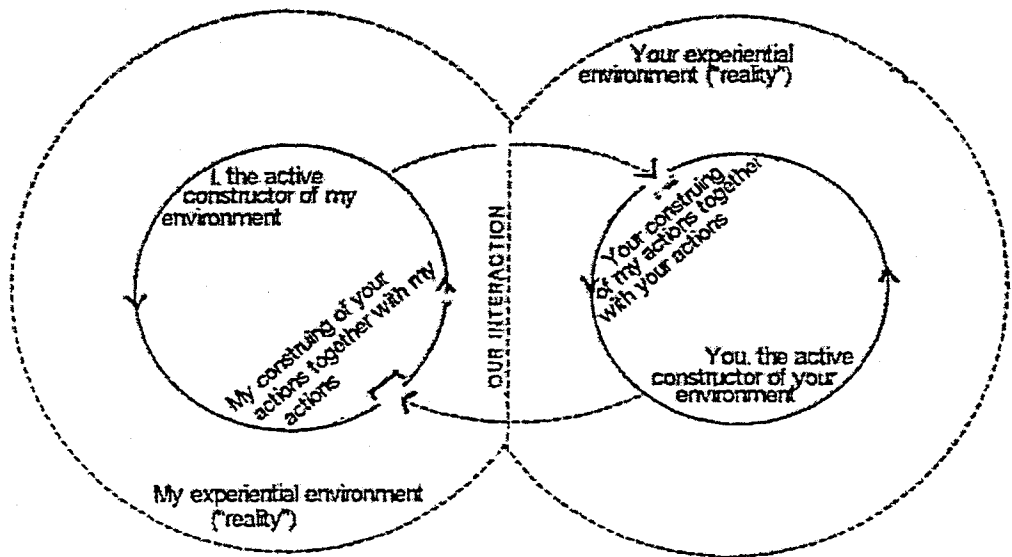
*Figure 2-1 A model of how we operate as individuals with other people.
This figure shows how 'I' and 'you' (any and all other people) interact in
terms of my epistemology. Thus interaction takes place in our respective
experiential environments or 'realities'. It does not lead to a transfer or
exchange but an invitation or perturbation to construe the other's actions
with our own constructions. This interaction is referred to as 'structural
coupling' by Maturana and Varela (1998). Our histories and traditions as
defined in Chapter 1 are histories and traditions of structural coupling.
(Figure adapted from Fisher, 1991)).*

Claim 9 does not imply that we cannot know other people.

> as living, embodied beings, we cannot not be responsive to the world
> around us ... once we allow for this possibility, once we allow people
> to be in a continuous, living contact with each other, we can no
> longer sustain the idea of ourselves as being separate, self-contained
> entities ... or of our world being an 'external' world. For when a
> second, living human being responds to the acts of a first, and thus
> acts in a way that depends on their acts ... then, the activities of the
> second person cannot be accounted as wholly their own activity
> (Shotter, 1996a).

However I consider it misleading to speak of 'exchanging meanings or

'sharing meanings'. Meaning arises in the course of conversation, that is,

in the languaging in which our interaction is constituted in Figure 2-1 (Fell

and Russell, 1999)(Claim 8).

Fisher (1991) claims that co-constructions exist, although these are general, and this is a recursive process - *"the sense of generality provides the conditions for co-construction"* (ibid. p. 43)[27]. In our relationships with others, our knowing them is a matter of the coherence of our constructions. As we reiterate our connections and construe each other's actions we come to have understandings in common. However this is a judgement and,

> language does not transport pieces of one person's reality into another's – it merely prods and prompts the other to build up conceptual structures which, to this other, seem compatible with the words and actions the speaker or writer has used (von Glaserfeld, 1991; p. 23).

The implications of this claim for researching and the thesis questions specifically concern two principles for ethical practice which are discussed later in this chapter. These principles relate to the creating of possibilities, and responsibility. Change for other people is brought about by their own agency, not caused by the actions of others. Therefore ethical practice is directed firstly towards creating conditions that other people could use to bring about change. Responsibility involves recognising our entire responsibility for our own meanings, including the meanings we attribute to other people. We cannot claim experiences for other people as participative; this is a judgement only they can make. Responsible participatory practice involves creating possibilities for participation and seeking to minimise the constraints in our structural coupling.

2.2.9 Claim 10: Knowing is a recursive process: in making sense of our experiences we distinguish those ways of knowing which enable us to achieve closure.

As Candace Pert points out our brains are under a constant deluge of sensory input, and *"some sort of filtering system must enable us to pay*

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[27] This *'sense of generality'* may be the *'commonality of embodiment'* – see Claim 5.

attention to what our bodymind[28] deems the most important pieces of information and to ignore others" (Pert, 1999; p. 146). My claim is that we attend to, or choose those ways of knowing that enable us to maintain our fit with the environment (von Glaserfeld, 1996), or *"achieve closure"* (Segal, 1986). Knowing is embodied in actions (Claim 7). Either our actions fit and we continue them, or they don't and we experience feelings of puzzlement and anxiety and sometimes discontinue the actions. As Fisher points out, the concept of *fit* means that we can't be sure beforehand that our actions will be the right ones to take. When things work out as we predict then we have *"real-ize[d] (to make real) coherence"* and maintained a fit with our environment (Fisher, 1991; p. 38). Fisher suggests that this coherence is what we ordinarily refer to as experience.

Recursion refers to how each element in a system provides the context (conditions) for the emergence of other elements. Thoughts, feelings, personal characteristics, behaviours and events may be understood as recursive processes. Recursion could offer an infinite regress. But we *"truncate the processes of recursion by getting to closure"* (Fisher, 1991). *"Closure is the point at which recursive processes are construed as self-evident conclusions"*(Segal, 1986). Closure occurs when we accept a satisfying explanation, in terms of the contexts as we construct them at that time. The following account is an illustration from my researching.

From conversations early in my research I made a judgement that it was the steep hierarchical structure of TCS that accounted for differences I perceived in people's descriptions of their experiencing. However on reflection I recognised that this judgement arose in part from the way in which I visualised the structure in a diagram (see Figure 7-1 in Chapter 7) and from how I had made sense of my own experiences in a similar organisation. I concluded I needed to find out more. From further

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[28] 'Bodymind' is the term Pert uses to indicate that emotions and bodily sensations are *"intricately intertwined in a biodirectional network in which each can alter the other"*

conversations I made a judgement that a satisfying explanation for the differences I perceived in people's experiencing consisted in the tensions between working in and with local communities in an organisation which was managed from the centre.

A way of making sense of this example is that closure occurs when we *understand* and *learn*. The situating of our distinctions in the contexts (or histories and traditions) brings forth understanding (Reyes and Zarama, 1998). Learning is the process by which we embody these distinctions in our actions (ibid.). Understanding and learning in the epistemology of my research are not about taking in new facts but *"knowing how to go on"* (Wittgenstein, 1999; par. 254), that is, knowing how to relate to our situation or circumstances at that time (Riikonen and Madan Smith, 1997).

Thus knowledge

> is constructed, negotiated, propelled by a project, and perpetuated for as long as it enables its creators to organise their reality in a viable fashion (Larochelle and Bednarz, 1998; p. 8)

The meaning of this for constructivist researching is firstly that there is no one right way to understand situations; there is no 'truth' and there will always be the possibility of other ways of understanding. Secondly because knowing arises and evolves in the unfolding of experiencing, the design of the research will always be emergent in the processes of engagement, as the researcher and others involved attend to feelings of puzzlement and revise their actions.

2.3 Summary of epistemological claims and ethicality

Constructivism is an alternative to an objectivist (or traditional) epistemology. The differences between objectivist and constructivist

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(Pert, 1999; p. 140).

epistemologies, as I have discussed them in the epistemological claims, are summarised in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2: A comparison of objectivist and constructivist epistemologies, based on Fisher (1991) p. 15	
Objectivist Epistemology of 'discoverers'	*Constructivist Epistemology of 'inventors'*
Reality exists "out there" independently of the observer, to be discovered	Realities are constructed or invented as *experience* = the relationships between the observer and the observed
A 'scientific' or propositional way of knowing is privileged in discovering truths; logical processes are how we come to new understanding	Multiple ways of knowing are recognised as ways of coming to satisfactory explanations; imagination is the way we come to new understandings
Knowing is a process of matching our internal conceptualisations and categories to an external reality	Knowing is an on-going process of making distinctions and interpreting present events from within the observer's interpretative framework.
Thinking is a disembodied process; the mind is separate from the body	Knowing is an embodied process
Meaning resides externally in symbols and combinations of symbols	Meaning is constructed both internally and socially as processes of interpretation
Causality is linear. That is, under specifiable conditions, if X occurs and Y follows, then X may be said to be the cause of Y	Recursivity; each element in a relationship provides conditions of operation for other elements in the relationship

The differences between objectivist and constructivist epistemologies are captured in von Foerster's pair of *"in principle undecidable"* questions, *"Am I apart from the universe"*, or *"Am I part of the universe"*. Those who decide they are apart from the universe see themselves as discoverers of an independent *world "whose regularities, rules and customs we may eventually discover"*. Those who decide they are part of the universe see themselves as inventors, *"participants of a conspiracy, whose customs, rules, and regulations we are now inventing"* (von Foerster, 1990).

Von Foerster goes on to tell of his continual feeling of surprise at the chasm separating the two different worlds of discoverers and inventors that can be created by making this choice, but that the two can live together *"as long as the discoverers discover inventors and inventors invent discoverers"*.

A constructivist inquiry is a *second order* inquiry, that is it is not just concerned with 'what is observed', or invented, but with 'observing the observer'. *Second order* positions do not replace *first order* positions, they are complementary (von Foerster, 1990, Atkinson and Heath, 1990). However a constructivist epistemology has consequences for how we think of *first order* understanding. Including the observer in that which is observed necessitates giving up the idea of certainty, and the possibility of finding an absolute truth.

In Claim 9 I referred to responsibility and the 'creation of possibilities' as implied by this claim and I am now going to explore the ethical implications of my epistemology further. Butt (2000) argues that

> A constructivist ethics allows us to use whatever power and argument we can draw on to make our points. However it emphasises that they are *our* points, and not God's or science's. [29]

This is both disturbing and liberating. Any moral judgement becomes open to question (Rorty, 1982). But as von Foerster writes, *"autonomy means responsibility!"* (von Foerster, 1993, quoted in Bardmann, 1996). As the researcher it is my responsibility to inquire into the contexts and connections of the ethical judgements I make and to be attentive to use of self (Rodwell, 1998). In a metaphor resonant with Hacking's *'unmasking"*, Fuller (1998) identifies the role of the constructivist in raising blind spots

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[29] I do not think that the recognition of ethical and moral construing as contingent necessarily precludes people identifying their ethical beliefs as Christian, for example. However, as Jeffrey Stout, the philosopher of theology, pointed out: *"You can't somehow leap out of culture and history altogether and gaze directly at the Moral Law, using it as a standard for judgement of the justification of truth or moral propositions ... any more than you can gaze into the mind of God"* (Stout, 1988 p. 23)

- revealing the silencing of alternative voices in establishing paradigms, and the rewriting of history. In this inquiry *"the situation at hand becomes much more textured"* (Varela, 1999).

Constructivism could seem to entail solipsism, that is that only I exist, everything else is the product of my imagination, and therefore ethics and responsibility are meaningless concepts. As von Foerster points out,

> The key distinction here is that the usual interpretation of experience is completely reversed. Rather than my experience being a consequence of something outside, i.e., the world, the world is postulated as a consequence of my experience (Von Foerster's words in Segal, 1986 p. 147).

He argues, however, that this provides additional choices. We can choose to reject solipsism, and we can choose to see ourselves similar to other people. Ethics arises from these choices. By choosing to see ourselves similar to other people we construct a communal reality. In seeing people as similar to ourselves we have to attribute to them at least the same capacities as ourselves, in terms of their capacity for self-reflection, for responsibility for themselves and choice. Since, as autopoietic systems, we cannot change each other, ethicality involves acting so as to increase their and our choices. This requires attention to the constraints and invitations in our construing.

As autopoietic systems, other people cannot be held responsible for causing change in us (although they can constrain our possibilities). Thus we are responsible for our constructions of our own and of others meanings. *"Acting responsibly towards [for example] a child entails doing one's best to figure out the child's meaning and acting in relation to the child's meaning"* (Fisher, 1991; p. 93). Thus being ethical is being responsive, or 'respons-able' (McClintock and Ison, 1994b).

There is no one 'true' way of knowing a situation. The meaning of experiences is brought forth in conversations. It is not possible to know with certainty what will count as ethical actions in situations beforehand. Thus codes of ethics are useful heuristics but cannot determine what will be ethical in all encounters between people; each encounter will be unique.

Ethical practising within a constructivist epistemology involves:

- Acting so as to increase the number of possibilities for myself and other people.

- Taking responsibility for my constructions, and being respons-able to alternative constructions.

- Granting to others the abilities I claim for yourself: *"to observe, to construct, to live with others and observe their worlds"*(Krippendorff, 1999; p. 141).

- Regarding codes of ethics as resources for making ethical choices rather than prescriptions for ethical actions.

2.4 Conclusion

In the introductory section to this chapter I identified five epistemological questions for my inquiry in relation to the preliminary thesis questions. I have responded to four – the last one 'how can organisations be said *to know* and is this different from how people know' will be introduced in Chapter 3 and addressed in Chapter 8.

The outputs of my inquiry in this chapter are that:

(i)   Metaphors, stories and pictures are evidence of knowing in terms of embodiment, imagination and presentational knowing.

(ii)   Other forms of knowing, for example knowing how (to do something), and bodily feelings and practice wisdom are valid ways of knowing too and should be put alongside 'knowing that' or propositional knowledge.

(iii)   In relation to the thesis questions, children's knowing is different from adults in terms of their embodiment (size and speed of physical changes) and 'domains of experience'.

I am not seeking to be objective, or to discover something, or for my research to match reality. However, I am seeking to be trustworthy in my relationships with other people and in terms of showing how I arrived at the conclusions of my researching. I want to be fair in my appreciation of, and respect for, other people's view points as I interpret them in my thesis. I aim to be authentic in offering invitations which reflect rigour and thoughtfulness in my inquiry. As I indicated in Chapter 1, the development of my understanding of what it is to be ethical in my researching followed from the epistemology.

2.4.1   Implications for *researching with* and practising *with*

I summarise below the implications of my epistemology claims for participatory practising and constructivist researching, as I have identified them in my inquiry in this chapter.

Researching *with* and practising *with* others involves

- recognising that in conversations with others, researchers and practitioners offer them possibilities and constraints, and practising so as to minimise the constraints and increase the possibilities for their participation;

- attending to taken-for-granted theorising, especially in how these construct the experiencing of others, for example children and young people;

- recognising others' experiencing of their environments and of other people may be different from the researcher/practitioner in respect of their embodiment;

- questioning the researcher/practitioner's judgements of linguistic or intellectual competence;

- being aware of and managing differences between the researcher/ practitioner and participants;

- attending to forms of knowing, for example knowing how and knowing from and empathy as well as propositional knowing;

- using multiple ways of languaging/communicating.

Constructivist researching involves:

- recognising the researcher's processes of distinction making;

- recognising that the contexts of research are not givens but constructions;

- revealing the researcher's sense making structures in communicating with others;

- attending to the researcher's feelings and other ways of knowing;

- recognising that research is an embodied experience and not just cognitive: attending to embodiment in conversations and other engagements with people;

- creating opportunities for imagination for herself and others – and recognising this as a way of knowing;

- attending to how her language constitutes others in her researching;

- inviting others to join in different ways of languaging and communicating;

- observing ethics of responsibility and the creation of conditions for change – possibilities;

- attending to 'not knowing how to go on', puzzles, paradoxes and dilemmas as opportunities for further conversations or reflection or distinction-making.

An implication of epistemology Claim 1 was that researchers need to explore their own pre-constructions in their researching. This is therefore what I discuss next in the thesis.

I indicated in this chapter some of the important aspects of metaphor, specifically the process of metaphor as categorising, and metaphors as underlying structures in theories. I also claimed metaphor as a way of knowing. In Chapter 4 I explore what I mean by 'appreciating metaphor' and how this could lead to illumination and enhancement of practising.

Chapter 3 An Inquiry into the implications of self-aware research

3.1 Introduction: self-awareness and the importance of self-awareness in researching

The second question in my thesis, and the focus of the second inquiry strand is 'what are the implications of self-aware research for participatory research, or 'researching with' other people'. In this chapter I inquire into the baggage of personal experiencing and professional belonging and discourses which I brought with me to the research.

In Chapter 2 I showed how the epistemology of my thesis forced an inquiry into my histories and traditions. By 'traditions' I mean the intellectual and conceptual background with which I interpret and act, and in which I draw upon a particular vocabulary and set of metaphors to make sense of my experiencing. In Hacking's (1995) term, these make up the "*description spaces*" – the categorial and conceptual resources that are available to me in making distinctions and which affect what I pay attention to. By 'histories' I mean those personal experiences which constitute my sense of self and which make up the emotional baggage and predispositions with which I came to the research. These histories and traditions shaped how I engaged

with the research, the judgements and choices I made and the decisions I took in the other inquiries. Although I have made a distinction between traditions and histories, I found these impossible to disentangle in giving a coherent account but I summarise what they are and the implications for my research at the end of this chapter.

There are risks for a researcher writing about herself. The personalised first-person account *"can leave the reader with the drama of the research experience but without the methodological substance"* (Young and Lee, 1996), quoted in de Laine, 2000). The researcher could be seen as having a *"covert agenda"* of softening up the critical reader (Gould, 2000). Worse, it can seem like self-indulgence (de Laine, 2000, Alvesson and Skölderberg, 2000, Hertz, 1997). This is implied in descriptions of research written in the first person as 'confessional tales' (Van Maanen, 1988). As part of my inquiry I wanted to understand *"how [emotion] does enter"* research (Steier, 1991b; p. 179), but in writing about my feelings as a researcher in the thesis, I was worried that the reader would be bored. I often felt uncomfortable, 'out of place', and vulnerable in the messiness in my inquiry in this chapter (Bell, 1998). However, as well as my inquiry into self-aware researching being required by the epistemology there are three further arguments for self-aware researching which are connected with the practising of research.

Firstly, as Scheurich argues, the researcher brings to research conversations *"a plethora of baggage"* – conscious and unconscious, including related research, epistemological leanings, institutional and funding imperatives, social positionality and so on. This baggage *"in the guise of the interviewer interacts with an interviewee, who of course brings her/his own baggage to the interaction"* (p. 74). However, in the writing up of the 'interview', rather than reflect the ambiguity of the interaction, the researcher fills the *"openness at the heart"* with their own interpretive baggage, imposing constructions and categories and theories. The first way that Scheurich

proposes for reconceptualising research 'interviewing' in order to *"refuse this false order"* is to highlight the baggage we bring to research.

Secondly, my inquiry in this chapter is also an inquiry into the connections between self-awareness and ethical practising. In Chapter 2, Claim 8, I referred to how our concepts of ourselves and others are constructed in language. Taylor (1991) emphasises that the self is embodied and that 'self' is a moral ascription :

> ... humans devise, or accept, or have thrust upon them descriptions of themselves, and these descriptions help to make them what they are. ... These self-descriptions include moral or ethical self-characterisations, that is, descriptions that situate us relative to some goods, or standards of excellences, or obligations that we cannot just repudiate. A human being exists inescapably in a space of ethical questions; he or she cannot escape assessing himself or herself in relation to some standards (ibid. p. 305)

For Mason (1997), moral awareness is self-awareness directed to *"grasp[ing] the moral possibilities of the roles I hold"* which I can learn to do with the help of exemplars and friends, for example. Moral awareness is sensitivity to the affordances of our moral environments – the practices, institutions, settings, roles, traditions of the group in which we live and in whose contexts our identity is constituted – for moral actions. Thus *"I learn, if I am perspicacious, the ways in which my own flourishing is connected with the flourishing of others"* (ibid. p. 243). Self-awareness can both reveal the researcher's ethical sensitivities and develop these further.

Thirdly, as I wrote in Chapter 1, I was concerned that in writing the thesis the reader should be able to 'follow in my footsteps', so this chapter is an inquiry into where I started. An account of the author is also entailed in terms of how the perspectives of other people could be recognised in my thesis. How can the reader hear the voices of those others involved in my researching without being able to differentiate my voice?

3.1.1   How I went about the inquiry

In the first month of my researching I drew a picture representing my life as a pathway and showing the events and choices I had made as bends and forks in the pathway (Figure 3-1). The question 'Who am I?' as Ricoeur (1992) points out is inescapably bound up with 'what?', 'how?' and 'why?' because of the construction of self in language as a 'some thing' and the knowing of self through embodiment in actions. The construction of 'life pathways' was a technique I had used in social work practice with individuals and families to help them identify and connect the turning points in their lives in terms of the decisions they had made.

In this picture I wanted to show some academic and practice credentials, and that my 'description spaces' included philosophy, social work and community work practice and management theory in local authorities and voluntary agencies, and training and teaching. My histories include a rural family background, being married, and a parent and sometimes struggling to fit home and work together.

From my picture, for my first meeting with people from TCS I prepared a short curriculum vitae which included some of the epiphanies[30], choices and difficult times as well as achievements and traditions. In the terms which I introduce in Claim 9 of Chapter 2, my CV indicated both rough and smooth patches in the quality of the flow of my structural coupling (Fell and Russell, 1999). Later in the research I used storyboards and rich pictures[31] to capture my experiences and feelings. These pictures were also a way of inviting conversations and showing my interpretations to other people. In this chapter I focus on how they can help develop self-awareness.

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[30] I am using the term 'epiphany' as described by Denzin (1992). Epiphanies are the sort of 'critical incidents' which "*rupture routines and lives and provoke radical redefinitions of self. In moments of epiphany, people redefine themselves. Epiphanies are connected to turning-point experiences ...*" (ibid. p. 27).

[31] Story boards and rich pictures are described in Chapter 5.
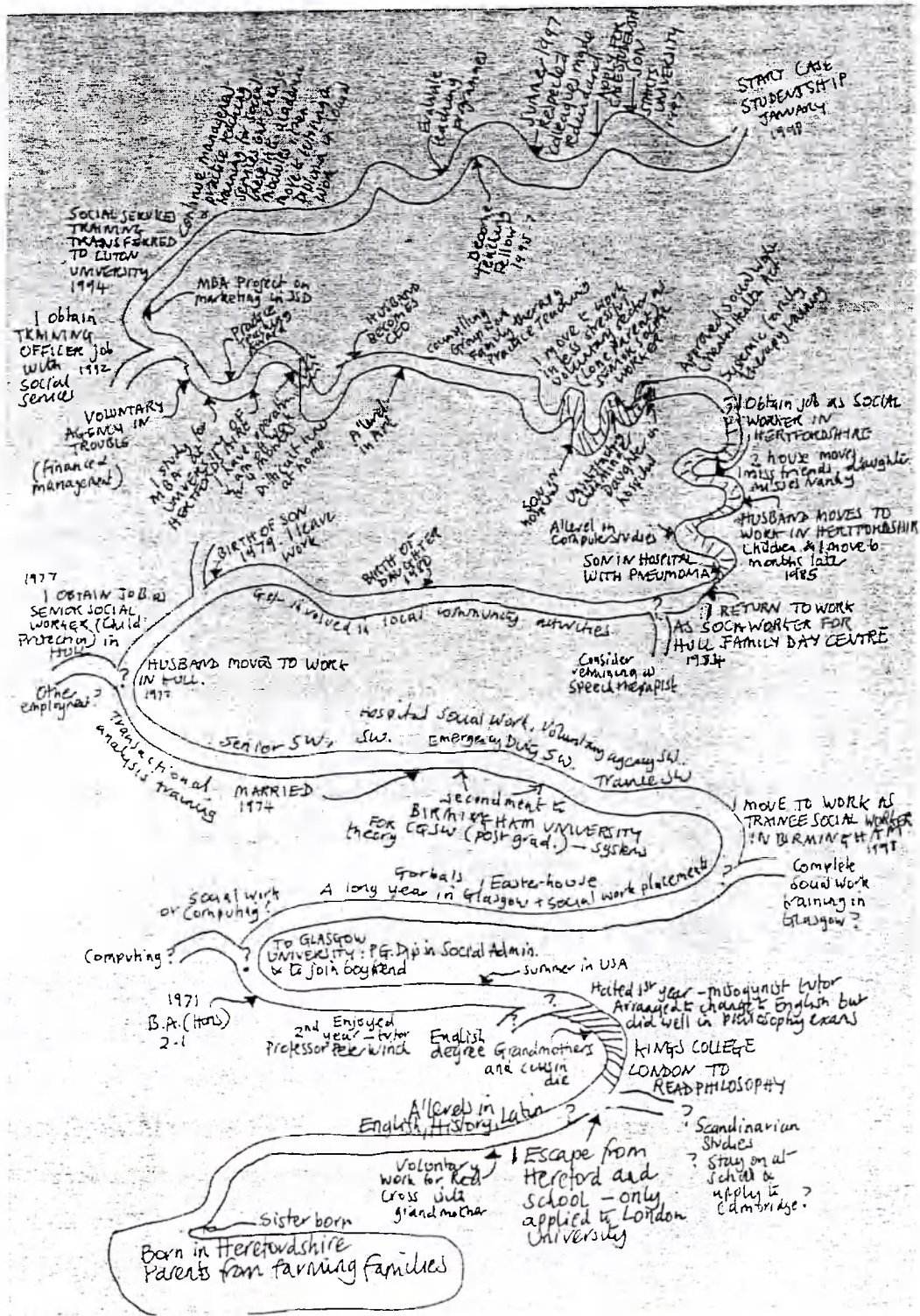
Figure 3-1 My life as a pathway of events and choices from being born to starting the CASE studentship

To explore my 'baggage' I *"move into a reflexive relationship with myself"* (Armson, 1998). I articulate some of the 'me's' writing the thesis. Judi Marshall describes *"living life as inquiry"* as meaning *"a range of beliefs, strategies, and ways of behaving which encourage me to treat little as fixed, finished, clear-cut"* (Marshall, 1999; p. 156). Living life as inquiry involves *"seeking to maintain curiosity"* and *"hold[ing] open the boundary between research and my life generally"* (ibid. p. 157, 160). I reflected on what in the original research proposal, and in my research experiencing triggered my enthusiasm and my curiosity. Enthusiasm or curiosity are necessary to engender energy for sustaining long term commitment, and also indicate predispositions and prejudgements, or ways of seeing situations. I also reflected on those aspects I was inclined to give less attention to, and the meaning of this for the direction of my researching.

As well as conversations with my academic supervisors I explored my understandings from researching with a 'critical friend' (CF). This was someone who had been instrumental in the original research proposal but who was no longer working for TCS. Kember et al. (1997) identify 12 metaphors for the role of a 'critical friend' in research. Those which I consider most apply to CF's role are *rapport builder* in terms of our relationship, *project design consultant* in relation to my interventions in TCS, *mirror* for my reflections on TCS, and *match maker* in his help in choosing people to contact. Most usefully to me though was that he was always someone with whom I could have conversations. Even when he wasn't there he provided another perspective; I could ask myself, 'What would CF say?'

Writing about experiencing is a means of inquiry (Clandinin and Connelly, 1998, Holly, 1989). I wrote different drafts of the stories in this chapter and shared some of them with other people in the stories. Some of the feedback changed my perspective, for example with regard to the judgements I made about my children's feelings. From other feedback I refocused my writing

on my research; 'holding the boundaries open' with my life generally meant that there was more data available to me in my inquiry in this chapter than in the rest of the thesis. In order to limit my inquiry and to help keep the focus I have separated out four mini-inquiries into self-awareness which capture different sets of implications. These concern:

(i)   Finding a voice in a welter of roles and ways of knowing

(ii)   My initial reluctance to include children and young people in the research

(iii)   Distinguishing managing and practising in organisations

(iv)   The CASE studentship as a participative experience.

3.2 Sub-strand inquiry into 'Who am I?': roles, feelings and remembering

Two of the most difficult things for me in writing up the thesis were writing in the first person and getting the first person voice right. Epston and White (1992) make the point that behind idea of 'author' understood as 'having a voice' is some functioning of power – the power to be heard or to be read, to influence others and so on. This is why 'voice' is such a powerful and pervasive metaphor of participation, as I discuss in Chapter 7. In other writing I have done for public reading I have always been hidden behind a 'professional' role of objectivity, or behind academic writing conventions (Alvesson and Skölderberg, 2000). As a novice first person researcher I slip past the second person into the third without noticing. Writing about students becoming researchers in the academic community, Schratz and Walker (1995) suggest that this may be like the struggle of adolescents who have to assert their independence of their family in order to become individuals. I have particularly struggled to find a coherent voice in my research.

My 'first-person' struggle is partly to do with how I construct what it is to be a woman and what is a scholarly text. Gilligan (1990) describes how adolescent girls meet *"the wall of western culture"*. They begin to realise that 'being a good woman' in this society means becoming selfless. They must renounce the clear sense of self developed by the age of 11 and 12, because to continue to assert the self will label them as selfish. I do not have a sense that my experience in adolescence reflects this loss of self. I do remember the deep unhappiness of feeling out of place in body as a fourteen year old girl and the unfairness of arbitrary adult decisions about what I could do. I saw my choice of studying philosophy at London University as an act of resistance to being drawn into a teaching career, an act of independence in choosing what I wanted to study and an escape from county town life. The irony of then becoming a social worker – the other career alongside nursing, of *"womanly self sacrifice and obligation"* (Bowden, 1997) in the 1960s and 70s, did not strike me at the time.

When I studied to be a social worker in the 1970s, at first in Glasgow and then in Birmingham, social work training was largely unregulated. The course in Glasgow included a large element of psychodynamic theory, and sociology connected to social action, with no attempt at synthesis. The Birmingham course two years later espoused systems theory, but the teaching was based on the theoretical preferences of individual lecturers. There was no attempt at theoretical coherence (Jones, 1996). Coherence was obtained 'on the job', with a 'pick and mix' approach to theoretical tools. I learned that many very diverse theories 'worked' in practice, if applied with conviction and energy. I always most enjoyed in practising social work the opportunity to inquire into people's stories about their lives; I specialised in what were then called 'problem families' because they had the most complicated lives of all. In my later social work jobs this became refined as child protection, family centre work and work with lone parents. A lot of this was difficult to manage emotionally and physically. The quality of supervision I received and team support varied from job to job.

Fineman (1993) argues that some professional workers, for example doctors and social workers have been *"in effect paid for their skill in emotion management"* in their work and in their role they are expected to exude benign detachment. Being non-judgemental and not becoming (over) involved are social work virtues that make it difficult to write in the first person.

My struggle to find a voice in my current research also relates to the plurality of roles I see myself in. A consequence of seeing the researcher as in the researching, rather than standing above it, and recognising 'self' as dialogically constructed is that many researcher selves become apparent. In different situations I have worn different hats, for example those of a student, an (ex) social worker, a researcher, an interviewer, a friend, 'an adult', as well as being elsewhere, a mother, a wife, a daughter, a lecturer, a neighbour, a close friend, a colleague, a partner and so on. In exploring 'who am I' the idea of roles is a useful starting point. Role theory (Goffman, 1959, Dahrendorf, 1973, Hartley, 1999) is helpful in thinking about these 'hats' as negotiated with other people, and as a way of talking about the problems when they are seen differently by different people, and when there is conflict between the roles that one individual holds. We say to people, for example when they are wondering how to 'present' themselves in an important interview, "Be yourself", as if this were a matter of choice and well-defined.

At home perhaps I am 'myself', in meetings with my supervisors I am 'the mature postgraduate student', in conversations with managers I was the 'respectful, but probing researcher', in activities with children I was ... This is where I think the idea of roles stops being helpful. I would like to think in the activities I have done with children in the research that I was 'being myself', as well as 'being a researcher' and 'not being a teacher'. This is despite my perception that how I behaved towards the children and young

people in the research activities and how I evaluated their behaviour was different from how this might be with children at home or elsewhere.

How I experience a situation with other people, and the role I see myself having are bound up together. Roles construct experiences and experiences constitute roles. In this research I did two activity sessions with children in a school with a TCS project worker as a co-researcher in each session[32]. These activities are described in Chapter 7. At the beginning of the sessions we tried to introduce ourselves to the children, to the teacher and, in the first session, to a parent helping out, by our first names. We did this on purpose to show we were not there as teachers. However, especially with the Year 3 group it was much easier for them to call us 'miss'. We noted that the class teacher had some hesitation in introducing us – especially me – to the class by our first names. It was really difficult not to behave in the classroom like a teacher. We had in front of us the model of the class teacher, who used various strategies to maintain his 'order'. I say 'his order' because he saw and responded to behaviour that I did not notice at all, or did not see as 'out of order' in the activities that we were doing with the class. This is not a reflection on his skill as a teacher but an observation on the differences in how people 'see' and respond to situations {58/notes}.

Feelings act like flags and signposts and paint boxes in remembering. Not everything can be recorded for re-reading in research, and it is the associated emotions that bring experiences vividly to mind. For example, on one of my field work visits in TCS I was sitting in the office kitchen, waiting for NC to finish a telephone call. On the notice board were arranged tidily an up-to-date set of health and safety notices. Office notice boards in my experience usually need pruning and tidying. In the

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[32] By 'co-research' I mean that these sessions were planned, set up, and carried out with TCS project workers, and that we talked the session over afterwards. But I took the lead in instigating the activities, and giving feedback. There is *tension* in conceptualising this as co-inquiry, as Costa (1997) notes.

conversation I mentioned the tidy notice board, and discovered that organisational health and safety issues were NC's special responsibility {54/notes}. The minor pleasure of this connection brings much of the rest of the conversation to mind, as well as some other conversations around notice boards, and understandings about how jobs are constructed, and certain qualities become associated with people.

The interplay of feelings and images and remembering is not always helpful. T.S. Eliot's lines,

> "I am moved by fancies that are curled
> Around these images and cling"
> (*Preludes IV*, lines 48 and 49)

remind me of my journey between Children's Society projects in South Wales and Somerset, which transported me to the holiday journeys of my childhood, travelling under Clifton suspension bridge, fighting and singing with my sister in the back of the Ford Consul between Hereford and Paignton. The cloud of nostalgia in which I arrived at the project got in the way of my listening and observing, and it is still the journey that is more vivid than the project visit.

There were other powerful reminders to me of my attachment to places and how many of the sites of TCS work that I visited in my researching were connected with my histories. I sent postcards to my father from Liverpool where he had been a student; I revisited the house in Hull where we lived when the children were born. Two of the most vivid experiences in my researching knotted together emotions and place. The first was being taken for a car ride around Newcastle to see housing estates where whole streets of houses disappeared overnight along with people's sense of belonging and community. This was so like what I felt about Glasgow in the 1970s that my sadness was how little some things have changed. It brought back my feeling about moving from the north east of England to the south east in the 1980s – somewhere down the M1 we crossed into a different world. The

second vivid experience was to share the solar eclipse of 11 August 1999 with people from a TCS project and a field of cows in the countryside of southern England. The taken-for-granted camaraderie reminded me of what I most missed in my research.

In my inquiry in this section I have just touched on some of the 'selves' brought out in my researching. That there are many selves is implied in the epistemology of my thesis. The constitution of a researcher's identity as having stable boundaries implies a reality independent of the knower (Lal, 1996). This raises the question of identifying the researcher's voice. Jopling (1997) proposes a 'self of selves'. I propose this as a useful metaphor for the researcher as author.

I have brought out the unsettling effects of experiencing that problematised my attempts to be consistent in the quality of my attention to other people's stories. The unsettling effects relate to the quality and quantity of connections that I am open to in my experiencing. From my social work traditions I am predisposed to attending to other people's experiencing and feelings, but not to recognising how these are woven in with my own experiencing. The next two 'mini-inquiries' take this understanding further in relation to issues specific to my researching.

3.3 Sub-strand inquiry into working and living with children and young people

My next 'mini-inquiry' into the implications of self-aware research concerns researching with children and young people. I verified with my academic supervisors that the research would not involve interviewing children and young people before I accepted the CASE studentship. However the TCS CASE partners required that I be police checked and clearly expected children and young people to be involved. I changed my view about researching with children and young people in the course of our

conversations, but I needed to inquire into my initial apprehension. The inputs of this 'mini-inquiry' are aspects of my social work practice, but mainly my immediate experiences as a parent.

Social work with children and young people was something I had 'drawn a line under', in the transition from being a social work practitioner to being a trainer in a work organisation, and then a lecturer in higher education. Seeing oneself as something particular is also not seeing oneself as something else. Few people who move from a social work or youth work practitioner role to a managing or teaching position return to practice. There is a sense of 'having moved on'. In the way we talk about work organisation structures, the move from practice to management is 'up', in both status and salary, at least in social services organisations. In fact, I no longer had confidence-to-practice. This was partly that my knowledge of the context and rules of practice had become obsolete, and some skills atrophied through lack of use. But it was also that I did not have confidence that I would choose to do what was right, especially in interactions with children and young people.

Writing about being a parent is still difficult for me, because it involves returning to painful experiences when I have felt most a failure. In the last four years my two children have grown from late teens to early twenties. One is working and the other studying abroad. I love both of them very much and unreservedly, and am very proud of them, enjoy their company and miss them immensely. However I found being a parent of children through the transition to adulthood a difficult experience.

Kaufman (1997) chooses 'mothering' as a metaphor of embodiment, for Living in Love - or living in a domain of unconditional acceptance. Her aim is to reclaim 'mothering' from its interpretation as 'smothering' in adult relationships. She relates this to Humberto Maturana's definition of

love as: *"the domain of those behaviours through which the other arises as a legitimate other in coexistence with oneself"* (Maturana, 1988).

> Mothering is a manner of living. It is not about giving to or doing for another. It is an emotional framework that includes both the self and other. It is living in a place of openness, and, by virtue of your manner of living, issuing an invitation to others to meet you there. It is a place of non-judgement. It is a place of absolute safety. It is a willingness, a desire, to accept others at face value. It does not urge you to agree or disagree with someone else's way of life or to "fix" what is wrong. ((Kaufman, 1997))

In her explication Kaufman misses what for me is a crucial point in the entailment of the metaphor of 'mothering'[33]. That is, it is not just <u>there</u>. It has to be embraced and worked on, and is hard work. There is always the struggle not to absorb others in oneself.

Just before my son's difficult birth I gave up social work practice for five years to look after him and subsequently his sister. This was an easy decision: removing other people's babies, even when convinced this was the only way to ensure their safety, was very difficult for a pregnant woman. I was strongly influenced by my own experience of being parented and patterns of parenting in my extended family and my partner's. Looking after two children under two years of age – who were <u>my</u> children - was hard work.

> Being constantly with children was like wearing a pair of shoes that were expensive and too small. She couldn't bear to throw them out, but they gave her blisters (Bainbridge, 1991; Ch. 4).

Advice from others about problems – not feeding, not sleeping, biting, tantrums - was often contradictory. Memories of the advice I had given and judgements made about others' parenting in my professional role were at best embarrassing, and for a time I considered changing career. However when I eventually returned to work – in preventive social work with

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[33] This is of course also a *gendered* term.

families in a voluntary agency, I think to start with I was less tolerant of other parents' practice because somehow I had managed to do this.

The theories of action embedded in parenting are no less heterogeneous, culturally determined and often contradictory than those in other ways of relating and being with other people. While espousing the individuality of my children – their de facto right to be different from their father and me – I also felt and thought of them as extensions of me – a sort of ontological extension of self. The intimacy of physical contact - cuddling, dressing - is reinforced through social practices. These include, for example being referred to as 'mother' rather than by name, receiving Child Benefit, waiting at the school gate, having their names added to my passport. All plans and decisions about future actions – what groceries to buy, whether to return to work – take account of the children.

> There is a real sense in which children are not 'other' to their mothers;
> the boundaries between self and other, mother and child, child and
> mother, frequently seem to dissolve in the activities of protecting and
> nurturing (Bowden, 1997; p. 30).

Whatever our children do and feel reflects somehow on their father and me.

How we respond to other people is often determined by place. In my parents' home I am always a daughter, to be nurtured. When my children are away from home, or we are together somewhere else, then it is much easier for me to recognise them as independent, autonomous beings. At home, we still fall into patterns of protection, and resistance to protection, of responsibility and irresponsibility, almost as if they had never been away.

I do not suggest this is how the relationships between children and their parents, and other adults, ought to be. This is how what being a parent of young children seems to me now, looking back, understanding how it was.

I am seeing it through the cultural and situational perspectives, the western-world nuclear family, the geographical distance from the extended family, expectations of self-as-parent from own experience of being parented and from observation of other families and from knowledge of theories of child development, kinship. Seeing children as extensions of oneself is often uncomfortable. Changeling myths – the fractious ungrateful goblin child swapped for the real obedient and loving child, offer escape and expression of ambivalence for parents in the same way that adoption myths – everyday moody parents swapped for the true noble ones, offer these to their children.

Within this metaphor of child-as-parent-extension, growing up is also a tearing away, from refusing to hold hands to choosing to go on holiday with friends rather than parents. Sometimes this feels anguished and other times an enjoyable release. What was most painful when the children were between fourteen and eighteen was not the anxiety about what they were doing - were they at school, taking drugs, not looking when they crossed the road etc. What felt most difficult was not to be able any more to make things better and easier, knowing that they would be sometimes unhappy and disappointed and despairing and tired. What felt almost worse was to know, with wearying anticipation that even when everything was fine, we would be shouting at each other and slamming doors and not speaking.

In Chapter 2 (Claim 9) I wrote of the possibility of 'co-constructions' and commonalities. Krippendorff (1996) suggests that rather than empirical constructs these commonalities are logical or technological constructs that we are 'tempted' to make in our dialogical involvement with other people. He claims that *"assertions of commonalities can be associated with the exertion of power and with efforts to control dialogical processes"*. Thus the rhetorical question 'don't we all agree on that?', or the statement 'of course, we all speak the same language' and references to shared family values, are assertions of commonalities.

> Commonalities are always constructed by someone who values such commonalities with the expectation that Others accept their conception and live within its entailment ... The authoritative assertion of commonalities, while contestable in principle, can easily silence divergent voices and become oppressive (ibid. p. 319).

A way of understanding what was happening in my relating to my children was that the commonalities that I had constructed, embodied and asserted were being contested as my children found their own 'voices'. As a social worker I found it particularly difficult to work with young women. In many respects their experiences were very similar to mine at their age, but in others completely different, and I would make mistakes. For example, with one young woman my attempts at empathy about physical changes were met with total incomprehension. However we achieved a startling but temporary rapprochement when we went out for a meal at a roadside café together. I would sometimes make the same mistakes with my children, so that they sometimes felt like strangers.

The growing up and away from their parents of young people is a frequent theme in folk tales and fiction and television drama. I suggest that my experiences led to me being hesitant about doing research with children and young people. This was because of the residual bruising effects and feelings of failure and lest I make the same sort of mistakes in assumptions about them.

An implication for my researching from this 'mini-inquiry' was that I was more sensitised to the assertion of commonalities in my researching with children and young people, although sometimes this only came out in my reflecting. For example, at the beginning of the research activity sessions I conducted in schools I asked the children what they thought research was. I had written beforehand individually to almost all the adults I talked with about what I was doing, and this question served the same sort of purpose. All the children's answers were that it was about finding something out. It was the right sort of question to introduce the session as something

different, and find out other people's expectations. But I also see it now as a didactic, back-to-the-classroom question, depending on the follow up to the response. There is a difference between *'that's right'* (which I think I said), and *'yes, that's what I think too'*. My awareness of this difference was triggered by a presentation by a researcher comparing teachers and planners working with children on their ideas for town planning. He expressed this difference as that the teachers were interested in changing the children, and the planners were interested in children's ideas for changing the town. This difference encapsulated for me the difference between ethics as adhering to codes of practice and the ethical principles I set out in Chapter 2, which are not about changing people but creating possibilities.

The research with children was 'sharp edge' learning for me in other ways. Firstly, most of this work took place at the end of the fieldwork period. I was more at home in the research and with the methods I was using than in the early meetings with managers. I was comfortable with being a researcher. I was starting to know what I was looking for. I was confident and so able to be more flexible, and see more possibilities. In recognising my own uncertainties I planned these activities, and 'rehearsed them in my head' much more carefully than most of the conversations and project visits. I seized on the opportunity to use different media and to be visual. I have always seen myself as a frustrated artist since I was told I had to drop Art for 'more academic subjects' at school.

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Most importantly, in all the sessions with children and young people I had a co-researcher from TCS. I knew these people beforehand, and in most cases had engaged them in the planning of the sessions. The real value of this in my learning was not only the companionship and the benefit to me of their experience, but that in my reflection on my experience afterwards I had my construction of their different perspectives to draw on.

3.4 Sub-strand inquiry into managing and practising in organisations

Before I started the research I knew of TCS without knowing it. In the 1970s I had some professional contact with TCS concerning adoption and fostering. In the early 1980s I worked for Barnados at a time when that organisation and TCS were making similar shifts from running children's homes and nurseries to working with children and families in the community. In the 1990s I experienced the changing relationships between the statutory sector – social care, housing and health, and voluntary agencies, as services moved into the 'contract' culture. From supervising and teaching students on practice placements in many different agencies, I saw practice in the statutory sector become more circumscribed by legislation, regulation, budgetary controls and the language of competence and accounting. But innovatory practice aimed at changing processes which marginalised groups including children and young people, was going on in many voluntary organisations, including TCS. However, despite teaching social work in a building a stone's throw away from one of TCS's regional offices, when I started the research I had little idea of what TCS actually did.

When I started writing about The Children's Society as an organisation, I wondered how people came to make sense of such an organisation. I wondered what they brought from their previous experience that helped them to do this, and how is it that we come to have the sort of organisations we do. Rhodes frames this question as "*how is it we come to 'know' about organisational life?*" (Rhodes, 2000). At a conference in Hull in 1999[34], one of the speakers, Merryn Hutchings[35], who was doing research into how children make sense of what 'work' is, said that younger children she had interviewed only identified an activity as work if they could see real money

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[34] 'Sites of learning: An International Conference on Childhood', 14-16 September 1999, Centre for the Social Study of Childhood, University of Hull
[35] From the School of Education, University of North London

changing hands. So what the teacher did was not 'work'. She also pointed out the similarity between head-teachers' rooms and Chief Executives' offices. There is also a resemblance in the structure of the relationship between teachers and children, and between managers and workers.

Whereas parenting is rich with emotion, work organisations have often been written about as emotion free zones, places of *"much head work, but little of the heart"* (Fineman, 1993). Some more recent texts argue that emotions are now accepted as an important factor within organisations (Bolton, 2000, Gabriel, 1998b, Fineman, 1997). However the tone of most conventional texts on management and organisations is usually dispassionate, and emotions reified as things to be worked on – 'emotional labour', managed, regulated and accounted for (Bolton, 2000, Putnam, 1993). *"When emotions are incorporated into organisations they are treated as commodities"* (ibid. p. 43].

If I think of a work organisation I have a picture in my mind of a large building, part Greek temple[36], somewhat resembling my school building and Aston Town Hall where I had my first permanent social work job. I interpret Hutchings' work as suggesting the importance of attending to such images and their sources. My image of an organisation made it easy for me to see some aspects of TCS, for example, the pillar-like structure of the five divisions, the Directors as capitals of the columns, capped by the entablature of Society Management team and Council. Appreciating 'surprises' about TCS, such as the geographical spread and the tensions between local community and Society alliances needs other images and metaphors.

Greek temples, as Handy (1985) points out are insecure when the ground shakes. In the late 1980s the small voluntary agency for which I was working as a practitioner had its funding drastically reduced. This was

foreseen but not planned for and I changed jobs to work as a training officer in a local authority. At the same time I was studying for an MBA, and observing the distress of fellow students from industry as their companies closed down. A year later the local authority proposed to 'hive off' some human resource functions. For my MBA research project I investigated and designed a marketing strategy, identifying potential 'customers' if training and personnel had to become self-financing. But nobody knew what was happening. There were tearful and angry staff meetings. Eventually, in what I see now as a political coup, those of us involved in post-qualifying social work training were transferred to the local university and everyone else stayed until the next reorganisation.

For the first three years at the University we continued to provide the same training under contract to the LA and took on an increasing amount of teaching and tutoring. We helped to develop a new university department, and became involved in research and the development of good teaching practice. During the fourth year serious financial problems came to light in the university. Misjudgements had been made in financial controls and forecasting. Rumour filled in the information gaps. We waited at home for the telephone call on a Saturday morning in April. Two of those made redundant were colleagues I especially respected for their learning, their teaching skills, and their research, and had worked with closely. There were more tearful and angry meetings. Those of us who were left were threatened with disciplinary action for writing in support of our colleagues. Union representation was ineffectual and the appeal process drawn out and unsuccessful.

Although this experience precipitated my decision to look for other employment and eventually apply for the CASE studentship, I continued to do some occasional teaching at the university. But I no longer trusted the university with my work. And as Seth (1999) writes, *"an egg may not be*

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[36] This is also just like 's picture of the role culture in a bureaucracy (p. 190)

unboiled nor trust resealed". It was in Denzin's terms, an illuminative moment in which the underlying structure of the relationship between me and the university as employer were revealed (Denzin, 1992). It was also a relived moment, an event that I came to define in consequential terms.

Within the constructivist epistemology explored in Chapter 2, I now see that what was revealed was a gap between the university's and my *epistemologies of practice* (Weil, 1998). Schön (1995a) argues that

> institutional ... [theories of knowledge] need not be consciously
> espoused by individuals (although they may be), for they are built
> into institutional structures and practices (p. 27).

What I thought of as *knowing*, for example, good teaching, was not, or no longer, *legitimated* by the university.

This experience – of colleagues being made redundant – is almost commonplace and can be argued for in terms of economic necessity that are generally accepted. It could be one more of many case studies, for example those researched by Cutcher-Gerschenfeld et al. who conclude that economic shocks often lead management to make unilateral decisions "*which disturb the spirit of co-operation*" (Cutcher-Gerschenfeld et al., 1991 in Heller et al., 1998).

I was reminded of the experience of the university redundancies several times during my research with TCS, as people in TCS were threatened with and made redundant. It was a connection between us, one of those moments of 'knowing from (social situations)' I describe in Chapter 2. In two particular conversations we discussed similar experiences as a breakdown of trust {42/notes; 53/tape}. This way of thinking about it had wider resonances. I was pointed to Richard Sennett's article criticising the government's failure to trust the public sector to regulate itself (Sennett, 2000). Parton argues that

audit in a range of different forms has come to replace the trust once accorded top professionals both by their clients ... and the authorities which employ, legitimate and constitute them (Parton, 1996; p. 112; see also Power, 1994).

As work becomes more closely supervised and specified, the less people trust each other – because close supervision is interpreted as suspicion, and trust engenders trust – in 'management-speak' (exemplified in Creed and Miles, (1996) *the opportunity cost of controls leads to trust deficit*').

I understand trust as that which helps us to go on in our relationships with others in conditions of uncertainty. By this I mean:

(i)   Trust is to do with relationships between people, not between people and objects (Baier, 1994).

(ii)   Trust concerns positive expectations about other people's actions in the future.

(iii)   Trust is an emotion, although it is often theorised as purely cognitive.

(iv)   Where we can predict or know with certainty then we do not talk of trusting.

(v)   Some mutual knowledge is necessary for trust; where we can only hope we cannot trust.

(vi)   Trust is an initial condition (the glue), and an emergent property (the lubricant), and can be sustained through participation between children and adults.

(vii)   "Trust has to do with what we can do together without doubting reality" (Maturana and von Foerster, 2000), thus trust between people may involve recognising the legitimacy of different epistemologies.

Trust, as I claim in Chapter 7, is seen as an ingredient of participation, and as a boundary creating a safe space in which participation can take place.

A question that arises is how it makes sense for me to talk of 'trusting' an organisation. Czarniawska (1997) defines work organisations as *"nets of collective actions"*. She argues that the image of the work organisation as 'super person' is pervasive but often overlooked. She suggests that within this metaphor the organisation is seen as a single powerful voice, embodied in a leader – chief executive, vice-chancellor – or in a consensual collective, against a background theory that tells us *"how organisations learn, unlearn, produce strategies, and do all the things individuals usually do"*. Seeing a university, or any other work organisation, as a super-person makes sense of this feeling of betrayal or disappointment. I find her metaphor persuasive, because the organisation – the network of relationships- that we have first experience of is our own body, and the bodies of others. The metaphor of organisation as person makes sense of the intense sadness I felt when people were made redundant or projects closed in TCS or there were financial difficulties. It was as if someone I knew were ill or had lost part of themselves. The metaphor also offers a response to an epistemological question I asked in Chapter 2 – how can a work organisation be understood to know?

A question that I brought with me to the research is,

> Why is it that practitioners working with others in anti-oppressive and emancipatory ways so often talk about their own management as oppressive and disabling?

This question drew on my own disenchantment with management and the opaqueness of management decisions. In a conference paper written in the first year of my research with TCS (Helme, 1999) I claimed that this question resonated with the experience of others, and this has been confirmed in conversations. I also claimed that it was an important

question for organisations like TCS, seeking to include in their own governance structures those with whom they were working. I proposed that considering different explanatory descriptions and their embedded metaphors was helpful in inquiring into the question. I offered stories with embedded metaphors of:

- Feelings as contagions to be passed on from service users to practitioners to managers. Thus Moylan, 1994 argues that,

  > by knowing about ways in which the institution can become "infected" by the difficulties and defences of their particular client group, staff are more likely to be aware when this is happening" (ibid. p. 59, my emphasis).

  Practitioners may have a predisposition to 'infection' in the form of *"unresolved issues from our past"* (Zagier Roberts, 1994). And 'supervision' is in part a 'disinfection' process.

- Feelings as projections of the situations of service users.

- Feelings as mirrors in which practitioners' feelings reflect those of service users;

- Feelings as pulls in opposite directions - between *"the regulating of an appropriate emotional distance"* and *"helping"* (Evans and Kearney 1997 p. 68). In her critique of *"rights talk"*, Smith (1997) argues that:

  > the ascendancy of rights talk has gained momentum within a context of practice which has come to owe less to the social and emotional content of a caring relationship than in does to the formal requirements of regulations, measuring and monitoring the externally observable contours of performance (p. 45).

- Feelings as pressurised containers- in which the pressure/anger comes from observing the effects of inequalities (Leonard, 1997), and the container/trap is the perceived inability to do anything about it in Foucauldian supervisory structures, bureaucratic organisations, and

professional conservatism (Foucault, 1977). Thus Oldham (1991) argues that,

> the clamour for children's rights is ... partly a cri de coeur from workers in bureaucratic organisations seeking some redress from the alienating consequences of the restrictive and half-understood complexities of their work with children (p. 48).

As I read these now, I see my organisational self struggling in the stories. I note that they are written from the perspective of practitioners and that the distinction between managers and practitioners runs through my discussion in this chapter and into the rich pictures I drew in my researching. This distinction and my valuing of practising above managing were sedimented rather than challenged when I studied for a Masters degree in Business Administration. It has been more difficult – and involved more learning for me – to be responsible in my researching with managers than with practitioners.

Michelle Fine uses two metaphors to describe the self and other (people) in research. One is that self and other are *"knottily entangled"* (Fine, 1998). Her other metaphor is "self- (hyphen) other", and she exhorts researchers to *"probe the hyphen"* through critical conversations. Writers about 'the other' in research are usually referring to people who are marginalised or 'unvoiced', for example poor people, people of different ethnicity and culture from dominant groups in society, and children and young people (Kincheloe and McLaren, 1998, Rodwell, 1998, Alderson, 1995, Reason, 1994). An output of the mini-inquiry in this section is that 'hyphen probing' is just as important for the validity and meaning of this research when 'others' are seen as powerful and independent.

Being a researcher of an organisation of which I was not an employee was having different ranges of power and powerlessness from being a practitioner or a manager. Although I met and talked with most of the senior managers in TCS, and become familiar with headquarters, getting

hold of everyday information, such as internal newsletters or reports, the sort of paperwork with which people complain they are overwhelmed, was much more difficult. People were welcoming, but I sometimes had to wait, and then some conversations were too short to explore 'off message' issues. *"Interviewees are people with considerable potential for sabotaging the attempt to research them"* (Oakley, 1981). My seeing senior managers – all but one of them men – as different from myself led to me being less assertive and to spend more time in the conversation in constructing commonalities. In Chapter 2 Claim 4 I argue that meanings are brought forth in contexts to which we had also given meaning. The difference between my conversations with managers and the research with children and young people was that I did not attend to my construing of the contexts of my conversation with managers; these took place early on in the research. However, as I discussed in the previous section I had reflected in some detail on the meaning for me of research with children and young people.

3.5 Sub-strand inquiry into the CASE studentship as a participative experience

In Chapter 1 I referred to the setting up of the CASE studentship partnership, and in Chapter 6 I outline the mechanisms by which this was managed, including the drawing up of the CASE studentship agreement. In this section I inquire into my awareness as a research student of the CASE partnership as a participative experience. The partnership was embodied in my researching but also in a series of meetings most of which took place at the OU between TCS partners, the research supervisors and myself, and which are the focus of my inquiry. The partnership was reified in the research proposals, the research agreement and reports on the research.

CASE studentship research starts life without the student so is not 'owned' at the start by the student (Harris et al., 2000). Marcus describes how people consciously and unconsciously use their home to express

themselves. People, objects and places come and go in our lives and we selectively pay attention and invest them with emotion, *"in the process of becoming who we truly are"* (Marcus, 1995). Objects and places are sets and props that we select *"to display images of ourselves and to learn by reflection of the environment around us"* (ibid. p. 11). The key is personalisation of space. It took me the first year to think of the research as mine because so much was unfamiliar. I note now that it was metaphor – both exploring theory and using metaphors - that helped me both move in and take off.

There was no specific guidance about how the partnership between TCS and the OU should be managed or what sort of relationship this should be (Bell and Read, 1998). Doctoral CASE students are on the peripheries and margins of several communities of practice, including the research community they are hoping to join, the university community and the CASE partner organisation. One of the reasons I continued to do some teaching was that this was a community of practice in which I had a footing.

Wenger (1998) argues that we define our identities through both the practices we engage in and by practices we do not engage in.

> Our identities are constituted not only by what we are but what we are not... our identities are shaped by combinations of participation and non-participation (ibid. p. 164).

He distinguishes between peripherality, in which there is a trajectory of joining the community of practice, for example the peripherality of students in the research community, and marginality, in which the trajectory is always to the outside. Wenger gives as an example how hard it is to be grown-up participants in our own families of birth (ibid. p. 166). This distinction between peripherality and marginality is helpful to me in making sense of my relationship with the OU and with TCS, and my awareness now of some missed opportunities. My experiencing of being peripheral to TCS

was in the activities I did with children and young people and in presenting
and facilitating discussion in TCS conferences.

A metaphor that I thought captured what the TCS CASE partners and other
people in TCS offered in the research conversations was some "hospitable
space" for learning. I borrowed this term from Myers (1997) who writes
that self-confident spirituality is unlikely to develop in a child unless
"parents and teachers provide a hospitable space". This is interpreted as
"compassionate concern" by Hay and Nye (1998), also writing about
children's spirituality. I understand hospitable space as offering comfort
and safety.

Robert Stake writes that *"qualitative researchers are guests in the private
spaces of the world. Their manners should be good and their code of ethics
strict"* (Stake, 1998; p.103). Being a guest is a form of marginal
participation. In constituting the relationship offered by TCS partners as
hospitality I was also constituting myself as a guest in TCS. Hospitality can
be withdrawn for bad behaviour. I saw it as in my best interest that our
CASE partnership meetings should be friendly and supportive. A way of
doing this was to focus on the processes of my researching rather than
potential outcomes. Differences which I knew of between individual CASE
partners were not discussed in these meetings, neither did we talk about the
impacts of changes of the people involved which to me were very
significant. This is not to say the meetings were 'emotion free'. In a
particular meeting one of the TCS CASE partners expressed the pain of
being under notice of redundancy and having to continue to plan and carry
out work. At other times people were passionate about children and young
people's participation and rights. But it seemed to me that the emotions
were about things going on outside the CASE meetings.

3.6 Conclusions: the implications of self-aware researching for 'researching with' and my research

My inquiry into my traditions and histories – 'self-awareness' - identified the following implications for 'researching with' other people':

- The identity of the researcher is constituted in researching conversations; thus there can be many researcher 'selves', as well as the different 'selves' or roles that the people carry with them from their different contexts, and different ways of knowing. This means judgements have to made in the writing up about what 'voice' to write in.

- Self-aware inquiry leads to openness to learning from other people; being aware of my own apprehensions about researching with children and young people I was open to invitations from others to act differently.

- Self-aware inquiry includes investigation of ideas that may be useful in participative researching, for example, characterising trust, and the idea of 'imposing commonalities'.

- Self-aware inquiry involves attending to the meaning of the contexts of conversations for the researcher as well as the contexts themselves.

The implications of my inquiries for my own researching are that I was predisposed to attend to:

- epistemological inquiry from my study of philosophy;

- the ethicality of practice, from my later experiencing of teaching and debating social work;

- stories, as how people express their relationships with each other, and their responses to questions about their histories and experiencing;

- specific discourses and metaphors, for example I think of problems as challenges rather than things to be solved, as a technician might. Control may be a problem for me rather than an objective. I would speak of filling gaps rather than bridging them, and of planning rather than designing. I would be more likely to use and attend to metaphors which are organic rather than statistical or mechanical.

- the situatedness of experiencing.

I also suggest that although social work is about dealing with feelings, the requirement of 'detachment' constrained my writing in the first person. From my bias towards practice it has been more difficult – and involved more learning for me – to be responsible in my researching with managers than with practitioners.

These outputs are taken forward into Inquiry Strand 3, which starts off in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 Inquiry into how metaphor can help in researching understandings of participation: developing a theory of metaphor

4.1 Introduction to the inquiry

Inquiry Strand 3 is divided into two parts. The first part, which is the focus of this chapter, is an inquiry into the question:

> 'What qualities of metaphor are helpful in thinking about and researching understandings of participation?'

The learning from this inquiry is a coherent theory of metaphor that could be applied in a qualitative research methodology that involves different groups of people including children and young people. This then becomes the starting point and building block for inquiry into the second question, which is the focus of Chapter 5:

> 'How can these qualities of metaphors be used in researching understandings of participation?'

The outcome of inquiry into these two questions is a research methodology. This draws on Inquiry Strands 1 (epistemologically-aware research) and 2 (self-aware-research), and has also been developed and tested in Inquiry Strand 4, for which I proposed the preliminary question, 'How can understanding metaphors of participation in TCS help TCS?' Thus the methodology emerged in the inquiry strands. By *emergence* I mean that putting different parts together and seeing the patterns in how they connect can lead to different ways of knowing 'how to go on' in other contexts. Another way of expressing this is that a higher level of integration - the methodology - emerged from combinations of different elements working together – the epistemology, self awareness, theories of metaphor and qualitative researching and my experiencing and embodiment of theorising in the research methods described in Chapter 7. This process is explored in more detail in the next chapter.

Metaphors as a means of inquiry were specified in the original proposal for my research, with an invitation to take up David McClintock's research with metaphor (McClintock, 1996, McClintock and Ison, 1994a, McClintock and Ison, 1994b). In the inquiry in this chapter I review theories of metaphor, and David McClintock's research as I see it connecting with my inquiries.

My question, 'What qualities of metaphor are helpful in thinking about and researching understandings of participation?' is deliberately ambiguous because I want the inquiry to be as open as possible in terms of how metaphors might be used in Inquiry Strand 4. But I am specifically interested in the qualities of metaphors that help people to engage with each other and to express understandings in a way that can be captured and explored further. Two key questions in my inquiry which relate to my initial concerns about metaphor discussed in Chapter 1 were:

How do we choose the metaphors we do?

How do we change the metaphors we choose?

4.1.1 Appreciating the qualities of metaphors in my research

Appreciating the qualities of metaphors[37] and in constituting and communicating our experiences, in ordering and connecting and inspiring was the starting point for me in the research.

The Aristotelian view that influenced much writing on metaphor until the twentieth century was that metaphors were ornamental and implicitly compared two objects (Ortony, 1979). 'Metaphorical' was to be distinguished from 'literal', in the way that 'fanciful' is to be distinguished from 'truthful'. The substitution theory of metaphor considers metaphor to be a substitute for a set of literal sentences (Noth, 1985). These I consider characterised my own appreciation of metaphor gleaned from English classes at school, and perhaps accounts for my initial difficulty in convincing others of the qualities of metaphors in my researching. It is interesting to note that those philosophers who were most suspicious of metaphors were often those who were most creative in their use. Hobbes compares metaphors to *"senseless and ambiguous words"*, but a few pages later writes *"... what is the Heart but a Spring; and the Nerves, but so many Strings; and the Joynts, but so many Wheels ..."*(Leviathon, quoted in Fiumara, 1995). Nietzsche, who even though he wrote that metaphor is an example of the falsifying nature of language in the face of experience, used metaphor freely, for example *"Gedanken sind die Schatten unsrer Empfindungen - immer dunkler, leerer, einfacher als diese"* (*Thoughts are*

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[37] In 'metaphor' I include specific types of metaphor such as metonym, synecdoche, and catachresis. Where these could be usefully distinguished from metaphor I have provided a definition in the text. In the theory of metaphor I discuss I do not include analogies and similes – expressions usually in the form 'something *is like* something else'. This is because unlike metaphor, similes and analogies are generally 'flagged up', they associate rather than transfer meaning and do not become embedded in languaging. A full discussion of the differences is beyond the scope of the thesis - see Glucksberg, S. and Keysar, B. (1993).

the shadows of our sensations - always obscurer, emptier and simpler than the latter) (Nietzsche *Die Frohliche Wissenschaft* No. 179, quoted by Mooij 1976 p. 124). These examples illustrate the pervasiveness and inescapability of metaphor use, and suggest that we use many and mixed metaphors.

My initial ideas from the preliminary literature search concerned how metaphors could be elicited and analysed to explore 'understandings of participation', as they had been used in exploring understandings of organisations (Morgan 1985, Morgan, 1997, Palmer and Dunford, 1996, Oswick and Grant, 1996, Vince, 1996, Kay, 1991), countrysides (McClintock, 1996) and research (Packwood, 1994, McClintock, 1996. Metaphors have been used extensively in research, to conceptualise the field, to bring out new insights (into teaching and learning), to identify research problems, to suggest research strategies, and to explain results (see McClintock, 1996, Table 8.1 p. 197). As Gowin (1981) puts it, *"metaphor is the hunting horn of inquiry"*.

I started with 'how' questions. How can metaphors help in researching with others? How can metaphors bring forth understandings? I was concerned not to use metaphors as instruments in my researching, or to 'collect' metaphors for the purpose of categorising and assessing the 'best' metaphors for participation. I saw it as inconsistent with my epistemology for me to take an 'expert' position on other people's practising by evaluating their metaphors from their experiencing. But I also wanted to increase the number of metaphors for participation in talk of practice in TCS. From my own experiencing of working in organisations I was suspicious of the *"colonisation of orders of discourse"* (Fairclough, 1992) in terms of professionalism, standards, 'best practice' and *"languages of the market place"*(Stout, 1988; p. 7). But at the same time I was reluctant to make judgements about these ways of talking about teaching or social work practice for example, as disabling or harmful *per se*. I could see different

ways of talking about practice as representing different aspects of practice, the different perspectives of those involved and the different contexts in which practice is situated.

Metaphors are extraordinarily powerful.

> It is pictures rather than propositions, metaphors rather than statements which determine most of our philosophical convictions. Without the notion of the mind as mirror, the notion of knowledge as accuracy of representation would not have suggested itself   (Rorty, 1980; p. 9).

Aristotle thought metaphorical language inappropriate for slaves

> The greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor. It is the one thing that cannot be learnt; and it is also a sign of genius (Aristotle, 1985a; par 22, 1459a 5-8)

> It is not quite appropriate that fine language should be used by a slave (Aristotle, 1985b 10-15 p. 2239)

Fiumara (1995) writes that despite Aristotle's claims for metaphor, metaphor as a topic was ignored for centuries. In the last thirty years theorists have made up for this (Packwood, 1994, Paprotte and Dirven, 1985).   Studying metaphor can be an overwhelming experience from the mass of work on metaphor theory and metaphor applications (Gibbs, 1999). The struggles of researchers in getting on top of metaphors has been written into fiction:

> Maud sat at her desk in Lincoln and copied out a useful passage of Freud for her paper on metaphor:
>
> 'It is only when a person is completely in love that the main quota of the libido is transferred on to the object and the object to some extent takes the place of the ego'.
>
> She wrote: 'of course ego, id and super-ego, indeed the libido itself, are metaphorical hypostasisations of what must be seen as'

> She crossed out 'seen' and wrote 'could be felt as'. Both were metaphors. She wrote 'could be explained as events in an undifferentiated body of experience'.
>
> Body was a metaphor. She had written 'experience' twice, which was ugly. 'Event' was possibly a metaphor too.
>
> (Byatt, 1990 Ch. 24 p. 430)

An insight of Czarniawska (2000) is that *"the positive prejudice towards metaphor"* may be a cultural trait. The use of metaphors in organisations, for example, originated in Anglo-Saxon and Nordic cultures. The English and German languages,

> have a preference for understatement and flat discourse: the metaphor appears to be an exotic flower in the midst of an evenly cut grass lawn - frightening, exciting, disgusting, appealing, but always provoking strong emotions (ibid. p. 1).

My developing appreciation of metaphors was not always fully shared by those with whom I have had conversations about the research[38]. I see my use of the language of metaphor theory before I could draw on examples relating to practice, as a barrier to those coming into my researching. An example of this was in the meeting between CF and me with the new programme manager for participation work with children and young people in TCS to engage him in the research {10}. I saw reflected in his questions my own uncertainty about how an interest in metaphor from a university researching perspective would promote participation for children and young people in project practice. There is some irony in my difficulty in communicating the power of metaphor in the light of strongly argued claims that it is metaphorical language that is used by *"flesh and blood human beings who use language for their passionate human purposes"*(Fiumara, 1995). However what occurred in our discussion was that in negotiating from our different understandings we generated and referred back to other metaphors. These included, for example a *metaphor play-centre*; 'ways of

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[38] e.g. CF wrote that " the OU metaphor/PhD pressure has led to the intervention process of your methodology being obscured ..." {83 e-mail}.

talking', and metaphors for this process of negotiation, for example TCS participation work as an *ongoing drama* in which I have entered.

A written (anonymous) feedback comment on my presentation of some of the stories and metaphors at a TCS Conference in 1999 was that although the writer had talked with me several times he or she still was not sure what I was doing in my research. I was aware that each time I talked about my research with TCS partners my perspective on metaphor had changed. However, as I could draw on my own stories my attention to metaphors and pictures triggered interest. My invitations to young people and adults to use pictorial metaphors in rich pictures ({66}, Appendix 5, pictures 23 to 26) led to a request for the same techniques in my facilitation of the evaluation of young people and TCS staff's joint policy making {76}. The two short papers that I wrote for a TCS conference in 2000 stemmed from a request from practitioners for ideas about using metaphors in participative work with children and young people {DM11, DM12}. An implication of my Epistemology Claim 10 (Chapter 2), was that the design of constructivist research will always be emergent in the processes of engagement. A corollary of this is that although the research is purposeful, giving a coherent account of the methodology to others at any one moment will be problematic. In my metaphor of the researcher as *bricoleuse*, in the process of *bricolage* the final shape of what is being constructed may not be apparent to observers.

4.2 Theories of metaphor

In this section I inquire into a theory of metaphor in line with the epistemology of the thesis, that is as a cognitive process, and way of knowing that is embodied and imaginative. In my research conversations, although I did not set out to ask for metaphors of TCS I was offered three metaphors of TCS as an organisation. As a 'by-product' of our conversations I considered these as data for Inquiry Strand 3 in terms of my

learning about how metaphors are ways of knowing, and examples to draw on in my inquiry in this chapter. The metaphors with an outline context are:

TCS as an orange[39] (offered by someone from outside TCS from his experiencing of working with TCS) - discussed in our conversation as implying segmented, tough 'skin' of values of putting the child first, spits out the pips.

TCS as an amoeba (offered by a senior manager as how TCS should be) – discussed in our conversations as vision and values replicated in each part, management not 'at the top' but wandering through, TCS permeable to its environment.

TCS as an iceberg (offered by a senior manager as how it is from a Human Resources perspective) – discussed in our conversation as visible processes and beneath the surface relationships which it was one of the purposes of HR to reveal.

4.2.1   Definitions of metaphor as a way of knowing

The root meaning of metaphor - 'meta + phorein' - means to carry, or to transfer, thus metaphor 'carries' meaning. The term metaphor is used to refer to a cognitive process and also to the expressing of the metaphor which is the outcome of the process (Gibbs, 1999). Rather than use cumbersome terms such as 'metaphoricising' in general I use 'metaphor', or 'the process of metaphor' to refer to the process, and 'metaphors' in discussion of outcomes. The definition of a metaphor in both senses that I have chosen to use is that it is *"understanding and experiencing one thing in terms of another"* (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). An additional definition which emphasises that metaphor is a 'carrying' process rather than a thing

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[39] To avoid confusion, following McClintock, D. (1996) In *Systems Department*The Open University, Milton Keynes. I use the convention *X as Y* for metaphors, although they are properly joined by the copula *is*.

is that metaphor is *"the means by which one thing is described in terms of something else"* (Cameron and Low, 1999b).

Following Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 1999), Miall, (1982), Cameron and Low (1999b) I consider that metaphor is properly construed as a cognitive process rather than just a property of language or linguistic usage. These views of metaphor marks shifts as much in theories of knowledge as in theories of metaphor and so discussion of metaphor belongs primarily to epistemology (Gowin, 1981). This is not to deny the centrality of metaphors in literature and imagination. However, metaphors are not just 'nice' figures of speech or special to literature but necessary and inextricably embedded in understanding and communicating (Ortony, 1975, Ortony, 1979).

Metaphor in Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) definition – 'experiencing <u>as</u>' is not a process of holding up a mirror to reality. As Fiumara (1995) points out, reconceptualising metaphor as a way of reasoning is revolutionary, and calls for epistemological awareness. The objectivist idea of truth as corresponding to (one) reality becomes *"just one of the components of the vast problem of language and reality"*. Our view of knowledge is extended to include the sorts of judgements we make about metaphors - *"appropriateness, fertility, utility or heuristic value"* (ibid. p. 37). Metaphor opens up the space for many ways of knowing.

Because metaphor as process constructs our experiencing, metaphors have entailments. That is that making the connection in seeing one thing in terms of another involves thinking in a certain way, which has <u>consequences</u> (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980).

> Metaphors *organise* their users' perceptions and, when acted upon, *can create the realities* experienced. (Krippendorff, 1993; p. 5).

Thus metaphor provides a way of knowing how to relate to our situation or circumstances, or *how to go on* (Chapter 2, Epistemology Claim 10). Schön, (1995b) argues that in making sense of a situation that she perceives to be unique, a practitioner *sees* it *as* something already familiar, so the familiar situation works as a metaphor for the unique situation.

> Seeing *this* situation as *that* one, one may also *do* in this situation *as* in that one (Schön, 1995b; p. 139).

Different metaphors have different entailments. Each of the ways of thinking about TCS in the metaphors of orange, amoeba and iceberg, if embodied in practice, would lead to different actions.

4.2.2   The role of metaphor in constructing and facilitating sense-making and in communicating with other people

In Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) definition, metaphor is not restricted to verbal processes. Metaphor involves recognising similarities within and between different domains of sensing and experiencing. Metaphor processes can be expressed in speaking and writing, and graphically and in gestures (Seitz, 1998) - for example in telling a story we show the listener how we felt by tensing muscles, or putting our hands over our eyes as if hiding from something dangerous[40]. Dance movements are metaphors (Goodridge, 1999). Barrett and Cooperrider (1990) give an example of a group of employees visiting another organisation as a metaphor in terms of their experiencing the one organisation in terms of another.

Metaphorical usage appears to play a key role in children's language acquisition. 'Over-extensions', for example referring to all four-legged animals as cats, are wrong because the child does not know the right word, but overextensions " *use metaphoric relations as a process to provide new*

terms" (Littlemore, 2001, Goatly, 1997). Children use verbal metaphors from about the age of two (Winner, 1988). If visual and auditory metaphors are included then there is evidence that babies can make metaphoric connections in terms of *'experiencing in terms of'* (Jolley, 1995; Cameron, 1999).

The process of metaphor helps us to make sense of our experiencing in three key ways. Firstly metaphor provides a way of mapping new experiences on to previous sense-making. By bringing out what is familiar to us, new experiencing can then be assimilated through a form of transfer and this may lead to new ways of categorising (Chapter 2, Epistemology Claim 3). Secondly, the mapping process is also an organising process; metaphor structures knowing by "*incorporating complex or confused information into an organised whole*" (Ortony 1979).

The third way that metaphor helps us to make sense of our experiencing is that metaphor provides a categorial structure for sense-making, that is, a way of structuring categories in terms of each other. In Chapter 2, Epistemology Claim 5, I referred to Lakoff and Johnson's (1999) point that our capacity for thought is shaped by our bodies and our bodily interactions. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue that most of our conceptual system is metaphorical in nature; concepts "*we live by*" – that define our everyday realities - are structured and related in terms of root metaphors. They identify two basic metaphorical concepts that draw on embodied experiences. 'Orientational metaphors' *arise from the fact that we have bodies of the sort we have and that they function in the way that they do in our physical environment*" (ibid. p. 14). Thus we speak of happiness as 'up', of *low status,* adults as *grown ups* etc. Fairness and concepts such as justice draw on the embodied experiences of balance. 'Ontological metaphors' arise from our experiences of physical objects and substances.

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[40] For example, the person I was talking with in one of my research conversations about participation interlocked his fingers in a gesture very noticeable to me and which I

Thus we speak of abstract concepts as if they were entities such as containers, for example participation as *in something,* energy as quantifiable (*'huge'*), forces as *things to be faced.* Lakoff and Johnson could also have added that we experience our bodies as containers, which we *fill* with food, for example.

There is an *"embodied motivation"* for choosing certain metaphors to speak about abstract concepts and experiences (Gibbs, 1999). Thus children do not need sophisticated linguistic ability or complex theories to understand and use many metaphors in everyday use; they have their own bodily experiences to draw on as much as adults

A further motivation for choice of metaphors is the desire to communicate with other people. Thus people choose to use metaphors in conventional use (Gibbs, 1999), as a commonality, or they opt for specific metaphors in terms of what they wish the metaphor to convey, or the emotions they desire to elicit. Ortony (1975) offers three theses concerning choices of metaphors in terms of metaphor as a 'tool' for communication which reflect the three ways in which metaphor helps us make sense of our experiencing:

1. The *inexpressibility* thesis is that metaphors can express what cannot be otherwise expressed, for example children in developing language skills may refer to all four legged animals as 'dogs', metaphors in new technology – the 'web', 'computer mouse' etc., and half-articulated feelings and expressions. Abstract concepts, like an organisation and participation can only be expressed in metaphors. The interest in metaphor in organisational theory may be associated with recognition of organisations as *organising* processes rather entities.

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commented on at the time.

2. The *compactness* thesis concerns metaphor as a way of organising and expressing large chunks of information, and multiple meanings (Ricoeur, 1986). Metaphors are the "tip of an iceberg" (Candy, 1994). Vico wrote of metaphor as *"miniature myths"* (Vico, 1744/1999 par. 404, p. 159) in which poets captured understandings of insensate objects. The *TCS as an orange* metaphor was offered at the end of a long conversation and could be understood as a summary of much of what we talked about. The meaning of *TCS as an amoeba* did not just relate to our conversation but the traditions of management theory that I shared with the manager with whom I was talking[41].

3. The *vividness* thesis concerns the richness of detail communicated in metaphor, because metaphors draw on lived experiences rather than abstraction. Metaphors make language memorable and entertaining. Metaphors trigger enthusiasm. Mio argues metaphors *"carry with them emotional arguments that motivate us into action or at least to support those who use them"*. Tannen writes of being *"swept up by the sound and rhythm of language"* in participating in sense-making. Metaphors are linguistic forms of Barthes' 'punctum' (Barthes, 1993), the *"sting, the speck, the cut (that) makes a photograph significant"* (Hagedorn, 1994), that sparks enthusiasm and *"fires you off into orbit"* (Cook, 1998).

My addition to Ortony's three theses of metaphors as tools in communicating is the *evaluation thesis*. That is that metaphors also express and convey *evaluations* of experiences (Carter, 1998; Moon, 1998 in Littlemore, 2001). An example of this is Bridges' (1991) story of the

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[41] We had both completed an MBA in the previous 6 years as we had established during the interview. The metaphor of an amoeba to describe the structure of 'missionary organisations' was first used by Mintzberg, H. (1979. and then in numerous other strategic management texts studied on MBA courses. Thus using this metaphor evoked for me our shared traditions (eg. of 'management-speak'). Taking the interpretation of this metaphor 'as shared' I did not inquire into its meaning for the speaker other than to establish the description as I wrote it earlier in the chapter.

difference between describing a company about to close down as *a sinking ship* which, it can be argued, has only negative connotations and *on a last voyage* which implies at least a glorious past. Bridges claims that inviting employees to consider the second metaphor may improve staff morale. This raises a question about how people respond to metaphors that I consider in Section 4.3.

4.2.3 The role of metaphor in constituting and constraining experiencing

The paradox of metaphor is that metaphors can engage with their vividity and expressiveness (Ortony, 1973) and also become a *"a perceptual hegemony, in their foregrounding and backgrounding, and ... in their perceptual moulding generate reality"* (Meisner, 1992). Metaphors *"organise their user's perceptions and*, when acted upon, *can create the realities* experienced" (Krippendorff, 1993 p. 5, italics as original). Thus *"our metaphors use us as much as we use them"* (Embler, 1966 quoted in Deschler, 1990).

An analogous process is the diagnosis of psychiatric illnesses, where this is perceived to confer legitimacy, predictability and confidence with regard to treatment rather than as a useful heuristic. Harlene Anderson gives an example of how diagnosis can exacerbate and oversimplify human problems by becoming the description of the illness (Gergen et al., 1996). People become *"prisoners of their diagnosis"*, and diagnosis '*clots*' sense-making processes (ibid). Metaphors, like diagnoses can become reified and unquestionable (Debatin, 1997).

(Mio (1996) gives the example of 'trickle down economics', i.e. that wealth 'trickles down' through society from the rich to the poor. This was used in the US by President Reagan in the 1980s to justify tax cuts to businesses and rich individuals and now seems to be assumed as a fact. This uses the

root metaphors of 'wealth as water', and 'up as more'. Mio suggests the root metaphor of 'money as magnet' gives a different picture and policy. Thus when single, taken-for-granted metaphors are in use and there are vested interests in maintaining them, they can control and dominate ways of acting and in so doing *"lose the voice of marginalised others"* (ibid.) *"Power ... involves the ability to impose metaphors on others"* (Cresswell, 1997 p. 333).

Because we 'use' metaphors as much as they use us, metaphors that at first bring in new ways of seeing things, because of their ambiguity can be reinterpreted into existing discourses. Furbey (1999) argues that this is what has become of the metaphor 'urban regeneration'. *Regeneration* has powerful resonances with a wide range of discourses, for example those of religion and biology, and appeals to diverse constituencies. Nevertheless, Furbey argues, the 'regeneration' metaphor *"sustains a restricted and confused agenda"*. Although 'regeneration' has the potential for transforming social policies, it has strong connections with individualistic and conservative traditions.

Metaphors can be used to legitimate social orders (Gergen, 1990). For example a common theme of metaphors used to describe learning and the acquisition of knowledge is 'knowledge as growth' ('the idea grew on me', Hoffman et al, 1990). This metaphor embodies the notion of teacher as gardener, but also implies that increase in growth is increase in knowledge, justifying comments such as 'when you are older you will understand'. Lakoff and Johnson present a case that values deeply embedded in our culture include 'up is more' (consider 'grown-up') 'bigger is better' and 'more is better' (Lakoff and Johnson 1980 p. 22). These account for the surprise element in the original presentations of 'small is beautiful' and 'less is more'. These ways of talking position others, for example children as inferior and reflect constructions and patterns of power relations which

constrain the introduction of new ways of thinking (Chapter 2, Epistemology Claim 8).

4.2.4 Summary: metaphor as a way of knowing participation

In this section I indicated the scope of metaphor in sense-making and communicating. In terms of my question 'What qualities of metaphor are helpful for understanding participation?', metaphor as process provides a way of structuring experiences like participation, in terms of other more fundamental structures, for example in terms of bodily experiences. Metaphors as products are the only way of expressing abstract concepts like participation – all talk about participation would be metaphorical - but metaphors operate in a way that connects the abstraction with people's lived experiences. Metaphors help us to identify what it is that we do experience. A metaphor used by Cortazzi and Jin (1999) in their research into the generation of metaphors in the context of learning to teach is that metaphors are "*bridges*" to the 'reality' of the professional world for student teachers. The study of these metaphors is then a *bridge* for researchers to understand student's learning. Thus metaphors of participation could offer *bridges* to understanding *participation* in TCS.

I claimed that motives for choices of metaphors related to *embodiment* and the *evaluation of experience* in addition to the inexpressibility, compactness and vividness of metaphors in Ortony's theses. I suggested that the choice of particular metaphors related to embodiment and the evaluation of experiencing Thus metaphors are a way of evaluating the experience of participation as well as conveying the complexity and vividness of experiencing participation. Cortazzi and Jin (1999) and Cameron and Low (1999a) evidence other uses in the specific context of teaching, for example, deliberate vagueness and providing a framework.

Metaphor can create possibilities by bringing into question propositional ways of knowing. However specific metaphors can become the only way of expressing an experience or concept if they are taken as 'the only reality'. This may happen if:

- metaphors are taken as expressing propositional knowledge about the world, or

- metaphors are imposed by powerful interests or power bases, such as 'expert power' and political power, or

- other metaphors are disqualified because they are perceived to represent marginal interests

- there is no space for the bringing forth of other metaphors

This is not to say that all metaphors are equally useful, or inviting or satisfying. But if a metaphor is treated as 'the reality' there is no way of judging its usefulness, or for the generating of other metaphors. I said that 'participation' can only be expressed in metaphors. So one way of finding out if there are 'diagnoses' of participation might be to see if there are ways of talking about participation which are not thought of as metaphorical.

In the next section I inquire into ways of understanding metaphors as they are brought forth in conversations, and exploring them.

4.3 Identifying and interpreting metaphors

In the previous section I outlined a general position with regard to metaphors and participation. In this section I consider some specific issues. My thesis is not research *into* metaphor, but research *with* metaphor. This involves pragmatic decisions about some of the questions in metaphor theory, for example with regard to live and dead metaphors, the level of analysis and identifying metaphors. However the focuses of my inquiry in this section are the implications of my epistemology for how metaphors of participation brought forth in conversations with others can be responded

to, interpreted and explored. I also wanted to inquire into the viability of metaphor in research with children since metaphor use is often associated with linguistic ability. In connection with the question in this inquiry strand I needed to consider how metaphors can be 'improving'.

4.3.1   Levels of metaphors

One of the implications of my discussion in Section 4.2 is that metaphor operates at different levels in sense-making and can be attended to at different levels of explanation. The level of my attention to metaphor is what Cameron and Low (1999b) refers to as the 'processing level'[42] (or 'psychological level' (Kittay, 1987). That is, I am interested in how metaphors get processed and expressed in discourse, how particular metaphors come to be used and understood, and how "*encounters with metaphor lead to conceptual change*" (ibid.). Specifically this is about metaphor as "*language in use, situated within particular discourse contexts*" (ibid.). This is a key distinction which I discuss in the next section.

Another implication of my discussion in Section 4.2 is that metaphor operates at different levels in language. For example some metaphors are embedded unnoticed in language and some surprise by their vividness. Literary theory of metaphors differentiates between 'live metaphors', that is those that are experienced and immediately recognised as metaphors such as *TCS is an orange*, and 'dead metaphors' which are not recognised because they have entered everyday language, such as TCS is *a force for change*.

> The line of distinction between the live and the dead is a shifting one, the dead being sometimes liable, under the stimulus of an affinity or a repulsion, to galvanic stirrings indistinguishable from life (Fowler, 1926; p. 348-90).

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[42] Other levels of explanation of metaphor above and below the processing level are the theory level (eg. the role of types of metaphor in discourse) and the neural activity level respectively (Cameron and Low, 1999b).

Distinguishing between dead and live metaphors seemed an unnecessary complication to me since 'participation' can only be expressed in metaphor. An alternative understanding of the degree of embedding of metaphor in language is that this is like *"depth in water"* so that surface metaphors are more easily recognised (Meisner, 1992).

4.3.2 Metaphors as partial and relational understandings

A useful distinction which I draw on in this discussion is between the parts of metaphors and the relationship between the parts. Metaphors can be analysed in terms of the *topic* – the 'one thing' in *"understanding and experiencing one thing in terms of another"*, *vehicle* – 'the other thing', and the grounds or terms in which they are being perceived (Richards, 1936/1979). Thus, in the metaphor *TCS as an orange*, *TCS* is the topic, *an orange* is the vehicle, and the segmentation, thick skin etc. the terms in which they are being perceived. Metaphors are *partial* understandings in that they only draw on some of the aspects of the topic and ground, those that are being judged as similar. These aspects are highlighted, or *revealed*. At the same time those aspects that are judged as dissimilar (orange as juicy citrus, TCS as voluntary organisation) are suppressed, or *concealed* (Goatly, 1997, McClintock and Ison, 1994a, McClintock and Ison, 1994b, McClintock, 1996). Metaphors with the same topic but different vehicles, for example *TCS as orange, TCS as iceberg* can be juxtaposed and explored in terms of what they reveal and conceal about TCS.

Recognising and appreciating metaphor involves having some knowledge of the topic and vehicle: *TCS as an orange* only works if you have some idea of what TCS and an orange are. In Section 4.2 I referred to metaphor awareness as a cognitive process from infancy. However there are differences between children's and adult's conceptions of what is and is not metaphorical (Cameron, 1999). Vosniadou (1987) identifies a lag between

children's use of metaphor and their understanding of adults' metaphors. Rather than this being related to developmental immaturity, or linguistic incompetence, Winner (1988), Winner and Gardner, (1993) argue that this has to do with children's knowledge of the topic and vehicle. Thus for example, an explanation for young children's use and comprehension of perceptual metaphors (e.g. 'the car was thirsty') rather than non-perceptual metaphors (e.g. 'the idea was planted') is their lack of knowledge of the *"the internal workings of the world"*(ibid. p. 434). The metaphor, for example, "the prison guard has become a hard rock" is understood as the guard having strong muscles not as the guard hardened to feelings (ibid. p. 435). Winner and Gardner (1993) concludes that

> metaphor understanding is constrained by domain knowledge [of the topic and vehicle] and not by any inherent limits on the kind of similarities children can perceive" (p. 442).

Todd (1996) suggests that the differences in metaphor use between adults and children, and between children of different ages should also be seen in sociolinguistic terms, that is that metaphors are structured in terms of experiential contexts. She cites the research of Hale et al. (1995) concerning children's use of the metaphor *conflict as a place* which is structured as a way of distancing themselves from the conflict, in opposition to the metaphor of 'argument as war' in which positions are defended and attacked. That understanding metaphors requires situating them in the contexts of their production is a key issue for my inquiry because it links with my epistemology.

There are two implications of my epistemology for understanding metaphors. Firstly, in interpreting metaphor, for example in terms of what aspects are being revealed and concealed, and in choosing metaphors, we draw on our own traditions and histories. As I indicated in Chapter 3, my histories and traditions lead me to use certain sets of metaphor rather than others, and to notice some in everyday language that other people would

take for granted. Low (1999) suggests that researching with metaphor heightens the researcher's sensitivity to metaphors, and to 'seeing' metaphors elsewhere that they have already noted. . Thus researching with metaphor requires self-awareness.

Secondly, in terms of my epistemology, the meaning of the metaphor does not reside in the metaphor but is brought forth in conversations. The interpretation and appreciation of metaphors is a collaboration between the interpreters and the metaphor makers - Davidson (1979) writes of this as a *"cycle of imagination"*. Metaphors are dependent on metaphor-makers 'taking-as-shared' with the interpreters a vocabulary, a set of beliefs and values *"which must be presupposed if the use of metaphor is to be attempted"* (Corradi 1997 p. 105). Metaphors are like a *"ping pong game"* in which the ball is always in play (Gowin, 1981). The 'stretchiness' of many metaphors – that is, their imprecision and vagueness invites different interpretations, and may in fact be chosen because of this (Candy, 1994).

Metaphor, and the interpretation of metaphors, are culturally specific and culturally determined (Packwood 1994). Packwood gives an example from Beck (1982); 'the rolling stone gathers no moss' - moss is seen as a bad thing in North America and a good thing in the UK, so as applied to life style, the metaphor means different things. Littlemore (2001) shows how uses of metaphor in university lectures are 'misinterpreted' by overseas students. Even when metaphors in different languages appear similar, their meaning in every day use can be different (Cortazzi and Jin, 1999). Gestures mean different things in different cultures.

In his research Fraser (1993) presented novel metaphors without a context for interpretation by people from different groups. He concluded that there was little evidence of consistency of interpretation between people of similar characteristics, except a general orientation in terms of positive and negative.

Cazal and Inns (1998) describe metaphors as having 'relational' qualities in respect to their specificity . They argue that associations made when using metaphor are socially defined and also individual and idiosyncratic and can only be understood in relation to the specific context and 'personal code of meaning' of the individual. Therefore the researcher cannot accurately interpret the meaning of metaphors used without access to the personal (unconscious) code of participant. Unless the metaphor is 'unpacked' for compact images and associations the meaning of the metaphor expression may not be understood. Cazal and Inns write that the researcher should also spend time in the participant's setting to access "situation-context-specific" language. Similarly Smith and Smith (1983) claim that *"before a metaphor is added to a context it has an incomplete meaning"*.

4.3.3   Summary: metaphors as a way of understanding others' knowing of participation

The qualities of metaphor which help us to make sense of our own experiencing have entailments for interpreting and responding to metaphors. Interpreting metaphors involves attending to the contexts in which the metaphor is brought forth and the histories and traditions of those involved in its interpretation, as well as to the conventions within which the metaphor is expressed. In terms of my question in this inquiry 'What qualities of metaphor are helpful for understanding participation?', metaphors needs to be contextualised in order to be meaningful in respect of other people's experiences of participation, and for my exploration of my own metaphors.

There are two contextual dimensions. One concerns the background against which the metaphor is brought forth, that is in my terms the context of the conversation. Attending to the contexts of metaphor is also required by Epistemology Claim 4, *meanings are generated within a context to which we have also given meaning* (Chapter 2). The other contextual dimension

of metaphor concerns the personal meaning of the metaphor for the speaker. Thus I should be 'self-aware' in respect of my own metaphors, but in my epistemology it is not possible to know the meaning attributed by another person. What I aim for is 'a satisfying explanation'. One of the ways this could be achieved is through conversation about the metaphor. Although this is useful and responsible research practice (Gibbs, 1999) the interpretations will be mine.

I also indicated ways of understanding the difference between adults and children's metaphor processes and products. In terms of offering and inviting metaphors, these need to take account of children's domains of experience.

> Like adults, in areas where children have experience, they have wisdom and competence (Boulding, 1995; p. 153).

This may imply a preference for perceptual rather than non-perceptual metaphors. In terms of understanding metaphors I should appreciate that children's contexts and experiencing means that our interpretations may be different in unexpected ways.

In the next section I consider criteria for judging metaphors and how metaphors are invitations.

4.4 Judging metaphors, changing metaphors and metaphors as invitations

4.4.1 Judging metaphors

I have stated that metaphors cannot be judged in terms of 'truth'. As a responsible researcher I could not take an expert position in respect of judging best metaphors of others. Because of the relational nature of metaphor, identifying 'best metaphors' for participation would not

necessarily apply outside the context in which they were generated. But I do want to come to some conclusions in Inquiry Strand 4: How can understanding metaphors of participation in TCS help TCS?

McClintock (1996) proposed three judgements that clarify how metaphors can add to understandings:

- *enabling or appropriate metaphors*: "Do the metaphors enhance an ability to act in a certain context? Do the metaphors give rise to new understandings in a certain context?"

- *disabling metaphors*: "Do the metaphors "reveal and conceal understandings and actions that are destructive or harmful in a particular context"

- *alternative metaphors*: Are there metaphors "that are not being used in a certain context at a particular time, but may trigger different understandings if they are used or explored"? (ibid. p. 84 ff.)

What I judge as enabling in one context might be disabling in another[43]. I assume that all metaphors are useful in some contexts. From this I propose an alternative criteria of usefulness and constraint:

- *Useful metaphors:* how are these clusters of metaphors useful in which contexts? By usefulness I mean how do these metaphor clusters help make sense of participation in these contexts and engage people with participation.

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[43] McClintock (1996) points to this in discussion of metaphors as disabling for whom (p. 86).

- *Constraining metaphors:* how do these clusters of metaphors constrain new possibilities for acting and choosing in other contexts?

From these questions I propose a further judgement of:

- *Attractor metaphors:* are there taken for granted metaphors, that draw on powerful influences and have become established as 'the' way of talking, or a 'discourse' from which other metaphors draw their meaning[44]?

In this chapter I argued that firstly in everyday language we use many metaphors and this adds to the richness of conversations and dialogue, and secondly that single metaphors constrain by becoming 'the way things are'. Thus I propose that the last judgement is that of:

- Different combinations of metaphors: *what combination of metaphors trigger different understandings and create possibilities for new ways of acting?*

This involves a further judgement, that of 'viability' in terms of metaphors fitting together and considerations of ways in which people may be invited to **'change the metaphors they choose'**.

4.4.2   Metaphors as invitations and as participatory

In this section I review what I have said about metaphor in order to see how using metaphors offers invitations to other people to participate in some way, that is how metaphor itself is 'participatory'. This discussion is predicated on the understanding that metaphors offer a general invitation to

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[44] I am not using the term *attractor* as it is used in complexity theory, but to indicate that these metaphors are *attractive* and people draw on these metaphors in their interpreting of alternative metaphors.

see 'as-if' (Debatin, 1997) and that metaphors are recognised as such, that is that there is more than one metaphor 'in play'.

Metaphors are written about as instrumentally transformative, that is that proposing a different metaphor by itself creates new understanding. Gowin (1981) argues that breaking the hold of thought controlling metaphors is just a matter of inventing others. However as Barrett and Cooperrider (1990), Morgan (1985) show this is not just a matter of proposing a new metaphor. There needs, for example to be experiencing with it.

Schön (1979) proposed the idea of *generative metaphor* in which new understandings are generated in the relationship between topic and vehicle. Because metaphors are experiencing one thing in terms of another, they carry over perspectives from one domain to another (Schön, 1979, Schön, 1995b). Generative metaphors result from *seeing* something already familiar *as* something else that is also familiar but "*so different that it would ordinarily pass as a mistake to describe one as the other*" (Schön, 1995b; p. 185). Generative metaphors invite new ways of structuring experiences, but taking up the invitation requires a lot of energy and enthusiasm since it is not immediately apparent what the connections are.

A second argument concerning creativity draws on the paradoxical nature of metaphor:

> the paradox consists in the fact there is no other way to do justice to the notion of metaphorical truth than to include the critical incision of the (literal) 'is not' within the ontological vehemence of the (metaphorical) 'is' (Ricoeur, 1986; p. 255).

A way of understanding this is that metaphors combine mutually exclusive meanings (Apter, 1982). The metaphor *TCS as an orange* combines at the same time *TCS is an orange* (in respect of these revealed shared properties) and *TCS is not an orange* (in respect of these concealed different

properties). Apter argues that metaphors are types of cognitive synergy in which the

> new effect produced by *the conjunction of mutually exclusive meanings* is experiential, and can be described as increased vividness associated with enhanced arousal (Apter, 1982, my italics).

Thus metaphors can trigger emotional responses, and increased interest because synergy *"contains some element of the unusual and therefore unexpected ... [and] presents a conceptual puzzle"* (ibid.). However Apter identifies that other responses may be to accept the 'logical puzzle', and synergy can also be experienced as annoying or worrying if it is perceived to serve no useful purpose.

By offering an invitation to 'see as' and at the same time denying identity, metaphors function like 'externalising conversations'. Externalising conversations are used in therapy to create space for people to see themselves as separate from the problem so they can resist identifying with it (White, 1998). Stories and metaphors provide *"safe emotional parallels"* as analogic experiences, in which new ways of thinking and feeling can be expressed (Sunderland, 1997).

Metaphors are not propositional, that is they cannot be considered true or false *per se*. Parker (1982) uses the metaphor of the 'metaphorical plot' to capture the idea of metaphor as a different way of knowing. By 'plot' she means not just the plotting of stories contained in metaphors, but also metaphors as a 'space' in which the break from a pre-determined meaning invites readers to participate. Because appropriate responses to a metaphor are "I see (or don't see) what you mean", not "That's true, you are right (or false, you are wrong)", metaphors invite the listener to evaluate the metaphor-maker's metaphor in terms of the listener's experiencing

A final way in which I consider metaphors to be invitational and which draws on the previous examples relates to their essential ambiguity. Rather than being paradoxical, metaphors should be considered ambiguous and open to different interpretations. Rather than stating 'this is how it is', metaphors invite by asking 'how about this?'. Thus metaphors provide metaphorical space for developing further metaphors. This understanding of metaphor resonates with Ricoeur's descriptions of metaphor as setting free language's function of discovery, and as allowing for one to many relationships, or a *"surplus of meanings"* (Ricoeur, 1986).

Woolum et al. (1987), quoted in Neimeyer and Neimeyer (1993), suggests that it is the metaphorical construction that permits movement and fluidity. *"Constructing something in metaphorical terms breathes life into it so that it can grow and change and evolve or diminish across time"* (ibid.).

4.5 Conclusion: summary

The focus of my inquiry in this chapter was what qualities of metaphor are helpful for understanding participation?' In reading texts on metaphor theory I attended to those that I considered gave an account of metaphor consistent with my epistemology. The conclusions of this first part of Inquiry Strand 3 that I take forward to the second part of the inquiry in the next chapter are:

- Metaphors are brought forth in conversations, that is between people.

- Metaphors are meaningful in so far as they draw on people's prior understandings, thus they relate to people's histories and traditions.

- Metaphors are useful in that they do draw on histories and traditions and thus can reveal these.

- Metaphors are ambiguous (in what they reveal and conceal) – thus as ways of knowing metaphors are not propositional, but 'invitational'; they create space for dialogue and allow for different constructions.

- Metaphors are inherently paradoxical (they are and are not identities), thus they invite different ways of thinking, that is, metaphors invite metaphors, and thus create possibilities.

- But metaphors are embedded in languaging and are 'compact' forms of expression, so they are often perceived as 'facts' and as propositional knowing.

- For metaphors to be useful in understanding participation they need situating in their contexts.

- By offering and inviting contextualised metaphors that are within children's domains of experience, metaphor can help in understanding participation from the perspective of both children and adults.

The questions arising from this inquiry that I consider in the next chapter are:

- How can metaphors be elicited?

- How can metaphors be contextualised ?

- How can metaphors be identified and explored respons-ably, that is in a way that includes other people in the process?

- How can the judgement criteria be put into practice?

Chapter 5 Inquiry into how metaphor can help in researching understandings of participation: developing the methodology

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is the second part of Inquiry Strand 3. The question for investigation is 'How can the qualities of metaphors identified in Chapter 4 be used in researching understandings of participation?' The purpose of this inquiry is to develop a qualitative research methodology that could be used to enhance practice of participatory and responsible research with different groups of people, including children and young people.

The inputs of this inquiry are:

- The qualities of metaphor identified in Chapter 4.

- Qualitative research theories to help see how these metaphor qualities could be embodied in the research praxis.

- The implications for participatory and constructivist research of being epistemologically-aware and self-aware (the outcomes of Inquiry Strands 1 and 2), specifically in respect of the ethicality of research.

- My experiencing in Inquiry Strand 4.

This Inquiry Strand has presented me with different issues from the other three strands because it draws on work I have already done but not yet written about in the thesis. I have used this inquiry to think generally about improvements on my research design. The output of this inquiry also provides a structure for presenting Inquiry Strand 4 in Chapter 7. There is a reflexive relationship between Inquiry Strands 3 and 4. Because in my experiencing they were braided together it has been particularly difficult to disentangle them and to think of this as an inquiry rather than as an explication of my methodological choices. I have, for example included some information which may properly belong in the next Chapter. Nevertheless, as I explain in Section 5.2 there are good arguments for disentangling methodology from method in constructivist inquiry.

In the conclusion of Chapter 4 I raised four questions which were

- How can metaphors be elicited?

- How can metaphors be contextualised?

- How can metaphors be identified and explored respons-ably, that is in a way that includes other people in the process?

- How can the judgement criteria be put into practice?

I have structured the inquiry around these four questions, and in relation to the research methods I used in Inquiry Strand 4 which included conversations, activities and reflexive reporting.

5.2 Methodology as the outcome of an inquiry

Methodologies are sometimes just labelled and not seen as requiring explanation, let alone inquiry. In this section I explain what I understand by a methodology and present some arguments for the usefulness of an inquiry into the methodology as part of a constructivist inquiry.

In qualitative research Guba and Lincoln (1998) argue that *"the methodological question"* is *"how can the inquirer ... go about finding out whatever he or she believes can be known"* (p. 201). In Chapter 1 I referred to this inquiry strand as drawing a map of my research terrain with some guidance notes about how to use it. Winograd and Flores (1987) offer another useful metaphor of methodology as:

> ... a kind of 'coaching' - not a formula for producing a result, but a set of practices that can lead to appropriate questioning and to appropriate change (in Heylighen, 2001, my emphasis).

This metaphor is particularly apt in terms of knowing as *how to go on* as the research unfolds (Chapter 2, Claim 10). In addition, this definition connects research with other sets of practices, for example those carried out by practitioners in TCS participation work. Methodology as a set of practices challenges the understanding of research as somehow on high, hard ground overlooking the swampy lowland of practice (Schön, 1995b), echoed in concerns from practitioners about how my research should be written up {DU3, 42}.

A further argument for seeing methodology as a set of practices rather than procedures or protocols is Madison's (1988) claim that method in interpretivist research is a normative process. That is, it is comparable to using ethical principles to guide ethical judgements in specific situations.

> [I] seek to make a responsible decision and give good reasons for [my] actions, but the application of ethical principles does not permit

> the elimination of judgement on [my] part [as] the decision maker ...
> To be rational in this situation demands or requires the exercise of
> judgement (not the following of procedures or rules) and the making
> of an interpretation. ... At best [I] can appraise the interpretation by
> applying norms or criteria that are compatible with the very
> condition that demands [I] interpret in the first place (Schwandt,
> 1998 p. 229, rewritten in the first person).

I found the idea of methodology as normative helpful in thinking about the
extent to which practices need to be specified. For example, engaging with
other people in research conversations requires making judgements and
interpretations. I knew from applying the methodology in Inquiry Strand 4
that I made interpretations of other people's experiencing and judgements
in conversations of how much to speak of my own experiencing and
whether and when to introduce specific metaphors in the flow of
conversation. It might be possible to devise a set of rules for when to do
this, but pointless because every engagement would be a special case. The
criteria for judging my interpretations would not be about their truth or
rationality, but their coherence and usefulness in terms of my learning, the
flow of our conversation, and my purpose, for example the elicitation of
metaphors.

One of the implications of a constructivist inquiry is that the process of the
research develops in accordance with an emergent design rather than being
set out before the research (Claim 10, Chapter 2). This is because the
researcher cannot know beforehand about the contexts of the research and
the multiple realities that will emerge (Rodwell, 1998). So the methodology
of my research was not a pre-specified formula, and nor did it appear by
magic. Methodology comes somewhere in between the epistemology and
the methods that are applied in a particular context. Boundaries between
theory and practice shift as the methodology unfolds, and are always open
to interpretation (Watson et al., 1995).

Traditional ways of judging research, for example in terms of confirmability or generalisability are inappropriate for research based on a constructivist epistemology because of the meaning of the inquiry draws on the contexts of research and these are unique. Checkland (1998) proposes 'recoverability' as an alternative criterion to replicability for action research. Replicability is the possibility of repeating the research to confirm the findings. Qualitative research, and particularly action research and research based on a constructivist epistemology, by its nature cannot be repeated. Components, relationships and processes are unique to those people in that situation at that time. Explicating the methodology of the research makes it possible for the research to be 'recovered', its processes to be traced so that it can be used by others in their researching.

One 'recoverability process' is the construction of an 'audit trail'. This is the organised collection of materials - notes, audio-tapes, transcripts, pictures and other documents, in which the data generated in my researching are available to me now in writing the thesis and could be to others (Schwandt, 1997, Halpern, 1983 in (Morse, 1998, and (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In organising the material and a reference system for this thesis I have adapted a model used by Rodwell (1998). She distinguishes 'interviews', the researcher's reflections and documents as sources of evidence. These are numbered so they can be cross-referenced in the text.

'Recoverability' also requires adherence to a common understanding of research praxis, for example as to what counts as 'evidence' and 'inferences from evidence' (Salner, 1999). In generic terms, my methodology fits the broad characteristics of qualitative research identified by Hammersley, (1990), Fell and Russell (1997a), Denzin and Lincoln (1998b):

- People's behaviour and things are studied in their natural settings, not under experimental conditions

- A variety of empirical materials are studied and collected. These describe problematic and routine moments and meanings. They include case study, personal experience, conversations, observations, texts

- A range of methods are used, but mainly include conversations and observations

- Analysis of data involves interpretation of meanings

5.3 Engaging with people in conversations

Research-with-metaphor can be carried out in several different ways. Metaphors can be identified in people's ways of communicating in everyday settings through participant observation. People can be specifically asked for a metaphor, for example, in the form of "*teaching is ... because ...*"(Cortazzi and Jin, 1999), or asked to write a description including a metaphor (Palmer and Dunford, 1996). Although these approaches are efficient in generating specific metaphors they are limited in terms of the contextualising of the metaphor. It can be difficult to produce metaphors to order. The meaning the researcher attributes to the metaphor may be very different from that of the metaphor-maker. For this reason and to provide a context for the metaphors I chose to invite 'examples and pictures'. These are discussed in Section 5.5

In important respects all constructivist research methods could be referred to as conversations, or engagements with the structure of conversations, as I describe these in claim 8 (Chapter 2). Schön (1995b) discusses design as "*reflective conversations with the situation*". Bamberger and Schön (1991) give an account of learning as "*reflective conversations with materials*". In this process, which they characterise as 'knowledge-in-action', talking, improvising, and experimenting are key activities.

In Chapter 2 I referred to my becoming 'epistemologically-aware' through exploring different metaphors of research in conversations with CF and my PhD supervisors. This was part of, and important to, the methodology of my research. The key metaphors I moved between were:

- Researching as discovery: this was the starting point from which I moved quickly with the guidance of the research supervisors, but returned to sometimes as a comfortable place.

- Researching as doing a jigsaw puzzle: this was a way of making sense of what I could *do* with the *material* brought forth in my experiencing, and was also a more useful metaphor for writing up[45].

- Researching as creating hospitable spaces: this was how I came to think of the relationships supporting my researching in the CASE studentship partnership, and the bringing forth of the Studentship Agreement. However hospitality is a qualified relationship within a 'hegemony of niceness' (The CASE studentship is discussed in Chapters 3 and 6, and a 'hegemony of niceness' is defined in Chapter 7).

- Researching as poking with a stick (and then rubbing up against): these were metaphors particularly discussed with CF about what organisational researching and what researchers do. The development of this metaphor captured my awareness that all research is an intervention, or a perturbation (Chapter 2, Claim 9).

- Researching as being on the boundaries: this metaphor captured my experiencing of researching as different *ways of knowing*, of my marginality in respect of TCS, which is discussed in Chapter 6, and my

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[45] de Laine, M. (2000) writes that "*at the beginning of fieldwork the problem is how to get the material; at the end it is what to do with it…*".

awareness that researching with people is moving in and out of engagements.

- Researching as dancing: this metaphor represents the cumulative learning from reflection on the other metaphors. 'Dancing' resonates with Becvar et al. (1997)'s term 'choreograph' (see also Janesick, 1998), Fell and Russell, 1997b). As well as embodying the 'turning with' of conversation, what this metaphor brings out is that there is a *flow of experiencing* through all the conversations in my research (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). Rather than each conversation being just a discrete event I took into it my learning, and the metaphors from the previous conversation.

In Chapter 2, following Maturana (1988), I distinguish between different types of conversation in terms of their emotional background and flow. Research conversations may be considered to take place against a background of *curiosity*. In my experiencing in Inquiry Strand 4 I differentiated *research activities* from *research conversations* in the following ways:

i.   All the activities involved doing something with a group of other people and in that process producing something that could be shown and talked about with others (summary on flip chart paper, pictures, objects, photos, written plans, stories of shared adventures). I suggest that as an analogue of learning it is a richer experience for those involved.

ii.   All the activities except two were designed to elicit visual imagery as expressed in drawing, rather than or as well as verbal stories and metaphors.

iii. All the activities except one included people purposefully moving around. For example they moved into small groups, moved from a group discussion to drawing individual pictures, moved into a different room for one to one conversations, moved around a room to discuss different issues. In one activity I invited children to do a short role play, to be photographed by other children. In another activity involving young people and adults, I invited them to think of themselves and other people as *crew members on a voyage of discovery* and to move round the room as they were exploring different aspects of their journey.

iv. I designed the activities purposefully so as to provide materials and construct a space in which I could invite others to improvise. Materials were usually restricted to pens and pictures. By 'space' I include blank sheets of paper, a story or metaphor (participation in the story of Peter Pan, experiences together as a voyage of discovery), role play, physical space in moving around a room. Thus I explicitly invited people to participate and to bricolate understandings of participation, as they were participating. Unstructured conversations can also offer 'spaces' for improvisation, but in my experience the invitation is less likely to be taken up.

v. In the conversations, at least initially, my role was of questioner/inquirer. In the activities, which took much more preparation, I was also facilitator and sometimes ringmaster. But also I could stand back and let people get on. There was also a sense, that I could 'be myself' more in the activities than in the one to one conversations. This may be that in moving and doing things with other people I could be many 'selves' in a way that talking at a table with one person does not permit.

The flow of energy and enthusiasm was greater in the research activities than in the mainly verbal exchanges of research conversations. Research activities are *richer* conversations and I would use these much more in applying the methodology in other research.

Thus my response to the question 'how can metaphors be elicited', given the pervasiveness of metaphor in everyday sense-making is that this is most effectively done *in exchange that has the structure of a conversation in language* and which is experienced as participative.

5.4 Ethicality and embodiment in conversations

In Chapter 2 I identified implications of the epistemology of my research for ethical practice. Wittgenstein's (1999) distinction between 'fixed rule language games' like the judicial system, and 'emergent rule language games' is helpful in thinking about how ethicality can be embodied in research practice. Ethics in research are emergent language games, that is, rather than being captured in pre-specified codes, ethics arise in lived experience. The meaning of what counts as ethical <u>for</u> that conversation is brought forth <u>in</u> the conversation. In Chapter 4 I proposed that for creating new ways of thinking the content of metaphors is in some ways less important than the process of metaphorical construction. There is an analogous relationship between Codes and Statements of Ethics and the process of drawing them up, if this process is carried on in conversations. It is working on developing a Code that foregrounds ethical issues rather than the code itself. Codes are *"markers of problematic areas"* of researching (Payne, 1995) rather than prescriptions for practice.

The mutuality of conversations is recognised by Clandinin and Connelly (1998) who claim that the conversational form in qualitative research is marked by:

- equality among participants;

- flexibility to allow participants to establish the form and topics important to their inquiry;

- listening;

- probing in a situation of mutual trust, and caring for the experiences described by the other.

I sent out to individuals and projects an introductory letter requesting an meeting, indicating those people in TCS involved in the research whom they might know. I included an information sheet about the research project, my background, the current research questions, assurance of confidentiality, and an outline of my plans for the research. My intention was that this would show my expectation of our conversation as an exchange and as an exploration, rather than an interview in which *"the only equity avenue for the interviewee is the benevolence of the researcher"* (Scheurich, 1996 p. 70). I embodied ethicality by adhering to common courtesies, for example punctuality. I made it clear in setting up research conversations that these were confidential and I provided information prior to the conversation about my research and the questions I would be asking.

An issue of responsible researching that arose in Inquiry Strand 4 concerned research with children and young people. Responsible researching involves valuing other people (McClintock, 1996) and attributing to them at least the same capacities for self-awareness and choice as you attribute to yourself. Children are obviously different from adults. As I discussed in Chapter 3 I had some specific concerns about involving children and young people in the research and how I would value them. I took two approaches that could be included in the methodology as a prior investigation. As well as self-reflection I used theoretical ideas to ensure that I took children and young people's perspectives into account in my conversations with them. I am including some key ideas about research with children and young people here in my methodology inquiry for three reasons:

1. Research with children could be seen as a practice in its own right, with its own repertoire of methods.

2. In terms of self-aware research, research with anyone whom the researcher sees as significantly different from herself requires careful reflection.

3. In terms of ethical researching, children will almost always be in a position of powerlessness relative to an adult researcher (Pole et al., 1999) and this might be the case for people from other groups. This difference in power can *'filter'* research engagements (James, 1993). For some researchers this raises questions about the validity of the data – for example whether children and young people are saying what they consider the researcher wants to hear, rather than a 'true' account of their experiences. The researcher is also required to use strategies that mitigate the effects of the power they hold.

Perhaps uniquely in all researching with particular groups of people, everybody is or has been a child and a young person. *"Childhood is ... something we all hold within us: a set of memories, a collection of ideas"* (Oakley, 1994; p. 28). Thus for everyone our knowledge of childhood and being a child is constructed from intimate deeply felt experience, not a reflection of an external 'reality', or *"something 'built' up within the mind through dispassionate observation"* (Gergen 1994 p. 68). In researching with children we are also researching our own childhood experiences (James, 1993). But *"your childhood is not like your children's childhood any more than your childhood was like that of your parents"* (Williamson and Butler, 1997; p. 62). As the knowledge expert of my own childhood and my own adolescence, especially from the vantage point of adulthood, it is easy to fall into the trap of assuming I am an expert of others' childhood and youth too. But there are also traps in adults as former children *"taking the familiar and making it strange"* as Thorne (1993) advocates. In

exoticising children's experiences they become objects of anthropology, incorporated in sociological discourses (James, 1993).

From my understanding of the contexts of my research and metaphor theory I decided that firstly I would consider differences between me and children and young people as a difference in 'domains of knowledge and experience' (see Chapter 4). A consequence of this was that, after consultation with my co-researchers from TCS, in the sessions with primary school children I used the expression 'children and adults doing something together' rather than 'participation'[46]. The implications of this are considered in Chapter 7.

Secondly, I would consider children and young people as experts of their own experiencing (one of their domains of knowledge). And it was my responsibility as a responsible researcher to work with them in their domains of knowledge, as I perceived these, and to check with them that this was what I was doing. In my script for the sessions I aimed to use illustrations that I judged both I and they could relate to, especially in describing what we were going to do and that they understood and agreed.

Thirdly, I would consider the data as brought forth in our engagement, and that what children and young people told me was what they wanted to tell me in the contexts of our engagement, and not representations of their experiences.

Fourthly, I would endeavour to use strategies to mitigate the power difference between the children and young people and myself as adult. One strategy would be to engage with groups of children and young people, rather than individually (Hill, 1997). Power can be considered in two forms, 'power over' and 'power to' (Nelson and Wright, 1995, Chambers, 1997). *Power over* is inherent in the structure of relationships, and difficult to challenge because there is investment in maintaining the *status*

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[46] This decision was also based on the understanding that sensory metaphors are more likely to be in children's domains of experience than conceptual metaphors.

quo. Power to is the energy people can apply to their actions, from motivation, enthusiasm and so on. In this analysis, *power to* challenges *power over*. Thus using research strategies that generate children and young people's involvement and enthusiasm mitigates the (adult) researcher's *power over*. Involvement in the design of engagements also increases *power to*, as could be the choice of where the engagement takes place.

What I concluded from my inquiry is that researching with children and young people is not especially difficult or a special case. But *"issues present themselves more sharply when subjects are children [and young people]"* (Thomas and O'Kane, 1998; p. 337), and the 'sharpening' emerges from the contexts of the researching. A section about participative research with children and young people is included in Chapter 6 as one of the starting conditions of Inquiry Strand 4. Because access to children and young people is mediated by other adults, there are logistical issues which I discuss in Chapter 7.

5.4.1   Attending to different ways of knowing

In Chapter 2 I claimed there were many ways of knowing, that these should be attended to in research and that this expands the idea of validity in research. For example, I attended to the flow of emotioning in conversations from my bodily reactions, being aware when people became distressed, or enthusiastic or puzzled and adjusting my responses accordingly. I noted my responses to the physical site of engagements, and feelings of puzzlement, belonging and marginality. McClintock (1996) identities a metaphor of the *researcher as facilitator* in participatory research-with-metaphor. Facilitation, like midwifery, involves technical know-how, and knowing how to care.

As I discuss in Section 5.5 presentational ways of knowing, in the form of drawings, were an important way of expressing and contextualising metaphors and exploring my own constructions.

5.4.2   Strategies for engagements

Because purposive sampling, or 'snowballing' of personal contacts is more likely to generate a range of different perspectives it is more appropriate in constructivist research than representative or random sampling. Snowballing is also more responsive to changes in local conditions and should apply not just to people but to sites (Rodwell, 1998). Arksey and Knight (1999) recommend *"start at the top and work down the hierarchy"* in researching organisations for political reasons. I found that doing this meant that my conversations with senior managers were less rich in terms of metaphor and developing my understanding of the background context than if I had arranged these later in the research.

In order to maintain flexibility in research conversations (Clandinin and Connelly, 1998) I only had three or four planned questions. These were:

'tell me about your role (or what goes on here)'

'tell me how you came to work here (or how the project started)'

'tell me about one or two experiences you've had of which you would say, that's what (participation) is about'

I would also invite people to explore further the metaphors that I understood them to be using in their stories. Rubin and Rubin (1995) use the term *"conversational guide"* for the emergent design of research conversations. My *conversational guide* included a repertoire of

metaphors collected in the course of the inquiry (for example *TCS as an orange, TCS structure and roles as the bridge and engine room, practice as looking outwards and looking inwards*) and brief stories of participation). I used these to trigger conversation about the background context and to trigger more examples. As I started to identify and cluster metaphors I used research conversations to test for their viability in respect of other metaphors in use. I did this by asking people whether the clusters offered meaning to them in making sense of their own examples of participation.

There were also more formalised strategies for developing interpretations and then involving other people in the process of data production and interpretation which I refer to as 'reflexive reporting'. As well as personal field notes from my researching and from conversations with my academic research supervisors and critical friend I use rich pictures – which are discussed in Section 5.4 – for reflecting on my experiences. I used a wide range of ways of reporting on my interpretations and exploring these with other people. These ways included meetings of the CASE studentship partnership (discussed in Chapter 6), presentations, and reports for discussion. All those involved in my research in TCS were invited to provide feedback on four key questions about participation that had emerged for me from my engagements, and I incorporated the feedback in developing these further. Overall, my strategies for including people in the process of interpreting the metaphors brought forth in the conversations were opportunistic rather than systematic. In applying this methodology in other research I would expect to implement my original plan discussed in Chapter 1. This was to invite people to join an activity group, or a reflection group for exploring metaphors.

My response to the question 'How can metaphors be identified and explored respons-ably, that is in a way that includes other people in the process?' is that this involves:

- Thinking of engagements with people as *conversations*, in the way that I defined these in Section 5.3

- The researcher being self-aware and attending to and addressing her own pre-dispositions concerning people with whom she engages in conversations

- The researcher recognising and responding to different ways of knowing, including feelings in conversations

- Developing statements of ethics or codes *in* conversations and being aware that the ethicality of relationships is constructed and re-constructed in conversations and not pre-determined

- Using research methods that generate involvement and enthusiasm, where the researcher may be in a position of power over research participants

- Developing strategies for systematic as well as opportunistic co-inquiry into the metaphors and understandings brought forth in the research conversations

5.5 Contextualising metaphors

In Chapter 4 I identified two dimensions in contextualising metaphors. These were the background, or context of the conversation in which metaphors are brought forth, and the personal contexts of the metaphor-maker. Building relationships with people is one important way in which a researcher can come to have an understanding of these contexts (McClintock, 1996). The relationships I established in the CASE Studentship partnership played an important role in my coming to know

TCS. Another way of coming to have some understanding of the background context is 'hanging out', that is spending time watching and looking round (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). This was not an option available to me, however I took some of the invitations to join in TCS activities as opportunities for 'hanging out' socially as well as 'joining in'. The main method for developing my understanding of the contexts was through the research conversations and activities.

5.5.1   Using grounded metaphors

I took the view at the beginning of my research that TCS was my 'case'. Case study researching is a well-used term, and a method extensively used, especially in organisational researching (Stablein, 1999, Robson, 1993). Some approaches to case study researching, for example Yin (1989) do not fit with a constructivist epistemology. For example the 'reality' brought forth in a case study is that of the researcher, not a representation of the "*native participants' reality*" (ibid.). My involvement with the issues and events under study is not the problem (Walker, 1974), but is my inquiry. Case study reporting is advocated for constructivist research by Guba and Lincoln (1989).

Miles and Huberman (1984) prefer to use the term 'site' rather than 'case' with respect to researching. Robson rejects this because it "*carries a strong geographical flavour rather than the desired human one*" (Robson, 1993). For me, this geographical flavour is its excitement, opening up a new range of metaphors, and capturing the experience of the researching. 'Site' reflects the embodiedness of my learning, both in the sense that my thoughts and actions were located in time and space, and that in the process of learning "*the agent [I], activity and the world mutually constitute each other*" (Lave and Wenger, 1991; p. 33).

I was aware that I was developing my understanding of TCS as the background contexts of my research through metaphors. Using metaphors as an epistemological tool helped me know and express TCS as many different organisations rather than 'a case', as I saw these unfolded in the research conversations. Metaphors can be explored and developed in conversations. This is an approach described by Dexter (1998) as using 'grounded metaphor', although it is also an application of the theory of metaphor in Chapter 4. In particular, using metaphors in this way draws on metaphor as an organising process for complex and confusing experiences. Metaphors can structure an account of the background contexts and can be explored in terms of their entailments for the research question.

My first response to the question 'How can metaphors be contextualised?' is that the contexts of engagements to bring forth metaphors can be explored through grounded metaphors.

5.5.2   Examples, stories and pictures

Stories and pictures provide ways of contextualising metaphors in terms of their personal meanings and have additional advantages for constructivist research. Metaphors are embedded in stories and pictures [47]. We construct our experiences and sense of self through narrative processes (Polkinghorne, 1988, Bruner, 1990). Stories are analogues of experiences, and fundamental sense-making structures. Children appreciate and tell stories as soon as language begins. I explained in Chapter 1 that I wanted Inquiry Strand 4 to be appreciative, so therefore in research conversations I asked for examples of experiences clearly identified as participative. Examples can be developed into stories through questions about what happened before and after and eliciting more detail.

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[47] Whole novels can be metaphors. Mooij (1976) gives the example of Kafka's *The Castle*. Parables can also be single metaphors. (LD1 includes an activity involving short stories from different faiths).

Czarniawska (1997) argues that *"stories must construct two landscapes simultaneously"*. They must construct a *'landscape of action'* where the constituents are the arguments of action – agent, intention or goal, situation, instrument, a 'story grammar'. At the same time they must construct a *'landscape of consciousness'* – what those involved in the action know, think or feel, or do not know, think or feel. Bruner (1986) refers to this aspect of stories as *subjectification* - imparting information about the inner world of the storyteller. Thus stories provide the second dimension of contextualising metaphors, as well as providing the background in terms of practising.

I note that in my research conversations descriptions include stories, stories turn into arguments, and arguments into stories. Descriptive responses to my question about people's roles, or how they came to be working for TCS turn into stories to illustrate what they do and stories to explain why they joined. Stories about participation turn into arguments for participation and vice versa. There is slippage, just as there is slippage between different epistemologies. My experiences of the research conversations confirm that

> if respondents are allowed to continue in their own way until they
> indicate that they have completed their answers, they are likely to
> relate stories (Polkinghorne, 1988 p. 163 drawing on Mischler,
> 1986).

Metaphors are embedded in pictures as much as in stories. Visual research methods, and those involving imagery are particularly advocated in research with children (Schratz et al., 1995). Hazel (1995) argues for the use of vignettes, pictures and photographs, and areas of popular culture in increasing communication between researchers and young participants. James (1995) in Davis (1998) claims children and young people are more used to communicating through stories and paintings than in interviews. Holmes (1998) suggests that drawing helps conversations between children and adults.

Pictures, like stories reveal personal contexts. They are elicitative, they draw out and *"get us to say more than we would otherwise"* (Barry, 1996). In relatively undirected drawing, people tend to only draw what is salient to them (Oster and Gould, 1987 in Barry, 1996).

Barry (1994,1996) suggests the usefulness of 'art-like creations' in symbolic constructivist research to enable different ways of knowing:

> Art-based symbolism tends to naturally upend more logocentric, 'reasoned' forms of knowing ... To paint one's world is to express and experience it very differently than talking about it – talking through the painting beseeches us to alter our story (Barry, 1996; p. 412-413)

Visual images capture experiences (Hagedorn, 1994, Banks, 1995). As well as being 'mirrors' of experiencing, they can also be 'windows' into new ways of seeing (Morgan, 1997).

As well as inviting children to draw their own pictures I used rich pictures in my research (see Appendix 5, pictures 30 and 31 for examples). The drawing of rich pictures is a particular technique used in Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) to elicit understandings of a situation (Checkland and Holwell, 1998, Checkland, 1999, Williams, 1998, (Flood and Carson, 1993). Rich pictures use a no-holds-barred approach to representing situations from a subjective point of view (The Open University, 2000). They are cartoon-like and require little drawing ability. In exploring situations they can show relationships, structures and processes, as well as emotions and conflicts and characteristics. They can be drawn by individuals and by groups and thus offer the experiencing of participation.

The advantages of using pictures is that they can help reduce the perceived power of the researcher in interviews by 'taking the pressure off'. Using pictures provides reassurance that opinions and imagination are legitimate

ways of knowing in interviews (Mitchell, 1994). They also add 'a third point of reference' so

> ... instead of the interviewer holding all the cards ... and quizzing the interviewee, who has no clues as to what she will be asked next, here both interviewer and interviewee can address the diagram (Schratz et al., 1995 p. 88).

The researcher can ask 'What's going on in the picture?' rather than 'What do you think?' Pictures do not have to be hedged about with comments such as 'it's only my opinion'. If people apologise, or hedge, this is due to the shortcomings they perceive in their drawing skills, rather than the content of the picture.

As Barry (1996) writes "*art as inquiry* does *things*". In using art-work in research the researcher may have to plead for participants to carry on, or plead for them to stop (ibid.) However people are engaged, things happen and they remember the pictures ("*people in TCS still talk about the pictures and drawing you did with them*" – conversation with CF in September 2001). Drawing, photography, and the making of three-dimensional objects (Barry, 1994) involves a process and a product (Malchiodi, 1998).

There are constraints in and implications of using pictures in research. Just as with adults some children might not enjoy drawing. Limitations in drawing ability shape what can be expressed in the drawing. Harden et al. (2000) recommend that drawing should always be accompanied with talk. Boyden and Ennew (1997) specifically identify there being no opportunity for children to explain or interpret the images they have produced as a contra-indication for using visual methods. Pictures need to be talked about in conversations in order for them to be helpful in understanding both their content and the contexts of the drawer.

My second response to the question 'How can metaphors be contextualised?' is that the personal contexts of metaphors can be revealed by eliciting examples, stories and pictures, but the meaning of these needs to be explored in conversation.

5.6 Data construction, analysis and interpretations

Using grounded metaphor (Section 5.5.1) is a way of constructing and analysing data about background contexts. There are two stages in the construction and analysis of metaphors: identifying metaphors in the stories and pictures, and 'clustering metaphors'. Clustering metaphors is an iterative and grounded process. Interpretation involves exploring the metaphors in terms of their entailments relative to the background contexts. The interpretation will always be the researcher's. As with the previous stages in the methodology, all these processes involved require the researcher to be 'self-aware'. The question is how to achieve a satisfactory explanation, or coherence.

5.6.1 Identifying metaphors

As a heuristic I considered as data what I took away with me from my engagements with people at the time or subsequently. These included tapes of conversations, my notes, subsequently annotated with further reflections, pictures, and documents given or sent to me or referred to in the engagements. Some of this data specifically related to the background context of the research and formed the basis, alongside my experiencing of TCS, of the elicitation of and inquiry into grounded metaphors.

The examples and stories were transcribed from tapes. Where the 'story-teller' had not identified for themselves a metaphor of participation, either in introducing the example or story, or in our discussion about it, I then asked myself "what metaphor/s of (participation), drawing on the words

used by the story-teller, help me make sense of this example or story as about (participation)?" In retrospect this is a question I could have asked the story-teller in the conversation. This would have added authenticity to the metaphor, but also the possibility of extending the conversation and reinterpretations of the story in terms of dominant metaphors. It was my experience that when people talked *about* participation they usually did so in terms of the prevailing discourses of empowerment and rights, but used other metaphors in their stories, for example perceptual metaphors. For example, in conversation with a project leader about setting up participatory projects, she discussed the aims as *"empowering young people and empowering the community"*. However the story she told as an example (included in Appendix 6) is about seeing, saying and listening. In introducing his story SN discussed participation as empowering, but in the story talked about participation as building and as having a voice {51/tape}.

I drew on research activities, and the pictures and drawings generated in them, as sources for metaphors of participation in different ways. I used the same approach as with stories to identify metaphors of participation in the pictures where these had not been identified by people talking about them. I asked 'what metaphors of (participation) help me make sense of this picture as about (participation)'. I also observed people in the processes of participating in the activities and explored my own experiences of participation to generate further metaphors of participation.

5.6.2   Clustering metaphors

Clustering is how I refer to the process of grouping and regrouping metaphors in terms of their perceived similarities and differences. It is an efficient way of dealing with the 'heaps' of metaphors generated in an inquiry. What I did was to write the metaphors on 'post-it' notes and move these around in different groupings to generate a set of categorial metaphors in respect of what connected groups of metaphors. I then drew these

clusters as spray diagrams[48]. The relationship between the bits that make up each cluster is, in Wittgenstein's terms a 'family resemblance' (Wittgenstein, 1999). Since the way in which data is displayed can materially affect interpretation (Tufte, 1997, Bertin, 1981), I regrouped the metaphors in different ways several times. I recognised that these clusters were judgements and that these drew on my own histories and traditions and enthusiasms. Thus I needed to engage with the processes described as 'reflexive reporting' and dialogue through 'gallery' presentations of the stories and pictures and metaphor clusters, and take feedback from others into account. Closure in respect of the final clusterings drew on how I could see these clusters having relevance to the background contexts, that is I could see how they might be translated into practice.

5.7 Interpreting metaphors for practice and offering invitations

In Chapter 4 I proposed a set of four criteria for judging metaphors:

(i)   *Useful metaphors*: how are these clusters of metaphors useful in which contexts? By usefulness I mean how do these metaphor clusters help make sense of participation in these contexts and engage people with participation

(ii)   *Constraining metaphors*: how do these clusters of metaphors constrain new possibilities for acting and choosing in other contexts?

(iii) *Attractor metaphors*: are there embedded, taken for granted metaphors, representing powerful influences, which may inhibit the development and use of other metaphors?

I said that in order to evaluate metaphor clusters in terms of these three criteria they needed to be examined in terms of what they reveal and

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[48] This is a 'low technology' approach. I could have done this electronically, but this offers less visual engagement and movement.

conceal in respect of each other, and what their entailments mean for practising.

I proposed a final judgement criterion of:

(iv)   *Different combinations of metaphors*: what combination of metaphors trigger different understandings and create possibilities for new ways of acting?

I said that these combinations of metaphors needed to be mutually viable, that is they did not lead to a breakdown in understanding. I also argued that these combinations of metaphors could be seen as 'sets of conditions' for emergence. This judgement criterion can only be applied with respect to the research question and the background contexts of the inquiry. This involves constructing a framework for applying the criterion, for example in terms of:

- Does this combination of metaphors enable innovatory practising as it is already going on?

- Does this combination of metaphors also invite new possibilities for practising?

- Does this combination of metaphors also invite new meanings for practising?

5.7.1   Implications of the Epistemology Claims for invitations to people to 'change the metaphors they choose'

In Chapter 2 I argued that metaphors were *ways of knowing*. I also proposed knowing as an embodied and imaginative process, brought forth in language, and that *meanings were brought forth in a context to which we have also given meaning*.

In a constructivist inquiry conclusions can only be offered as invitations, or 'working hypotheses'(Guba and Lincoln, 1989). From my inquiry into the qualities of metaphors in Chapter 4, invitations in terms of ungrounded 'new' or alternative metaphors are unlikely to be taken up. For other people to develop and to take up metaphors as *ways of knowing* they must perceive them as viable in terms of the metaphors they already use. This is a judgement only they can make and this will depend on their personal interpretations. Invitations have to be made in terms that recognise the relational qualities, that is what the metaphors mean to the person suggesting them. Invitations must be owned (taken responsibility for) by those who are involved in the process of emergence or who offer them. In offering invitations, the 'politics of invitations' needs to be recognised, that is, the meaning of the *contexts of invitations* may lead to invitations being considered irrelevant or viewed as impositions.

Deschler (1990) proposes that new metaphors can be developed through dialogical processes in a 'reflective group'. The processes include recognising metaphors, choosing and unpacking a metaphor by describing its meaning, reflecting on the values, beliefs and assumptions embedded in the meanings of the metaphor, questioning the validity of the metaphor's meaning in terms of own life experience, knowledge etc. From this he suggests new metaphors can be created that express meanings the group want to emphasise. He argues that this should be a recursive process in which the new metaphors are then explored. The content of the metaphor is in some ways less important that the process of metaphorical construction itself. The dialectical processes described by Deschler also enable the rearticulation of constraining metaphors in a similar way to that proposed by Krippendorff (1995) for the rearticulation of power (see Chapter 2).

In terms of the epistemology of the thesis, changing metaphors as ways of knowing also involves processes of embodiment, enactment and imaginisation. Barrett and Cooperrider (1990) give the example of

experiencing a new metaphor for managing through visiting another organisation. Rich pictures and model building provide ways of depicting and exploring new metaphors (See Section 5.3 above).

Thus invitations to develop new metaphors must also attend to:

- Personal interpretations of the metaphor (for example, BC gave the example of 'change as movement' metaphors being challenged as inappropriate for people with mobility difficulties).

- The 'politics of invitation' in terms of coercive and enabling contexts.

- Opportunities for dialogue, or *conversations* which are *free flowing* (see 7.3.1 below).

- Opportunities for embodiment and imagination – which may be constrained by the primacy of propositional knowing.

5.8 Summary: the output of the inquiry as a methodology

In this chapter I inquired into the implications of a constructivist epistemology for engaging with people in research through my inquiry in Strand 4. The implications for the methodology are that:

- All researching could be considered as conversations in that meaning arises in the process of engagement;

- Researchers need to attend to the flow of researching as well as to discrete events and experiences, for example in how metaphors develop from conversation to conversation, and in terms of the researcher's own experiencing and learning;

- Ethical practice involves self-awareness on the part of the researcher in terms of her predispositions. Drawing up a Statement of Ethics is good practice as a starting point especially if it is the outcome of conversations with those to whom the Statement applies. But the meaning of the statement and its interpretations are brought forth in conversations. Thus the researcher needs to be sensitive and alert to the limitations and constraints of codified practices as she is participating in the 'reality' of what is going on;

These are the principles for the conduct of the methodology.

I also inquired into how the qualities of metaphor identified in Chapter 4 could be embodied in a set of research practices. Those identified form the methodology in five steps:

Step 1:

a) Design engagements with people in their settings so that they may be experienced as participative, and include invitations to describe their organisational contexts and invitations to give examples and stories about participation;

b) Design activities so that they may be experienced as participative, and include invitations to draw pictures;

c) Engage in conversations and activities with others to bring forth the contexts of conversations and stories and pictures of participation;.

Step 2:

a) Explore the contexts of conversations through grounded metaphors, attending to the researcher's own predispositions

Step 3:

a) Identify metaphors of (participation) in the examples, stories and pictures, that is turn these into metaphors of the form '(participation) is ... (a journey, a battle, a safe place ...). Present some of the stories and pictures to others for the metaphors they perceive.

b) Group metaphors in clusters in terms of perceived similarities and dissimilarities, being aware of own predispositions and obtaining feedback from others involved in the inquiry as to their perceptions. Feedback to research participants the main metaphors that appear to researcher and invite comments. Review these comments, and recluster the metaphors.

Step 4:

a) Explore the usefulness of metaphor clusters in terms of their contexts and identify the constraints and possibilities afforded by the metaphors in terms of practising. That is, consider the influences that might affect choice of metaphors and explore the entailments of the metaphor for practice and to what extent they offer new ways of seeing participation, or challenge those understandings in use that may be constraining.

Step 5:

a) Develop criteria for judging combinations of metaphors as 'set of conditions for emergence' from the research question

b) Identify combinations of metaphors inviting new possibilities for practising

c) Offer invitations to apply these combinations in terms that take account of :

- Constraints on the invitation being perceived as such

- The availability of space and time for conversations about metaphors

- The richness of contextuality: metaphors are more likely to be taken up if they are richly contextualised, that is they are presented in terms of the meaningfulness for people's experiencing.

5.9 Conclusion/outputs: a methodology and refined research questions

In this chapter I drew on the appreciation of metaphor and metaphors as *ways of knowing,* and the relational, invitational and ambiguous qualities of metaphors developed in Chapter 4 to bring forth the methodology that was presented in Section 5.8.

The second output of this inquiry is revisions to the questions for the current inquiry and Inquiry Strand 4. Because of the need to contextualise metaphors, which I identified in Chapter 4, the questions need to refer to stories and pictures. Thus the question for Inquiry Strand 3 becomes:

> How can appreciating metaphors in stories and pictures enhance ethical and responsible participatory researching, or researching with? The outcome of this strand is the methodology.

The question for Inquiry Strand 4 becomes:

> How can appreciating metaphors in stories and pictures illuminate and enhance children and young people's participation and participatory practising with children and young people in an organisation working for social justice?

As I said at the beginning of the chapter, the methodology developed in this chapter is robust because it has been applied in practice in Inquiry Strand 4. Thus I now move on to show how this was done. Chapter 6 describes the 'starting conditions' for Inquiry Strand 4 in terms of the CASE studentship, the work of TCS, and some of the discourses within which participatory practice with children and young people is situated. In Chapter 7 I structure Inquiry Strand 4 in five sections relating to the five steps in the methodology.

Chapter 6 Inquiry into participatory practising in TCS: the starting conditions

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I describe the starting conditions for the fourth inquiry strand in the thesis, which is the focus of Chapter 7. The revised question for this Inquiry Strand is:

> How can appreciating metaphors in stories and pictures illuminate and enhance children and young people's participation and participatory practising with children and young people in an organisation working for social justice?

In Chapter 2 I showed what constructivist research might mean in terms of ethical and responsible participatory research and practice. In Chapter 3 I inquired into the bases for my choices and predispositions in researching, and identified those that connected with my research in this inquiry strand. In the previous chapter I drew on the qualities of metaphor in people's engaging with each other and qualitative research theories to establish a

methodology. I said that the methodology emerged from the practice of the research in a specific context.

To set the scene for the inquiry I am going to give short accounts of the elements which were in place, or 'givens' in the inquiry. These include the CASE studentship partnership, the work of TCS in outline, the discourses in which TCS practice with children and young people is situated, and the Child in the Neighbourhood Group (from whose work in TCS the idea for my research originated).

The CASE partnership provided, and in some ways determined, my access to TCS. I describe the CASE studentship partnership in terms of the mechanisms and people who, at different times, supported my research. The outline of the work of TCS draws mainly on publicly available sources.

I discuss the discourses in which TCS practice with children and young people in terms of residual, dominant and emergent discourses. These include objectivising discourses of childhood, problematising discourses of youth, and emergent discourses of social justice and children's rights, with reference to social inclusion and citizenship. Each of these discourses could take up a chapter in their own right. There are many other discourses and concepts I could have selected, for example discourses in respect of gender, race and sexuality and youth, concepts such as social capital, community competency and the 'civil society'. My main interest though is in seeing these discourses as entering and structuring the practices in TCS in respect of children and young people's participation, and as metaphors of participation that could be juxtaposed with metaphors elicited in my inquiry. As Victoria Morrow concludes from her research using a social capital framework with children, children's perspectives do not fit a pre-existing model because "*social life is much too complex and contradictory for such an account*" (Morrow, 1999; p. 17).

The information about the CIN group comes from written reports I was given at the beginning of the research, but also conversations with some of those who were members.

6.2 The CASE Studentship partnership: possibilities and constraints
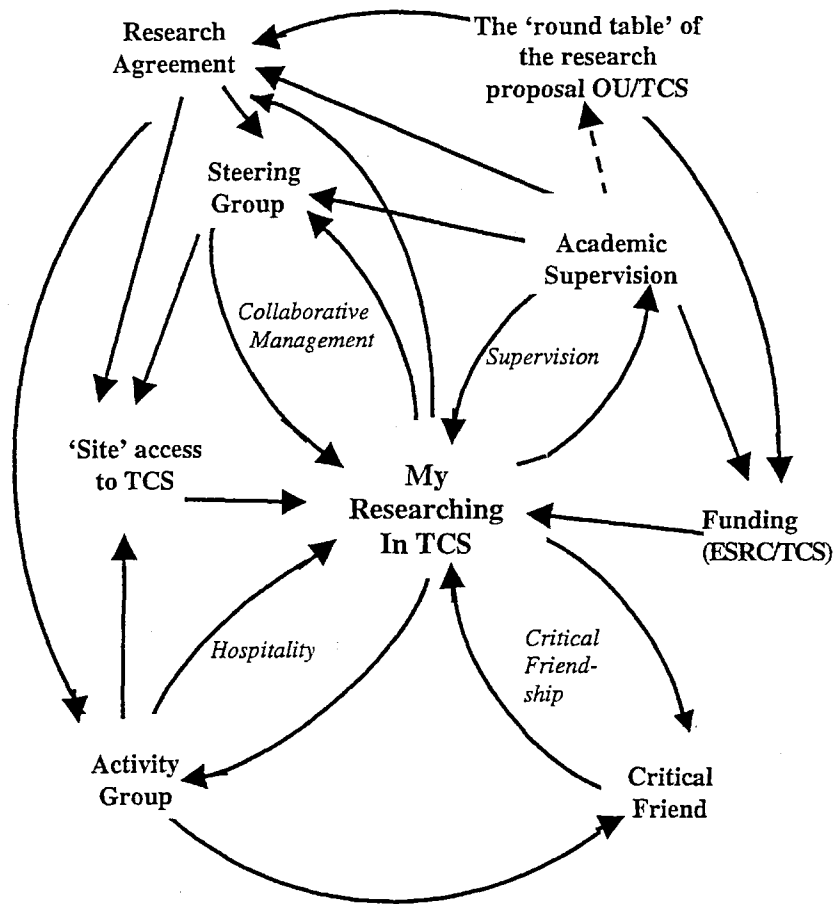
Figure 6-1: A relationship diagram to show the components of the CASE studentship partnership that supported my researching in TCS at different times and how they were connected. The arrows mean 'led to'- for example the round table and academic supervision led to funding from ESRC and TCS - except for the dotted line which means that academic supervision 'was part of' the round table research proposals.

During the period of my research in TCS, different components of the partnership with TCS were brought forth to support my researching. These

are shown in Figure 6-1. 'The round table of the research proposal' arose from the shared interests of TCS and the OU Systems Discipline referred to in Chapter 1. The 'round table' was the originating body of the CASE studentship and preceded the start of my research by about 18 months. From a TCS perspective the 'round table' came out of the work of the Child in the Neighbourhood (CIN) Group which is discussed later in this chapter.

I briefly explained the partnership in Chapter 1 and discussed one aspect in Chapter 3. There is wide variation in how CASE studentships operate because of the range of contingent factors. My experience was different from that of other CASE students, for example that reported in Harris et al., (2000). Bell and Read (1998) suggests that CASE studentships can be more demanding for the student than standard, non-collaborative studentships. They suggest this may be because of rapid change of personnel in non-academic organisations, the different research time-scales within which non-academic organisations and universities operate, and potential conflict between organisation specific concerns and the depth and originality of successful PhD research.

At the instigation of TCS a formal research agreement was developed between TCS, the Open University and me. There were no appropriate models for such an agreement in either TCS or the OU. During 1998 the ESRC published research on CASE studentships which recommended *"a formal written agreement, set out in advance, between the university, non-academic organisation and the student"* as a matter of good practice (Bell and Read, 1998;, p. 1). The final version of my CASE studentship research agreement was eventually signed 17 months after the start of the research and is included in Appendix 1. The first version, Terms of Understanding, was drawn up in conversations between TCS people, the academic supervisors and myself. This embodied the spirit of our working together in these discussions and is included in Appendix 1.1. However this version

then had to be re-interpreted and renegotiated in a legal framework[49]. With regard to my conduct of the research, the agreement specified that I should draw up the statement of ethical principles for research with children and young people which I discussed in Chapter 5. Conversations in the process of drawing up the agreement were as useful as the agreement itself in supporting my research.

In the Terms of Understanding two bodies were set up to manage and develop the research. The management body was the Steering Group, *"steering the partnership"* {5/tape}. This included the academic supervisors and myself and three people from TCS. The Steering Group met twice a year during the first three years of the research. I reported on the progress of the research and we discussed developments in TCS. The other body was the Activity Group, which included 2 TCS colleagues who had been involved in the research proposals and me. The Research Agreement legitimised my access to people in TCS, and the Steering and Activity Groups provided the introductions that started the 'snowballing' process off.

The Activity Group was to be designed to be part of the research and to

> bring [TCS's] participation into the research, in terms of it's understanding, in terms of those who have interests that need to be seen to be included that have positional understadnings, that need to be subject to reflection by ... a group, by exchanges between projects and managers ... so there is in a sense what I call a stakeholding... The [Steering Group] is external to [the research]... managing that which is happening. The Activity Group is within the frame ... It is part of the mechanism ... So what ever task it takes on ... you need a group to help you achieve or to help the research to be achieved {07, transcript of tape of Steering Group/Activity Group meeting, RA's comments}.

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[49] The contract first offered by the OU contracts department in response to requests for guidance concerned 'laboratory research'.

The Activity Group did not work as planned; the two TCS people involved
in this group left TCS or took leave of absence early in the second year of
the research. The activity group was replaced by what I described in
Chapter 3 as 'hospitality', that is a network of informal conversations with
TCS people encountered in the research with whom I explored ideas about
the research and the emergent metaphors. These conversations were the
basis of my personal learning about, and experiencing of, children and
young people's participation. There was a shift in the role of the Steering
Group to include a greater role in developing the research and providing a
forum for feedback. The Steering Group was also an opportunity for my
participant observation of TCS histories and traditions as these were
brought in to the process of collaboration. Thus I include the Steering
Group conversations in the methods of inquiry in Chapter 7.

At my instigation one of the people who had been involved in the research
from the beginning but whose post in TCS was made redundant, became my
'critical friend' (CF). We met four or five times a year with a focus on
developing my understanding of TCS histories and traditions. CF's
involvement provided a continuity for me and a link to TCS traditions and
histories. I especially valued his critical perspective as a counterpoint to
my tendency to be unquestioning of, or detached from, management
perspectives, a pre-disposition I identified in Chapter 3.

Academic supervision was crucial to my sense-making and learning,
particularly in the other inquiries in the thesis. At the beginning of my
research the academic supervisors took the lead in discussions with TCS
people and the question for me was *how can I join in conversations which
are already going on?* As the research with TCS progressed I saw them
standing by or behind me. By the end of the second year of the research I
saw myself as a *broker* between two communities of practice (Wenger,
1998). This was embodied in the Critical Review of the research in the
third year to which both academics from the OU Systems Discipline and

people from different parts of TCS were invited. The Critical Review was planned as another round of processing the research. I saw my role in the Critical Review as offering invitations arising from my research and setting up conversations rather than participating in them. As I discussed in Chapter 3, I was a *marginal* member of TCS communities of practice, and a *peripheral* member of OU/research community. Being a broker between two communities of practice, as Wenger states, does mean not being a full member of either; this may be experienced as *uprootedness*. Brokering can be an ambiguous and vulnerable role, but my role as broker as I constructed it was supported in the CASE partnership.

A PhD thesis can only be written by the student and I experienced the process of writing up as much more difficult than I had anticipated and complicated by family problems and illness. As this extended well beyond the three-year period of the CASE partnership seeing myself as broker became very uncomfortable. Wenger suggests that the feeling of uprootedness arising from brokering may be interpreted as a feeling of personal inadequacy (ibid.). In addition, I was doing very little brokering as such, partly because I found it difficult to interpret feedback from CASE partners purely in terms of my writing and not as additional data as there were further changes of people's roles and developments in TCS, including redundancy of a Steering Group member. As I discuss in Chapter 7, travelling – driving from place to place, is a requirement for many people in TCS because of the management structure and practice requirements. Looking back I see as significant that I had stopped travelling – visiting projects and HQ, and this increased my feeling of marginality in respect of TCS.

What I suggest from this is that although the CASE partnership provided high quality support for my researching in TCS, there were also constraints; These related to:

- How I (and perhaps others) constructed my role and the implications of this in the stages of the research'

- How situational issues cannot be covered in formal agreements'

- Questions about forms of writing appropriate for collaborative practices.

I now turn to TCS, and what sort of organisation it is.

6.3 The work of TCS

TCS is a voluntary organisation working directly with children and young people in their communities in England and Wales. TCS also commissions and publishes research, and advocates for children and young people in social and political contexts. During the period of my researching, TCS ran about 100 locally based projects in England and Wales and over 100 'charity shops' (mainly selling second-hand donated goods to raise funds). TCS employed approximately 1200 people of whom about 300 worked in headquarters in London (these numbers varied slightly from year to year), with the support of a substantial number of volunteers who are mainly involved in fund-raising. The 1997-98 Annual Report records that in the previous year 'TCS had contact with 21 750 children and young people, with more limited contact with a further 16 000'.

TCS was founded in 1881 as The Church of England Homes for Waifs and Strays by Edward De Montjoie Rudolf, a young Sunday school teacher and civil servant:

> ...while working at his Sunday school in south London..., troubled when two young people did not turn up for lessons he set out to look for them and found them begging on the streets . . Rudolf recognised that 'there was a need to help impoverished and destitute children .. and felt that the Church of England ought to be leading the way ... Archbishop Tait warmed to the idea, remarking '...if this thing is to be done, this man Rudolf is the man to do it'(The Children's Society, 1995)

Until the 1970s, TCS was primarily concerned in running a large number of residential care homes for children and in fostering and adoption work. The growth of the statutory social-work sector and the recognition of the need for children to remain with their families in their communities led to changes in thinking about the role and work of voluntary agencies in the UK. In the 1970s and 1980s TCS shifted to working to support families within their own environment "with innovative projects" - community based, focussed on local needs, and managed within geographical regions in England and Wales. A wide diversity of approaches and structures developed within these regions. Developments in the strategic direction and structure of TCS in the 1990s can be seen as a reaction to this increasing autonomy, diversity and 'distance from centre'.

TCS is the fourth largest children's charity in the UK in terms of income and expenditure. Since it was founded in 1881 TCS has been strongly linked with The Church of England. Until 1993 the organisation was known as 'The Church of England Children's Society'. Most project work is joint-funded and otherwise resourced through partnerships and contracts with other bodies including local authorities, health trusts and the complex network of central-government funding initiatives for the regeneration of communities and tackling social exclusion (Rickford, 2001). However TCS relies on the support of Church of England congregations and voluntary donations. In the financial year 1998-1999 it had an annual income of £26.5 million[50], of which 73% was from voluntary donations including legacies, and 24% from public funding and fees or charges[51].

TCS is both competing and collaborating with other children's charities in financing and developing work. In 1997, on the retirement of the director of 'Public Affairs', a new director of 'Marketing and Communications' was appointed, specifically *to "raise the profile of TCS and attract funding from*

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[50] The incomes of the three larger charities, Barnado's, NCH Action for Children and NSPCC were £105m, £64.4m and £55.2m respectively (CaritasData Ltd., 1999) .

corporate sources" {01/notes}. TCS may be considered to be more vulnerable in terms of sustaining its work than some of the other children's charities because of its reliance on a declining voluntary donor base in a period of increasing transfer of services with funding from local government to the voluntary sector.

In terms of practice and research TCS is an innovating organisation. It was the first organisation to set up family centres in the 1960s, the first to provide a safe haven for runaway children and young people in the 1980s. TCS' funding of research and campaigns was instrumental in bringing child prostitution to public notice in the 1990s. Funding was used in the development of new ways of working with children and young people living on the streets. TCS has been active in the innovative use of government funding for the regeneration of communities.

6.4 Discourses of childhood and youth

As Franklin (1995) affirms, childhood is a social construct

> formed by a range of social, historical and cultural factors ...
> differently constructed expressing the divergent gender, class, ethnic
> or historical locations of particular individuals (p. 5).

In Chapter 3 I reflected on my knowing of children and young people from my perspectives as parent and social worker in terms of *flows of emotioning*, based on intimate and deeply felt experiences. In a distinction analogous to the two *contextual dimensions of metaphor* identified in Chapter 4, this reflection concerned the *personal meaning* of childhood and youth as constituted in my histories and traditions. The current section is an overview of some of the *background contexts* of TCS conversations and practices concerned with children and young people's participation in their communities and decision-making, and of my research, and on which personal meanings rest. These include discourses, or ways of thinking and

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[51] Information on TCS Website, May 2000: http://www.thechildrenssociety.org.uk.

talking about childhood and youth, which support TCS work for children and young people's participation, and those which participation work challenges and struggles against.

Constructions of 'child work' (Oldham, 1994) and 'youth working' (Tucker, 1997) - and what counts as innovative practice with children and young people, are themselves intimately connected with discourses of childhood and youth. Participatory practice with children and young people is enacted within and against constructions of childhood and youth. In Chapter 1 I referred to a conversation in which I had asked project leaders whether they saw their work as *"filling gaps in walls or pulling walls down"*. Later in that conversation ST said of her work for children and young people's participation in schools that it was *"like dripping water, wearing away at things"*{02b/notes}. Tucker (1997) uses the metaphor of *"the game"* for the complex and discursive social and political constructions against which youth identities, and professional 'youth working' are defined. In a statement that still rings true, twenty five years ago Denzin (1977) wrote of children as political products:

> Children are created, defined, and acted on in political terms ..
> caught ... without a clear spokesman for their collective position,
> children find themselves talked about, legislated over, tested and
> scrutinised by society's experts; by its social workers, educational
> psychologists, probation officials, judges, courts, teachers,
> sociologists, anthropologists, politicians and psychiatrists (Denzin
> 1977, p. 1 6).

Williams (1983) suggests that society is always grappling with the mixed influence of dominant, residual and emergent institutions, and I see this mirrored in ways of thinking and acting towards children and young people.

The background contexts of children and young people's participation that I discuss here include:

- *objectifying discourses* of childhood, which may be considered as residual understandings, *"thickened and hardened across generations"* (Berger and Luckman, 1967; p. 76);

- *problematising discourses of youth*, which may be considered as currently dominant, enacted in social policies and legislation (Griffin, 1993);

- *emergent discourses of children and young people as 'social agents in their own right', and as 'co-citizens with rights'* (James et al., 1998, Qvortrup, 1994).

These three sets of discourses are discussed briefly in the next sections. I have drawn on texts and research relating to Western European and US contexts. A full discussion is beyond the scope of this thesis. This is a complex field; I do not discuss issues of gender, race and sexuality as distinct from other discourses, although there is a good case for doing so. I have chosen those discourses that I see as particularly significant to practice in TCS.

6.4.1   Objectifying discourses

By 'objectifying discourses' I mean those in which children and young people are constituted as 'other', or lesser than adults. Perhaps because of the ubiquity of childhood to which I referred in Chapter 5, these discourses are complex – for example Holt (1975) argues that children are considered *"a mixture of expensive nuisance, fragile treasure, slave and super-pet"*. As Cloke and Davies (1995) discuss, these discourses, or ways of talking, conceal the realities of children and young people's experiencing. For example, two *"myths"* concerning child protection - that the treatment of children is based on respect and the wish to protect them, and that childhood is a golden age and special time, conceal the fact that *"children are amongst the most vulnerable members of our society, but are denied civil rights"* (Cloke and Davies p. xv). Among the discourses I have selected to discuss are those reflected in TCS Action Plans for projects. The role of Action Plans is discussed in Chapter 7.

There was little written about childhood and children's lives until the publication of Phillipe Ariès *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous L'Ancien Régime* in 1960 (Cunningham 1995, James 1993). Ariès' frequently quoted statement that in *"medieval society the idea of childhood did not exist"* (1973 p. 125), although not reflecting his full argument (James 1992, Stainton Rogers 1992) nevertheless reveals the historical specificity of the idea of 'childhood'. In a historical review of ideas of childhood Cunningham (1995) considers that,

> it has been common to imagine the history of humankind as equivalent to the life cycle of a human being; some societies have seen this as an ascent from savagery/childhood to civilisation/adulthood, others as a descent from primeval innocence/childhood to corruption/adulthood.

He illustrates *childhood as savagery* in discussion of seventeenth century Protestant childhoods of disciplining original sin out of children. *Childhood as innocence* is evidenced in eighteenth century aspirations to bring up children on Rousseau's principle of *"the right of a child to be a child, and to be happy with it"* (ibid. p. 66). Jenks (1996) refers to these two ways of thinking and talking about childhood as the Dionysian and Apollonian views respectively. In both of these views children's behaviour is thought of as a natural part of being a child which it is adults' duty to mould and control.

More recently, children were compared with 'primitive societies' and people with mental illnesses in a text book on child psychiatry from my social work training:

> Animistic thinking (attributing human characteristics to inanimate objects) and thought omnipotence (what the child wishes is sufficient to cause it to happen) are encountered in primitive societies, and may be observed in certain adult mental illnesses" (Kamp, 1974 p. 5)[52].

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[52] Kamp's exposition of child development includes the injunction that the infant must renounce omnipotence 'to become a socially conforming being' (p. 6) and the comment that in later childhood 'the child begins to be able to use a system of symbols, letters and digits, the tools of our civilisation' (p. 7).

In these discourses children are constituted as irrational beings, at the mercy of their senses.

> Childhood is measured out by sounds and smells
> And sights before the dark of reason grows
> (John Betjeman *Summoned by Bells* IV)

At the same time childhood is talked of nostalgically, at least in western ideology, as a time of carefree happiness and innocence, especially by those some distance from it[53]. This ideology of the happy, carefree childhood *"works to exclude those for whom it is not "* (James 1995 p. 28). Children whose behaviour does not conform with the essential innocence of childhood are then considered as abnormal, for example the two boys who killed the young child James Bulger in 1993 were typically described in the tabloid media as children who *"had the faces of normal boys but hearts of unparalleled evil"* (Daily Mail 1993 quoted by Newell, 1995).

The rationale in the Action Plan for JO2 draws attention to the point that:

> in acknowledging children's rights there is a risk that an
> inappropriate perception of children as 'little adults' may emerge.
> All involved with the protection of children should remember that
> children also have the right to be children (Action Plan for JO2,
> Rationale par. A7)[54].

However Cunningham's (1995) diagnosis of *"the root cause of much present confusion and angst about childhood"*, is that both these discourses – of children's rights to autonomy and *"the remnants of the romantic view that the right of a child is to be a child"* are in currency (p. 190).

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[53] Gergen contrasts the findings of two pieces of research in which firstly a sample of youths between the ages of 19 and 21 were asked to chart their life history along a general evaluative dimension, and secondly a sample of people between the ages of 63 to 93 were asked to do a similar exercise. The graphs produced by the youths show a decrease in feelings of well-being between the ages of about 7 and 16, before a rise. The graphs produced by the older people show a steady increase in feelings of well being from age 10 to about age 55, followed by a gradual decrease (Gergen, 1994 p. 200-201).
[54] A similar point is made in an anonymous comment from a TCS practitioner *"we need tc meet (the children) on their ground, at their level, with their agenda and within their framework, rather than expect them to become like mini adults in order to meet our wishes, needs or agency objectives"* (quoted by Gabriel 1998, p. 12)

In Chapter 2 I discussed how theories of childhood constitute and are constituted by adults' constructions of children and young people, and specifically how Piagetian theory can lead to understandings of children and young people as vulnerable and incompetent. Oakley (1994) argues that a consequence of considering children and young people as 'potential' people of lesser competence is that they become inscribed in a dialogue of *"in their best interests"*. However the language of "in their best interests" is based on *"a philosophy of exclusion and control dressed up as protection"* (ibid. p. 16)[55].

The rationale for the TCS 1998 Action Plans for project work draws on de Winter's metaphor that in current society children and young people are

> "shielded in a special youth land …marginalised and excluded, until they are suddenly expected to be responsible, independent and committed adults/citizens" (de Winter, 1997){D1}

In the 'youth land' childhood is differentiated and separated from the world of adulthood. Children's culture, talk, games serve to mark their identity as children, and distinguish childhood from adulthood. This resonates with the media creation of 'yoof culture' in the early 1990s and the identification of children as a market segment for targeted advertising[56]. James (1995) points out that state institutions, and the legal system *"combine with child-centred commodities and markets"* to create boundaries around the world of children and young people and constrain and limit their everyday activities. Thus Ennew (1994) comments that

> Modern childhood constructs children *out* of society, mutes their voices, denies their personhood, limits their potential (p. 125, quoted by Roche, 1999).

In reviewing research involving children James et al., (1998) identified several different overlapping ways of 'seeing children' embodied in

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[55] Although Article 3 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (see below, Section 6.4.3.1) specifically relates to 'the best interests of the child', this is directly related to *"such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being …"* (see Flekkoy and Kaufman(1997) for full discussion).
[56] 'World in Action', ITV, 23 November 1998 8.00 p.m.

researchers' conceptualisations. (see also Morrow and Richards, 1996; James, 1995).Each of these

> combine notions of social competence with those of status to give rise to ideal types' of 'the child' (ibid. p. 4).

These are also helpful in identifying different ways of seeing 'types' of children and young people in TCS practices. They include *"the* [Piagetian] *developing child"*, which undervalues children's competences so that even when their views are elicited they are perceived as unreliable sources of information – *"he's only a child"* (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995; p. 19-20).

"The tribal child - an alien species [inhabits] *an autonomous world"* with its own rules and agenda, and unknowably 'other'. James (1993) reflects that in the first research she did with children she constituted childhood as *"culturally other"*, and *"exoticised"* children in order to turn childhood into a 'legitimate' anthropological subject. There is an element of this perception in the use of children's drawings that adorn without being related to the content of some TCS documents, for example the Corporate Plan 1999-2002[57].

The *adult child* – is a *"competent participant in a shared but adult centred world"* and assumed to be essentially the same as adults (James, 1995 p. 11). However this perception does not take into account differences in social status between children and adults (Morrow and Richards, 1996). Adult childhoods are forced on many children with whom and for whom TCS works, for example young carers (Frank, 1995). Of these children Roche (1999) comments,

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[57] The old (pre 1998) logo of The Children's Society included three coloured stick figures, like a child's drawing, which could easily be seen as three differently aged children, or two children with a parent etc. At a meeting in 2000 with some project leaders I was told that these, faintly scandalously, had actually been designed by adults to look like a child's drawing. (The new logo which can be seen as a figure 'reaching for the stars is clearly 'designed' (Kennedy, 1998).

> it is ironic that those children who act in that highly responsible way
> (the way in which it is most often regretted they do not act) in
> relation to their family are 'made to disappear' by adult practice.

Practices that render children invisible include ignoring them and also assimilating them into 'adult' worlds and practices. 'Adult' children and young people are invited to the tea parties of the 'adult world' of governance. The group of young people who were involved in governance work were invited to give a presentation of TCS Council[58], and then to join the Council in their refreshments afterwards. (This story was told to me by two people in a way that I interpreted as pointing to the gap between young people's lives and TCS Council's understanding of these lives, and the meaning of young people's involvement in governance). A story of participation' told me by a Council member, which was also respectful of young people, was:

> My house was attached to the hall and I felt it important that it
> created a house in which students could be adults and I would have
> all my meetings with students in my own sitting room and I would
> treat them ... as if they were sensible adults who might have done
> something daft but who were going to tell me how they were going
> to put it right. My house became the place in which the junior
> common room committee could walk in and behave like very
> responsible adults and I don't how how we created that. It was
> partly that I had a very beautiful sitting room ... and I would behave
> as if they were my guests which puts a constraint upon them
> immediately... There's an element of manipulation in it {50/tape}.

The *social structural child* is located in societal and political structures, for example, 'the lone parented child', 'the socially excluded child', 'the looked-after child' (ie. 'looked after' or accommodated by the Local Authority under the Children Act 1989) and the target of interventions that attract government funding.

The *minority child*, for example, the 'the waifs and strays' for whom TCS was founded, and 'the disadvantaged child' are generally more isolated than all other groups from the culture and institutions of wider society (Boyden

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[58] The role of the Council is discussed in Chapter 7.

and Ennew, 1997)). However the plight of this child – and their potential rescue, is often the basis of advertising campaigns from charities like TCS seeking to attract donations (for example, Barnados campaigns in 2000 and 2002).

James et al. (1998) also identify a perspective they refer to as 'the social child', *"children as social actors with their own distinctive abilities to understand and explain the world"* (Thomas and O'Kane, 1998). In this perspective children are not objectified but *"are comparable with adults, but ... possess different competencies"*(James, 1995). This perspective underpins some of the discourses discussed in Section 6.4.3 below, and participative research with children and young people.

6.4.2   Problematising discourses

By 'problematising discourses' I include those in which children, and more frequently young people, are constituted as in some way problematic for the well-being of society in general, that is, as social problems. Beauvais et al., (2001) reflect this as a recent shift in perception:

> whereas youth of the 1960s were portrayed as a social movement, there is a tendency to see today's youth as a social problem (p. 5).

However, as Griffin (1993) demonstrates, problematising discourses of youth in the Western context draw on a particular understanding of adolescence that has been current for the last century. Adolescence, like childhood is a socially and historically constructed concept. Oakley (1994) comments that "adolescence" itself is a derogatory term since all it implies is 'becoming an adult' (see Chapter 2, Epistemological Claim 2; Cockburn, 1998). Griffin (1993) specifically identifies the underpinning biological paradigm of adolescence as a phase between childhood and adulthood characterised by 'stress and storm' due to biological, specifically hormonal changes, originating from the work of G. Stanley Hall in 1904. *" 'Youth' defines a moment of disturbance: a space in between "* (Oswell, 1998; p

38). Thus, like children, young people are driven by irrational forces, which also make them vulnerable to social vices.

Griffin, and more strongly Finn (2001), also link the 'construction' of adolescence as pathology in the twentieth century to capitalist development, specifically to the need to produce the disciplined labour required by mass production, which required a compliant and mechanised work force. But as Griffin points out, the ideology of adolescence also emerged against a norm of youth appearance and behaviour *"which was white/Anglo, middle class, heterosexual and male"* (Griffin, 1997), and modelled on the desirability of self-control and conformity. Young people should defer to the authority of adults. The role of social reformers wielding professional power was to protect young people from their own vulnerabilities and to control them in order to maintain order and self-discipline.

Griffin argues that dominant discourses of youth, drawing on the 'storm and stress' model, link young people with specific social problems primarily or solely on account of their youth – for example, age is the only variable that make sex, pregnancy, smoking, and alcohol use deviant behaviour for young people. Within the individualised psycho-biological paradigm, young people are then blamed for social problems – youth as trouble. Sibley (1995) suggests *"adolescents may be threatening to adults because they transgress the adult/child boundary"*.

Alternative, or radical discourses developed from critiques of the 'youth as trouble' discourse, focusing on the social systems in which young people live and societal structures in relation to youth, gender, race and class, of which young people are victims – 'youth in trouble'.

Across the 'youth as trouble' and 'youth in trouble' distinction Griffin (1993) identifies three main problematising discourses:

- Discourses of deficit: young people are in need of education and socialisation into adulthood in order to redress the influences of a poor family background and peer group influences.

- Discourses of dysfunction: young people are in need of therapy to 'treat' their behavioural problems which arise from dysfunctional families and social deprivation. These discourses draw on a medical model of clinical diagnosis and treatment

- Discourses of deviance: young people are in need of control and correction to address their drug-taking, alcohol abuse and other behaviour seen as dangerous. The discourse of 'perverted youth' focuses on adolescent sexuality, especially that of young women, 'teenage pregnancy', and homosexuality. Within discourses of deviance young people can be seen as 'sick' and as delinquent.

Within these problematising discourses, girls are perceived to need to be protected and controlled, and to be uncontrollable (for example, in their sexuality). Boys are perceived to be underachievers, to be socially disturbing, criminally inclined, prone to disabilities and illness and uncontrollable. Young people are therefore a risk to society and a cause of fear for adults.

Griffin further argues that problematisation is an active process. That is, the discourses are continually being brought into play, for example in response to "media panics" such as those associated with the James Bulger murder (Oswell, 1998). Moral panics

> articulate beliefs about belonging and not belonging, about the sanctity of territory and the fear of transgression … [and] bring boundaries into focus by accentuating the difference between the agitated guardians of mainstream values and excluded others (Sibley, 1995; p. 43).

Moral panics also influence the development and enactment of social policies. Sharon Stevens, quoted by Finn and Nabell (2001), speaking in a North American context, suggests that although labelling of some youth as pathological has been going on for some time, what is new is *"the extent to which all youth are now going into the 'pool of pathology' to be subsequently fished out by different nets"* (p. 142).

> Thus, adolescence – as the period of flexible trying on of roles and playing with identities – may be increasingly the model for 'adulthood'. But this form of subjectivity must first be cleansed of its adolescent emphasis on collectivity, political questioning, and social experimentations. The sorts of adults now needed are individualised, depoliticised, flexible subjects. The pathologisation of adolescence and its related modes of treatment may be one way of getting us from here to there" (ibid.).

6.4.3 Emergent discourses: children's rights, children and young people as 'eco-agents' and 'children as the future'

I include as emergent discourses those that challenge conceptualisations of children and young people as angels, or devils, in a state of becoming, or as social problems, menaces and victims. Those considered here are:

- discourses of rights linked with citizenship;

- discourses of children and young people as eco-agents, participating in the creation of sustainable environments

- current politically driven discourses of social inclusion and 'children as the future'.

The international discourse of human rights, and children's rights developed alongside the more local issues of empowerment and service user involvement. Specifically the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) (UNCRC) has become an important reference point, inspiration and resource for the work of TCS.

The Convention was not so much revolutionary as the product of an evolutionary process. It was *"a major landmark in a continuing process of experience-gathering and reflection over several decades - in the sphere of human rights in general as well as in regard to children's issues"* (Cantwell, 1997). Within the UK the Convention has no legal force; ratification of international conventions does not incorporate them into the legal system, although it does in some other countries, for example, Belgium (Hill and Tisdall, 1997)

In 1995 the UK government submitted its first report on implementation of the Convention. A well-publicised 'alternative' critical report from The Children's Rights Development Unit (CRDU), funded from voluntary income, triggered a debate that:

> removed any possible justification for complacency about the state of children's rights in the UK (introduction by Robert Smith and Paolo Basurto in Lansdown, 1996 p. 1).

The overseeing body of UNCRC relies on non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as TCS to supplement the reports from States on their implementation of UNCRC and to disseminate the CRC's findings (Cantwell, 1997). For example TCS was involved in the UK's reporting to CRC in 2002.
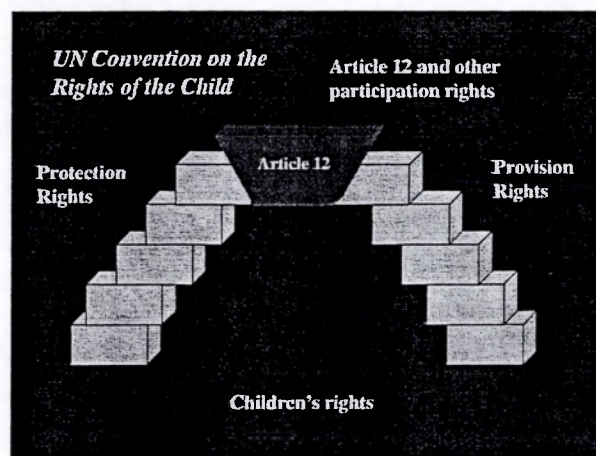
Figure 6-2: Article 12 as the keystone of the 'arch' of the UN Convention[59]

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[59] This picture was created by Bill Badham and Beth Bell of TCS, and distributed electronically in January 2001 after the TCS JO5/Children in Communities Conference {63}.

As depicted in Figure 6-3, broadly speaking the range of rights can be categorised as the three "Ps": provision, protection and participation. The general principles are outlined in four articles stating that:

- children should be protected from all forms of discrimination (Article 2);

- in all actions concerning children their best interests should be the primary consideration (Article 3);

- children have an inherent right to life, survival and development (Article 6).

The last principle is enshrined in Article 12, which is of particular relevance for my research:

> States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. (Article 12, paragraph 1: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child).[60]

The real value of UNCRC is that it produced a comprehensive discourse of children's rights in which changing perspectives on children's place in society can be enacted. The setting up of Children's Commissioners, the inclusion of looked-after children and young people in decision-making, the voice of children and young people in governmental policy can largely be claimed as owing to UNCRC. But as Freeman (2000) asks – why is there

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[60] Other related Articles concerning participation rights in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of The Child:
Article 5 – the duty of guidance *"in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child"*, by parents and others in children's exercise of their rights
Article 13, paragraph 1 - the right of freedom of expression and *"to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice"*
Article 15, paragraph 1-rights of the child to freedom of association
Article 42 - Duty of states ratifying Convention to publicise it *"to adults and children alike"*.

still a chasm between the Convention and practice? For example one third of children in UK now live in poverty (Badham, 2001).

The problem identified by Alderson (1994) was that rights are based on rationality, independence, freedom, and these are associated with adulthood, not childhood, as discussed in Section 6.4.2 above. However UNCRC has been interpreted in terms of its implications for adults' learning, for example, Lansdown wrote that.

> what is implied in the Convention and its philosophy of respect for children is that adults need to learn to work more closely with children to help them articulate their lives, to develop strategies for changes and to exercise their rights (Lansdown 2001, p. 7)

There are some risks in only practising participation as defined within UNCRC. Children's rights to participation as citizens are not addressed, neither do children have rights to representation separate from their parents (parents are considered 'good enough'). *"The lives of too many children are glossed over in the Convention"* particularly, disabled children, gay children, girl children, street children and refugee children (Freeman, 2000, see also Andrews and Freeman, 1997).

A further issue relates to my discussions of ways of knowing as codes of practice in Chapter 2. Freeman (2000) questions whether international conventions should be about codifying or advancing practices. Discussion of rights as Wringe (1996) points out tend to focus on wrongs - what <u>is</u> rather than what <u>ought to be</u>.

> Rights ... have the capacity to be elements of emancipation, but they are neither a perfect or exclusive vehicle for emancipation. [They] can only be operative as constituents of a strategy for social transformation as they become part of an emergent 'common sense' and are articulated with social practices (Hunt, 1990; p. 325).

There are three different understandings of the relationship between children and the environment embodied in The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Firstly and primarily in the UN Convention 'environment' is understood as those relationships and conditions within which children are born and grow up. Thus the child's family is *"the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members particularly children"* and,

> the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding (Preamble).

Underpinning this statement is an understanding of children both physically and psychologically, as *products* or outcomes of their environment.

Secondly the Convention refers to children's rights in respect of protection from environmental dangers, of which they are actual or potential *victims*. This echoes the concerns of an earlier United Nations Report that stated that:

> children are too often the victims of pollution – their young bodies make them far more vulnerable than adults to the poisons we spew into the air, and the toxins we sow on earth. Moreover, the problem of environmental degradation is essentially a problem for children, not for adults. They, and those still unborn, will inherit the earth we leave them. Their futures are in our hands – only we can protect it for them (United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)/United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), 1990 p. 1 quoted in Rosenbaum, 1993).

Understandings of children and young people as eco-victims and eco-products are constraining in terms of participation because children and young people are constructed as vulnerable and immature[61].

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[61] See discussion of Piagetian theory in Chapter 2.

The third type of relationship between children and their environment is found in Article 29 of UNCRC, which refers to education rights, and implicitly to children as active and potentially responsible *agents*. The education of the child should be directed to development of the child's potential, to respect for human rights, parents, cultural and national values and other "civilisations" (sic), to preparation for a responsible life, and finally to *"the development of respect for the natural environment."* (Article 29, paragraph (e)).

Two years after the adoption of the UN Convention on Children's Rights, the UK was a participant in the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. This resulted in a programme of action for sustainable development, Agenda 21. As well as concern for the quality of life, global economics, global consumption and pollution, Agenda 21 sets out expectations of people's responsibility for the environment and their involvement in decision-making about use of resources. Chapter 25 of Agenda 21 identifies young people as a special interest group. Their active participation in environment and development decision-making and in the implementation of programmes is critical to the long-term success of Agenda 21, because *"it affects their lives today and has implications for their futures"*, and

> [in] addition to their intellectual contribution and their ability to mobilize support, they bring unique perspectives that need to be taken into account (Agenda 21, Chapter 25, par. 25.2).

'Social exclusion', like rights and social justice, provides yet another set of ideas and terms in which children and young people are inscribed. In discussion of children and young people's social exclusion Ridge and Millar (2000) point out that this

> ... may mean much more than exclusion from society as conceived by adults, but also crucially exclusion from children's society. In this respect childhood needs to be seen as a social experience in itself, one that has its own norms and customs, and where the demands of participation and inclusion may be considerable, likewise the costs of exclusion (ibid. p. 162).

Harden et al. (2000) argue that in the last ten years children have become the projects not just for their parents, but for the state. This process has been accelerated if anything by the UK Labour Government's policy description of 'children as the future' and as an investment in which the future can be controlled (HM Treasury, 1999). At the same time, parenting has been made a private concern for individuals rather than communities (Birkett, 2001); the Government introduced 'curfew orders' up to the age of 15 to keep children and young people 'involved in anti-social behaviour' in their own homes and away from public places.

A problem with any description focussing on the future, as Alan Prout (1999) points out, is that it does not take account of children as children now. Neither does it resolve current responsibilities for adults. As the UNICEF comic on children's rights wrote to children *"you are the future and the mistakes adults make today, you will have to sort out in years to come"* (UNICEF, 1998). A statement with which I have great sympathy, and which I consider stands for other marginalised groups in society is that of Boulding (1995):

> Admitting children to co-participation in social thinking, dreaming and planning ... [drawing] on their own experiential knowledge of the world will help the adult social order more malleable, and more open to new and more humane developments (p. 153).

6.4.4 Summary

In this overview of some of the discourses of childhood and youth I have indicated those which are challenged by the concept of children and young people's participation, for example discourses of which children as angels or devils. I have also indicated that participation work with children and young people as social agents in their own right may be at odds with expectations of 'youth working' and 'childwork' as therapeutic, protective or controlling. In contrast to these discourses I have introduced those of

children's rights, citizenship and children as social agents. These are discussed further in Chapter 7 in Inquiry Strand 4.

Hill and Tisdall (1997) optimistically suggest that

> to extend full citizenship to children could cancel today's social construction of childhood (p. 38).

However the Committee on the Rights of the Child, reviewing the UK's progress in implementing the UNCRC in October 2002 issued a highly critical report although noting some progress, including *"greater emphasis on children's participation and consultation"* (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2002).

An issue alluded to but not discussed, and which stands behind discourses of childhood and youth, is that of the relative power of children and adults. As Finn (2001) asks:

> Where might the 'stress and storm' attributed to adolescence be located if youth were full political participants with voting rights? ... What might the middle-age and elderly scripts look like and how might their deviance be defined if adolescents controlled the power and resources to shape those images and experiences?

The concept of power threads through all the Inquiry Strands in different guises. Power is a synthesising concept in terms of the Inquiry Strands that is discussed in Chapter 8.

6.4.5   Participative research with children and young people

In Chapter 5 I described the strategies with which I approached engagements with children and young people, and what I took into account in selecting research methods. In this section I consider in more depth some of the issues in participative research with children and young people from

a theoretical perspective. In their comprehensive manual for participative research with children in a development context Boyden and Ennew (1997) use *'participation'* in the sense of knowing that one's actions are taken note of and may be acted upon – *"which is sometimes called 'empowerment"* (p 33). This is the understanding of participative research I use in this section, and which Kirby (1999) links with social justice:

> Participatory research is not just about improved research methods. It is also about achieving democratic participation and social justice for ... young people. By influencing what is researched and how their lives are represented, they participate in institutional decision making processes. The more young people become actively engaged in research, the more they personally gain, and the more they may expect - and demand - that changes come out of the findings (p. 3).

The discourses of childhood and youth outlined in the previous section show some of the contexts and influences on research with children and young people. *"Ways of seeing children affect ways of listening to children"* (Punch, 2002). Research with children as *"adults in the making"*, or as *"a different species"*, or as *"equal but still different"* with different competences leads to different research practices, and different understandings of the researcher's role (Harden et al., 2000, see also James, 1995). Neither are many children used to being listened to (O'Quigley, 2000; Williamson and Butler, 1997).

Much research about children and young people still relies on surveys and questionnaires with little reference to qualitative data, and *"the outcome is quantitative information that is divorced from its context"* ((Boyden and Ennew, 1997 p 9). Griffin (2001) makes a similar point about youth research. As Wetton and McWhirter (1998), indicate, children and young people's answers to questionnaires are *"answers to questions which* adults *have posed in* adult *language with predetermined answers that* adults *have chosen"* (p. 265). Hennessey (1999)in Walker (2001) makes the same point in relation to satisfaction questionnaires in service evaluations which do not

address aspects of the service that are relevant for children and young people.

Boyden and Ennew claim that until 1979, The International Year of the Child, there was little research into children's lives outside the welfare of their families and households. *"Childhood as a social experience in itself"* – out of school, in their neighbourhoods, with other children, is still researched rarely, in comparison for example with children's television watching behaviour (Hart et al., 2000a, see also Matthews, 1999), in which 'the child viewer' becomes the object of research[62]. As Hood et al. (1996) note, *"research has been on children, not with them or for them"*. Whereas *ideas* of childhood can be readily identified in historical records as *"fed through into the discourses of philanthropists and governments"*, there are particular difficulties in finding out about the lives of children, since available historical records are mediated through the perceptions of adults (Cunningham, 1995).

Because of the differences between adults and children, and the individuality of childhood experiences, a problem for 'scientific' research is that *"the criterion for validity is hard to derive from any source other than the child itself"* (Tiller, 1988, quoted by Walker, 2001). Mahon et al., (1996) also point to the inadequacy and unreliability of information, for example about family structure and status, in saying anything about how children experience their families and social worlds. Thus,

> Understanding children and childhood, if one starts from the social position of adulthood, requires listening attentively to their agenda, and participating with them in the research process (Hood et al., 1996 p. 119).

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[62] Hacking, I. (1999) gives the example of a world congress in 1997 on 'the child viewer of television' at which *"certain absences were conspicuous: children, producers, advertisers, products, televisions sets as objects of study"*.

However, the extent to which adults can 'participate with children and young people' in research may also constrained by the traditions and histories of the researcher (as I discuss in Chapter 3), differences in competence, perspectives, power and the contexts in which the research take place.

Harden et al. (2000) point out that 'friendship' is an inappropriate relationship between the researcher and children and young people because this disguises differences in power and perspectives. Research, as the purpose of the relationship, is also a 'context'; ironically, as Alderson and Goodey (1996) note, their informal methods of research with children with disabilities, which included child led interviews, could be criticised as unscientific and therefore unethical.

Walker (2001) makes a strong case for consulting children and young people in service evaluations: children's views as much as adults must be sought in order to improve the services and processes which affect them. However he concludes that,

> the combination of adult assumptions about children and young persons' competence in contributing to service evaluation, together with children and young persons' assumptions about adult power and authority, conspire to hinder meaningful developments to improve the situation (p. 50).

Problematic key issues for participative research and consultation with children and young people identified by Walker (see also comprehensive discussion by (Alderson, 1995;(Boyden and Ennew, 1997)) are:

- The importance of the *timing* of research – interviewing, feedback, and dissemination. Earlier in this chapter I referred to differences between research time-scales within which non-academic organisations and universities operate. In Chapter 7, 7.2, I discuss different time scales and time zones in relation to TCS practice, including time scales of

children and young people that, because of issues of their embodiment, will be different to those of adults.

> Ethically the findings should be feedback to participants, but in practice the time delay between data collection and writing up, together with access to children militate against achieving this aim (Walker, 2001 p. 53).

Because children are not able to challenge how research findings about them are represented, researchers have the responsibility of ensuring that their views are not distorted or misrepresented (Thomas and O'Kane, 1998).

James (1995) raises a different issue: *"How can children's voices ... capture a cultural context .. which children themselves gradually disown over time ?"* (p. 29). Children and young people may 'move on' more rapidly than adults. Kirby (1999) lists 17 stages in the research process, from commissioning to campaigning, and points out that time and commitment implications for young people needs to be taken into account in deciding at which stages young people should be involved.

- Issues of informed and unconstrained consent (see Appendix 4). Because the consent of adults (parents, teachers) often has to be obtained, it is important to gain their trust and confidenceas well as the consent of children and young people. Thomas and O'Kane (1998) distinguish between the *passive* agreement of caretakers, and the *active* agreement of children and young people, which involve different strategies. Much research with children and young people takes place in homes and schools, which can also constrain consent and participation:

> When we were conducting research into the rural poverty issue we worked through schools when interviewing children. Schools throw up all kinds of dilemmas when looking at how much consent children and young people have when taking part in research. We had emphasised to the headteacher that pupils should have a choice about taking part and didn't have to answer questions if they didn't want to. But, when we came to do the interviews the room we were given to use was next to the headteacher's and pupils out of habit would

stand outside of our room waiting for us to call them in (Report from TCS project CPP Wessex {W3 p 2).

- The infrequency of children and young people being involved in the choice of research topic, or research design and monitoring. Morrow and Richards (1996) argues that methods should be used that "encourage children to interpret their own data". Thomas and O'Kane (1998) suggest ways in which this could be done, for example giving children choices over the research instruments, returning to see children and using a combination of individual and group processes, and involving children and young people in young people in eliciting and selecting comments from other children.

TCS projects have initiated several research projects which were co-designed with children and young people, and in which children and young people ('young researchers') carried out the research and the data analysis (for example, 'Young People and Domestic Violence in Rotherham' (March 1999), 'Article 12 Research' (carried out in two sites January to March 2000), and 'Priority Search' into children and young people's views on their neighbourhood in Newcastle 1999, in which children participated in the data analysis). Kirby (1999) identifies several factors that help young researchers to gain improved data in research, including 'speaking a common language' and 'sharing comoon experiences', and that in researching taboo subjects it may be particularly beneficial to involve young researchers (see also Alderson, 1995). However although the research may be carried out by young people, research topics are usually driven by adult agendas, representing adults' concerns because adults control resources and funding bodies (Hill, 1997). How the research is presented may also affect whether and how it is communicated:

> Writing a report at the end of research doesn't always happen,
> sometimes it is a video or display that children and young people
> have produced. But reports are useful as they give a record of what
> was done and they are a way of getting messages out to a range of

> people. But reports can also sit on shelves and be ignored... (Report from TCS Wessex project {W3 p. 3}.

- The need for researchers to attend to the emotional impact for children and young people of their involvement in research. Mahon et al. (1996) point out that participation in some research topics may be distressing. However, participation may also be exhilarating as an experience and in increasing the possibilities for change.

Hill (1997) notes that for the adult researcher, participative research with children and young people involves specific attention to methods, ethics and skills. In the epistemology of my thesis, participative research is an epistemological practice that recognises different ways of knowing. Specifically, participative research with children and young people means valuing their knowing at least as much as adults' knowing.

This understanding was the starting condition for my research with children and young people. As Davis (1998) indicates, a reflexive approach is needed because of the impact of personal histories and traditions, and ways of thinking about childhood and youth, and research. Participative research also involves letting go of some certainties, and constant vigilance; in my research activities with children and young people I sometimes slipped into adult controlling and protection mode as I discuss in Chapter 7.

The last 'starting condition' I discuss in this chapter is the work of 'Child in the Neighbourhood Group in TCS' which led to a new area of practice for TCS, and from which developed the idea for the CASE studentship.

6.5 The 'Child in the Neighbourhood' Group

In the late 1980s a group of practitioners and managers in TCS formed to share common concerns about the relationship between children and the neighbourhoods in which they were growing up. Neighbourhoods – the local area or immediate streets where children live – provide a space, or

territory, and a place, or 'belonging', for children and young people. There was growing evidence that children were being denied access to their neighbourhood, especially in inner city areas. This was associated with increasing danger from traffic, concern about drugs and crime, physical safety, and the deterioration in the physical environment. From these discussions in TCS the group of managers and practitioners developed an area of practice termed 'The Child in the Neighbourhood' (CIN). This reflected the 'problematising discourses of childhood and youth' discussed in Section 6.4.2, but also the influence of systems thinking in recognising connections between children's behaviour, adults' perception of that behaviour and the environment.

CIN practice was recognised as having implications for the whole organisation. The director of TCS wrote, "... *as the new [CIN] practice developed, we realised that it was beginning to establish principles which affected the way in which [TCS] was organised and managed*" (Sparks, 1988).

The work of the CIN group is important for my researching, because many of the same people were involved at the same time in the 'round table' proposal for my researching, and later offered hospitality for my researching. I see my researching as emerging from the CIN group, carrying not only their ideas but also their expectations. Nick Gould noted in his research into TCS as a learning organisation, that there were a 'hierarchies of knowledge' in TCS – "*different values were attributed to commissioned research and to research indigenous to [TCS]*" (my notes of his presentation of the research {77}, see also Gould, 2000)). I wondered later whether an expectation was that my research would *legitimate* CIN group work.

6.5.1 The CIN Hypothesis

The CASE studentship came out of an unsuccessful bid for research funding to develop the work of the Children in the Neighbourhood Group. This bid concerned research into a hypothesis developed by the CIN Group of *'neighbourhood as child development system'*. Figure 6-3 is an iteration of a multiple cause diagram I drew to model the CIN hypothesis.
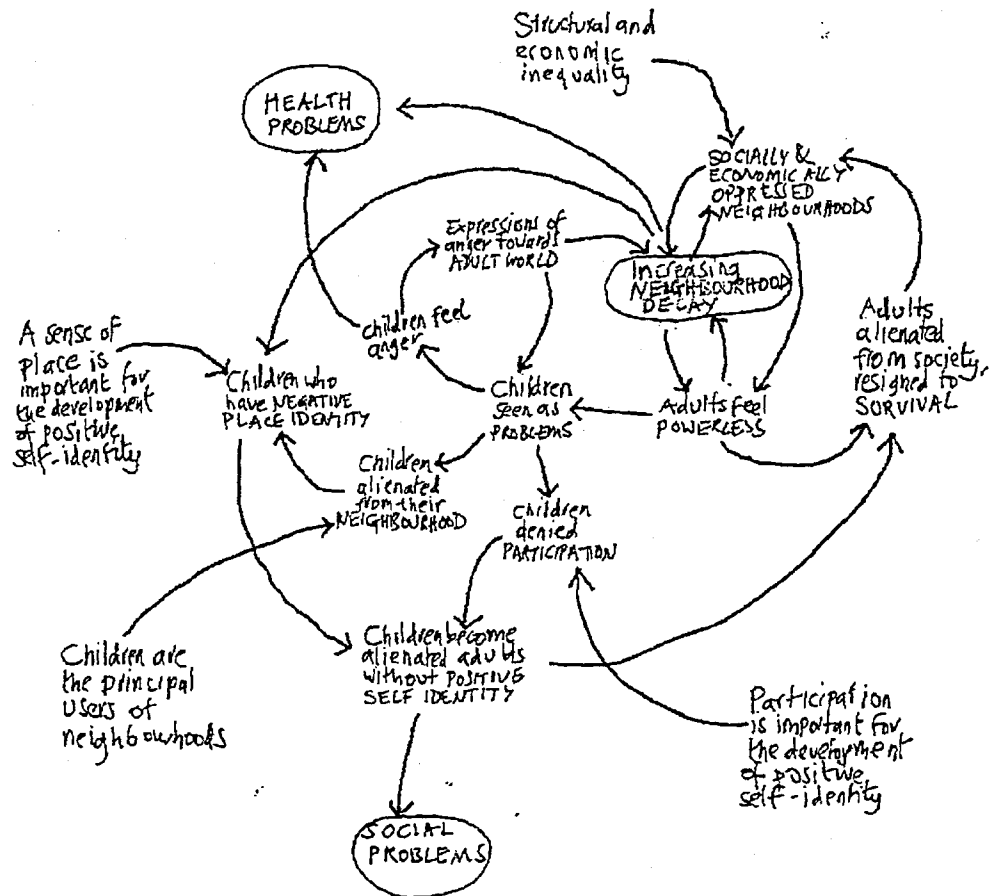
Figure 6-2: A multiple cause diagram showing the factors leading to:

1. *children becoming adults alienated from society and resigned to survival*
2. *increasing neighbourhood decay*
3. *health and societal problems arising from children being denied participation and positive place identity*

The arrows mean 'leads to'[63].

The hypothesis was that structurally and economically oppressed neighbourhoods lead to adults feeling powerless, and seeing children as problems. Children who experience adults viewing them as problems become alienated from their neighbourhood. This in turn leads to decay of the physical environment and anger towards adults. These children are then denied opportunities for participation. Thus, adults' tendency to see children as problems, and the decay of the environment, are amplified. Without opportunities for participation and positive place identity children become alienated adults, resigned to survival. 'Vicious circles' amplifying people's lack of positive self identity are linked with those amplifying the physical decay of neighbourhoods.

This hypothesis is based on the understanding that children and young people need both opportunities to participate and 'place identity' to become happy and healthy adults. Participation and place identity are not defined in the hypothesis. One member of the CIN Group wrote elsewhere of place identity that it was about being able to " *actively* [use] *the physical environment in creating and maintaining the self ... self-involvement in the physical environment, ... a choice of belonging to place in a way that sustain*[s] *... existence as a person*" (Adams, 1995; p. 165-166). A key concern in children's participation in project work conducted within the CIN Hypothesis was:

> to listen carefully to what children were saying rather than impose an adult framework to which they were invited to respond (Adams and Ingham, 1998 p. 76, see also Callaghan and Dennis, 1997; Davis and Ridge, 1997).

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[63] Phrases are taken from the CIN Group Notes. I presented this diagram at the Critical Review of my researching in June 2000. This was attended by some of those involved in the original formulation of the hypothesis. They approved the diagram.

The work of the CIN group {DJ1} was based on the understanding that " *a rich sense of place through time* (neighbourhood, community) *is an important factor in a child's development of identity and wholeness*". There were many different realities in society, shaped by different interest groups based on relative power. In working with children and young people TCS should offer *"creative ways of working with children and young people to explore, promote and develop positive change in their neighbourhoods and* influence wider systems " {DJ1 CIN Group Position Statement}.

Thus CIN work as participatory practising with children and young people involved redefining 'reality', perhaps by changing the balance of power, and *per se* was considered to bring about changes. Because young people and children were perceived to live as part of a neighbourhood, this needed to be better reflected in project support for young people. A risk identified in CIN work was that *"young people might easily become a single issue political movement"*. Community was seen as a 'system', and a system which could be used to influence other systems. Project access to the community system was often through children and young people's voices who had definite things to say about the place in which they grew, and continue to grow, and about its future {DJ 8, Newcastle}.

The difference between the CIN Hypothesis and other interpretations of children's participation, for example in terms of rights, is that the hypothesis linked together participation and a positive sense of place as a sense of belonging:

> not in the trivial sense of simply being there, nor as reduced form of raw material to be moulded, nor as the possession of the society or state ... (but) in the sense that children do in fact participate ..., and (this) constitutes a part of the social structure (Qvortrup, 1991 p. 14, quoted by Henderson, 1995 in a TCS publication).

The hypothesis also placed adults and children in the same 'world', facing the same issues. Although adults were postulated as seeing children as

problems, which triggers children's alienation, this was not presented as a necessarily adversarial relationship. The problems were the circumstances in which both adults and children live. The metaphor of participation represented in CIN Group work was *participation is belonging in neighbourhoods*.

6.6 TCS as a "social justice organisation"

In the early 1990s TCS' management team declared that rather than child care or welfare TCS was to be described as a *social justice organisation*. This was reaffirmed in the TCS Corporate Plan 1999-2002. Social justice concerns *fairness* (Bojer, 2000, Franklin, 1998).

A *social justice organisation* can be interpreted as meaning 'TCS works for social justice for others' (and) or 'TCS aims to embody social justice in its organising'. The first meaning rather than the latter is implied in the Corporate Plan and the definition on the TCS website:

> This is what we mean when we call ourselves a 'social justice' organisation... Social justice is about helping one child, but taking their experience forward so that others don't have to suffer in the same way... For example, we work with around 1,200 young runaways, but by campaigning on their behalf we aim to improve services so that all 100,000 children who run away every year will have somewhere to go for help.[64]

In the ethical principles entailed by my constructivist epistemology participatory practising as social justice could be understood as both recognising " *the validity of the [o]ther*" (Leonard, 1997 p. 164), and at the same time increasing possibilities, or 'life chances'. How TCS could embody these in its organising is an important aspect of my inquiry in Chapter 7. As with emancipatory practising there is often the dilemma that participatory practising and practising for social justice are themselves situated within disempowering and oppressive processes and structures. In

Chapter 3 I wrote of my difficulty in empowering others when I was working in what I experienced as a disempowering environment. Gomm (1993) writes of the essential paradox in the term 'empowerment':

> To empower oneself ... is a perfectly logical idea, and we don't need the word 'empowerment' to express it. To empower someone else implies something which is granted by someone more powerful to someone who is less powerful: a gift of power, made from a position of power ... Those people who say they are in the business of empowering rarely seem to be giving up their own power: they are usually giving up someone else's, and they may actually be increasing their own (p. 137).

Krippendorff (1995) points out that *"in emancipatory dialogue people are neither alone nor can they be in charge"* (p. 129). As dialogical processes, always open to being questioned, working in emancipatory ways for social justice does not fit well with the demand for quantifiable output and performance indicators in work organisations.

In 1993-4 a formalised method of planning, presenting and evaluating work was introduced throughout TCS. 'Justice Objectives' (JOs), which *"we believe all children are entitled to"*[65] were identified to guide all work done by TCS. These were revised in 1997 as:

- *a good start in life* (JO1)
- *be protected* (JO2)
- *be treated fairly* (JO3)
- *access to sufficient resources* (JO4)
- *be listened to* (JO5)

My research was primarily associated with the work done within JO5:

> All children and young people are able to participate in their neighbourhood and in the services which affect their lives; their

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[64] Information on TCS Website, February 2002: http://www.thechildrenssociety.org.uk
[65] Quotation from undated pamphlet "You can help TCS: We just wanted you to know" (reference number DA2310) available in 1996

thoughts and wishes are taken into account and they are able to make informed decisions about their lives[66] .

As I interpreted the JOs, 1 to 4 were about tackling sources of unfairness in terms of life chances for children and young people. JO5, however concerned a way of practising for all JO work. In the course of my researching, I visited and talked with practitioners and managers involved with work within other targets and JOs.

6.7 Conclusion

I set the scene for Inquiry Strand 4 by describing how the CASE-student partnership supported my research, and identifying some problematic issues, including how I constructed my role, and to what extent the partnership could support writing up the research. I also considered the role of the research agreement, which relates back to Chapter 2, the epistemology of the research, and the extent to which codes and contracts can capture practices and relationships.

In terms of the epistemology of my thesis, changes in the status of children and young people goes hand in hand with changes in beliefs and constructions of childhood. What I have sought to do in this chapter is 'pull on some threads' in locating TCS and children and young people's participation in discourses of childhood and youth, and those of rights and social justice [67]. These are still radical issues and offer powerful metaphors and ways of thinking about participation, but do not say all there is to say about participation[68]. I am left with two questions to take forward into my inquiry in Chapter 7:

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[66] Action Plans 1998, Planning Process Terminology, (TCS internal document).
[67] This is a term borrowed from my critical friend. Palazzoli (1984) describes the referral of a family for family therapy as like a loose thread of a tangled ball. If the thread is pulled gently the complex interactions which perpetuate and surround the problem situation start to be unravelled.
[68] A point made by George Smith who comments that although discussion had convinced him that "*the rights issue*" should not be "*in a separate box from participation and*

What metaphors for participation are in use in TCS as well as 'belonging in communities', rights, social inclusion and social justice?

What would it take for an organisation like TCS to embody participation in its practising and managing?

involvement", he "wouldn't go down the road of saying they should be fully in the same box." quoted in National Youth Agency (2000).

Chapter 7 Inquiry into participatory practising in TCS

Introduction

I introduced the fourth Inquiry Strand in Chapter 6 by giving an account of the starting conditions. These included the CASE partnership and how this supported my researching, a description of TCS and the work of the CIN group, and some of the discourses in which TCS' participatory work is

situated. The question for the fourth Inquiry Strand, which was revised in the conclusion of Chapter 5 is:

> How can appreciating metaphors in stories and pictures illuminate and enhance children and young people's participation and participatory practising with children and young people in an organisation working for social justice?

I identified two questions at the end of Chapter 6 to guide my inquiry. These were:

> What metaphors for participation are in use in TCS as well as 'belonging in communities', rights, social inclusion and social justice?

> What it would take for an organisation to embody participation in its practising and managing?

There are five parts to the inquiry in this chapter. These correspond to the five steps in the methodology developed in Chapter 5. Each step includes a set of activities. The first part of this inquiry is how I applied Step 1: designing, setting up and participating in conversations and activities.

The second part, Step 2 is an inquiry into TCS as the contexts of these conversations, using a grounded metaphor approach and based on data brought forth in Step 1. I explore TCS through four metaphors evoked in my experiencing. The metaphors are:

1. *Practising in TCS as looking in two directions at once*
2. *The structure of TCS as matrices struggling in hierarchies*
3. *Clotting protocols in TCS*
4. *Managing in TCS as negotiating uneasy truces*

These metaphors are heuristic devices for further inquiry, as well as ways of organising my experiences. TCS was in a period of flux and change, some of which related to external environmental factors and others to

internal issues including financial problems. In my exploration of the four metaphors I include an account of these changes and developments.

The third part, Step 3, explains how I identified and clustered the metaphors of participation brought forth in the activities and conversations. The metaphors are presented in a series of spray diagrams.

The fourth part, Step 4, is an exploration of these metaphor clusters in terms of what they reveal and conceal, and their entailments for practising.

The last part, Step 5, involves developing a framework in terms of children and young people's participation and participatory practising. This is then applied to bring forth a metaphor combination that may lead to the emergence of participation in different ways. This is the output of this inquiry.

In Chapter 5 I identified principles to be embodied in these five steps. These related to the ethical implications of the constructivist epistemology of the thesis, research with other people as *conversations*, and research as a *flow of experiencing* in terms of my learning. In my inquiry I review how I have embodied these in my research practising.

7.1 Step One: Engage with people in conversations and activities

The four activities included in Step One include:

- Design engagements with people in their settings so that they may be experienced as participative, and include invitations to describe their organisational contexts and invitations to give examples and stories about participation

- Design activities so that they may be experienced as participative, and include invitations to draw pictures

- Engage in conversations and activities with others to bring forth the contexts of conversations and stories and pictures of participation.

- Construct data: the researcher's choosing of what among the mass of experiences in researching she pays attention to.

7.1.1   Designing and engaging in research conversations

By 'research conversations' I refer to a range of differently structured visits and meetings with people connected with TCS. These were primarily, although not exclusively verbal, and oral. I distinguish research conversations and research writing as two domains of languaging (Krogh and Roos, 1995). However I include in research conversations letters and e-mails exchanged in connection with the conversation.

Table 7-1 provides an overview of the conversations, activities and 'reflexive reporting' (Chapter 5) carried out in Inquiry Strand 4. These included 15 project visits, and 25 'formally arranged conversations'.

Table 7-1: Time distribution and number of research events during the three-year period of my researching. X and Y refer to individual events. Preparatory meetings and return visits are not included.

	1998		1999		2000	
	Feb-June	*July - Dec*	*Jan-June*	*July-Dec*	*Jan-June*	*July-Dec*
Steering Group Meetings	X	X	X	X	X	X
Reports and short papers for TCS	X	X	XXX	XXX	X	X
Workshops and presentations for TCS		X		X	XX	X
Activity group meetings X Meetings with critical friend Y	XXX	X	XXX YY	XX YY	XX YY	Y
Project visits (first or one off)	X	XX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX		
Formally arranged conversations.			XXXXXX XXXXXX	XXXXXX XXXXX	XX	
Activities with children & young people or with mixed groups.			XX	XXX	XXXX	

Research conversations included:

- Unplanned informal conversations about TCS organisation, history, practice and people, for example;

- Informal and unstructured conversations with those originally involved with the research proposal about the contexts of the research ;

- All meetings with Steering Group members;

- Visits to projects to talk with groups or individuals about the work of the project and my research;

- Formally arranged meetings of 45 minutes to 2 hours with specific individuals.

There were overlaps. Almost all initial conversations were also project visits, and I took up invitations to look round projects and talk with other people. Two of the formally arranged meetings were with TCS people who were members of the Steering Group.

I designed the 'formally arranged conversations' and project visits in terms of the questions I would ask and their purpose in consultation with the CASE Studentship Partnership Activity Group (see Chapter 6, Section 6.2). I identified individuals, projects and groups for conversations through snowballing of personal contacts, starting with steering group members. Most of these 'formally arranged conversations' were with people who were engaged in practice, or the management of practice designed to promote children and young people's participation. Some people were also selected for pragmatic reasons, to do with convenience of location, and for political reasons, to do with legitimising my research. All except two of these conversations took place in TCS offices and projects. Most of these conversations were with single individuals. However three of the conversations were with project teams, when I was invited to meet the whole team and six included 'serial' conversations with different team members. A few took place over two or three meetings.

A paragraph about the research was included in TCS Management team's monthly briefing in April 1999, circulated throughout TCS. This was intended to legitimise my researching and connect it with work being done in TCS and prepare people to be contacted by me. I sent out introductory letters requesting a meeting. The letters included an information sheet about the research project, my background, the current research questions,

assurance of confidentiality, an outline of my plans for my researching, and membership of the Steering Group. To allow for flexibility and 'space' I had four questions:

'Is there anything you'd like to ask about my research?'

'Tell me about your role (or what goes on here)'

'Tell me how you came to work for TCS (or how the project started)'

'Tell me about one or two experiences you've had of which you would say, that's what (participation) is about'

On project visits the last question usually was not necessary but was covered in discussion of 'what goes on'.

7.1.2   Designing and engaging in research activities

The *research activities* are listed in Table 7- 2 and differentiated from *research conversations* in the terms described in Chapter 5. The *research activities* include two in which I was invited as an observer-participant and had no part in the design. Those that I instigated were co-designed with people from TCS. Activities involving children and young people were co-researched with TCS people from projects. However I had responsibility for the detailed planning and for conducting these activities.

For different groups these activities were planned around the use of pictures, drawings, picture cut outs, photographs, role-play, and small group work. The sessions were planned for between one and four hours, depending on the purpose and the participants. All included several activities which were selected in terms of appropriateness (e.g. age of participants) and available resources. In the activities in which people drew

pictures I used the same phrase, *"Tell me what's going on [in your picture]?"* as in the project visits.

In the activity sessions with young people and adults I invited them in groups of two or three to draw a 'rich picture' of the same specific participatory experience, after explaining and showing them an example (see Appendix 5, pictures 23 to 29).

I chose to use 'rich pictures' because they were less likely to evoke judgements of drawing ability. After the pictures were drawn for all sessions there was a 'gallery' showing, and people talked about their pictures, and what it was like drawing them, and others asked questions. Because of the number of children in the first school session, the co-researchers asked each child about their drawing and wrote what they said on the back, and I did brief 'vox pop' taped questions and answers with the drawers (Appendix 5, pictures 1 to 16). However in the second session with a smaller number of children, after the drawers had talked about their picture everyone could ask questions.

Conversations and research activities are distinguished in terms discussed in Chapter 5.

Table 7-2: A chronological list of research activities with a brief description of their contents. Numbers in square brackets refer to the list data sources in Appendix 2[69].

Date	Activities
Sept. 1998	Design and facilitation of two workshops at a TCS JO5 conference for those working in JO5. Participants were invited to consider *"the sort of things that [an organisation or team] could do to be fully participative"* and *"the sorts of things that people could do to fully participate in [an organisation or team]* within the metaphor of the pirate ship in J.M. Barry's story of Peter Pan {09}
May 1999	Design and facilitation and report back on a workshop with a group of young people inappropriately housed, (part of TCS project work) using cut out pictures and group discussion. {24}
June 1999	Observation/participation: A day mountain biking with a group of young people and project workers. This was planned to mark the end of 'caution with support' group for young people, work designed to prevent further involvement in criminal activity, and I was invited by the project leader with the agreement of the young people. {25}
Nov – Dec 1999	Observation: Two meetings of a church-based group of children, young people and adults working together to on researching children and young people's views of their neighbourhood. When I observed the meetings the work was in the closing stages of planning presentation of the results. By invitation {52}
Nov - Jan. 2000	Design and co-research, and report back of two school based sessions with children, using drawing, photos and role play, co-researched with a TCS project worker {58, 66}
Feb 2000	Design and facilitation of a session in a TCS conference centre with young people and adults from a TCS project about their experience of working together, using rich pictures, followed by a short discussion with the young people. {72}
March 2000	Design and facilitation of the evaluation of project –based young people's research into awareness in their local communities of Article 12 of the UNCRC. This included drawing rich pictures of the process of the research, group evaluation as a dialectic, and individual interviews with the young people to identify their own learning. {73}
April 2000	Presentation of the research to small group of TCS managers using rich pictures, as part of a day about organisational learning {76}
April 2000	Facilitation, within the metaphor of 'a voyage of discovery', of evaluation of work by young people and adults in TCS on TCS policy development in a TCS conference centre (commissioned by TCS) including making artefacts, small group tasks and discussion, large group plenary, winding up exercises. {78}

7.1.2.1   Drawing up a Statement of Ethics

I was required under the terms of the Research Agreement with TCS to provide a Statement of Ethics in respect of research with children and

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[69] Unpublished documents are similarly referred to in square brackets with the number prefixed by 'D'. They are listed in Appendix 3.

young people. The Open University did not itself require such a statement, nor have a body set up specifically to approve research and neither did TCS. (See (Morrow and Richards, 1996) for a discussion of the limitations in available guidelines). During the period of my researching, however, guidance in the form of a collection of papers "Ethical research within the Children's Society: Ethical Practice" (The Children's Society, 1999) was distributed within TCS. This included my Statement and a short paper on how I drew it up.

My purpose was to produce a statement that applied to adults as much as children and young people, but that also took account of differences between adults and children. In the process of drawing it up I wrote a short paper about how I wished to involve children in my researching. Two points were then amended following two iterations. I then included this version with information about my research that I sent out prior to engagements. An annotated version of the statement is included in Appendix 4. My statement was subsequently adapted for use in TCS project work.

7.1.2.2   Constraints in engaging

There were sectors of TCS I did not reach, for example those working in finance and administration and fund-raising. This was partly a consequence of the 'baggage' in terms of pre-judgements and susceptibilities that I brought with me, and partly due to methods I used, but mainly due to the need to focus and maintain boundaries around my researching.

Setting up the sessions with children and young people took months to arrange, and I experienced this as limiting the activities I could set up in m researching. On visits to projects I inquired about the possibility of meeting children and young people they were working with. I was particularly interested in how children and young people saw themselves doing something participatively with adults. All the arrangements to meet

children and young people in my researching were mediated by adults. These were people in TCS projects and school. I did not need to obtain parental consent because of the age of the young people and the agreement of the school in loco parentis, but this could have been a further level of mediation (see (Callaghan and Dennis, 1997)). The minimum time it took for me to arrange a session with young people was almost 3 months and two preparatory visits.

Being invited to meet children and young people is being trusted. This is especially the case in meeting children and young people who the mediating adults know as vulnerable, as compared with children and young people that they know, for example, as 'school children'. For sessions {24} and to an extent {72} I was 'prepared' by the project workers with respect to the young people's vulnerabilities, and arrangements made for support in case they became distressed in my session with them. All except two of the invitations to be engaged with and engage children and young people in my researching arose from those practitioners and projects who were involved in setting up the research. These were located in the north of England so there were additional time and logistical problems.

When L (TCS project worker) and I arrived for the first school activity (Table 7-1, {59}), we found we were expected to work with a whole class of 24 seven year olds, the class teacher and a parent helper for the whole afternoon. This was despite my having spoken and written to the teacher about a 'focus group' of ten to 12 children. Rather than a carefully structured series of activities, this was chaotic noisy mix of drawing and photographing, bracketed by a short sitting down session in which L and I introduced ourselves, and a short sitting down session when the children talked about what it was like doing something with other people, concluded by a loud end-up exercise. At the end of this session I arranged the second 'focus group' directly with the class teacher, however this was cancelled the

day before the date we had agreed, and another could not be arranged until the next term.

After consultation with my co-researchers from TCS, in the sessions with primary school children I used the expression 'children and adults doing something together and having a good time' in inviting the children to draw pictures, rather than 'participation'. I recognise this as an issue for the subsequent juxtaposing of metaphors and have clustered these separately. In the conversations and activities I purposefully did not define what I thought 'participation' was. If asked for a definition I gave brief examples that I introduced by 'some people said this, others said that'.

All the young people, and almost all the people I talked to in TCS were white; this reflected the reality of the demography of staff in TCS. I recognise this as a constraint. Metaphors, as I discussed in Chapter 4, are chosen in relation to people's culture, which includes their ethnicity. Thus I am limited in terms of the distinctions I can invite TCS to consider in their practising. I claim that a development of the methodology of my thesis could be used to help draw out distinctions in the use and interpretation of metaphors by people of different ethnicity, and that this could help learning in TCS. Although the two school sessions included black children I did not consider differences of race and ethnicity in terms of their pictures and discussion in the activities. I noted in the first school session my discomfort shared by my co-researcher when in response to a question from a boy about why he had not received a handout on (Catholic) confirmation sessions given to most of the class, the teacher reminded him that he was Moslem {58/notes}.

7.1.2.3 Engaging and co-inquiry

In the conversations I reflected back the metaphors I heard in the stories:

We try to have an opportunity for young people from projects to come together at weekend of our (TCS management team) conference. One of my commitments is to go to these weekends. It's often a struggle. Basically it's a fun weekend [with] ... some serious bits for people to work on. First of all this is about experiencing we're in a project in a big organisation ... But what strikes me at these meetings is the care and commitment that young people have for other young people. They will always have lots of ideas about the other things TCS have been doing. There's always a session where they are able to have some direct debate with me ...About two years ago they wanted to talk to me about the fact that it was really tough when you come out of care. What can we do to help? I asked them if they were in my shoes what would they do to help young people. One of things is that they would set up a fund... Helping people with going on courses, education etc. So I got about £10,000 a year. Clearly from letters I get back from young people it does make a difference. That was one thing we did...

(Marion: about your examples ... you talked about participation as being in someone else's shoes?)

What I understand is that much of the work in projects do use this, for example, if you were mayor, or head of the local authority, what would you do? {17/tape}

But I also reviewed transcripts for 'taken for granted' metaphors.

A characteristic of the telling of stories in my researching, and the research activities was the enthusiasm with which people entered into these. People became involved in their accounts of their involvement and this excited me too. There was, in the terms of my epistemology, a flow of emotioning in these conversations, sometimes helped by sharing pictures.

R: *(R and I are looking at a picture or cartoon they are offering as a metaphor of participation.)* "...the picture is that participation is first about grown ups recognising that the young people aren't sitting around on park benches not doing anything. They are wanting to go somewhere. They have huge energy, huge creativity, whether they are trying to blow it up with some dynamite or trying to scale it, or ramming it. So ... participation for me or any part of the organisation is actually coming alongside and working with them. Not to say, "Oh don't be so stupid, there's nothing on the other side worth bothering about or don't be so silly you are far too young to climb that wall". But to understand how you are meant to be inspired by it

- their energy, why they see that wall there and why they want to get through it, or climb it or whatever. I suppose participation is about me participating and enabling them rather than somehow me saying, no, no don't try and break that wall, why don't you come over and have a consultation about something. Perhaps you say to the young person if you place your dynamite in this loose brick it will have more impact.

Me: Are you handing them the dynamite?   *(indicating stick of dynamite depicted in the cartoon)*

R: Well, I think we are. I think that that's about participation being about recognising the forces of opposition that they face. For me participation that is in that picture is not (that) there are winners all ways for everybody, but that there are structural things that young people's participation is about changing. And unless there are actually shifts in power, either that wall breaks or that person gets out of that wall or whatever then participation is not just meaningless, it's damaging. And it's reactionary and it's controlling and it's a means of retaining control by adults. And it's all the more powerful and dangerous because it's racked up in this package that we're then always be able to sell to them. So yes it probably does include metaphorically giving them dynamite, at least giving them effective tools to impact on change." {28/tape}.

In the second school session with ten year 6 children, I introduced the session with some discussion about my 'statement of ethics' and the protection of people's confidentiality, and invited them to choose a name for them to be referred to in the session. Each of them, and my fellow researcher from TCS, had a name badge with different colour slips on which they could write their 'real' name and their 'research name'. I had planned that at the end of the session they could put back their 'real' name as part of the de-roling and returning-to-school process, and this part went well. We also had a big sheet of paper on the table on which everyone wrote their names to act as a map during the session. This proved unexpectedly important. Two of the girls, to whom their teacher had given responsibility for leading the way and finding our room, chose to keep their real names as their research name. Two best friends decided they wanted the same name (Louise) as their research names, although these were spelled differently. It was revealed in the name choosing that one of the boys had introduced himself to us with a pseudonym (Peter), but he also

chose a different name as his research name (Windy). Two of the children based their research names on famous people (Bart Simpson and Demi Moore), and which were relatively easy to remember. The remaining two boys changed their 'research name' two or three times during the session, each time using a different name slip. One started as 'George Clooney', then became 'Uncle Randy' and ended up as 'The Undertaker'. Everyone decorated all their name slips (which they also took away with them), and for some this took up quite a lot of the session. This seemed to me to be an example of *'power to'* in the sense that when people have some control over their environment this generates energy and enthusiasm.

Drawing pictures in particular provides meaningful ways for the researcher to value other participants. I could say 'Great picture!' and that had more meaning for me than thanking people for their time and interest.

Conversations about the pictures were also co-inquiries:

> Excerpt from discussion about 'Bart Simpson's' picture (Appendix 5, picture 18)[70]
> Bart Simpson
>
> Bart: I drew this picture because me and my dad like playing on the games a lot
> Carol: What are they playing?
> Bart Goldeneye
> Marion: Has anybody got any questions?
> The Undertaker: What's that there?
> Bart: An aerial
> Windy: Where's the tele?
> Bart: It's there (pointing)...
> The Undertaker: What you're playing, how much does it cost?
> (Everyone joining in with discussion about different games, where to get them, how much they cost)
> The Undertaker: Is it in an arcade? What is it, 50 inch?
> Louisa: How many times a day do you play on the play station?
> Bart: About three
> Laura: So you are literally glued to the tele.

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[70] This tape was particularly difficult to transcribe – everyone was talking at once and there was a lot of laughter.

> Anna: And about how long?
> Bart: About half an hour (group discussion about how long it takes to play games)
> Demi: Is that why you've got yellow hair?

In Chapter 5.3 I discussed how research activities were *richer* conversations than conversations that were verbal exchanges. In practice the activities were also much messier and risky. Things often did not go as planned, I didn't know what would happen and the different roles I refer to in Chapter 3 became blurred.

After the drawing activities in the second school session I invited the children to do a role play of a situation in which everyone wanted to do something different and to see if they could work together. Half the children did the role play while the other half took some Polaroid photos (one picture each) so we could talk about what was going on afterwards. Then the two groups swapped roles. Deciding on a situation took some time, but looking at Demi Lee's picture of her family watching Brookside on the TV (Appendix 5, picture 22) I suggested that the situation was a family all wanting to use the same room to do different things. We moved some furniture about, and the first group of children got into roles (wanting to watch a TV programme, watch a video, listen to some music, do homework etc.). The role plays were excellent, and evidently enjoyable for the children from their feedback at the end of the session. But I became very anxious as the role-played arguments escalated and people got up from their chairs. In the second role play I intervened when people started pretend raising their fists at each other. Reneau (2000) describes how watching his young son 'Z' playing "*excavates ... an archaeology of discipline that is buried in myself*", and that Z

> confronts me with the choice of mindlessly passing it on ... or following his lead, discovering ... the difference between navigating by judgement and reacting by reflex (ibid. p. 130)

In reflecting on my intervention with my co-researcher from TCS afterwards I recognised that I had acted not so much because I thought someone would actually get hurt, but because I thought I ought to do something – as parent, perhaps as teacher, but as adult acting within the *objectifying* discourses of childhood I outline in Chapter 6.

Research interviews can be sites of power struggles and resistances. As I discuss in Chapter 3, my struggles were often with my own tendency to publicly forelock tug and privately be critical with senior managers and to be awed by, and wish to emulate in their skills many of the practitioners working with children and young people. Of the resistance strategies available, only one person eventually refused an interview (would not reschedule one that she had cancelled).

Ribbens refers to Carol Smart discussing *"how she felt doubly oppressed in interviews with powerful men – first as a woman she was not supposed to interrupt, and second as an interviewer her role was supposed to be passive"* (Ribbens, 1989). While not experiencing any of the research conversations as oppressive in this way, I did interpret two particular related sets of actions within conversations as resistance strategies. The first was directed at controlling the time available. In my request letter I stated that the meeting would take between an hour and an hour and a half. Occasionally I would have to wait for the person I was scheduled to meet to be available, up to a maximum of twenty minutes. On two occasions conversations were only about forty minutes because of a late start and the minimum of an hour allowed. This not only limited the information that could be exchanged, but it changed the dialogic shape of the meeting from conversations around three or four topics, to short questions and longer answers. Short meetings also enabled people to stay "on message", as I came to think of it, especially concerning their job descriptions and organisational role, and limited the opportunities for me to ask exploratory questions, and invite consideration of ideas from other conversations.

7.1.3 Data constructing, referencing and use in the inquiry

Data is 'constructed' by the researcher rather than found in the environment. As I indicated in Chapter 1 and discussed in Chapter 6, in my engagements with people I was concerned with understandings of participation from people working in TCS and children and young people, and with 'what goes on' in TCS as an organisation- the background context. How I constructed the data for understandings of participation is more transparent than how I constructed the data for 'what goes on in TCS'. This is partly because the examples and stories were already identified within research conversations and activities as about participation.

The other sources of data for understandings of participation were my observations of participation as this had been identified by the participants, and my own participatory experiences in the inquiry. I identified in Chapter 3 that I was predisposed to listen to stories of people's experiencing rather than to statistical data, and that from my histories and traditions I was more likely to attend with a positive ear to tales of practice than tales of management. A further issue is that the everyday tends to be missed in one-off conversations. People tend to talk of what doesn't work rather than what does, the exception rather than the rule. I needed to take these points into account when making sense of TCS.

7.1.3.1 Referring to people in the inquiry

I have striven to respect the confidentiality of all those involved in my researching, and to refer to the data in such a way that individual people cannot be identified. This has included changing the initials of people's names and sometimes their gender in referring to them, and omitting details such as their specific role or place of work. In some cases this has involved changing words for a quotation to make sense and I show where I have done this. I decided to do this even where people have given express permission

for me to quote them. I could not as a matter of good practice offer children or young people the choice of not being anonymous, even though some wished me to use their names. I did not want to put the pictures and stories of 'children' alongside those of individually identified adults. The point of closure of my reflection on this was that no-one would be identified.

7.1.3.2   Data omitted in the inquiry

As McClintock (1996) notes, fieldwork is about relationship building. This is enhanced by being interested in technical issues and practices and people generally. Much specific data about how TCS projects are funded, how many people work there, relationships in offices, histories of pieces of work, relationships with other agencies are omitted in the thesis.

In the conversations I asked how people came to work for TCS, or be connected with it. This helped me to connect with other participants in the conversations, to establish things in common. I also saw the question as embodying my respect for the other's experiences, and taking the conversation forward or "*activating narrative production*" (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995). It was a useful bridge between what sometimes became impersonal, third-person accounts of roles and processes, especially in short conversations, and my request for examples of participation from people's own experiences. Other than expressing appreciation for people sharing personal information with me, I did not 'probe' the responses to the question about how they came to work for TCS because this was not part of a systematic inquiry, and I do not include the responses as data in my thesis.

Although I and other people took photographs in some research activities, I do not include any photographs of people as data, or for illustration in the thesis for reasons of confidentiality.

7.1.4   Summary

In this application of Step1 I described how I engaged with people in conversations to bring forth examples and pictures of participation, and to bring forth understandings of TCS. The next step in the methodology is to build a picture of TCS as the contexts of the inquiry. This is important for making sense of the metaphors embedded in the stories and pictures as they have entailments for practising, and for judging metaphors.

7.2 Step 2: Explore the contexts of conversations

The activity in Step 2 is:

Explore the contexts of conversations through grounded metaphors, attending to the researcher's own predispositions.

Among the metaphors of TCS evoked in the inquiry, the ones I have chosen to structure my exploration of TCS as the background contexts are:

1. *Practising in TCS as looking in two directions at once*
2. *The structure of TCS as matrices struggling in hierarchies*
3. *Clotting processes in TCS*
4. *Managing in TCS as negotiating uneasy truces*

I have chosen these because, in terms of my appreciation of TCS, they best represent my learning as this developed during the inquiry. The metaphors also represent my appreciation of the effects of the ripples of changes as they flowed through TCS. After a series of conversations and my attempts to make sense of TCS and the organisational changes my overwhelming feeling was *"I am confused about what is happening here"*. My initial response was to think that maybe I needed to find out more. In a conversation with a TCS manager in June 1999, she said that rather than my sense of confusion arising from lack of knowledge or understanding, I might be *"picking up* [the]*confusion... and feelings of a lot of disillusion and uncertainty"* in TCS {26/notes}. In choosing the metaphors I wanted to express the confusions and uncertainties as I felt them in my research.

The topics of these metaphors also relate to the way in which I engaged with TCS.

Firstly I engaged predominantly with practitioners and their managers in Social Work Division, which was only one of five divisions in TCS. Secondly my engagement with TCS was episodic and responsive rather than systematic. That is, I did not set out to conduct an organisational analysis in terms of different aspects and dimensions of TCS, but to try to see it through other people's experiencing as they engaged with me in conversation about TCS. So the topics of the grounded metaphors reflect what was significant for them at the time of our conversation.

Thirdly, my conversations with many people started off with me asking what was their role. This was a good question to initiate discussion. However people tend to think of roles in terms of positions in structures. My learning about TCS from these conversations would have been richer if I had planned a second question for all conversations about a different aspect of TCS, for example, what TCS is good at, or what people would like to see changed.

7.2.1 Practising in TCS as looking in two directions at once

'Looking in two directions at once' is the effect of working in local communities and being involved in situated practice, and at the same time working in an organisation which has a centrally managed bureaucratic structure sited some distance away. By choosing this metaphor I imply that this leads to *tension*. For practitioners and project leaders taking account of directives from HQ, and even communicating with projects in other geographical regions, at the same time as being involved with the community in which the project is situated involves a 'Janus-faced' perspective. As I discuss below there are significant differences between how work in projects gets done, and the organisation is managed. I think that this poses problems for *alignment* in TCS, that is how people see what they do in TCS as part of TCS as a whole. *"Through alignment, we become*

part of something big because we do what it takes to play our part"(Wenger, 1998; p. 178).

In the first meeting of the CASE partnership after I started the studentship research, the discussion focussed on changes indicating a power shift - *"there's never been anything like this before"* - from social work to marketing in the divisional structure of TCS. The logo of TCS had been changed with some resistance from fundraising staff (Kennedy, 1998). The marketing and communications division had proposed 'national initiatives', promotable goals for TCS interventions and a 'repositioning strategy' for the organisation (ibid.). These initiatives (later called 'programmes') were to be *"flagship pieces of work carried out nationally, to which projects contributed from their local community based work"*.

My struggle to understand how these national programmes related to justice objectives which drew on project work was shared by others. The work of some existing projects was not included in any of the National Programmes. A glossary of TCS 'planning process terminology' {D1} distributed later in 1998 defined the differences as:

> Justice Objectives – describe the kind of world we want for children and young people...
>
> Targets – identify the more specific areas of the justice objectives that we have decided to address
>
> National Programmes – describe how we plan to achieve a target

Rather than being grounded in practice the justice objectives were now framed as aspirational. National Programmes which also have national outcomes, were designed to be *"the measurable impacts of our work"* (ibid.). *"...Other essential programmes and innovative work ... [provided] the seed-bed from which national programmes could grow"* (Kennedy, 1998).

The implementation of national programmes led to an expansion of practice, initially funded from TCS's reserves and a shift to a national focus. However I also saw national programmes and justice objectives as two different and competing discourses. This was how I made sense of the changes in TCS being talked of as *"the subordination of practice to image setting"* {01/notes}, as *"practice initiated and directed by the marketing division"*, and as raising the question *"whether children or funding bodies were the clients?"*(ibid.)

One of the replies to my question 'what distinguishes a manager from a practitioner in TCS?' was that managers have permanent contracts of employment {05/notes}. This was said jokingly, but it reflected the reality of project work. All project work was time limited. The usual maximum period of funding was three years. Action planning - the organisation-wide process of evaluation and planning of TCS work - worked to a similar planning and evaluation cycle. National Programmes however each have a different time period of operation, another point of differentiation. The 'Child in the Neighbourhood' programme, as a number of projects and other associated organisational activities working towards the same 'target', was planned for a ten-year period.

Project workers were employed for particular projects, and if funding was not agreed for the extension of existing projects or new ones, their contract of employment was not renewed or they were made redundant. So project work could be seen as overlapping cycles of designing, enacting and evaluating pieces of work, each cycle determined within a linear time scale of about three years. However, in terms of national TCS, developing new strategies, moving forward, time is linear.

In practice there was more leeway than this model suggests, as for example in the degree of overlap between finishing one project and starting another. However for some people the experience of working for TCS was stop-start

– being made redundant and then re-employed for another piece of work a short time later {80/notes}. I visited LP, a project worker based in a TCS project in the north of England three times during my research because I was especially interested in children's participation in relation to their spirituality, and LP had set up and was working with a group of young people on this. My first visit was in July 1999 and I called in again in October. During the second visit both LP and I were in tears because she had heard that project had come to the end of funding and would probably close and staff would be made redundant. The situation was still uncertain when we met again at the JO5 conference in November. This was confirmed by other TCS people in February - despite the innovative work of the project around children's spirituality being praised in the January 2000 issue of the Society Briefing, and I wrote to LP with best wishes for the future. She wrote back saying she was being made redundant and looking for other work, but faxed me in April 2000 to say she had just been interviewed for, and offered a senior practitioner post in the project. Some external funding had been found for the work and it was continuing for another year. When I called in to see her in new offices six months later, part of her new role was to find further funding. Although there had not been a gap between her contracts of employment with TCS it had been a close call and a colleague had had a gap of six weeks between redundancy and reemployment in the TCS project {37/tape; 53/tape; 82/notes}.

This is a pattern repeated in other voluntary organisations and statistics for staff turnover in TCS were similar to other national children's charities {65/tape}.

There is a difference between 'project work time' and that of much of the rest of the organisation. Project work often takes place in the evenings, at weekends, 'out of working hours'. A few people work from their homes. In my experience, some project offices are sometimes only contactable through an answer phone service. This is a different pattern of working

from, for example, HQ. Some people, especially programme managers spend several days away from their offices, travelling the country.

Some projects were located over three hundred miles from London. As I started visiting them I was struck by the heterogeneity of project life. The buildings blended in with the surroundings, people often spoke with local accents. The work of the projects was with the local community, local councils and other locally based agencies. I visited, for example:

- Myrthyr Tydfil – crowded open plan office on upper floor of a tower block in town centre, with graffiti scrawled on the battered lift.

- Manchester – newly designed and decorated, well-equipped smart office with small rooms on the edge of the town centre

- Twyford – the upper floor of a two storey chalet-style building, lower floor occupied by the local planning department, next to fields with cows

There was an 'ad hocness' about these offices as belonging to TCS. The work of projects is characterised by the physical geography of the areas in which they are situated, for example the difference between those working in rural areas and in urban settings. There are also differences in the 'sector' environment of the different regions, that is those other organisations concerned with the same issues for children and young people and how they operate. Some projects received funding from the Single Regeneration Budget, government resources for targeted inner city programmes. Others were still wholly funded by TCS; these included many of the JO5 projects. Some were financed through complex arrangements with other agencies. A social work manager I talked with in the west of England was managing twenty-three contracts with other agencies in respect of project work {39/tape}.

One of the effects of this diffusion and dispersal was that some people in TCS spent a lot of time travelling especially those working in sparsely populated areas and those at project leader level and above in social work division. This puts pressure on time and money. Arranging research conversations was sometimes difficult. Steering Group meetings had to be booked months ahead.

Several practitioners I met had never visited headquarters (HQ) Edward Rudolf House in London, where most of the staff from the other divisions were located. Staff induction programmes were located in the regions. HQ is a 1960s brick building of three stories. During the period of my researching there was pressure on space. Many of the offices there were open plan which I found initially disconcerting in conversations. The noise from the air conditioning intruded into my audiotapes. There was no canteen in the building and little shared space. In our conversation about this GB said of HQ that *"people come in and sit at their desks and then they go home"*{36/tape}.

Projects were 'pulled' towards their local networks and communities, and 'pulled' towards the management and support functions at HQ. There was tension and resistance. TCS was described to me as being too centralised in several conversations. Reports on implementing the Corporate Plan for 1999-2003 recognised the principle of subsidiarity, and that frontline staff,

> who are directly involved with children and young people, supporters, volunteers and the public ... must have the delegated authority to get on with the jobs for which they are accountable and the rest of TCS must be organised to support and complement their work (Society Briefing – Special Edition November 1999)

These considerations – the distances in terms of geography and function, the desire for subsidiarity, and the search for a form of single identity – pointed to the need for effective ways of people communicating and engaging with each other in different ways across different organisational

structures. In the terms which I use in Chapter 2 section this concerns opportunities for conversations in which people exchange messages and invitations and negotiate meanings.

Practitioners sometimes did not know of work similar to their own going on in other projects. Gould (2000) indicated from his research with TCS projects that people identified a diverse range of activities that helped them integrate learning within their professional activity. Unproblematic activities were *"supervision provided through the chain of line management"* and *"joint working* [within the team or with workers from other agencies]*"* (ibid.). However *"inter-team meetings were cited as something which were difficult to prioritise but were important opportunities for sharing experience"* (ibid.).

People specifically mentioned the unselective flood of written and electronic material they received {05/notes; 19/notes; 32/notes; 55/tape}. During 1998-2000 TCS' internal intranet was replaced in a rolling programme connecting sites to the internet. However there were delays and many projects were still not connected by mid 2000, including some of the most distant from HQ. E-mail addresses were not included in the internal telephone directory and these appeared only available by word of mouth.

Some of the issues of the exchange of messages in TCS were brought out in the evaluation of a piece of TCS work involving children and adults that I facilitated (see Chapter 5 section 5.4.3). One of the problems identified in the evaluation was the time delays in taking the work forward. This was connected with duplications and omissions in communicating.

A final distinction in terms of TCS as a national organisation and community based projects working with children and young people relates to different 'time zones' of practising. Being human is to continually change; this is not just something that characterises children and young

people. But for children and young people the process of change is deeply felt, rapid and embodied in ways evident to observers. The long drawn out process of policy development discussed above was emphasised in the rich pictures people drew of their experiences (see Appendix 5, pictures 24-27). To authentically and meaningfully involve children and young people, the organisation needs to work in their time scales (Gabriel, 1998a, James, 1993), and with attention to aspects of time that matter to children and young people (Christensen, 2002). A telling comment made at the TCS JO5 Conference on 30 September and 1 October 1998 was that this called for a high degree of altruism from children, and that the Society should endeavour to work within children's time scales, not just those of adults. The children and young people who participate in developing project work will most probably not be the ones who directly benefit from it.

However "...*helping one child*" and "*taking their experience forward so that others don't have to suffer in the same way*" (The Children's Society, 2001) involve different time scales. This does not only apply to children. For me the metaphor points to tensions between the locally situated practice of projects and the central management of TCS, amplified by geographical distance, different ways of working and communication processes that in many instances increased practitioners' perceptions of being at the margins. In March 2000 I met up again with three project leaders in the North East of England two years after my first meeting with them. In our conversation about changes in TCS from their perspective they agreed that the most significant was that project workers, and particularly new members of staff, saw themselves as being employed by the project rather than TCS {74a}. In the terms in which I introduced this section, this is a shift in *alignment* and points to increased fragmentation in TCS.

7.2.2 The structure of TCS as matrices struggling in hierarchies

This metaphor is an organising metaphor for the impact of the hierarchical structure on practising as management layers were inserted and removed and new roles introduced.

1998-1999 was a year of optimistic expansion in TCS work, generated through the National Programmes. A new post of Operations Director was created, responsible for the day to day work of TCS, freeing the CEO for strategic decision-making. A new tier of 'social work managers' was inserted in the social work division, to be responsible for the day to day management of regional projects, so that regional heads of social work could focus on strategic direction in the region. There were then eight tiers of management accountability between project workers and the governing body, the Council. This was both a geographical and a hierarchical distance - the people holding these posts in each tier might be located in five different offices in different parts of England and Wales.

A description I was given of the structure of TCS was that it was a combination of matrices and bureaucracy {4/notes}. However in my initial appreciation of TCS, interdivisional work was isolated and exceptional. People who worked in projects in the Social Work division had little contact with staff in other divisions, and people from other divisions rarely visited social work projects. I was forming a picture of the organisation as a 'Greek temple' (Handy, 1985), the divisions representing the pillars and 'senior management' as the entablature (Figure 7-2). Thus I particularly took account of the development of the roles of programme managers. These appeared to offer connections between the 'pillars'.
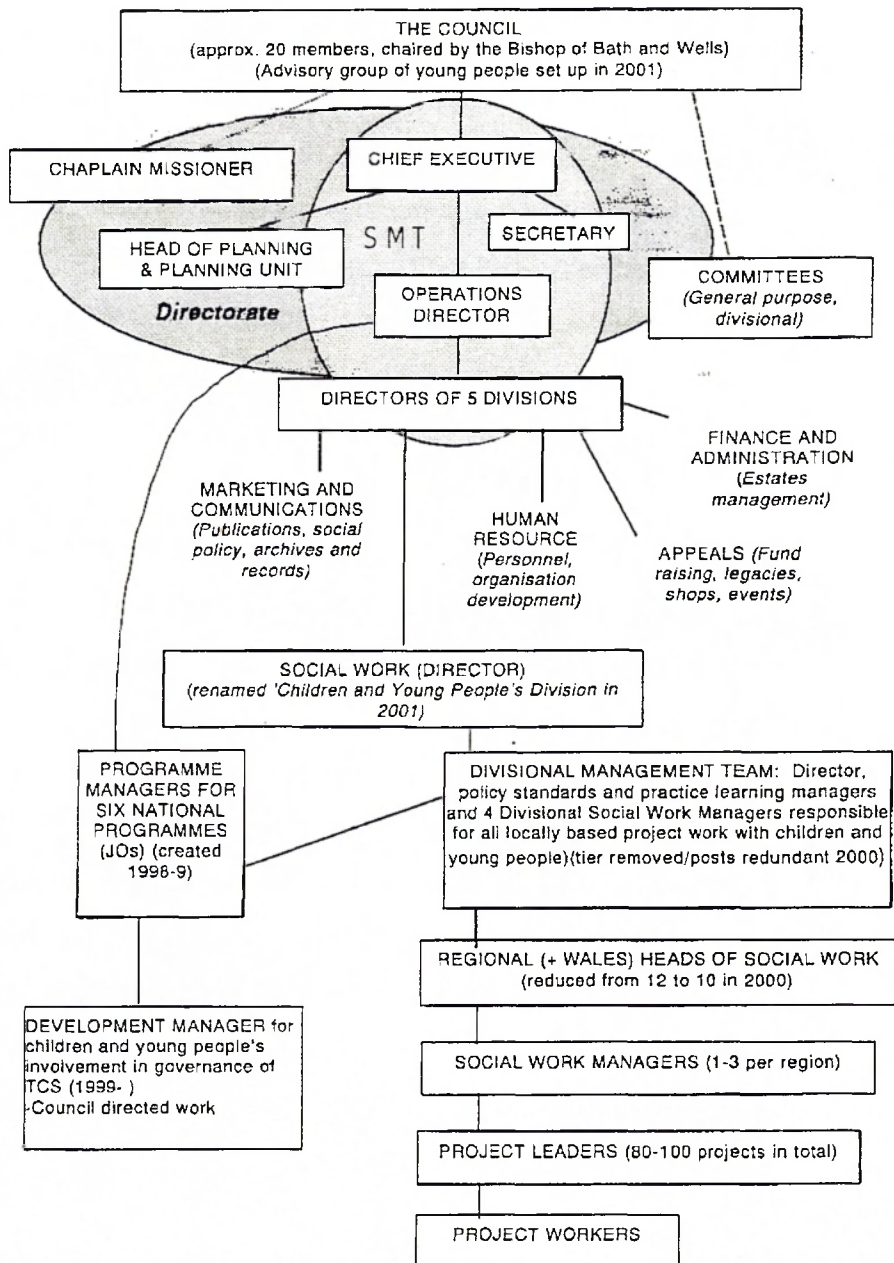
Figure 7-1: A map of the hierarchical structure of the Social Work Division in TCS drawn to make sense of changes 1998-2000. SMT is the Society Management Team. The lines imply accountability. Thus programme managers were accountable to the Operations Director and supervised by the Social Work Divisional Management team.

Figure 7-1 shows that The Chief Executive is responsible to the Council, "the point of final responsibility" of about twenty trustees chaired by a bishop of The Church of England. The two circles identify the two key

management groups: Society Management Team[71], and The Directorate. (The Planning Unit was created 1999-2000). The work was distributed in 5 functional divisions, each headed by a director. The Social Work Division, the largest, employing about 800 people, was structured geographically into regions with the exception of Programme Managers posts which had a national responsibility for the development and co-ordination of justice objective work and national programmes. In 2000 the number of social work regions was reduced from 12 to 10 with other staffing reductions and the excision of the divisional management tier.

In 1998-99 Programme Managers were appointed to develop the work in each of the six national Programmes. The posts were not highly specified, so that there was room for people to 'grow' their roles in practice. Programme Managers were interdivisional in their work and operated within the discourse of social justice objectives, and national programmes. Because many had recent experience of working with children and young people they had credibility with those working in projects. They also had legitimacy in the management levels of the organisation because of their voice in corporate policy. There was potential in their roles for the interpretations of the different realities in the organisation. I could also see that they were weaving networks through the divisional structure that might be used by others too.

One of the responsibilities of the Children in Communities/JO5 programme manager was to develop a process for involving children and young people in the governance of TCS:

> Target 2: To demonstrate how children and young people can be effectively involved within TCS's own planning and decision making structures. (J05 targets for 1999-2000, internal document).

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[71] Usually referred to in practice as the 'Senior Management Team'

Responsibility for implementing this rested with the Council, and SMT. The Programme Manager secured funding for a two-year secondment within TCS for a 'development manager' to manage the starting of the process to involve children and young people in the governance of TCS[72]. Some projects were already involving young people in the recruitment and interviewing of project staff. Their experiences were used to develop a process in which children and young people, with people from social work division and The Council, drew up a job specification, and then interviewed applicants for the post of Development Manager (Children and young people participation initiative). In November 1999, in the week the new manager started the job, she and I presented a workshop at a conference for staff working in JO5.

Inquiring into how children and young people could be involved in the governance of TCS illuminated some aspects of my structure map. Firstly the map shows the governance structure of TCS as a traditional linear model (Billis, 1989). This is *"a chain which begins with a vision of need and ends with a provision of a service which responds to that need via a group of staff"* (Harris, 1996). Alternatives outlined by Harris are 'membership' and 'entrepreneurial' models. The membership model is one in which *"the chain forms a closed circle"* – those who govern are also the recipients of the service – ultimately a 'self-help' group. In the entrepreneurial model those who govern are also those who deliver the service, the staff. Within Harris's typology including children and young people in the governance of TCS in a meaningful rather than a tokenistic way involves a change of model, if not to that of membership, then to a form of democratic governance. Wilson (1996) further argues the structure model chosen *"sets the internal context of the organisation to a mode of governance which in turn sets 'the rules of the game' for all operations"* (p. 91).

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[72] Subsequently made a permanent post.

This partly explains why the principle of subsidiarity appears to have been so difficult to put into practice in TCS, or why it seems to work differently for different things. For example one project leader might be satisfied with his degree of control over the budget, whereas a regional manager might be frustrated by not having the power to sanction the wording of an advertisement for staff {29/tape; 26/notes}.

Contexts, patterns in ways of acting, as Wilson points out, have history. They are often developed over long time periods. So *"managing change in the internal context means unravelling a great deal of organisational history"* (ibid.).

Secondly, I recognise an echelon structure in my map. Echelon structures are authority structures in which an implicit partnership agreement exists among those on a superordinate level so that anyone on the higher level has authority in relation to anyone on the lower level (Goffman, 1966). Echelon structures are efficient and protective, but they are not emancipatory. Two parent families can be considered an echelon structure:

> Mother and father are supposed to agree on how things should be done. The children need not be consulted... Because the parents are jointly responsible for the family's direction, each feels pledged to support the other. Should there be no prior agreement on a particular issue, each parent is expected to respect any position taken by the other ...In a well-functioning two-parent household, parents can count on each other (Weiss, 1979; p. 72-73).

I claim that this model as still influential in how good two-parent parenting is seen. This is to some extent supported by one of the 'stories of participation' gained in my researching. This is about the involvement of children in deciding where the family should go on holiday – an example of participation, not everyday family life {23/notes}.

In contrast, Weiss gives many examples of one parent families sharing responsibilities between parent and children, children being consulted about

family decisions, and having a voice, in a way not open to them in the echelon structure of a two parent family. Parents give greater weight to children's wishes and the children *"as befits junior partners"* are less deferential towards their parents. In my social work with one-parent families I found this was often the case, but usually not valued elsewhere, and frequently overwhelmed by problems of day to day survival.

I connect this discussion with a question I raised in the previous chapter, 'how do I make sense of an organisation?' I wrote elsewhere of *"the dilemma that emancipatory practice itself is situated within taken-for granted structures and systems"* (Helme, 1999). In my construing of being parented, and parenting, and working at school and working in organisations, hierarchies and echelons seem so deeply embedded that I cannot see what an alternative structure would be. But I was concerned where children and young people could be located in and not just added on to an organisation with these structures.

In my metaphor of the *structure of TCS as matrices struggling in hierarchies* I sought to make sense of why it was that people in different Divisions in TCS seemed to be working for different organisations, with different objectives. I also saw the posts of programme managers challenging the existing structures. These issues are developed further in the next section.

7.2.3   Clotting protocols in TCS

This metaphor was useful for connecting my understandings of how protocols in TCS sometimes inhibited flows of communicating and *processes* in TCS. I saw the possibility of programme managers operating outside these codes and protocols and wanted to explore this further. Wenger's definition of reification - *"the process of giving form to our experience by producing objects that congeal this experience into*

'thingness'"- was helpful in seeing what was different about the role of programme managers in TCS (Wenger, 1998 p. 58). By reifying experiences *"we create points of focus around which the negotiation of meaning becomes organised"* (ibid). Reification is an indispensable and powerful process. But as Wenger argues reification can ossify practices, and fail to capture the richness of lived experience. As I discuss below the *climate* in which people interact can also be 'clotting' in inhibiting *moving on* in TCS. In Berger and Luckman's (1967) phrase, *"'There we go again' ... becomes 'This is how these things are done'"* (p. 76-77).

A way of understanding protocols is that they are boundary objects between communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). 'Brokering', as I discussed in Chapter 6 is what people do when they connect communities of practice:

> 1) *Boundary objects* - artefacts, documents, terms, concepts and other forms of reification around which communities of practice organise their interconnections.

> 2) *brokering*- connections provided by people who can introduce elements of one practice into another (ibid. p. 105)

Programme managers provided brokering between project work and the other divisions and management structures in TCS. Brokering is a practice 'on the edge' and brokers' contributions lie in *"being neither in nor out"*.

The concept of 'the child' is a boundary object for TCS. There are many different perspectives, or constructions, of 'the child' or 'the young person' in the contexts of TCS practising and managing. Arguably these need to be co-ordinated in some way for TCS to be seen as working for children and young people's participation or as a social justice organisation. I explore this issue as an 'uneasy truce' in section 4.3.4 below. Action Plans were key boundary objects that connected what goes on in TCS projects with the rest of the world. They encoded information about project work in a way that it could be dealt with by other constituencies in TCS, for example those

working on practice standards (another set of boundary objects) or measuring and evaluating cost-benefits.

Boundary objects reify processes. TCS has a history of drawing up rules and regulations, for example the innovation of introducing regulations in children's homes in the early twentieth century (The Children's Society, 1995). The book of personnel procedures was described as enormous {55/notes; 65/notes}. The 1998 Action Plans covered almost 200 typed pages. The 'Blue Book' of policy and practice which includes for example the time that TVs have to be switched off in TCS residential care facilities, featured as villain in rich pictures ({72}Appendix 5, pictures 23 and 24 – *"the dreaded blue book!"*). Some descriptions of project work are often terse and formulaic (see example in Appendix 6.1) Raban (2000) describes the imperatives of eighteenth century discovery as *"shoot! classify! name! describe!"* (sic p.26). There is some analogous process of fixing in the process of writing down.

In Wenger's terms,

> the problem of communication is one of both participation and reification, to be dealt with in terms of opportunities for the negotiation of meaning within and among communities of practice (ibid. p. 108)

In August 1999, after a seven month planning process, SMT presented a corporate plan for the next three years, "a manifesto for TCS and hence, for all those involved with TCS". This is an inspiring document. It reaffirms the commitment to social justice, and shared purpose with The Church of England. It puts forward powerful metaphors; *"we need to operate with children and young people at the centre"*. The plan was presented and discussed in regional workshop conversations for all staff. These generated activities including an audit of social justice work in TCS. However within four months TCS *"the car was driven into a brick wall"*, as a manager later

described it {76/notes}. A financial deficit was revealed in late 1999. The restructuring of the organisation that followed was also a contraction.

The JO5 conference in November 1999 was, for me a time of shared sadness. The future of some projects was uncertain. It was anticipated that all the social work managers, who had only been in post for about a year might be made redundant. The six members of the social work divisional management team, one of whom was a member of the CASE Partnership Steering Group, were given notice of redundancy. In the next year the eleven social work regions in England were reduced to nine, and there were similar contractions for staff in the Fundraising Division.

Even when redundancy notices were issued, however, they were not acted on for many months. The difficulty in TCS of making hard decisions was noted in three research conversations. A way of understanding the focus on process and difficulty in making hard decisions is the idea of a 'hegemony of niceness'[73]. A hegemony *is "an all pervasive, discursively mediated and consensual superstructure"* (Krippendorff, 1996, Gramsci, 1971). A hegemony is so pervasive it is almost never distinguished as such. It is perceived as 'normality'. It is, in the metaphor I used in introducing this section 'a climate'. *Niceness* is about telling people what you think will make them feel good about themselves, not confronting them and denying any vulnerability (Argyris, 1990).

In a *hegemony of niceness* doing things right (morally) takes priority over doing the right thing (effectively)(Ackoff and Pourdehnad, 2001). Thus it makes sense to focus on processes like consultation exercises rather than to act on decisions which will involve upsetting people. Consultation takes place in too short a time scale to be effective, or people suspect that the

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[73] This term was coined by Tony Brauer in his doctoral research at the OU, and referred to by one of my OU research supervisors during a Steering Group meeting. I have developed the term for my own use. I do not claim this hegemony as an existing social condition but as an explanatory idea or metaphor.

decisions have been made already. The problem with this is that people will get upset anyway. As LP said to me after TCS 'hit the brick wall' and they were waiting to hear if the project would be closed, any decision would be better than none. The limbo of being the holder of a redundant post but still employed was tellingly expressed as feeling like being *"on death row"* {69/notes}. In a telephone conversation with MN on 16 December 1999, he spoke to me of *"the remoteness of managers"*, and that *"surely* [there would be] *some vision, guidance, comfort, from the reaction [of senior managers] to the reaction [of staff] to the effect of changes now"*.

There are two further understandings I connected with the *hegemony of niceness*. The first was WF's comment about interdivisional working, that *"the problem is, you can't beat anyone else up"*, that is in the context of our conversation that there was no way of ensuring the cooperation of people from other divisions, and this was frustrating. WJ corroborated this – *"we're a bit wet that way"*, and added that some TCS managers did not recognise the authority they had. The second understanding was SN's identification of a *"double bind"* in the relationship between projects and TCS as an organisation:

> projects are doing very good work but they feel disempowered by the organisation ... the organisation [TCS] doesn't stop any one from doing anything very much although people act as if they think it does.

This was reflected in Gould's TCS research with TCS projects, in which he reflected that people were positive about experimentation but did not feel that TCS supported them, for example in learning from mistakes – even when they had had experience of support when things had not worked {77/notes}.

A *hegemony of niceness* promotes 'undiscussibles' in Argyris and Schön's (1991) term, which are:

> defensive routines, which may be defined as an policy or practice
> that prevents organisations (and their agents) from experiencing
> embarassment or threat and at the same time prevents them from
> identifying and reducing the causes of embarassment or threat ...
> Defensive routines, at any level, are anti-learning (p. 94).

The standardisation of practice through roles and procedures is a characteristic of bureaucratic organisations. I understood that in part, the emphasis on protocols and the use of boundary objects was the result of a strategic decision to centralise management, following concerns about organisational coherence in the 1980s. People commented to me that this had gone too far, which is represented in my metaphor of *clotting processes*.

7.2.4   Managing in TCS as negotiating uneasy truces

I see truces as temporary 'agreements to differ', spaces within which people can get on with working and living together in organisations and in families, and recognising their differences. Truces do not resolve differences, but in the process of getting on with life, differences become seen as more or less important. Relationships can be seen as a continual process of renegotiations of agreements to differ, tacit and explicit. By 'uneasy truces' I mean those referring to differences which are embedded in the context, structure and processes and which are restated through practice. Truces are a way of managing the consequences of ambiguities.

In my metaphor of managing in TCS as negotiating uneasy truces I see it as a network of ambiguous alliances and tensions. Some of the ambiguities derive from the structure of voluntary agencies and the truces derive from the embodiment of TCS in its contexts and in its internal processes. Within this grounded metaphor I explore divisions in TCS, between TCS and The Church of England, and between some perceptions of the relationship between TCS and children and young people.

One of the uneasy truces related to my perception of the relationships between the different divisions in TCS as an alliance of different countries. This drew on the divisional structure of TCS, (Figure 7-1) and an appreciation of the different discourses in TCS that emerged in my researching conversations.
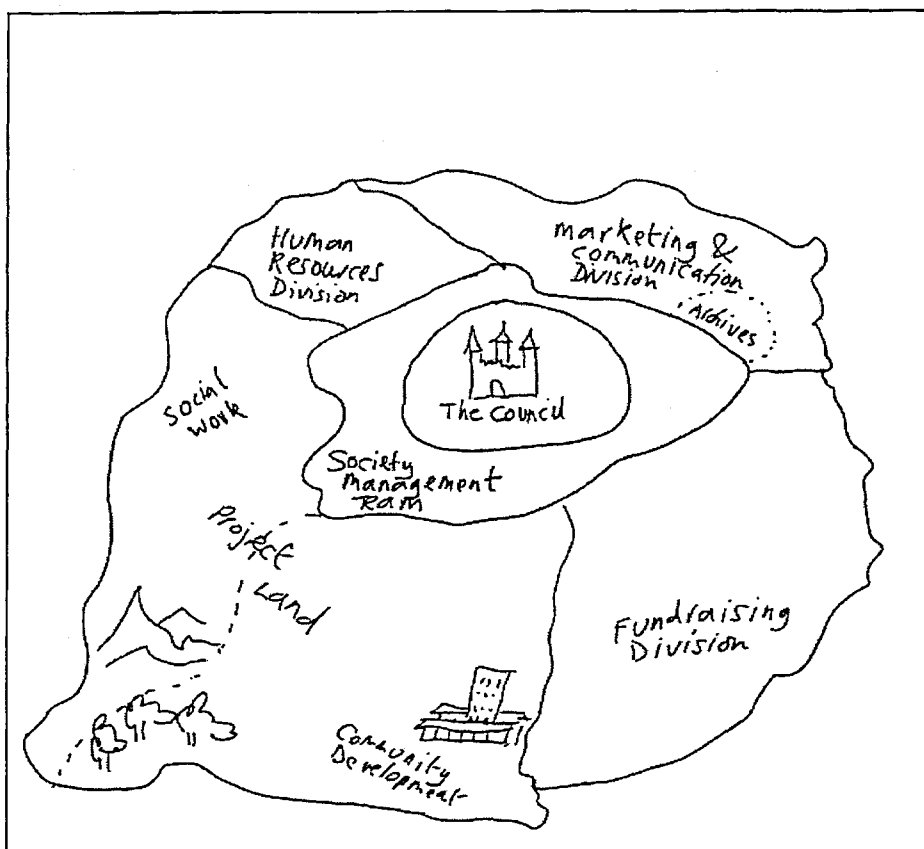
Figure 7-2: My picture of TCS divisions as an alliance of different countries

In Figure 7-2 'Project Land' is the social work division, and I thought of that as including both social work and community work. In Chapter 1 I referred to a conversation in which a project leader said they were not social workers. I understand the name of the division to have been reconsidered on several occasions, twice during the period of the researching[74]. In the social work division I talked to people who had

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[74] The name was eventually changed in 2001 to 'Children and Young Person's Division'.

worked in social work, teaching, youth work, community work, community development, youth and community work, and probation. In making a distinction between these I draw on my own practice experience. This has perhaps sensitised me more to the differences between them than the ways in which they are similar. However I claim that there is a difference between, for example, how those with social work training characterise their work, and those who describe their work as community development.

I put HR division adjacent to 'projectland' because approximately two thirds of employees work in the social work division. Fundraising division shares with social work division some of 'the pull to local'; fundraising staff also work in the regions and share office accommodation. My map of TCS as countries reminded an observer of the Balkans. Balkanisation is the process of dividing land into mutually hostile territories, and the metaphor recalled for me Mintzberg's use of the term as one of the "basic pulls on the organisation". He claims that this is a particular characteristic of the divisionalised form of organisations, in which each division has its own structure (Mintzberg and Quinn, 1991). Central headquarters maintains "a semblance of control" over the divisions in this structure by some direct supervision, but mainly through performance control systems. Mintzberg also identifies a pull to standardise, which he particularly associates with 'machine bureaucracies' in which jobs are highly specialised.

Regardless of the form of the organisation, there is a need for some standardisation of output and process in TCS, especially in how the work is presented outside the organisation. This is, for example, in order to distinguish TCS from other voluntary sector organisations (Barnados, NCH Action for Children, NSPCC, Save the Children Fund and smaller NGOs), competing for funding from the same purses, wallets, budgets and profit surpluses.

Drawing on the metaphor of TCS as 'different countries', at a joint workshop at a TCS conference, the development manager, CD, and I invited workshop participants to *"envisage TCS as ... lands with different sorts of terrain and cultures and imagine journeys for children and young people's participation in TCS"*. CD described in the conference report that:

> We particularly looked at the barriers in trying to cross the borders and the incentives to doing so. The group actually 'drew' a map, which featured "attitude land" and "treat land". We also likened our journey to a game of snakes and ladders and used ladders to climb walls representing barriers. We identified that we needed "fortress-type" buildings to ask for help along the way during our journey particularly given that we had identified 'sentries' trying to block our entry to some lands. We also felt it was a steep climb to the top and we needed more than one "treat land".
>
> The group also contemplated 'blowing up' the continent using dynamite so that we could re-build the lands!!! {DJ6}

During the period of the researching, I observed some conflict about how the work of projects was presented in written form. On two occasions I was given copies of reports on project work, kept within the project because of distrust about how they might be presented by the M&C Division. In another conversation the concern was that M&C would reject the cover of the report which had been designed by the children who took part in the work, for the official TCS design. I saw that this in turn was frustrating for those in M&C division, but also had implications for learning within TCS, if reports were kept within projects.

The second 'uneasy truce' concerns the relationship between TCS and the Church of England. This relationship is acknowledged to be ambiguous {41/tape}. Options of becoming a secular organisation or a 'Christ-centred' organisation, or continuing the ambiguous relationship, were considered in 1999. The Corporate Plan reaffirmed the relationship with The Church of England.

During the period of my research there were two widely publicised differences between The Church of England, as represented by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and TCS. In May 1998, TCS presented eleven proposals to the Government, in which as reported in The Daily Mail:

> TCS preferred to define a family as 'an emotionally supportive network of adults and children, some of whom live together or have lived together ... Marriage had nothing to do with the reality of family life and no one should discriminate by stating parents should be married, it added. ... The views of the charity put it on a collision course with its president, the Archbishop of Canterbury. (Daily Mail May 5 1998, by-line Steve Doughty.)

The second difference, which had greater implications for TCS, was its decision to include lesbian and gay parents as prospective adoptive and foster parents in July 1999. This was in line with the organisation's Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Statement (Appendix 1.2), and a move considered long overdue by many {23/notes}. This was reported as

> a move that has angered the Archbishop of Canterbury... A spokesman for the Church of England said 'As far as adoption and fostering is concerned, the Church would still teach that a married relationship provides the best environment within which to bring up children' (The Times July 28 1999 p. 1)

It was covered as a front page item by several national newspaper. Many TCS staff first heard of the change from the day's newspapers. It led to particular problems for those involved in fundraising, and reportedly a large decrease in donations.

A further issue of difference concerns the Church of England as representing traditional views of the right of parents to punish their children – 'to teach them right from wrong'. The right of parents to physically chastise their children by 'smacking' has been hotly debated in the UK, in connection with several high profile court cases. Early in 1999 over 150 voluntary organisations, including Barnardo's, Save the Children, and the NSPCC – but not TCS or NCH Action for Children, agreed a campaign for

the physical punishment of children to be made illegal. This was named the 'Children are Unbeatable' campaign. The United Reform Church also signed up to the campaign, but not the Church of England.

> Traditional family groups reacted with fury, while Ministers sat firmly on the fence. (Observer Sunday January 10, 1999)

I am aware that staff in TCS have worked for TCS to join the campaign, and consider any other position as inimical for social justice for children[75].

Paton identifies issues like these as 'values issues', defined as

> an organisational conflict which reflects emergent or unresolved tensions concerning the implications of a commitment central to the identity or mission of an organisation, or between two such commitments, where such tensions are perceived to have a clear ethical dimension (Paton, 1996 p. 31).

Thus TCS has commitments to the ethical codes of practice of social work, which are represented in the EOPS/AD Statement (Appendix 1.2), and to the Christian values, as represented by the teachings of the Church of England.

Paton claims that values issues have features which differentiate them from other types of organisational conflict:

i. the participants may consider the other party as morally questionable, rather than foolish or mistaken.

ii. values issues are often of greater significance to the organisation, about 'what we stand for' – , 'practising what we preach'. Thus, the gay and lesbian carers issue led to questioning TCS's relationship with the Church of England.

iii. values issues are of personal significance. Staff who were themselves gay and lesbian considered the ban on gay and lesbian carers – and the delay in changing the policy, a personal issue, that affected their loyalty to the organisation.

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[75] Although TCS was reported to me as having agreed to support the campaign in early 2001, it was not listed among supporting organisations in 2002.

iv.   there is limited scope for compromise – which is why I chose the term 'truce' to discuss these issues.

Paton argues that these aspects explain why values issues often involve *"passionate arguments"*, and *"outrage and bitterness"* (ibid. p. 33), and that they are prone to escalation. This accounts for the tone of some newspaper articles, and my sense of the relief and pleasure with which some people have talked about the changes. The public profile of these values issues between TCS and the Church poses challenges for managers. This is also positive in the terms in which I discussed ethics in Chapter 6 since it keeps issues of ethics and values an open debate in the organisation.

My third uneasy truce concerns the relationship between children and young people and TCS. I relate this to my experience of the invisibility of children in TCS, and different models of the relationship. Few children and young people visited HQ, but I was also initially surprised not to see any children and young people on the project visits. This was an experience shared with someone new to the organisation who had also been to several projects {41/tape}.

There were many reasons for this. JO5 projects in particular worked with children and young people in their <u>communities</u>. Some places had specific days for meetings, visitors and administrative work when the staff are not busy working with children and young people. Often there was a need to protect the confidentiality of the children, young people and their carers. There were very recent and pressing concerns about the access of paedophiles to vulnerable children and young people. Nevertheless I found it surprising because of the contrast with my experience working as a social worker. As a social work lecturer visiting social work students on placement in a wide range of organisations, I often waited for meetings in rooms full of children and families. In some TCS projects there was tantalising evidence that children and young people used the buildings – pictures, play equipment, brightly painted rooms.

There is a paradox in working for TCS without seeing any children. I could see that this might be perceived as 'preciousness' by projects, and a degree of mystique about what it was they were doing. I could understand that other parts of the organisation might lay claim to the work of projects, and the contact with children and young people. Thus I could appreciate the importance of the involvement of children and young people in the governance of TCS, and also that this was risky.

Figure 7-3 is a sketch of three different relationships between children and young people and TCS from my notes of a conversation with a TCS manager {48/notes/tape}.
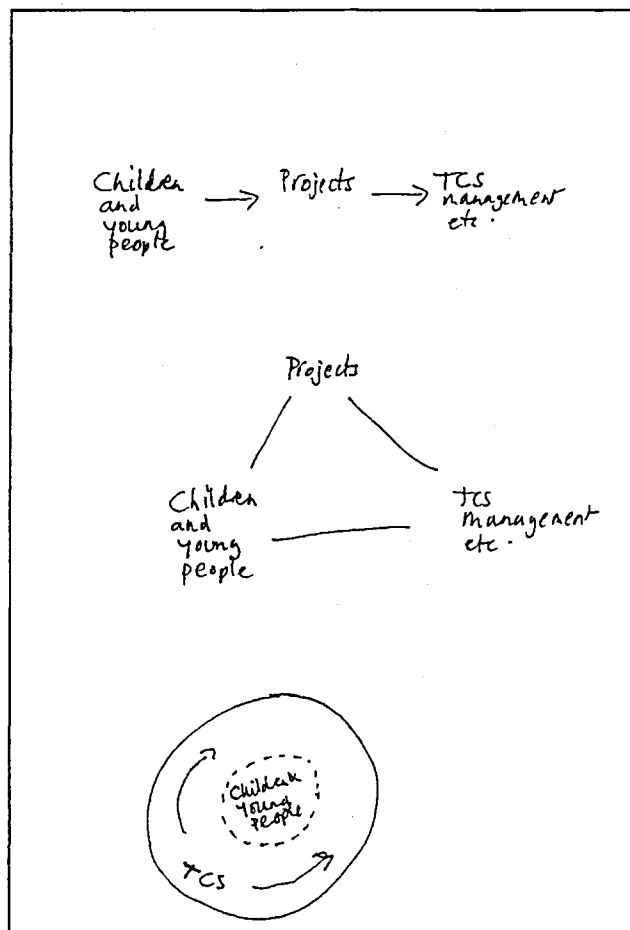
Figure 7-3: Sketches from field notes of three ways of seeing the relationship between TCS and children and young people .

In the first model projects are the intermediaries between children and young people and TCS. Children and young people only know TCS

through projects, and this usually means project workers (see Gabriel, 1998).

The second model is a three-way relationship in which children and young people are also seen to be engaging with TCS, not just with projects. This certainly may apply to some children and young people, for example those involved in planning the governance work. But I do not think that the structures or the culture in the organisation promoted this model during the period of the researching.

The third model is taken from the Corporate Plan, which states that children are at the centre of our organisation.
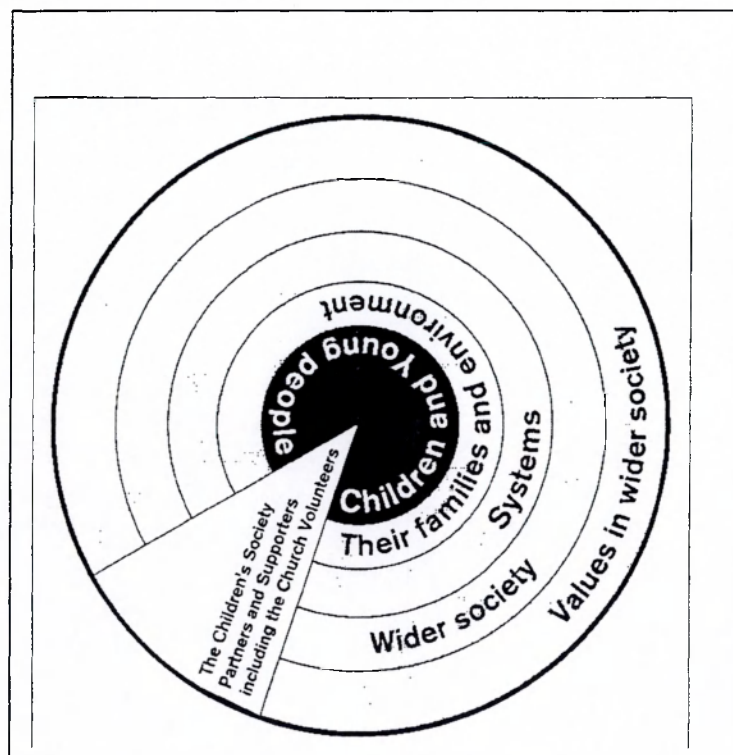
Figure 7-4:"Becoming child-centred", illustration of "the interrelationships between children and young people, TCS and wider society", The Corporate Plan 1999-2002, TCS August 1999 p. 11 [D7].

These models are taken forward to Step 4 in this Inquiry.

7.2.5   Summary

My exploration of TCS through 'grounded metaphors' surfaced some issues for an inquiry into understandings of participation in TCS. Firstly, *looking in two directions at once* is an uncomfortable experience. I might expect that practitioners would not consider TCS to embody participation. But the role of project managers as 'brokers of practice' offered possibilities for mediating this two-way gaze. A focus on protocols was part of TCS traditions, but these, and the *hegemony of niceness* inhibited practice developments and learning. I considered that *managing uneasy truces,* actually kept debate about important issues alive in TCS. Finally, during my research there were at least three different models for the relationship between children and young people and TCS, which related to different perspectives in TCS.

7.3 Step 3:Identify metaphors of participation and cluster them

The activities in Step 3 include:

a) Identify the metaphors of participation in the examples, stories and pictures, that is turn these into metaphors of the form '(participation) is ... (a journey, a battle, a safe place ...). Present some of the stories and pictures to others for the metaphors they perceive.

b) Group the metaphors in clusters in terms of perceived similarities and dissimilarities, being aware of own predispositions and obtaining feedback from others involved in the inquiry as to their perceptions. Feedback to research participants the main metaphors that appear to researcher and invite comments. Review these comments, and recluster the metaphors.

7.3.1   Uses of and responses to the term *participation*

I did not attend to all uses of the term *participation* encountered in my inquiry. As Williams points out 'participation' is a *"warmly persuasive word"'* which *"never seems to be given any positive opposing or distinguishing term"* (Williams, 1976 p. 76, quoted by Nelson and Wright, 1995). However, as with any injunction or exhortation, "Participate!" like "Enjoy!" can be experienced as bullying or usurping personal autonomy.

Metaphors can add value (Lissack, 1999). There are multiple understandings of participation, some of which draw on the 'warmth' without implying any more than being in the same place at the same time. For example, the TCS Human Resources Director wrote to TCS staff in a letter accompanying a questionnaire for a review of the rewards structure and development of a new strategy[76]:

> I would emphasis that participating in this survey will not lead to any direct consequence for your personal salary {D10}.

A document from TCS Society Management Team sent out to all staff refers to their recognition of *"the need for participative leadership"* and thus their commitment to *"moving forward through mutual understanding of the issues and developing appropriate processes"* {D7e}. Participative leadership, like 'servant leadership' (Greenleaf, 1970), referred to in {55/tape}, and 'leading from behind' is arguably an oxymoron. This was reflected in some stories which specifically spoke of participation as incompatible with, or being outside hierarchical organisational roles and responsibilities {31/tape; 45/tape}.

Commenting on how the participation of service users was seen in the 1970s and 1980s, Richardson (1983) wrote

> not only was it seen as a key means of ensuring fair processes and
> creating better decisions, but the act of participating would also
> bring about fulfilment and understanding to those involved.
> Participation like motherhood, was clearly A Good Thing (p. 4-5)

Cornwall and Gaventa (2001) identify shifts in participation in a
development context which could also be seen to apply to practice for
children and young people's participation. These are:

- From beneficiary to citizen – as citizenship becomes part of the National
  Curriculum for education.

- Project to policy – as the focus of practice turns from working with
  individual children to changing 'systems' (see Chapter 6 for TCS as a
  'social justice organisation').

- Consultation to decision-making – as children and young people become
  involved in governance issues and appointing TCS staff.

- Appraisal to implementation (for example, for appointment of a 'young
  mayor' in Middlesborough in 2002).

Participation has become a politically sensitive term, by which I mean it
has been appropriated in social policies, linked with dominant ideologies
such as 'The Third Way' and social inclusion, and stipulated by funding
agencies as both prerequisite and yardstick. For example, a 'key issue'
identified by a project in TCS Children in Communities Programme
performance review was that:

> Children and young people should not [just] be consulted for the
> sake of satisfying funding criteria, i.e. SRB, Government
> consultation documents. Appropriate time should be given and a
> method of feeding back the response to children and young people
> agreed ({DR8}, my clarifying term in brackets).

One manager whom I spoke to could not at first think of an example of
participation, but eventually said that the opportunity for *"free flowing*

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[76] The aim of this strategy was to "give a positive lead in the behaviour and culture which
[the Society Management Team] wishes to see developed in the Society" (Corporate Plan
1999-2002, p. 15).

discussion" in some meetings was participative. However he thought that the organisational hierarchy in general worked against participation.

Six of the 'examples of participation' were about management practice within TCS. These were:

1. The introduction of a new record keeping process (related by one person, also discussed by me with two others) which was an interdivisional process.

2. The inclusion of project administrators in a staff development implementation group (related by two people).

3. The appointment of the development manager for children and young people's participation in the governance of TCS (told by three people from different perspectives). This involved people across the organisational hierarchy and children and young people working together in developing the selection criteria and interviewing candidates together.

4. "*Working together*" to put forward guidelines for applying for external funding, which involved people from different perspectives with common interests.

5. The development of action research in TCS .

6. Collaboration with other agencies:

   > If we have issue inside TCS about change, one of things we do is ask who else would be interested. There are collaborative processes between TCS and Barnados etc. We did this recently about child protection issues {17/tape}.

In telling the first four stories, people emphasised that what made these participative was working with people from different parts, or different

perspectives in TCS. I interpreted this as being unusual for them in their work experiences. Of the record-keeping process VR said:

> Basically I do feel there has been a pulling together, it's the only way I can describe it. Once the bridge, hill, had been actually climbed and we were all standing on the top of the hill together, looking out across the valley, and we could actually see what we were looking at, what we were trying to achieve...
>
> I do think there has to be partnership at two levels. The first is ... in terms of funding and legitimation ... and actually just accepting the need, being aware of what we were trying to do (and saying) this is the problem, we recognise you perhaps have the skills and techniques to solve the problem, here you go. Then [there's] selling the idea to others. You have to forge a partnership ...at the end of the day the thing won't work unless they buy into it, agree to it, we make that partnership work {46/tape}.

Part of the struggle in this story was to get people from other divisions involved. In all these stories there was an element of working against normal practices, and perhaps doing something new. Another common ingredient was enthusiasm, particularly in the story of action research. In all these stories, something was being produced in the process of participation, a policy, a new way of working and so on. There did seem to be a real interest demonstrated in these conversations for working participatively in TCS, but not much opportunity.

7.3.2 'Paradoxes' of participation

I also took into account the 'paradoxes' of participation. These were inconsistencies or dilemmas noted by practitioners and others in terms of what counts as participation in different contexts. Paradoxes are not full stops. In Chapter 4 I presented an argument that the creativity of metaphor arose from the inherent paradox of 'is and 'is not'. 'Paradoxical injunctions' given to families in systemic therapy are disruptive in implicitly putting the therapist on the side of change and "no change" simultaneously, and inspire families to seek new relationships and organisations. Paradoxes of

participation can be interpreted as opportunities for the emergence of new metaphors.

- Participation means being able to choose not to participate.

- Participation is about being free (unbounded in the choices available, or able to 'look outwards', or 'step out') and choosing to be constrained by respect and care for other people's views and interests.

- Participation is about joining in and standing back.

The first 'paradox' was reflected in the comments of a participant in the 'pirate ship' workshop I conducted with TCS practitioners {09}. He wrote and spoke of this later as *"the interesting experience of feeling pressurised to 'participate' in a workshop on the nature of participation"*. This *"led him to question how much choice we sometimes give young people and whether the choice not to participate necessarily means someone has nothing to contribute"* {DJ6: 'Let's get real': a personal perspective'}.

The second 'paradox' was reflected in my observing what went on when I was a participant in a mountain biking day for young people, arranged by a TCS project. The potential conflicts and possibilities of people going off to 'do their own thing' was managed within the group of young people so that everyone had a good time. I was not sure *how* this was being done; I thought of it in the metaphor of a 'self-organising system' in that the 'boundary' *around* the group was maintained *in* the group.

The third paradox is reflected in some of the pictures drawn by children, for example picture 16, Appendix 5, in which the children are playing on the swings and *"the mums are chatting on the bench"*. Checkoway (1997) writes that the role of adults as allies of young people is to *"stand back, let the young people do the work and take decisions, but provide essential information as needed"*.

A fourth *paradox of participation* in respect of young people is that children and young people participate in a society and culture always defined by adults. This was reflected in conversations in which people spoke of children and young people's participation as always and inevitably being qualified in terms of their perceived competence and the need to protect them.

7.3.3 Review and feedback

The analysis in this chapter is only drawn from the examples, stories and pictures of participation elicited in my research conversations and activities. I transcribed the participation examples from tapes, and viewed the pictures. For each one I identified one or more metaphors from inquiring 'what metaphors of (participation) help me make sense of this (example, story or picture) as about participation?' I then grouped and regrouped the metaphors to bring out similarities and dissimilarities. I decided not to integrate the metaphors from the stories and the metaphors from the children's pictures so that I could consider them in juxtaposition.

The processes of review and feedback that I engaged in while I was identifying and clustering the metaphors included:

i.   Presenting some stories and pictures along with my proposed categories of 'journey', 'boundary maintenance', and 'geography' to a group of JO5 practitioners and managers in a workshop at a TCS conference in November 1999; although there was no specific feedback concerning these metaphors, practitioners expressed interest (Workshop feedback).

ii. Writing to about 50 people in TCS with whom I had spoken, proposing understandings of participation in terms of geography (place) and 'trust as boundary'. This included a short paper on my

constructivist approach (included as Appendix 7). I had four written responses to this letter, two of which commented on the metaphors of participation I had offered:

> Do organisations have cultures which are either open or resistant to participatory systems? The scientist Richard Dawkins proposed that there are 'memes' [social genes] as well as biological genes – perhaps there are also 'orges' which shape how organisations develop and grow!? – the influence of Edward Rudolf. (e-mail from JT (sic)).

> It strikes me that it is much more multi dimensional. Geography is important but it is one factor in a complex web of experience that impact on the way in which people construct their lives. In some senses the idea of geography is itself changing through the development of such things as social mobility, easier and better travel and of course the phenomenon of the internet. Thus I would be inclined to think that the metaphors people use are multi dimensional in which of course geography is an important element., and that geography metaphors per se might be limiting in terms of practice (letter from HP, 8 March 1999).

iii.   Displaying the pictures from the two school sessions alongside some stories for discussion at a CASE partnership Steering Group meeting (February 2000).

iv.   Presenting my research in a presentation to TCS social work division managers (April 2000). In this presentation I invited the managers to read, view and discuss some of the stories and pictures of participation. I then introduced ways of clustering them in terms of *space* and *place*, illustrated with some images and metaphors of geographical features. Finally, I invited the managers to draw rich pictures of TCS from their perspective, and then to discuss these as a way to introduce the idea of drawing as a participative process. Three of the four managers present were aware that their posts were about to be made redundant, and my presentation followed the session in which TCS was described as *"[a] car driven into a brick wall"* (above, Section 7.2.3). I had not intended this session to

generate more stories and pictures of participation. I did not

consider the pictures as of 'participation', and did not take them

away from the session. But the powerful and shocking images to me

at that time are reflected in the grounded metaphors I chose to

structure my understanding of TCS in Section 7.2, and in the

question with which I concluded Chapter 6:

> What would it take for an organisation like TCS to embody
> participation in its practising and managing?

The rich pictures included:

- TCS as a model trainset in which the carriages had come apart
  from the engine, and needed to be reconnected and *"put back on
  the rails"*.

- TCS as a rubik cube in which the bits were all there, but out of
  order and children and young people's participation in TCS could
  help rearrange the bits so that the pictures could be seen.

- TCS as a swimming pool in which children and young people
  played and learned to swim in the pool, observed by their
  families and by TCS staff as life guards, but where the walls of
  the swimming pool were covered by notices – "Do not run", "Do
  not jump in the pool".

- TCS as a wasteland in a battle, with tanks rolling in and a
  signpost in the middle indicating different (but personal, for the
  person who drew the picture) directions out.

(Excerpt from my notes).

I found this session, and especially the last picture, very depressing –

a low point in the research – both in terms of how I saw TCS in the

pictures and the gulf between perspectives on how things might

change.

v.   Reviewing the research processes, and the stories and pictures of

participation as discussed in Sections 7.1, 7.3.1 and 7.3.2, and some

of the metaphors for TCS in Section 7.2, with people from TCS and

the OU Systems Discipline in the Critical Review of the Research (June 2000). The objectives and activities of the Critical Review are described in Appendix 9, which also includes all the written comments from participants that were one of the outcomes of the review.

In this Section I have described the five formal ways of feeding back to people the metaphors of participation and the processes of elicitation. I have also indicated that some were problematic in terms of the methodology because issues were raised that I thought of as 'outside' or 'after' the research. I discuss this further in Chapter 8 in terms of embodying participation.

7.3.4   Metaphor clusters

From feedback in these sessions, and reflection on other material about participation I regrouped the metaphors in terms of relationships and sensory metaphors, and doing things together. At the same time I added another collection of metaphors from my observations of what went on when people were doing drawings together. The results are the four spray diagrams in Figures 7-1 to 7-4. These diagrams form the basis for Step 4, exploring and judging the main metaphor clusters.

A few examples pointed to how participation is not necessarily a 'good' thing, for example that it can be destructive. I decided to include these in the clusters but consider these examples separately in discussion.
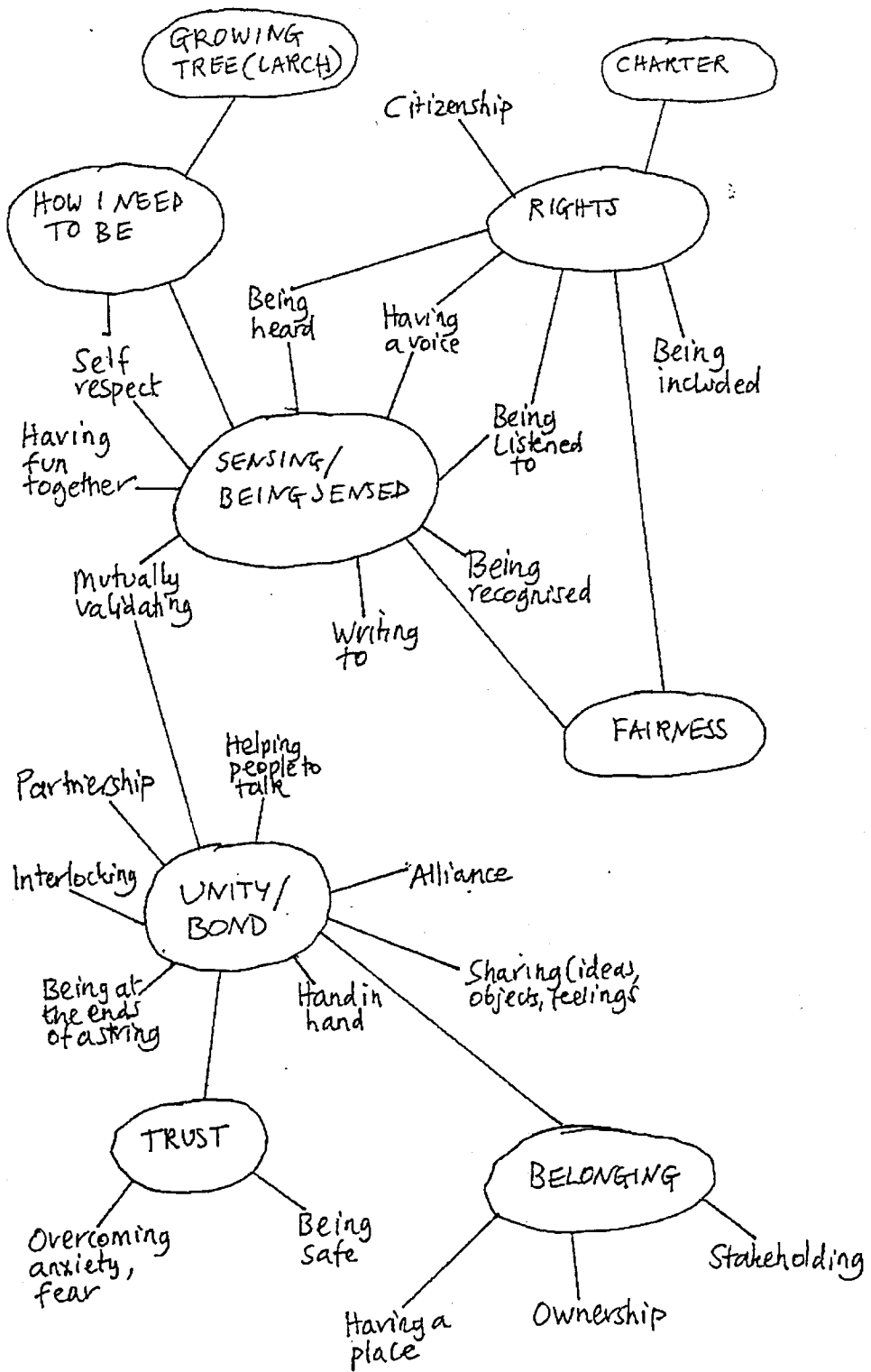
Figure 7-5: A spray diagram of metaphor clusters of participation as 'ways of relating' and 'ways of being'.
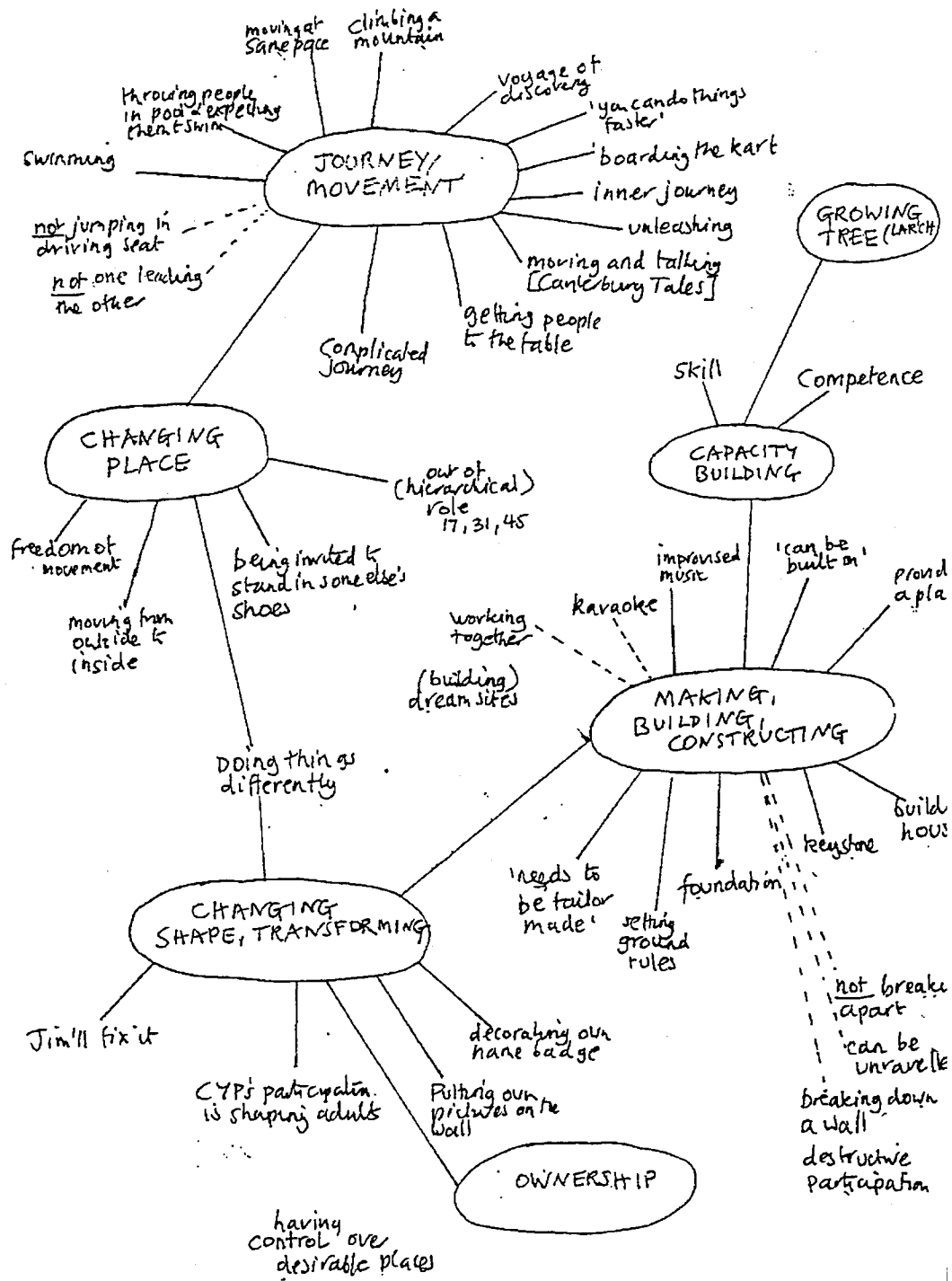
Figure 7-6: A spray diagram of metaphor clusters where participation is 'ways of doing'

While working on the final clustering in the first two spray diagrams I recognised the distinction I made in Chapter 4 concerning *orientational* metaphors which draw on our physical experience of our environments, that is metaphors about movement, and *ontological* metaphors, that is those that reflect our experience of our body as a container. The metaphor clusters *participation as movement*, and *participation as having a voice* reflect this distinction . Drawing on Webster's Dictionary definition, Wenger (1998) claims that participation refers to both the process of taking part and the relationships with others that reflect that process – "*it suggests both action and connection*" (ibid. p. 55). A story about teaching some children to sail provided a particularly vivid example of action and connection:

> There was quite a safety issue and we had them on the end of a bit of rope ... I only had a maximum of two boats so I could concentrate on what they were doing, so the string has the minimum of distortion and that they had some sense of human contact even though they were dealing with it ... So I would literally spend ... 2 hour slots up to my neck ... with these kids on a bit of string. That was one role of enabling participation. Other times I was in the boat with them, or I was in a motor boat and they were in a [small sailing boat]. That's my understanding of different types of participation. Different kinds of close support, then they are off sailing around on their own. {55/tape}.

Participation as sensing/being sensed were by far the most used in examples and stories. This metaphor also appeared in some of the rich pictures in which people were depicted gazing at each other (Appendix 5, pictures 24, 26 and 28). These metaphors are predominantly used in the literature on children's rights, especially 'having a voice', and this has been used as an organising metaphor for different types of participation ((Hadfield and Haw, 2001)). Williamson and Butler (1997) write of a "*deaf ear policy context*" in which the voices of children and young people are ignored (see also Kövesces (2000) for relationship metaphors).

making something
with other people

Modelling (wearing it,
using it) for others
to see

Inviting
others to
look

Inviting and
being invited
to draw

Moving
around

Being
invited
to show

About
picture

Putting your
picture next
to others

At same time

About
process
of drawing

Looking
and
talking

Drawing
same
topic

In same space

Writing out
names
(ownership)

DRAWING
A PICTURE
TOGETHER

With same
resources

Choosing
same topic

Collaborating
in

pen

Showing/watching
film/photos
of people
who made them

ideas & drawing
(tasks)

sections

on same
sheet

aspects of
topic

Taking photographs/
making films with
other people

*Figure 7-7: A spray diagram of metaphor clusters where participation is
'drawing a picture together'.*

Robert Chambers (1994) uses the metaphor of *"group-visual energy"* for what happens when people engage in visual representations of their knowledge and judgements and preferences. I experienced this going on in my research activities. Figure 7-7 looks at the different ways that participation could be going on from my observing. I think the 'energy' arises in part from the diversity of possibilities of 'doing something' together that the drawing process invites. Even when people drew separately and almost in silence, there was still the experience of working alongside, and the showing of the pictures and talking about them. In the class room the amount of energy seemed on the edge of chaos, especially as some people finished drawing before others. There is also *power to,* in the invitation to do a drawing as I discussed in Chapter 5. (Although I recognise that not everyone enjoys drawing as such).

A further observation of people drawing pictures together was that these were designed, but the design emerged in the process of drawing, and talking about the drawing. In one of the pictures drawn in my second school session, Louise and Louise-Ann, best friends who chose similar 'research names' decided to draw together on the same sheet of paper (Appendix 5, pictures 20 and 21). They drew a line down the centre of the paper *"because it's about night and day and we couldn't put it together"* and each wrote their headings and names at the top. Louise's picture is a story in two scenes. People are watching a horror film (The Bone Collector) in the cinema. Then later (underneath in the picture) in bed the daughter has nightmares and sees monsters under the bed and the door of the room looks like a monster with a big tongue, at least to me. The father comes in to reassure the child and says, *"It's OK, there's nothing there"*. In Louise-Ann's picture:

> in the day the ice cream man comes down and asks if anyone wants an ice cream and the mums and dads come out and take the children to the park {tape}

A mum with a tear in her dress pushes her child on the swing, and there *are* *"two boys swapping something and a dad with some shopping"*. Louise and Louise-Ann talked and answered questions about their part of the picture separately, but together in saying why they had drawn the line down the middle. In the discussion people commented and asked questions about what adults and children were doing together in the picture, which was what I consider we were taking-as-shared in our inquiry. People also asked about details such as the patch on the skirt and the cat under the bed, and questions 'outside' the picture, such as whether Louise had seen the film (*"no, it's a 15* [age limit]") {72/tape}(See also the discussion about another picture in Section 7.4.4).

Observing people draw calls attention to their movements, in respect of the materials and in respect of each other. In Chapter 2 I referred to the *embodied* experience of teaching in the classroom, that is that learning is enhanced by people's awareness of their embodiment in the process. I thought that this might be the same with participation. This is how I understand Krippendorff writing about communication:

> ... communication involves people - not only as participants, as speakers and listeners, but also as observers of their own participation in that process. This includes observing other communicators as well ... It is the speaking of communication that the practices being observed and talked of become communication and that its participants commit themselves to being in it" (Krippendorff, 1997)

In Chapter 6 I wrote of the impact of 'discourses of participation' in terms of children and young people becoming 'social agents in their own right' (Prout, 2000). Alongside this there is also a shift from children being perceived as *a body*, to them being perceived as *a voice* (Lee, 2000). Lee in particular notes the effect of the 1991 Criminal Justice Act which permitted children to give evidence in court proceedings in the form of pre-recorded video-taped interviews, rather than the child's body *per se* being the evidence. I reflected that in other contexts the metaphor *participation as voice* might conceal the embodied experience of participation.

Figure 7-8: A spray diagram of 'what was going on' in 24 drawings by children of 'adults and children doing something together and having a good time'.

On the right hand side I listed in the words used by the children in talking about their pictures:

- The different activities that children and adults were doing separately in the same location (eight of the twenty two pictures were specifically of a playground or park, and eight more of outside play activities)

- The different activities that children and adults were doing together

- The different activities that children and adults were doing in respect of each other

- What adults were depicted as doing to children.

For example in a picture of people in a pub, the adults were drinking beer and the kids were drinking coke ({58/tape}, Appendix 5 picture 13). Some of the pictures drawn in activity {58} included more detail than I have indicated but this has been omitted because it was not recorded at the time and not obvious to me what is being depicted.

The list of what adults and children are doing in respect of each other is one sided. This was clearly indicated in the pictures and discussion of them. Children are watched and looked after and played with. Another issue I particularly noted from the pictures is that except for the football match where a boy plays with his dad and there is an adult referee and spectators (Appendix 5 picture 3), the only pictures that clearly showed an adult playing with a child was where there were only the two of them in the picture.

This is only a partial analysis. What is missing is the detailed, colourful, worked through attention to the site of these activities which can only be captured by looking at the pictures. It was this that evoked for me *participation as geography* because of the sense of space and place evoked in the pictures. Roger Hart points out that as adults we have forgotten the fascination that small local places can offer and thus we have difficulty in empathising with children's attitudes to place (Hart, 1978). The pictures elicited in my research reflect children's feelings about place as the site of 'children and adults having a good time'. This appreciation of the importance of place resonates with the work of the CIN Group described in Chapter 6.

A common theme of several stories of participatory practice with children and young people was that children and young people were 'out of place', for example:

> So you've got this huge mass of young people on the street, drinking, drugs, not a lot. It's just that the town council started saying this is a seaside resort, ... and you've got the sight of the young people on the street {60/tape}.

Being considered to be 'out of place' like a weed or disease, involves acting in specific ways, for example to eradicate or cure (Cresswell, 1997). Thus in the example above, participatory practice was directed towards establishing a *place of their own* for young people.

7.3.5   Summary

I took forward my understanding of participation as a continuous process, as an embodied experience, as a way of doing and relating, and the importance of place into the next steps of the inquiry.

7.4 Step 4 Explore and judge metaphor clusters

The activities in Step 4 of the methodology are:

> Explore the usefulness of metaphor clusters in terms of their contexts and identify the constraints and possibilities afforded by the metaphors in terms of practising. That is, consider the influences that might affect choice of metaphors and explore the entailments of the metaphor for practice and to what extent they offer new ways of seeing participation, or challenge those understandings in use that may be constraining.

My metaphor for this Step is 'unpacking metaphors' of participation'[77]. In some research conversations, the example or story of participation was introduced by a prologue about participation and the various other terms in play – empowerment, consultation. Some people expressed a difficulty in making sense of social justice as more than political rhetoric. However as one person said, *"If you understand the concept* [of participation], *you will put it into your own language"* {54/tape}. This is how I understand people's different use of metaphors in their stories.

I start out by discussing what participation *is not*, that is the 'anti-analogies' brought forth in my research conversations. Then I explore four metaphor clusters identified in Step 3. A further three 'attractor' metaphors are explored in terms of what they reveal and conceal about participation. I conclude with a discussion of how the relationships between adults and children were constructed in the stories, pictures and metaphors.

7.4.1   What participation is not

The difference between *consultation* and *participation* was a theme of several conversations. For example, because JW had used both terms in her

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[77] This is a phrase borrowed from Murray and Hallett (1999) who in reporting their research into the Scottish Children's Hearing System write of the term 'participation' remaining unpacked in many empirical studies of children and young people's participation. In particular they suggest the failure to distinguish between attendance, participation and consultation.

story of participation concerning the involvement of TCS adminstrators in staff development, I commented: *I got confused between participation and consultation.*

> JW: That can be about who sets the remit. Consultation is when you identify the specific task or focus for people's engagement. It's about who sets that focus, who do you have the discussions with to start that process off. Does it just come from the top down. Whose agenda is it? It is coming from top down? If that's the wrong agenda as perceived by other people that's where it can get lost. How do you set the agenda that you go out for consultation with? The staff development [group] isn't the only group with same broad make-up, that if you went to consultation where the agendas had been drawn from a range of perspectives.

> Marion: More a participatory process? The other difference in consultation is that there's no guarantee that things will change, that things fed back will change decisions. For me that would have to happen for participation .. not sure ...

> JW: Participation is a process; it's a dialogue in which both parties might be changed in that dialogue. There's learning on both sides. I'm not sure that always happens. On one side nothing might change. If you start with polarised positions you still end up with polarised positions.

> Marion: You say oh I'll fill in this form but no-one is going to read it?

> JW: A participative process for me is when there's much more engagement and exploration of different perspectives. That might mean people moving apart again, but perhaps not quite as far or they agree to recognise the difference, or you come up with a consensus or agreement how to take things forward. One of the struggles in managing an organisation like this is it is hierarchical, it's not a cooperative. A pure participative organisation might be a cooperative... where everyone has an equal voice, different roles but no extra weight.

> Marion: The other form might be democratic organisation? There is a paradox about participation in organisations...

> JW: And in social work organisations where you place a high value on confidentiality the paradoxes in that case! I want everything I do and my practices to be completely secret but you've got to tell me what you are doing all the time.

Several people differentiated consultation as somehow less satisfactory or inferior to participation, as not *"genuine participation"*. Consultation was also described as something TCS was bad at {18/tape; 55/tape}. One person talked of the *"lip service"* sometimes paid to participation in TCS, which reminded me of an experience at a TCS conference:

> ...a new document was being presented and I thought it was a joke, you know, when someone said you've got two weeks to respond to this. But it wasn't ({41/tape} – conversation with MW].

Consultation was *partial participation* because the final decision rests with one party (Pateman, 1970). At the same time, the difference between *participation* and *consultation* is often elided in the reporting of practice. Children and young people are *consulted* by local authorities, planning authorities and central government, but *participate* in their local communities, in the governance of TCS.

Participation by invitation was also not thought to be genuine participation, for example having to *"work to someone else's agenda"* in terms of interagency work with children and young people {27/notes}. This is also pointed out by Fitzpatrick et al. (1999):

> Many adults who accepted the validity of youth involvement had yet to translate this into any change in their own behaviour ... They expected young people not to participate on their own terms but to adapt to existing structures, processes and language (p. 12).

Neither was participation 'pretending to listen':

> At one particular point in [these proceedings] these young people are allowed to take part ... in a token way. And they usually stand up and say things, which are absolutely brilliant, and then everybody claps and we get on with what we are doing and totally forget about what's just been said. 'Isn't that wonderful that young people can d(joined up writing and they can really speak'. ... And in a way that's an act of very *polite violence* against young people as it's saying we're pretending to listen to you, we're pretending to involve you but we are actually not {36/tape}.

Neither is participation 'throwing people in':

> I was going to all kinds of committee meetings ... and suddenly
> introduced into these committees were users ... that was the most
> extraordinary experience because nobody did any kind of preparation
> for these people so there they were dropped into fairly formal
> activities with highly articulate people ...I had a whole range of
> feelings about. I had a feeling it was basically right in some kind of
> deep sense but it was extremely irritating, it was unfair to the people
> concerned because there was no way in which they could make a real
> contribution. It was like throwing people into a pool who couldn't
> swim and expecting them to do so {50/tape}.

These are three among several similar examples. From my observations of
participatory practice, and observing my own practice, this involves
constant vigilance for *"polite violence"* by adults towards children and
young people[78].

A further observation made in a research activity was that *participation as
inward-looking* can be destructive because it may lead to not noticing what
is going on around you {9/notes}. Thus focussing on the participation of
children and young people may lead to ignoring the need to do something
about 'structural issues' and their social and physical environments. This is
sometimes discussed as a limitation of *participation as rights* (Hasler,
1995).

7.4.2 Alternative metaphors: participation as 'being', 'doing', constructing 'a (safe) place' and drawing a picture together

An outcome of the first research activity I did with young people and TCS
staff was that participating was:

* Being the same

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[78] 'Niceness' (see Step 2) could be considered a form of 'polite violence'.

- Working at the same thing
- Enjoying the same thing
- Aiming at the same thing

({24/feedback/my notes} – Appendix 6.1).

In this first activity I primarily used the term 'sharing' in inviting the young people to think of ways of participating, but I interpreted the participation that went on in the session as both about doing something together and the way in which people were relating to each other in doing it. The feedback I had from practitioners in response to my proposed metaphor clusters was that participation needed to be *in* something to be meaningful both to children and young people and to practitioners. That is, as I understood it, participation needs to be embodied in action, not just talked about. There should be a purpose.

The distinction between *doing* and *relating* was brought forth again in a conversation among the CASE partnership Steering Group while looking at the pictures drawn by children in my research activities. The interpretations focussed on the role of adults as they were depicted in relation to children's activities. Adults were perceived as *"facilitating and defining space, making it safe by being there ... that the important thing was about adults being there while children did their own thing"* {69/tape}.

GH said about the involvement of children and young people in the governance of TCS:

> [Participation] is not just about doing like setting up ... it's how I am in the presence of children and young people. If you say to adults [in TCS] 'you need to think about the participation of children' it's like 'what have I got to do then' rather than 'how I need to be' {69/tape}.

An interpretation of the children's pictures related to how they depicted the *place* of participation. I connected this with the cluster of metaphors about

participation as building, and in particular the stories in which these were embedded. *"Confidentiality agreements"* with children on the streets provided a *safe place* for them to talk about their dangerous lives. *Trust* was about building a relationship in which children and young people could have confidence that they were respected. The 'happy suns' in many of the children's pictures smiled on the children and adults. Thus Smith (1982) writes that *"participation is not a thing but a boundary that summarises a relationship"*.

The metaphor of *participation as constructing a safe place* provides ways of seeing how children and young people and adults could participate together. Just as children and young people perceive their environments differently from adults, and need different things from them (Spencer, 1995), so they have different things they wish to achieve from their participation. Adults may see training and education as important, and young people a change in adults' attitudes towards them (Fitzpatrick et al., 1999). Jones (2000) writes of how adults' spaces *"can be in some way 'otherable' in that children can use and reconstruct them without ... the opposition of adults"* (p. 37).

Participation as drawing a picture together captured both the doing, relating and place, in that it is a situated activity, with the addition of triggering enthusiasm and adding some fun. As a metaphor it provides a rich understanding of what it is like to participate, but it is not easy to translate into practice, especially in what Gregory (1997) refers to as *"coercive contexts"*. That is, I could see *participation as drawing a picture together* useful in establishing participative relationships, but not for enabling children and young people's participation where this involved challenging other people's ways of thinking about children and young people.

7.4.3 Participation as a Charter of Rights, a tree and a ladder

For participation work with children and young people, *participation as rights* could be considered a *paradigmatic metaphor* (Packwood, 1994). That is, it is not possible to write or talk about children and young people's participation without reference to rights (see Chapter 2). *Participation as rights* is legitimated through the UNCRC, and human rights legislation in the European Community. As I claimed in Chapter 6, the notion of *rights* in interpretations of the UNCRC has expanded beyond 'rights as valid claims'. In juxtaposition with other metaphors, *participation as rights* is both useful and constraining. This is discussed below.

The three 'attractor' metaphors I have chosen to discuss include two from TCS project work which have been widely disseminated, Rotherham Participation Project's Charter of Participation and the LARCH (Listening and Responding to Children Project in Leeds) tree. I also include Hart's (1997) 'ladder of participation' which was referred to several times in my conversations, and appears in many TCS reports. All of these are useful and engaging. They embed contrasting understandings and are mutually illuminating. I also refer to the metaphor of *participation as belonging in neighbourhoods*, the metaphor of CIN Group work, which was discussed in Chapter 6.

In contrast with the CIN Group interpretation of participation as leading to *"transformations of reality"*, *participation as rights* leads to children and young people's participation in existing societal structures and processes. This *"improves accountability, structures and responses"*, as Bill Badham writes about the effective involvement of children and young people in neighbourhood renewal (Badham, 2001).

Arguably *participation as rights* highlights the difference between adults and children; the rights of children and adults can conflict. This is useful in challenging ways of thinking. On the other hand it doesn't allow for seeing how we (adults, children and young people) have common concerns. Juxtaposed with the CIN hypothesis the metaphor also conceals that the separate worlds of adulthood and childhood can be understood as historically situated constructions to make sense of perceived inequalities of experiencing.

Rights highlight the situations of classes of people rather than individuals. Rights are constructed as claims for classes which people belong to at the time of claiming. That is, children and young people claim, or have claimed for them, rights for children and young people now, not in respect of their potentialities or individual experiences. I can claim rights as a human being, or as a woman, but not just for being Marion. Other metaphors and stories of participation emphasise the specificity of experiencing, for example the need to empathise with particular others and the need to trust.

Lastly, rights prescribe norms and draw on a particular understanding of society. It may be argued that having rights assumes participation; legal rights often exclude those who choose not to participate in the society prescribed in rights discourse, for example travellers. *Participation as rights* may share with *participation as social inclusion* an idea of a 'one society'. Aitken (1994) writes about children in schools that *"good citizens are children who conform to social norms and group behaviour defined as appropriate by the authority"* (p. 89, quoted by Gagen, 2000). What counts as being a good participant, like being a good citizen, a good student, and a good baby and 'being co-operative' often means conforming to, or fulfilling other's expectations and desires, or 'doing what you are told', not asking awkward questions or rocking the boat.

A further issue concerning the language of rights is that this tends to use metaphors that embed conflict – e.g. 'fighting for rights', 'violating rights', and dualisms – rights and responsibilities. However rights as entailing responsibilities has been substantially challenged with regard to children and young people's rights, and UNCRC uses sensory rather than adversarial metaphors (see Chapter 6).

The Rotherham Young People's Charter of Participation is a document written for organisations and young people, abstracting from practice experience in Rotherham and elsewhere. Charters are codes of rights[79]. In the Charter young people's participation is defined as:

- Having an influence
- Acknowledging and responding to difference
- Encouraging people to share their interests
- Gives some experience of sharing responsibility
- Gives the opportunity to speak for yourself
- Gives the chance to learn new skills

- Gives you the incentive to change things

- Allows you to make your own decisions

The Charter includes specific guidance for action planning and was distributed throughout TCS in 2000. As well as the metaphors embedded in this summary (participation as sharing interests, sharing responsibility, speaking for yourself, learning etc.) other metaphors for participation are used in the discussion and practice examples in the Charter, for example *"young people's participation is a complicated journey"* (DR2 p.14). The document is introduced by a poem in which young people's participation is

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[79] Charter: (a formal document) granting or demanding certain rights, with radical associations with the Magna Carta, the eighteenth century Chartist movement, Charter 77 claiming human rights in Czechoslovakia and Citizen's Charters setting out rights of service users of public services in 1980s UK.

"boarding the kart", and pictures of jigsaw puzzle pieces illustrate how the principles of the charter fit together.

The tree metaphor underpinned the TCS JO5/Children in Communities conference in 1999 {62}. It was outlined in an introductory presentation and we were invited to identify our own apples and butterflies as benefits and caterpillars as barriers in evaluating our experience of the conference. LP described the LARCH tree while we were looking at a drawing of the tree in the project handbook:

> We took the tree as our starting point to try to explain to ourselves and new members of staff how we put participation into all our work. ... The roots are the foundations of our work, beliefs and values ... At ground level there is nurturing hence the watering can and soil ... The trunk is listening and responding. The branches are how children and young people are empowered to participation ... The leaves are growth ... [this] applies to children and young people and adults as the result of the process.
>
> Then there are caterpillars which eat their way into what we're trying to achieve - negative attitudes, barriers and problems. [But] caterpillars are very good things so we argued about this. We stuck with caterpillars because they have a chance to change. They can learn from the way we work and change into butterflies. So adults feeling threatened can be changed, can take away what they've learned and apply elsewhere. Acorns are the benefit to children and young people from participating ... {37/tape}.
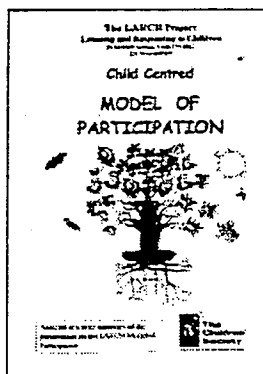
Figure 7-9: The LARCH Tree "Child Centred Model of Participation" (icon illustration from TCS Conference Report 1999)

The tree metaphor highlights participation as a 'living system' involving a network of different processes (watering, nurturing through soil, growing branches and leaves) and entities (trunk, branches, leaves etc.). It evokes the metaphors of 'tree of life' and 'tree of knowledge' and environmental sustainability:

> The compost at ground level and the watering can show what is needed to help the work develop and ultimately be sustained. They represent environmental factors which encourage and enable participation {DJ7 'Participation: a fresh look'}.

The metaphor suggests, while not specifying ecological participation and spiritual participation : *"The kernel of [the] fruit is that we all become more whole as human beings ..."* (ibid., sic.) The tree metaphor can also be further extended and invite questions such as whether there is a certain inevitability in the emergence of participation in this network of processes, as the tree's DNA brings forth the tree[80]. In juxtaposition with *participation as journey*, and *participation as constructing*, the tree metaphor conceals participation as a purposeful activity. Trees just *are*. They grow without making choices in respect of their growing. Neither do trees *do* in terms of their embodiment of their 'tree-ness'. The tree metaphor conceals *participation* as a praxis of choosing and acting.

As examples of metaphoricising and metaphors manifested in language, the tree metaphor is a chosen metaphor. That is, it is recognised and extended by those using the metaphor as understanding participation in terms of a living tree. This includes identifying those aspects which are unlike, for example the ambiguity of the caterpillar, and the use of terms such as *represents* and *stands for*. The charter metaphor on the other hand is a taken for granted metaphor in the sense that aspects which are unlike are hidden. Charters are about the giving or acknowledgement of rights by one

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[80] A variation was offered by JT who questioned whether some organisations might have a *"participation meme"*, borrowing Richard Dawkins term[80], predisposing them to be participative [71/email response].

party to another. Charters set out responsibilities, outcomes and actions to achieve outcomes. The development of children's participation in local government decision-making has often been accompanied by charters {62}(Johnson et al., 1998). In comparison with the tree metaphor, charters are specified in terms of rights and duties and what *needs to be done*, rather than *how to be*.

Both Charter and Tree refer to barriers to participation (LARCH 'caterpillars') and benefits ('apples'), and the set of principles for organisations within the Charter can be seen as the nurturing needed for young people's participation. Both tree and charter metaphors distinguish between the practising for participation by adults or organisations, and the experiencing of participation by children and young people. Children and young people are *"empowered to participation"* in the branches of the tree, and "given" and "allowed" in the Charter.

The third 'attractor' metaphor of a "ladder of participation" (Figure 7-10), unlike the tree and Charter distinguishes participation from other forms of relationships, and provides useful definitions of different categories. I claim that part of its attraction relates to imperatives of accountability in the management of practice and of evaluating outcomes in terms of inputs of resources. Participatory practice and its success must be measured in some way in order to evaluate the work in terms of the organisation's mission and economic constraints. What the metaphor conceals is that a judgement of whether an experience is participatory or not can only be made by those involved, such as children and young people.
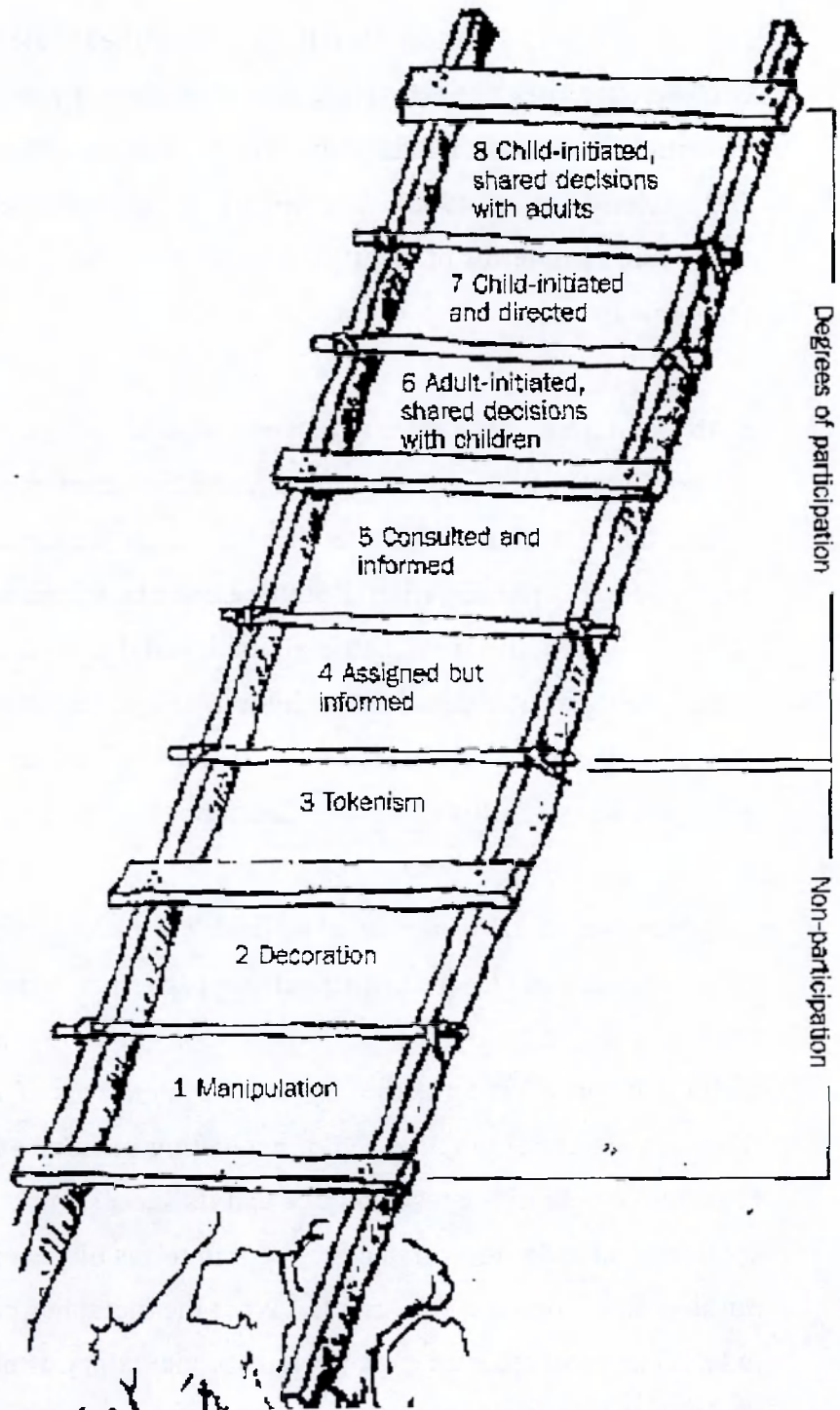
Figure 7-10: The ladder of children's participation (Hart, 1997 p. 41)

"The figure is ... meant for adult facilitators to establish the conditions that enable groups of children to work at different levels on different projects or during different phases of the same project".

In the ladder of participation as interpreted by Hart (1997), there are seven levels each of which express increasing degrees of initiation by children. Thus the lowest level is 'manipulation' or deception which *"refers to those instances in which adults consciously use children's voices to carry their own messages"* (ibid. p. 40). The highest level is *"child-initiated, shared decisions with adults"* in which it is the children or young people who choose to collaborate with adults on projects which they themselves initiated. Of the seven steps, Hart considers the top four are *"models of genuine participation"*. The fourth step, *'social mobilisation – assigned but informed'*, which is involving children and young people in adult instigated activities is borderline. This can only, for Hart, be judged participatory by those *"within the culture who understands the political system"* (ibid. p. 42).

Hart and others who draw on similar models (e.g. Morrow, 1998) emphasise that which of the steps on the way up the ladder is appropriate is a matter of who is involved with what, and the ladder is a heuristic. Nevertheless adaptations of the ladder are used to make judgements. For example, The National Youth Agency's (2001) Standards for the Active Involvement of Young People in Democracy identify three cumulative *"levels of performance"* for local authorities in which the *"advanced"* level includes young people *'being canvassed, being consulted, representing, decision-sharing, implementing, and initiating'* in decision-making (ibid. p. 23).

These standards are 'boundary objects' in my distinction discussed in Step 2 of this inquiry. No alternative understandings or metaphors of participation are offered. Thus as reifications they may become seen as the only descriptions of participatory practice, and then as the practice itself. As is richly illustrated in this chapter and elsewhere in my thesis, participation cannot be reduced to formulas and single metaphors without losing the dynamic possibilities of changing established orders and ways of thinking. Turning processes into measurable things means that claims of

ownership and *rightness* can then be asserted. Because of the *appropriation* of participation in political contexts, the NYA standards risk the sedimentation and absorption of participative practices within the objectifying and problematising discourses discussed in Chapter 6.

7.4.4 "Fun and games and serious business": constructions of children and young people's participation

In this section I discuss the understandings of children and young people and adults that were brought forth in the examples and metaphors. This is a two way process; childhood is distinguished from adulthood and vice versa, that is, they are understood in relation to each other. For example, a project report included the statement that:

> [children and young people] should be provided with social activities together such as is taken for granted by adults {DJ7 p.4}.

This is a judgement that many adults' lives might not sustain.

The distinction between participation as fun and participation as serious came up in a research conversation with FG who said that children participate for fun, and adults for a serious purpose {21/notes} (See also Nixon, 1998). 'Fun' appears in the pictures generated in my research as smiling faces or written in. In activity {09/notes} my invitation to adults to think of participation in the story of Peter Pan evoked both playfulness and serious struggling with what it is to be a participant. Two of the children's pictures evoked a serious response in me and other people. The first was the picture of an adult abusing a child; although the boys who chose to draw this did so with great panache and subversive enjoyment, it is a deeply serious issue for children.

> Transcript of tape excerpt of discussion about this picture (everyone talking at once sometimes). The picture was drawn by 'Uncle

Randy' (UR), 'Windy' and 'The undertaker'. 'Cath' is a project worker from TCS:

Uncle Randy: Our picture is about a teacher hitting a little kid"
(audible gasps)

Cath: Why is the teacher hitting the child?

Uncle Randy: Because he's done wrong

Cath: What's he done that's so wrong?

Uncle Randy/Undertaker: He's been to school and he's been (not distinguished) (implied fighting)

Demi: What made you think of doing a picture like that?

Uncle Randy/Undertaker: Because it looks good (laugh). Because it's an adult and child and we couldn't really think of anything else and it [has got?] a few people hasn't it?

Louise: If you get in the teacher when they're fighting they'll just send them to the headmistress

Uncle Randy: It was in 1960

Demi: Oh yes that would be

Uncle Randy: Because it's our [?world, ?will]

Anna: But people didn't have haircuts like that in 1960

Marion: That's actually true

Windy: Can I say it wasn't my idea (laughter).

Uncle Randy: It's a wig, because he didn't want anyone to laugh at his baldy head (laughter)

Marion: What are the people doing on this side?

Undertaker: Watching. They're the people in the school.

Uncle Randy It's like an assembly and they're watching. And that's another teacher there, saying that's ... that's an OK teacher. ...

The second drawing was of a drawing of a girl and her mother playing in the park, about which the artist made a point of saying that the dad stayed at home (Appendix 5, picture 6). Without wishing to read dramatic meanings into these I suggest that they indicate that children's lived experiences involve the same mixture of serious business and having fun as adults[81]. Williamson and Butler's (1997) finding from their research that *"what*

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[81] Frank's (1995) TCS research with young carers is one example of the heavy responsibilities carried by many children and young people. (See also Boulding, 1995).

young people sought from adults was some serious listening inside a funny shell" resonates with the comment from a research conversation that,

> what young people wanted for the job [of developing children and young people's participation in the governance of TCS] was someone who can be serious or can be fun {26/tape}.

Two constraints on or for children and young people's participation were specifically discussed by adults. The first of these concerned the vulnerability of children and young people which might limit their participation in situations where they might be exploited by adults. For example, in the context of discussing children and young people's participation in staff selection procedures as an example of participation, NC said:.

> I think that I conclude that participation is never complete ...
>
> (Me: *How would this apply to the involving of young people in recruitment?*)
>
> Interesting ... I'm talking about face to face involvement particularly. Not involvement in the processes because that doesn't create any problems for us. (Me: *Drawing up job specs, sorting through application?*) Yes.
>
> The danger comes in in face to face contact with applicants. Our team recommended that there should be face to face contact in residential settings. But we know that ... abusers are extremely clever. If you expose children to an abuser you may have no control or even any knowledge about what will happen. It may take a long time before it does happen. So if we involve children in face to face contact... we will expose children in some sense to this. And it's a degree of risk that in one sense we don't need to expose them to. In terms of them being directly involved in matters that affect them we do need to involve them. So it highlights the dilemma between one hand ensuring they are protected and on the other hand ensuing that they are involved in meaningful ways in matters that will directly affect them, and recruitment of staff definitely will {54/tape}.

The second constraint concerned children and young people's interest in what they saw going on. Aspects of organisation business were not seen as inappropriate *per se* in terms of children and young people's participation

so much as likely to bore them. However as a project leader pointed out, the organisation of meetings as much as the content can discourage – and be used to discourage – participation.

> I went to meet the town council and explained what I was doing and said it would be really nice if young people could be represented on the town council. They weren't very happy but they said well we'll let it happen. Of course the young people got fed up with going because it's really boring. They were put on the very last agenda item, not the first... We invited the councillors to the young people's meetings but they haven't taken it up {60/tape}.

To involve children and young people in TCS means that what goes on needs to be made more interesting for them {67/tape}.

However what was clearly shown in the children's pictures is that 'adults and children doing something together' can include them doing different things (Figure 7-5). Sometimes these are complementary or parallel, for example, watching and playing, holding the rope and skipping (e.g. pictures 1, 8, 15, 16). But other different activities are just in the same 'space', for example mums chatting and children playing in the playground, walking the dog and feeding the ducks in the park (pictures 2, 16).

I had planned at first to ask adults in research conversations for two 'examples' (stories) of participation, one of which involved children or young people. However some people, particularly those based in HQ, could not provide an example involving children and young people in TCS and perhaps could not think of, or choose to tell me about, any other experience.

People pointed out that in their role in the organisation they had no contact with children and young people.

> People who work in organisations like me have very little contact with devalued people. [Participation]can't work if we don't address that issue .

Few children and young people ever visited HQ, and the time I visited HQ there was little evidence of children and young people other than stylised pictures on leaflets. I wondered if in HQ young people seemed like *"the legendary yeti"*, as a project leader described how the young people he was working with seemed to researchers {DU3}. Stories which did not involve children and young people tended to be much less rich in detail, in imagery and enthusiasm than those that did.

Only one person chose to draw on the experience of being a parent for an example of participation involving children and young people. This was a matter of choice, and people use different strategies for managing the boundary between work and home (Nippert-Eng, 1996). Dave Wiles' research with young people indicated that in comparison with neighbourhood, school and politics, they *"expressed most satisfaction about their ability to take part in decisions within the home"*. In the children's pictures in Appendix 5, almost all the adults shown are family members. It was pointed out in one conversation that the experience of your own children could be very different from those whom TCS was aiming to help so there was a risk of extrapolating. As I discussed in Chapter 3, slippage between parenting and work experiences can be difficult to manage. I questioned, however, how those who did not have participative experiences with children and young people made sense of TCS participation work, where this was discussed and whether there were opportunities for them to be inspired by participatory practising in the same way that project workers were. One manager in HQ said that although they had planned to visit projects and find out what people were doing, this was not given any priority in terms of workload.

The final point concerns models or metaphors of the relationship between children, young people and TCS. In Step 2, par. 7.2.4 of this inquiry I presented three ways of perceiving the relationship between children and young people and TCS:

a) Children and young people living in their communities outside TCS, relating to project workers - the reality for those children and young people with whom projects were working directly and drawing on their lived experience;

b) A three-way relationship between children and young people, practitioners and managers, such as that experienced by those working for children and young people's involvement in the governance of TCS, in a specific role, or as representative;

c) 'Children at the centre' from the Corporate Plan. This was also described to me as children as *"targets, the bulls eye"*).

A fourth perception in relation to children and young people's involvement in the governance of TCS draws on discourses of 'children as the future'. Thus children and young people's involvement might help to revitalise TCS {55/tape}. Christensen (2000) suggests that as the spirit of life *"the child is constituted as the agent or catalyst by which the survival of the community is secured"* (ibid. p. 42).

In Step 2, Section 7.2.2 of this inquiry I suggested that 'the child' could be considered a boundary object, or *"nexus of perspectives"* in terms of co-ordinating different constituencies in TCS, or in Wenger (1998)'s terms, 'communities of practice'. Communities of practice are distinguished by mutual engagement of participants, a joint enterprise that is defined by participants in the process of pursuing it, and a shared repertoire of routines, words, ways of doing things, gestures, symbols, stories, metaphors that the community has adopted or produced and which have become part of its practice (ibid, p. 72 ff.). Organisations are constellations of communities of practice with overlapping membership. For example people working in local projects in Social Work Division were part of that community, or communities, and of the particular JO5 or National Programme. Boundary objects bridge between communities of practice and their outside world. They can foster collaboration or conflict. Wenger refers to the competition for *'ownership of meaning'* of boundary objects as processes of negotiation in *'economies of meaning'*. *"Appropriation by*

some can entail alienation from others" (ibid.). The idea of 'economies of
meaning' can be applied to some of the issues I discussed as ambiguities
and uneasy truces in Chapter 4.

Including 'children' in the title of TCS is a reification. I had an experience
familiar to many practitioners in TCS. On the journey back from the
mountain biking expedition near Newcastle, I went round the coach with
my tape recorder doing 'vox pop' style questions and answers about the day
out. One of the young men took the recorder to speak into it, and when I
asked if he'd finished he held on to the recorder briefly and said jokingly
that because it was The Children's Society, wasn't everything for the
children?

One way of making sense of the models of the relationship between TCS
and children and young people is that these draw on different meanings of
different communities of practice in TCS, for example, there is the 'project
child', the 'marketing child', the 'fundraising child', the 'social policy'
child, the 'participatory child'[82] and so on. This could be understood as a
shift in ownership of meaning relating to a shift in power, or a renegotiation
of meaning. Some of these different perspectives are complementary, but
others may conflict. A conference dialogue that I observed could have
been described as around the difference between the 'Daily Mail child' and
'the Guardian child'.

7.4.5   Summary

In this step I explored four 'alternative' metaphors arising from the
metaphor clusters and three 'attractor' metaphors in terms of their
implications for practising. The main implications were that participatory
practice includes attending to:

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[82] I recognise this is already a term in use in TCS.

- How people are in respect of each other, that is in terms of their mutual construing;

- The embodied of this mutuality in *doing;*

- The commonalities of people's experiencing and their individuality;

- The *situatedness* of people's experiencing together;

- Both the common concerns of children, young people and adults, and their different concerns;

- The animation of *boundary objects* through appreciating these as metaphorical understandings of participation, or of 'the child'.

The next step is to return to the Inquiry question in order to judge an appropriate combination of metaphors for the enhancement of practice in TCS.

7.5 Step 5 Introduction

This is the final step in the methodology. The activities for this step of the methodology are:

a) Develop criteria for judging combinations of metaphors as a 'set of conditions for emergence' from the research question.

b) Identify combinations of metaphors inviting new possibilities for practising.

c) Offer invitations to apply these combinations in terms that take account of:

　　1. The richness of contextuality: metaphors are more likely to be taken up if they are richly contextualised, that is they are presented in terms of the meaningfulness for people's experiencing, which includes attention to opportunities for embodiment and imagination;

　　2. Constraints on the invitation being perceived as such;

　　3. The availability of space and time for conversations about metaphors.

7.5.1   Judge combinations of metaphors

The question for Inquiry Strand 4 is:

> How can appreciating metaphors in stories and pictures illuminate and enhance children and young people's participation and participatory practising with children and young people in an organisation working for social justice?

I noted from my research conversations and observations of practice, as well as a literature survey, the wide and increasing range of techniques used in participatory practising with children and young people. CD talked of her experience that

> It does seem that when you get in a room with other people from external organisations it's a sort of competition in terms of who is doing what for children and young people's participation and whose model is the best when we should be looking at all the models and taking bits from each to look at models of good practice and how we as organisations can best further the interests of children and young people and not further our own organisations {69/tape},

CD's concern resonates with what Cleaver (1999) critically discusses as the *'tyranny of techniques'* in participatory development:

> 'Participation' has been translated as a managerial exercise based on 'toolboxes' of procedures and techniques, it has been 'domesticated' away from its radical roots; we talk of problem solving, participation and poverty rather than problematisation, critical engagement and /or class (ibid. p. 609) (see also Bell, 1994).

There is no shortage of good ideas, models and techniques for children and young people's participation in different contexts (for example – among many - in National Youth Agency, 2001, IIED, 2001, The Children's Society, 2001, Johnson et al., 1998, Willow, 1996). Enhancing children and young people's participation is not a matter of proposing yet another set of techniques. Nor would it enhance children and young people's participation to propose a list of criteria for choosing a technique. In the epistemology of my thesis each encounter is unique and the design of practice emergent. What I looked to offer TCS from my research was a combination of metaphors that would help practitioners in their designing of participatory practising.

From reviewing my inquiries in the thesis, and reflecting on my experiences while carrying them out, I identified the following three criteria for my selection:

- The combination would reflect the main metaphor clusters identified in Step 3 of the inquiry, in order to represent the range of understandings of participation at work in TCS.

- These metaphors would be meaningful for children and young people. Thus I need to take into account their understandings of participation as I construed these from my observations, conversations and research activities.

The third criterion concerned the radical implications of children and young people's participation. As I discussed in Chapter 2, the idea of children and young people's participation challenges constructions of children and childhood. Although children and young people's participation may be espoused in government policies, young people are easy political targets and scapegoats to blame for social problems. So my choice of metaphors need to take into account that children and young people's participation involves challenging perceptions, and a change in the way that people *know* children. Thus I judged that the third criterion should be that

- The metaphor combination needs to take into account metaphorical understandings of learning and knowing as an embodied and imaginative process.

7.5.2   A set of conditions for the emergence of respons-able participatory practice

I applied these criteria to the metaphors explored in Step 4, and to the pictures and stories brought forth in my research, including those from my own participative experiences in the Inquiry. The four metaphor cluster that I propose as *a set of conditions for the emergence of respons-able participatory practice* are, in summary:

- *purposeful activity* - which is what participation is <u>in</u>

- *space* for changing and owning

- a *safe place* for learning

- *recognition and respect.*

These are only one possible combination, and I recognise that they draw on my particular perspectives on practice.

The four metaphors are the tips of iceberg clusters of metaphors. In relation to space, place and recognition I have clustered metaphors as different ways of metaphorically experiencing our environments. Metaphors that relate to how our bodies move are clustered under the space condition. Those that relate to how our bodies feel (warm, safe etc.) are clustered under place and those that relate to the senses, specifically seeing, hearing and touching, are clustered under the recognition condition. Metaphors could be members of more than one cluster. *Purposeful movement* is a metaphor for learning and *participation as journey* occurred in three research conversations (Lakoff, 1987). *Participation as a safe place* drew on the CIN Group metaphor (see also Holloway and Valentine, 2000), but also to *site of learning.*

In terms of children and young people's participation I consider that some conditions may need more attention than others. For example, for younger children purposeful activity and a safe place may be more significant. For young people's participation the space to change and reciprocal recognition may be more important (Hart, 1998).

The physical embodiment of a safe place and space to move may be more important for children than for adults. This is because children are growing and changing, and in their bodyhood more vulnerable than adults.

7.5.2.1   Purposeful activity

A purposeful activity is what participation is *in*. This is also what the practitioner does when they respons-ably design conditions for the emergence of participation. Purposeful activity is something that people

want to do. They may see it as useful in rational terms or as fun or as an expression of their feelings for others or about themselves or a desire to communicate. Thus it is not something imposed on people against their will or simply working to a blue print. Neither is it directed to one achievable goal, or objective. Just as with stories, pictures and participation, there is always something more that could be said or done. Goff (2001) suggests purpose may be better expressed as 'a sense of purpose': *"when I weave process into my facilitation practice, it is my sense of purpose that holds the threads together"*.

I draw a parallel between purposeful activity and what JH said in their example of participation as involving children and young people in the selection of project workers and other staff:

> I think that I conclude that participation is never complete. It will always be partial. [*Why do you say that?*] That's my experience. It's always been partial, not least because the methods of consultation and how [people?] participate will vary, and also of course if I participate in something but the result isn't as I like it I don't feel I've been fully involved in participating in the process because [then] it would go the way I would want it to {54/tape}.

With stories it is always possible to ask 'what happens next? Pictures are always open to further interpretations, other ways of seeing.

However in engaging in purposeful activity people experience something as taken as shared[83]. This could be their subscribing to a mission, or a set of ethics, or a purpose, . What it is that is 'taken as shared' relates to the contexts of the activity and those engaged in it and what is significant to them. The examples of purposeful activities in my researching include: telling stories, drawing pictures, designing activities and researching, play, reflective and learning conversations. Purpose is realised through practice. Everyone need not have the same purpose all the time. The drawing

sessions included a range of different purposeful activities in terms of design, the embodying of the design in the process of drawing, the activities depicted and the interpretation or storying of how they did and what was going on in the picture. This is a liberal interpretation of purposeful activity that can be applied to the everyday experiencing of children and young people. A range of purposeful activities can be identified within, for example one exercise, or piece of practice, or management decision-making process. Purposeful activity does not require people to be working together on the same task, but for them to be somehow *in the same picture*.

7.5.2.2   Space to change, choose and own

In formulating the next two conditions for the emergence of participation I am making a distinction between space and place. There is overlap in how we use the terms *space* and *place* in everyday language. As I discussed in Chapter 4, because of our physical make-up spatialisation metaphors structure many of our fundamental thought processes and how we express feelings and judgements and concepts. However there are useful distinctions we make between *space* and *place* in languaging which capture two different aspects of participatory practising and experiencing.

By *space* I mean space in which people are free to move around, space in which they have time to think, *space* in which they can make choices and decisions have not already been made, and *free space* which people could "*occupy, define and decorate*" if they chose (Breitbart, 1998). In *space* you can go off in any direction. MN used the term "*socially neutral zone*" about what he saw was going on in some of the children's pictures {69/tape}. By *place* I mean a specific location or site where people can feel, for example comfortable, safe, protected and at home and have a sense of belonging. Another way of expressing the *space-place* distinction is the difference between having room to move and having a room of one's own.

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[83] I say 'taken as shared' rather than 'shared' with reference to discussion in Chapter 2;

The *space-place* distinction is not either/or. A metaphor that helps to see how it is possible to have both space and place is of participatory practising and managing as a *"transparent umbrella"*. A transparent umbrella provides a *dry place*, and *space* for people to step out and engage with the world. *Space* to change, own and choose draws on the metaphors in Figure 7.5 in step 3, relating to movement, changing shape, changing place and making and building. It draws particularly on the understanding of participation as 'unleashing', and of people not knowing what is going to come out of it, and participation as letting go – *"not being in the driving seat"* and as *"changing the way things are done here"*. Space includes for example people being able to choose not to participate.

In terms of my *participation is drawing* metaphor, the *space* is the invitation, the sheet of paper, the tools, and the moving around. When we move it is through *time* as well as *space*. When we say, "Give me some space!" we often mean more time rather than more legroom. A reiterated theme of project reports relating to children and young people's participation is the time it takes. In Step 1 of this inquiry, and in Chapter 6 I drew attention to time as an issue in researching with children and young people. I conclude that this is to do with contextual issues such as mediated access. Rather than time being a condition of itself for the emergence of participation I consider that in some contexts it is a condition for the bringing forth of space, place and particularly mutual recognition when that challenges people's constructions of self and others.

7.5.2.3   A safe place to learn

The condition *a safe place to learn and try things out* draws as much on my own experiencing and participant observations as the metaphors in stories and pictures. However what struck me in almost all of the pictures drawn by children was the attention to place in terms of the detail and this also came

epistemology about how we know other people.

out when young people talked about their experience of participation. I connect this with participatory practising that provides a *place* that children and young people can call their own, or have some control over, for example the caravan in work with travellers' children {59/tape}, the drop-in centre for young people {61/tape} (see also DJ8). Sibley (1995) gives the example of adolescents have no place in being between childhood and adulthood:

> While [adolescents] may be chased off the equipment in the children's playground... , they may be thrown out of a public house for underage drinking (p. 34).

I also include participatory practising that is *"setting a frame round the process and enabling people to find their own product"* {28/tape}, confidentiality agreements with young people {29/notes; DM1}, and *boundary maintenance*. This is the tacit and explicit work that goes on to keep people included while recognising them as experts of their own experiencing, and work to bring forth and sustain trust.

The other understandings I draw into the condition of *a safe place to learn* are of *participation as competence building* or capacity building. Thus expecting people to participate in situations of inequality can be *"like throwing people into a pool who couldn't swim and expecting them to do so"* {50/tape}. Safe places are for building confidence and trying out protocol skills that can help negotiate space for change. They are *"a breathing space where you [aren't] under the spotlight"* {67/tape}.

In this appreciation of *place* it is not closed with fixed boundaries but negotiated and may be facilitated. Doreen Massey (1994) argues that in the current age references to a sense of place often draw on nostalgia for *"idealised eras when places were inhabited by coherent and homogenous communities"* and that we need a more progressive sense of place. She suggests the term "meeting place" (ibid.). However 'place' as I have

outlined it here is for meeting and for belonging and where people have a positive sense of self as well as place. A 'safe' place may be provided by peer group or peer led activity, for example.

Safe places are also places that people can speak from. The metaphor, often employed by Robert Chambers, from participation in a development context of 'holding the stick' is about providing a bounded place, which people take turns to occupy, and a *claimable space* to speak their mind. Thus place is also a *position*. A position is a starting point for thought, or inquiry (DeVault, 1999). In participatory practice, anyone's position is as good as anyone else's. As Goff (2001) argues, this understanding is emancipatory:

> The non-participatory world controls the right to inquiry by locating it in positions that are beyond the reach of anyone who is not prepared to live their lives with some experiences of alienated servitude to secure the benefits of privilege (par. 14).

7.5.2.4 Reciprocal recognition

Reciprocal recognition refers to the sense of self and sense of others, as I described this in Chapter 3. This is the 'togetherness' of participation – the voicing and being heard, the seeing and being seen, the gelling, and the fairness, the equality of respect. This is the experience of which people can say "*... that's good, that's OK. It's gone in a different manner but my voice has been recognised.*" {41/tape}. However, as I also discussed in Chapter 3, this is embracing without absorbing others into oneself.

A place in our thoughts and hearts is where we hold people who are important to us. In his discussion of usages of 'out of place' metaphors, Cresswell (1997) links these with metaphors that describe people and actions in terms of weeds, disease and bodily secretions (see also Douglas, 1996). The importance of having a place and visiting and using other people's places (and the discomfort that this sometimes involves) is

indicated in the stories of participation told, for example, in Appendices 7.2, 8.1, 8.2. Thus having a *place* is connected with *reciprocal recognition*.

I include in *reciprocal recognition* participation as being hand in hand, as not leading the other and not taking the driving seat, and participation as a conversation in which people turn together (see Chapters 2 and 5). In this analysis, rights are valid claims to recognition.

7.5.3 Summary and review of steps 1 to 5

In Step 1 of the Inquiry I described the conversations in which I engaged with people in TCS and children and young people to bring forth examples and pictures of participation, and to develop an understanding of TCS as the background contexts.

In Step 2 I explored my experiencing of TCS through 'grounded metaphors' evoked during the inquiry. These related to the difference and distance between project practice and central management, the roles of protocols and procedures in which sometimes practice was sedimented, and the issues for managing TCS as 'uneasy truces' in terms of its constituencies. I described stories of participation in the management of TCS, and concluded that these could represent enthusiasm for participation but limited opportunity.

In Step 3 I identified and clustered the metaphors of participation in the examples and stories, with feedback from research participants. I took forward my understanding of participation as a continuous process, as an embodied experience, as a way of doing and relating, and the importance of place into Step 4.

In Step 4 I explored four 'alternative' metaphors arising from the metaphor clusters and three 'attractor' metaphors in terms of their implications for practising. From juxtaposing these metaphors and inquiry into what they

revealed I concluded that respons-able participatory practice involved attending to: how people are in respect of each other, the embodiment of their mutuality in *doing,* commonalities and individuality in experiencing, the *situatedness* of people's experiencing together, common concerns and different concerns of children and adults, and the animation of *boundary objects.*

In Step 5 I set up criteria for judging combinations of metaphors in terms of the metaphor clusters identified in Step 3, their meaningfulness to children and young people, and their meaningfulness for learning.

This is the invitation I offer to TCS as the output of Step 5 in Inquiry Strand 4:

> To adopt and adapt the set of metaphorical understandings I offer as conditions for respons-able participatory practising with children and young people: *purposeful activity* - which is what participation is in, *space for changing and owning, a safe place for learning* and *recognition and respect.*

I am left with a question raised in Chapter 6, and two concerns that relate to how such an invitation could be accepted, and the quality of the invitation. The question is:

> What it would take for an organisation like TCS to embody participation in its practising and managing?

The first concern is the extent to which I have embodied participation in Inquiry Strand 4. The second concern relates to the 'loose ends' in the knitting together of the Inquiry Strands, specifically 'undiscussables' such as personal and contextual constraints on participatory inquiry, and feedback from the Critical Review of the research. These issues are taken forward to the final chapter of the thesis.

Chapter 8 Reflections and Synthesis

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter I am first going to review and reflect on the thesis as
presented in the four Inquiry Strands. Then in the second section I explore
the meta question I raised in Chapter 1 concerning my ambitions for the
research:

> What would need to have occurred for this research to be second
> person action research, or to *embody* research *with* others?

To help me do this I set up four questions, drawing on proposals for
'ecological narratives', that is *"a way of writing a story of social
phenomena that embraces the stories of its human constituents and can be
reembodied in their lives"* (Krippendorff, 1998, p. 8.). My exploration is
focussed around two related groups of issues:

1. 'Structures and 'structuring out', in the writing and other aspects of
   participatory inquiry: these issues draw on previous discussion of

reification and boundary objects, but also relate to problems in reporting and presenting the messiness of participatory inquiry in complex situations.

2. Power as undercurrents in participatory inquiry: understandings of power have occasionally surfaced in the Inquiry Strands but I have not articulated the workings of power in participatory practice and *researching with* as I experienced this. This is despite, or perhaps because of Epistemology Claim 9, in which I claim interactions with other people as *presenting opportunities and constraints for interpretation*. As Ralph Stacey (2002) writes:

> Since all human interaction ... is power related simply because we're always constraining each other, then any change, any shift in the way of thinking is going to shift power relations (p. 12).

This view of power is coherent with a Foucauldian concept of power as existing in relationships and expressed in action, rather than as a commodity. Conversations about power relations in some form may be required for conversations about the set of conditions that are the conclusion of Inquiry Strand 4.

The questions and the metaphors I use in my exploration of these two issues are heuristics, that is, guides in my exploration and ways of getting to grips with unexplored aspects of my research, for example the complexity and messiness of the circumstances of my inquiries. Metaphors as heuristics draws on the theory of metaphor articulated in Chapter 4, and this is how I used the metaphors for research discussed in Chapter 5, for example. An *organising* metaphor for reflection in this chapter is seeing the research through an *"understandascope"* – standing back and seeing patterns and meaning in the research as a whole[83]. I conclude this section with

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[83] "The understandascope" is a cartoon by Michael Leunig: a character looks through a telescope-like object at an urban landscape teeming with people. Schratz et al. (1995b) suggest that the dismayed look on the character's face is due to being *"caught between*

improvements for the methodology developed in the thesis as a methodology for *researching with* in complex and uncertain contexts.

In the third section of the chapter I return to my question:

> What it would take for an organisation like TCS to embody participation in its practising and managing?

I connect this question with the 'meta question' and draw on my explorations to offer invitations and questions to TCS concerning the embodiment of participation.

In the last section of the chapter, I identify questions for further inquiry arising from the thesis, and proposals for application of the methodology.

Further reflection on the thesis was indicated by two contrasting responses from people in TCS to drafts of Chapter 7. One person said they had immediately used the set of conditions for their evaluation of project work. Thus, this outcome had partially achieved one of the expectations of the research identified in Terms of Reference (Appendix 1.1) and the Critical Review:

> To provide a tool for all those who are responsible for practice and its development (to improve conditions of children and young people and those who facilitate learning) (Appendix 10: 59).

However BC, from a wider organisational perspective, responded that the 'set of conditions' did not appear to take TCS any further than Paul Mainteny's (1997) research, which I discussed in Chapter 1, especially in challenging power relations between children and adults and in TCS. As participants in the Critical Review briefly wrote:

> [The] history of TCS and Marion's interviews highlights that TCS' decision to involve children and young people in its decision-making

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being an observer and a witness", reflecting the role of research in "*tracing and transgressing*" the boundary between public and private knowledge (p. 73-4). (See picture 31 in Appendix 5 for my use of the metaphor.)

> in governance is the key driver for change – change in attitude, change in power of adults; towards social justice which is with, not for children and young people! (Appendix 10: 6).

> Bottom up (participation of children)/ Top down (corporate plans/assessment of project to headings) (tension/power) (Appendix 10: 14).

These responses, and feedback from my PhD supervisors and the thesis examiners triggered further reflection on critical aspects of the thesis, specifically participatory inquiry in circumstances of complexity and uncertainty, and in respect of power.

8.2 A review of the Inquiry Strands and claims arising from the Inquiries

I have chosen to include a reflection on the development of the thesis structure as a synthetic issue because I wanted to think about what the metaphor 'Inquiry Strands' revealed and concealed in the writing up of a constructivist inquiry. The Inquiry Strands were then presented in the form of a PhD thesis. This raised a further set of questions for me about the limitations of participatory inquiry in doctoral research. I start off with a review of the Inquiry Strands then reflect on some of the things that are minimally referred to in the Inquiry Strand. Other attempts at a structure are considered.

In Chapter 1 I set up the thesis as four Inquiry Strands. Each of these had implications for the next Inquiry Strand and also 'outputs' which could be the basis for invitations. The set-up up the Inquiry Strands is shown in Figure 8-1.

The four Inquiry Strands and research questions

'Outputs' of the Inquiry Strands

```
┌─────────────────────────┐     Implications for 'researching with' of a constructivist
│ Inquiry Strand 1        │     epistemology:
│ What are the            │ ↘·   being self-aware;
│ implications of         │  ·   attending to different ways of knowing
│ epistemologically-aware │  ·   knowledge as embodied, enacted, imaginative,
│ research for            │      'satisfactory', ethicality as responsibility and the
│ 'researching with'?     │      creation of possibilities.
└─────────────────────────┘  ·   Interactions with others as offering invitations
                                 and constraints

┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Inquiry Strand 2        │
│ What are the implications│
│ of self-aware research for│ ↘ Implications for 'researching with': openness
│ 'researching with'?     │    to learning, choosing the researcher voices,
└─────────────────────────┘    useful ideas, awareness of meaning of
                               context.

┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Inquiry Strand 3        │
│ How can metaphors       │
│ help in researching     │
│ understandings of       │
│ participation?          │                         ┌──────────────────────┐
└─────────────────────────┘                         │ Loose threads:       │
                                                     │ · Effects of         │
                                                     │ constraints and      │
┌─────────────────────────┐                         │ resistances          │
│ Inquiry Strand 4        │                         │ · Complexity of      │
│ How can understanding   │                         │ research contexts    │
│ metaphors of participation│   A set of metaphorical│ · Mess and          │
│ in TCS help to improve  │ ↘ conditions for respons-│ uncertainty          │
│ participatory practising?│   able participatory    └──────────────────────┘
└─────────────────────────┘   practice.
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Figure 8-1: The four Inquiry Strands of the thesis showing how they were connected in the thesis, the 'outputs' from each individual inquiry and the 'loose threads' indicated for reflection in Chapter 8.

Deciding to present the thesis in four Inquiry Strands forced an order on the mass of my experiencing during the research. At the same time the Strands authentically represented the different aspects of my learning and research. In particular, I claim that presenting the constructivist epistemology as an inquiry provides a solid ground for the choices I made in respect of the methods and conduct of the other inquiries. As an inquiry, I could focus on issues specific to my research, for example theories of child development

and ethics, which I would have had to bring in later. The ethical injunctions derived from the epistemological inquiry provide a robust framework for practice and this would be particularly useful for inquiries conducted by practitioner-researchers. Codes of ethics may be recognised as necessary but not sufficient - Husband (1995), for example, writes of the 'morally active practitioner' in social work who *"recognises the implementation of professional ethical guidelines as desirable and as being permanently irreducible to routine"*. I claim that ethicality as a matter of epistemology provides a firmer foundation for practice than the concept of 'situational ethics' (Punch, 1998).

The second Inquiry Strand into 'self-aware' research offers an alternative to models of reflective practice. 'Self-aware' research as I have conducted this in Chapter 3 is purposive in improving my research practice (Armson, 1998). Self-aware research includes reflection in which *"the interior dialogue is grounded in present and future need as well as past and present experience"* (ibid. p. 13) without this taking over the research itself. By undertaking a self-aware inquiry I could explore matters of concern to me in my research.

The first part of Inquiry Strand 3 adds to the theory of metaphor put forward by McClintock (1996). My purpose was to develop a way of researching with adults and with children and young people, drawing on metaphor theory. This theory draws on Inquiry Strand 1; metaphor is considered to be 'a way of knowing'. In the first part of the inquiry I construct a theoretical basis for exploring metaphors expressed in examples, stories and pictures, and an understanding of how metaphors themselves can be invitational and participative. This is not intended to be a sophisticated theory of metaphor, but a way of drawing on the qualities of metaphor as a cognitive process and expression. My purpose is to put understandings of children and of adults side by side so that these understandings can be mutually illuminating. I claim that this is a functional theory that could be

developed further, but which opens up possibilities for metaphor inquiry with groups of diverse membership.

The second part of Inquiry Strand 3 develops a methodology from the theory of metaphor in the first part of the inquiry, and my experiencing in TCS, the contexts of my research, which is enacted in Inquiry Strand 4. The inquiry both draws on my experiencing and helps me make sense of it. What emerges in this inquiry is a methodology that I then apply to *structure* my inquiry in Inquiry Strand 4, and that has been applied in that inquiry. I claim this methodology as *participatory*, that is research participants are included in four of the five steps in the inquiry.

Inquiry Strand 4 is a reconstruction of my research with TCS in terms of the methodology. I justified presenting the Inquiry Strands in this order by claiming a) that the *design* of constructivist research emerges in doing of the research, and b) that presenting the methodology as an inquiry enables the research to be *recoverable*. I claim that the metaphor *methodology as inquiry* reveals that there are many other ways in which I could have made sense of what I did in Inquiry Strand 4. In this way *methodology as inquiry* is similar to Schön's (1995) concept of *frame analysis*. Applying the steps of the methodology enabled me to disentangle what I wanted to say about TCS from the processes and products of engaging with people and bringing forth examples, stories and metaphors. I could also identify in my account when and how other people had been involved – although this was something I was sometimes unsure of while conducting the research and discuss in Section 8.2.1 and 8.3 below.

A further advantage was that rather I could weave in the literature in different strands as I had used it, that is to show learning from texts as a *dynamic* of the research, rather than as a 'stand alone' literature survey. I could also articulate how I arrived at the conclusion – the 'set of conditions' for participatory practice – in a way that represented some of

the complexity of this. I do not claim the 'set of conditions' as a sophisticated, all-purpose understanding of *participation* or of *participatory practice*, but as an invitation to TCS to use the metaphors that were brought forth in the conversations in my research for further conversations with children and young people and adults *about* participation in other conversations.

8.2.1   Reflection on the four strand structure

In this section I reflect on some issues for choices in organising the writing of the thesis. The thesis as structured was only one of many possible ways of writing about the research, and this structure developed in the process of writing and in conversations with my academic supervisors rather than from conversations with people in TCS. Thus the structure reflects a particular way of seeing the research, that is from my position as doctoral student, and a particular readership.

Writing unfolds further interpretations and writing could have formed a fifth inquiry strand. The structure of the thesis holds a lot of the 'mess' and uncertainties of the different aspects of my research, for example with respect to self-aware inquiry and TCS as an organisation. The four inquiries were not carried out in a sequence or in parallel. I started with much of the material on metaphor eventually incorporated in Chapter 4. The epistemological inquiry and the self-aware inquiry threaded through the four years of the research. Most of the inquiry with TCS took place in the second year of the research, but the activity sessions with children and young people spread into the third year. In my first thesis drafts I tried working with a structure in which all aspects of the research emerged from my research conversations, which felt at that time as how I had experienced the research. But this was impossible to sustain since further interpretations were unfolded in the writing, the design continued to emerge and the thesis needed to be written. The shifts from seeing the research in

the first year as a sequence of activities to attempts to 'knit up' a mass of experiencing at the end of the third year are depicted in pictures 30 to 32 in Appendix 5. As I indicated in Chapters 3 and 5, I tended to return to the [o] third person voice and the metaphor *'research as discovery'* as comfort zones to cope with my learning during research with TCS and in the writing.

Marshall and Reason (1993) describe how

> even when [postgraduate] students seem to have taken on personal responsibility for their inquiry and to have recognised their previous attribution of authority externally, it is interesting how easily the pattern of de-authorisation can recur. Any mention of examiners, for example, can swiftly trigger it (p.125).

'De-authoring' goes on in other contexts where judgements may be made about practice in situations of uncertainty, for example in the formal reporting of project work (see Appendix 8), the 'hierarchies of knowledge' at work in TCS (Gould, 2000a), and the concern of TCS practitioners to get action research 'right' when they were expected to be 'action researchers' (ibid., {62/notes}).

Constructivist inquiry is a recursive process, that is, the learning about one aspect affects others and *vice versa*. In my first attempt to *bring forth* the methodology from my research in TCS, I applied Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) (Checkland 1998, 1999). SSM provides a structure and a set of methods to develop a model of a 'human activity system'. A major advantage of using SSM was that I could develop and represent the recursions through diagramming; I could show, for example that my appreciation of metaphor developed both in my engagements with people and in reflecting on my own learning and there was feedback between these.

However using SSM did not work for two reasons. Firstly to provide a rationale for using SSM I needed to construct another research question.

Secondly, SSM draws on *engineering* metaphors. As I discussed in Chapter 3, I would choose different metaphors from my histories and traditions. Fiumara distinguishes between *digital* and *analogic* styles in language. Although she applies this distinction to academic language and that of everyday life I found it useful for making sense of my struggle with SSM. Although I could *apply* SSM, I found it difficult to *critique* my application in terms of its usefulness, or make aesthetic judgements about how I had used it. I was *practised* in using SSM, but not *fluent*. But I chose to keep *inputs* and *outputs* as *organising metaphors* in the Inquiry Strands to differentiate and then to connect experiences and reflection and learning, although these metaphors did not fit with my process metaphor of *researcher as tricoteuse* (Chapter 1, 1.5.4).

The primary advantage of the four strand structure of the thesis is that this 'combed out' the recursions in a way that enabled me to write the thesis. I could show beginnings and endings, indicate convergence and some of the ways in which the strands overlapped. A disadvantage, as well as the problem of metaphor viability, is that the strands do not capture what it was like to be involved in the research. As Lakoff (1987) writes about scientific rigour in categorisation processes, *"Rigour leads to rigor mortis"* (p. 11). There is no place for some of the very rich experiences that triggered my enthusiasm, or the 'loose ends' of unpursued questions and problems. In Chapter 3 I referred to Handy's comment on 'temple' structures that are *insecure when the ground shakes.* Crucially, the four Inquiry Strand structure freed me up when I was bogged down in working out a coherent framework for writing which captured interconnections in my inquiry and some of the outcomes. However this freeing up - and the constraints of a PhD thesis – were at a cost. The nouns of 'input' and 'output' took over the verbs of 'researching' and 'knowing' (Hoskins 1999) (see also Chapter 2, Epistemology Claim 8). Other consequences are discussed in the next sections.

8.3 Questions for reflections on participatory inquiry and embodying researching *with*

In Chapter 1 I identified a 'meta-question': What would need to have occurred for this research to be second person action research, or to *embody* research *with* others? This question arose from my concern about the slippage from my ambition for the research as 'second person inquiry' to the 'first person inquiry' represented in the thesis. In my accounts of TCS as an organisation, of the shifts in focuses and methodologies and of the difficulties in writing a coherent story of the research, I have shown the complexity and uncertainties in my research and the research contexts. Some of this complexity and uncertainty related to my histories and traditions as I discussed in Chapter 3. Doctoral research also represented a significant personal risk in that I was stepping out of an established work role and 'community of practice'. I learned from my research in Inquiry Strand 4 that participatory endeavours are often characterised by complexity of contexts, contradictions, uncertainty and issues of identity.

To help me reflect on second person to first person slippage I have extracted four questions from Klaus Krippendorff's (1998) proposals for an *"ecological narrative"*. Krippendorff's proposals are designed to counter the *"pull of monologism"* in writing and the theorising of other people in research.

> In everyday languaging, third person pronouns refer to those who are absent ... theorising is responsible for estranging other from us (ibid. p.5).

'Theorising' entails distancing the observer from the domain of observation and from the theories themselves. The expectations that theories should be consistent and rational reduces them to monological constructions as the product of one voice, and one logic (ibid. p. 3). Krippendorff (1999) argues further that an aim of social scientists should be to *"cherish incoherences ...*

to honour the necessarily indigenous nature of human understanding" (p. 142).

In his account of social theories Krippendorff draws on appreciations which I have discussed elsewhere in the thesis, including that as 'communications in language' theories are not *found* but constructed, discussed, rejected and so on, and that theories serve social functions, and *"transform their objects in the process of their communication"* (ibid.). Krippendorff chooses the term 'ecological narratives' because of the connections between ecology and narrative: both arise from their many constituents in the process of distinguishing among interactions (ecology) or stories (narrative) in the enaction of understandings or stories of the world. Narratives are always incomplete because they are always extendable – it is always possible to ask 'what happened before, what happens next?'- and ecologies are always larger that the world of any of their constituents.

The first proposal is that since observational accounts do not exist without their narrators, researchers should use the first person pronoun and verbs to make clear our active involvement. This proposal concerns what I understand as 'first person inquiry', and which is represented in the thesis. That is, I have written in the first person and accepted responsibility for my constructions; I have chosen rather than *"backed into"* the passive voice (Fine et al, 2000). But an aspect missing in the Inquiry Strands is my observing of my own participating. I include this in discussion of power in shaping my inquiry and 'being with' in Sections 8.3.1 and 8.3.2 below.

Krippendorff (1998) also proposes that *"in ecological narratives we must grant others their voices as well"*. One way of doing this is to report other people's own stories. But Krippendorff also argues that *"recording a polyphony of voices"* is not enough; sources must be given. Neither should stories be presented as inherently meaningful; researchers should assume positions as readers or speakers, but not interpreters, that is, the voice of the

researcher should be made contestable. 'The granting of others voices' has been a point of slippage from second person to first person in my thesis; I reflect on this in Section 8.3.1 n terms of 'structuring out'. Fine et al (2000) add the question *"have I described the mundane?"* in respect of including other people's voices and stories. In reflecting on this I realised that there were aspects of TCS that escaped me, particularly everyday processes that work well. In interview formats people tend to talk of what doesn't work rather than what does, the exception rather than the rule. As I discussed in Chapter 7, other questions than 'tell me about your role' might have been more useful. This was also an issue for the *scale* of the research, and the quality of my engagements, as I reflect in Chapter 3. If I were using the methodology again on a similar scale I would arrange to spend longer periods of time with fewer people. The number of different people involved in my research was partly a consequence of the political aspects of my research (see Section 8.3.2 below).

The third proposal I consider here is that, *"We must find ways of listening to how others take what we may hear quite differently, how they respond in ways we would not"* (Krippendorff, 1998 p. 10). This means avoiding censoring the voices of others and presuming to know what they 'really mean'. It also involves avoiding projecting our own theory on to others, but to *"take in and to echo what others tell us"* (ibid.). In connection with the same issue Fine et al (2000) ask, *"Have some informants, constituencies/ participants reviewed the material with me and interpreted, dissented, challenged my interpretations? And then how do I report these departures/agreements in perspective?"* In Chapter 7, 7.3.3 I list five formal processes I used for checking out the metaphors in stories and pictures of participation. But these processes were opportunistic rather than systematic, and conversations in which I always had the last word (and in the context, was bound to have the last word as the 'thesis writer'). Reason (2001) gives an example of first person inquiries being systematised and integrated with second person inquiry in an inquiry group. David (2000)

points out in doing action research that practically it is impossible to participate with everybody and to ask for reflection from everyone involved. Nevertheless I did not include in the methodology or enact in my research a *systematic* approach to reviewing the material, or to how I would incorporate the feedback. This is an issue for improvement in the methodology developed in the thesis.

Krippendorff's (1998) final proposal concerns the status of ecological narratives as political accounts, echoed by Herndl and Nahrwold (2000).

> When researchers construct representations of the experiences of others and then validate those accounts through formal disciplinary codes, they engage in a social activity that affects and perhaps even infringes upon the lives and subjectivity of others.

That is, I recognise that my account can 're-enter' the social processes of which it speaksand therefore should be understandable to the participants and respectful of them. This proposal is embodied in my accounts to specific participants of my engagements with them, for example those included in Appendices 6 and 9. However, as an (adult) reader of my letter to 'Mr. G's class' (Appendix 6.1) commented, I couldn't write my thesis like that. Polkinghorne (1997) advocates different versions of research for different audiences. But, as I pointed out in Section 8.2.1, writing is a process of re-interpreting. In TCS participation work with children and young people, other forms of reporting are often used, for example presentations, drama and video.

In Chapter 3, I referred to Scheurich's (1997) description of the *"openness at heart"* of interviews as conversations, and that in the writing up of research, the openness gets colonised by the researcher's own desires and intentions. As an alternative Scheurich proposes the use of other forms of expression, for example poetry. Reflecting on this revealed to me a judgement I had made concerning the contribution of children and young people to a TCS conference on children's rights. This contribution was in

the form of a short play, and poems and songs. I had judged the one of the songs as inappropriate because the content of the song had nothing to do wth children's rights or participation. But as a *performance* in those contexts it was an expression of *embodied participation*; knowing the performance as an *expression* of participation I could not then make judgements of appropriateness. In response to my epistemological question from Chapter 2, is children's knowing different from adults' knowing, and in what ways? I suggest that in children's knowing *embodiment* and *imagination* may be more to the forefront than in adult's knowing.

In terms of my distinction between objectivist and constructivist epistemologies in Chapter 2, pictures and drama as ways of *knowing* – and the *knowing* triggered by seeing these presentations, may be discounted by those who privilege scientific, propositional knowledge (for example, policy makers). Fine et al's (2000) questions: "To what extent has my analysis offered an alternative to the 'commonsense' or dominant discourse? What challenges might very different audiences pose to the analysis presented?" brings out other problems. I consider this as an issue for further research, and for improving the methodology developed in the thesis.

8.3.1 Structure and the 'structuring out' of mess and multiple voices

At points in the thesis I have distinguished between codes and reifications and the enactment of these codes in practising and participation. Theses are 'boundary objects' in the terms in which I discuss these in Chapter 7, 7.2.3. In becoming reified the dynamics of experiencing, participating and practising can disappear, or become 'reified out'. My hypothesis for the disappearance of the CIN Group is that this became 'reified out' in the process of translation into Action Plans, Justice Objectives and so on. As the boundary objects *became* the practice, practice could only be talked

about in the terms of Action Plans, which are directives, not conversations. As the thesis became my research, then I began to see my research *as* combed out in the Inquiry Strands and the loose ends were invisible. In this section I discuss what was left out in the thesis as a consequence of the structure.

There are two issues for which there was no place initially in the Inquiry Strands as I have presented them, another referred to only briefly, and an issue of consistency in my invitations and the writing of the thesis. All are important in my aim for the reader being 'able to follow in my footsteps'. The first issue concerns my use of pictures in my own reflecting and in the research conversations in the thesis. Showing people my own rich pictures triggered their interest and their drawing of their own pictures. Discussion and illustration of these, except for the last three pictures in Appendix 5, were omitted for reasons of space and coherence. Because of this omission I felt constrained in the extent to which I could urge the use of pictures in formulating the invitations for other researchers to take up the methodology developed in Chapter 5.

The second omission is how some pictures, particularly those I referred to in Chapter 7 as 'disturbing' provoked conversations and the enactment of the ethical position arising from the epistemology of the thesis. For example, pictures 15 and 19 in Appendix 5 were the focus of several conversations before and during the Critical Review. This omission was a matter of space in the thesis because of the complexity of the explication. But neither did an explication fit readily into one of the Inquiry Strands. But the pictures were often the triggers and focuses of co-inquiries in my research. I also saw using pictures as a way of coping with and showing the complexity in my inquiry and communicating this to other people.

A further constraint arising from *research as thesis* and the four strand structure relates to the *space* available in a thesis for examples and

illustrations from my engagement with TCS. Although I advocate the use of *stories* in the methodology developed in Chapter 5 I have used very few of those brought forth in my research in the thesis. Every one of the events listed in Appendix 2 has several stories attached, and there are many more *interstitial* stories (Brown and Duguid 1984). Appendices 7.2, 8.1 and 8.2 include examples of stories of participation to show how these developed in conversations and from experiences. There are stories that became narratives in my research, that is, they developed into several episodes – for example, my conversations with LP, skeletally referred to in Chapter 7, 7.2.1.

Omitting stories is largely a matter of word length, and this is an issue for qualitative research generally. In the final version of the thesis I wrote stories back in, and included the pictures and other writing in the appendices, but then these stories often became illustrations for my constructions, rather than voices (and pictures) of other participants. That is, they were included to fit my interpretations rather than as the voice of other participants. (This is a criticism I have made of the use of children's drawings in some TCS publications). Thus the thesis is not a fully developed "*participant text*" (Penn and Frankfurt, 1994), or a representation of a 'second person action inquiry', since the voices of others are often at the margins.

These issues are related to the regulations for the form and length of theses, but also to choices concerning *ways of writing* and the foregrounding and backgrounding of material.

8.3.2 Power as a way of understanding complexity in participatory inquiry

Although I refer to power in different ways in the thesis I did not include power as a focus of systematic inquiry in the Inquiry Strands. In this

section I show some of the discussions about power in TCS from my research conversations. These discussions indicated to me how understandings of power inhibit change in TCS, and have the potential for creativity, and they are taken forward to support the invitations to TCS in Section 8.4.

I then reflect on theories of the workings of power in relation to the shaping of my research. I conclude by pulling out some issues for participatory inquiries. Rather than power being a fundamental, or an irrelevance in participatory inquiry, and while not denying its material effects, I consider the concept of power as useful in exploring complexities.

The 'hegemony of niceness' discussed in Chapter 7 conceals the workings of power in the management of TCS (and in the CASE partnership). Kets de Vries (1995) describes *"managing by ambiguity"* as contributing to an uncontrollable and unpredictable work environment and confusion. This description resonates with GH's comment to me following the Corporate Plan workshops (see Chapter 7, 7.2.3), that

> my feeling about [TCS] culture is that it generates two behaviours: 'I'm going to do what I want to anyway' and 'very adapted children' who have to check out everything with everybody. There isn't a lot in the middle {26/notes, with reference to Transactional Analysis personality states (Berne, 1970)}.

One explanation of my question, 'Why is it that practitioners working with others in anti-oppressive and emancipatory ways so often talk about their own management as oppressive and disabling' draws on my hypothesis of the 'hegemony of niceness', that is, that the *ambiguous* management style that is an interpretation of organisational values, leads to confusion and stress for employees. For example, in the TCS Corporate Plan (1999-2002), an attempt was made to distinguish different relationships:

> Unlike our relationship with children and young people where the Society reaches out unconditionally, the relationship with its staff is conditional as determined by the Society's employment policies and procedures and its contracts of employment (Corporate Plan p. 15).

But within those conditions the Plan sets out dealing with staff in almost the same terms as children and young people, as 'reaching out', 'involving and listening', 'overcoming injustice', and 'recognising and nurturing'.

A character of Stanley Robinson's (2001) novel about colonising Mars asks:

> If democracy and self-rule are the fundamentals, then why should people give up these rights when they enter the work place? In politics we fight like tigers for freedom ...for choice ... for control of our lives, in short. And then we wake up in the mornings and go to work and all those rights disappear (p. 146).

Crossing boundaries, as Sibley (1995) points out can be problematic. *"The mixing of categories ... creates liminal zones or spaces of ambiguity or discontinuity"* (p. 32-33).

In terms of children and young people's participation in TCS, WJ and SM respectively said:

> ... A lot of it is to do with perceptions of systems and power that staff bring. How do the people we recruit see the authority? Do the people in authority recognise the authority we have. The CE will say we're a non-hierarchical organisation. These [Society Management team] are people who almost don't recognise the authority they have. At same time ... about overspend and redundancies they forget the human connection. Because there's no decent performance evaluation we set up heroes and villains. Every time they get a problem they chuck a post at it, whether it's child protection or ... whatever. Then they give the person 6 months and then they marginalise them in order to avoid change. {55/tape}

> Somehow people get into a mindset that they can't achieve change, that everything has to happen despite them which isn't helpful or useful in terms of the work with children and young people. One of my most frustrating experiences in TCS, I think I've learned this from working in TCS, power is not a jigsaw. It's more like a river, particularly creating power. There are different sources of power,

for example oppressive use of power clearly which one wants to give up and decrease. But creative power is something one wants to increase. Where one's been a position where one's manager hasn't been creatively powerful in the Society, I haven't experienced that as empowering. I have been in a position where my manager has not been creatively powerful and that doesn't empower you. You need your manager to be creatively powerful for you to be creatively powerful yourself {48/tape}.

I saw connections with BC's concern about the meaning of my research in terms of power relations in TCS, and Shula Ramon's comment about "*the impossibility of reconciling involvement and obedience*" (my notes from PIASP conference, Leicester May 1998). In terms of Epistemology Claim 7, Chapter 2, *conversations of involvement* and *conversations of obedience* are different classes of conversation, that is, they embody different ways of *knowing* other people. As I describe in Chapter 7 certain practices in TCS, for example the use of 'boundary objects' such as specific reporting formats, and 'standards', privilege some ways of knowing over others. Similarly Newman and Roberts (1997) consider that 'evidence-based' practice may lead to "*pushing the views of people who use welfare service to the epistemological margins*" (p. 290). A comment from the Critical Review connecting participation and ways of *knowing* children and young people was that,

> *[TCS] should value the assets children bring through participation –
> energy, creativity, movement (not understood within TCS)* (Appendix
> 10:59).

In so far as I had a policy with regard to *power* in my inquiries, I thought of power as much like *participation* in terms of the complexity of understandings and use of metaphors. That is, like 'participation', you can't point to some thing and say, 'that's participation!', or 'that's power!' However, the understandings of power that I brought with me into the research were contradictory. From my experiences as parent, employee and student of management (see Chapter 3) I thought of power in terms of discipline ('for their own good') and control – albeit exercised from

different bases (Morgan, 1985). As O'Connor (1995) points out, participation in organisations by employees is *"an especially paradoxical form of change"* (p. 217) because it runs counter to organisational practices such as hierarchical decision-making, and selective information exchange[84]. O'Connor describes the organisational change required for employee involvement as a *"system contradiction"*, which requires *"tolerance for 'floundering'"*, and willingness to accept more and more change, and in which

> *processes are often 'out of control', ambiguity in the early stages; blueprints and packages can't be used; processes are inherently iterative, involving temporary states* (ibid.)

- a description that encapsulates my experience of my research, and resonates with stories of participation (for example, those in Appendices 7.2 and 8.1, and some of my descriptions of the research activities with children and young people).

At the same time, as a legacy of systemic therapy training in the 1980s, I thought of power as an *"epistemological error"* or *myth* in Bateson's (1972) terms (p. 488, p. 494), since, as I indicate in Epistemology Claims 1 and 8, our knowing of other people (and their power) is a process of our constructing. I'd also taken on board that power as a linear concept is unhelpful in understanding systems[85]. As the epistemology of the thesis unfolded I saw all interactions with other people as power-related, so power was in one sense a 'given' of *participatory practice* and *participatory*

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[84] In the thesis I do not draw on literature and research concerning employee participation, because much of this is heavily qualified in terms of organisational objectives, or does not recognise the 'paradox', or is concerned to advocate specific models (see, for example, Sagie and Koslowsky, 2000). A useful point from Heller et al. (1998) in terms of 'systems change' is their conclusion that organisational participation requires a holistic approach and a wide range of participative practices.

[85] This understanding of my side-stepping of 'power' and connection with my histories and traditions was revealed to me through reading Flaskas and Humphrey's (1993) article concerning the 'problem' of power in family therapy.

inquiry. It was there, but because it was everywhere I couldn't see it as significant.

Power was a term used in at least half of the research conversations about participation, for example that participation involves power *shifts*, *giving power to*, and *empowerment*. Power was expressed as a commodity, for example something that can be *devolved*. As I discussed in Chapter 5, distinguishing between *power over* and *power* to was useful in thinking about research with children and young people. To make sense of 'empowerment' in a school setting, Griffith (1996) distinguishes similarly between *investment* power, that is power that derives from hierarchical position, and *divestment* power, which is *"corporate and distributive ... that regards change as constant and celebrates diversity"* (p. 215). As he says, *divestment* power is based upon an *ethics of democracy*. In his formulation this is similar to the ethical position I derive from the epistemology in Chapter 2. In my research activities with children and young people they identified the differences between adults and children in terms of size and *power to* (drive a car, have a drink in a pub and so on), and *organising* power, that is, the power to mobilise resources, construct boundaries and help things to run {76/notes}.

As I illustrated in Chapter 6, 6.6, rather than highlighting the significance of power, talk of 'empowerment' may hide the complexities in understanding participation as a practice (see Humphries, 1997; Griffiths, 1998). Kothari (2001) argues that by the creating of 'dichotomies of power' such as 'adults have power and children have none', power is only apparent in material realities. Participatory approaches based on this appreciation of power may not *"unearth the processes by which this dichotomy occurs, and that participatory approaches themselves may reproduce wider power relations"* (ibid. p. 140).

A further assumption I made was that in adapting Rodwell's (1998) model for constructivist research the methodology would *"redistribute power"*, as Rodwell claims, even though as she also writes, *"recognition of power dynamics are important in preparing adequate, appropriate responses to the emerging political dynamics"* (p. 218).

These understandings of power made it difficult for me to articulate how the contexts of my inquiries as I experienced them led to shifts in the boundaries I was constructing around myself as a researcher, and the boundaries around my inquiry. *Power* in a constructivist epistemology as defined by Fisher (1991) is *"the capacity* [of individuals or collectivities] *to determine meaning"* and is structured recursively between *power holders* and *power addressees* (p. 55). Fisher suggests that exercises of power can be challenged by testing the *power-addressee's* presuppositions concerning the meaning of the *power-holder*, for example in dialogue. If the *power-holder's* meaning is not accepted by the *power-addressee*, then the *power-holder* has the options of imposing their meaning, seduction or accepting defeat. Thus the questions to be asked concerning power are not 'how much power do I have over you', but "how do I construe our interaction as constraining (or offering possibilities)", and "how do I construe your construing of our interaction in terms of constraints and possibilities" (see Epistemology Claim 9). That is, power issues are not so much about how much power do you see yourself as having, but how much power do you see others as having, and how much power do you think they see you as having.

Fisher's explanation does not distinguish or account for how power works in terms of embodiment, for example in relationships between adults and children. In contrast, Foucault emphasises that:

> nothing is more material, physical, corporal than the exercise of power (Foucault, 1980 p. 57-58).

as exemplified in *"the work of power on the bodies of children or soldiers"* (ibid.)

In Chapter 3, I referred to Foucault's writing about power, specifically in the context of 'feelings (of practitioners) as pressurised containers', invoking his concept of 'disciplinary power' as it develops in professional <u>discourses</u> and institutions,

> in the form of a network of relations from top to bottom, but also to a certain extent from bottom to top and laterally ... This network holds the whole together and traverses it in its entirety with the effects of power that derive one from another; supervisors perpetually supervised (Foucault, 1977 p. 176).

Power *circulates*, and individuals are *"the vehicles of power, not its points of application"* (Foucault 1980, p. 98). Researchers, practitioners, managers are 'conduits of power'. As SM's metaphor of 'a river of creative power' indicates, power has two sides:

> What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't weigh on us as a force that says 'no', but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge ... It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the social body, much more than a negative instance, whose function is repression (Foucault, 1980, p 119).

Discourses, for example, those in relation to childhood and youth that I discussed in Chapter 6, are created through social practices. Discourses as 'Power/Knowledge' work to create 'subjectivities' and to 'normalise'. Kothari (2001) points out, for example, that conventions can develop in participatory practices in which choosing not to participate becomes deviant.

> [As] our reflexive gaze takes over the disciplining role as we take on the accounts and vocabularies of meaning and motive that are available to us ... *certain other forms of account get marginalised or simply eased out of currency* (Clegg, 1994, p. 279, my italics).

Power always implies resistances: *"there are no relations of power without resistances ... resistance exists all the more by being in the same place as power"* (Foucault, 1980, p. 142). So exercising power over others will not always lead to modifying their actions; power is only one sided when the possibility of effective resistance has been removed.

Rather than 'power' as a stand-alone concept and something that can be seen in itself, power cannot be understood divorced from the local context in which it shows itself - in professional discourses, everyday interactions, in the way we are able to think about self and others, and in what it is we choose to study (Flaskas and Humphreys, 1993).

In a related development Wenger (1998) considers power as a *property* of social communities, that is, *"in terms of the ability to act in line with enterprises we pursue"* and concerning negotiations of meaning and the formation of social identities (p. 189). He conceives power as having a *dual nature* in deriving from *power to belong* – the identity of being a certain person and being a member of a community, but also *vulnerability* in negotiating and exercising control over what we belong to. This dual nature involves tension.

I am going to draw on these understandings of power – working in local contexts and constructing identities, to consider three ways in which workings of power in interactions shaped my research with TCS, specifically in terms of constraining and enabling participatory inquiry. These concern academic discourses, self-disqualifications, and the workings of power in TCS.

The first aspect concerns the academic discourses in which my research and identity as student and researcher were constructed. In the first meeting with TCS it was emphasised among us when participatory methodologies were discussed that the first objective of my research was my writing and

presentation of an academic thesis as sole author. Since I would be involved in research training in the first year and writing in the third, the research with TCS would be carried out in the second. Thus there were constraints on the timing of the research, how others could be involved as participants, and the relative weight of research with TCS and the writing of the thesis, and what counted as 'legitimate' research activities, and what the local research community were interested in. Since I was based in a Technology faculty, for example, my research with children and young people was considered as novel and exciting and I was enthusiastically supported in my struggles with the epistemology.

The second aspect concerns 'self-disqualifications', that is what I saw as legitimate and disqualified in my researching, and in constructing my identity as researcher. As I discuss in Section 7.1.2.3 in terms of an 'archaeology of discipline' these choices relate to discourses beneath the surface. For example, a topic in conversations that I disqualified myself from concerned the religious beliefs of participants and how these influenced people's understandings of participatory practice. In Chapter 7 I discuss the relationship between TCS and The Church of England, and at times people referred to their personal beliefs and practices, but I ruled this out as a private discourse of a community of which I was not a member. Neither did I ask people about their personal life and families; even at the end of my research, after I had met people many times I knew little about their lives outside TCS. I felt this as a personal loss, especially in terms of my aims for a participatory inquiry but I also saw this as outside my role as a researcher.

The third aspect concerns the workings of power in TCS and how these shaped my research. In mid 1998, when I preparing material about the research to set up project visits and interviews, Paul Maiteny's (1997)

report[86] was read by the Chief Executive of TCS, who was reported to me as very concerned about how TCS was represented in it. This report unearthed a history of vulnerabilities and insecurity for me, a reminder of some of the 'Zeus nods' experiences I discuss in Chapter 3, and of the personal riskiness of my research. In Chapter 3 I discuss the experience of watching a teacher maintain 'his' order in a class, since I could not see what was 'out of order'. Neither could I see how Paul Maiteny's report had been disrespectful in representing TCS. I saw my fears echoed by people from TCS. Although I had planned to interview managers at some time, this was moved forward, and efforts made for the Society Management Team to legitimise my research. Recalling this experience, and despite an enjoyable interview with the Chief Executive I was astonished by the suggestion that TCS was a 'non-hierarchical organisation'.

Looking back, I can see this as having other consequences, including a scaling up of the research, a review of my personal investment in the research and a reinforcement of my 'forelock tugging' to managers. Rodwell comment that for some people *"their need for control may result in efforts to prevent a free flow of information"* and that political control of information prevents *"the dialogue and change central to constructivist inquiry"* (p. 219). A further consequence that also draws on my personal 'hegemony of niceness' as well as vulnerabilities was for my censoring material included in the thesis. Among material not included is a conversation thread concerning heroes and villains in TCS. In my account of TCS in Chapter 7 and in my invitations in this chapter I have considered the *effects* of management practices rather than the practices themselves. Neither have I included critical material from people who might be identified. This is a choice made from awareness of my biases, from how I perceive my responsibility to other people (for example, in terms of confidentiality), but also uncertainty about how the material might be read.

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[86] This report is discussed in Chapter 1, 1.1. Copies had been sent out to project leaders involved in the research soon after completion, but not to the Chief Executive.

Metaphors I used to make sense of my research included 'threshold crossing' and 'being in and out of step'. These metaphors articulated other aspects of my research, specifically my observing of my participation in the research, and that this was punctuated by shifts and gaps that were difficult to express as a narrative. Although both threshold crossing and being in and out of step metaphors concern movement I also saw them as implying a hiatus. I could envisage writing about my research as a list of border crossings and recrossings.

In Chapter 5 I refer to 'the flow' of experiencing during the research within the metaphor 'research as dancing'. What this metaphor reveals, and that is elided or compressed by the four Inquiry Strands is the time and timing of this and other research of this type. These are issues rarely discussed in research literature. Conle's (1999) suggestion that *the outcome [of research] seems to hinge on the inquirer's relationship to time and place in life and research*" resonated with my experience during the writing up of the research. The metaphor 'research as dancing' captured times when I was 'out of step' either with developments in TCS or with the research timetable.

8.3.3   Summary

There is one set of conclusions and an invitation arising from my reflections in this section.

The set of conclusions concerns improvements to the methodology developed in Chapters 5 and 7 as a *participatory* methodology, or a methodology for *researching with*. In Chapter 5, 5.4, I identified a set of principles for the conduct of the methodology developed in Chapters 5 and 7. These were

- All research could be considered as conversations in that meaning arises in the process of engagement;

- Researchers need to attend to the flow of researching as well as to discrete events and experiences

- Ethical practice involves self-awareness on the part of the researcher in terms of her predispositions.

From my reflection in this chapter, as a *participatory inquiry*, two further principles are indicated:

- Primary forms of reporting the inquiry are required that embody the different ways of knowing of the participants in the inquiry.

- Feedback, or 'play back' to other participants of the researcher's interpretations – and attending to meanings as they emerge in conversations, should be designed into the research methodology; that is, the interplay between the researcher's first person inquiry, and participatory inquiry as a 'second person' inquiry should be systematic, and not just happen when the opportunity arises.

The invitation concerns how the concept of 'power' might be useful in participatory inquiry. Firstly, 'power' and 'empowerment' are *attractor* metaphors in terms of understanding participatory inquiry and practice. That is, *power* is an everyday language term with meanings that directly draw on our bodily experiences, and on our perceptions of social institutions such as the law. I conclude that *power difference* and *empowerment* are explanations of how things are, for better or for worse, but for seeing how things can be different other metaphors are needed, for example those I propose at the end of Inquiry Strand 4, or *"multiple causes"* as represented in Figure 6.3, or formulations such as Finn's question quoted in Section 6.4.4, which although invoking the concept of power also invites imagination:

What might the middle-age and elderly scripts look like and how might their deviance be defined if adolescents controlled the power and resources to shape those images and experiences?

Where I do consider that understandings of power may be useful in participatory inquiry is in articulating complexity, that is the interconnections between researchers and contexts, including the site of the research, the discourses within which the research is situated, the histories and traditions of those involved, and differences in *ways of knowing* other people.

8.4 Invitations to TCS to embody participation in its organising

The question that was left over from Inquiry Strand 4 was, w*hat would it take for an organisation like TCS to embody participation in its practising and managing.* To respond to this question I review Step 2 of Inquiry Strand 4, that is my understanding of TCS. I then invite TCS to *join up the sites of participation*, to set up *conversations of participation* drawing on metaphor as a heuristic for exploring 'possible futures', and ways of *storying practice.* These invitations bring in the ways in which metaphors and stories can be invitational and participatory from Chapters 4 and 5, develop further the concept of *conversations* from the second and third inquiry strands, and draw on discussion in the previous section of this chapter.

From my exploration of the grounded metaphors of TCS evoked in Inquiry Strand 4 I noted the effects of distances between practising and managing. This led to a need for 'brokers between communities of practice' to help TCS to communicate with itself and between the different realities of project practice and central management. I considered the skills managers needed in negotiating TCS' environments and 'uneasy truces' and suggested these could be applied more effectively within TCS. I introduced the metaphor of a 'hegemony of niceness' to make sense of the apparent

problems in making difficult decisions. In Section 8.3.2. I gave examples of the multiple understandings of the workings of power in TCS, and also indicated that some of these understandings inhibited change, and this would require further exploration. I claimed that practices became sedimented in protocols and reified in 'boundary objects'. I conclude from my experience of TCS that:

(i)   There is a serious need to address the growing gap between practitioner 'realities' and those of TCS senior managers; this causes problems of alignment and constrains *"the sense of the possible"* (see Section 7.2.1)

(ii)   Participation is embodied in some sites in TCS but not all;

(iii)   Some people have a richer appreciation of children and young people's participation than others.

The issue in terms of participatory practising with children and young people is not the enhancement of this practice in individual sites, but how this is communicated and used as learning in and for TCS as a whole (Gould, 2000).

8.4.1   Places and spaces for participation: metaphor playgrounds

A metaphor for the role of a project manager brought forth in a research conversation was as *a dry space*. This was provided by a 'transparent umbrella', so that project workers could do their work protected from demands of TCS and partners, but which they could choose to 'look up' and see. They could also choose to step out and engage with 'what is coming down'. In this way project workers had *power to*, and Another manager said of an example of participation, *"[people] need if they want to, to be able to go to someone and say, make this more of a concern"*{41/tape}.

There is resonance between this concept of managing and some participatory practice with children and young people. I see this in practice

which facilitates a space for children and young people to explore issues and then to 'step out' and present their explorations to powerful adults (e.g. school council work – Y4). There is also resonance with practice which helps young people to build transferable skills (Young People's Charter of Participation), mediation and advocacy work, and for example the setting up of the Liverpool Children's Bureau (L4).

In my judgement participation was embodied in the projects I visited in terms of the metaphors people used in their practising. However there are other TCS sites and processes which I have experienced or of which people have spoken to me which do not embody participation. For example, once *"things were away from the individual in the organisation"* they were no longer participative. A manager said of significant issues that senior managers should *"let them be things that are visible, tangible, not to be the province of the few who only talk to a few"*.

The signs of sites of participation being disconnected are in how people make further distinctions between themselves and their work and TCS. These include the way people in projects distinguished what they were doing – for example getting on with life at the bottom of the sea, while the storms of HQ went on overhead, and about how new workers saw themselves as working for the project and not for TCS. A metaphor used to describe TCS was that it was *"woolly"*, and since *"loose wool is very weak"* TCS needed *"binding together"*. I also relate this to the concern expressed in projects about how project work was published in TCS and the reluctance I perceived in some people to engage in conversations with other 'communities of practice' in TCS.

The site I experienced as most embodying participation was the TCS Conference Centre. I saw it used by people from all the divisions in TCS, by volunteers and by children and young people. In terms of the set of conditions proposed in Chapter 7, it is safe place in which there is space for

movement. People talk of it as a nurturing environment, and at the same time as the site of difficult discussions and hard work. If TCS were a neighbourhood, the conference centre is the community hall, playground, church, park or whatever constitutes the heart.

The site I have experienced as least embodying participation is HQ. This may be an expression of my alignment with practitioners rather than managers. It possibly reflects that all my conversations in HQ were with individuals. My perception of TCS was that HQ was 'at the centre' of TCS, and this was an understanding reflected by others. I also perceived it as working within a paradigm of temple and a machine bureaucracy, although I saw signs of other paradigms emerging with the development of the programme managers' jobs. In terms of embodying participation I invite the SMT to bring forth and work with other metaphors, for example that of TCS as a person, or as a neighbourhood, which relocate or reframe the relationships between the sites and functions of TCS. Another metaphor from a project in respect of the different pieces of work carried on was that of hub, spokes and rim {35/tape}. In embodying participation, and TCS as a network of communities of practice, I would see the conference centre as being the *hub of conversations*. As I discussed in Chapter 4, metaphors have entailments and can trigger new understandings. For example, in Chapter 6 I referred to the metaphor of participation used by the CIN Group as *belonging in neighbourhoods*. *Belonging* has been interpreted by Wenger (1998) in terms of three 'modes' for the development of learning communities which I discuss elsewhere in the thesis and which could form the basis for exploring the meaning of *TCS as a neighbourhood*. These include engagement *in negotiations of meaning*, imagination – "*creating images of the world and seeing connections through time and space by extrapolating from our own experience*", and alignment – "*coordinating our energy and activities in order to fit within broader structures*" (p. 173-174).

This invitation is also a general invitation to elicit and explore metaphors, to ask questions such as:

> How is this metaphor attractive (for example Figure 7-4 "becoming child centred")?

> What are its entailments for our managing and practising and for the participation of children and young people?

And to compare, for example:

> GH: We are a hierarchical organisation.

> AR: And we are also a system {07/tape}.

8.4.2   Conversations of participation

My second invitation is to bring forth conversations in which people can tell and inquire into their own stories of participation. The purpose of these would be to develop awareness of the sources of people's own understandings of participation and non-participation and constructions of childhood. People need rich stories of their experiencing in order to bring forth new possibilities for practising and management. Peoples' knowing of participation is evidenced in their practice, but also in the richness of their own stories. *"Emancipatory discourse carries with it its* _past history_ *of successful emancipations"* (Krippendorff, 1989 p. 194). Developing awareness of participation is especially important for people in TCS who do not have direct contact with children and young people in their work, and for people joining TCS. In the terms in which I discuss *conversations* in Chapter 2 learning goes on <u>in</u> conversations, and it is through conversations between people and as brokered between *communities of practice* (Chapter 7) that organisations can be considered to 'learn'. Learning for organisations is enhanced through people's membership of multiple communities of practice (Wenger, 1998).

How conversations enhance learning and create a future – imagining and practising thoughts, emotions, images, behaviours and outcomes, people begin to "create memory pathways that eventually will generate the actual outcomes" "*we rely on memory frameworks for organising available clues*" (Berlin, 1996, p. 334).

In an organisation like TCS practitioners are the 'face' of the organisation, not just between TCS and children and young people, but with external local organisations. There is an issue for TCS about its organisational coherence if those 'on the boundary' do not feel able to defend TCS to the external world. During my research I was aware of the amplifying effect on the 'boundary blurring' of the series of re-organisations. Thus people talked of being 'sceptical' about messages from 'the centre'.

HP wrote in response to my question about the experiencing of management as oppressive (see Chapter 3 and Appendix 9) that organisations like TCS were seen as having a primary aim – the mission, and a secondary aim - running the organisation:

> The paradox is that sometimes those with organisational power are more preoccupied with secondary aims and those with relatively little power are not at all interested in the secondary aim and are only associated with the organisation because of its mission. [response to DM9]

Those '*in management*' were "*responsible for organisational coherence and integrity (especially at the level of values)*". Where there were conflicting or contested values such as the gay and lesbian carers issue:

> ... even where those in management have their priorities fixed in mission related work their views, values and decisions may be different from those 'in practice' and different views may be experienced as oppressive. (ibid.)

I claim that these different understandings are experienced as oppressive when they are not articulated, debated and debatable in conversations. In Chapter 2 I referred to different *classes* of conversations, including that of conversations of *command and obedience*. Krippendorff (1999) writes of these as involving 'first order understanding':

> Bureaucracies, hierarchical command structures, and user instructions succeed only when there is no difference between an authority's understanding and its subjects' understanding (p. 140).

Participation in communities of practice and organisations needs not only an understanding of the work of the community of practice or organisation, but also an understanding of other participants' understanding, or 'second order understanding' (ibid.). In the constructivist epistemology of the thesis this is a matter of ethics - *granting to others the abilities I claim for myself* (Chapter 2, Section 2.3). Where there are differences of understanding in TCS, for example with regard to children and young people's participation in TCS – whether this involves *doing* or *being* (Chapter 7, Section 7.4.2) – then opportunities for conversations and exploring others' understandings are needed. This is not a matter of consistency, nor coherence (Krippendorff, 1999), nor of consensus (Ison, 1999), but of 'remaining open'. In Chapter 3 I claim that 'self-aware' research leads to *being open* in the same way.

Attending to metaphors, because of their ambiguity provides *space* and a *safe place* for sensitive inquiries. I invite TCS to use the metaphors in the 'set of conditions' which is the output of Inquiry Strand 3, to trigger conversations about participation. In the same way that Reyes and Zarama (1998) argue that speaking about learning *"sets a favourable context for learning"*, conversations about participation would increase possibilities for participation.

8.4.3   Storying practice and listening to multiple voices

The reports of project work that I have read are about excellent practice but often I have not been clear about how project workers went about the work, what they felt about it and how they experienced it. For example, reports include evaluations by others involved but not by the authors. What is missing is 'people participating in their own participation'. In my experiencing, when project leaders and others talk about their work they do this, and they do it in their practising too. Shaw (1997) describes the creative possibilities of story-telling in conversations, particularly when *"people work with the tension between stories told in hindsight and those told in the middle of actions and events"*.

Where it is important to establish standards across work and to identify outcomes first person writing may not be appropriate. This is especially the case where interagency relationships and funding may be jeopardised by perceived criticism. However, it is from storied accounts that people learn, both in writing and in reading. Griffiths (1999) writes of *"small tales of social justice"* that arise from practice as communicable and collaborative learning. Stories, by *"exhibiting explanations"* rather than providing them (Polkinghorne, 1988) invite other interpretations and applications. One of the most helpful TCS documents in my research was a short paper from the Wessex Participation Project about research in schools. This connected with and articulated my own feelings of unease about my research in schools because it included an example about interviewing children in the head teacher's office.

An issue that emerged from Nick Gould's research with TCS projects, which was being conducted at the same time as my inquiries, was the metaphor of an *organisational memory* (Gould, 2000). This was conceived as a way of finding out and building on the learning and expertise within

TCS. An 'organisational memory' could be *"more systematic than the folk-knowledge of individuals within the organisation and less susceptible to the vagaries of staff turn-over"* (ibid.). Some of the CIN Group work has been carried away by people who have since left TCS. One of the members of this *"defunct group"* asked at a TCS conference in late 1999 *"why this area for 'critical reflection' was overtaken, undone and consigned to the dustbin of history"* [DJ6]. This question triggered two responses from my inquiries. The first , which I discussed in Sections and 8.3.1 concerned the reification of practice. The second concerns the way in which learning is 'stored'.

In the constructivist epistemology of my thesis, memory is not a bank for the retrieval of information but an active process of construction and interpretation. Giambattista Vico claimed that memory has three distinct aspects:

> memory [*memoria*] when it recalls things; imagination [*fantasia*]when it alters or re-creates things; and ingenuity or invention [*ingegno*]when it orders them in a suitable arrangement or context (Vico, 1744/1999; p. 369, interpretation in Neimeyer, 1994).

I suggest that to be useful 'knowledge' needs to be represented in an 'organisational memory' in a way that allows for re-interpreting and re-contextualising. In the arguments presented in Chapter 5, stories invite people to engage with them in a way that accounts of knowledge in propositional forms do not.

Story writing is an art and it takes time. I am not suggesting that all writing about practice should be in the form of stories. However, for practitioners and TCS to learn then people should be encouraged to give accounts of their experiences in the form of short stories and vignettes. There do need to be safeguards in recognition that this can be risky and requires trust on behalf of both writer and reader in terms of authenticity and respecting people as experts of their own experiencing.

8.4.4 Summary

These are the invitations I offer to TCS for embodying participation in its practising and organising:

(i)   To join up the sites of participation in TCS by bringing forth and exploring new metaphors of TCS as an organisation;

(ii)   To open up conversations particularly for senior managers and new staff around the question 'what is the point of participation' and to facilitate their engagement with their own stories of children and young people's participation;

(iii)   To embody practice experiences in stories rather than, or as well as, other forms of recording and reporting.

In articulating these invitations, and in Inquiry Strand 4, I have taken people's own stories and pictures of participation as evidences of people's knowing of participation. I have also implied that the quality of knowing is indicated by the *richness* of detail and metaphor use in the stories and pictures, that is that this knowing is embodied and imaginative.

What I take to be evidence of my knowing of TCS is that the invitations in this chapter and Chapter 7, as well as being proposals for TCS, concern 'how I can go on' in taking the research forward (Claim 10, Chapter 2). I claimed that 'conversations of participation' could offer learning to TCS, as well as individuals. In differentiating how organisations can be said to know, and how people know, I want to say that this depends on the metaphor I choose to make sense of what 'an organisation' is. But I cannot make that choice in respect of people and their learning, because that is an ethical judgement in the thesis epistemology, rather than a judgement of the usefulness of a metaphor. An ethical injunction arising from the epistemology was that I should grant to others the abilities I claim for myself. This is how I understand von Foerster's comment that discoverers and inventors can live together *"as long as the discoverers discover inventors and inventors invent discoverers"*.

8.5 Thesis conclusions

There are two main conclusions and a reflection on participatory inquiry in CASE studentship doctoral research.

Firstly, an inquiry into the epistemology is *required* in constructivist research in order to make claims for the learning from constructivist research and to provide an ethical basis. I would also suggest that an epistemological inquiry would be helpful for participatory practising and participatory research not only to provide an ethical basis but also for awareness that the outcomes of participatory practice cannot be predicted.

Secondly, the methodology developed in the thesis requires further testing in the light of improvements added in this chapter but it has the potential as a robust and flexible methodology to form the basis for research in different contexts, and could be used in participatory practice with children, young people and adults in mixed groups.

With regard to participatory inquiry in CASE studentship research my experience leads me to conclude that this requires a supervisory relationship with at least one person in the partnership organisation throughout the studentship, on an equivalent basis in terms of responsibility as the academic supervision, especially for research in organisations as complex as TCS. Bell (1998) particularly comment on the demands on students of CASE studentships in managing relationships between CASE partners, and that research is rarely completed within three years. The messiness and the time issues would qualify my invitation to practitioner-researchers to do research of this type on the same scale.

8.5.1   Questions for further research and applications of the methodology

Questions arising for further research from the thesis are:

- What other metaphorical understandings of participation are in use by people and groups of people not included in my research?

As I discussed in chapter seven, the scope of my inquiry is limited to the languaging of white English speakers, and to those employed by TCS and some children and young people. Further research would be needed to explore the resonance of my set of emergent conditions and their metaphors for people of other ethnicity and other languages. For example, one of the issues where consensus was difficult to achieve in drawing up the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was with regard to children's duties, and this is included in the Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child (Freeman, 2000). Important groups of people with whom I had minimal contact in my research with TCS are those working as volunteers and fundraisers, and those in the Church of England clergy.

- What (metaphorical) understandings of power are at work in TCS? What stories do people tell about the power they see others as having, or about the power others see them having?

This question is directed to increasing the possibilities for change and alignment in TCS, which may be required for the meaningful involvement of children and young people.

- What forms of research reporting could capture *participation* as an embodied relationship, that is as a *practice*, and as a *performance?*

- What forms of research reporting could trigger enthusiasm of practitioners, managers and children and young people for further inquiry rather than judgements of irrelevance (not what it's like or what we do), redundancy (you are telling us what we already know) or imposition (only taking account of this because we have to) (the politics of invitation)?

These questions draw on my discussion of "ecological narratives" and my concerns about writing forms, and especially the thesis form in including multiple voices.

Finally and not as a research question but as a *"marker of a problematic area"* Payne, 1995), I propose my question:

- Why is it that practitioners working with others in anti-oppressive and emancipatory ways so often talk about their own management as oppressive and disabling?

The methodology developed in the thesis, and as improved from reflection in this chapter could be used to explore other concepts taken as shared and significant for practising and managing in TCS, such as 'community' by articulating the metaphors in people's stories. As a participatory methodology designed to include children, young people and adults it could be used in action research for improving neighbourhoods or in 'conflict work'.

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Appendix 1 Case Studentship Research Agreement

This AGREEMENT is made this [17th day of May 1999]

BETWEEN

(1) **THE OPEN UNIVERSITY** (a body established by Royal Charter) of Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA (hereinafter referred to as the "University");

(2) **THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY** (a registered charity with registration number 221124) of Edward Rudolph House, Margery Street, London WCIX OJL (hereinafter referred to as "TCS");

(3) **MARION HELME** [...] (hereinafter referred to as the "Student");

Who shall together hereinafter be referred to as the "Parties" or in the singular to as the "Party".

WHEREAS

(a) The Parties wish to carry out a three-year research project entitled " Children Creating their Environments: metaphors for organisational change, learning and evaluation in the Children's Society" and accordingly wish to collaborate upon the terms agreed hereunder.

IT IS AGREED by and between the Parties hereto as follows: -

1. DEFINITIONS.

In this Agreement the following terms shall have the meanings ascribed as specified hereunder:-

1.1 "the Research" shall mean research entitled " Children Creating their environments: metaphors for organisational change, learning and evaluation in The Children's Society" as further specified and agreed between the Parties at Annex 1 hereof.

1.2 "Research Results" shall mean the thesis, reports, designs, know-how, information data and copyright material arising wholly out of and in the course of performing the Research"

1.3 "Confidential Information" means all commercial, technical or financial information, technical data, methodologies, know-how or information which a reasonable person would deem to be commercially sensitive or likely to harm the reputation of any Party hereto which is either directly or indirectly made available by a Party to another Party in connection with the Research.

PERFORMANCE OF THE RESEARCH

2.1 The date of commencement of the Research shall be 3'" January 1998 (which date is referred to in this Agreement as the "Commencement Date")

2.2 The University wishes Marion Helme ("the Student") studying for a postgraduate degree to work on the Research, such work to be supervised by one or more supervisors nominated by the University (hereinafter referred to as "the University Supervisor(s)") the reports of which will be submitted for the award of PhD degree at the University.

2.3 The Parties shall take all reasonable steps to ensure satisfactory progress of the Research and its completion within (3) three years of the Commencement Date.

2.4 The obligations of the University and the Student shall be limited to the exercise of reasonable endeavours to ensure success of the Research. For the avoidance of doubt, however, it is hereby declared that: -

2.4.1 there is no undertaking that the Research will generate any particular information or guarantee that the Research will be successful in achieving any particular result;

2.4.2 there is no representation or warranty that any advice which is given by the University Supervisor(s), employees or agents or the use of any information provided in connection with the Research will be free from infringement of rights owned by parties who are not parties to this Agreement, and

2.4.3 neither neither the University nor the Student shall accept any responsibility for any use made of or reliance placed upon any information generated by the Research.

2.5 The University and the Student shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that the Research is carried out in accordance with the established policies and principles relating to Equal Opportunities (as produced by the University and TCS). The Equal Opportunities statement as produced by TCS is attached hereto at Annex 2. In addition the Student shall produce a written ethical and Equal Opportunities statement to be supplied to TCS.

2.6 The Student hereby recognises that the collaboration and Research is contingent upon and subject to her:

(i) Satisfying police checks as are reasonably considered to be appropriate for working with children and young people;

(ii) Informing TCS of any pending, actual and spent civil and criminal proceedings or convictions;

(iii) informing an appropriate member of TCS forthwith should during- the course of the Research she obtain knowledge in relation to which she reasonably believes harm has or may occur to any individual;

(iv) informing TCS of any information which during the course of the Research comes to her attention and which she reasonably believes may harm the reputation of TCS.

3   REPORTS

3.1 University Supervisor(s) shall ensure that fully informative annual reports of the Research are produced. Any other reports shall be produced as agreed between the Parties.

4 PROPRIETORSHIP

4.1 The Research Results shall be the property of the Student who may (provided no Confidential Information is included or disclosed) without royalty or payment to TCS use the information developed or produced therein as part of publications and/or teaching materials.

4.2 Subject to obligations regarding Confidential Information the Student grants the University and TCS a non-exclusive non-transferable worldwide royalty free licence to reproduce the thesis produced as a result of the Research subject always to the reproduction therein and acknowledgement of all copyright notices and acknowledgements. Where the University or TCS wishes to reproduce and publish extracts of the thesis then they shall first submit the extract to the Student in order to obtain the prior written permission thereof which shall not be unreasonably withheld.

4.3 In relation to any other materials which may be produced as a result of the collaboration of the Parties and which are not wholly arising from or directly associated with the Research or the thesis as specified herein the copyright shall vest in the originating author(s) and any licences in relation to such materials shall be the subject of further separate agreement between the Parties.

5 CONSIDERATION

5.1 By way of consideration for the obligations incurred in accordance with the terms of this Agreement TCS shall pay the following sums to the University at the start of the Research and on the first and second anniversaries of the Commencement Date of the Research providing it is to continue:

5.1.1   the sum of £4300;

5.1.2   in respect of Student travel, subsistence and accommodation a sum of £1500.

5.2 The University shall invoice TCS accordingly, such sum to be paid within 30 (thirty) days of the date of receipt by TCS of each invoice.

5.3 In addition to the consideration in Clause 5.1 TCS shall make available to the University and to the Student such Confidential Information owned by TCS as the Parties agree and consider as being necessary for efficient performance of the Research.

5.4 The University and TCS each satisfy the criteria of an 'Eligible Body' as defined under the Value Added Tax (Education) Order 1994 and therefore any sum due under this Agreement is exempt from the application of Value Added Tax thereon.

6 **CONFIDENTIALITY**

6.1 For a period of 5 (five) years from the completion of the Research the University and the Student agree as regards the Confidential Information of TCS hereto, to use its reasonable endeavours to protect it and keep it confidential and in particular: -

6.1.1 only use it for the purpose of the Research;

6.1.2 not to disclose it to any third party;

6.1.3 only disclose it to those engaged in the Research to the extent that they have a need to know it for the purpose of the Research.

6.2 The obligations of this Agreement shall not apply to Confidential Information which:-

6.2.1 is already known to the Student and/or the University receiving at the date of its receipt under this Agreement and this fact can be demonstrated by documentary records; or

6.2.2 is already or hereinafter becomes published otherwise than through the fault or negligence of the Student and/or the University; or

6.2.3 is lawfully obtained without restriction as to disclosure and use by the Student and/or the University from a third party having full rights of disclosure; or

6.2.4 is approved for release or use by TCS; or

6.2.5 is independently developed by the Student and/or the University without the use of data provided by TCS.

6.3 Except in relation to the TCS's Confidential Information, the University and/or the Student shall be free to disseminate and/or publish the

information developed or produced in the course of Research subject to details of all presentations and copies of all theses, papers, articles etc based on the Research Results intended for publication will be sent to TCS for comment. TCS shall have a period of fourteen (14) days from receipt hereof in which to supply comment or raise any reasonable objections to the same.

6.4 Notwithstanding Clause 6.3 nothing in this Agreement will be permitted to delay the submission for examination of a thesis or dissertation based on the Research in accordance with the University's normal procedures for degrees of Doctor or Master. Disclosure through publication of a thesis or dissertation (which for the avoidance of doubt shall include the lodging of the thesis in the University library in accordance with University Regulations) may be delayed for a period of up to 2 (two) years at the reasonable request of TCS if the dissertation or thesis includes any element of TCS's Confidential Information, such period commencing from the date the thesis is passed.

7. WITHDRAWAL BY STUDENT

7.1 In the event that the Student ceases to continue the Studentship with the University for any reason during the term of this Agreement representatives of the University and TCS shall meet to discuss the most appropriate course of action to be taken.

7.2 If under the provisions of clause 7.1 it is mutually agreed to cease the Research then:

7.2.1 The University and the Student shall return to TCS any records containing TCS's Confidential Information or if so requested certify through a responsible officer that they have been destroyed. The return or destruction of the records containing TCS's Confidential Information shall not release the University or the Student from the obligations relating, thereto under this Agreement;

7.2.2 The University shall wind up the Research in an orderly fashion;

7.2.3 Subject to such sums as specified in Clause 5 being received by the University and such expenditure in relation thereto not having been committed the University shall return any such sums (or part thereof) to TCS.

8 WORK AT TCS'S PREMISES

8.1 In respect of any of the Research carried out by the Student at premises owned or controlled by TCS, TCS shall indemnify the University in

respect of any legal liability for death or injury to the Student directly attributable to TCS's negligence.

9 TERMINATION

9.1 The Research shall terminate:

9.1.1 upon expiry of three (3) years from the Commencement Date or after such longer period as may be agreed in writing by the University, TLC and the Student; or

9.1.2 earlier without prejudice to the rights of either Party for breach if any Party to this Agreement fails to meet one or more of the obligations imposed by this Agreement.

9.2 Termination of the Research shall not affect the rights granted or obligations incurred by virtue of this Agreement.

10 GENERAL

10.1 No Party shall assign or transfer its interest in or obligations under this Agreement in whole or part without the express written consent of the other Parties hereto.

10.2 No alteration of the terms and conditions of this Agreement shall be valid or effective unless contained in a written document made subsequent to the date of this Agreement and signed by an authorised signatory of the Parties hereto.

10.3 It is hereby expressly declared and agreed that no Party hereto is the agent of the other for any purpose whatsoever under this Agreement and that the Parties do not intend to create a partnership between themselves. No Party hereto shall hold itself out as the agent or partner of the other.

10.4 Communications which do not impinge upon the terms and conditions of this Agreement and are of a technical nature and thus do not seek to limit or expand the nature of this Agreement or the Research to be performed hereunder shall be addressed to the following named persons (or to such other person as may from time to time be notified by one Party to the other):

10.4.1 For the University: Rosalind Armson, Lecturer, Systems Discipline, Technology Faculty at the address specified in the preamble.
10.4.2 For TCS: Nigel Hinks, Divisional Manager (Practice Learning), Black House, Foxhole, Dartington, Devon, TQ9 6EB

10.5 All other notices to be served pursuant to this Agreement shall be addressed as follows (or such other persons as may from time to time be notified by one Party to the other): -

Appendix 1.1 Research Agreement Annex 1: Terms of Understanding

Children creating their environments: metaphors for organizational change, learning and evaluation in The Children's Society

1. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

1.1. This proposal has developed from the national programme of work within The Children's Society based upon the "Child in the Neighbourhood". This is partly about the impact of 'place' on children and young, people's lives and place identity. TWELVE projects contribute to this using a range of approaches. All are contributing to the participation of children and young people in local decision-making processes, whilst some are engaging with children on the quality of their neighbourhood experience. There is a belief that 'neighbourhood' is a primary system that impacts upon children's lives, and as participants in their neighbourhoods their development and quality of life is increased and improved.

1.1 This work builds on that completed by the Open University into practitioner experience of developing participatory decision-making with young people in The Children's Society (Maiteny, 1996). It also develops work of a theoretical and methodological approach using metaphors to enable diverse stakeholders to participate in constructing environments '(McClintock, 1996); (Ison, 1994); (Ison, 1995).

1.3 This research would enable The Society to learn by addressing and acting on such questions as:

What innovations are needed, in The Children's Society and elsewhere, so that children can say that they have been listened to, and that their participation in their neighbourhood or environment has been facilitated?

What are the potential outcomes and effects of such participation?

How do key professionals respond to such factors as age, ability to understand in relation to young people's participation?

How do adults involved in the systems that directly impact with children enable participation and become participants with children?

What relationship between projects, programmes and processes does an Organisation like The Children's Society need to have so that children can say that their own perceptions have been understood? [1]

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[1] It is recognised that this clause identifies children as the only people who can say whether their perceptions have been understood. It is also recognised that the time frame and resources available may make it unlikely that direct researching with children is a feasible part of the student's research. This has to be recognised as an ongoing internal tension in the research design.

What are the prerequisites of participation?

2. AIMS AND OUTCOMES

The Children's Society and The Open University recognise that they have a mutual commitment to, and responsibility for, enabling the student to submit the PhD thesis within the period of the student's three-year ESRC funding.

2.1 Relationship to The Society's Action Plans

The Society's Action Plans place emphasis on the development and promotion of approaches where children and young people can be listened to and can participate. The programme will also contribute to the measurement of the effectiveness of the participating project's agreed performance indicators. The specific Justice Objective related to this programme is 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 (previously 6.3.1. and 6.3.2.).

2.2 Aims and Objectives

The context of this research programme is participative action research with children in their communities and the resultant organisations change within The Children's Society. The primary focus of the student's research will be the changing relationships within The Children's Society that participative action implies.

The following objectives have been agreed:
• To identify and develop a body of knowledge, experience and methodologies that can be shared within The Children's Society
• To analyse and evaluate current practice alongside the research proposed within the Society's National Initiative 'Renewing Neighbourhoods' plan
• To disseminate the findings to appropriate audiences and participating agencies
• To identify further research possibilities
• To contribute to The Society's understanding of the ways that people, with all their differences, are enabled to participate

2.3 Outcomes of the Research
The following outcomes have been agreed:
• Provision of research reports and workshops in conjunction with Society staff. Any direct involvement by University staff would be subject to further negotiation
• An extensive literature review
• Stimulus for further cycles of learning and action through critical reflection on the practice of participative action with children
• Feedback on practice and learning that may enable the continued development of practice within The Children's Society
• Enablement of wider dissemination of findings and training to other professionals within this field

It is anticipated that there will be new understandings of participative action research which will allow the Society to extend this work to include children as participants.

3. METHODOLOGY

It is important to acknowledge the need for routine review at each stage and to establish the successful achievement of each preceding stage. This will enable appropriate flexibility of the process to respond to any significant changes within The Children's Society. Also to consider the learning generated.

SUMMARY OF STAGES
Proposed time scales for research student activities
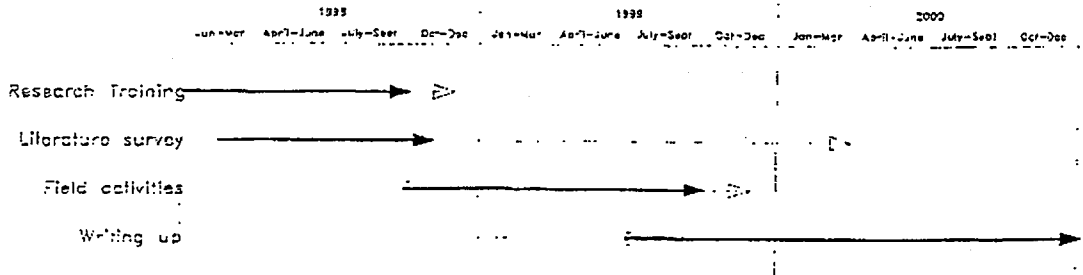
This is a plan that all parties will seek to work although there is some recognition that slippage could occur at certain stages. It is recognised that providing there is no dispute over any need for renegotiation of the time-scale then this is acceptable.

4. LEARNING AND DISSEMINATION

The methodology will be designed to enable mutual learning- for the student and The Children's Society to take place on a continuous basis once the initial research training is completed. This is key to the early stages and it is important that staff do not perceive the process as research undertaken from the outside 'to' the work they are doing.
Dissemination will involve participatory workshops with key stakeholders, supplemented by formal report publication and by conference presentation(s).

The student will be supervised by two members of The Open University's academic staff. The supervisors will also be responsible, with the student, for managing the CASE partnership. Any additional time and input from the University would be the subject of additional negotiation. It may be appropriate to hold seminars throughout the programme and to include members of staff from the University as speakers/participants. This will only be done in collaboration with The Society and with prior agreement over what material might be released and who is credited and, where necessary, appropriate remuneration. Such events will be developed collaboratively between the CASE partners.

5. PROPOSAL MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCES

5.1. The student's research will be planned, designed and implemented by the research student who will consult with the research supervisors and the Activity Group. The Activity Group will comprise the student, the Regional Social Work Manager and the Society's Practice Research and Learning Consultant. Membership of this group will be guided by the principle of continuity although it is recognised that members' roles may change.

5.2. The Steering Group will be responsible for management of the CASE partnership. It would aim to meet at least twice a year, or as necessary, to resolve any structural issues or difficulties that may emerge that have not been possible to resolve at the operational level of the Activity Group. Any concerns over satisfaction or the management of the student's research programme will be drawn to the Steering Group's attention immediately in order that action can be taken. The Steering Group will comprise the Divisional Manager (Practice Research and Learning), the Programme Manager of Justice Objective 5 (formerly J.0.6), Regional Social Work Manager, the student, and either or both of the student's academic supervisors.

6. PROJECTED BUDGET & COSTS

Costs to be paid on submission of invoices to The Children's Society, Region 1, Tyne and Tees Regional Office, Suite L, Walker House, High Street, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland. TS18 1BG.

Appendix 1.2   Research Agreement Annex 2: The Children's Society Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Statement

1. As well as accepting its responsibilities under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, as amended 1986, the Race Relations Act (1976), the Disabled Persons (Employment) Acts 1944 and 1958, the Equal Pay (Amendment) Regulation 1983, the Society is committed to the broad principles of social justice.

2. All members of staff employed by the Society and all potential employees will be afforded equal opportunities irrespective of their sex, marital status, sexual orientation, race, ethnic or national origin, colour, trade union membership and agreed related activities within The Children's Society, disability, creed or age (below 65 and above 17).

3. The Children's Society is committed to the eradication of racism in all aspects of its employment of staff.

4. The Society seeks to improve the opportunities available to women and to recognise the skills and experiences of women which have been traditionally undervalued.

5. Individuals regardless of gender will be encouraged to apply for all jobs unless there are genuine occupational qualifications which restrict a job to one of the sexes.

6. A person's sexual orientation will not be taken into account in determining their conditions of service, suitability for recruitment, promotion, training or grounds for dismissal.

7. The Society recognises the benefits to be gained from removing discrimination on the grounds of age. It is therefore committed to a process of eliminating age stereotypes and assumptions and will treat employees and potential employees on their merits regardless of age.

8. The Society welcomes individuals who:

    Thoughtfully and conscientiously respect its Christian basis and values:
    Will recognise that The Society's work is an active expression of the Christian Faith and its values and
    Will, whatever their own faith position and cultural background, work with the Society in pursuing Christian values through its work

9. The Society will not tolerate harassment against any individuals whether physical or verbal and is committed to maintaining grievance and disciplinary procedures to deal effectively with any incidents which may occur.

Appendix 2 Data Sources: Research conversations and research activities

This list provides an audit trail for the data brought forth in my researching and which I have drawn on in constructing the thesis. It includes:

- The number by which I refer to the research event in the text

- The type of research event:

    SG = steering group meeting,

    AG = activity group (or conversation with member/s of steering group),

    CF = conversation with Critical Friend,

    PV = project visit

    AC = arranged interview conversation

    IC = informal, unplanned conversation

    A = activity

- The date and location:

    OU = Open University,

    P = TCS project base

    AO = TCS area office

    HQ = TCS headquarters in London

    W = TCS conference centre in Worcestershire

- The type of data for each event available to me in writing the thesis (my notes – preparatory, during or after the event, audio-tape, tape transcript, pictures and documents discussed or given me etc.)

- Brief description, including the aliases for people with whom I engaged in the research event

Details that might be likely to reveal personal identities have been removed from the version included in the thesis.

No	EVENT TYPE	DATE & LOCATION	DATA SOURCES	DESCRIPTION
01	SG	6/2/98 OU	preparatory notes + a form of my CV for TCS partners; my notes of the meeting; CF's notes	The first meeting between me, people from TCS - FC and GJ - and PhD supervisors, SH and SB (*MW* from TCS was unable to attend)
02a	PV/AG	26/3/98 am AO Stockton-on-Tees	notes	Conversation with *FC* and *GJ* about TCS and their work
02b	PV	26/3/98 p.m. AO Stockton-on-Tees	notes	Conversation with *FC* and two project leaders *ST* and *BJ*
02c	IC Tees	26/3/98 p.m. hotel Stockton	notes	Hotel bar conversation with management development trainer in TCS
02d	PV	27/3/98 am P Newcastle	notes Meeting agenda	Regional managers meeting – *GJ, ST, BJ and AW*
02e	IC Newcastle	27/3/98 am P Newcastle	notes	Conversation with *NN*, who had just started work as a project worker with TCS
03	AC	22/5/98 BD's office	Tape notes	Conversation with *BD*, a researcher who worked closely with but was not employed by TCS
04	SG	29/4/98 W	notes Contract documents	Meeting with supervisor *SB, GJ* and *MW* to discuss Studentship Contract
05	IC	16/6/98 P Liverpool	notes	Conversation with project manager/CIN group member *JT*
06a	PV	17/7/98 P Bolton	notes	Conversation with new project leader
06b	PV	17/7/98 P Warrington	My notes	Conversation with project leader and project workers
07	SG/AG	16/9/98 AO York	Tape and full transcript notes	Meeting with *SB, GJ and FC* to review and plan
08	JO5 Conference	30/9/98 and 1/10/98 Swanwick, Derbyshire	Agenda, speakers and attendees, notes Tapes of speakers	Listening to speakers and engaging with TCS people involved in JO5 work during 2-day residential conference.
09	A	30/9/98 Swanwick, Derbyshire	workshop scripts my notes, feedback from participants Photographs	Two workshops ('Peter Pan') to elicit understandings of participation in TCS with workshop participants through Peter Pan story metaphor
10	SG	11/1/99 OU	notes Tape	Conversation with *FC,* and *BC* who had just joined the Steering group, to discuss my research
11	PV	10/2/99 P Milton Keynes	My notes	Conversation about my research and the project work with project staff including *GN*, after team meeting
12	SG	24/2/99 W	My report on the first year of the research. Tape of meeting Notes, BC's notes	

13	CF	31/3/99 OU	Tape My notes	First meeting with *FC as Critical Friend* after his withdrawal from the Steering group
14	AG	1/4/99 AO Nottingham	Tape, notes Children's rights material	Meeting with *BC* about my research and specifically how to involve C&YP
15	SG	7/4/99 OU	notes Final version of Studentship Contract	Meeting with *MW, SB* and contract manager from OU to work on contract
16	A (planning)	16/4/99 P Milton Keynes	notes	Meeting with *GN* to plan activity session with Wednesday Lunch Club for homeless young people
17	AC	23/4/99 HQ	notes Tape	Interview with member of SMT
18	AC	23/4/99 HQ	Notes Tape	Interview with member of SMT
19	PV	6/5/99 P Newcastle	My notes	Conversation with *BJ* about project work and planning of involvement of C&YP in my research
20	PV	7/5/99 P Rotherham	My notes Charter of Participation	Conversations with project workers involved in different aspects of C&YP's participation
21	AC	11/5/99 HQ	Notes Tape	Interview with member of SMT
22	AC	11/5/99 HQ	Notes Tape	Interview with member of SMT
23	AC	13/5/99 HQ	notes	Interview with member of SMT
24	A	19/5/99 Church in Milton Keynes	My script notes My feedback	Session with Wednesday lunch club young people, *GN* and other TCS project workers and volunteers on understandings of participation, using cut outs and pictures
25	A	2/6/99 Hammersley Forest near Newcastle	Tape (comments about the day on the bus on the way home) My notes	At invitation of *BJ* I accompanied a group of young people and TCS project staff for a day's mountain biking. This was the final event in a piece of work with a 'caution with support group' of young offenders.
26	AG	3/6/99 AO Stockton-on-Tees	My notes	Meeting with *GJ* on return from maternity leave to discuss research and TCS developments
27	AC	3/6/99 AO NE England	Tape notes	Conversation with *KL* about his action research approach to work with youth justice
28	AC	4/6/99 AO Midlands	Tape notes	Interview with Programme Manager, PM
29	PV	10/6/99 N England	Tape notes	Interview with Project Leader
30	AC	10/6/99 AO N England	Tape notes	Interview with Social work manager
31	AC	11/6/99 AO N England	Tape notes	Interview with Divisional Social Work Manager
32	IC	11/6/99 P Liverpool	notes	Conversation with *JT* about how to involve C&YP in my research
33	CF	16/6/99 OU	Tape notes	Conversation with *CF*
34	AC	28/6/99 home of interviewee SW England	Tape notes	Interview with Social work manager
35	AC	28/6/99 P SW England	Tape notes	Interview with project manager
36	AC	29/6/99 HQ	Tape notes	Interview with member of TCS Directorate
37	PV	1/7/99 Leeds	Tape notes	Interview with *LP* about JO5 work

38		9/7/99 Guisborough	Conference information notes	*GJ* invited me to attend conference on children's rights arranged by TCS for local agencies in NE England
38b	IC	9/7/99 Guisborough	My notes	Conversation over conference lunch with *HP*
39	PV	11/8/99 P S England	Tape notes	Conversation with project leader and team members about their work and participation
40	AC	16/8/99 HQ	Tape notes	Conversation with member of SWDMT
41	AC	19/8/99 OU	Tape notes	Conversation with member of SWDMT
42	CF	25/8/99 OU	Tape notes	
43a	A	1/9/99 P Liverpool	notes	Meeting with two project workers *WF and CL* to plan school activity sessions
44	AC	9/9/99 AO S London	Tape notes	Conversation with Programme Manager
45	AC	9/9/99 HQ	Tape notes	Conversation with manager in fundraising division
46	PV/A C	10/9/99 AO E. London	Tape notes	Visit to TCS Archives Section Conversation with VR
47	IC	14/9/99 Hull	notes	Conversations with TCS project managers attending conference at Hull University
48	AC	24/9/99 AO Luton	Tape notes	Conversation with SWDMT member
49	SG	1/10/99 W	Tape notes	Meeting with *GJ and BC*
50	AC	7/10/99 W. England	Tape notes	Conversation with TCS Council member
51	AC	8/10/99 HQ	Tape notes	Conversation with Marketing and Communications Division manager
52	A	12/10/99 (planning) 4/11/99, 11/12/99 Newcastle Parish church	My notes Preliminary analyses of questionnaires	By invitation of *BJ* attended 2 meetings of children, young people and adults working together on researching C&YP's views of their neighbourhood
53	AC	18/10/99 P Leeds	Tape notes Copy of paper by *LP*	Return visit to continue conversation with *LP*
54	AC	21/10/00 AO W. Midlands	Tape notes	Conversation with SWDMT member
55	AC	25/10/99 OU	Tape notes	Conversation with Human Resources Division ?? *WJ*
56	SG	29/10/99 W	Tape notes	*MW, SB, and me*
57a	AC	4/11/99 P York	Tape notes	Conversation with project manager
57b	IC	4/11/99 P York	notes	Conversation with JO5 project workers
58	A	9/11/99 Liverpool school	Tape, notes 16 pictures Photographs My feedback	Activity session with year 3 class (age 7) in Liverpool school
59	PV/A C	11/11/99 P S Wales	Tape notes	Conversation with project manager and project administrator
60	PV/A C	11/11/99 P S Wales	Tape notes	Conversation with project manager and project workers
61	PV	12/11/99 P Somerset	Tape notes	Conversation with project manager

62		16/11/99 Swanwick	JO5/Children in Communities Conference: details and notes	Attended conference as participant and as group facilitator
63	A	17/11/99 Swanwick	Script, notes, feedback from participants. report written for conference report	*Joint presentation with new development manager for involving C&YP in governance of TCS*
64	CF	25/11/99 OU	Tape notes	
65	AC	5/1/00 HQ	Tape notes	Conversation with SMT member
66	A	21/1/00	Script, tape, 5 pictures, 10 photos, feedback	Activity session with 10 year 7 children (age 10) in Liverpool school
67	AC	27/1/00 N. England	Tape notes	Interview with TCS development manager *(young people manager invited to meet me did not come)*
68	IC	28/1/00 Nottingham	My notes	Conversation with *BC* about TCS changes
69	SG	9/2/00 OU	Tape notes Part transcript	6 monthly steering group meeting attended by all members. TCS financial crisis, redundancies.
70	CF	10/2/00	Tape notes	Issues in letter to be sent out re my research
71	Letter	Feb to March 2000	letter paper 4 written responses	Letter I sent out to all those in TCS with whom I had had conversations, to say thanks you, to offer four questions re participation and TCS, and enclosing a short paper on the theory behind my researching
72	A	21/2/00 W	notes Tape (part) 4 (rich) pictures	Activity session with young people and TCS staff about their working together on policy making
73	A	20/3/00 P Newcastle	Notes, script, report for TCS, 3 (rich) pictures, tapes of individual interviews	Facilitated the evaluation of research by four young people into awareness of young people in their neighbourhood of Article 12 of the UN Convention
74a	AC	31/3/00 AO NE England	My notes	Conversation with *GJ and* project managers about changes in TCS
74b	IC	31/3/00 AO NE England	My notes	Conversation with *GJ*
75	A	03/04/00 (telephone)	My notes	Conversation with *BC* to plan Critical Review of research
76	A	23/3/00 (planning) HQ 26/4/00 (evaluation) W	preparatory notes and script, report to TCS and young people based on participants' notes	Facilitation of the review day of TV policy development, planned with TCS SWDMT member and staff in meeting at HQ - 4 young people, 3 project staff and 3 staff from TCS HQ.
77		06/04/00		Observing presentation of research into organisational learning and participating in the discussion and contributing
78	A	06/04/00 Conference centre Cheltenham	presentation script notes	Presentation of my research to SWDMT and invitation to draw rich pictures of TCS
79	CF	28/4/00 OU	Tape, notes	
80	CF	16/6/00 OU	Tape notes	

81	A	27/6/00 Friends' Meeting House, London	preparatory notes Participants' notes	Critical review of my research to an invited group of 12 people from TCS and the OU
82	IC	28/9/00 Leeds	My notes	Conversation with *LP* about C&YP's participation as spirituality
83	SG	19/10/00 OU	Tape notes	Last meeting of steering group
84		1/11/00 W Children in Communities Conference (JO5)	notes	Annual TCS conference for managers and project workers in Children in Communities programme
85	CF OU	3/8/01	Tape notes	Meeting with critical friend focussing on perspectives on the CIN group and the methodology of my researching

Appendix 3 Data sources – documents

Appendix 2.2 lists the internal or unpublished, or locally circulated documents that were available or given to me at research events or subsequently sent to me. These are linked to relevant research events, for example those relating to or in which I obtained the document. Published or public sources such as books and journal articles, TCS annual reports and publicity material are included in the bibliography of the thesis.

Appendix 3.1 My reports and other writing for people in TCS

Doc no.	Document title and date
DM1	My curriculum vitae written for the first meeting with Steering Group, including choices made and difficult times February 1998
DM2	Metaphors and Research: short paper for meeting of JO5 managers group, May 1998
DM3	The Open University Research: Participation, metaphors, systems, learning: short paper distributed at JO5 conference 1998
DM4	Outline of my current thinking and proposed research activities for discussion by the Case Studentship Activity Group January 1999
DM5	Report on the First Year of the Research: report for Steering Group meeting February 1999
DM6	Research with The Children's Society: information about the research including research questions sent out with letters requesting interviews and visits, March to December 1999.
DM7	Ideas for Involving Children and Young People in the Research: discussion document June 1999
DM8	Reflections on interviews and project visits: report for meeting with steering group members October 1999
DM9	PhD Participation Research with The Open University and The Children's Society: thank you letter to interviewees and project visited including four questions arising from my research (sent out in February 2000)
DM10	Paper on the constructivist epistemology of the research (February 2000)
DM11	Ten points about metaphors and participation (for distribution at JO5 conference November 2000)
DM12	Some different applications of metaphor theory in the participation of children and young people (for distribution at JO5 conference November 2000)
DM12	Letter of invitation to the Critical Review Day and short paper on the development of the research June 2000

Appendix 3.2 TCS Internal Documents about TCS as an organisation

Doc no.	Document title and date
D1	The 1998 Action Plans, setting out Justice Objectives, action plans and targets for each piece of planned work in TCS, including glossary of terms (with introductory letter from Chief Executive dated 1 March 1998, received by me in September 1998)
D2	Staff Directories, specifically editions dated October 1998, July 1999, December 1999 and June 2000
D3	Why do we need standards?': short paper available at JO5 conference 1998

D4	Reorganisation of management of Social Work Division January 1999 (memo from director of social work dated 19 October 1998, list of appointments and chart of new structure)
D5	Society Briefing, a monthly newsheet from the Society Management Team (SMT) sent out to all offices and projects in TCS
D6	Church Strategy Paper
D7	The Corporate Plan: A fresh vision for the future 1999-2002 (August 1999) and associated documents concerning organisational change:
D7a	Note of appreciation to all staff: e-mail sent out to all TCS staff by the Director of Operations concerning the workshops on the corporate plan 1999-2002 and organisational development of TCS (23 September 1999)
D7b	Summary Document of Corporate Plan (29 October 1999)
D7c	Society Briefing - Special Edition: The Corporate Plan and Organisational Development sent out by SMT and concerning the summary document (11 November 1999)
D7d	The Social Work Director and the Management of Social Work: A Green Paper, circulated in TCS (19 January 2000)
D7e	Draft Briefing sent out by SMT in response to *confusion and dismay* " caused by the Summary Document, *"that was not removed by the Special Briefing"* (21 January 2000)
D7f	Future Society: Working together to deliver our corporate plan (newsletter from HR Division about implementation of the corporate plan – one issue April 2000).
D8	Inside out newsletter for TCS staff (September 1999; March 2000, May 2000)
D9	Talking Shop Newsletter South East Region (about fundraising, Autumn 1999
D10	Role Analysis Questionnaire and accompanying letter from HR Director for review of rewards structure (28/1/00)
	See also [Kennedy, 1998 #1060]; [Gould, 2000 #1048]; [Adams, 2001 #1651]

Appendix 3.3   Documents about TCS CIN/JO5/Children in Communities Programme

DJ1	CIN Group Presenters' notes from presentation of the CIN Group work to the Society Management Team 18 February 1997
DJ2	Draft national outcomes November 1999
DJ2	The Children's Society' My Vote Counts Too Campaign information sheet (an online survey for children and young people about their environment October 1999 to January 2000)
DJ3	Children's participation and improving our democracy: memo from Programme Manager to Head of Planning (24/4/1999)
DJ4	Programme and contract for the process of recruiting the co-ordinator for involving children and young people in the decision-making of TCS (May 1999)
DJ5	It's not fair: young people's reflections on children's rights: report by Caroline Willow on research on young people's perspectives on implementation of the UN Convention on the rights of the Child (2000)
DJ6	Children and Young People's Participation in Their Neighbourhoods and Communities Annual Conference Report November 1999 (distributed in May 2000)
DJ7	Children in Communities Programme Annual Conference November 2000 'Snakes and Ladders: Barriers and opportunities for children's participation in their communities' (May 2001, pages unnumbered)

See also [Maiteny, 1997 #700]; [Gabriel, 1998 #1337];[Badham, 2001 #1687]

Appendix 3.4   Material from projects about their practice, listed by project

Document reference	Project location.	Title
B1	Brighton	First Stop Keeping Safe Project Annual Report 1996-98
LD1	Leeds	Belief in their Neighbourhood: Report on a Pilot Study Autumn 1999-Spring 2000 (draft)
L1	Liverpool	Poems from Liverpool 8 Children's Research Group 1995-1996
L2		Children's News Special Edition July 1997
L3		Proposal for Future TCS Work in Liverpool, Region 3, Report to Divisional Operations Group (9 July 1998)
L4		Liverpool Children's Bureau Feasibility Study (13 January 2000)
L5		Citizens Now: A Report into Children's Participation in Liverpool (Does the City need a Children's Bureau?) (received January 2001)
LO1	London	Children and Neighbourhoods in London Programme Annual Review 1997
LO2		Listening to Children and Young People (paper presented at JO5 conference 1998)
M1	Manchester	Safe in the City confidentiality policy
M2		Safe in the City equal opportunities policy
M3		Child Prostitution: protection not prosecution – article published in Inside Out (TCS staff publication) October 1996
M4		Running the Risk: briefing paper summarising findings of TCS national research concerning children and young people who have run away from home and are living on the streets (full report published by TCS in 1998)
M5		Leaflets: Young people who runaway or are on the street; Will a child or young person you know go missing this week?
MT1	Merthyr Tydfil 1	Video: Kids in Bedlinog (undated, received November 1999)
MT2	2	The Children's Services Plan 1997-98 Merthyr Tydfil Council
MT3	3	Peer Mediation: A Training Manual for Primary Schools compiled by The Children's Society in Merthyr Tydfil (undated, received November 1999)
MD	Middlesborough	Children in Communities North East – information leaflet
N1	Nottingham 1	An Ideal World (evaluation questions for children and young people involved in 'ideal world event' consultation)
N2	2	Children's Rights Worksheets: "Some aliens have landed in Nottingham. There are no children where they come from. They're trying to find out what it's like being a child in Britain"
N3	3	All about you: questionnaire for children about themselves and the TCS project and the people who work there
R1	Rotherham 1	Listen to Young People in Rotherham: A Summary of the needs and rights of young people by Jeanne Bain, The Children's Society (Report: 1996)
R2		Young People's Charter of Participation (pilot edition 1998 9, and final published version distributed in TCS in 2000)
R3		Young People and Domestic Violence in Rotherham (Report: March 1999)

W1	Wessex	JO5 Work at the Children's Participation Project Wessex (paper from JO5 conference 1998)
W2		Involving children and young people in action research – short paper by Rachel Grant and Jim Davies
W3		Ethical Statement Regarding Research and Research Reports (June 2000)
Y1	York	'Listening to children: the voice of disabled young people' short paper distributed at JO5 conference 1998
Y2		Take 10 (Audio Tape)
Y3		Information about PACT
Y4		Evaluation Report on School Council at Northfield School (March 1999)
Z1	Others	The Newsletter Family Placement Project, Billingham (summer 1999)
Z2		The Transitions Project (Southport): Ethics, Research and Practice Learning (paper presented at JO5 conference 1998)
Z3		The Children's Society Educational Resources: Victorian History Education Resource Pack: KS 1 (1999) (from JO5 conference 1999)
Z4		The Children's Society in Telford Information booklet (1998)

Appendix 3.5   Unpublished or unreferenced papers about practice development and research

DU1	Reflective Practice and Action Research (July 1999) *short paper from Social Work Divisional Management Team*
DU2	The development and evaluation of innovative practice within the Children's Society: progress to February 2000 (February 2000) *a report on the work of a researcher from University of Bath with three TCS projects*
DU3	'The urban practitioner and participation in research within a streetwork context': draft paper by Roger Adams and Andy McCullough (July 1999) sent to me for comments, and Roger Adams' notes for presenting the paper
DU4	Participation in decision making: a research report by Dave Wiles (researcher) distributed in TCS in 1999
DU5	'A Practitioner's Tale', draft paper by Pam Lythe, project worker in Leeds sent to me for comments August 1999

Appendix 4 Annotated Statement of Ethics and Principles In Researching with Children and Young People

1. The views and voice of children and young people are of equal value to that of adults involved in this research.

This is similar to [Grundy, 1998 #1602]'s 'parity principle' which is about equality between researchers and other participants in action research. I did not want children and young people's views to be in a 'special corner' of the research or in some other way different [DM7].

2. The researcher will respect the experiences and views that all others bring to the research, including children and young people, and will respect the differences between them and the researcher, for example in age and ethnicity.

Respect does not imply agreement. I drew on the idea of domains of knowledge and experience.

3. The methods used in the research, including the way that things are written down and said, will be chosen so that everyone is included. Methods will include sharing and making stories through activities, pictures and drawing as well as talking and writing. The researcher will ask for, and act on, feedback about whether people feel included, because this is a very important part of her learning.

I wanted my researching to be a participative experience for all of us who were involved.

4. Children and young people's involvement in this research is separate from, and will not directly affect, any other involvement they may have with The Children's Society's projects.

5. Nobody will be involved in the research without their informed consent. This means that everyone knows:

- they can choose not to participate
- they can withdraw at any time
- what they must do if they choose to participate
- what will happen to the information that they give while they are involved in the research

This list reflects three of [Homan, 1991 #1612]'s four elements in informed consent; information (also in point 7), comprehension, and voluntarism. The fourth element 'competence' is covered in point 3. [Roberts, 1993 #1611] particularly stresses the importance of the ability to withdraw for children and young people.

6. All information will be regarded as confidential. It will not be used so that people can be identified, without their recorded agreement.

There are only two situations when information might be shared with someone else without this recorded consent.

- Firstly, the researcher as student, might talk to her two supervisors about particular interviews and experiences to help her own learning. The supervisors and researcher will regard this discussion as strictly confidential.

- Secondly, all people have a right to be protected from harm. If the researcher believes from what she hears or sees that anyone might be in danger or is being abused, then she will take action. For children and young people this will mean telling someone working for The Children's Society, usually the project manager, with the knowledge of the children or young people concerned.

Because confidentiality is always bounded, I wanted to be as explicit as possible about when I would, as a matter of course, share information. The second point was especially important for TCS managers and practitioners and their duty of care and protection with regard to the children and young people with whom they are working.

7. Those involved, including children and young people, have a right to know what happens to the information they provide through their involvement in the research. The researcher will report back on what she has learned to all those involved and invite further comments.

I did report back in terms of my own learning and invite comments, but did not receive any.

8. The research is expected to help The Children's Society to improve practice and the researcher in getting a PhD. However not everyone directly involved in the research may benefit from it. This might particularly include children and young people, who are growing up and who may only have a very short connection with The Children's Society. To thank them for their involvement they will receive a gift. This will be negotiated with each group and will usually be some stationery or chocolate or gift vouchers, or whatever is most appropriate.

Of all the points, this was the one that generated most interest and difference in responses. I saw this as a principle of reciprocity that specifically recognises the difference between the adults and children involved in the research. For adults, involvement in the research was either included in or an optional extension of their work for TCS. This was not the case for children and young people who might not expect to get anything out of the research at all. There are a range of different views and practices. [Holmes, 1998 #958] disapproves of personal gifts but distributes sweets. [Mahon, 1996 #863] supports the giving of gifts in this way but not that this should be mentioned beforehand. [Thomas, 1998 #729] decided to pay children for their participation in activity days of research, but not for individual interviews "any more than [they] did for [their] adult subjects" (p. 344). I did not see the gifts as an exchange for information, but as thanks for time and attention. Those TCS practitioners I worked with supported this.

<u>What I did in the process of drawing this up</u>

I had already written and discussed with others a short paper on the involvement of children and young people in the research [DM7]. This was to clarify my ideas, and for practitioners who were helping me to contact young people. The organisation did not itself have any procedures or code of ethics in research with children. The research agreement between me, the organisation and the Open University specifically included a requirement to provide a Statement of Ethics, which would meet the organisation's legal

responsibilities and standards towards the children with whom it is working, and a requirement that the research would be conducted in accordance with the organisation's Equal Opportunity Policy. In thinking about this I drew on my previous experience of research (mainly with adults), and of practice (in which confidentiality is explicitly recognised to be always qualified – point 6), and from teaching and the use of learning agreements. It was important to me that I wrote one statement, which had meaning for the children and young people, for me, and for the organisation, and which was homologous with the research (reflected in point 3). I did not want to write different statements attempting to convey the same meaning in different language and formats. Neither was this to be a 'wish list'. My intention was that the statement should speak for both intentions and actions. Finding the words took the most time.

I read texts about ethics in qualitative research, particularly those that took a critical stance, and used examples from their own research. Punch (1998) is particularly helpful, but others, e.g. Robson (1993), had surprisingly little discussion). I looked at similar research, particularly a series of articles in Children and Society, Hood, Kelley et al. (1996), Thomas and O'Kane (1998), Morrow and Richards (1996) the work of Priscilla Alderson (Alderson and Goodey 1996), participatory research with children and young people (Boyden and Ennew 1997) and also texts written for practitioners rather than researchers (Greig and Taylor 1999)and talked to people who had done research with children and young people, who gave me further ideas for references and about problematic issues. I looked at codes of ethics from relevant organisations (e.g. British Psychological Society), and found some more examples on the internet (Illinois Department of Children and Family Services), and also medical research, and issues of informed consent.

I wrote a draft, based on the principles of confidentiality, informed consent and then at the suggestion of my supervisor, I reflected on the assumptions and beliefs which I held on which this was based (or the 'meta' ethics which were informing these statements) and rewrote it. I then sent the second draft to some people I was working with and asked for comments and feedback. The feedback resulted in some changes, although these were mainly to do with the wording, but also helped me in clarifying the differences between being a researcher and being an employee, which had been blurred in some research I had done previously, and to come to an understanding of the statement as being about the relationship between me as the researcher inviting others to join me in the research, and the children and young people (and others) being invited to join. I am now sending out the statement when I am arranging to contact children and young people, and will be introducing it at the beginning of interviews and focus groups with children, young people and adults, and it is still developing.

One of the most taxing questions was why I should write a statement for only one group (children and young people) with whom I was researching, rather than everybody. To come to an understanding of this I returned to some of my earlier writing about the research, and the proposals. This is reflected in the first point, which comes from an understanding of the position of children and young people in society. However I decided that I would write the points in such a way that they could be read as referring to anybody, and I would explore the meaning of this difference with those with whom I was researching. I saw the statement as an opportunity to draw a boundary round the research, which would be clear to everybody, and to include what would not be included as well as what would be (e.g. point 4).

Almost all practitioners with whom I have shared the statement have been most positive about the last point, which may be seen as not belonging in a statement of ethics. However for me it recognises the difference, which is difficult to express, between children and adults. It also, like points 2 and 7, indicates the difference between the researcher and children and young people. On reflection, perhaps I should include a recognition of where we are the same (although I do not know what this might be yet).

# Appendix 5 Pictures generated in the research

I am including pictures of all the twenty-two drawings by children generated in the research activities and two sets of rich pictures drawn by young people and adults:

- To include other people's voices in the thesis through their pictures and stories, alongside my own;

- To show the diversity of responses to my invitation to draw a picture of adults and children doing something together, and the diversity of interpretations of experiences in pictures;

- To acknowledge the work that was put into them and to say thank you to those who drew them and those in TCS who issued the invitations with me;

- Because they were beside me as I wrote the thesis to remind me of good times and inspire me in the writing.

The pictures were drawn on large sheets of paper size A1 or A2 using felt tip pens. I then had the pictures photographed digitally and also printed out as glossy photographs. I have subsequently scanned the photographs electronically, removed from each picture the names of the children except for those who used their 'research names' and included in typescript any description written on the front or back of the picture.

The effect of these processes is that firstly the pictures appear roughly the same size. Originally there was great variety. For example, M who drew 'football' folded his paper into four first, whereas A and E used the whole sheet for 'school trip'. Secondly the background in all the photographs is pinkish grey instead of white. The colours are less vivid than in the original pictures. Because of this and the reduction in size, some of the detail has been lost particularly in 'Happy2000' and 'duck feeding' and the rich pictures.

Numbers 1 to 16 were drawn by a class of year 3 (approx. age 7) children [58]. Numbers 17 to 22 (and no. 9) were drawn by a group of ten year 7 (approx. age 10) children [66]. The description written on each picture is the words used by those who drew when they were asked what the picture was about. The 'name' of each picture was assigned by me in order to remember and refer to them.
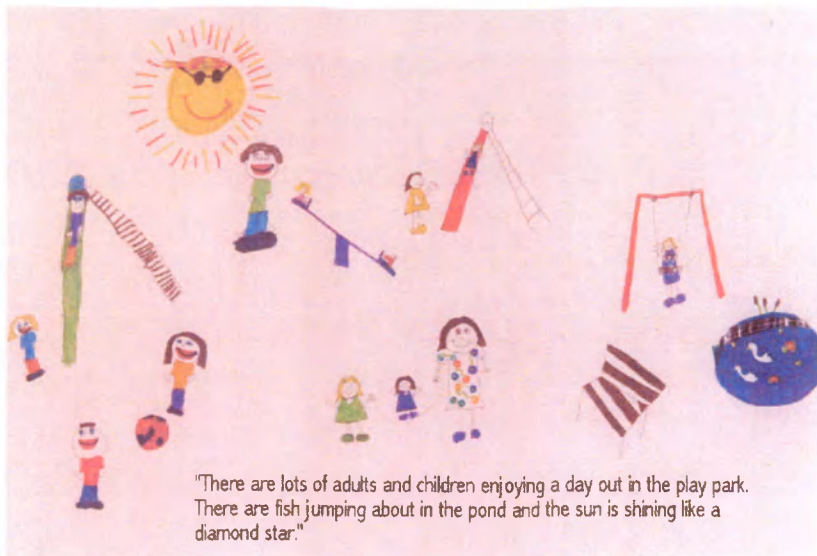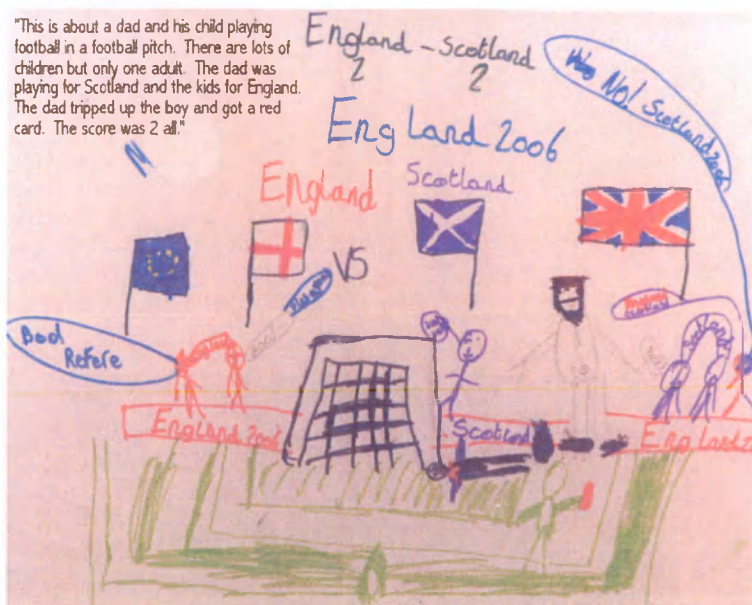
"There are lots of adults and children enjoying a day out in the play park. There are fish jumping about in the pond and the sun is shining like a diamond star."

1: Diamond star
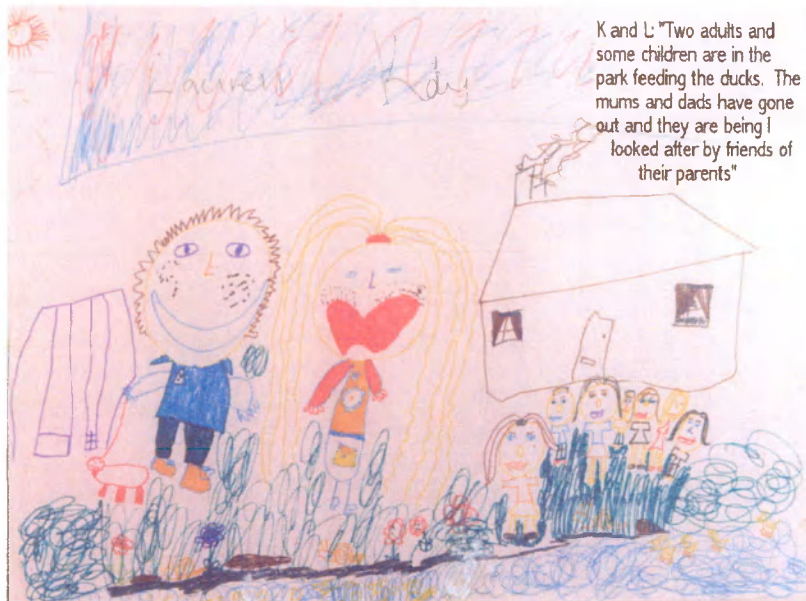
K and L: "Two adults and some children are in the park feeding the ducks. The mums and dads have gone out and they are being looked after by friends of their parents"

2: Duck feeding

"This is about a dad and his child playing football in a football pitch. There are lots of children but only one adult. The dad was playing for Scotland and the kids for England. The dad tripped up the boy and got a red card. The score was 2 all."
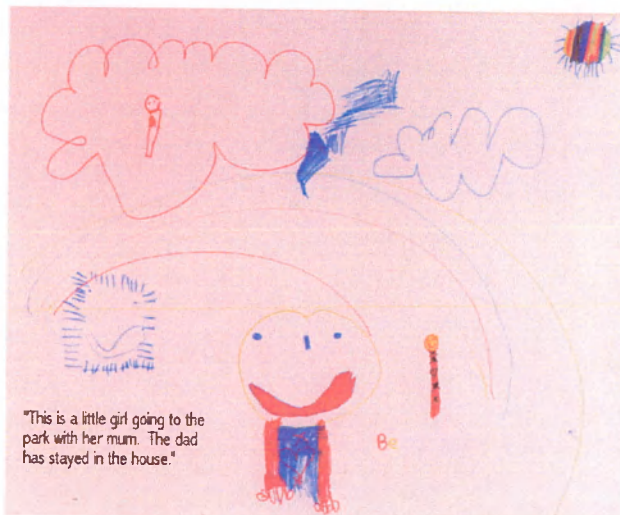
3: Football

4: The Funky House

5: Six in the park ("children and adults are playing in the park")

"This is a little girl going to the park with her mum. The dad has stayed in the house."

6: Going to the park with mum (and not dad)

Going to the park with my mum + sister

7: Going to the park with mum and sister

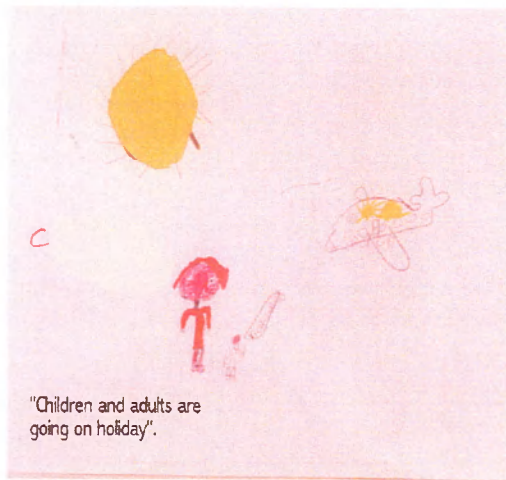"Mum and sister are lifting (swinging) the baby up saying, "One, two, three, up!"

8: Swinging the baby

9. Swinging and sliding

"Children and adults are going on holiday".

10: Going on holiday

A and E: "This is a school trip. All the children are lining up to come off the bus. They are going into the forest. The bus is in the background".

11: School trip

by L

and K

L: "Mum and kid playing in the rain"

K: "Mum, child and child's friend play in the sun"

12: Rain and sun

"This is a pub. The adults are drinking alcohol and smoking and the children are drinking coke. The pub is open 24 hours a day. The pub is called 'The Dead House'. The pub's phrase is 'Happy 2000'".

Happy 2000   24 hours open a day

13: Happy 2000

"Mum and daughter are skipping together"

14: Skipping together

Having a pretend fight - adults watching and children fighting

15: Pretend fight

This is about children and
adults ebjoying a day at the park. The mums
are chatting on the bench, there is a pond and a happy sun.

16: Happy sun

17: Adults and children on the Big Wheel (celebrating the Millenium)

18: Dad and son playing 'Goldeneye'

19: Mohican

20: Night: watching 'The Bone Collector' and being comforted by dad after a nightmare
21: Day: playing in the park

22: Watching 'Brookside'

Pictures 23 to 26: "Rich pictures of (TV) policy-making together"

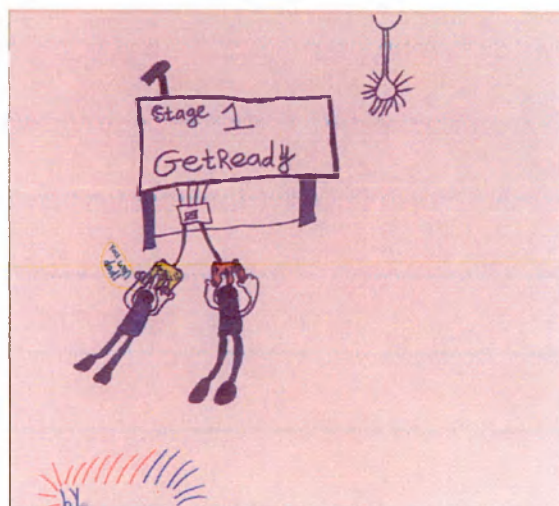These rich pictures were drawn by three different groups of the experience of working together on policy-making in respect of access to TV by young people in TCS projects [72], [76]. The top picture was drawn by a group of three young people, the middle picture was drawn by one young person and two (young) TCS staff members from the project where the young people were based. The bottom two pictures were drawn by a group of two managers from the project and one TCS HQ staff member.
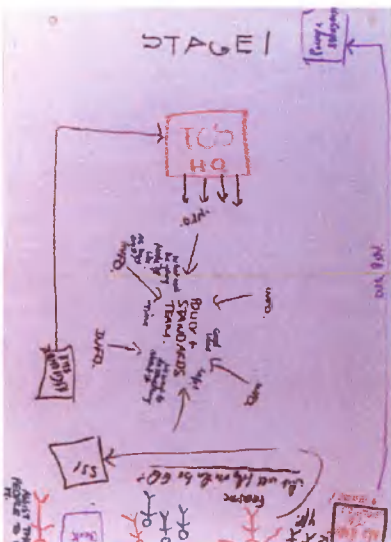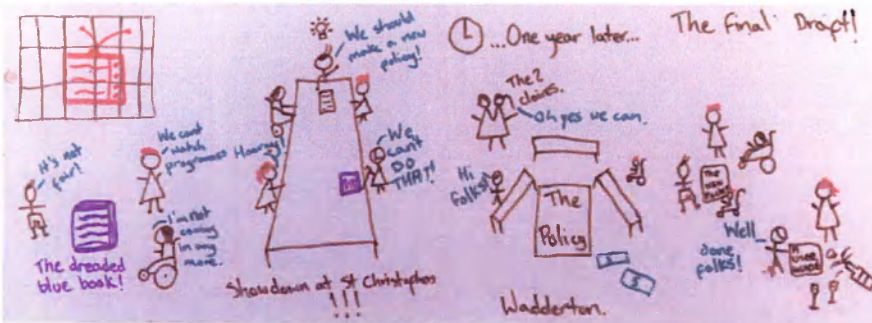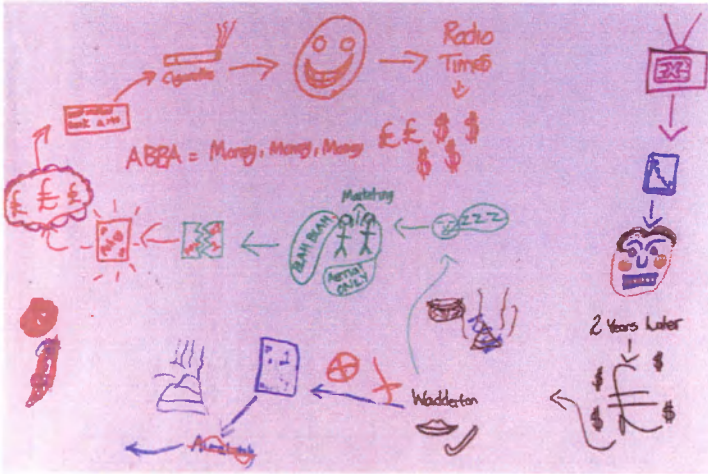
Pictures 27 to 29: Rich pictures of doing Article 12 research together

These rich pictures were drawn by three different groups of the experience of working together on research into young people's awareness of their participation rights under Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The top picture was drawn by two project workers who were involved in the design of the research. The middle and bottom pictures were drawn by pairs of the young people who were involved in the design and also the interviewing and recording of the research [73].
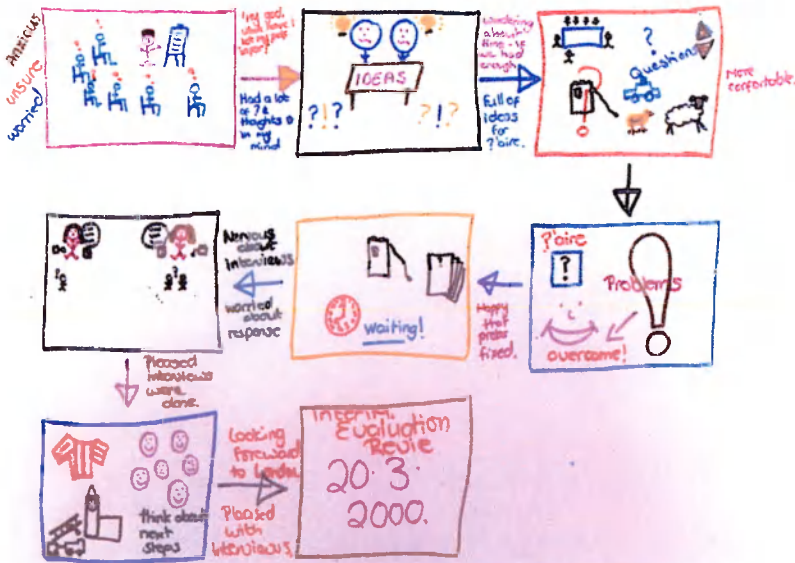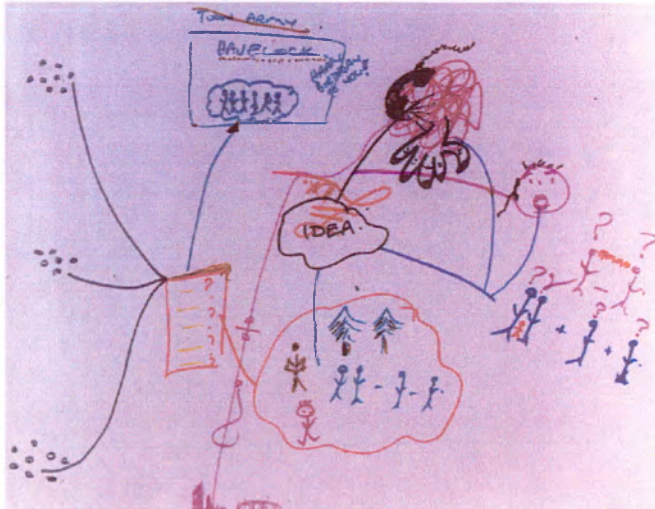
Pictures 30 to 32

These are examples of rich pictures I drew to help me make sense of my experiences in my research, towards the end of years 1, 2 and 3.
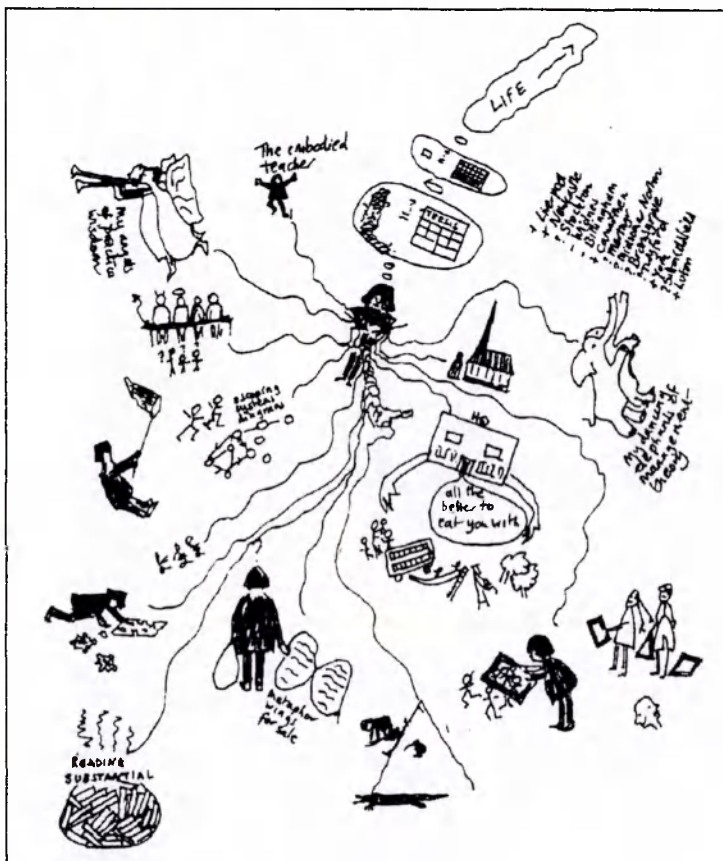
Appendix 6 Examples of feedback

Appendix 6.1 Letter to Wednesday Lunch Club

This is my feedback to the young people and project workers in activity [24]

To those who were there when I visited on 19 May, thank you very much for doing the exercises with the pictures and for the discussion and feedback.

(I'm doing research into new ways in which young people can be included (if they want to be) in their community, and their voice heard by people who make decisions, and how they can become decision-makers themselves. At the start of this, I'm collecting different ways of thinking about joining together and sharing.)

This is to tell you some of the things I learned in the session, and to ask for any more comments from you, if you have them.

Pictures of different people : what could they be doing together ?
I put your answers under rough headings to check out with other people and to add to.
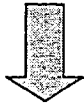
'Being' the same
- being in films, featuring in magazines
- bi-sexual
- in an advert for camel cigarettes because they've got the hump

- all tarts, all models
- in prison

'Working' at the same thing together
- trying to understand Hugh Grant and friend

- starting a women's club
- team members

Enjoying the same thing
- orgy
- cocaine
- having a laugh
- talking/socialising
- sport

Aiming at the same thing (for themselves)
- glory hunters
- showing what they are good at
- posing
- racing

One of the things that has come up in my research is that some people see that in order to work together,
adults need to get something out of it <u>for themselves</u>
but that what **young people** need is <u>fun.</u>

Do you agree with this and that in order to work together :

Young people need to have fun

Yes ☐   No ☐

Adults need to get something out of it for themselves
Yes ☐   No ☐

Any comments ?

Ways of sharing things: I asked for ideas about different things that could be shared. At the moment I'm still collecting these and what each one means for how people behave towards each other. This is what you suggested

- sharing the same family
- sharing a bed (good and bad)
- a toilet
- a toot
- sharing music (can't do this with a deaf person or someone who doesn't like it)
- sharing knowledge
- sharing information
- sharing your love
- sharing the earth
- sharing views
- sharing daylight
- sharing a bank account (would you do this with anyone ? Could be a wife or someone you trust. Children have to share an account with someone in the family)
- sharing your germs
- a teacher

The last question I asked was what do **you** think should be done to make sure that young people have a voice and are listened to.
(Someone suggested doing away with the police but not everyone agreed.)

If you have any more ideas, I'd really like to know them, and include them in what I write. This will be for The Children's Society, but also for conferences and (I hope) books.

Comments:

Appendix 6.2   Letter to Mr. G's class

This is the text of the letter I sent to thank the children who were involved in activity [58] – Mr. G's year 3 class.

Dear Everybody,

L and I came to see you a month ago, on November 9, to find out what you thought about people doing things together.   Thank you very much indeed for the pictures and the photographs and your ideas.   I'm sending the photographs back to Mr. G, but I hope it will be all right if I keep the pictures you drew until after the Christmas holidays.   I'm hoping to use some in my book, but don't know how to do it at the moment.   There's also a copy of the tape – but it's difficult to hear what people are saying because of the noise.

I learned many things about participating and children and adults doing things together from you:
- Doing things together is good because
  - ➢ you can get help with questions,
  - ➢ you can do things faster,
  - ➢ you have company,
  - ➢ you can make new friends together,
  - ➢ if people are fighting if someone else is there they can stop the fight,
  - ➢ if someone is upset or feeling sad or crying you can go and ask them to play with you,
  - ➢ if someone is a friend they are helping you and you can share their love.
- You said the differences between children and adults are that children are small and adults are big (and you showed this in the pictures), and adults can do some things that children can't (go to pubs and drink beer (and this was clear in one of your pictures), and drive cars) and they know more.
- When you think of doing things together, you think of the place where it happens, and this is important.   For example, lots of people drew pictures of adults and children together in a park, and other pictures were about people together in a pub, or a club, or a football pitch, and there was lots of detail in the pictures about this (whether the sun was shining, or it was raining, or there was a rainbow, what was in the playground, whether there were ducks on the pond, the name of the pub and the club and what they looked like, the flags at the football ground).

- Doing something together doesn't have to include a lot of action, or even much talking. People can just be walking in the park, or having a drink or a meal, or just being together. But it can also be about doing something very active, like skipping, or playing a singing game or jogging or playing football or going on holiday. This might be different for different people. When you were drawing the pictures, some people moved around and talked a lot more than others.

- In most of your pictures, and in your stories about the favourite things you do with people, the adults were mums and dads (not friends, aunts and uncles, teachers and so on). I will ask the next group of children I talk to about this — about the difference between doing things with mums and dads and other adults.

- It is difficult to know what to call adults who come into the classroom, who aren't teachers or parents. Because we aren't teachers, L and I thought we'd like to be known by our first names, but everyone (except Mr. G) called us "Miss"! We didn't mind this — it reminded us we were in school — but I think we felt we should behave like teachers, until L got everyone to shout their names at the end.

I hope everyone has a good time in the Christmas holidays.

Yours sincerely

Marion Helme

PS Thanks also to Mr. G and to Mrs. S (apologies if I have her name wrong) for all their help.

cc. L, The Children's Society

Appendix 7 Two ways of describing project work

The first extract is a report on the participation work of a regional team taken from the 'Outcome Data Summary' of the TCS performance review of the Children In Communities Programme 1996-1999 [DJ6]. The Data Summary was distributed in May 2000.

The second extract is the transcript of part of my research conversation with a project leader from this regional team concerning one of the pieces of work reported in the 'Data Summary' (Supporting Young People) [59/tape].

References to specific places have been removed.

Appendix 7.1 Extract A from the 'Outcome data summary' relevant to the work of the project team from TCS Performance Review 1996 –1999 Children in Communities Programme (JO5)

[Regional Diocesan] Team

Major achievements
- Funding was secured in 1997 for a new three-year Partnership between the ... Diocese and The Children's Society to end on 31 March 2000.
- The project was successful in meeting its budgeted income target each year and in obtaining funding beyond that target. This was attributed to the project's good track record, and carefully planned funding applications and negotiations.
- Building on the experience and skills gained during the past partnerships and capitalising on networks and contacts already established, the project team enabled and empowered children, young people and their families to respond to their needs. Working alongside community groups across three counties, using community development techniques to address Justice Objectives 1 and 5, the work of the Team resulted in [eighteen projects in three counties]...
- The fruition of a project brought a new or improved facility that had been identified and researched by the community. Records showed that projects were well-attended and enjoyed community ownership, respect and credibility.
- The process by which this was achieved brought about a personal growth within the individuals involved, as skills, confidence, and motivation were developed. Evaluations showed that community groups were well supported, providing an opportunity for people to be heard who had little experience of being listened to before.
- Community groups underwent training, gained certificates and in some cases went back into employment as a result of the training and confidence building within the project.
- Throughout the three counties the team was responsible for the promotion and facilitation of parenting programmes including the training of volunteers... This resulted in thirty-five courses providing support at every stage of the family life cycle.
- Evaluations showed that the project achieved a raising of awareness which was needed before a change could begin.
- Through a partnership with the Diocese, the project developed good relationships

with clergy, parishioners and children. This provided the project with a sound basis for their work with churches involving the application of project knowledge of child care to ensure that children have a good start.

- The project also developed considerable expertise in involving young people directly in decision making and development of facilities to meet their needs. The project was successful in developing young people's fora, young people's centres and increasing their participation in developing the neighbourhoods in which they lived.
- Whilst working alongside community groups to achieve their aims, funding has been attracted in the range of £600,000 over the past three years.
- To achieve the above the project had one full time project worker in [one county] with part-time project workers in [the other two]. The project's target is for a full time project worker in each County. Despite staffing changes, (two new team leaders and two new project workers), the project was proud that the team remained committed during a very unstable time both within the team, and within the Children's Society as a whole.
- The team expanded to include four staff members who were based at the ... Family Centre.

Key learning: systems

- When working with community groups agreements or contracts needed to be formalised, so that progress could be reviewed and an exit planned.
- Community groups can be empowered and can provide quality provision for their communities. In so doing, they gain credibility in the eyes of the local authority.
- Community development has the potential to tailor-make provision to suit a community's needs, yet, the resulting provision can fail to fit into existing systems. Thus, existing systems have had to change to meet the needs of the community, for example, P Playscheme benefits children from 1 - 16 years old.
- Two satellite projects, [one in C] and Supporting Young People in [A], have shown that the voice of the young person can be heard. Young people, in both instances, were invited to attend meetings of their respective Town Councils and to make informed comments on issues arising during the meetings.
- Trust must be built with community groups before progress can be made.
- Much can be achieved by using resources within the Church. Community development as a means of achieving the practical outworking of faith is more effectively practised when clergy practice community development within the Church.
- Throughout the project's community development work, it continually challenged systems and structures and encouraged community groups to respond in a similar manner...

Key issues: strategic planning

- Funders needed to appreciate that community development is an on-going process which it is difficult to evaluate within a limited time-scale. The impact of project work will be much wider than evaluations show, e.g. Parenting – we can measure the number who attend, and solicit their personal evaluations, but we cannot readily measure the impact it has on their children and their children's children.
- In a rural area covering a huge geographical spread it was unrealistic to have part-time project workers. A large turnover in project workers was in the past related to part-time work and instability of funding. A turnover of staff has the potential to lead to instability within projects.

Appendix 7.2   Extract B: A story of participation from a TCS project leader

My comments and questions are in Italics. This story followed a discussion with the project leader and the project administrator about the work they did, history of project, funding issues, connection with other agencies, especially the Church, and other projects in TCS.

We've got a very nice seaside resort. It became the in thing for the young people there to hang around the harbour at night. I think they were just hanging around the street but it became very popular to them, and for the parents from the surrounding rural areas to actually drop the young people off and pick them up again. So you've got this huge mass of young people on the street, drinking, drugs, not a lot. It's just that the town council started saying this is a seaside resort, ... and you've got the sight of the young people on the street. And the young people maintained the line saying, we're bored, and the press interviewed them and they chose the young people that were quite disaffected to interview. And everyone said, oh typical of these young people.

The local school had been doing some peer led education, and addressing issues such as alcohol, and it was completely peer led. And they were actually finding possible solutions. Two issues – young people were putting together packages they were taking to other schools and this was very successful. There was a lot of support from the Health Council, and health promotion felt well we are doing as much as we can inside school, involving young people in decision-making about issues that affect them. But that's not good enough. We need to take this participation, addressing these issues, out into the community. And there's a real problem here ... So we need the young people themselves to address this issue. That's where we were asked to get involved in this project. So I met with the head teacher and health promotion and we decided we could get involved. And our role would be to take the project out into the community.

The first thing I did was to meet with a group of the young people in the school and asked if they wanted us. They said yes. I said we couldn't do it on our own. So we had an open meeting in the school. A lot of professionals came. There was a lot of support and we had the go ahead then to do a piece of work. There were a lot of young people outside the peer led education group. I said give me your names and I'll write to you and we'll have a meeting. At that stage the head teacher said just a minute, they've got homework to do on a Monday and something else to do on a Tuesday, and I realised then it was going to be a bit of a struggle. But we had our first meeting, but again we were on school premises, because that's where the young people wanted to meet. They felt at half past three they didn't want to go anywhere else. We had a few meetings in the community hall, then we went into the common room. They were happier there. We had a lot of young people – probably 45- 50 a time. It was very difficult to cope with such large groups.

And I started talking to them and doing exercises and games and trying to find out what was the problem and it was somewhere safe to go. And I said, there are only a handful of you here, what about the rest. We had the most articulate people, because the school wouldn't really allow me access to anybody else. They said, yes, we need to find out what they want. So we started putting together a questionnaire. The young people wrote to a lot of outside organisations asking if

they'd like to contribute to the questionnaire, to find out what it's like to be a young person living in the town. That was the idea of the questionnaire. They were getting the support of letting them know what was going on, and they chose the questions they wanted to put in and what they didn't want to be put in. They translated the questionnaire. The young people were criticised at a later stage as to why there were no questions on sex. And I said they didn't want any questions based around sexual habits. And there were no questions on healthy eating. But again that was of no interest to them in their community at the time.

So they put the questionnaire together and it was delivered to every child in the school by the young people. There was no teacher involvement. First of all they went to each age group in the school, the young people themselves and then they delivered the questionnaires and then they took it back. So hopefully we got some sort of questionnaire that hadn't been ?.

(So it wasn't mediated by the teacher or somebody else in authority?).

It was very difficult to make this happen. It took a long time ...to put together the questionnaire, to get the staff to agree to what we were doing. We had to send letters home to parents to say this was happening. The head teacher tried to put a stop to it. She wanted to look through the questionnaire to make sure it was appropriate. She did want us to take one out about bullying. But we didn't take anything out ... We got 600 questionnaires we could work on.

...The young people themselves collected the results and then put them into report form. But this wasn't good enough for them. They wanted to present it now to professionals, they wanted to let them know. And they wanted to do it through art, dance, theatre. So at this stage I had to bring a lot of professionals in to help. And we attracted funding that was based on celebrating the neighbourhood, and we managed to put together a whole week of experience. We brought in a storyteller, a musician to put together music, a photographer, a dance worker ... all of whom worked with the young people. And they put together a production that was called 'Is there anybody out there?' and it was all about the reality of living on the estate and it was performed to an audience of professionals and non-professionals, the director s of education and social services, health authority, they all listened. It was extremely powerful, the message that came across. We got a video. It was very moving. Every single part was an experience that they'd worked on. It wasn't a script. There were the skills of the storyteller ... but it had all come from the young people.

It was wonderful. They were able to tell the community what they wanted. It was of course a drop in centre and that's what we are taking forward. We are working with young people. We brought together a group of adults who will support the young people through this. And it's the adults of course who can attract the funding, but working to the young people's agenda. We've identified a builder. He's great, the young people like him. The building will be leased from the local authority. But I don't think any of this would have happened if we hadn't raised awareness through the performance and the report. The report has gone out to a lot of agencies, a lot of people have requested it. It's been used as part of the Children's Services Plan.

... I've moved on from the project. Our project worker's concentrating on getting the drop in centre forward. The young people who were involved in the beginning had moved on so we've got a new group and it's keeping the interest.

(It's not something you can ever leave and say, yes we've done that?)

They've got links now with the town council and I went to meet the town council and explained what I was doing and said it would be really nice if young people could be represented on the town council. They weren't very happy but they said well we'll let it happen. Of course the young people got fed up with going because it's really boring. They were put on the very last agenda item, not the first ... We invited the councillors to the young people's meetings but they haven't taken it up. But I do think there are a lot more people interested, a lot more people wanting to make contact for research purposes and we have to decide whether we do it or not. But yes I think definitely they have raised the awareness of what it is like to be a young person. They went to a European conference in Belfast, which was quite a learning experience.

(What interests me is this broad development from the original concern that was picked up by the school)
I think the school didn't know what they were letting themselves in for. I think looking back they might not ... they went with it but not willingly. Letters flying backwards and forwards. [The headteacher] was trying to put a stop to it. I had a lot of meetings with her and tried to reassure her. This did make newspaper headlines, the performance. And this was, 50% of young people in the town take drugs. They picked up on things like that and the school was horrified. They wanted me to write to the paper and say put an apology. But I said I can't do that because if the young people are saying 50% of them have tried drugs at some time then that's the truth. Very difficult with the school. Still dodgy relationships, but we are getting there. A lot of support from the church there, with the vicar being part of one of those groups.

(It's interesting that many stories of participation have an element of struggle within them)
It seems a really good idea in theory. They read children should participate more. They think they'll do it as a token.
(But this happens in other contexts ... It is almost that you have to have some difficulty for it to be more powerful learning?)

In our case as well, we work with people in communities who may not be acceptable to other organisations. So there's a conflict of personalities there, which seems to take over what we are trying to do. So the chairperson of the adult support group wasn't perceived as the type of person that should be in charge. She was full of life and energy, slightly hippyish, but that's not the sort of person they want portrayed as lives in the town. *(They wanted a suit!)* Perhaps with a hat on! They said you can't have this person working with young people because they say she smokes cannabis. But it's very difficult because we work with everybody and if they really believe in young people and want to take their ideas forward ...

(There are two other things that relate to stories of participation. One is that it's located. For example, the school common room. You had a place for the young people to be there. How is it safe for them?)

I suppose it was the trust that I built with them. It took a long time. I suppose it was also that I listened and kept to their agenda. It wasn't a case you can't have that. I spoke to them at the beginning I said there are some things we will not be able to do because we'll talk about it and we'll have to say was this practical, can we do it, quite realistically. But I think it's building up trust and finding a safe

place where they felt comfortable. ... there was something wrong with the community hall, but the common room was great.

But I became unhappy with the common room because as long as we were on school grounds the head teacher had control, and I did try to persuade them and explain why because everything they tried to do socially, they tried to have a beach barbecue and things like that, the head teacher would say no. I was getting quite confused here because this was an activity after school and yet the head teacher had an influence here. So I said shall we try to take this meeting to another venue, social services were getting quite interested so maybe they'd let us have a venue. But it didn't work.

(That was a choice in spite of. It did to an extent work there. Did they call you by your first name?).
Yes, we sat on the floor, there were crisps and pop. There was quite a lot of freedom about the format the meeting was going to take and what we do. I think in the end we were sitting round a table, we were taking minutes. But in the beginning they had freedom to decide.

... I think we started with these rules, we should be democratic. ... We are talking about a long time. They wanted to achieve something. I'd probably make contact with them every two weeks. I had about 5 different projects going on at different stages. At the beginning they said they wanted to see me about every two weeks.

Although they had meetings they had others when everybody could turn up. I can't quite understand this. Everybody could join but they did have these other sort of meetings when anybody could come.

(That's interesting because it is a recognition that open meetings often aren't open really?)
I was a bit puzzled about that. Every time, how could we have an open meeting? It did work.
(But there is a difference between saying everyone can join and having an open meeting when you can just turn up?).
They did have meetings in their lunch hour, but they wanted me to attend as well. And we had the OK from school to do this and she (head teacher) stopped it.

I had a lot of trust there. They would tell me a lot of things that were going on in the school. They used to come to the office sometimes. I miss them, but they've moved on now. They've grown up. It's difficult when you meet them in the street. They've probably changed their hairstyle. They know me but ... you don't instantly recognise them. Then they are disappointed.

Appendix 8 Stories of participation (examples)

Appendix 8.1 Story from programme manager

First example – this didn't have to be participative... S used to work [in a government department]. Basically we did a Jim'll fix it for senior staff from [two government departments] to go to [two TCS projects]. S came with, this is what they want to see. My view was clearly there was some negotiation. I needed to find out what the projects felt and policy issues [about the government departments]. And what any other issues were. How you make it OK for others, what's comfortable for them. A lot of background papers needed to be written. While we were doing it there was a clear attempt for that to be a participative process from local people through to project staff through to S and the [civil servants]. So what would come out of it should be acceptable to both sides. [The civil servants] would have been keen to meet larger numbers of children but due to the school day it wasn't possible in [one project], whereas it was possible in [the other]. So in [the first project] we took them around the area.... What was important about it was that we had quite a substantial exchange beforehand that was mediated and both sides were prepared. The real sense of participation came when the visits were taking place and afterwards. There was a very awkward point where young people returned from going round the estate for lunch and it wasn't clear how the conversation was going to start, but they [civil servants] moved around between groups of local residents and it worked very well. And they came back to a smaller team to sum up the day. In [the second project] they had a couple of smaller meetings and both worked well because they seemed prepared and people were able to have an exchange. Another interesting thing – [the first project visit] was very much around the table. The sting in the tale that the project leader had prepared, he'd done a questionnaire about the educational background of the [civil servants] and that was shared around the project. That wasn't itself participative, but it opened up a whole discussion about expectations and jobs which we were able to follow through. We asked them for their assumptions about each other and what they would do differently. Apart from a larger meeting... we'd have liked to have ongoing dialogue, invited reps from both groups to go up to [the government department] to work on ... policy with the ... advisers. As a piece of participation, you work with people who have been excluded and ask them to think through some of the barriers they faced which was a tremendously participative idea. The value is not only that it's happened but it's potentially an ongoing process. Breaking down stereotypes. Also it's the idea that it's not just local people who need to [change]. It's a reversal.

(Marion: being able to put yourself in other people's places, see through their eyes. It takes courage?)

Yes - watching the teenagers waiting for a meeting. Also everyone had had to take a long journey to get there. I was fascinated watching parents cramming into a child's play room ....

Appendix 8.2   Mountain biking in Hammersley Forest (excerpt from my field notes)

BJ, a project leader whom I'd met a couple of times invited me to go with a group of young people and project workers on a day's mountain biking in a forest about 45 minutes drive from the city. So I booked two nights in a hotel near the project and arranged to meet up with a couple of other people the day after the mountain biking, and a meeting in Nottingham on my way back south.

BJ had also talked about inviting the TCS Marketing Director, but she didn't come. The trip was to mark the successful conclusion of a cautioning group, that is project work with a group of young people who have been cautioned by the police for criminal activity. Project workers had been working with the group for several weeks to develop alternatives and help prevent further involvement in crime.

There were about 12 young men and 3 young women, four project workers, three of whom I knew, and me. BJ had told me earlier we weren't going to stop on the way because they'd had problems before with the young people taking stuff from shops – not in a critical way, more like 'this is how it is'. We were collected with provisions from several locations by coach. The number of young people who turned up at collection points was noted with occasional disappointment by BJ.

On the way from the city to the forest, most of the young people gathered at the back of the coach, the lads on the back seat, excited, joshing. I was apprehensive about the mountain biking, being overweight and unfit and knowing how silly I look in a cycle helmet. I was also apprehensive about my failure sometimes to understand what people are saying and to appreciate whether they were jokes or to be taken seriously. Because I speak something like BBC English people usually understand what I say so it's embarrassing if I don't understand them. It's like thinking you know the way somewhere then it looks a bit different; there is an assumption when you speak to someone that they will understand, that there will be a connection. With people who speak differently I feel unaligned at first. I think M introduced me but I could not remember how he did this. However by the end of the biking day I was tuned in.

We arrived, we claimed bikes that would do from the hire shop. People started cycling around madly. A lad and I haggled about a bike. He asked if I was with them. We put on helmets with varying degrees of resignation. We set off along the road to the woods, leaving Martin behind to set up the barbecue. It was starting to rain. We kept more or less together, me and Carol and two of the girls at the back. The bigger lads cycled on ahead. There was some reminding from BJ and Carol about how we should stick together and about wearing helmets. The cycling was fine and it felt really good to be one of a big bunch.

In the woods we caught up with a group of lads and BJ where the path went over a stream. Some of the lads had got off their bikes and were investigating the stream and discussing what to do, complaining about the weather. Some were for cycling down the stream. There were some raised voices. One lad set off down the stream, but when others didn't follow he came back and then in twos and threes everyone set off on the path again. I was intrigued about what had gone on. There were a couple of other occasions later, one when there was a choice of routes, and later after we'd eaten and some people were playing cricket in the

rain, when it looked like some people might go off on their own, and some arguing. It wasn't that BJ or the other project workers intervened; in fact they let everybody get on with it. But somehow the lads sorted themselves out so that everybody ended up together.

Most of the lads removed their cycle helmets soon after we set off, and were advised by the (adult) project workers to put the helmets back on. I found myself in a dilemma, since I was just there for the ride. So I compromised by just suggesting lads put their helmets on when they asked me to carry the helmets (as a few did) rather than accost them.

Appendix 9 Letter with questions arising from the research and "Participation Research" Paper

This letter and short paper were sent out to fifty people in TCS with whom I had had conversations. The letter included a summary of my appreciation of the conversation, including the 'stories of participation' and embedded metaphors.

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Dear «FIRSTNAME»
PhD Participation Research with The Open University and The Children's Society

I am writing to everyone I have interviewed and talked with in The Children's Society to thank you and to tell you briefly what I have been doing since then, and will be doing in the next year. This is also to invite you to continue the conversation, and to ask you for your thoughts on four specific questions which have come up for me from the stories and conversations and observations. The questions are about participative action in organisations, communities and groups, and concerning children and young people. I've included a paper written to go with this letter, which outlines the development of my thinking, and the theory underpinning the research.

What I want to offer in this research is a different way of understanding the relationship between research and practice and the management of practice, and specifically a challenge to the idea that reality is 'out there'. The philosophy and theory on which the enquiry has been based has been difficult for me to explain in conversations – my understanding has unfolded in the process of doing the research. I hope the account in the paper and the questions will continue conversations and trigger your enthusiasm, in the way they have done for me.

Firstly, I did enjoy and find helpful «INTERVIEWVISIT» «INTERVIEWDATE». «INDIVIDUAL_COMMENTS».

Since the beginning of the research in 1998 I have interviewed about forty people in The Children's Society and met many more, I have also visited about 15 projects, read many documents from projects about practice, and some about the organisation. Now I'm reviewing what I have learned from this, and recording the metaphors people have used in stories of participation. There are still some more

interviews to do with children and young people, and some people I would like to talk to again, but this should be completed by mid February. For the next twelve months, most of my time will be spent in writing up the thesis. However I propose to invite people to some workshops next year to share the methodology and the learning and especially how these could be moved forward into practice and the management of practice. (Because of the changes in The Children's Society it hasn't felt right to do this during the last few months).

Question 1: Why is it that practitioners working with others in anti-oppressive and emancipatory ways so often talk about their own management as oppressive or disabling or somehow irrelevant?

I came into the participation research with this question out of my own experience, and it has echoed with what some people have said to me about The Children's Society, and with others who work in social work, community development, teaching. There are many different ways of interpreting this, for example, in order to make sense of working directly with children and young people (or people in another oppressed-against group) to get their voice heard, do adults need to see themselves as somehow oppressed too? Is this to do with how people (and the organisation) deal with the strong emotions felt by practitioners? It seems to me that there are some different understandings of the relationship and relative value of 'practice' and 'management' and that this may, for example, affect communication between "management" and "practice", and whether messages are heard and acted upon.

Question 2: How can people engage with and develop their own stories of participation to effectively promote social justice for children and young people?

The stories that people tell of participation, and the metaphors within the stories – about the struggles in sharing of different views, the battles with others to get children and young people's voices heard, the journeys of mutual learning, the freedom of people being able to speak for themselves and the containment of 'safe spaces', are at the same time ways of making sense of past experiences, and frameworks within which action is taken and future experiences will be interpreted. Rich stories embody rich understandings and the potential for sharing and generating new ideas. The richest, most detailed and descriptive stories that people have told me about participation have usually been about their direct experience working with children and young people. Not everybody can have this particular experience, but I would argue that to promote social justice either directly in communities or through systems and social policy changes needs an awareness of the rich possibilities of participation, and that this might be developed through reflection on own experience with other people.

Question 3: Do geographical metaphors have an especial resonance in making sense of participation?

This question links together several issues. The idea for the research project first came out of the Child in the Neighbourhood group in The Children's Society over four years ago, but for some time it was difficult to connect the work of that group with where I saw the research going. In listening to people's examples of experiences of participating, it has been very exciting to see how many include geographical metaphors – of place, of landscape, of difficult journeys with hills and walls to be climbed. In the pictures that children drew me of 'adults and children doing something together', the 'where' stands out (parks, football pitches, under the rainbow, pubs and clubs). A very powerful metaphor of the

process of participation embedded in some stories is that of 'putting yourself in somebody else's place'. There are echoes with geographic metaphors of 'displacement', for example, 'weeds are flowers in the wrong place', and 'unconventional life styles for which there is no place in society are dangerous'. This may connect with the previous question, as a way of accessing own experiences of participation. It also needs to be considered alongside other 'root' metaphors of participation, for example, as using the senses (different views, having a voice, being heard etc.) and participation as a battle.

A subsidiary question that arose from my observations is "does participation reach a plateau?" Once everyone starts agreeing is there is less participation – e.g. people stop coming to meetings? Does the energy that comes from participation arise out of the differences between people? If there is too much attention to getting agreement then is there a corresponding loss of enthusiasm? (There is more discussion of this in the paper).

Question 4: How can space be found for new metaphors to emerge in organisations?

A metaphor for organisations is 'networks of collective action'. The purpose of management in organisations can be understood as the co-ordination and control and direction, of the networks and/or the collective action. In the process of doing the co-ordinating, controlling and leading, certain ways of talking about the work of the organisation - metaphors and stories, become dominant and legitimate, and others become marginal, or no longer acceptable. For example, the Corporate Plan circulated in July this year emphasised that 'children and young people are "at the centre" of the Society. Changing job titles is often used in organisations to bring about rapid change; for example many local authorities changed the job titles of social workers to community care co-ordinators in the early 1990s.

The issues for me here are, firstly that I think several metaphors need to be in play, rather than one or two, because dominant metaphors can be stifling. As is often said, organisations need to be adaptable and "fleet of foot" in response to unpredictable and rapid changes in the environment in which they operate. There needs to be space for new ways of thinking and talking about practice and about management to emerge.

Secondly, there is a particular question about participation in organisations. This can be seen as a paradox because it runs counter to practices such as hierarchical decision-making and selective information exchange. Some of the stories of participation that I have heard are about people doing things together so that everyone's voice can be heard, in spite of the efforts of others, either explicitly or surreptitiously, to control or sabotage the process. This control or sabotage sometimes involves the exercise of power – for example, so head teachers deny access to rooms for young people to meet. Often it is institutionalised through policies and practice, arising from stereotyping children and young people as, for example, immature or irresponsible, or through a particular understanding of "children needing to be children".

Thirdly, this question evokes for me particular concern about ways of talking about changes in organisations. How can metaphor makers in powerful position ensure they meet their responsibility to consider how others might understand the metaphor? For example, many ways of talking about reducing the number of employees - as downsizing, right-sizing, re-engineering, restructuring etc. imply that people are things or objects. Metaphors have implications, but these may be different for different people. How can people discover differences in their interpretations of metaphors? It seems to be that this can only be discovered

through a participatory process. I would also tentatively suggest that sometimes 'new' metaphors emerge within a closed group, a sort of 'hot-house', which are difficult for others to grasp and difficult to question because there is no shared context.

I would welcome your views on these questions, and the paper, or any other aspect of the research. Please e-mail me at M.F.Helme@open.ac.uk, or write to the address at the top of the letter.

With best wishes for the New Year, and thanks.
Yours sincerely
Marion Helme

Participation Research

This paper is an outline of my thinking behind the research, and the emergence of the process of making sense of what I've been learning from talking with people working for The Children's Society, with some children and young people, and with others, and from a lot of reading. In the paper I make connections between participation and learning, discuss research as a sort of DIY building process, and link this with social justice, within constructivist philosophy. Finally I connect this with metaphors and stories, as ways in which we make sense of the jumble of our experiences, which can limit our thinking but also offer new ways of seeing and doing. The 'stories' referred to in the paper are usually examples of experiences of participation that I have 'collected' from meeting people during this research project, although some are from documents too.

This is work in progress! There are many loose ends. This paper is intended as an invitation for you to think about some of the same issues, to get enthusiastic about them too, and to continue conversations.

How is participating like learning?

In the research I am working within a constructivist philosophy, and drawing on ideas from systems theory, from theories of metaphors and stories and from participative action research. I first became excited about constructivism because it offered a different way of teaching. So in my university teaching in the last couple of years I have changed the way in which I use reading and ideas and methods. Previously I tended to act as if teaching was somehow about transferring or transmitting ideas and knowledge from one source (texts, me) to another (students), or about organising student activity. Instead I have tried to listen to students and invite them to use reading and me and activities as resources for them to construct their own learning. One metaphor for this process of helping others learn is 'scaffolding' and it's also described as 'making learning possible'. This is a struggle, especially in a framework within which outcomes (numbers of students and pass/fail rates) appear to be valued more than the process of learning, and with inflexible time constraints. But it is much more stimulating and engaging, and it's been encouraging for students to say in class "now I see what this is about" in actively making sense of theories through their own experiences, and to have this reflected in assignments.

In many of the stories about participation it is talked about as involving learning, for example developing skills in making decisions and speaking out, or as a process of learning together, or like learning, as being about change. The tension between process and outcome is mirrored in some of these stories too. Some writers on participation, for example some of those writing in a development context, imply that for participation to be 'authentic', it needs to have a specific purpose, a successful and measurable outcome, such as presenting a report, setting up a sustainable school council, changing housing policy etc. At the same time there are heroic stories of community action, which I would call 'participative', which does not achieve its immediate goal, for example in stopping the building of a road or a dam, or changing oppressive social policies. Just looking at outcomes often ignores learning, particularly the learning about yourself, which may come out of failure or disappointment as much as from success[2]. Neither does attention to immediate outcomes account for the ripple or critical mass effect in the longer term.

Almost all the teaching I do now includes reflective practice, either as the module theme or in the assessment criteria. A question often used to test students' learning at the end of the course, and their commitment to put it into practice, is, "What would you do differently now?" This has had some pitfalls; legitimate responses could be, "nothing, because what I'm doing is OK", or "avoid getting into difficult situations". From my understanding of constructivism I now have a more useful question to evaluate learning and uncover the process, which is "what alternative choices for action are available (to you) now?" This draws on the ethic of constructivist philosophy, 'create possibilities'. In thinking of participation as learning, a similar question could be equally helpful in evaluating practice that aims to 'make participation possible', for example "what possibilities for action have been generated for (you and) others through this work?", "what doors are open that were closed before?" (remembering that before you can open a door, and before you go through it, you have to see it as a door, not just a wall decoration). I suggest that this question should be used in evaluating changes in social and organisational policies too.

How is research like do-it-yourself construction?

Discovering "constructivism" as a researcher has also been liberating and exciting and difficult. My first experiences of research were about translating local "social problems" into numbers in order to obtain resources for a solution. However this sort of approach really became unstuck in researching an MBA project on developing a marketing strategy for a local authority Human Resources unit, which was required to "operate on a trading basis" and somehow become independent. Most classical marketing texts and research were based on a logical-positivist paradigm, on a linear model of a series of steps. This was little help in a situation in which, for example, nobody knew how much anything cost, the term 'customer' aroused some strong negative responses, no-one was quite sure who the customers were, and the customers

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[2] Among the questions outside the scope of this paper is the link between spirituality and the experience of participating. My current thinking is that the connection between involvement with others and self-knowledge, and the 'spiritual appreciation of wholeness' with which systems thinking begins may illuminate this link, but would welcome further ideas.

refused to behave like customers (they kept asking the HR unit what <u>they</u> wanted and they didn't have any money anyway). Neither did the recommended scientific and objective research methods allow an account of my own personal investment in the future of the HR unit, and how I and the others involved were struggling in the endless meetings to make sense of what was happening together, and our mixed feelings of loss, fear and hope. The expectation of the HR managers of my research was that I should find the "prescriptions" in the outside world (how other people did it). I observed that although these were listened to politely, they were never taken any further. A discussion might start but was then hijacked by the old interpersonal and intersectional rivalries, blaming of others, and so on[3].

This experience was recalled powerfully in the paradoxes which have emerged in the conversations in the 'participation research', for example:

➤ participation means not having to participate;

➤ participation is about being free (unbounded) and about being safe (bounded)[4];

➤ participation in organisations is a paradox because participation is about openness, and organisation is about control;

➤ the participation of children and young people is a paradox because society and culture are (always) defined by adults;

➤ the responsible researcher is not responsible for what follows from their research;

➤ objectivity can only be attained through subjectivity.

But paradoxes are not full stops. Like the 'paradoxical injunctions' given to families in systemic therapy, they can be interpreted as invitations to 'think beyond' current ways of understanding and really exciting. It is my contention in this research that constructivist theory offers a way of proceeding.

A[5] constructivist philosophy

I understand learning and knowing as processes of making sense of our experiences, not about finding out about a true 'reality' which is separate from ourselves. We make sense of, and act on, new experiences through reference to how we've interpreted previous experiences. For example, someone said we have the sort of organisations that we have because of the education system we

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[3] What I did was construct a methodology based on the tools to hand (e.g. theories of group processes, systems and complexity theory, marketing and learning, interviews. questionnaires and some quantitative analysis), and ended up with a learning strategy written in marketing language, by which time a different future for the unit had emerged from within the unit.

[4] Another question outside the scope of this paper is about the nature of the boundary, and particularly about that which makes it 'safe' to participate, for example mutuality and relationships of trust. I would welcome your views on this too.

[5] 'A' is because there are many different interpretations of 'constructivism' (not including constructionism and social constructionism). So although the next paragraphs read like a textbook, these are themselves my construction drawing on a number of different accounts, for a particular purpose, within a specific context.

have – with headteachers in their own rooms behind desks, differentiation between teachers and students etc. In this way of thinking, learning is not about storing up 'truths', but of useful personal knowledge. Meaning – making sense - is constructed both internally (individually), and socially (with other people). We make sense of experiences through processes of interpretation (what could it mean) and making distinctions (is it different), and, echoing Piaget, of assimilation (seeing new experiences from the viewpoint we already have), and accommodation (changing our viewpoint in the light of new experience).

The principles informing this research draw from constructivist theory, and, I would argue, a social justice perspective. Firstly there is a recognition of the legitimacy of different perceptions and 'voices'. There is no one 'right' way of seeing and doing things, no one 'best story' of participation – however this does not mean that one course of action might not be more appropriate, more useful, than others in the circumstances. Secondly the intention is to generate choices, to 'create possibilities', in providing an opportunity to take different perspectives, from those we already have, and from the dominant ways of seeing things ("this is how we always do things here"). Choices for actions come out of different ways of talking about experience, and through the stories and metaphors of other people. This is similar to the way that for adults in powerful position to hear the voice of children and young people and do something about it, they have to be able to 'see through their eyes', whether this is about the state of the local park, or what it's been like living in Belfast, or just being ignored etc. So, for example, decision-victims become decision-takers. Thirdly, within the constructivist framework, 'there is no research independent of the researcher'. It is I, for example, who am framing this writing about the research, the theory and the methods, and the puzzles. It would not make sense to say this research is scientific, or objective. However that does not mean it cannot be rigorous, valid, generalisable and valuable. Neither does it mean it cannot be collaborative, a sharing of different perspectives, and the development of shared possibilities for future action.

Metaphors and stories in inquiry

In constructivist theory, language is central in constructing what we understand as our 'reality'. We create and make sense of our "reality" through metaphors and stories and imagery. In sharing stories and metaphors with other people we communicate our understanding – how we see the world, and we can create <u>shared</u> meaning.

Metaphors are 'talking of one thing in terms of another'. There is a lot of evidence that children can understand metaphors 'as soon as they can be tested', provided they have enough knowledge of both of the 'things' – the domains - on which the metaphor is based. Metaphors are not only used intentionally in poetry - "I wandered lonely as a cloud", but also all the time in everyday language, for example, Article 12 of the UN Convention on The Rights of The Child says "the <u>views</u> of the child" should be given "due <u>weight</u>", choosing a visual metaphor for ideas and understanding, and the metaphor of weight for importance. We can, for example, only talk of abstract ideas like understanding and importance through metaphors; they make these ideas concrete and discussible. The term 'participation',

understood as a metaphor, implies some <u>thing</u> that is made up of parts. In talking about participation we use other metaphors, for example children and young people 'having a voice', and 'being heard'. Metaphors express 'the inexpressible', things and ideas for which there is no other way of talking, e.g. computer mouse, Website etc.

Concepts and the metaphors used to talk about them, are inextricable, and an attention to metaphors can reveal social and cultural 'ways of knowing. For example, in everyday ways of speaking, 'up' or 'more is better, so we talk about feeling 'up', about important things being 'high on the agenda', (and in reverse, about being 'downcast', 'in low spirits', 'only little'). In this research I have done two sessions with children in school. At the beginning, to get things going, I have asked 'what are the differences between kids/children and grown ups/adults?" Unsurprisingly the most frequent answers are 'adults are bigger' and 'adults know more'.

Metaphors also <u>organise</u>; for example Arnstein's ladder of participation puts a lot of different ideas about participation into one coherent, related framework. Perhaps most importantly for this research, using different metaphors offers the possibility of re-describing experience, seeing it differently, which then creates new possibilities for action.

At the same time, metaphors and stories can act as constraints, if they become dominant and pervasive. They have entailments, so that Arnstein's ladder can become interpreted as a chain of hierarchical goals – going 'up' the ladder. Particular metaphors can become the only legitimate way of seeing things. There is some criticism about what appears to be the only way of thinking about children that underpins the present government's social and educational policy, that of 'children as the (economic) future'. One of the arguments is that this fails to consider children's experiences as children in the present. Metaphors are powerful and influential – Aristotle suggests that slaves should not be allowed to use metaphorical language, and metaphors are frequently used by politicians ("the wind of change", "the third way"). They can also be subversive, for example my terrifying headteacher Miss Bedson was known to us as 'Bedsocks'.

In the interviews I have been asking people for examples in stories and pictures, rather than metaphors, because firstly I don't think that we often talk in isolated, individual metaphors, and few people are able to come up with them if asked. Examples and stories have metaphors embedded within them (for example, a story about a piece of JO5 work might include metaphors of a journey, battles and wars, snowballing etc.). Another reason I have chosen examples and stories is that stories organise in ways that are different from metaphors. Stories have a time element, and a plot ('we were asked to evaluate the local authority procedures, but we said we would only do this if children and young people were involved, and they eventually agreed; then we invited everyone to a meeting and this didn't work because ... so then we ... " etc.). Perhaps the most important argument for stories is that the telling of metaphors without a context can be misinterpreted or seem meaningless to others, because they are culturally specific and depend on shared domains of knowledge. The same metaphor can have different meanings, or none, in different contexts.   Marion Helme   January 2000

Appendix 10 Critical Review of Research: Questions and Comments

The critical review of the research [79], was a day of discussion in London about the research in June 2000 to which the CASE Studentship Steering Group invited practitioners and managers from TCS, people from the OU Systems Discipline and some of the young people involved in the research. The day was planned with members of the Steering Group, and facilitated with one of my supervisors from the OU.

Objectives of Critical Review

* To review the research before completion;
* To connect the research with practice and management in TCS and explore relationships between research and practice;
* To give Marion (as the researcher) an opportunity to test and develop some of the key discoveries from the research.

"Outcomes" – what we anticipate will be achieved by the end of the afternoon

* What Marion has done in the research – the methodology and the findings – will be clear to those present;
* We will have considered together the research from our different perspectives
* We will have moved on in our thinking about participation in TCS and other organisations, from the research discoveries so far;
* We will have contributed to the development of the research and helped Marion to finish this part of it by giving critical feedback.

(Excerpt from letter of invitation to TCS and OU people. Young people were invited through TCS staff attending the review.)

Seven people from TCS, six people from the OU and my son (at that time a psychology student) came to the Critical Review. However none of the young people invited could come on the day, except for my son.
I introduced my research as a developing story in which many there had been directly involved. I put up picture boards of drawings, photographs and quotations from the research conversations and activities to invite conversations about participation, reflections on research and practice and ideas of what to do next. People were then invited to write down on post-it notes ideas and questions triggered by my introduction and pictures and stick them up for all to read (activity A). People were then invited to choose a theme that interested them and discuss in small groups specific questions which I considered useful for me (activity B):

* What are the important issues in this theme?
* How could this be written up so people will read it?
* What could be done next? By whom?

The collated comments and questions from individuals and groups were typed up from their notes written on the day. These comments only represent the part of the discussion that was recorded. Different groups took different approaches and I have not attributed the comments to individuals or groups. The numbering of the comments is for ease of reference only.

Comments/Questions
About the research and TCS (A)

1. What is our common interest? Participation? Our value base? TCS?
2. What constitutes children and young people's participation in the context of the discussion around this table?
3. What is the goal? Is it to benefit kids or feel good about ourselves? Do kids wish community based involvement and stop there?
4. Why organisations (focus in this research)? (A thought from ... children participating in what?). Is it because of the TCS as context for research ... or academic traditions?
5. The two themes? 1) help others participate 2) have experience of participation
6. History of TCS and Marion's interviews highlights that TCS decision to involve children and young people in its decision-making in governance is the key driver for change – change in attitude, change in power of adults; towards social justice which is with, not for children and young people!
7. Justice Objective 5 says "able to participate in services and neighbourhoods" – why often called 'are listened to'? Why abbreviated to 'able to participate'? Removal of participation as core value to periphery programme.
8. Change of focus "from injustice to justice" [in TCS work - comment in group discussion]: what is this story and what does this formulation of it represent?
9. [Children and young people] alienated from society – but is that too simple? Do they develop their own cultures/society ... even on line ... Do we mean by the society? Can their society be validated? Maybe there are "connections" across from 'society' but maybe distorted/co-ev[?] up etc. (say some teachers, probation, neighbourhood, milkman etc.).
10. The barrier of 'protection of children' making it difficult for staff to connect with children. When do professionals become part of the problem – i.e. 'only we know how to do it ...' (non-participative)?
11. 'Need boundaries for participation' – wider dissemination/ understanding of this is needed.
12. Force for change: we're like Barnado's but smaller → wanting to construct a different story.
13. Action plans ≠ child in the neighbourhood
14. Bottom up (participation of children)/ Top down (corporate plans/assessment of project to headings) (tension/power)
15. Comments: "it was interesting when these 2 met" Orange – pips squeaks! This is interesting!
16. Metaphors – entropy – 'closed metaphors'. Does this mean prescriptive over metaphors (judgements) or is it classification term?
17. Entropic metaphors – causing halts in the conversations. A feeling of what do you do next.
18. Role of geographical metaphors in participation?

Understanding participation (A)

19. Do you have a definition of 'participation' that you have worked with?
20. Participation is not a transitive verb – "I have participated you". It exposes the organisation to risk – adults have to relinquish control – do different things to what it might otherwise do.
21. Children's participation in what?
22. What constitutes children's participation in TCS activity?
23. If participation is good for children and young people why not for everyone else? Is this represented by anything in TCS?
24. What is/are the verb(s) associated with "participation"?
25. Participation is highly contextual – as is taking responsibility
26. ... so is childhood
27. Prerequisites for participation: information, skills (assertiveness, communication), accessible structures, transparent practices
28. Value the assets children bring through participation – energy, creativity, movement (not understood within TCS).
29. Participation without listening or action doesn't work
30. 'The process is more important than the outcome' – is it 'doing social justice' combined with other principles – access to information, being listened to, spiritual and emotional needs?

31. What are the threats/opportunities from reifying "participation" in the organisational mandate of TCS?
32. Keeping children 'in mind' – how can this be real?
33. Children v/become adults, i.e. do participating children become participating adults? Assumption that children all want to participate – do they? Should they want to?
34. How do you measure the success of a participative scheme? I.e.. Symptomatic v. adaptational v. process etc.

(B)

35. Question v. answers – questions perhaps/often more important
36. Contexts – can core principles be identified?
37. Sharing of ideas between projects and also over time (but often difficult in practice); how continuous should programmes be? What generalisations can be made?
38. How can ideas/stories be disseminated?
39. Need to ask questions in all projects

Things missed or missing from the research (A)

40. Which young people are being referred to when the term 'young people' is used? How do you account for diversity?
41. It would be enormously valuable to develop the thinking on researching with children/involving them in research
42. About what level of interaction, practice, feedback, contact etc. has there been with black and ethnic minority children, young people and adult professionals? (It's just that this meeting is very white!)
43. Hmmm, there doesn't seem to be much here about the role/function of workers in providi metaphors, interpreting them and making participation something that children and young people feel positive about.
44. Whose metaphors? Children v. practitioners? - (basis for negotiative understanding betwe children and practitioners about participation)

"Abstract issues" and "others"(A)

45. Are the experiences of children rather than adults' interpretations of the experience of children considered significant in this research?
46. Practitioners starting from children and young people's perspective – BUT children and young people starting from adults' perspectives – ethical implications?
47. Governance is not to be caricatured as us getting them to join in our business. Projects a TCS are often communities of interest already for children and young people; we are a reality in their lives. Many are wanting to be more involved and participate within TCS.

(B)

48. Need to evaluate through multi-stakeholder evaluation whether children and young peopl feel able to participate rather than see participation as a technical process or indicator.
49. Learning from research into continued ethical research with (not on) children and young people (continuing to inquire into all our practice)
50. The research raises questions about reconceptualising participation in terms of context dependent quality of relationships, i.e. quality of relationships with place (perhaps as 'enabled' by TCS) quality of relationships with TCS etc.

Questions that emerged (B)

51. TCS [should] take responsibility for using the research it commissions [how?]
52. Does (any) research make a difference to TCS practice?
53. How to deliver research output so that it's useful/usable?

How could this be written up?(B)

54. In what way has/could the notion of boundaries be useful?
55. Will the papers be produced in an accessible format to be readable by non-academics?
56. What practical ways can Marion take to incorporate the richness of her material in her thesis?
57. Is the research able to 'travel in time', that is be perceived as relevant to the practice question of 2000 in TCS when its beginnings are back in the 1980s?

58. Constraints on this. Lots of it (the research) may be important for PhD – fine – but not all this relevant for TCS. That can be OK. Who is the research for? Research is a political process. Ideology 'dead' provides us with a problem for asking 'why' questions → Social change, rights justice/academic rigour – an opposition? → Research as leading to action/change – how far do this though? → Something short

59. To provide a tool for all those who are responsible for practice and its development (to improve conditions of c&) and those who facilitate learning.

60. Recognition of the innovative nature of this research collaboration (agreement). Link to quality practice innovation needs to be articulated. Don't want to lose this (write it up as process). Learning and exemplar towards enabling more and better ethical partnerships. Model of working collaboratively: how can this be developed and translated to other contexts?

61. Model of dissemination – not just a research report at the end but process of engagement throughout.

62. Translation from general to local and back (programme)

63. Who needs to read it? = For whom does the research have implications?

64. To be built into design for continued learning and not just adding to 'report production' (processes such as recruitment, induction, quality (inspection)

65. There is a major tension between the language acceptable (or necessary) for academic purposes and that which is helpful/useful/<u>understandable</u> to TCS as an organisation and <u>for those people who work for it.</u>

What next?

66. Marion has experienced a tremendous richness. Are there follow-up initiatives (other than a thesis) to learn from this experience?

67. Who takes responsibility now? Marion – thesis agenda, TCS – (national outputs needed to give authority)

Comments on children's pictures (A)

68. Why did they say 'yeah let's draw child abuse'? Seems worth exploring. Felt, even in j?, that this side needed voicing. Or even – as a reaction for researcher – 'eh, this'll please/displease her'. All interesting.

69. Children fighting, adults watching. Is this the child's view – adults view/look on during our world/important activities. This is very interesting.

70. Why doesn't school feature as part of children's representations of participation?

71. Re school not featuring in the pictures – what language did you use to trigger the acts of drawing? Where were the pictures drawn? It sounds like the act itself was one of participation, so if done in school perhaps the act participating with adults (in a school setting) was too immediate to represent.

Comments on my pictures and presentation(A)

72. I like the idea of a kind of psychodrama, different actors in the drama of Marion's research, putting their view.

73. Liked the countries analogy for TCS depts. Especially Switzerland

74. Marion's map of TCS looks like a sort of 'Balkans' – with all that implies about an unfolding history.

75. Rewards review – what do you think the use of the term "participate" means when used by TCS in this way?

76. Checking of visual representations (e.g. maps)?

77. Clarify which audience it is for.

78. Marion to address/TCS to work out how to receive it (thesis/report).

79. Is this all about relationships and valuing relationships in a meaningful way?