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HERMENEUTIC EXPERIENCE AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY IN SCHOOLS:
ON THE WAY TOWARD MEANING

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

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HERMENEUTIC EXPERIENCE AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY
IN SCHOOLS: ON THE WAY TOWARD MEANING

by

Edward G. Dickinson

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
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Approved by

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APPROVAL PAGE

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This study reflects the ontological significance of research itself. As a linguistic expression of the researcher's participation in an ongoing search for a greater understanding of intersubjectivity in schools, the study affirms the conditioned nature of being-ness that affects all efforts to interpret human experience.

Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics is the model of interpretive theory used in the study. This model represents a speculative ontology that is open to the pre-understandings or prejudices of the interpreter/researcher who is pursuing an understanding of a text, an "other," or any subject matter. The researcher's self-reflective search for the underlying prejudgments that influence the research is a significant characteristic of the study. The openness of the study informs the possibility of finding meaning that is conditioned by the interpreter's historical experience and linguistic relationships.

In offering a hermeneutic dimension of research which encourages dialogue as a method for gaining understanding, this study attempts to distinguish the traditional conceptualizations of research methodology from what is demonstrated as an application of a hermeneutic-dialogical lens of research.

Selected theoretical reconceptualizations of educational experience are discussed in order to point out progress toward

an interpretive understanding of interpersonal relationships in schools. The dependency of these theories on strictly epistemological and/or phenomenological descriptions of human relationships is critiqued. The failure of these theories to acknowledge the universalizable groundworks of the hermeneutic experience is credited to their relationship with Habermas's critical theory.

The Habermas-Gadamer debate is explicated in order to further clarify the distinction between the objectivistic tendencies in the critical perspective concerning conscious self-reflection and the intersubjective characteristics of the reflective turn in the hermeneutic circle of understanding.

The later work of Habermas relating to the language phenomenon is discussed in an effort to illustrate that the critical tradition is perhaps beginning to converge with the interests in philosophical hermeneutics concerning the universality of the human condition in linguisticity. Continued differences related to the historical rootedness of the self and the question of the legitimacy of (traditional) authority are pointed out as barriers separating Habermas's sociological interests from the hermeneutic significance to all the disciplines.

The characteristics of hermeneutic-dialectical experience are explained as a means to construct an approach for illustrating an application of the philosophical hermeneutic lens of interpretation to intersubjective relationships in the school context. Such hermeneutic characteristics that are

particularly relevant to experience in schools are openness to the questions of all participants in and with the curriculum, the give-and-take of questioning in dialogue, the reflexivity experienced by dialogue partners, the transsubjective mediation that takes place in dialogue, and the conditioning affects of language, tradition and history upon our intersubjective experience.

In that the hermeneutic circle is represented in this study as not simply a heuristic, methodological device used by the researcher, but the reality of being of the researcher and researched, the conclusions of the study reflect the mediation of the researcher with the researched, in this case the illustrative investigation of a classroom dialogue. A better understanding of the authoritarian role of the teacher is discussed as a result of the researcher's role of participant-hermeneuticist in this case study. Insofar as the study as a whole reflects a journey toward greater understanding of the meaning of intersubjectivity (in schools), the disclosure of such an understanding is discussed as a distinction between the researcher's understanding of how he values this or that in experience and how he understands experience itself from his study of the hermeneutic endeavor.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My experience with this dissertation reflects the culmination of a long journey toward much more than just the satisfaction of degree requirements. And I feel that I have come to a relationship with the graduate faculty that has encouraged more than just an intellectual or professional orientation to the field. This is particularly true of my feelings toward the members of my doctoral committee.

The guidance and friendship that I have gained in coming to know Dick Weller will help me to remember that a warm-hearted humanism has much to offer to the academy. Warren Ashby's openness to my interests in discussing the religious dimension of our work in education and his willingness to share the wisdom of his own teaching experience will also remain valuable guides. Jim Macdonald has taught me not only to value the tensions inherent in all emerging approaches to theory and practice, but also how courage and steadfastness are necessary for maintaining one's own way through the challenges.

It is very difficult to find a place to begin crediting David Purpel's assistance. Perhaps his open door best symbolizes the reassurance that he consistently offered and that I so often came looking for. His calm yet confident manner in helping me to uncover the value of my own way of thinking and his amazing ability to ask the "right" questions will surely be remembered.

Finally, my wife, Teresa, must be recognized for her patience and companionship. She has gracefully endured this journey.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study originated with my personal desire to construct some common groundworks from which to better understand and talk about my role or function as a teacher in the traditional educational environment and my interests in defining the mundane, yet universal experience of human intersubjectivity that represents our ability to relate meaningfully. I initiated this search with a rather naive sense of certainty that I could draw upon my studies of religious experience in seminary to provide a language frame for structuring and discussing these groundworks. I quickly began setting boundaries of approach and organizing a pattern from which to interpret educational objectives vis-a-vis aspects of religious experience. And, after some laudable progress, the legitimating characteristics of ritual, faith, stewardship and other religious commitments began to make up a very convincing model for interpreting human interaction in schools. It became apparent, however, that this interpretive model was only my own sense-making process of projecting an understanding of the association that I perceived between religious and educational experience. Although this was quite meaningful to me and seemed to be a sufficient lens for relating two traditionally disparate domains of human experience, it was an interpretation

that depended on a phenomenological juxtaposition of activities, e.g., the ritual of school schedules, which to any other observer or interpreter may not relate whatsoever. Thus, the relativism inherent in the use of this interpretive model prevented me from making claims of universalizable and ontological characteristics of intersubjective experience that I had hoped to uncover.

In Interpretation: The Poetry of Meaning (1967), Hopper and Miller approached the problem of whether or not a non-objectifying language is possible. They were searching for a mode of language that manifests an openness for interpretation. Heidegger (1962) encouraged this openness by calling for a "going on the way toward meaning." In many ways, I have been after this same quality of openness for interpreting the language of intersubjectivity in schools. This search that I have undertaken has become an opening-up of the "way toward meaning" through participation in a broader dialogue of intersubjectivity with the theoretical traditions in education and hermeneutics.

My journey through readings about the religious domain of experience has provided an opportunity for reflection that has ultimately led to a much greater understanding of the problems inherent in my preconceptions concerning this study. My recollections regarding interpretive techniques for theology have informed the language and historicity of not only the emerging form of this study but the content as well.

The hermeneutic art of interpretation that is common practice for gaining an understanding of religious texts has become a useful model for other interests in historical texts, especially legal and literary interests. I have chosen a hermeneutic approach to the "text" of human intersubjectivity in schools. This approach has taught me that any search for a better understanding is grounded in certain truths regarding how understanding itself is possible. And I have learned that my own research concerning intersubjectivity in schools has been a journey of reflecting upon my preconceptions as a researcher and teacher and gaining a greater understanding by sharing and fusing these reflections with the texts of the study, i.e., the researched materials.

The truths of interpretive understanding have been discussed by Hans-Georg Gadamer (1975, 1976) and will be related in detail in this dissertation's study of hermeneutics and the understanding of intersubjectivity in schools. Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics is the model of the art of interpretation that I have used for the study. This model affirms awareness that the journey toward genuine understanding includes the experience of having first projected some preunderstandings or preconceptions that have been informed by our prejudices regarding the problem or subject that we are seeking to understand. The use of such terms as "preconceptions," "prejudgments" and "prejudices" to translate Gadamer's German has been somewhat misleading as I have continued to research

his works. The English terms carry a pejorative connotation which is not intended by Gadamer. He simply wanted to bring out the fact that the interpreter's own language, experience, beliefs, etc. are a precondition for the initiation process of the interpretive understanding.

The distinction Gadamer claims between "truth" and "method" in interpretation has been helpful in orienting my perspective regarding hermeneutics. The ontological truth that understanding is "more being than consciousness" (Gadamer, 1975, p. 239) is a clarification that has allowed me to establish some independence from the traditional structure of a methodological approach for demonstrating the legitimacy of my research. This disestablishment from the more empirical and positivistic research procedures will be discussed throughout the paper and will be the central point of the fifth chapter which offers a model for applying a hermeneutic analysis that is more speculative than methodological.

Chapter II will provide an historical description of the hermeneutic tradition since the early Greek teleology surrounding Hermes, the messenger of the gods, to the contemporary movement in philosophical hermeneutics that abandons the structural claims of hermeneutical phenomenology. This review of historical hermeneutics contributes two important dimensions to the study as a whole. It represents the research of what will be considered the horizons of thought regarding the topic. This research itself represents the

mediation of language and history that are conditions which influence acquisition of understanding any subject matter and, therefore, reflects a significant characteristic of my own hermeneutic endeavor with the material. Secondly, this review of hermeneutics establishes the basis of my justification for choosing an ontological, as opposed to an epistemological or phenomenological, perspective from which to construct my own model of hermeneutic-dialectical experience.

The third chapter offers a brief review of Jurgen Habermas' (1970, 1977) critical theory for the social sciences in contradistinction with Gadamer's (1975, 1976) philosophical hermeneutics. The Habermas-Gadamer debate represents a fundamental drift in the critical, humanistic tradition concerning the emancipatory opportunities found in self-reflection. Both theorists claim the need to work for modes of reflexivity that allow people to examine the taken-for-granted assumptions that shape their discourse. Habermas' (1970) critical assumptions of how this discourse reflects the manipulative controls of authority and external power structures upon our actions and consciousness is quite different from Gadamer's theory which assumes the need to understand how our own historicity relates with authority. The question of whether or not authority's use of control is for legitimate purposes is a matter that both Gadamer and Habermas find central to the intentions of self-reflection. The basic differences between the consciously reasoned justification for self-reflection in Habermas' epistemology, and the historical and linguistic

conditions that define our beingness and inform our abilities to understand our relationship to authority via self-reflection in Gadamer's ontology, are discussed in order to clarify my adherence to Gadamer's theory. I have tried to allude to the implicit need for educators to gain from both theories by generalizing the benefits of Gadamer's perspective in coordination with the recent developments in Habermas' (1979) theory of communicative competence.

Through illustrating Gadamer's and Habermas' common interests in the language phenomenon, I have set the stage for defending the need to reaffirm the relativism inherent in our being conditioned by tradition. The tradition of the researcher as well as the teacher becomes the crucial characteristic for conceptualizing an interpretive perspective from which to discuss both roles. And these roles help to mediate my intentions in Chapters IV and V with the previous parts of this dissertation's journey.

Chapter IV represents the hermeneutic experience that the journey of research for this dissertation reflects. Having established that my own preunderstandings of research and my own personal history have informed the choices of literary sources, theoretical conceptualizations and metaphorical illustrations, i.e., methodologies or models, for describing the findings, I have participated one step further by actually reflecting upon these prejudices or preconceptions and discussed the details of the hermeneutic endeavor through

this self-reflective turn. This experience, in the written form, is also representative of Heidegger's (1962) notion of the "hermeneutic circle" which is discussed. The parts or fragments of my own horizon of experience have fused together with my projections of understanding regarding the subject matter, i.e., the readings of interpretive theory, and have brought me closer to the truth in understanding, or rather to a genuine conceptualization of the whole of this experience. As well, the whole has helped to inform the partial understanding of how the search for a greater understanding of intersubjectivity in schools is possible. This is apparent in the efforts to conceptualize an application of the hermeneutic endeavor for analyzing teacher-student interactions.

Thus, Chapter V offers a conceptualization of hermeneutic methodology that reflects my understanding of hermeneutic interpretation transformed into a structure of analysis. Gadamer (1975) has at times talked about the method of interpretation as being completely determined by its object. I have chosen the object of teacher-student interaction (intersubjectivity) for constructing a model of hermeneutic-dialectical analysis.

This model, an up-dated projection since my earlier (Chapter I) understanding of Macdonald's (1979) "dual-dialectical" model, is further informed by the characteristics of Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics. Moreover, it represents the fusion of my personal horizons of meaning as a

teacher/researcher with the horizons of thought offered by Heinech Ott (1967) who has also attempted to apply the hermeneutic lens of analysis to dialogical relationships. This model of research is intended to prepare a structure, or rather present an emphasis on the phenomenological foundation, for the actual implementation of hermeneutic analysis for interpreting a specific content of dialogue in a school setting.

This projection is the coming-full-circle of hermeneutics toward an analysis of intersubjectivity amongst students and their teacher, myself as participant-teacher-hermeneuticist. This analysis has ultimately depended upon the wholistic image that I have sought regarding interpretive theory in the hermeneutic tradition. Moreover, it also reflects the qualitatively speculative nature in the ontological characteristics of such an application of hermeneutics.

Those conclusions which have been claimed as defining the being-in-relationship in the intersubjective or hidden dimension of the curriculum are conditioned by the tradition-context of the situation used for analysis. The conclusions expressed in Chapter VI reflect the projection of meaning from my perspective as research hermeneuticist. A deeper understanding of the authority of the teacher as well as the distinction between valuing and understanding inform these conclusions.

I will henceforth continue this introduction with a broader statement of intention that reflects my initial projection of meaning regarding the subject of interpretive

theory. My hope is that preconceptions of human intersubjectivity and experiences in school will become apparent through these reflections. These preconceptions have been informed by my understanding of the work in the field pertaining to the critical tradition and interpretative interests in educational theory.

The Hermeneutic Perspective of Research

In "Research Methodology, Politics and Values" (SERA, 1978), James Macdonald posits the methodological problem:

If we are to take seriously a critique of the positivist approach to research, and are to continue to engage in what one would still call research, then we are faced with a methodological quandary. How should we go about researching? (p. 3)

This challenge has rapidly become an open issue, and has, as in Macdonald's own distinction between the methodological (constructivist) and the contextual approach to research, created dialectical encounters which in themselves challenge the traditional philosophical assumptions of most curriculum theorists. These encounters reflect the need in educational research to seek greater awareness and understanding of the conditions, (human and historical), which inform our potential to relate and dialogically interact within our own values and shared knowledge as opposed to merely constructing and describing empirical means of knowledge acquisition, or what Henry Giroux (1979) describes as the "moribund assumptions" of contemporary theorists. The response which Macdonald, Giroux and others have been attracted to and which welcomes anti-positivistic interests in theorizing educational

curriculum will be referred to in this paper as the critical tradition of inquiry, often seeking interpretive methodologies that provide qualitative accounts of variables in the curriculum, as opposed to quantitative measurements. After discussing the work of several representative educational theorists, I hope to establish that this critical response in many ways represents approaches to phenomenology which are themselves as objective as the frame of reference of some scientific perspectives.

It is the potential of the dialectic itself that interests me most in confronting Macdonald's question. Consequently, I approach his challenge as more than a matter of the need for alternative paradigms of "research." In and through the self-reflective prerequisites which most interpretive or critical inquiries into human sciences demand can be found yet another challenge perhaps even more fundamental than the classification of methodology and research. This a priori requirement calls forth an acknowledgement that the presuppositions, the prejudices, and the preunderstandings of the researcher are important in determining the nature of the research itself. That which is chosen to be researched reflects the underlying intent, the telos or purpose, of the researcher. And, for this matter, the discoveries themselves are means for weighing the values or interests of the researcher.

This, to me, elicits the need to recognize that I can not ignore the tradition (historicity, temporality) which has

informed my judgment. I cannot set aside the controlling agents of efficiency, design, manipulation, and product orientation that have for years caused a social evolution and a personal socialization of knowledge, interests and intentionality towards instrumentality, objective control, and predictability. And yet, in acknowledging the biased nature of these fetters and through conscious and consistent reflection upon the effect of these pre-judgments on my research encounters, I can attempt to see beyond (transcend) these covert and inhibiting subtleties.

My mind's eye, in search of an expressive mode for demonstrating my interests (prejudgments) in the conditioned nature of relationships in education--amongst students, teachers and the curriculum--will assume a hermeneutical perspective. This approach, what will be periodically referred to as the reflective art of understanding, is nothing more than what these words, here and now, represent. For the language that I am entrapped (by the boundaries of tradition) to put to use and the dialogue that I choose to momentarily entertain, reflect the ontological significance of "research" that seeks to explore the groundworks of research itself.

As Palmer (1969) writes of Hans Georg Gadamer's appraisal of the hermeneutical situation, the attitude of the interpreter/researcher is one of expectancy, of waiting for something to happen:

He recognizes that he is not a knower seeking his object and taking possession of it. . . . The

methodical discipline is one designed to restrain his own will to master. He is not so much a knower as an experiencer, the encounter is not a conceptual grasping of something but an event in which a world opens itself up to him. Insofar as each interpreter stands in a new horizon, the event that comes to language in the hermeneutical experience is something new that emerges, something that did not exist before. (p. 209)

Although to Gadamer this event is grounded in linguisticity and made possible by the dialectical encounter with the meaning of a text, to the interpreter as educational researcher, (studying interactions amongst humans and between agents and the curriculum), the text of dialogue is also significantly the hermeneutical experience that finds fulfillment through the emergence of relationships which did not exist before. Consequently, as well, any research, even the most mundane questioning of one to another in our everyday lives, represents the problematical issues of meaning and existence that in themselves signify (through the potential of awareness and understanding) the hidden meaning of our interactions. The tacit meaning, or rather the implicitly conditioned nature, of our interactions can be interpreted by exploring the language phenomena that mediates relationships.

Existential phenomenologists who use the hermeneutical approach, such as ethnomethodologists, Garfinkel (1967) and Mehan (1975) as examples, and hermeneutical phenomenologists, such as Paul Ricoeur (1966), describe the experience-expression link of language as the phenomenological means of interpreting the "common sense" meaning (ethnomethodological

interests) or the "double meaning" (semantical and structural hermeneutical interests) inherent in our interactions. Although language does reflect how we know and what we value in knowing, the phenomenological measuring sticks in linguistic research, and especially in the search for such phenomena as "indexicals" in ethnomethodology, still create a distancing and a sense of objectivity between the researcher and the subject of interest which controls the relationship and interferes with the ontological nature of the relationship, i.e., the conditioned nature of human beings in relationship. It is at this point that research, as a retrieval of meaning or an intended rediscovery of the subject matter through investigation into factual phenomena, must be reminded of its groundworks: that there exists a reality in the relationship itself between the researcher and the researched which can only be interpreted or understood through a dialogical or dialectical (mediating) encounter, (as opposed to the mere reconstruction of facts). Dialogue becomes the means of research which demands the most intense reflexivity and participation on the part of the researcher.

As a researcher, attempting to establish the viability of self-understanding and self-reflection as a "methodological" variable in research, I too must periodically seek to understand my own conditioned status. And yet, I must also affirm the dialectical encounter with the tradition being researched. Only then will it be possible to begin interpreting the

meaningfulness of understanding as "being." I intend to offer a model of dialogical/dialectical "methodology," based on the philosophical hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer (1975, 1976) in such a way that the ontological significance of research and the understanding of intersubjectivity can be made more clear.

Gadamer's (1975) notion of linguisticity, the conditioned and existential lens for understanding the groundworks of phenomenological interests (and their epistemological and axiological associative interests), will be helpful in satisfying the "methodological" expectations of this research. I will continue, however, to question the methodological implications of any endeavor into ontology. I will recognize the usefulness of the traditional language of research, simply because the notion of method does not necessarily carry with it the empirical implications and boundaries of systematization or hierarchical and closed measures of process. Methodology can and should be considered as any approach which is taken towards research--even the most spontaneous and undefined processes.

The process of inquiry that I wish to use in my research has a life of its own and is often filled with developments that are unanticipated and unintended. This in itself suggests the ontological importance of inquiry and the conditioned status of the inquirer--the situatedness in tradition--which can neither be forgotten nor avoided as long as ontological concerns remain fundamental to epistemological and axiological interests.

In affirming hermeneutics as form and content of research, I must be prepared to seek an understanding of my own prejudices and valued interests as I proceed. Moreover, the interest in synthesizing the claims of critical theorists and the philosophical hermeneutic tradition, both insisting upon a self-reflective mode of inquiry, represents my own approach for establishing the credibility of ontological concerns.

Some Questions for the Phenomenological
Tradition of Research

Efforts to reconceptualize the intention, process, and effect of educational research have begun to polarize and form boundaries behind which differing philosophical positions can vie for influence and attention. Some contemporary curriculum theorists, including Max Van Manen (OISE, 1977), Dwayne Huebner (1975), James Macdonald (1975, 1978, 1979) and Henry Giroux (1979, 1980) have helped to identify the teleological and ideological viewpoints that are reflected in these perspectives. The classification of epistemological interests (knowledge-oriented interests) provided by phenomenological sociology, especially the works of Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1967) and Alfred Schutz (1970), and the critical sociologists, Jurgen Habermas (1971), Paulo Freire (1973), and Anthony Giddens (1977), has influenced the thoughts of these educational theorists. My decision to choose the generally shared perspective of Giroux, Huebner, Macdonald and Van Manen, is not, however, a reflection of

an agreement with their sociological bent towards epistemological and axiological categorizations (of knowledge interests grounded in particular value orientations). Although I support the humanistic claims for a serious acknowledgement of the subjectivity inherent in the choices of research (intention) and in the product of research (effect), it is important at this point to mention that the sociological Weltanschauung (worldview) in its phenomenological orientation, often overlooks more philosophical (existential and ontological) rationalizations for research. Moreover, the encouragement of dialogue with educational theorists who assume a sociological perspective is intended to facilitate the exploration of such issues as: How do epistemological and axiological perspectives in research--either in their theoretical or methodological assumptions--relate to the assumptions of research aimed at the study of human "being" or the meaning of being and human relationships (i.e., philosophical, ontological and existential notions)? Does research as connoting a methodology and system or process, offer a means for discovering/creating/building an understanding and meaning (i.e., of universal human conditions), beyond the shared knowledge (social knowledge) of subject-subject or subject-object relationships within the subject matter of the study alone? Or must it be necessary for the researcher himself/herself to share his/her own pre-understandings within the study itself in order to manifest such an understanding? And, can an

emphasis on the phenomenological status of human "being"-- demonstrated in reality-creating activities such as language interaction (dialogue), work (labor) and other forms of observable, yet symbolic human activity--provide a means for gaining insight into the immanently hidden dimension of human relationships that gives meaning to the specifically educational activities (curriculum) which inform our relationships in schools? Also, intended through such dialogue is an effort to combine the methodological and phenomenological presuppositions of traditional curriculum research with a more philosophical aim of avoiding the strict structure of method in order to interpret the phenomenal representations of our existential condition of being-in-the-curriculum. This is not intended to imply that a shift in paradigms from action-interests to being-interests should ignore the wisdom of the phenomenological and contextual tradition, "reborn" (reconceptualized) through recent research theories in education.

An approach which may reflect yet another reconceptualization suggests that in dialogue with other epistemological perspectives, it is helpful to combine the hermeneutic or interpretive interests that rely on a phenomenological inquiry and provide an understanding of the ontological conditionedness of human "being." This interest in going beyond the phenomenological tradition in research is also based on the contention that the need for "thick" descriptive data,

as apparent in such research procedures as ethnographic and ethnomethodological studies, is itself an empirical prerequisite for validity and reliability that controls the interests, process and outcome of phenomenological studies.

The contextualist approaches as described by Macdonald (SERA, 1978) do, however, attempt to affirm the researcher's participation in their studies, and most speak to the latently viable, qualitative interests that must reject the dominant model of empirical validity in order to avoid the traps of objective "participation." Most critical interests in the subjectivity of research are, however, not without their own need for coherency and cohesiveness if they are to maintain momentum in establishing both humanistic and philosophical alternatives to the dominant research models. What follows is an attempt to explicate and review the sociologically and psychologically influenced alternative modes of research as have been described by Macdonald, Huebner, Van Manen and Giroux. Dialogue with these approaches will hopefully clarify the move towards an interest in the debate between the critical theorists and hermeneutics, (particularly, the Habermas-Gadamer debate), which may possibly set the stage for relating epistemology and ontology and for a discussion of hermeneutics in the educational setting.

The Interpretive Mode and Educational Theory

The response during the 1970's to the challenge for theorizing new paradigms for educational research has, as

mentioned earlier, created a number of ideological boundaries. James Macdonald (1979) has offered a critique of the major components, as described by Kohlberg and Mayer (1972), of these ideologies. As a philosophical comparison, Macdonald distinguishes between the ontological, epistemological and axiological considerations assumed by the Romantic, Developmental, and Cultural Transmission ideologies. In general, Macdonald's analysis states that the knowledge and value orientations of these three ideologies are idealistic assumptions concerning the interaction between "inner cognitive structures" and the outer realities of the social environment. None provides adequate reflective consideration to the social structures of the environment (social contexts) that influence human development quite often through unquestioned authority and power which creates "hierarchical dominance and submission patterns." As Macdonald had implied earlier in "Research: Methodology, Politics and Values" (1978), these ideologies promote a generally methodological approach to educational research, or what Magoon (1977) classifies as constructivist social research, which, in its objectivity, is "actually an acceptance of the 'way things are'" (Macdonald, 1978, p. 6). Macdonald also critiques a fourth perspective, the radical ideology, which, in response to the political value vacuum formed by the previous three ideologies, fails to "adequately account for the tacit dimension of culture" because of its materialistic and ameliorative focus in an

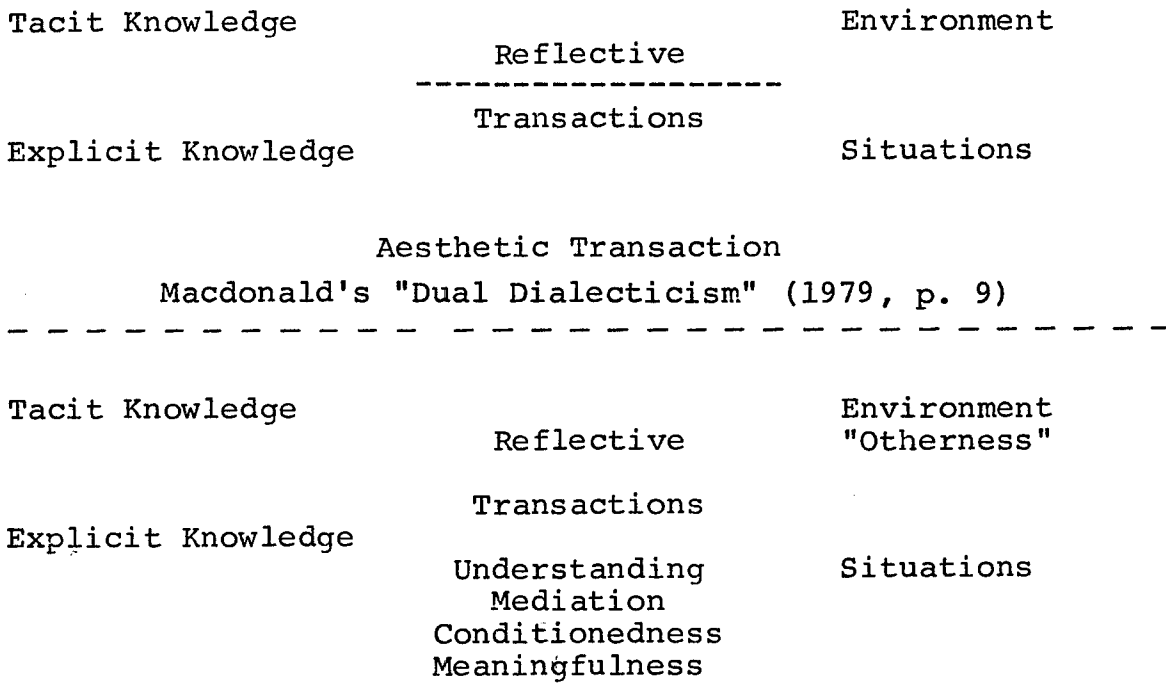
historical (objective) frame of reference (1979, p. 4). The "cultural realities" of Macdonald's interest are considered with a progressive, developmental perspective, and yet with an effort to transcend the technological (materialistic) world, which is "in effect an externalization of hidden consciousness of human potential" (1979, p. 6). Macdonald's (1979) transcendental developmental ideology is offered, moreover because of the ontological and phenomenological deficiencies of the other four. Macdonald tries to deal with these inadequacies in his model of "dual dialecticism" (p.9) that establishes a "reflective transaction of human consciousness" not only within situational contexts but also a dialectic between the tacit domain of human values (subjective pre-understandings) and subjectively explicit knowledge (beliefs, wishes). This phenomenological assessment defines the self's active reflection and participation in context and the ontological considerations of human nature's entrapment in a tacit dimension of "pre and unconscious data." If, however, the context of such "reflective transaction" is obviously just as much an aspect of the social situation in which the self acts as the situation informed by individual ideas and beliefs, then the question remains as to why Macdonald chooses a perspective which weighs so heavily upon the "personal values" of the individual and which relies on support from psychological theories, especially the theories of C. G. Jung and William James, that dwell on the inner potential and the

phenomenological process of individuation. Although Macdonald (1979) assumes that such psychological explanations do lead us to come to grips with human nature, we should question this orientation toward an ontology of individuation that short changes the reciprocal affect of the context itself. In other words, is it not just as important to come to an understanding of the tradition-context which both conditions the situation as well as the individual's personal values when characterizing the ontological domain of interaction.

Psychological models of interpretation which posit developmental criteria that assume progressive expectations often reflect the biases of psychological interests and should be valued more often for the structure (form) of their research than for offering explanations of human conditionedness in a temporal and historical context (i.e., the subject matter of ontological research). Although the interests of philosophical hermeneutics are responsive to what Macdonald describes as the aim of the centering self (1979, p. 16ff), the art of understanding inherent in the hermeneutics of everyday life is itself considered as a dialectical process toward understanding, reflecting an ongoing dialogue between the historical tradition and the immediate interests of the self, (informed as it is by the immediate tradition), and not necessarily as Macdonald claims, "only known after the fact" (p. 24), or rather, the product of knowing. Unlike the process of the individual's psychological development, understanding is the

emergence of truth which is conditioned by and conditions the relationship of inter-subjectivity.

Phenomenologically speaking, understanding could be illustrated as a mediative reality that informs and is informed by relationships (through language) and subsequently is more uniquely determined by openness to the meaning of such relationships than either through a strictly subjective self-reflection or through the transaction of the self with the environmental context. By transforming Macdonald's illustration of his model of dual dialecticism, the mediating structure of understanding should perhaps be included as a possible consequence of the reflective transactions.



Hermeneutic-Dialectical Experience

What should be inferred from the model of hermeneutic-dialectical experience is that some residue of reflective transactions does not result in or encourage an understanding relationship. (This could be explained by the multiplicity of barriers, especially in language, that inhibit understanding in the phenomenal world). On the other hand, this model does depict the reality of mediation which exists between the self and the world (perhaps through conversation with another self--e.g., students, teacher, researcher, the subject matter of the curriculum). Dialectical relationships lack meaning without openness, awareness, and acknowledgment of such a "synthesis" of reflective transactions. Certainly, the ontological realm of the dialectic, the meaning world, is dependent on the potential relatedness of the tacit domain and the objective environment. The dialectics of hermeneutics defines this realm as that reality which can neither be claimed by the self nor others in relations, (subjectively or objectively). This realm of meaning exists as a result of the ongoing dialectic or dialogue--i.e., the relationship itself. Moreover, unlike the psychological models of reflective and transactional behavior, the philosophical ground of hermeneutical reflection is not so oriented to the subjectivity of the self in search of a way of knowing (e.g., the epistemological structure of being). Consequently, interaction in a particular context such as in curriculum activities in schools, is considered more influenced by intersubjectivity than by individual self-reflection.

This dialogue with Macdonald's thoughts is based on my use of Gadamer's (1976) philosophical hermeneutics which presents a radical rethinking of earlier hermeneutic phenomenology concerning the idea of *verstehen*, or understanding. While the earlier authors treated *verstehen* primarily as a method whereby historians or social scientists gain a systematic access to the "subject matter," (usually a written text), generally for understanding the intentions of the authors', Gadamer regards it as the very condition and mode of human subjectivity. To Gadamer, language is the medium, the mediating reality, of understanding. And understanding is not only conditioned by the language structure. The historical context of understanding and also the aesthetic tradition of the culture are significant.

Gadamer critiques aesthetic consciousness in his introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics (1976, p. xxvi) and develops a concept of knowledge and truth about aesthetic experience that transcends the traditional concept of the observer's objective awareness of the aesthetic object. Gadamer's concept of the true experience of aesthetics involves the understanding of meaning through an account of the observer's interactions with the aesthetic object. Although Macdonald credits the aesthetic dimension of understanding in claiming that "understanding others is not a 'useful' procedure in the sense that knowing is, in that it does not provide the basis for planning, manipulating and calculating," he does subjugate

the reality of relationships to understanding in saying that "understanding provides the ground for relating" (1979, p. 24). The hermeneutic tradition of Gadamer suggests that understanding is the practical (rational) outcome of relatedness (intersubjectivity). Moreover, Macdonald's emphasis on the importance and uniqueness of personal knowledge in aiding the "construction" of the "culture of human life" seems to ignore the significance of the language phenomena as affecting or changing the fundamental nature of knowledge. This is certainly important to the hermeneutic tradition which claims that language informs our condition of being human and consequently our shared knowledge. Of course, Macdonald does distinguish between social knowledge and personal knowledge, and he finds support in Polanyi's (1967) idea of the tacit dimension of knowledge as well as Berger and Luckmann's (1967) descriptions of the social construction of knowledge.

In discussing tacit knowing (p. 13), Macdonald assumes Polanyi's classification of understanding in the realm of the tacit dimension. Consequently, if our tacit knowledge remains implicit and hidden, then understanding itself can never be fulfilled. This corresponds with David Hoy's (1978) analysis of Gadamer's version of contextualism which holds that interpretive understanding is also conditioned by preunderstandings, as is our tacit knowledge. However, Gadamer recognizes that these preunderstandings themselves are conditioned by the situation, i.e., the context of the interpreter in an aesthetic, linguistic and historical tradition. In describing the

conditioned nature of all understanding and knowledge, Gadamer states that:

. . . even when we ourselves, as historically enlightened thinkers, are fundamentally clear about the historical conditionedness of all human thinking and hence about our conditionedness, we have not ourselves taken an unconditioned stand. . . . The consciousness of the conditionedness does not in any way negate this conditionedness.

Macdonald (1978) also alludes to this conditionedness in referring to Gunner Myrdahl (1969) who says that in education:

. . . there is a lack of awareness. Even today that, in searching for the truth, the student, like all human beings whatever they try to accomplish, is influenced by traditions, by his environment, and by his personality. (p. 7)

Macdonald recognizes the conditioned status of educational research and especially of the subjectivity of the researcher. He concludes in "Research: Methodology, Politics and Values" that "all educational research has intentions which are a priori to the research" (1979, p. 9). These intentions are reflected in the questions that initiate research, and to Macdonald as well as the critical tradition of inquiry, the questions are all expressions of our interests, and are phrased in terms of our values. To the hermeneuticist however, these questions are not only conditioned by our values but also are the conditions themselves of our manner of relating meaningfully (via dialectics or dialogue). Moreover, for Gadamer, our preunderstandings as researchers can be made conscious by our willingness to defend the appropriateness of our understanding (via self-reflection) and to justify the legitimacy of our research. And yet Gadamer does show agreement with

Macdonald and Polanyi in claiming that since such self-reflection can never lead to clarification of all the preunderstandings (tacit knowledge), all research/interpretation must remain partial and contextual.

Although through this dialogue there seems to be some implicit and potentially apparent connection (or convergence) between the thoughts of Macdonald and Gadamer, the generally epistemological interests of Macdonald's transcendental ideology, especially with its subjective and psychological emphasis, does not speak as directly to the ontological concerns of human being and meaning which assume more intersubjective, universalizable significance.

M. J. Max Van Manen (OISE, 1977) has also relied on an epistemological perspective in discussing alternatives to the empirical-analytic approach in research. However, unlike Macdonald (1975, 1979) who seems to base his opinion of the hermeneutical/interpretive mode on the work of the earlier structural tradition in hermeneutics, Van Manen acknowledges the more meta-theoretical possibilities of interpretive inquiries. According to Van Manen (1977), the metalevel of "research into research" helps to identify neglected areas of research and helps to "make explicit the epistemological suppositions which form a basis for motivating new inquiry" (p. 1).

As in the work of Macdonald in Pinar, 1975, Van Manen outlines social education research orientations based on Habermas' schema for categorizing social scientific research

(i.e., interpretive, empirical-analytic, and critical inquiry). Van Manen attempts to distinguish the relationships of these dominant inquiry modes and focuses on their practical significance, claiming that the interpretive science of hermeneutics shares a general theoretical orientation with phenomenology, ethnomethodology and other analytical means for "providing commonalities of understanding" (i.e., a humanistic, consensus orientation). Van Manen, in turn, lists the "human engineering" (technical) applications of the empirical-analytic sciences and the emancipatory designs of the critical theories.

In emphasizing the participant observation technique as an interpretive mode of making sense shared by hermeneutics along with phenomenology and ethnomethodology, Van Manen fails to recognize the specifically ontological significance to research suggested in a philosophical approach to hermeneutics. This interest for research transcends the objectivity of the researcher and suggests a self-reflective approach that encourages more than just participant observation as a mode of interpretive inquiry. Ontological interests require more than just a "scenic understanding" (e.g., the ethnomethodological understanding of the taken-for-granted world) or a fundamental "insight" into the "nature of knowledge in consciousness" as in the phenomenological studies. A search for meaning hermeneutically assumes that a dialogue between the researcher and the researched exists and that a self-reflective turn (what will be referred to later as the "hermeneutic turn" or "circle") is necessary for the researcher

to comprehend his/her own pre-understandings as having an impact on the subject matter of research and the dialogue itself.

I believe that Van Manen has misinterpreted Gadamer's hermeneutics in his reference to the notion of "social wisdom" (1977, p. 10). Gadamer's (1976) use of Aristotle's "phronesis" (p. 46) which can be better translated as "practical wisdom," is not an understanding of phenomenological experience of coming-to-self-consciousness or, in Van Manen's explanation, a "nonobjectifiable accumulation of 'understandings.'" Gadamer sees this condition of wisdom not as a greater knowing, but as an openness to more experience. He writes in Truth and Method (1975) that:

. . . openness includes the recognition that I must let something in myself count against myself, even if there were no other who would make it count against me. . . . The hermeneutical consciousness has its completion not in a methodological self-certainty, but rather in the same readiness for experience that distinguishes the experienced person from one who is dogmatically constrained. (pp. 343-344)

Consequently, to assume that hermeneutics should be considered a "science" or even a phenomenological "bracketing" or understanding is to deny it of this "openness" to the conditions of potential meaning that determine its existential and ontological significance. The taken-for-granted common meanings of ordinary life and the social realities which are made visible through such phenomenological devices as dialogue, are simply the tools (medium) of the researcher (hermeneuticist) who seeks an even deeper meaning of human understanding.

The four chapters which Dwayne Huebner has contributed as "reconceptualizations" of curriculum interests in Pinar's Curriculum Theorizing (1975) each typify the interests of philosophical hermeneutics in language, man's temporality, and interpretive understanding. Moreover, Huebner accepts Heidegger's (1962) phenomenological ontology of man's "being-in-the-world" as a significant condition of temporality which influences the possibilities of the educator and educational researcher in transcending the dialectical encounters between individuals and society (immediate context) and in understanding the meaning of relatedness (sharing) in "the rhythms of continuity and change, of necessity and freedom" (Huebner, 1975, p. 247). Heidegger's strong influence upon Gadamer (1975) and philosophical hermeneutics will be established in Chapter II but for now, it should be apparent that the intentionality of our language use and of our activities is an aspect of the curricularist's search and thus reflects a meta-theoretical interest in the phenomenal world for helping us to understand a more fundamental meaning to such phenomena.

Huebner seems to differ somewhat with hermeneutics in his discussion of man's relationship with language. Although he acknowledges man's situatedness in language, as he says, we are "inevitably caught in it" (1975, p. 265), he assumes that man has the potential to transcend the confines of language. The paradoxical relationship between man and his language is, to Huebner, an important reminder that the

different intentions and uses of language--which he categorizes for curricularists to be descriptive, explanatory, controlling, legitimating, prescriptive, and affiliative--must be researched historically in order to find the "origins" of the curricularist's (or researcher's) "ways of talking" (1975, p. 254). This concern with the use of language is a phenomenological approach to a deeper understanding of the human.

To philosophical hermeneutics, language does have a self-transcending characteristic in its uses. But more importantly, understanding through linguistics is capable of transcending the limits of any particular language use. (This point is also helpful in defending against the criticism of relativism suggested of hermeneutics. This criticism will be referred to in the next chapter.) Consequently, language use alone, as reflecting a tacit intentionality (of control, legitimization, etc.), is not all the researcher needs to study (research) in order to seek an understanding of such intentionality. It is the understanding itself which establishes the meaning inherent in the valued intentions of the language use. This meaning reflects a conditionedness, universal in nature, that is not simply a conscious choice (reflective understanding) for interpreting our relationships, but a realization of a pre-reflective understanding of being from within a concrete situation that has intrinsic relation to the interpreter's/ researcher's past and future.

In his Philosophical Hermeneutics (1976), Gadamer reflects agreement with Heidegger's (1962) assertion that language

and understanding are inseparable structural aspects of human being-in-the-world, not simply optional functions that man engages in or does not engage in at will. He states that:

What is given in language is not primarily a relation to this or that object, or event to a field of objects, but rather a relation to the whole of being, a relation that we neither consciously create nor control and objectify as science does its objects. Our possession of language, or better, our possession by language, is the ontological condition for our understanding of the relations that address us. (p. 151)

Perhaps the lens which prevents the sociological and phenomenological-minded research alternatives from "crossing the path" of the ontological interests in hermeneutics is their orientation to research as a science. Even Huebner, in "The Tasks of the Curricular Theorist" (1975, pp. 250-269), discusses research as the "development of a form to 'fit' the facts" of the researcher's discoveries. Also he describes the form as a "man-made institution" for discovering and creating other forms to interpret the phenomena of man's relatedness. Thus, this form-making can be considered a human science which has a legitimating function of making sense of its discoveries (scientific data, language statements, etc.). In a sense then, research as form-making is a methodology for fitting together the realities of the social/phenomenal world in such a way that the researcher's ("form-maker's") intentions can be objectified. Although the beliefs and values of the researcher are made clear by the methodological, yet human, science, Huebner's model of research, reflecting the sociological

tradition in conceptualizing educational research, continues to boost scientific methodology, although certainly not empiricism, as the ultimate definition of meaning and truth.

Henry Giroux (1979, 1980) has begun to question the language and concepts in education's curriculum field. In discussing the "interpretative rationality" as a dominant underpinning to educational practice, Giroux (1980) distinguishes the concepts of appropriation, intentionality, and intersubjectivity as central to the hermeneutic experience. He emphasizes the attention that the interpretive activity gives to teacher-student relationships and the relationship between epistemology and intentionality (p. 12). However, Giroux claims that interpretive accounts of experience "lack an adequate notion either of institutions or history" and are "overburdened" with a phenomenological focus on subjectivity that neglects the issue of pre-categorical conditioning" (p. 12). Obviously, Giroux is unaware of the recent developments in the philosophical hermeneutics of Gadamer (1976). He seems to be relating the interests of hermeneutic phenomenology with the tradition of interpretation that offers a rediscovery of the subjective meaning in a text or a relationship. Gadamer's ontological option to this epistemological exercise will be discussed in detail in Chapters II and III. Giroux like Macdonald (1979), Van Manen (1977) and Huebner (1975) specifically attacks the knowledge-oriented interests of the social sciences which continue to objectify their theories and modes

of research. Giroux (1979) discusses his interest/prejudices in theory as having "its center of gravity in its social potential for insight into the nature of truth and meaning" (p. 250). This is a new, ontological interest that "situates its assumptions and modes of inquiry in both understanding and determining ends" (p. 250).

Giroux's (1979) call for such an ontological language of truth and meaning for curricularists is obviously a new twist in the search for alternative research interests. But if Giroux is to join the ranks of the "post-critical reconceptualists," (including Macdonald, Van Manen and Huebner) in their rejection of the universal claims (e.g., truth and meaning) inherent in an ontological frame of reference, he must first convince the critical tradition, established through the thoughts of Jurgen Habermas (1971), who has consistently invited debate with the hermeneutical traditions that hold such a perspective, that knowledge interests are grounded in ontological concerns with human understanding.

All of these educators, Macdonald, Huebner, Van Manen, and Giroux, in their search for a way out of objectivism in curriculum theorizing, agree that the empirical-analytic methodology of research ignores the grounding of knowledge in human interests. They each have suggested in some way that the victory of the scientific method over science, as described by Jurgen Habermas in Knowledge and Human Interests (1971), has created a formalized language and an objectivism

in educational research which establishes a "monologic" abstraction of fact from value. Macdonald (1975) has especially sided with Habermas' critique of this formalistic positivism and, as has been discussed, he has joined Habermas in proposing the need for a self-reflective science (and educational ideology) in an attempt to "transcend the problems of objectivism and scientism" (p. 28). Also evidenced in Macdonald's and Van Manen's theoretical agreements with Habermas is the assumption that of the three fundamental cognitive human interests--control, consensus/understanding, and emancipation--the value orientation of the interests in understanding and critical consciousness are the only viable options if relationships in education are to reflect humanistic realities and concerns. Unfortunately, and as a result of Habermas' (1971) critique of the hermeneutic understanding of meaning, what he calls consensual interests, most of these educational theorists have discredited the potential of a hermeneutical approach as an alternative to the empirical and dominant scientific model for research.

Macdonald (1975) has interpreted Habermas as claiming that hermeneutics, as a mode of understanding, is grounded in an objectivist stance that divorces itself from self-reflection. This is true of the structuralist tradition in phenomenological hermeneutics whose interpretive research led towards a heavy dependence on reconstruction of the original intentions of the author and on linguistic analysis or semantics, as in

the hermeneutics of Schleiermacher (1959) and Dilthey (1957). This attention to the objectivity of grammatical and rhetorical forms has a tendency to lose sight of the hermeneutical interpretive potential for opening doors to a greater understanding of "being-ness," an ontological understanding.

In order to clarify the distinction between the phenomenological tradition in hermeneutics (and its association with Habermas' critical theory) and the later works of Gadamer in philosophical hermeneutics, it will be necessary to journey through the historical unfolding of the hermeneutic tradition.

A close analysis of the hermeneutic tradition will help in discussing the exchange between Habermas and Gadamer (Chapter III) that has ultimately led me to choose the philosophical/ontological perspective for describing the experience of intersubjectivity and for providing an interpretive model to better understand interactions in schools.

CHAPTER II
TRADITIONS IN HERMENEUTICS

In order to begin a discussion of the hermeneutical perspective for understanding curriculum in education it is important to briefly relate the characteristics of Gadamer's (1975, 1976) philosophical orientation, (which has been described as a "radical rethinking of Verstehen", that is, of understanding), as distinguished from the other, perhaps more reknown, traditions in hermeneutic phenomenology. The dialogue which has evolved between these traditions has encouraged Gadamer's rethinking of an ontological perspective quite distinct from the methodological assumptions in what is referred to as structural (phenomenological) hermeneutics. Moreover, this encounter of interpretive views helps me to situate Gadamer's notions of historicity, linguisticity, intersubjectivity, self-reflection, openness, and the dialectic (as method) as inherently useful characteristics for discussing our hermeneutical experience in and with the curriculum in education. It is necessary to take some time to encourage an encounter of Gadamer's perspective with the earlier and other contemporary traditions in hermeneutics.

Classical Hermeneutics

The most important distinction between Gadamer's claims for a philosophical hermeneutics and the traditional uses of

hermeneutics is Gadamer's questioning of hermeneutics and theoretical reflection as a "technique." Harvey Cox (1973) has explained that:

Hermeneutics comes from the name of the Greek god Hermes (Mercury, in the West), whose main job was to carry messages among the gods and from the gods to men. Hermeneutics is the study of messages, or more exactly, the study of how one interprets the meaning of texts. (p. 146)

This original function of the hermeneutic endeavor quickly evolved into a practice of regaining or translating the historical meaning or the "hidden" meaning of literary and religious writings.

Literary critical hermeneutics has become a tool of the humanists for reviving classical literature. Also, the scriptural (exegetical) hermeneutics has been important to Bible reformers searching for the meaning of the Bible text that has become alien and unavailable. In both traditions, hermeneutics claims to reveal, by specialized techniques, the original meaning of the texts, humanistic literature and the Bible.

In discussing the questionableness of these romantic hermeneutics, Gadamer writes in Truth and Method (1975) that:

. . . because understanding as such has become a problem, theoretical reflection is no longer a technique guiding the practice of critic or theologian. . . . The effort of understanding is found wherever there is no immediate understanding, i.e., whenever the possibility of misunderstanding has to be reckoned with. (p. 157)

Although Friederich Schleiermacher (1959) introduced the idea of a "universal hermeneutics," that the experience of the

alien and the possibility of misunderstanding is a universal one, Gadamer (1975) was the first to respond philosophically to the phenomenological presuppositions of the classical hermeneutic task. These presuppositions directed the attention of Wilhelm Dilthey (1957) and later Paul Ricoeur (1966), whose phenomenological interests have helped to encourage Gadamer's insistence on the more existential notion of ontology as it relates to understanding and interpretation (Wolff, 1975, pp. 74-77).

The Phenomenological Tradition in Hermeneutics

Dilthey (1957) is considered to have initiated the first phase of the development of the hermeneutic tradition "out of" the classical (romantic) uses of textual interpretations. Dilthey introduced the notion of understanding as involving explanation (erklaren). In studying human conduct, what he called the human sciences or Geisteswissenschaften, Dilthey attempted to establish similar standards of "objective" assessment as those paramount in the natural sciences. Dallmayr (1977) has critiqued this objectivity by referring to Dilthey's approach to understanding (verstehen) in the social sciences as too psychologistic. Dallmayr has written that:

. . . understanding/interpretation to Dilthey was a self-transposition into the life of the author or agent which eliminated its practical relation to life in favor of a contemplative model of scientific objectivity. (p. 28)

Phenomenological studies in the social sciences have become to some extent a continuation of Dilthey's efforts to

elucidate the dimension of "meaning" as a counterpart to scientific explanation. Even hermeneutic phenomenology, (as will be discussed further below), reflects much of Dilthey's interest in individual consciousness as a means for developing a theory of understanding. However, according to Dallmayr (1977), Husserl extended the scope of inquiry beyond normative values, (the scientific interests in explanation), to the full range of phenomena (natural and cultural) "amenable to human cognition" (p. 9). Husserl wanted to unravel the "meaningful core, or 'essence', of phenomena as disclosed in a purified consciousness" (Dallmayr, 1977, p. 9).

Unfortunately, the clarification of meaning and the domain of intersubjective understanding originally introduced by Dilthey were lost in Husserl's explanation of consciousness as the "transcendental limit of the world" (Dallmayr, 1977, p. 12). Husserl later tried to overcome this over-emphasis of individuation ("purified consciousness") by introducing the notion of the "life world" (Lebenswelt), or the world of mundane experience (McCarthy, 1973, p. 359). But he was not able to really clarify the relationship of the "life world" with individual consciousness.

This development of the phenomenological tradition in Dilthey's and Husserl's (1965) work can be contrasted with the philosophical orientation of hermeneutical phenomenology which Gadamer has associated with through the thought of Martin Heidegger. Heidegger reshaped phenomenological

analysis in Being and Time (1962) with his "existential ontology" or hermeneutical phenomenology. Hermeneuticists influenced by Heidegger, such as Gadamer (1975) and Ricoeur (1965, 1966), have tended to redefine interpretive exegesis by de-emphasizing the aspect of subjective purpose and intentionality. In Truth and Method (1975) Gadamer presents history not so much as an emanation of individual practice but as a complex learning process in which "man is able to decipher himself only through encounters with past cultural traditions" (p. 292).

In contrast with Gadamer's movement away from the strictly phenomenological tradition, yet with some relation to Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology, (especially his interest in the character of human being-in-the-world), is Paul Ricoeur's (1966) notion that hermeneutics is a listening, a "belief." While Ricoeur's "hermeneutics of belief" offers an ontologically descriptive affirmation and demystification of the "symbols," (as belief), his use of phenomenology as an instrument of hearing and of believing reflects a descriptive investigation of the field of symbolic language, (a recognizably phenomenological technique closely related to the contemporary developments in ethnomethodology). Unlike Gadamer's (1975) claims for hermeneutics as an "understanding science," or ontology, Ricoeur's descriptive/phenomenological hermeneutics, (conditioned by symbols), is oriented much more toward an interest in objective consciousness, or false consciousness, than toward being-ness.

Much of Ricoeur's work can be compared with Jurgen Habermas' (1971, 1977, 1979) theory of "distorted communications." Both aim to remove illusions and encourage a "hermeneutics of suspicion" (Ihde, 1974, p. 141). Habermas also seems to believe that there is a "hidden substratum which is the real hidden under a set of appearances" (Ihde, 1971, p. 85). For Ricoeur (1966) it is impossible that man may know himself directly or introspectively. Both Habermas and Ricoeur suggest a "detour," or indirect route through either symbolic interpretations or, as in Habermas' later suggestions, through Freudian psychoanalysis, to get to this hidden dimension of consciousness (Giddens, 1977, p. 62 ff). Psychoanalysis, as method, defines a set of rules for interpretation which remain the center of interest. Ricoeur (1966) implies agreement with Habermas that Freud offers a useful hermeneutical method for displaying the "limits of phenomenological possibility" (p. 4). For the development of hermeneutic phenomenology, Ricoeur has contributed a helpful distinction between the methodologies of description and explanation. He admits that the psychoanalytic experience "bears a much greater resemblance to historical understanding than to natural explanation" (Ihde, 1971, p. 134).

Ricoeur approaches the application of phenomenology to language somewhat differently than Habermas' (1979) theory of an ideal communicative competence in his "universal pragmatics." Ricoeur justifies the need to turn to language, (as a symbol system), as a means of elaborating concepts

indirectly and dialectically rather than directly and univocally" (Ihde, 1971, p. 98). The hermeneutic turn in his phenomenology is seen in his interpretive interests in the need to understand symbolic expressions. And unlike earlier structural interests (in hermeneutics) in the restoration or reliving of experience, Ricoeur interprets the world of expressions as the object correlate which is used to reflect the subject, and subjectivity itself is reflected in the field of expressions. Consequently, this experience-expression link in Ricoeur's hermeneutics explains why he interprets the problem of the symbol to be the problem of language. He has written that:

. . . in order to think in accord with symbols one must subject them to a dialectic; only then is it possible to set the dialectic within interpretation itself and come back to living speech. . . . This return to the immediate is not a return to silence, but rather to the spoken word, to the fullness of language. (Ihde, 1971, p. 163)

Gadamer's Philosophical Distinction

In many ways, Gadamer is in agreement with Ricoeur's turn to the language phenomena. Both use phenomenology, as a theory, for assuming the central value of the primacy of concrete experience--subjectivity as opposed to objectivity. Ricoeur's (1966) "eidetic" interest in meaning--his interest in describing experience as opposed to an objective explanation--is also in line with Gadamer's (1975, p. 329) anti-positivism. However, Ricoeur claims that experience is to be read through expression. The circle of belief (affirmation) and understanding in Ricoeur's hermeneutics depends on

an underlying focus upon the use of expression as interpretation. This is quite different from Gadamer's hermeneutical description of experience and understanding. To Gadamer, what interprets the phenomena, or what precedes the understanding of experience, is the experience itself. Experience to Gadamer is "more being than consciousness" (1975, p. 249). Consequently, the ontological significance of Gadamer's philosophical claims suggests that since experience precedes the understanding of experiencing then subjective self-awareness arises secondarily. It should be recognized that Gadamer's appreciation of the language phenomenon, (Ricoeur's symbolic expression), is not for an approach to the eidetic structures of consciousness by a reflective procedure, but for its reflection of experience itself and a deeper understanding of being-ness.

This discussion of Gadamer's (1975) and Ricoeur's (1966) work with Heidegger's (1962) existential analytic is very important for developing a relationship between the methodological direction of hermeneutics and the use of such for understanding/interpreting educational experience in and with the curriculum. Although both Gadamer and Ricoeur have demonstrated the transition from the psychological, (Husserl's (1965) individuation or subjectivity), to the hermeneutic foundation of the cultural sciences, Gadamer is more successful in developing Heidegger's notion of Dasein, the human condition of being-in-the-world, for an ultimately ontological

understanding of intersubjectivity and the limits of self-reflection. According to Heidegger, the basic attribute of man's existential condition, or Dasein, itself is the groundworks for an understanding of meaning, i.e., the ontological task (Wolf, 1975, p. 103). Dasein was seen by Heidegger as enmeshed in a fabric of "preunderstandings"--a fabric that is basically intersubjective and cultural in character, and therefore experiential, and not itself a condition of symbolic expression as Ricoeur would lead us to believe. Gadamer (1975) also steps beyond Ricoeur's phenomenological method by emphasizing the significance of an openness to past and future in historicity and/or tradition in his ontology: "The problem of history is not how relationships are in general experiential and knowable but how relationships that no one has experienced as such should be knowable" (p. 211).

It might be helpful to suggest that the questions of methodology in philosophical hermeneutic concerns should be distinguished from the structural hermeneutic approach of the ethnomethodologists, especially Alfred Shutz (1973) who follows Husserl's (1965) phenomenology. Ricoeur's description of symbolic expression and the "suspicion of belief" is related to ethnomethodology's description of "understanding" as not simply an individual category denoting an existential or "experiential" form of "common-sense knowledge of human affairs" (Dallmayr, 1977, p. 10). Like Husserl, Shutz has left unresolved the measure of consciousness and intersubjectivity.

Ricoeur's (1966) hermeneutics also has not transcended the phenomenological dependencies on conscious self-reflection and reality construction, (symbolic expressions), in order to establish an understanding of the historical conditionedness or situatedness for this consciousness. Even though Ricoeur and Gadamer agree that the dialectical experience is the "method" for surfacing the "truths" of intersubjectivity and man's existential condition, the perspective of "indirectness" and "suspicion" held by Ricoeur differs substantially from Gadamer's prescription to an openness to emerging experience conditioned by historical and linguistic factors in understanding human being-ness. This distinction is not only due to the different lens of phenomenology and ontology, but also to the epistemological assumptions of each.

Ricoeur views the epistemological task as entailing a search for disclosing the false consciousness inherent in symbolic structures of experience-expression. Gadamer's critique of the epistemological subject's role in historical understanding emphasizes that the subject is incapable of extricating himself from the very traditions which he attempts to study. Ricoeur's approach to a hermeneutic phenomenology appears to assume that it is possible and necessary to achieve a degree of objectivity from which the phenomenal world held in one's consciousness can be "analyzed" and "judged" for its symbolic nature. Not only is this objectivity rejected in Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics, but the concerns of

Gadamer are quite distinct from either epistemological or methodological ones.

Unlike Hegel who also suggested that knowledge is acquired through a self-objectification of consciousness, Gadamer (1975) asserts that experience has its dialectical fulfillment not in a conscious knowing but in an "openness for experience, which is itself set in free play by experience" (p. 338). In the Hegelian tradition, however, Gadamer retains the "negative moment of the dialectic"--what he calls the "principle of dynamic change" (p. 339). This notion of the negativity inherent in the dialectical encounter is central to Gadamer's hermeneutics. According to Gadamer (1975), the task of hermeneutics is to find one's way through the give-and-take of dialogue. In the dialogical experience, the structure of question and answer is presupposed. Thus, all experience reflects the structure of questioning because "every experience runs counter to expectation if it really deserves the name experience" (p. 339). Moreover, the realization that some matter is other than one had first thought, the insight of all "experience," presupposes the process of passing through questioning.

Hermeneutics for Understanding Curriculum

The method of questioning in the dialectical experience, of finding the right questions through an openness to emerging dialogue, and the existential "preunderstanding" of our intersubjective condition are components of Gadamer's theory which are especially significant to a hermeneutics of educational

experience. Each of these hermeneutic realities also helps to describe the circle of understanding implicit to our being-in-the-curriculum. The problem of understanding the curriculum itself is an affirmation that the curriculum is not what it was thought to be. In realizing the dialogical groundworks of intersubjectivity, we can begin to reflect upon the inevitable questioning or tension that exists in all encounters of intersubjectivity. The reflective mode initiates the phase of openness which is presupposed in the process of questioning and itself presupposes that the answers are unknown. In affirming this mutuality (of questioning) in intersubjectivity we can begin to understand the meaningfulness of the curriculum, i.e., its ontological significance. Moreover, based on Gadamer's (1975) explication of experiencing, any experience in the curriculum (as dialogue/intersubjectivity) can be considered a dialectical encounter.

The reality of questioning inherent in the hermeneutic assumptions concerning the curriculum also acknowledges the negativity of the dialectical encounter. It is this negativity of knowing that we do not know which defines the hermeneutical task in an educational framework. The problem of understanding the meaning of being-in-the-curriculum, of knowing that we do not know this meaning is, moreover, an affirmation that something, i.e., our relationships in the curriculum, is not what it was originally thought to be. Finding the right questions, then, becomes a particular challenge to the educational hermeneuticist.

The notion of openness to this not knowing, to this affirmation of the hermeneutic task of understanding, is also significant to our being-in-the-curriculum. Richard Palmer (1969) helps to illustrate the openness which Gadamer describes as implicit to all genuine understanding. He discusses the approach of Socrates as a model of the dialectical encounter in questioning. He states that:

. . . in Socrates' vacillation between knowing and not knowing in the playful probing of the subject from different angles lies the willingness to risk everything and to be instructed by the subject matter itself. Beneath the artful shiftiness of Socrates is the serious intention to let the subject under discussion lead the way. (p. 234)

CHAPTER III
THE GROUNDS FOR DIALOGUE BETWEEN
HERMENEUTICS AND CRITICAL THEORY

The challenge of finding the right questions from which to begin the hermeneutical task of interpreting and understanding the intersubjective and dialectical experiences of teachers and students in the school context can be approached initially by reflecting upon the assumptions or preconceptions from which these questions must come. This reflexivity itself represents a dialectical tension that exists between the questioner and the tradition questioned, (even if it is the tradition of which the questioner is a part). The theoretical assumptions that determine questions concerning social or intersubjective relationships should be clarified before putting to use a method of analysis, since the choices between theoretical approaches can significantly influence such preconceptions of research.

The self-reflective mode for formulating questions regarding tradition has been the method of inquiry assumed by both critical social theory and philosophical hermeneutics. This methodological similarity reflects only the basic epistemological agreement that has been shared by adherents to these different theoretical traditions. In general, the disagreements concerning the value and purpose of self-reflection

mark the boundaries between the epistemological critique of ideology (of critical social theory) and the ontological interest in a better understanding of the conditions for understanding itself (of philosophical hermeneutics).

Questions relating to how and why we know certain things and how we interpret and come to an understanding of our relationships within and amongst different traditions are all dependent on how we perceive the conditions of social and cultural interactions. Although critical theory and philosophical hermeneutics both affirm the importance of the historical and linguistic conditions for social knowledge and understanding, they seem to assess these conditions quite differently. And yet, due to recent developments in the critical theory of Habermas (1979), these assessments, or preconceptions of interpretive value, have moved toward a synthesis of interest in the universality of the language phenomenon that conditions both our knowing and our understanding.

Discussion of the dialectical experience of teachers and students in and with the curriculum will benefit from a closer analysis of our use of language and our relationships in/with tradition that condition our interpersonal relationships. Moreover, the decision to apply the hermeneutic/interpretive perspective for analyzing such relationships can claim a stronger justification if the critical perspective is found to support characteristics of the hermeneutic experience.

My own preconceptions as researcher/hermeneuticist lead me to believe that a deeper meaning in intersubjective relationships can be understood through dialogue between these perspectives.

It is apparent that the differences which have brought about debate between Habermas (1977) and Gadamer (1976) threaten to obstruct the possibility of formulating a fusion of their theoretical assumptions and claims which is relevant to the interests of both in communicative interaction. The interest of Habermas's critical theory is the emancipation of the self from unnecessary domination in all of its forms, especially ideological claims to truth that reflect an objectivity which distorts communicative interaction (Misgeld, 1976, p. 94). Gadamer's hermeneutic theory clarifies the difference between solving the practical problems of communicative interaction (e.g., all those involving social norms) and recognizing the legitimacy of those problems as a feature of historical understanding and the tradition-context of language (communication) that may or may not reflect domination. Consequently, the assumptions concerning the power of self-reflection to liberate or emancipate the self from the conditions of ideology depend on whether such conditions are considered as distorting communicative interaction and therefore illegitimate, or as legitimate prejudices of the tradition-context which they reflect. Nonetheless, I will attempt to follow the historical dialogue between these theorists. And, largely by reference to the work of Hoy (1978), Misgeld (1976), McCarthy

(1978), and Wolff (1975), I hope to show that both existing and potential agreement between Habermas and Gadamer can clarify the relationship between critical reflection, self-knowledge and practical action. Moreover, this theoretical "fusion of horizons" can be considered helpful to any analysis of self-reflective experience as well as further study of intersubjectivity in particular contexts (e.g., schools).

The Gadamer-Habermas Debate

Habermas has included a discussion of hermeneutics in his critical survey of recent work in sociology and social theory entitled The Logic of the Social Sciences (1976). He has agreed with Gadamer's criticism of the unreflective character of positivistic theory of social science. On the other hand, Habermas has also suspected Gadamer's theory of tending toward relativism and of lacking a critical analysis of the ontological basis it derives from Heidegger. Habermas has considered the hermeneutical description of the sciences relevant only to the socio-historical disciplines and subordinate to the even more reflective level of his own concern with "Ideologiekritik"--social criticism of ideologies modeled on the paradigm of psychoanalysis.

In his more recent work, Knowledge and Human Interests (1971), Habermas has suggested that science is ideological and that the scientific method of objectivity prevents the cultivation of individual autonomy and emancipatory truth. He instead has offered a "discipline of trained thought" that

aims to "outwit" its innate human interest (p. 311). The interests that condition knowledge (deriving from work, language, and authority), have been of primary concern to Habermas. According to Macdonald's (1975) description, Habermas has set forth "the basic proposition that knowledge cannot be divorced from human interest" (p. 286). Habermas has proposed a self-reflective science that transcends objectivism and encourages emancipation from the interests of control and domination.

Wolff (1975) has explained that Habermas considers critical self-reflection a theoretical methodology which has emancipatory power. Wolff has quoted Habermas's claims that: "the subject experiences in itself to the extent that it becomes transparent to itself in the history of its genesis" (1975, p. 36). This experiencing of self is definitely an epistemological mode of interest in methodology, in line with Habermas's sociological interpretation of science.

In arguing that Gadamer's hermeneutics lacks a sufficiently critical (self-reflective) attitude toward these epistemological concerns, Habermas has suggested that hermeneutical reflection should only be considered as a sort of pre-scientific exercise of self-reflective activity by "controlled alienation" (Gadamer, 1976, p. 27). Gadamer's (1976) version of self-reflection, which will be discussed below, has been criticized even further by Habermas (1977) as tending toward subjectivism, as opposed to his (Habermas's) more pragmatic kind of objectivity in self reflection.

Gadamer (1976), in turn, has criticized the objectivistic interests in Habermas's epistemology. He has suggested that sociological methodology itself creates an intentional alienation and distancing from the subject matter. In rebuttal to Habermas's (1977) critique, Gadamer (1976) has maintained that hermeneutical experience lies beyond science and is directed against alienation. Consequently, he has argued that Habermas doesn't really explain the truth of understanding in hermeneutical reflection. Gadamer (1976) has stated that Habermas places too much value on a "dogmatic objectivism" that distorts hermeneutic reflection (p. 28). While claiming that this objectivism discredits the necessary conditions for understanding, Gadamer has posited that in hermeneutic theory, subject-matter and method are intrinsically connected. As Wolff (1975) has explained, "sociology of knowledge (that is) grounded in hermeneutics will be seen to define both its own object and its method of grasping this object" (p. 102). Such a theory leads beyond method into its own philosophical conceptions of knowledge and of existence, an important difference from the epistemological perspective used by Habermas. In other words, according to Gadamer (1976), hermeneutic method should be seen as involving and involved in epistemology and ontology, the interest in the conditions of being itself in the process of understanding.

Gadamer (1976) has subsequently criticized Habermas's premise that hermeneutics should serve the methodology of the

social sciences. He has stated that this assumption, in itself, is a prior decision of great significance:

. . . for the purpose of sociological method as emancipating one from tradition places it at the outset very far from the traditional purpose and starting point of the hermeneutical problematic with all its bridge building and recovery of the best in the past.
(p. 26)

Gadamer's hermeneutics has assumed a methodology that presents a discipline grounded in question and inquiry which, in developing an interest in historicity, guarantees the truth of interpretation (or understanding of relationships in history). Rather than concluding that inevitable relativity makes the notion of truth irrelevant, he has argued that historicity guarantees the truth of the interpretation. This "truth," according to Gadamer, cannot be verified by the methodology of science. The hermeneutic method of *Verstehen* has as its task the discovery of truth not attainable by science (Wolff, 1975, p. 104).

The method of Gadamer's (1975, 1976) hermeneutics can best be referred to as the "hermeneutical circle" which is an acknowledgement of the researcher's or interpreter's need to recognize the inevitability of approaching material with certain prejudices (preconceptions), or anticipations, originating in his/her own historicity, and yet retain a certain openness to the object of study, (i.e., a receptiveness to the "otherness" of the material, allowing it to speak for itself, creating a balance between prejudice and openness). Gadamer has emphasized the point that the circle is ontological

rather than methodological. As Wolff (1975) has explained:

The hermeneutical circle is not simply a heuristic, methodological device, invented to facilitate the approach to historico-cultural material; it is the reality of being of interpreter and interpreted, and their mediation and unity in the history of events. (p. 106)

Gadamer (1975) has argued that prejudices (at least "legitimate" prejudices) are necessary conditions for understanding (p. 238 ff). He has condemned the rise of the discrediting of prejudice which has been brought about by objectivist theory in the social sciences. Gadamer has written:

That which presents itself, under the aegis of an absolute self-construction by reason, as a limiting prejudice belongs, in fact, to historical reality itself. What is necessary is a fundamental rehabilitation of the concept of prejudice and a recognition of the fact that there are legitimate prejudices, if we want to do justice to man's finite, historical mode of being. Thus we are able to formulate the central question of a truly historical hermeneutics, epistemologically its fundamental question, namely: where is the ground of the legitimacy of prejudices? (1975, pp. 245-246)

Gadamer has also offered a redefinition of "objectivity" which requires a certain "openness" to the subject matter and allows prejudices to be discovered: "Verstehen (understanding) of what is there consists in the working out of a . . . projection, which is certainly constantly revised by what results from further penetration into the meaning" (1975, p. 267).

The "understanding" in philosophical hermeneutics is not abstracted from the hermeneutical situation. As Gadamer (1976) has stated, "hermeneutics teaches us to see through the dogmatism

of asserting an opposition and separation between the ongoing, natural 'tradition' and the reflective appropriation of it" (p. 34). This is a central point of distinction between Gadamer's ontological perspective and Habermas's strictly epistemological lens. Unlike the self-reflective objectivity established in Habermas's epistemological frame of reference, Gadamer (1975) has emphasized the interpreter's/researcher's consciousness of his/her own historico-cultural context as establishing an ontological significance to knowledge and understanding. Moreover, Habermas's (1977) criticism of hermeneutic's alienated subjectivity should be qualified by Gadamer's (1975) clarification of such a contextualism. In contrast to a subjectivistic kind of relativism, in Gadamer's contextualism the interpretation or understanding is dependent upon, or relative to, the circumstances (historicity) in which it occurs.

For this contextualism, rational reflection and dispute do not stop with the interpreter's personal preferences. Justifying reasons for the appropriateness of a context rather than alternative ones can and should be given. Furthermore, since no context is absolute, different interpretations are possible. Hoy (1978) has claimed that any hermeneutic theory should account for the possibility of adjudicating between conflicting interpretive understandings (p. 4). Gadamer's contextualism offers justifying reasons for interpretations. Since interpretive understanding is conditioned by preunderstandings arising out of the situation of the interpreter,

the interpreter can defend his understanding by making these preunderstandings conscious. This assertion of the conditional character (the situatedness) of all understanding, is itself conditional according to Gadamer:

Even when we ourselves as historically enlightened thinkers, are fundamentally clear about the historical conditionedness of human thinking and hence about our own conditionedness, we have not ourselves taken an unconditioned stand. . . . The consciousness of the conditionedness does not in any way negate this conditionedness. (Hoy, 1978, p. 70)

In his insistence that hermeneutic theory is philosophy and not a particular science, Gadamer (1976) has emphasized that hermeneutics cannot supply material appropriateness conditions for interpretive contexts, that it "cannot legislate a canon of interpretive norms of a 'method' of criticism" (p. 31). However, Gadamer has suggested that philosophical questions or inquiries can begin to approach how we can be said to have certain knowledge--about how utterances can be said to be meaningful, and it is these ontological queries which call for a "practical language" that makes explicit the preunderstandings involved in discourse.

Gadamer's view is that language and world share the same boundaries--both are historical in their appearance. Gadamer (1976) has claimed that:

. . . there is no social reality with all its real coercions that for its part does not get represented again in a linguistically articulated consciousness. Reality does not happen 'behind the back of language', but rather behind the back of the person who lives with the subjective belief that he understands the world (or no longer understands it). Reality also happens in language. (p. 35)

The world is not an independent object for language; rather, the world presents itself in language (Wolff, 1975, p. 114).

The Linguistic Condition

The dialectical relationship of language and being (via the mediation of tradition and interpretation/understanding) gives Gadamer's hermeneutics, based as it is in linguistic foundations (i.e., the conditionedness of being) an ontological aspect. For just as language-understanding involves a certain grasp of being, so this same grasp of being underlies hermeneutics. This is why Gadamer has spoken of "language as the horizon of a hermeneutic ontology" and what he means in the statement that "being that can be understood is language" (1976, p. 31).

At the time of his initial critique of Gadamer's hermeneutics, Habermas (1977) had suggested that there was a need for a linguistically oriented approach to understanding the subject matter of the social sciences. However, he had typically viewed language as merely one aspect of reality and other constitutive factors exist, specifically work and power, in which language is grounded. He had claimed that the universality of the language phenomena as claimed by hermeneutics was an "idealism of linguisticity" and reflected a "sorry powerlessness" in the view of work and power relation's impact on the social whole (Hoy, 1978, p. 124). Consequently, with its insistence on the communication (linguistic) basis for confronting disrupted (intersubjective) understanding,

and not through a systematic participation or method of learning specified rules (rational principles) of action which direct communication, Habermas had criticized Gadamer's hermeneutics for lacking a sufficiently critical attitude toward the authority of the tradition.

In rebuttal, Gadamer (1976) pointed out that Habermas's critique of ideology was in itself a linguistic act of reflection. Gadamer maintained that faith in the power of reflection alone "represents an idealization that falsely attempts to break out of the hermeneutical circle" (p. 32). Furthermore, Gadamer asserted that Habermas's (1977) application of hermeneutics with a "limiting concept of perfect interaction between understood motives and consciously performed action" was a misinterpretation of the true value of hermeneutics (1976, p. 33). Gadamer (1976) claimed the inclusion of work and power relations within his theory of hermeneutics:

From the hermeneutical standpoint, rightly understood, it is absolutely absurd to regard the concrete function of work and politics as outside the scope of hermeneutics. . . . The principle of hermeneutics simply means that we should try to understand everything that can be understood. (p. 33)

Gadamer has maintained that the hermeneutical problem of understanding is universal and basic for all interhuman experience, "precisely because meaning can be experienced even where it is not actually intended" (p. 37).

Van Manen (1977) has suggested that Gadamer believes hermeneutics is practical, corrective, and emancipatory in the sense that it gains insights which make personal and social

change possible (p. 9). Gadamer has discussed this pragmatic emphasis of hermeneutics in his broad theoretical claims found in Truth and Method (1975). However, he has differentiated this pragmatism from a dogmatism that idealizes emancipation as a "completed reflection," both "empty and undialectical" (1976, p. 31).

In continuing to criticize the idealism in Habermas's critical theory, Gadamer (1976) has claimed that Habermas's Marxist critique of ideology appears to presuppose that all understanding allows us to see through pretexts or "unmask false pretensions" (p. 32). As stated before, Gadamer has argued that this use of hermeneutics to "shake the dogmatism of life-praxis" is itself a dogmatic prejudice and an idealistic misinterpretation of hermeneutic reflection (p. 32). To Gadamer, reflection does not always step towards dissolving prior convictions.

Gadamer himself has not been so interested in proving the illegitimacy of authority (such as the ordering of education or the mandatory commands of the army and government) as he has been interested in our acceptance or acknowledgement of relationships to authority. As he has said, authority "lives not from dogmatic power but from dogmatic acceptance" (1976, p. 36). Hermeneutical reflection then is not intended to dissolve our relationship or emancipate us from authority, but a means of becoming conscious of it.

This seemingly unsolvable conflict of "idealizations" has been further discussed by Hoy in The Critical Circle (1978).

Hoy has stated that an unavoidable question implicit to Habermas's critical theory is whether hermeneutics is subject to ideology criticism or whether the latter is itself accounted for by the hermeneutical theory of understanding (p. 6). In insisting that only a self-reflective understanding can accomplish practical liberation from unnecessary social controls, Habermas (1977) has suggested that hermeneutics serves ideology criticism. Habermas also has continued to hold to a notion of reason demanding principles of understanding and truth.

Hoy has also posed a question relevant to Gadamer's (1976) claims. He has asked:

Is it possible for philosophy itself to stay within the hermeneutical circle of understanding, and within the limitations imposed by its own historical conditions, yet legitimately posit rational principles as conditions for the possible validity of truth of particular acts of understanding? (1978, p. 118)

Gadamer has maintained that there is no unconditioned standpoint, not even for philosophical hermeneutics. Even as there is no way to see language from a nonlinguistic viewpoint, there is no way man can get out of history to view history as a whole. Moreover, Gadamer (1975) has noted that:

. . . tradition exists only in constant alteration. To gain a connection with the tradition is a formulation intended to call attention to an experience whereby our plans and wishes are always in advance of reality, and are, so to speak, even without connection with reality. What then becomes important is to mediate between desirable anticipations and practicable possibilities, between sheer wishes and actual intentions--that is, to imagine the anticipations in the substance of reality. (p. 250)

Theoretical Synthesis in Linguisticality

Though it appears that it is at this juncture that Gadamer and Habermas seem to be most in disagreement, it has become evident since Habermas's (1979) later work in linguistics that the development of critical theory and hermeneutical reflection could be converging. Habermas has begun to provide his own approach to a linguistic theory for the social sciences. In Communication and the Evolution of Society (1979), he has developed a theory of communication that is far more detailed than Gadamer's account of linguisticity and provides a reversal of his earlier position concerning the idealism of linguisticity.

Habermas's awareness of the language phenomenon as conditioning historical remembrance has been an importantly synthesizing characteristic. Misgeld (1976) has suggested that Habermas has become interested in Gadamer's insights because he has noticed that hermeneutical reflection on historical understanding has "faithfully described the origin of understanding in the practice of communication" (p. 180).

Giddens (1976) has investigated the Habermas-Gadamer dialogue relating to language and he has found Habermas agreeing with Gadamer that language is not merely a system of description. Habermas has stated that "language is the medium whereby an intersubjectively formed social life is carried on: Language is a medium of doing things through communication with others" (Giddens, 1977, p. 43).

Like Gadamer, Habermas (1979) has claimed universal status for his theory of linguistics which he calls "universal pragmatics." And yet, in his "pragmatics," he has posited a transcendental and apparently unhistorical notion of truth that applies in all rational dialogues or discourse situations. (Gadamer has strongly resisted this unhistorical notion of rationality, and has insisted that there is nothing paradoxical about his own thesis of the historical character of all understanding.)

Habermas's interest in expressing circumstances of "distorted communication" in his linguistic theory, also has a particularly dogmatic prejudice. The emancipatory function in the notion of "communicative competence" is itself too subjective and too methodological. It forgets the purpose of intersubjectivity which is necessary for unveiling knowledge-orienting interests. Habermas's (1979) use of the notion of "communicative competence" to suggest an idealization of linguistic interaction is, consequently, different from Gadamer's emphasis on the mediating significance of language for bridging the hermeneutical gap between the present experience of the self and traditional or historical situatedness.

McCarthy (1978) has explained that Habermas stresses the limitations of an approach, e.g., Gadamer's hermeneutics, based solely upon the normal competence of a speaker of a natural language to understand symbolically structured objects and events (p. 191). The universalizing--by way of

ontologizing--of hermeneutics results in an "aprioristic devaluation of methods of social analysis with a theoretical basis that goes beyond normal linguistic experience" (p. 191). Habermas has in mind a theory of natural language that attempts to reconstruct linguistic competence. According to McCarthy, the question is whether Gadamer's insights, viewed methodologically and not ontologically, are actually compatible with such an approach.

If the methodological issues are overlooked, it might appear that the different emphases of Gadamer and Habermas--on historicity, participation, and dialogue with the past versus enlightenment, critical distance, and anticipation of the future--spring only from their different attitudes toward tradition. Whereas Gadamer speaks of tradition primarily as a source of insights and values that have to be constantly reactualized in every new situation, Habermas stresses the elements of domination, repression, and distortion, which are also incorporated in our heritage and from which we must continually strive to emancipate ourselves. Whereas Gadamer speaks of 'the dialogue that we are', Habermas speaks of the dialogue that is not yet but ought to be. Whereas Gadamer is moved by respect for the superiority of tradition, Habermas is motivated by the anticipation of a future state of freedom. . . there is no need to remain at this kind of impasse. Hermeneutic understanding can be pursued critically, with an interest in enlightenment and emancipation. And critique would remain empty without concrete input from our cultural heritage. (1976, p. 191)

The Universality of Hermeneutic Understanding

Anthony Giddens (1977) has also pointed out Habermas's over-emphasis of the Verstehen-Erklaren (understanding-explanation) opposition in his theory. Giddens has explained that Habermas has failed to acknowledge the sense in which hermeneutics, insofar as it is concerned with all "meaningful comprehension,"

must be as basic to a critique of ideology as to any other human enterprise (p. 54). Consequently, Habermas's ideals of emancipation and communicative competence should not be considered independent processes from autonomy of action and mutual understanding. Habermas's avoidance in including the level of ontology in his critical and linguistic theories has created this weakness in his ability to relate conditions of action and the capability of really transforming those conditions. Gadamer has consistently refused to separate or to suggest a hierarchy of importance amongst interests in action, mutual understanding, as well as communicative competence.

Giddens (1977) has acknowledged that the universality of hermeneutical experience and the interconnectedness of subject matter and method in hermeneutical theory, forbids confining hermeneutic problems in understanding and communication to one class of disciplines. He has based his criticism of Habermas's epistemology on the tendency of Habermas to be too accepting of a "deductive-nomological version of scientific explanation" as a method for the social sciences (p. 52). Giddens has explained that a nomological form of explanation, (which is essentially an empirical perspective modeled after the natural sciences and should be considered quite differently from the interpretive perspective), should not be the only way of describing scientific interests, for "explanation in science is most appropriately characterized as the clarification of queries, not deduction from causal laws, which is

only one sub-type of explanatory procedure" (p. 52). Consequently, the hermeneutic/interpretive character of science must also be recognized, and meaningful understanding should be considered more integral to science than Habermas allows.

Misgeld (1976) has mentioned a number of ways in which Gadamer's hermeneutics can become relevant to Habermas's re-design of a foundation for critical theory (pp. 168-171). Among these, Misgeld has claimed that philosophical hermeneutics helps to clarify critical theory's epistemological status by describing the role of interpretive understanding in social practice. Hermeneutics takes historical understanding to be a practice of life and describes the practice of life as the practice of speech which articulates our historical existence in communicative interaction. Also, as with the implicit aims of critical theory, Gadamer's hermeneutics has provided a notion of an ideal form of life in which "we have come to an understanding with one another which need no longer be revoked" (Misgeld, p. 170). Furthermore, according to Misgeld, critical theory must be seen as dependent upon a hermeneutical element:

. . . the impossibility of securing intersubjective understanding before we have entered into a situated discourse with others about the specific matters at hand in this very situation. (p. 182)

The dialogue or the reality of the relationship between Habermas's interest in a methodological application of explanation (his epistemology) and hermeneutics in the service

of his critical theory and Gadamer's insistence that such an application distorts the character of the innate linguistic, historical and intersubjective conditions for meaningful understanding (in his hermeneutics) is valuable to most fields of the humanities, including education, which involve an essentially historical and ideological dimension. By exchanging the terminology of their different perspectives, the methodological questions raised in hermeneutics, (i.e., the dialectic between the researcher and the researched), can be described as probing into the very possibility of thinking historically, and the ontological questions implicit to critical theory can be described as probing into the possibility of emancipation from historical controls, (i.e., the conditions of labor and suppressive authority), through self-reflection.

In Hoy's (1978) assessment:

. . . whether history is viewed as continuous or as discontinuous, (involving radical ruptures or paradigm shifts), will make a difference to the kinds of explanations a discipline gives and to the extent to which it searches for causes and general principles. (p. 7)

Habermas's (1977) epistemology distinguishes the circular character of knowledge as always located in history (therefore continuous as tradition or "paradigm"), and consequently is a defense of the hermeneutic significance to all knowledge-constituted interests. Therefore, Habermas should acknowledge the rational (or "practical") ontology inherent in Gadamer's hermeneutics for uncovering the universal conditions and meaning of not only the socio-historical tradition, but

phenomena in other areas of the social sciences. While Gadamer's (1976) theory has maintained that interpretive understanding is different, not better, and thus recognizes the possibility of discontinuity between the researcher and what he/she researches, it also makes a central principle of the fact that the researcher stands in and is conditioned by a tradition.

Hoy has justifiably asked:

Is it paradoxical to insist both on the possibility of historical discontinuity and on the necessary continuity of the interpreter (researcher) with his own historical tradition? (1978, p. 7)

Gadamer has avoided answering such queries simply because his central principle suggests an openness and possibility that any relationship is conditioned by a tradition. The object of study of any discipline is just as much a product of the researcher's "tradition," no matter to what degree this represents the cultural tradition, as it is of its own historical character.

It should be clear that by challenging the social sciences to think not only about the historical character of their object of study but also the historical character of their own discipline, Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics makes a better self-understanding in these disciplines an essential precondition for the legitimacy of their enterprise. Furthermore, this function of philosophical hermeneutics should be regarded by the critical theorists as a welcomed ontological accompaniment to their own epistemological interests, in that "the task of identifying and reconstructing universal

conditions of possible understanding" (p. 1)--Habermas's (1976) own description of his "universal pragmatics"--serves both to acknowledge the conditions of historicity and linguisticity as well as to open a path toward emancipation from the controlling agents which attempt to abuse our being in such conditions.

The level of epistemology alone is not sufficient for developing a theoretical approach for interpreting human interaction in the context of schools. The Erklaren route of practical objectivity itself is an illusion. Knowledge and human interests can neither be separated from each other nor from the ontological conditions out of which they are formed.

My relationship as researcher (and interpreter) to the tradition of interaction between critical theory and hermeneutics has been informed by the experience of self-reflection that has encouraged a projection of meaning concerning this interaction. Furthermore, this hermeneutic endeavor of reaching a greater understanding of the subject matter can be illustrated by attempting to unveil the illusory mask of objectivity and describing my personal experience in the tradition which conditions all of my understanding.

CHAPTER IV
AFFIRMATION OF HISTORICALITY

Habermas's (1979) theories of communication and social evolution have recognized the historicity of human existence and communication as a universal medium of social life, both aspects of Gadamer's (1975, 1976) philosophical hermeneutics. However, Habermas has attempted to mitigate the radically situational character of understanding through the introduction of theoretical elements, i.e., idealizations, which have been meant to reduce the context-dependency of the basic categories and assumptions of critical theory. Consequently, Habermas has continued to argue against Gadamer's approach to tradition which denies the possibility of methodologically transcending the hermeneutic point of view--that the linguisticity and historicity of human existence are the very conditions of possibility of understanding. O'Neill (1976) has explained that even in Habermas's linguistic turn, the interpretive endeavor in the genesis of critical theory has not been represented clearly. For Habermas has limited the possibilities of the role of historical remembrance (reflection) by his emphasis on the normative function of rational discourse.

In Gadamer's (1975) thought, the role of the historian or the sociologist in being conscious of and in conceptualizing

tradition has been described as the "effective historical consciousness." Wolf (1975) has explained what is meant by the insistence that understanding is "effect-historical":

The interpreter must recognize both his subject's and his own place in history, in the fusion of the two standpoints in his work . . . it goes beyond a pure phenomenology of inter-personal or cross-cultural understanding, existential or otherwise, for it allows the mind to see itself in a context, rather than bracketing off any world or context perceived other than through the mind . . . hermeneutic philosophy forces the interpreter to begin by grasping the place of his own consciousness in its historico-cultural context. (p. 107)

In that this ongoing (dissertation) study implicitly represents my own research-oriented role as interpreter, it seems fitting that I affirm my effective-historical consciousness by attempting to reflect upon those prejudices or preconceptions which have conditioned my relationship with the topic. The claim of participation, as hermeneuticist in the study, requires that I acknowledge the self-awareness derived from this self-reflection and that I project a new sense of meaning into the study as a consequence of this better self-understanding.

According to McCarthy (1976), "the interpretive understanding of one's own tradition started with a 'structure of prejudices' . . . which have themselves been shaped by this tradition" (p. 175). Although this study has not been specifically intended to illustrate my efforts to understand the tradition of educational research (of which I have chosen to take part), the subject matter of my choice of research reflects, in an emergingly meaningful way, my participation

in or relationship with the tradition. Thus, in order to better understand the tradition's influence upon this choice, as well as the affect that I have had upon the tradition, (through my participation and active making-sense of the research tradition), it is necessary that I reflect upon this relationship.

The Circular and Dialectical Experience
of Understanding

Palmer (1969) has explicated Gadamer's dialectical hermeneutics as a means to understanding that is "not manipulation and control but participation and openness, not knowledge but experience, not methodology but dialectic" (p. 215). For Gadamer, the circular character of understanding the parts in terms of a projected sense of the whole, and revising the latter in the light of a closer investigation of the parts, is demonstrated in the experience of inquiry (interpretation) that is both a questioning from the context of one's pre-understandings and an openness to new understandings. Such an openness cannot be a matter of the interpreter's ridding himself of all preconceptions and prejudgments. As McCarthy (1976) has noted, "there is, of course, no possibility of raising to consciousness all-at-once and once-and-for-all one's preconceptions and prejudgments" (p. 173). Consequently, the circular and dialectical experience of understanding consists, in part, of an openness to the horizon of experience of the interpreter as it is brought to bear upon the horizon

of the tradition being interpreted. And, moreover, the self-reflective turn that raises to consciousness this experience of the interpreter is itself only a partial understanding of the whole of the interpreter's experience that makes up this horizon.

I have already attempted to relate that part of the dialectical relationship with the tradition of interpretive and critical theory which has informed my present understanding of these theories. The projection of meaning that represents my understanding of these theories has been represented in previous chapters, especially Chapter III. I will not attempt to gain a better self-understanding by reflecting upon those preconceptions and experiences which represent the horizons of an interpretive understanding of this subject matter. Although this, too, is a part of the whole relationship with the subject of hermeneutics and educational experience, my projections of meaning regarding my participation in the tradition of formal education is the part of the circle that will be linguistically related.

What follows represents a linguistic expression of a partial understanding gained through self-reflection. It is that part of the dialectical relationship with the tradition of interpretive theory which will provide a means of my capturing a sense of hermeneutics so that I may later articulate it in a framework that is meaningful to other relationships more specific to the context of the school. Furthermore,

it is an interpretation of experiences that I have had in the tradition of formal education. It represents the historicity of those preconceptions which, at this time, is unavoidably partial, incomplete and full of emerging meaning--meaning which may later enrich my participation.

For the purposes of illustrating the process of hermeneutic reflection, I have only been able to relate a broad, yet significant, spectrum of experiences that, at the time of actively sitting, reflecting and writing, I was able to begin understanding as experiences in the tradition of education which have conditioned my journey toward a study of intersubjective relationships in schools and the hermeneutic task of understanding those relationships

The Reflective Turn of Understanding

A very important link in my effective historical experience was the decision to pursue an undergraduate degree in political science. I can recall the difficulty in this decision. At the time, I was not ready to begin limiting options for the future and I was definitely unprepared to choose a program of studies that was limited in itself to certain narrowly directed areas of study. In other words, I felt that I needed more time and one way to insure this was to enter a line of study that appeared to continue offering less well-defined opportunities for the future. This, I was soon to learn, was an accurate estimation of the uncertain options in such a liberal arts degree. As I look back now

with an even stronger desire to remain flexible in terms of career orientation, I feel that my preconceptions of such flexibility were influenced by the tradition-context of the questions that many college students felt concerning the social and diplomatic direction of our country during the period from 1969-1972, when I was in college.

The fact that throughout my political science education I inherited a very passive orientation to social institutions, one which seemed to unquestionably value the status-quo of institutionalized and bureaucratized authority, is significant. Moreover, the conservatism of judging revolutionary motivations and insurgent activities in past and contemporary history as threatening to the valued stability and maintenance of social organization and democratic order should also be reflected upon as establishing an understanding of politics and social action which initially informed my judgments concerning the methods of the "left" for questioning the foundations of the "rightful" decision-makers.

A second step in my effective education was the concretization of the political science degree in my experience as an agent in the real world: my first job in government as a counselor in a large and archaic prison system. The history of my search for this position must credit my earlier sophomoric projections concerning the possible meanings and direction of the degree in political science. Although I had participated in a field program in state government, the

fact that I ran across a job as a "behavior analyst" in a federally operated prison counseling program hopefully should not reflect the academy's intentions for awarding degrees in political science. Again, this step into the tradition of school-work relationships reflects the possibilities of my own preunderstanding having influenced this relationship.

The reality of being required to participate in questionable "corrections" practices or be fired must be considered as the beginning of a crisis, a turning point, in my passivistic perspective. Having entered this field at a time when young, naive and innocent people were incarcerated for lengthy periods of time because of the possession and use of marijuana, the drug which to this day the policing network has been unable to discourage from even the most respectable citizens, forced a perspective which required questioning the status quo and authority. Other experiences which I shared with many college graduates at this time--Vietnam and Watergate especially--certainly helped to encourage a change to a perspective (world view) of pessimism and disgust concerning the "establishment"--the prison system, the military, the government and those who had supposedly assisted me in preparing for the initiation into the work-a-day world.

I soon found myself incapable of continuing the promotion of certain prison practices and searched for a way out, finding it through friendship gained with those outsiders who visited the cell blocks and seemed to be more successful

in affirming the basic humanity of the inmates. Those who were most willing to discuss their interests with me were seminary students from a local university who chose fieldwork in the prisons. The subtle, yet effective, methods of excusing groups of inmates from meaningless labor and the efforts performed in establishing an educational program, a learning laboratory and high school equivalency lessons, proved to me the success of an "anti-establishment" perspective which had liberating and constructive results. These achievements impressed me especially because they were undertaken without the trappings of religious dogma that, I feel, would have stifled the individual's choice of commitment. I subsequently decided to explore this religious perspective on corrections and entered a seminary program which permitted a concentration in corrections solutions.

The selection of a seminary program, again, was primarily determined by my speculative (prejudiced) interests in less structure. The thought of exploring not only a theological perspective on the conditions of our interpersonal relationships, but actually experiencing broader opportunities for such relationships, informed the selection of location for this educational venture. The transition to a much more receptive environment, (an interdenominational seminary, located in a seemingly multi-cultural city--Boston), to intellectualism and other "anti-establishment" concerns, provided the groundworks of what has become my personal orientation to inquiry,

openness, interpersonal relationships (intersubjectivity), and interpretive understanding as a means for research. The exegetical activities of practicing Biblical interpretations touched an existing interest in our dependency on understanding and language use.

The consistent experiences in the "heavy" academic area demonstrated the potential of dialogue and dialectical tension as a pedagogical method for smoking out theological truths concerning the metaphysical world. This helped to establish a repertoire of interpretive techniques for creating tension in order to encourage more lively, challenging and meaningful interaction. And certainly the plethora of directed readings in theology and ethics (my graduate concentration), which established the need for an acceptance of a pluralistic world and for a way to find some sense-making, universalizable perspective relating East and West, subject and object, immanence and transcendence, secular and sacred, I and Thou, etc., directed me towards more alternative approaches to "reality and truth."

The decision to continue to pursue pedagogy in the formal robes as teacher was made as yet another option for maintaining some autonomy of choice and expression. In that I had been instructed to believe that the teacher is responsible for interpreting the direction of the curriculum and the pedagogical tradition of which he/she becomes a part, I felt that such a role would allow me to influence this tradition

and better understand the means by which students could be liberated from unnecessary inhibitions in school relationships, e.g., the manipulative structures of objectivity in testing and evaluating procedures.

While being initiated into the tradition of the school, I also decided to search further for a better understanding of traditions in education and how I could philosophically begin to fit, as I had soon discovered an inevitable necessity for insuring survival in the predominant "systems" approach to education. The decision to complete a degree program in education represents an openness to identifying with some emerging traditions in educational theory which promised to enlighten my journey toward an understanding of human intersubjectivity. The domains of moral education and curriculum criticism seemed most promising.

At this time, I was fortunate to begin a period of interaction with the personalities who have affirmed and promoted my own intellectual interests--especially those immediate to this dissertation's purpose, my doctoral committee. I cannot complete any conscious self-reflective efforts without emphasizing the open, yet guided, facilitation for this research provided by these individuals. Moreover, the perspective which I maintain as researcher has built-in preunderstandings which have been partially informed by my interactions ("fusion of horizons") with these individuals. The committee chairman has included the very important point that what I choose to

read as researcher will very much influence the manner in which I write and participate in research. This seemingly obvious point, yet insignificant in an objective sense, is of upmost importance to one who is interested in the hermeneutic task.

Other committee responses to this inquiry have provided the incentive to approach the research with a degree of responsibility to the subject matter that allows it to become both content and form of the research--and the concomittant incentive to challenge the methodological expectations of "research" in order to build upon current work in the field, (especially in qualitative evaluation and curriculum criticism). Most important, however, is the introduction to the thoughts shared by the critical sociologists and educational theorists who these educators have developed some association with. Such an introduction encouraged me two years ago to write a preliminary proposal for research that spoke to the need for associating religious reflection with the existential concerns about the educational experience. This paper, entitled "The Developmental Criteria of Dialogue," introduced the notion of "co-existential relationships" as a qualitative characteristic for assessing the intersubjectivity inherent in dialogue and for developing a concern for meaning and truth in the educational process. It is with this topic that I also first introduced the ontological dimension in educational experience and suggested that inquiry, (as a search for understanding, i.e., the hermeneutical task), is that act of

reflection which finds its origination in the atmosphere of emitted, or developed, dialogue--dialogue that has been sent forth from the center of our co-existence. Inquiry, therefore, is grounded in the possibilities of dialogue.

As I reflect now upon the subject matter of that paper, I begin to recognize that at that time I was still very much "stuck" (prejudiced) with an approach to ontology which assumed a very objective point of view. The notion that there exists "patterns of dialogue" which can be systematically described and researched, depended on a structured, phenomenological lens of study which inhibited an openness to experience--the preconception that I have maintained as an essential characteristic of ontology. Nonetheless, this early formulation of an interpretive interest in intersubjectivity must be considered now as an important "variable" that has informed my pre-understandings of the subject matter at hand.

Perhaps the most significant point that I reflect upon now in an effort to disclose the foreknowledge that presently influences, as does any tradition, my choice of interest is related to the importance of my selection of readings. These readings have created an attraction to metaphors, models, and paradigms concerning dialogue, intersubjectivity, and dialectical tension. The experience of passing over to another's tradition (or worldview) and coming back to one's own cultural orientation, having shared "truths" and gained insights, is the metaphorical language that John Dunne uses in describing

the interaction necessary to understand one's own (religious) tradition as well as the "truths" shared by different traditions. Dunne's The Way of All the Earth (1972) is a model of a hermeneutical venture of one who listens to, (is open to), the stranger (the "other" by journeying away from his own frame of reference to the world, and, in returning, not only discovers new insights about others' points of view, but can reflect upon his own tradition with new lens for discovering and understanding deeper truths in that world (tradition).

I have also been attracted to the writings of Heinrich Zimmer (1946) and Mircea Eliade (1959) who have attempted to describe many of the universalizable characteristics found in different religious world views. Zimmer (pp. 219-221) told the story of Rabbi Eisek, son of Jekel, of Crakow who experiences a number of dreams tempting him to travel to the city of Prague where he should discover a hidden treasure. Rabbi Eisek decides to follow his dreams and upon approaching Prague he confronts a guard at the city's bridge who laughs at the Rabbi's story and exclaims:

Really, you poor fellow! Have you worn your shoes out wandering all this way only because of a dream? What sensible person would trust a dream? Why look, if I had been one to go trusting dreams, I should this very minute be doing just the opposite. I should have made just such a pilgrimage as this silly one of yours only in the opposite direction but no doubt with the same result. Let me tell you my dream.

The sympathetic officer related his dream which spoke to him of Crakow, commanding him to search for a treasure in the house

of a Jewish rabbi whose name would be Eisek, son of Jekel.

The guard went on to say:

The treasure was to have been discovered buried in the dirty corner behind the stove of Eisek, son of Jekel. Fancy going to Crakow and pulling down the walls of every house in the ghetto, where half of the men are called Jekel and the other half Eisek!

After hearing the guard's story, Rabbi Eisek hurried back to his distant home, dug in the "neglected corner of his house" and discovered the treasure. Zimmer concludes from the story that:

The real treasure, to end our misery and trials, is never far away . . . it lies buried in the inner most recess of our own home, that is to say, our own being. . . . But there is the odd and persistent fact that it is only after a faithful journey to a distant region, a foreign country, a strange land, that the meaning of the inner voice that is to guide our quest can be revealed to us. (p. 221)

This metaphor of the journey and of the treasured truth which can be uncovered through dialogue with and openness to the "other" is, like Dunne's model of "passing over" and "coming back," a tremendously supportive paradigm for the hermeneutical "journey" of understanding which I have come to research and reflect upon.

The ontological significance of the journey which establishes the persistent fact that meaning can only be found through communication and that understanding is involved with disclosure also suggests that this understanding is only possible if the dialogue is "about" something. And, although I personally have discovered that it is in the context of

religious experience, (the something "we are about"), which best informs us of the path to the inner voice and shared truths, this is surely a prejudice which is born out of my own choice of attention to particular readings. However, even in a very philosophical sense, such as in Apel's (1977) explanation, the notion of intersubjectivity as the "a priori" of communication can be argued.

The "legitimacy" of these prejudgments and preunderstandings that my own effective history in the tradition of work and school can reflect is, of course, a factor which conditions the understandings which I come to in "practice" as hermeneuticist. And yet, as Robinson points out, "hermeneia, or interpretation, is constantly being carried out without calling attention to itself, as people seek to understand one another and make themselves understood" (1963, p. 66). Consequently, the reflective turn to one's own historicity and tradition is a necessary component in the hermeneutical circle of understanding. The legitimacy of one's personal prejudices is therefore determined by the recognition that these prejudices do indeed inform one's perceptions, one's interpretations and one's understandings. I must recognize my prejudice toward the encounter, (ingrained in my experience as a "child of the '60's"), towards an attraction to the essential impediments to understanding, (a shared experience with those dispossessed by society--i.e., the prisoner, the radical), toward the indoctrinated consciousness of ultimate questions of "being-ness", (experienced in a

theological education), and toward the willingness to confront the tension of the dialectical moment, (also a valued "technique" in the theological debate as well as an effective pedagogical technique of the social sciences).

Willis (1978) has discussed the qualitative evaluator in much the same way as I imagine the hermeneuticist:

In contrast to the quantitative evaluator, who tends to see the world as largely determinate and non-problematic, the qualitative evaluator tends to see the world as largely indeterminate and problematic; hence, its qualities are seen more directly as functions of the perceptions and personal meanings the evaluator brings to the situation. (p. 4)

Although more contemporary qualitative evaluators have sought a phenomenological "measure" of "common patterns of personal meanings," (Willis, 1978, p. 32) the ontological intentions which I hold as hermeneuticist are similarly qualified. One calls forth reflection upon the theory of interpretation and the problem of understanding when some impediment to understanding draws attention to the understanding process itself.

The importance of the nature of the dialectical relationship is an aspect of hermeneutics particular to recent theories which attempt to transcend the objectivity of the interpreter/researcher and establish the "encounter" as the true experience of non-objectified accumulation of understanding--as Gadamer (1976) has claimed, a knowledge of the way things are in the not purely personal capacity. In other words, the inter-subjectivity inherent in dialectical encounters demands a recognition of reciprocity and dialogue as the methodology for gaining understanding.

As researcher, by choosing to wear the lens of philosophical hermeneutics, I am presently ready to confront the subject matter of this inquiry again with a better self-understanding and to demonstrate the openness required for allowing a synthesis to emerge from the dialectical encounter of myself, as researcher, with the subject matter.

CHAPTER V
HERMENEUTICS AND THE CURRICULUM

The hermeneutical task of finding the right questions from which to begin understanding intersubjectivity has been made clearer by recognizing the ontological condition of historicity that informs the preconceptions of one's questions. The self-reflective mode of inquiry, the phase of openness to one's own effective historical experience in the circle of understandings has itself opened up the realm of preunderstandings out of which such questioning arises. Gadamer's (1976) analysis of this process of understanding is a good place to begin when considering the experience of education as an experience of intersubjectivity, and of the ontological being-in-the-curriculum.

Gadamer (1976) has compared the notion of the fusion of horizons (preunderstandings, prejudices) with dialogue between persons. When considering experience in school curriculum as dialogical experience--for intersubjectivity in the curriculum is dependent on dialogue--then Gadamer's reference to this phenomenon is directly relevant to a concern with the fusion of horizons via school curriculum.

The structure of questioning that determines dialogue as the dialectical encounter has also been discussed (Chapter I) as a characteristic of the inherent relationship between experiences in and with the curriculum and the hermeneutical

expérience. The dialectical encounters between students and teachers, amongst students, teachers and the formal curriculum, as well as amongst other participants in schools, are explicit examples of the importance of questioning in the educational process.

The different subject matter of dialogues in education reflects the different dimensions of the curriculum. The formal subject-matter curriculum can be thought of as the tradition-context, the general condition in which educational intersubjectivity is immersed. This "object" of experience in education--the subject matter curriculum--can be assessed in a different light when considered hermeneutically. These questions that are implicit to the subject-matter encourage dialogical/dialectical encounters amongst the participants in/with the curriculum. To recognize these questions requires an openness on the part of these participants.

Another significant dimension of the curriculum is that which is particularly intersubjective in its own right--the hidden curriculum of interpersonal relationships amongst students, teachers, and the formal (subject) curriculum. This encounter in the curriculum lights up the horizons of students and teachers and conditions the possibility of self-disclosure and self-understanding. It is the intersubjective curriculum that reflects the ontological conditions of hermeneutic interest. The understanding (meaning) which emerges from the questions inherent in the intersubjective curriculum reflects

the significance in interpersonal relationships to our wholistic understanding of the educational process.

It is meaningless to try to separate the curriculum as either formal or intersubjective when discussing the tradition-context or historicity of the curriculum. However, it is helpful to understand these parts when describing the ontological aspect of a hermeneutic "analysis" of dialogue in the curriculum. Ott (1967) has provided a useful commentary about the intersubjective event of dialogue and the grounds for understanding this event. According to Ott, "persons are together under the claims of a common subject matter . . . in which and confronting which they are first able to understand each other" (p. 15).

Although the common subject matter is not always the formal disciplines of the curriculum in schools, it is important to be aware that these disciplines establish the explicit tradition-context of our being-in-the-curriculum. Consequently, both the implicit, hidden curriculum of intersubjectivity and the explicit, formal curriculum make-up the historicity of intersubjective relationships in the school.

Another significant characteristic of the curriculum that defines its historicity is its reflection of linguisticity. We belong to the tradition of curriculum only through the language which emerges in our understanding of curriculum. The deeper meaning of the curriculum, or rather the curriculum that transcends the limits of any particular

curriculum content, is recognized in and through the mediation between the conscious familiar elements of the curriculum and the alien (hidden, intersubjective) reality in the curriculum. The language of intersubjectivity and of the concrete curriculum is this mediative phenomenon that provides a means for making possible agreements that broaden the horizons of participants in the (whole) curriculum.

The Hermeneutical Circle and Interpretive Analysis

The hermeneutical circle of understanding the curriculum can be assumed to be conditioned by the give and take in dialogue amongst school participants. In beginning to describe a method of approach or an application of the hermeneutic perspective in assessing the dialogical relationships in the curriculum, some further comments regarding the hermeneutic circle may be helpful.

The hermeneutic circle of understanding is a condition posited by Gadamer for the possibility of human experience and inquiry. Formulated variously in different theories of hermeneutics, the circle generally describes how, in the process of understanding and interpretation, part and whole are related in a circular way: in order to understand the whole, it is necessary to understand the parts, while to understand the parts it is necessary to have some comprehension of the whole. Gadamer's (1976) philosophy in hermeneutics accounts for the primordial reciprocity between the interpreter and the interpreted and can be used to suggest that the

self-understanding of the participants (interpreters) in education conditions the manner in which the curriculum is understood. In turn, the curriculum as both the tradition of intersubjectivity and the formal subject-matter in education conditions the self-understanding of the participants (teachers, students, administrators, etc.) in this tradition.

Approaching the hermeneutical circle objectively is an ideal which prevents the interpreter as researcher from genuinely understanding its conditions. This is basically what distinguishes the epistemological model of inquiry, which generally posits the ideal of scientific objectivity (e.g., in the Cartesian tradition of rigorous deduction) and of presuppositionless knowledge, from the ontological claims of Gadamer's (1976) hermeneutics, which is based on Heidegger's (1962) view that all understanding presupposes a prior grasp, a pre-understanding of the whole.

Any interpretive or critical humanistic approach to understanding relationships in education must recognize this circle of understanding as fundamental to its assumptions and findings. Whether or not one can approach ontology "scientifically" (with accompanying methodical expectations) is an important question which the perspective established in philosophical hermeneutics has been willing to challenge. Furthermore, the traditional approach relating cognitive interests with observable and measurable cultural phenomena must ask itself if an understanding (as opposed to knowledge) of the human

being in the educational context can be realized with only epistemological and phenomenological lens.

In choosing to use the lens of Gadamer's hermeneutics, and as researcher/interpreter of the circle of understanding in the context of the school, I must affirm the ontological perspective. Although I must also acknowledge the phenomena of school relationships as the material givenness of the situations which I choose to discuss, the deeper ontological interests in intersubjectivity will ultimately determine the "method" of interpretation. Bozarth-Campbell (1979) has helped in distinguishing this approach from the strictly phenomenological perspective:

. . . seeking a way of access belonging to interpretation means discovering the observable characteristics of the processes and entering into a dialogue with them--questioning, listening, and responding to them. (p. 3)

Consequently, the dialogical requirements of the interpreter's participation with the phenomena being studied, (in this case, intersubjectivity in schools), will determine the ultimate understanding of the ontological significance of the study itself. Furthermore, it will most importantly determine the "technique" or method for analyzing the situations under study. (The interpretive technique, in turn, will reflect the findings of the analysis.)

Boundaries for a Hermeneutical Analysis

The historical and linguistic conditions which have influenced and are influencing this particular writing are also

ontologically significant to my application of the hermeneutic lens to an interpretation of specific experiences reflecting intersubjectivity in school. The linguistic conditions which reflect our being and sharing a social tradition often also reflect very particular nuances when studied in a school setting. Although the language shared in schools is not necessarily distinct from that shared in any other social environment or institution, it is very much influenced by the structure of relationships that are generally informed by the curriculum of activities in the school. Certain language phenomena reflect a tradition of student/teacher/administrator/custodian/coach/etc. roles. And, insofar as this tradition does not pose a problem to the interpreter who assumes the task of investigating the interactions amongst these roles, it is not problematic for the interpretive method. However, acknowledging that this tradition does exist and that certain peculiarly school-related functions and relationships (curricula) reflect this tradition is an important influence upon the interpretation.

The (a priori) tradition-context of language in the school can be assumed by the interpreter to be a normative element or condition that controls and maintains relationships in the tradition. Any reason to question the mediating function of the language used would in part be a questioning of the tradition. Although this is not a problem to my particular interests as interpreter, I do think that there remains a need to question the phenomena of linguistic barriers to

greater understanding amongst the participants in schools. The language used by teachers often reflects areas in the formal curriculum which may be totally beyond the experience of the students. But more than this, the traditional and dialectical nature of posing questions and assigning tasks to students, as well as the traditional ("acceptable") questions and responses from students to teachers and the curriculum are very challenging problems to an interpreter who is interested in analyzing the influence of these dialectical encounters upon the fulfillment of understanding amongst students and teachers.

The tradition-context of the language phenomena in schools establishes the historicity of experiences and interrelationships in schools. Although there are many other possible institutional norms and conditions (e.g., spatial uses in the classroom and school in general and routines of bells and instructional procedures), which help to define the historicity of relationships in schools, none represent the ontological nature of the human condition in educational intersubjectivity as does language. Reflecting upon this historicity does, however, encourage the interpreter to acknowledge the ongoing fixedness of relationships in schools and how this has informed the degree of understanding, or the patterns of understanding, which can be described. This fixedness is problematical and necessarily questioned when the interpreter assumes that there are problems of understanding in the present conditions of intersubjectivity in schools.

Assuming for the purposes of this study that these conditions of linguisticity and historicity define the ultimately ontological nature of human beingness and that a hermeneutical approach for interpreting situational characteristics of these conditions in schools requires attention to the active phenomena which reflect these conditions, then it is necessary to set some boundaries as to how the situations of intersubjectivity are to be discussed.

Situations of intersubjectivity can first be recognized as phenomenological characteristics of the existentially grounded hermeneutical circle. The goal of the hermeneutical circle is to achieve a unity of sense. Consequently, a sense of the whole must first be projected as initially meaningful. This whole must therefore be discussed as it relates to the situations of intersubjectivity in schools. For the analysis that is soon to follow, the whole reflects the understanding of the curriculum (both formal and hidden) through the interaction of students and teachers both in and with the curriculum. The hidden curriculum of intersubjective relationships is itself obviously a part of the preconceived meaning of schooling reflected in the preunderstandings of all participants in the school.

Another boundary which I have chosen to place for this analysis of situations in schools is to consider these phenomenological characteristics in a descriptive reference rather than to interpret them as if dialogues between students and

teachers were historical "texts." Although it would be quite relevant to a hermeneutic interpretation of the dialogues to consider them as a text, I have chosen simply to describe what I consider to be the qualitatively hermeneutic characteristics implicit to the dialogues--in other words, a description of what I hear to be reflective of a hermeneutic situation. The problem of understanding the curriculum that is explicit in the dialogues is what is important here--not the problem of analyzing the dialogues as themselves needing to be interpreted as significant to the tradition from which they have been taken out of context.

The choice of taping dialogues amongst students and teachers is itself a choice of method. This satisfies a justification for applying the hermeneutic lens in discussing intersubjectivity in schools. The method of dialogue, whether it is to be used as a control of interactions in any field or more narrowly as a tool for instruction in education, presupposes the net result of understanding. Certainly the grounding of the tradition of relationships in education is found in methodical dialogue. However, many interactions in schools which are characteristically considered dialogical fail to reflect the particular qualities of the hermeneutic dialogue. Therefore, I will briefly classify those characteristics in dialogue that are hermeneutically significant.

The hermeneutic techne or practice of dialogue is described by Gadamer (1976) as being acquired through experience,

not learned. However, in order to discuss those particular situations (experiential) which qualify as hermeneutic dialogue it is necessary to differentiate them from patterns (or structures) that can be systematically learned and "applied" as hermeneutic practice in dialogue.

Heinrich Ott (1967) has attempted to list those ingredients of hermeneutic dialogue which presuppose a methodological development toward genuine understanding amongst the partners in dialogue. These include: (a) paraphrasing--formulating someone else's words into our own; (b) affirmation that contradicting a dialogue partner can be an expression of disagreement; (c) acknowledgment that dialogue partners are understood only when the subject matter of the dialogue is understood; (d) acknowledgment that that which the dialogue partner says last is normally decisive and most important; (e) affirmation that thoughts can change in the course of a dialogue so that finally something new results, "which nonetheless was already there when the dialogue began"; and (f) willingness to lift a thought out of its context in order to legitimate the importance of the subject matter to the dialogue (pp. 23-31).

Ott states that these should not be considered as general rules which would be valid always and everywhere. Instead he considers these as "structures" of dialogue occurring in certain cases, "the knowledge of which may be hermeneutically helpful" (1976, p. 22). Ott's structures are

very important to the phenomenological assessment of the hermeneutic encounter in dialogue. They, moreover, provide criteria suggesting a methodical approach toward the analysis of any dialogical "text."

Although Ott (1967) disregards the normative aspect of this structural analysis, the phenomenological practice of categorizing definite structures in the process of interpretation suggests a narrow sense of the hermeneutic paradigm. I, instead, would rather acknowledge the phenomenological "objectivity" as researcher/interpreter while also affirming the ontological interests in those speculative preconceptions and questions which are significant to a more philosophically hermeneutical analysis of dialogue. The characteristics of such a hermeneutical analysis, though remaining phenomenological in the everyday (concrete) description of the dialogue experience, also reflect a more imaginative, speculative or contemplative openness to possibilities of greater understanding that transcends the particularly situational phenomena of the dialogue itself. These characteristics should include:

1. An openness to the questions of all participants in dialogue, including the subject matter itself. This, of course, requires the capacity to posit what is questionable in the subject matter and to formulate questions that question the subject matter further, (i.e., to risk involvement with the subject matter);

2. Acknowledging what can be called an element of bouyancy that leads the dialogue (i.e., the movement--give and take--between questions and responses and amongst the dialogue partners);

3. An openness to unintended developments in the dialogue--or rather, a willingness to expect the unexpected and move tangentially toward broader dimensions in understanding the subject matter and where it can take the relationship in dialogue (This is similar to Ott's structure described in letter (e) above.);

4. Acknowledging the reflexivity experienced by the dialogue partners;

5. Affirming the transsubjective mediation that takes place in dialogue. In other words, understanding via intersubjective dialogue is like a transaction--subjective consciousness alone cannot make an ultimate claim to the meaning of the subject matter (The essential dialectic must be recognized as new meaning unfolds.); and

6. Acknowledging the conditioning affects of language, tradition, and history and the boundaries created by these factors.

Ott's (1967) strictly phenomenological structure for explaining the hermeneutical relevance of the dialogical experience has been expanded somewhat by this more ontological description of the phenomenological foundations of dialogue. Although there are obvious references to the concrete experience of dialogical/dialectical questioning and reflecting,

the philosophical ontological interest in understanding qua understanding is, I hope, a recognizably significant characteristic of the hermeneutic-dialectical criteria that I have suggested.

These differences in analysis between the strictly phenomenological method of bracketing in order to explain the hermeneutic dialogue and the philosophical (ontological) openness to the emerging meaning inherent in the intersubjective and dialectical nature of hermeneutic mediation via dialogue require a different approach to the text of dialogues in educational contexts. An example of this approach will now be demonstrated as I relate these characteristics to a taped recording of teacher-student(s) dialogues.

An Example of Hermeneutical Analysis

As has been stated throughout this paper, recognition of the hermeneutic dimension in our efforts to find meaning through greater understanding aids awareness of our own participation in creating meaning. In that this study is intended to provide some substance to an understanding of what can be called participant-hermeneutics, my own self-reflective awareness of those preunderstandings and preconceptions that unavoidably influence the chosen approach to this research is a significant matter. Unlike the carefully directed procedures of an empirical study which are intended to limit any biased, unreliable or invalid factors from interfering with the selection of a study sample, the application of the

hermeneutic lens of interpretation requires an acknowledgement that such prejudices and controlling variables are the true determinants of the interpretive sample for research.

As Vandenberg (1974) has pointed out, initiative to begin an interpretive study is born out of the recognition that some problem exists in understanding. Awareness of this problem is itself not simply a presumption of this understanding, but is grounded in some tension that exists between my preconceptions, i.e., preconceptions concerning the subject of research, and the understanding that I initially project relating to this particular subject. Speaking more directly about the role of the teacher as researcher/interpreter preparing lessons concerning a subject curriculum, sensitivity to the students' needs for expressing and exploring their own preconceptions or preunderstandings of the subject-matter in the formal curriculum is a prerequisite of openness essential to the hermeneutic experience of teaching and learning. This sensitivity, or rather hermeneutic affirmation, is an important step toward approaching the problems that hinder the sharing of understanding which reflects teacher-student intersubjectivity.

The openness which also reflects the hermeneutic-interpretive endeavor is hindered by the possible measures of control which the teaching role demonstrates in our Western tradition of schooling. Whether this authoritarian role is a legitimate means for manipulating relationships in order to assist in the achievement of greater understanding is a

question which enlivens my interest in interpersonal relationships in schools. As this particular study proceeds with the application of an interpretive analysis of exemplary student-teacher interaction in dialogue, I will attempt to respond to the issue of teacher authority and the experience of intersubjectivity in schools.

I will begin by describing how intersubjective relationships in schools have become initially meaningful to me as teacher and researcher, and then move on to provide an example of a hermeneutic-interpretive analysis which will demonstrate attention to the characteristics of hermeneutic experience pointed out earlier.

The ontological and conditional nature of demonstrating a hermeneutical analysis of intersubjectivity suggests an affirmation that I have gained a greater understanding of relationships in schools through my own experience. I have done so not through a distant and objective observation of interpersonal relationships in schools--e.g., by entering previously unvisited schools and classrooms and taping or taking notes from situations of interest. I have become aware --been able to make sense--of situations by experiencing them as a participant-teacher. I have subsequently been able to project an initial understanding of problems which have encouraged an interpretive approach for even greater understanding.

I am not saying that it is only the participants in a situation who can ultimately and adequately make claims to

the hermeneutic-interpretive understanding of that situation. Experiencing other dialogical roles, e.g., interviewing, in interaction with students and teachers in schools, is an obviously legitimate approach toward interpreting the experiences of the students and teachers. The more traditional methods of obtaining "data" regarding such interactions, e.g. ethnomethodological studies, are, however, more concerned with phenomenological findings than with possibilities for the emergence of ontological truths.

My prejudice or conviction as researcher and as an adherent to the philosophical-hermeneutic interests in the conditions of intersubjective relationships in schools, allows me, requires me, to talk from my own experience. Such a directed, hermeneutical-interpretive approach is free from the structurally designed quantitative interests in objective findings, and free to explore the potential for using a dialogical/dialectical model of hermeneutics.

Such metaphors as the journey and the search help to depict the frame of reference which applied hermeneutics invites. The speculative nature of an ontological orientation to hermeneutics is, however, limited to the historical perspective, i.e., the conditions, of the interpreter. And, therefore, the examples of intersubjective interaction which I find reflect the characteristics of hermeneutical experience are quite relative to my own interpretation of these examples.

I have chosen one experience as a teacher in discussion with students in a classroom interaction to point out the hermeneutic reality of intersubjective dialogue. This is only a sample of the innumerable possible choices of interactions in the school. Any situation in the classroom, the lunchroom, the hall or the school office is useful for discussing the characteristically hermeneutic dimension of intersubjectivity. Obviously, those contexts in which active dialogue is taking place are better for exemplifying the hermeneutics of human interaction in schools. My choice is a situation in my own classroom and a part of the historical, ongoing relationship in which I participate daily. This choice, of course, acknowledges the prejudice I hold toward the classroom context for illustrating the hermeneutic relationship.

The classroom is traditionally the center of activities concerning the formal curriculum. It is also significantly a context for other parts of the whole curriculum, especially what I have discussed as the curriculum of intersubjectivity or the "hidden" curriculum. Those dimensions of experience which help to construct the ever-changing historicity of relationships in schools are the remaining parts of the curriculum.

The hermeneutic reality or experience in schools can be discussed in terms of the hermeneutic circle. The relationship of these parts of the curriculum to the whole,

and vice versa, determines the possibilities for understanding how understanding itself is conditioned in the school context. Furthermore, the uniqueness of the educational arena to the hermeneutic endeavor of interpretation and understanding is its assumed purpose of teaching and learning which, if these roles are to be successful, demand attention to and development of expertise in understanding skills and possibilities.

It is neither an interpretive interest in gaining a better understanding of the affect of the formal curriculum on classroom intersubjectivity, nor an interest in gaining a better understanding of the historical and/or traditional conditions of the particular text of dialogue that has been taped that is the criterion for the decision to apply the hermeneutic lens of interpretation to my experience as teacher. It is the dialogue itself, the substance of the intersubjective relationship in the classroom discussion which will be analyzed in the hermeneutic dialogical/dialectical mode.

The problem of understanding the curriculum of intersubjective dialogue amongst students and teachers is not only a hypothetical concern of this hermeneutic endeavor. My own pedagogical interests in relating to my students and to the variety of curriculum experiences in the school has generally informed the impulse to approach this problem. And, most importantly, the specific problems inherent in the

dialogue taped remain with me as I reflect upon the degree of pedagogical success that I have maintained as a teacher attempting to build and participate in intersubjective relationships in school intended to accomplish a number of goals, not the least of which are reflected in efforts to better relate as human to human and to exchange knowledge, ideas, and understandings about the formal curriculum with students and other teachers.

In the taped session, a group of nine students is sitting in a traditional classroom in which the seating arrangement is circular, a design used to help facilitate dialogical interaction. The number of students is small, but does not suggest that a larger gathering could not be used for such an interpretive analysis.

The formal curriculum in this context relates to a variety of topics in the humanities that are directed toward Joyce's text, Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. At the time of the taped session, the class had become somewhat oriented to the arts and theories of artistic expression. The dialogue that follows was the first in a series of sessions pertaining to our discussion of Joyce's text. Since it was the first, I explained to the students the reason for using the tape-recorder and invited questions and concerns from the students. The interpretive analysis of the dialogue, located in the right margin, generally parallels those significant interactions or points in the discussion that characterize the hermeneutic-dialectical experience:

Classroom Dialogue

Teacher: Let me tell you what I am doing with the recorder. I am undertaking a project and I want to ask you to participate. After I have explained it, if you want to question its purpose or disavow your participation, you are welcome to. I'll try to make the explanation simple. It has to do with a paper that I am writing that involves relationships between students, between students and teachers, and in general, relationships between people in schools. . . . OK? And my proposition is that one good way to understand these relationships is to record conversations, instructions, class discussions and so on with people that I have to deal with in schools and then listen to the recordings later and make my

Interpretive Analysis

In addition to the obvious ethical ramifications of consent for participation in the study, the explanation made by the teacher is also significant to constructing a stage of openness for the students to participate in the decision-making surrounding the taping of class discussion. This participation, of course, is dependent on their understanding the reasoning for the recording. This degree of explanation from the teacher is in line with the historicity of relationships in the class--that is, the basis of what I now perceive as the relationship with the class. To say such a thing as, "I presume that you would get used to it after awhile," is not a

Classroom Dialogue

own interpretations of what I think is going on, share that interpretation with the people who participate in the recording and eventually discuss certain aspects that have been recorded. This is why the recording is necessary--so that I will have a record as if it were a textbook, written down, of things that go on in schools. And, if you don't mind, I would like to do it a couple of days. If it seems to be an inconvenience to you, then we'll not do it. I presume that you will get used to it after awhile. I know that I already have because I have completed other recordings like this in other situations. What do you think? (pause) Do you understand my reasons for taping?

Interpretive Analysis

reflection of the kind of authority which often allows the teacher to be overbearing and make such a presumption. This "presumption" is, I believe, understandable to the students and clearly an invitation for their comments. Moreover, also involved in this transaction with the students is the posing of the problem of participation itself. The choice of the teachers to do this or that with or in the curriculum is problematic, i.e., the curriculum of intersubjectivity must be acknowledged before genuine dialogue amongst students and teachers is possible and failure to acknowledge such intersubjectivity creates further problems in approaching the formal curriculum.

Classroom Dialogue

John P.: It's going to be hard to get used to talking when you know it's being recorded.

Debbie: Just act like it's not there.

John P.: It would probably be better . . . no, I guess that would be dishonest if you just decided not to tell us, then we'd act natural . . . and then you could tell us after you'd done it . . . and then if everybody wants to . . . we'd say yeh, you can go ahead and use our recording.

John T.: To get it more natural, you could like put it on your desk and just let it sit there and not tell us if it is on or off and let us just get used to it being there.

Janis: I can tell that it's on now, 'cause I can see those things moving.

Interpretive Analysis

The students respond to this subject matter, i.e., the recording problem, with the same dimension of concern for the process. The bouyancy in this interaction of student with student and with teacher is hermeneutically significant. That suggestions can be made about the curriculum of activities by the students is a matter reflecting transsubjectivity and the mediation of roles. Openness to someone's hypothesizing, i.e., John P.'s "It would probably be better . . ." comment, is also significant to the possibilities of unintended meaning in the curriculum. John P.'s concern this time for process is taken by John T. as an opportunity to acknowledge the conditioning effects of the recorder. This,

Classroom Dialogue

John T.: Yeh. I guess it has to be right there to pick everything up.

Chris: You could, put it right in the middle of the floor to make it look inconspicuous. (all laugh)

Teacher: I have thought of some of those things you've mentioned--(moves tape recorder to the center)--It could be our "totem pole" for the day. (laughter again) We can just try it here, OK? Let me just say that even though we're just discussing this whole process,

Interpretive Analysis

consequently, allows the responses to move toward broader dimensions in the subject matter of the recorder, i.e., the placement of the recorder. Like most teachers wanting to "get back" to an orientation with the formal curriculum, I attempted to relate the issue of the recorder, i.e., to manipulate the dialogue, to our earlier studies, (the class history), of the American Indian culture. As any good "participant--hermeneuticist," I felt that an affirmation of the mediation inherent in the discussion concerning this decision-making process should be made. This also reflects an openness to the conditions of teacher-student intersubjectivity and

Classroom Dialogue

that to me is very important. What I want you to understand is that even though we are taking time to decide whether it is worth it, whether it's going to be an inconvenience--causing some people to be quiet, others to talk, (some chuckle), to me that sort of discussion is what is important amongst people in schools. OK, let's start with Portrait of the Artist and then to the Renaissance material that we were with . . . I asked you to come to class today with an example of something . . . Who remembers what that was?

Debbie: Something about what we thought about Stephen's ideas of the future . . . Something like that . . .

Teacher: Something relevant to the future in Stephen Dedalus's life? . . . Was that it? . . .

Interpretive Analysis

and the continuing (historical) nature of the "hidden curriculum"--e.g., the use of the recorder. The give-and take dialogue in the hidden curriculum of intersubjectivity can be compared to the activity of a game in which teams (or players) exchange "possession" of a ball or instrument. In the school, this "instrument" is "passed around" in some discussion contexts as in many institutionally controlled relationships. However, as is often the case with institutional relationships, intersubjectivity is also affected by the role of the authority which is displayed by certain designated participants--e.g., the teacher in schools. In the interpretive context discussed

Classroom Dialogue

John T.: I think that Joyce was preoccupied with cold, clammy, bog water . . . (laugh)

Teacher: Wait a minute now. I'm trying to get out our topic. . . We need to be in some agreement . . . Debbie, you seemed to have been saying something different than what John said.

Debbie: Well, something that Stephen dwelled on.

Interpretive Analysis

here, the teacher's responsibility to "oversee" or "guide" the learning of the student, becomes an active ingredient in the understanding of a particular subject matter. Because of the historical conditions of this control by the teacher, the hermeneutic characteristic of openness to the questions of all the participants in the classroom becomes an important component in the teacher's own interpretive "repertoire." The type or quality of "arguments" made by the teacher, therefore, become important to an analysis of the dialogue amongst the participants in the classroom that involves these directives. In this particular dialogue, the assignment to come to

Classroom Dialogue

Teacher: OK. Do you remember? . . . (to class) an example of something that he seemed to be interested in that we come to know through his thoughts. OK? . . .

What you thought was particular to his interests . . .

(one student begins to speak)

Just a minute. Isn't it true that basically what we're reading are his (Stephen's) thoughts?--descriptions of incidents through his reflections, right? They are not happening at the time.

Interpretive Analysis

class with some reaction to the subject matter of the formal curriculum, i.e., Stephen Dedalus's view of the world, is quite open-ended and "passes the ball" back to the students so that the buoyancy of the dialogue is maintained.

The "ball", i.e., the assignment for discussion, must first be partially understood. The interpretive process of reflecting upon the assignment, and reaching some consensus concerning its meaning, is demonstrated here--obviously by the insistence (authority) of the teacher. But certainly not without some sensitivity to the mediation or reciprocity that makes this clarification of the assignment understood and meaningful.

Classroom Dialogue

I am under the impression that what we're reading is a great big flashback.

John P.: The way he describes something that's already happened.

Teacher: Right. Why don't we go around and let everybody tell us something that they found in reading that particularly interested Stephen. If you have written any notes, then please refer to them . . . Janis? . . . (sees she has no notes) . . . or you can just tell us about it.

Janis: When Stephen was, uhm . . . punished by the prefect of studies and he thought, he considered, it was for no reason. And I thought that, you know, that was a pretty important thing. It made him think that this is unfair and it made him

Interpretive Analysis

A thought here concerning the students' reflections and reactions to the subject-matter--Stephen Dedalus's interests and experiences--might help to further demonstrate the implicit significance of the students. The choices of thoughts or experiences shared by the students that relate to their reflections about the character in their own interpretive study are relative to each student's own experiential/historical conditioning. Those important matters that the students feel are worth bringing-up

Classroom Dialogue

go up to a higher person to talk to. Rather than going to the teacher or going back to the priest that did that, he went up to the Rector and asked him why it happened and tried not to cry. He felt good about it.

Teacher: Alright. . . I'm just going to jot this down and we'll continue to go around. I think that's a very good choice, Janis. Chris, what did you write down or find?

Chris: I thought that all of the politics talked about at the dinner table was important . . .(pause)

Teacher: Was it just politics?

Chris: Mostly.

Teacher: What kind of politics?

Chris: I can't remember?

Interpretive Analysis

are not only those "answers" that they feel the teacher is seeking. They are unavoidably those matters which, for various reasons, relate to their own experience, make sense to the student's personally. This is the mediation of meaning or "fusion of horizons" which is indicative of the hermeneutic relationship between the students and the subject matter, e.g., the literary text being discussed. The teacher who understands the potentiality for such mediation will attempt to set up or create tension in the types of questions he/she asks in order to fulfill these possibilities. This requires an openness which is very often tremendously rewarding for all participants in the classroom.

Classroom Dialogue

Teacher: Can you remember any of the specific things that were said?

Chris: (pause)

Teacher: (to class) You can help him if you'd like.

John P.: They talked about religion.

Teacher: Well, one of you says religion, and the other politics . . .

John P.: Well, then, let's just say the current happenings around the area, the town.

Teacher: Do you want to tell us some of the specific happenings then?

John P.: No, But it's kind of like what families do when they get together for the holiday, you know they talk about things like this . . .

Teacher: OK, Cheryl, you were going to say something?

Interpretive Analysis

It is certainly an acknowledgement of the conditioning effects of the students' personal-historical experiences with the curriculum which encourages the quality and type of question a teacher will ask relating to the formal curriculum. Of course, the curriculum itself is perhaps just as important in formulating the quality of questions. The formal, subject matter curriculum is constantly "questioning" the being-ness of the students and teachers. Our task as participants in and with this curriculum is to listen for these questions. In the case under study here, the text of Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man seems quite fitting to this task. It reflects a not-too-distant

Classroom Dialogue

Cheryl: No, just thinking. . .

Teacher: What did you find about Stephen?

Cheryl: I wrote the same thing as Janis.

Teacher: Was it for the same reason?

Cheryl: Well, I just said that it was important to him because he was not sure whether he should go up to the Rector about what happened. But he did. And despite the fact that he was afraid he did it anyway.

Teacher: So this incident shows some signs of maturity in Stephen? (Cheryl nods) Janis? Are you saying this too?

Janis: Yes.

Teacher: So, in this incident, you see a definite change occurring in his personality.

Interpretive Analysis

historical experience--the "schooling" of a young man in search of a better understanding of himself and the world--another recognizably hermeneutic endeavor in which Stephen Dedalus, the "symbolic" young man, fuses his own horizons of thought and experience with a desire to communicate with a (theoretical) ideal of beauty. As a teacher, a prejudice that I consistently reflected upon as I "directed" this particular classroom dialogue was the interest in assisting my students to fulfill a similar understanding by guiding them in their understanding of Stephen's thoughts and experiences and how this may relate to their own experiences and feelings. However, often this prejudicial desire of the teacher

Classroom Dialogue

Janis: Yes (Cheryl, nods again)

Teacher: That's interesting. OK. Charlene?

Charlene: Well, I, uhm, found the part about him dwelling on being cold and wet, clammy hands and he feels uncomfortable with being cold and wet. And he talks about the strong, big rat knocked into him in the ditch when he fell.

Teacher: OK. You're pointing out some other things. Are there other objects associated with these feelings, those sensations he has--coldness, wetness-- can you think of any others?

Charlene: Uhm . . . repeat what you're asking?

Teacher: Are there other objects that Stephen associates with coldness and

Interpretive Analysis

to nurture the interaction of the student with the formal subject matter becomes manipulative and forbids opportunities to step beyond the formal curriculum. Although it may appear in this context of discussion that the tension of possible misunderstanding is a potentially useful problem created by the teacher's questioning, it can also be interpreted as a mis-use of authority that limits the possibilities of self-understanding as well as understanding the subject matter.

In reflection, I sense that this series of interactions with the students is quite manipulative and the interpretations of the teacher concerning Stephen Dedalus's maturing personality is possibly focusing itself

Classroom Dialogue

dampness? (Some students speak out--"hands, he said about his hands")

(pause)

Teacher: OK, Charlene.

You are suggesting sort of a general feeling he had.

I am probing to see if there were other specific objects that become

associated with those feelings. I think that as he is maturing here, he is associating sensations with objects.

(pause) What were you going to say, Cheryl?

Cheryl: I was going to say that John mentioned that Stephen had begun thinking of friends like that. He was always talking about the girl who had cold, icy fingers.

Teacher: Oh, yes, good!

Interpretive Analysis

upon the students' own understanding of the discussion topic.

On the other hand, certain responses, implicit to the students' projections of meaning concerning the subject of discussion do point out their individual prior understandings of Stephen Dedalus's experiences and feelings. Such matters as justice, fairness, initiative, maturity, and feelings themselves reflect the responses of the students related to the incident of Stephen's experience in going to the Rector after being punished by the Prefect of studies. These are examples of the students' dialogue with the text and not the intersubjective interaction with the teacher. Through this

Classroom Dialogue

Debbie: And he even talked like that about the school, too.

Teacher: Yes. Remember he used the description "ivory tower"? We sometimes hear this and I think this relates to what you are saying about his (Stephen's) sensations. Joyce seems to use the notion of "ivory towers" in Stephen's perception of the world. Stephen is at a stage in his life where he isn't sure what that concept--that metaphor--the "ivory tower"--really means.

Debbie: He also talks about how gentle the Prefect's hands were.

Interpretive Analysis

interpretive reflection that I have experienced as teacher, I know now that I better understand the importance of this relationship of the student with the text and that I have learned from this reflection the need to pose questions with less control over the direction of the students' responses. Although the teacher is a participant in the dialogue relating to the curriculum, the dialectical role often supercedes the "right" of the teacher to project his/her own interpretations of the subject matter. There are traditional occasions when this condition of posing questions should be lifted to allow the teacher to interject his/her interpretation. I did so with

Classroom Dialogue

(Discussion continues regarding Stephen Dedalus's physical sensations and feelings without any further insight into the reason Joyce is "using" these experiences to communicate a symbolic message.)

Interpretive Analysis

the comment concerning the "ivory tower" and risked closing off Debbie's own interpretation of Stephen's reference to the school. I felt, however, that the metaphor of the "ivory tower" might open new doors of understanding for the students. I discovered in reflecting here that the students, somewhat like Stephen, were uncertain about what it means and perhaps thinking in a very different frame. So, being responsive to their own dialogue with the text, I dropped the issue. The students appeared to want to continue interaction relating to the feeling-sensations experienced by Stephen and this discussion carried on for some time without any seemingly greater

Classroom Activities

Later in the class . . .

Teacher: What we find here are some strange terms that are used by the characters-- such as "being in a wax" for what we might call "being-in a jam." This is very much analogous to certain local expressions that we find in particular regions of the United States--sort of like the expressions typical to the different dialects in New England or even our own Apalachian area. What do you call the category of dialect that is particular

Interpretive Analysis

understanding of the author's symbolic intent. And rather than pushing their interest in understanding this symbolism, I chose to retreat for awhile and change the topic somewhat.

This is yet another approach of pedagogy to move the discussion in a direction that the students may find more meaning in relation to their own experience. Discussing Joyce's use of language through the character of Stephen is a topic central to the traditional philological interests in hermeneutics. Although this was not the instructional intent of the teacher, it does seem quite relevant

Classroom Dialogue

to a specific region of the country?

Lisa: Aren't they called colloquial expressions?

Tommy: Yeh. Stephen was in Dublin where they talk different from the rest of Ireland--different locations. I couldn't understand some of the things they talked about.

Teacher: What do the rest of you think? Do you find Joyce's use of such "colloquial" terms confusing?

John P.: You can usually pick up what they are . . . like what Miss Flynt calls idioms. You can usually figure out what they are by . . . uhm, just looking at them.

Teacher: What are some examples that we could use here from our own experience?

Interpretive Analysis

in hindsight, or rather in my own historicity of understanding this dialogue. The students are not familiar with the literary techniques of language analysis and appropriately lean towards the direction of relating the topic here to their own understanding or experience in other contexts in the school, particularly their English coursework. Coincidentally, their on-going experience with the idiom and cliché as figures of speech is relevant to our rather open discussion of Joyce's text. This provides, I feel, a clear justification for such a tangential discussion as this.

The flow, the give and take of the dialogue is often

Classroom Dialogue

Can you think of any?

John P.: Can ya'll think of any? (looks at others in his English class) . . . there are about 50 we learned.

Debbie: Tell us one.

(laugh)

John P.: "Today's Idiom":

(reads from his notes)

"Wear your heart on your sleeve." That is, "make your feelings noticed."

And, "to wash dirty linen in public"--"to discuss openly private affairs."

And, "to save face". . .

well I don't think this is a good idiom . . .

Teacher: Well, what is the definition of an idiom?

John T.: I don't think that it is so important to know what it means as how to distinguish them from clichés.

Teacher: Well, then, what

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enhanced when there is a willingness to allow the subject of dialogues to "take its own course." Hermeneutically speaking, that is an openness to emerging meaning and to the possibility of new projections of understanding to become a part of the whole understanding under construction. Consequently, in the classroom context, the hermeneutic endeavor of searching freely and openly for new understandings affects the status of the formal curriculum. The relationship of understanding determines the usefulness of the formal curriculum in contributing to the ongoing and future understanding of the teacher-student, student-student intersubjectivity. This is not a matter of placing a

Classroom Dialogue

is a cliché?

Charlene: Like, "bury the hatchet."

Teacher: Is that a cliché?

I am trying to understand the significance of idiom here for our discussion.

. . . There obviously is a difference between slogans, clichés and idioms-- how can we distinguish them definitionally?

Janis: Well, like, "clear as a bell" is a cliché.

They are usually used more often.

Tommy: In my opinion a cliché is a phrase describing an event, something happening. . . whereas an idiom is sorta like

. . . it doesn't necessarily have action to it . . .

John T.: A cliché is like an adjective, it describes

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higher value on the understanding shared solely for the meaning gained in human interaction. The possibilities for encouraging and developing new paths toward a greater understanding of the formal, subject-matter curriculum should be evident. Certainly, there are "risks" taken through such a "sacrifice" for tangential dialogue. The dialogue concerning the distinction between clichés and idioms has become equally important to, and perhaps temporarily more important than, the discussion of the formal text.

The tension acknowledged in attempting to differentiate between these two linguistic variables, or figures of speech, is a good example

Classroom Dialogue

something.

Teacher: Then an idiom doesn't describe? .

(pause)

Lisa: I thought a cliché was something that was really current.

Teacher: Do you mean commonly used?

Kim: Yeh, it's kind of faddish.

(pause)

Teacher: Then how is an idiom used?

John P.: Well, a cliché is more slang, more everyday. An idiom is more established by tradition.

Teacher: OK. Now you're beginning to clear-up the distinction--whether it is correct or not (looks somewhat curious and some students laugh). But the point we need to make is

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of the dialectical relationship amongst the participants in dialogue that not only encourages the "game" of "passing the subject matter around" but ultimately assists in the construction of meaning relating the formal curriculum with other parts of the curriculum seemingly tangential to the subject matter. And furthermore, the give-and-take dialectic of questions and answers amongst the participants is an obvious characteristic for a better, greater understanding of the intersubjectivity of relationships in the classroom.

The authority of the teacher is, I feel certainly justified here as a legitimate controlling variable necessary for constructing this

Classroom Dialogue

that the Irish, like ourselves, use them too. Maybe even more than we do.

(pause) Actually, I think the cliché is not only more slang, but it refers to something not necessarily having anything to do with the words being used--such as "clear as a bell." The idiom is more in line with the region of use and the terms used in the idiom are much more metaphorically important to what the intended meaning is--such as "wear your heart on your sleeve"--now let's try to relate this a bit more to Joyce's intentions.

Chris: We got completely off the subject.

Teacher: Not really. I mean it may help us in the long run . . .

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matrix of relationships amongst all of the parts--the formal curriculum, the participants in dialogue, and the myriad possibilities of tangential and emerging meanings provided by the dialogue relating to other subjects.

The tension that is "primordially" apart of this hermeneutic circle of relationships is, I believe, the significant means of mediation amongst the parts. And, in order to find a point of reference from which to begin reflecting upon this mediation that brings about the fusion of horizons of understanding, it is important to acknowledge this legitimate authority of the teacher.

In less traditional, less structured "learning

Classroom DialogueInterpretive Analysis

environments" or classrooms, the configuration of parts to whole is not necessarily any different when interpreted from the same interest in human interaction or intersubjectivity. The same legitimate fear of "getting completely off the subject" is a shared problem inherent in any dialogue.

There are a number of pedagogical insights that can be claimed as a consequence of applying hermeneutic analyses to such a "text" as this intersubjective encounter of teacher and students. An understanding that has hopefully been made explicit through the interpretive process is of the tension that exists between the formal, subject-matter curriculum and the curriculum of intersubjectivity. The dialectic of question and answer often poses problems to the pedagogical interests in structuring the teacher-student interaction solely around the formal text of the curriculum. The constant invitation to carry on dialogue tangential to this formal text is quite evident. This tension between the "authority" of the subject matter and the openness in the intersubjective relationship demonstrates a universal characteristic of the

hermeneutic experience: the problem of achieving and maintaining openness for genuine understanding.

Although the authority of the teacher often reflects the power of control and provides periodic means for returning to the text of the formal curriculum, the occasions which appear to reflect greater understanding amongst the dialogical participants are those in which more active yet tangential, intersubjectivity is evident. Openness to being absorbed in the subject matter is a hermeneutic impulse that is dependent upon the quality of intersubjectivity in the classroom.

Whether the teaching tactic of periodic disengagement from maintaining a certain direction of study is judged as "unproductive" or overly open-ended is not important. The ought-ness of the pedagogical method is not a concern when the interest in understanding requires such openness.

The possible conflict between the valued interest for choosing an orientation toward pedagogy and the requirements for encouraging understanding through pedagogy is an important problem that has emerged from this endeavor of hermeneutical analysis. Also, the question of the legitimacy of authority, which has been discussed earlier (in Chapter II) as an issue that distinguishes Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics from Habermas's critical theory, has re-emerged in the active reflection of this interpretive venture. Both of these conditions--value and authority--reflect the "findings" or meaning that I have come to in journeying with the perspective of

a hermeneutical inquiry concerning the intersubjective experiences in schools. The conclusions that I can claim from this inquiry must include these issues of value and authority that have emerged from this application of the hermeneutical (ontological) lens.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Vandenberg (1974) has commented that "any analysis of any kind is without point unless the clarifying process discriminates significant elements, extracting the 'ought' from the 'is' in the delineation of the phenomenon" (p. 195). This concern for the phenomenological relationship involves clarification of the interpreter's normative interests. But, unlike the methodical process of most analytical interpretations, the hermeneutic interests in phenomenological relationships concentrate primarily on the descriptive elements of what "is" in understanding itself that makes such relationships possible to begin with. However, those questions of "oughtness" are not without representation in the hermeneutical analysis.

The acknowledgement that the (hermeneutic) interpretive approach uncovers (through its affirmation of the interpreter's self-reflection) preconceptions and preunderstandings that condition the ongoing analysis, is also recognition of the values implicit to such an analysis. According to Gadamer (1975), this recognition represents the "legitimacy" of not only the interpreter's understanding (of the tradition under study) but the interpreter's participation in coming to this understanding. Therefore, as both the interpreter in the

broad sense of having undertaken a search into the tradition of hermeneutical theory for a better understanding of intersubjectivity (in schools), and as the participant-teacher hermeneuticist (in the preceding case-study) demonstrating the everyday-ness of student-teacher intersubjectivity, I can now briefly project some meaningful conclusions concerning the value or intentionality inherent in my preunderstandings involving this research and some specific conclusions regarding the interpretive analysis chosen to represent the usefulness of the hermeneutical approach. In doing so, the questions of value and of authority will represent the understanding which has emerged through such a hermeneutical journey.

Valuing and Understanding

One significant preconception that I feel has been reflected in this study is the concern for the axiological question, "in whose interest" is research carried out? Macdonald has often posed this value question in the context of discussing issues regarding curriculum theory and practice. And, as a student of Macdonald, my preunderstandings of research have been conditioned by my sensitivity to such a concern. I am now in a position to consciously consider the relationship between this study's representation of the understanding process and the value query, "in whose interest?", which has influenced the study.

The hermeneutical circle of understanding affirms attention to the interpreter's prejudices and preconceptions.

However, the question now emerges as to which dimension of the interpretive process is most important to the study of intersubjective relationships, the values inherent in the interpreter's preconceptions of meaning or the understanding that reflects the fusion of horizons in intersubjectivity itself. Hermeneutical understanding, as the discovery of meaning, and awareness of the values that inform that understanding are similar when considered through the initial question, "in whose interest?". But understanding, unlike valuing, is only activated by the need to overcome some question or problem in an existent preunderstanding. Thus, understanding also involves an interactive notion such that the exchange, mediation or sharing of pre-understandings with another person or text can occur.

Valuing, on the other hand, though reflecting what has been acquired through interaction, is much less dependent on the need to overcome some tension in a relationship, even if it is the relationship between one's preunderstanding and emerging understanding.

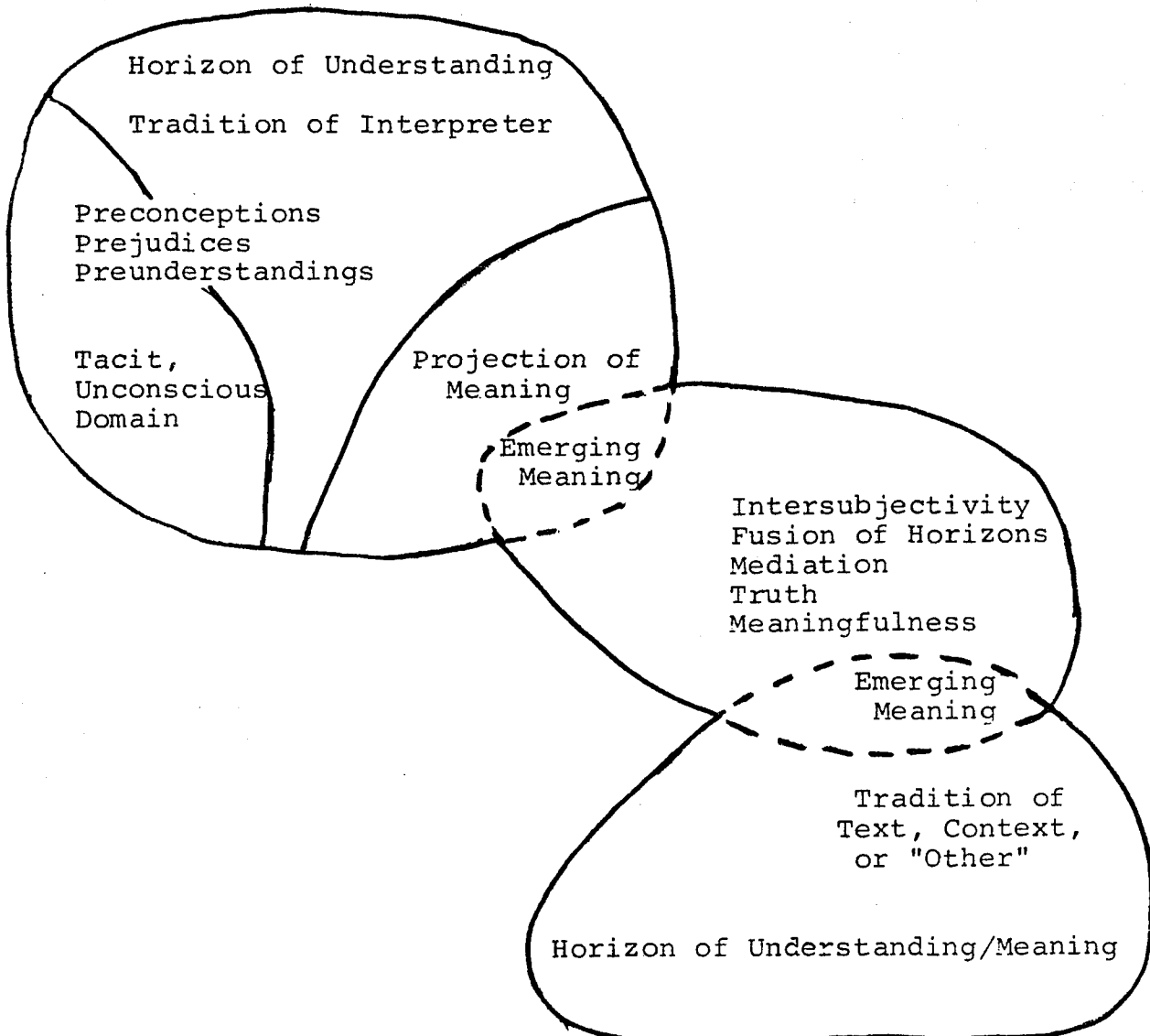
The problem of understanding requires a conceptualization of method or searching procedure quite unlike a method for attaining values or representing the individual's values. The value of understanding is itself dependent upon some awareness of how understanding is both needed and made possible. Furthermore, the problem of understanding itself transcends the assumptions of valuing and requires a certain quality

of participation from those seeking to pursue it. Participation involves an active openness to mutuality in relationship and the potential for reciprocity and mediation in the search for understanding. The intersubjective necessity for understanding, then, requires some notion of the actual interaction and how to encourage those factors which help to bring about better understanding and realize emerging meanings.

A New Projection of Meaning for the
Hermeneutical-Dialectical Experience

Because of this unfolding of my preconceptions of research, i.e., the relationship of the value query with the need to affirm the intersubjective prerequisites for understanding, I can better illustrate my initial response to Macdonald's (1979) model of "dual dialecticism" in describing the transcendent realm of the self's interaction with the environment. While also representing the dialectical relationship in reflective transactions and describing the domain of understanding as within the transaction itself, and not simply an exercise of the self's knowledge acquired from the relationship, I am now able to include those characteristics of openness, mediation and the fusion of horizons that better describe the hermeneutical dimension of intersubjective transactions.

These perhaps more ontological or speculative characteristics of the dialectical experience have also recently become an interest in Macdonald's (1980) work concerning the hermeneutical theory.



Macdonald has suggested that it is time to "reaffirm the legitimacy of contemplative curriculum theory" (1980, p. 3). He has placed the contemplative or imaginative interests of the curricularist in the hermeneutical mode of searching for meaning, understanding and a "sense of unity and well being" that transcends the methodological practices of the "control and/or emancipation oriented theories" (p. 10). Macdonald has come to support the hermeneutic affirmation of an "ontological platform" for legitimating the search for understanding in educational theory and practice and for acknowledging the "meditative thinking" that occurs concomitantly with such a search for meaning (p. 11).

As I have also tried to define this search, or rather this disclosure of meaning, in its hermeneutic dimension, the horizon of Macdonald's conceptual portrayal of the interpreter's "sense of unity" attracts my own horizon of understanding regarding my participation with the subject of hermeneutics itself. As I reflect upon this participation, my horizon of understanding must be seen as having been initially informed by the preliminary projections of the study as a whole, including such projections as the value interest or intentionality in participation itself. With further penetration into the more detailed aspects of the study, this preliminary projection has been revised and alternative proposals (e.g., the interest in understanding qua understanding) have been considered. Thus, in a somewhat different frame than Macdonald's

interest in the hermeneutic "sense of unity," I am now suggesting that a "unity of sense" is also ultimately a reflection of the "ontological platform" of inquiry--that is, an interpretation of the whole in which our detailed knowledge of the parts can be integrated.

We are all obviously both burdened and potentially liberated by the many preconceptions and prejudgments that we carry along to provide us with projections of understanding and meaning. Until we are capable of reflecting upon and coming to a better self-understanding, we are incapable of such a unity of sense which is potentially emergent in each (hermeneutic) encounter. On the other hand, these self-reflective prerequisites which have been postulated by many who adhere to the more psychologistic analyses of the epistemological and consciously phenomenological domain of understanding, e.g., the critical theorists in sociology and the psychoanalysts, fail to include the element of mediation in intersubjectivity which must be acknowledged before an adequate (genuine) understanding of either the self or the intersubjective relationship is possible.

Authority and Participant-Hermeneutics

One particular conditioning characteristic of the mediation in intersubjectivity that I have come to experience as an emerging meaning in school relationships (by "applying" the hermeneutical analysis to my own participation in the case study cited) is the authoritarian role assumed by the

teacher in the classroom. The philosophical questioning of the legitimacy of this authority is necessary from the hermeneuticist's perspective.

The hermeneutical affirmation of the tradition-context that informs how we relate intersubjectively can be considered here as an affirmation of the teacher's role in fulfilling the needs for instruction concerning the formal curriculum. However, those characteristics of the teacher's authority which subvert the intersubjective relationship, (e.g., refusing to consider the questions of the students or denying the possibilities of emerging meaning in dialogue that is tangential to the subject-matter at hand), are also better understood as potentially illegitimate uses of authority. The question remains in considering the tradition of the teaching role as to whether this authority is necessary as a pedagogical aid for assuring the traditional student-teacher relationship.

Although the hermeneuticist does not assume that this tradition is necessarily manipulative, the requirements of objectivity inherent in the way the teaching tradition has conditioned the institutionalization of teacher-student intersubjectivity can be criticized as impeding the ongoing need for encouraging intersubjectivity as a mediation for greater meaning and understanding.

The interest in self-reflection shared by critical theory and philosophical hermeneutics takes a very different path

when confronting this issue of authority. As was clarified in the discussion relating the Habermas-Gadamer debate (in Chapter III), authority to the critical tradition is the controlling element that makes self-reflection necessary for greater understanding of the self's condition and relationship to authority.

A critical analysis of the case-study dialogue (in Chapter V) would undoubtedly point out those characteristics in the relationships amongst the students, teacher, formal curriculum and the school which illustrate the manipulation of one or more of these by the controlling interest of one or more of the others. Although I do not believe that such an analysis would uncover any particularly "subversive" agenda on the part of the "participants" in the case study that has been used, the degree of interest of the critical analyst in pointing out the implicit controls, e.g., in my own recognition of the teacher's authority in directing the class discussion, would determine whether or not the need for emancipatory self-reflection was evident.

Hermeneutics and the Creation of Meaning

As I stated earlier (and in Chapter III) the epistemological orientation of the critical analyst would encourage concentration on the effect of these controlling factors on how the relationships are known phenomenologically and not necessarily on how we can better understand the more fundamental nature of how the relationships themselves create meaning.

Even Gadamer (1975) has criticized the tradition of relationships in formal education. He has claimed that:

. . . to understand the other person in advance performs the function of keeping the claim of the other person at a distance. We are familiar with this from the educative relationship, an authoritative form of welfare work. (p. 323)

I have not only experienced this "distancing" of others as a teacher, but also in the experience of attempting to relate the role of participant-hermeneuticist with the role of the teacher. It remains questionable to me whether the teacher in the traditional role can participate and also actively consider those conditions which are important to encouraging intersubjectivity in the classroom that creates meaning and understanding.

The most important clarification of hermeneutical theory which assuages this dilemma is the difference between the epistemological interests and the ontological interest which includes a speculative willingness to an imaginative journeying in a tradition of experience toward greater awareness or understanding of the meaning of "being" itself, e.g., being-in-the-curriculum.

Jerome Bruner (1970) has discussed the metaphoric combinations in our cognitive experience that, I think, are helpful in connecting the common interests of the critical theorist and philosophical hermeneuticist. In addition, Bruner is helpful in relating the importance of intersubjectivity to this common search for understanding. He refers to the possibilities of "human connection," what I interpret as creative

meaning, as if self-reflection is the key to unlocking the doors of those things that limit our understanding. Like the artist, one "must be close enough to these conditions in himself so that they may guide his choice among combinations" (p. 22). Bruner refers to this choice as the "production of novelty," "a placing of things in new perspective" (p. 19). However, the creative means that Bruner discusses is not only a matter of a reflective critique of those controlling conditions. It is necessarily a matter of "looking sidewise rather than directly" (p. 12) and requires more imagination and connective activity than the critical theorist's rationality allows.

The hermeneuticist is more like the artist and relies more on hunches and what Bruner calls "effective surprise" in order to support the search for meaning. The artist's "medium," the loosely woven web of ideas relating the self with other selves and the phenomenal world, is very much the hermeneutic realm of intersubjectivity.

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