USING NARRATIVE TO SUPPORT PUPILS' DEVELOPMENT OF ETHICAL SELF-DETERMINATION

MARY PLINT

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Abstract

This thesis is about ethics, the aim towards the good life, within the UK's education system, in which effects of postmodernism are discernible: relativism, doubt, a certain disengagement and unreflective faith in technical-rationalism as an antidote to uncertainty. As a teacher, my interest in enlightenment emancipation, the belief that education can increase personal freedom and pupil agency, challenges me to explore creative ways of approaching values education within current curriculum structures, to support pupils' full personal development; moral, emotional, social and intellectual, and to develop a conception of ethical pupil self-determination.

I review literature, referring to philosophers such as Aristotle, Kant, Nietzsche, Foucault and Ricoeur, whose work concerning the individual, ethics and epistemology illuminates various themes: the individual, society and ideology; universalism and particularism; and research methodology and validity. Certain of Freud's more philosophical works are referred to. Philosophers Nussbaum and Ricoeur suggest that narrative provides a means through which I might offer pupils non-didactic and non-prescriptive moral engagement that supports pupil self-determination, addressing affective and cognitive dimensions and motivating engaged inquiry. The literature review includes reference to relevant psychologists whose theories of cognitive and moral development contribute further insights: Kohlberg, Piaget and Vygotsky.

An empirical element comprising two case studies complements the literature review. The *procedural values* underpinning Lipman's 'community of inquiry', a public forum for discussion, and the *content of narrative* are used to address moral values. In the Key Stage One Study, involving young children of six and seven years of age, narrative illustrates an Aristotelian virtue and introduces cognitive challenge that extends pupils' moral reasoning. In the Key Stage Four Study, involving adolescents of 14 and 15 years of age, narrative contextualises moral dilemmas and stimulates discussion whilst also supporting pupil self-determination. I conclude that, within current educational structures, committed teachers can contribute in limited ways to pupils' moral development, and can themselves experience sustenance and emancipation through engagement with philosophy as provocative companion.

Author's declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of the University of Gloucestershire and is original except where indicated by specific reference in the text. No part of the thesis has been submitted as part of any other academic award. The thesis has not been presented to any other education institution within the United Kingdom or overseas.

Any views expressed in the thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University.

Signed... ..Date .....July...2007.....

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Notes on citation

1. In order to maintain a sense of chronology, I have provided original and subsequent publication dates of works referred to.
2. In a small minority of instances, contributors to whom I refer in this thesis elude standard referencing conventions. Contributors to others' published conversations or journal articles are referred to as 'Contributor's Name, *in* Author's Name, Date'.

INTRODUCTION

Using narrative
to support pupils' development
of ethical self-determination

'...an emancipatory interest...is an attitude which is formed in the experience of suffering from something man-made, which can be abolished...'

(Habermas, 1986/1992: 193, 194)

This thesis investigates aspects of education in contemporary England, whose education system, situated within the Enlightenment tradition, assumes the enhancement of personal freedom through intellectual and academic activity. The thesis defends emancipatory ideals as desirable within and necessary to education, but suggests that Enlightenment confidence in reason has been translated, within current curriculum structures, into a certain conception of knowledge-acquisition, to the corresponding neglect of the development of moral values as the norms guiding human interrelations. The thesis narrates my own quest towards meaning; personal and professional emancipation through academic research, experienced principally through engaging, as a novice philosopher, with philosophical ideas of several philosophers who contribute in different ways to an understanding of morality. Their ideas stimulate and challenge my personal thinking, an intertextual process supported by philosophical and research methodology (Hollis 1994, Ricoeur, 1986).

My starting position is that an education focused exclusively upon the transmission of factual information is incomplete, and that pupils' engagement with moral values and ethical conduct is an implicit educational end; a view that would not necessarily meet with unanimous acceptance. Despite overarching policy statements that moral values underpin education (OFSTED, 1994; Statement of Values, 2006), I consider that insufficient thought is given to practical aspects of implementing this supposedly fundamental principle.

The development of autonomy, in line with Kant's notion of practical reason, is a widely accepted aim of liberal education (Carr, 2005; Cuypers, 2004; Hirst and Peters, 1973; National Curriculum, 2006), but one that is deserving of greater critical examination. Educational rhetoric regarding 'autonomy' suggests that individuals are free to control their own lives, but in this thesis I argue that ethical pupil self-determination, the capacity for self-expression through examined, self-conscious decision-making in matters that affect the pupil, may be a more defensible educational aim than autonomy, for several reasons.

Firstly, the very notion of autonomy must be challenged because it is premised upon Kant's conception of supposedly inviolable rationality, which is shown to be culturally and historically determined, lacking the robust objectivity Kant claimed for it (Hollis, 1994). Feminists emphasise the value of shared forms of human experience and co-operation over the drive for individual independence with its potential for rugged self-assertion, which may be perceived as a male value (Pendlebury, 2005). Foucault (1995) views autonomy as the individual's internalisation of society's control, associating autonomy with discipline rather than with freedom. Considering pupils' economic dependence and the authoritarian nature of educational institutions (Jones and Wallace, 1992), the notion of pupil autonomy could be argued to constitute a contradiction in terms. I argue that in a global environment facing major ecological problems that can only be effectively addressed through mutual co-operation, interdependence rather than autonomy might be emphasised. Whilst mindful of the emancipatory ideal of autonomy, educators might instead promote pupil self-determination as a more limited, but more defensible educational aim, and strive towards developing within pupils certain attitudes and capacities that will serve them in self-reflexive and ethical decision-making. The thesis aims to suggest a definition of ethical self-determination and a way of developing it.

As a teacher experienced in working with children of varying age-ranges in South Africa and England, I observe that educators experience certain perennial influences external to the academic curriculum as challenging: supporting individuals' personal development towards self-management, their co-operation within groups, promoting attitudes of respect towards others and the environment, and enhancing pupils' capacity for thinking. I consider that a fundamental educational task is to fully and

holistically develop individuals' capacities, without thereby encouraging selfishness, so that they and the societies in which they live might flourish. I hope that other educators might find this exploration ethically provocative in relation to their own practice.

The study begins with a literature review and analysis of selected philosophers, elements of whose work on individual freedom, narrative, morality and ethics have particular relevance for this study. It is not within the scope of this study to deal comprehensively with these major philosophical themes which have occupied philosophers over millennia, nor do I claim a thorough understanding of Western philosophy. Selective reference is made to philosophers whose thinking might guide teachers encountering ethical challenges within contemporary education: Aristotle (c350BC/1953), Foucault (1994, 1995) Plato (c370BC/1961) and Ricoeur (1981, 1988, 1991, 1992, 1995, 1996, 2000). Several psychologists' contributions to understanding of cognitive and moral development are considered: Donaldson (1987, 1992), Kohlberg (1981), Piaget (1968) and Vygotsky (1934/1962). Freud's (1915/1930/1933 *in* 1985) philosophical psychology complements philosophical perspectives. My perception that education divorced from philosophy can become mechanistic and misguided challenges Carr's (2004) suggestion that education and philosophy are separate disciplines.

The literature review's exploration of theoretical perspectives is complemented by an empirical element, comprising two case studies, the Key Stage One Study, involving young pupils of six and seven years of age and the Key Stage Four Study, involving adolescent pupils. In each case study, narrative was used as a stimulus to discussion, within a 'community of inquiry' (Lipman, 2003), a public forum based upon procedural values. The empirical element aimed to explore claims that narrative might enhance ethical development (Ricoeur, 1992), within a moral environment. Practical investigation enabled me to explore research methodology that is responsive to pupil self-determination.

Stenhouse's (1993) ideas concerning practitioner-research serve as a springboard to developing my own teacher-research. My dissatisfaction with elements of traditional research methodology within the social sciences motivates me to explore alternative

approaches that truly recognise and respect pupils as equal participants in research, in accordance with my strong views concerning self-determination. Methodology I use is influenced by philosopher Ricoeur's hermeneutic methodology (1986). Ricoeur, a respected philosopher in Europe and in America although lesser-known within the United Kingdom, is of recurring importance within this thesis because his ideas suggest possible solutions to contemporary situations that are relevant within education.

Several elements suggested in the thesis title require detailed examination:

- relevant philosophers' views of 'the individual' and the notions of *individual freedom, self-determination and autonomy* (Aristotle c350BC/1953, Foucault 1994, 1995, Kant 1956, 1996, 1998, Rorty 1980, Ricoeur 1992, Strawson 1986), and Freud's psychological perspective regarding 'the individual' (1915/1930/1933 *in* 1985)
- *moral values and ethics*: definitions of these and other related words such as 'practical reason', 'particularist' and 'universalist' within this study, informed by Aristotle (c350BC/1953), O'Neill (1996), and Ricoeur (1992)
- the underlying principles and *aims of liberal education* and the challenges faced by contemporary educators in England (Carr, 2000, 2005; Davies, Gregory and McGuinn 2002; Hirst and Peters, 1973; White, 2003)
- the scope and practical use of *narrative* (Booker, 2004; Nussbaum, 1990; Lyotard, 1984; Ricoeur, 1992)
- *practitioner-research* (Gilbert, 1993; May, 1993; McNiff, 2002; Mills, 2000; Stenhouse, 1985; Thomas, 1998; Yin, 2003)

The research questions encompass four interconnected and at times, overlapping, areas of interest. The thesis explores how it is possible for schools to provide for the development of values education within the context of current government initiatives and how teachers can legitimately encourage pupils to make decisions that reflect an awareness of public as well as personal 'goods'. It investigates how narrative can be used to extend learners' thinking about moral issues and seeks to develop a satisfactory definition of pupil self-determination.

This introduction explains the thesis structure, outlines main themes and reveals elements of the teacher-researcher's personal context that may influence research. The thesis contains two sections, the first of which (comprising chapters One to Four) explores broad theoretical themes through a literature review of the individual, society, morals and ethics, education and narrative. Chapter Five moves towards applied philosophy, linking the theoretical first section with the second, empirical section (comprising Chapters Six to Nine). Chapter Ten draws together the various strands investigated and presents practical perspectives for teachers who may consider using narrative to involve pupils in philosophical discussion.

Although the literature review is contained within the first section and description and analysis of the empirical element within the second section, the order of presentation is a matter of practicality rather than a temporal sequence, reflecting a dialectic relationship between the literature review and the empirical element. Each philosopher makes a unique contribution towards the understanding of moral reasoning: Aristotle; an ancient Greek particularist, Kant; an enlightenment universalist, and contemporary philosophers of different persuasions, each with specific contributions: postmodernists Foucault (power), Lyotard (narrative) and Nietzsche (nihilism) and Ricoeur, hermeneutic philosopher. Similarly, each psychologist whose work is referred to is relevant to the empirical element. My dialectic involvement, as teacher-researcher, with theoretical perspectives underpins empirical research methodology, rendering the case study an attractive overarching tool (Yin, 2003). The empirical element is both inspired by, and inspires, the literature review. The notion of intertextuality as dialectic activity between interrelated elements exists in this thesis between several philosophers' ideas, psychologists' ideas, my engagement with philosophers' and psychologists' ideas and case studies' planning, implementation, data collection and data analysis.

This exploratory and reflective thesis avoids prescription, hoping rather to challenge and enthuse educators, and perhaps encourage them to consider embarking on teacher-research themselves. I concur with Robson (1993) in challenging the view that research is something done exclusively by experts. Robson warns that it is easy to undervalue the experience and skills forming the basis of many kinds of inquiry:

systematically and sensitively watching people and talking with them. Figure 1 shows the structure of information-presentation in the thesis.

Figure 1: Thesis structure

<table>
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<tr><td rowspan="4">Section One
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Chapter One: the 'I' word, the individual

Chapter One explores philosophical and psychological views concerning individual freedom and society's shaping of development. Various philosophical contributions and a psychologist's perspective are considered, relevant to this study for two reasons. Firstly, pupils' fullest personal (and therefore, individual) development; the individual's personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is stated to be a primary aim within education (National Curriculum, 2006), with knowledge and skills-transmission. Secondly, exploring notions of 'the individual' informs examination of pupil self-determination or autonomy; for Carr, the most valued aim of post-war liberal education (2000), where self-determination is defined as the capacity for autonomous life choice.

Freud's (1915/1985) psychological perspective is explored regarding notions of individual freedom, self-determination and autonomy. Philosophical contributions follow, encompassing Aristotle's views regarding the good life (c350BC/1953), Foucault's (1988, 2000) conception of individuals as self-constituting, yet affected by power relations and Heidegger's (1962) concerns that modern life imposes constraints upon individuals that threaten the maintenance of an 'authentic self'. I explore how Ricoeur's (1992) distinguishable components within individuality, *idem* (the immutable part of the self that maintains sameness) and *ipse* (the reflexive self), address individuals' continuity and change. Strawson (2004) rejects Ricoeur's (1995) implication of narrative in identity-formation. Lyotard (1984) contributes an understanding of factors within postmodernity that destabilise traditional meanings, moral codes, identity and education. Postmodern philosophy denies the existence of over-arching metanarratives of church, state and science that bring cohesion and meaning to life. However, Lyotard urges the realisation of new opportunities created by casting off false metanarratives. Gur-Ze'ev (2002) insists that the individual can refuse to become a mere effect of the conditions that constitute modern life by refusing to be regulated by society. Chapter One's focus upon philosophical contributions to the notion of 'the individual' are complemented by Chapter Two's exploration of individuals' ethical relations with others and by Chapter Three's examination of the individual within education.

Chapter Two: The 'We' words: society, morality and ethics

The focus in Chapter Two turns from the 'I' words of Chapter One ('individual', 'identity' and 'I') towards the 'we' words of society: the good life, norms, values, morality and ethics are defined and examined. Education is not exclusively concerned with individual development, but also preserves social cohesion (although educators may also challenge social norms). Educational institutions play a major role in socialising individuals (Foucault, 2000). Ricoeur's (1991) methodology of comparing utopia and ideology is used to explore the contested issue of the possibility of self-criticism. The literature review of ethics is here confined to the views of selected philosophers regarding ethics: Aristotle's focus upon the virtues, Kant's deontology of will, duty and reason, Nietzsche's nihilism and Ricoeur's (1992) extension of Aristotle's notion of *phronesis*, practical wisdom, as a basis for ethical decision-

making. Central tensions within contemporary conceptions of ethics consist in the particularist and universalist models, reflected in relativism and deontological obedience to moral law, and responses such as that of Ricoeur which seek to overcome the tensions, within pluralist environments. Ricoeur's ideas about narrative and his ethical intention, *'...aiming at the "good life" with and for others, in just institutions.'* (1992: 172) are applied practically within the empirical element of the thesis, in which a 'community of inquiry' (Lipman, 2003), a 'just institution' enables pupils to investigate moral dilemmas, introduced through narrative. Supporting values education is challenging within instrumental educational milieux emphasising grade-attainment.

Chapter Three: Education's task: developing 'I' *and* 'we'

The dual functions of education in serving individual development and social processes, outlined in Chapters One and Two respectively, are followed, in Chapter Three, by examining the aims of and tensions within current English education to discover whether values education enjoys the primacy rhetoric suggests it enjoys. The central aims and the ideology that underpins education are examined with reference to analytic philosophers Hirst and Peters (1970) and contemporary educators; Carr (2000, 2005), and Davies, Gregory and McGuinn (2002). Hirst and Peters' (1970) proposal of personal autonomy as a core value within a liberal education is sustained in the Statement of Values (2006) underpinning education. I explain why I find autonomy as a primary educational aim problematic and explore instead increased self-determination and self-management in learning as important to pupil confidence and experience of agency.

Chapter Three also traces the perceived threat, to broad educational aims and to values education, of influences of technical and instrumental models within education: the technical-rationalist character of teacher education (Winter, 2000) and top-down management and centralised control that demands compliance, threatening teachers' professional autonomy (Forrester, 2000). Teachers may experience a mismatch between personal values and externally imposed values, as their concerns for the broader ends of education are absent from official debate: goods internal to education and non-technical questions about excellence in achieving these goods are not discussed because decision-making concerning education is undertaken by policy-

makers rather than educators (Carr, 2004). Doubt and relativism, which may accompany postmodernism, further threaten education in England.

Reference to philosophers can be a fruitful means of approaching tensions within education, because the educational microcosm reflects broader societal issues. Aristotle's description of the virtuous individual shares similarities with the conception of the citizen that England's Citizenship Curriculum aims to encourage. Foucault's (1994b) conception of the effects of power informs matters such as power-relations, appropriate authority for teachers, autonomy and pupil-self-determination. I suggest, for teachers' consideration, Ricoeur's (1995) approaches towards complex issues such as the characteristic uncertainties of postmodernity, which are observable within current education in England.

Chapter Four: Narrative

In Chapter Four I explore, through a literature review, the role of textual narrative (stories) in contributing to traditional narrative knowledge and understanding of our own and other societies (Abbott, 2002; Bage, 1999; Bettelheim, 1975; Booker, 2004; Hawthorn, 1987; Rustin and Rustin, 1987; Siebers, 1992; Stephens, 1992). A further review of philosophers' contributions concerning narrative (Foucault, 1988; Nussbaum, 1990, Ricoeur, 1992) suggests that textual narrative may support the development of moral values by providing a suitably non-prescriptive vehicle through which pupils can encounter and engage with moral dilemmas, facilitating moral reasoning.

'Narrative' refers to textual material, including speech and writing; myths and legends, parables, fairy stories, fables and fiction. Foucault (1988) explicates the role of ancient Greek writings in developing self-knowledge as a basis for caring for the self and others, such as Plato's representation of Socrates' dialogues (c370BC/1961) illustrating Socratic questioning techniques for interrogating and clarifying concepts. I investigate the relationship between language, a shared textual code, and learning (Lipman, 2003; Mercer, 2000; Vygotsky, 1934/1962) and narrative's relationship with research epistemology (Lyotard, 1984).

These theoretical notions underpin the methodological approach to empirical research: introducing moral dilemmas through narrative text rather than by a teacher diminishes the effects of power relations, allowing pupils freedom in interrogating texts, thus respecting and supporting pupils' developing self-determination. Additionally, narrative involving individuals' subjectivity is implicated in constructivist learning; learning developed through pupils' meaning-making involvement. Features of narrative revealed through the literature review render it particularly attractive as a research methodology applied within the case studies. In the Key Stage One Study, a story is read after full discussion: narrative is thus used as a pivotal device within the research process for extending pupils' dialectic engagement. In the Key Stage Four Study, narrative is used to introduce moral dilemmas; a hermeneutic device for developing understanding.

Chapter Five: Language: Speech and writing

Chapter Five represents a moving towards applied philosophy, revealing how the selected philosophers' conceptions concerning morality and various theoretical perspectives investigated in the literature review (Chapters One to Four) influence research methodology and underpin the case studies comprising the empirical element. Narrative and the principles of philosophical inquiry are investigated as suitable methodology for use within the empirical element of the study because they are consistent with, and illustrate, a possible means whereby the aims of pupil self-determination and a focus on moral values might be realised within current education in England. I use Plato's pseudo-dialogues (c370BC/1961) to explore the attributes of writing and speech because of the centrality within the case studies of narrative and discussion within a public sphere. A central question in the empirical work is whether narrative can engage pupils on an affective level such that they can experience self-determination whilst also developing moral reasoning and critical thinking, thus simultaneously enhancing the good life for society. The notion of the good life is taken to include shared values, for example the golden rule 'Treat others as you would wish to be treated' and democratic values, that can be assumed to enjoy sufficiently widespread consensus to be regarded as accepted norms.

Chapter Six: Research methodology and self-determination

Chapter Six describes my struggle to find suitable research methods for the proposed case studies; broadly described as reflective practitioner-research using predominantly qualitative research methods. Walker's assertion that '*...the conditions for the development of self-determination are the same as the conditions for its exercise*' (2005: 75) expresses accurately my conviction that research supporting self-determination must be characterised by co-operation between equals rather than maintaining the traditional hierarchy of researcher and subjects; a status-change that presents challenges in the areas of research validity and research ethics. Personal ontological positioning regarding the perceived need for justification through impartiality, objectivity and rationality estranges me from traditional research methods, yet *'sociology would cease to exist if all sense of critique were corroded away.'* (Lyon, 1999: 19). Thomas (1998) is sceptical about the rationality's assumed validity within social sciences research is, as is Freud, as this letter to Albert Einstein illustrates:

> *'It may perhaps seem to you as though our theories are a kind of mythology and, in the present case, not even an agreeable one. But does not every science come in the end to a kind of mythology like this? Cannot the same be said to-day of your own physics?'*
>
> (Freud, 1933: 358)

Chapter Six contains three sections, the first of which explores the notion of ontology (Scheurich, 1997), the investigation of what we believe exists, to orient the reader to the influence of my values upon research methodology and upon epistemology. I consider the influence of narrative upon epistemology and research (Foucault, 2000; Hollis, 1994; Walford, 1998), the source of my scepticism concerning social sciences research, for which Ricoeur (1986) provides possible solutions. Foucault's views concerning the 'production' of knowledge by the powerful (2000) encourage me towards using reflective practitioner-research in an exploratory manner, informed by a literature review of action research (McNiff, 2002; Walford, 1998). Section B reviews research ethics relevant to research within educational environments (Freeman, 1998; Homan 1991; McNamee and Bridges, 2002; Mills, 2000). In Section C, I consider how my understanding of the themes forming the research focus has been enriched through intertextuality between philosophers and my dialectical involvement with the literature

review content, now extended through operationalising the research questions within the empirical element of the research. A brief description is provided of the research methods used in the case studies: field notes, the keeping of a reflective journal and pupil and parental questionnaires (Gilbert, 1993; May, 1993; Miles and Huberman, 1994). Research methods for each case study are addressed more fully in Chapters Seven (the Key Stage One Study) and Eight (the Key Stage Four Study), but thematic considerations have greater influence upon the research than methods have.

Chapter Seven: The Key Stage One Study: Three pigs, A Wolf and the 'Know-Nothing Baby'

The Key Stage One Study aimed to explore narrative's contribution (Ricoeur, 1992) to young pupils' understanding of selected Aristotelian 'virtues': friendship, fairness, goodness, courtesy ('politeness') and honesty, with reference to the developmental theories of Piaget (1932) and Vygotsky (1934/1962) and to Piaget and Kohlberg's (1981) theories of moral development. The research process took place within a 'community of inquiry' (Lipman, 2003), a circle-time activity involving children in philosophical inquiry. Both the process and the content of the philosophical inquiry were considered important in extending ethical behaviour and engaging pupils on an affective as well as an intellectual level. Each week for five consecutive weeks, children were involved in 'Thinking Time', exploration of a 'virtue', comprising:

1. Children explaining fully to the 'Know-Nothing Baby' their understanding of the virtue.
2. The teacher-researcher's reading of a relevant story illustrating the virtue, to provide further stimulus.
3. Children being invited to discuss the concept further.

Method: I recorded observations of each inquiry session in field notes, from the content of which a wall display was mounted; kept a reflective journal (J1) in which elements of theory and practice were compared; and used a Parental Questionnaire in an exploratory manner.

Figure 2 contextualises the main themes applied within the Key Stage One Study, showing the interrelationship between themes approached through literature review and empirical work.

Figure 2: Key Stage One Study; 'Thinking time'

Research activity	Purpose
Each week for five consecutive weeks, in a circle-time activity, pupils explore one Aristotelian virtue. Children are involved in philosophical inquiry in a community of inquiry (Lipman, 2003) Pupils practise philosophical engagement with others.	To support pupils' personal development (moral, social, emotional and cognitive, National Curriculum statement of values) by exploring pupils' understanding of selected virtues, and my understanding of pupils' learning. Exploration of the 'I'. Pupils develop self-understanding (Theme: the individual; Aristotle, Foucault, Nussbaum, Ricoeur)
Each child in turn explains to the 'Know-Nothing Baby' his/her understanding of what it means to be a friend, fair, etc. I use Socratic (repetitive) questioning (Plato, 1961) I record field notes.	Pupils' think deeply about their own understandings and express these. Pupils listen to others' understandings. Pupils address their remarks to an uncultured being, the 'Know-Nothing Baby'. (Ricoeur's 'ethical intention', 1992)
When no further explanations are forthcoming, I read a story chosen to illustrate the virtue (Ricoeur, 1992).	The pupils' previous speech activity is extended through text to determine the effect of narrative upon understanding. (Theme: cognition; Piaget, Vygotsky)
Pupils contribute further thoughts about the virtue, through raising hands. I question pupils to clarify meanings where necessary and manage the discussion process. I record field notes.	To observe the effect of the narrative upon pupils' understanding: whether it extends the thinking activity, whether divergence or convergence of thinking occurs, whether the nature of responses changes.
A wall-display is mounted each week, detailing contributions revealing different aspects of understanding.	To maintain children's and parents' awareness of the virtue and, possibly, to invite further informal discussion. (Theme: interrelationship between own knowledge and narrative knowledge, Lyotard, 1984)
Throughout the process, I keep a reflective journal, which includes a focus on research, research ethics and relates the literature review of philosophers and psychologists to practice.	To enable me to relate theory (philosophy and psychology) with practice (Donaldson, 1987; Kohlberg, 1981; Piaget, 1932).
Parents fill in a weekly questionnaire, providing their predictions concerning their child's understanding of the named virtue.	To broaden my understanding of parental values, explicitly stated. To inform parents of the week's topic, increasing the possibility of further discussion between parents and children. (Theme: ethical development)

(Source: M Plint)

The chapter explores whether narrative can claim to enhance young pupils' awareness of and empathy with others' points of view, thus serving as a basis for the development of caring and ethical reasoning. Ethical matters relating to informed consent and power relations within research with young children are interrogated.

Chapter Eight: Key Stage Four Study:
'...a debate is an organised row'

Chapter Eight describes a case study involving Key Stage Four pupils of 14 and 15 years of age in a Debating and Philosophy Club, a public sphere providing for two distinctive forms of discussion of moral issues. The Debating and Philosophy Club represents my attempt, as a teacher-researcher, to explore ways of approaching values in education with pupils in a secondary school setting, where curriculum structures do not allow time for extended exploration of personal responses to moral dilemmas. I describe the challenge encountered when the proposed research could not be implemented as envisaged because of unexpected practical and ethical influences.

Section A describes methodology applicable to the Key Stage Four Study, where the process and the content of discussion is considered important to encouraging personal development and supporting pupil self-determination: the process requires non-prescriptive engagement within a supportive environment. Debating and philosophical discussion within a community of inquiry are recognised procedural models supporting democratic values. Pupils select debating topics and prepare in advance their arguments. Content of philosophical inquiries is selected by pupils, from within a pre-selected range of narrative texts, each presenting scenarios containing moral dilemmas. The narrative is read as a stimulus to formulating a philosophical question for exploration.

The ethnographic research methods used in the Key Stage Four study include field notes recording my observations of debates and philosophical inquiries, a reflective journal (J4) enabling me, as teacher-researcher, to exploring the interrelationships between theory and practice and a Pupil Questionnaire obtaining descriptive qualitative data from pupils.

Section B explores the influence of mutual trust on pupils' interrelationships in philosophical discussions. It also examines the role of epistemological doubt in maintaining a critical research orientation. I perceive trust as assurance necessary to action, confidence and self-expression.

Section C contains an analysis of the Key Stage Four Study. Differences in perception are revealed between the teacher-researcher's observations and pupils' responses within the Pupil Questionnaire. Analysis reveals debating and philosophical inquiry's potential for extending ethical, social and intellectual behaviour. A summary and rationale for the Key Stage Four Study is contained in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Key Stage Four Study, Debating and Philosophy Club

Research activity	Purpose
Over an eight-week school term, pupils participate alternatively in four debates and four philosophical inquiries.	A public sphere provides opportunity for discussion about moral dilemmas, thus contributing to pupils' moral, social, emotional and intellectual development. Themes: the pubic sphere, development of moral reasoning.
Debates: Pupils prepare a presentation arguing for or against a motion. A colleague chairs the debates. I observe pupils' verbal responses, behaviour and attitudes in field notes.	Pupils present logical arguments (which may or may not represent their own beliefs) for interrogation by the group. Theme: supporting moral development by providing time and a supportive moral environment.
Philosophical inquiries: Pupils select and read an account that presents areas of moral interest (Nussbaum, 1990; Ricoeur, 1992). Pupils and teachers are involved in philosophical inquiry. I manage the inquiry process, using questioning to clarify meanings where necessary. I record field notes following the inquiry.	Enables pupils to identify, from text, an area of interest for discussion. Pupils think deeply, explore their own understandings and beliefs and listen to others. Theme: supporting pupil self-determination and moral development.
I keep a reflective journal (J4), which includes a focus on trust, research and research ethics.	To enable me to relate theory and practice and to stimulate critical analysis concerning the research.
Four pupils complete a detailed questionnaire about the attributes of debating, philosophical inquiry and the role of narrative as stimulus material.	To engage pupils in reflection and metacognition about the benefits of debating and philosophical inquiry and their role in effecting change.

(Source: M Plint)

Chapter Nine: Drawing on the case studies

'Infants' and adolescents think and talk about stories

Chapter Nine offers my reflections as teacher-researcher regarding the research undertaken within the Key Stage One Study and the Key Stage Four Study, considering practical influences upon successful practice with children of different ages. To explore whether narrative fulfilled my expectations as a vehicle for ethical engagement, I relate children's involvement with textual narrative and with the community of inquiry with Aristotle's notion of *praxis,* action that is both intrinsically

and instrumentally good. I dialogue further with Plato (c370BC/1961) about his rejection of writing, to reveal features of both written and spoken 'text' that suggest that narrative may make important contributions to pupils' personal development, in addition to the contributions offered by the procedural values practised within the community of inquiry.

Relational trust between participants is recognised as influencing discussion and the role of suspicion in ontological and epistemological spheres is acknowledged (Ricoeur, 1986). I examine the benefits to pupils of metacognition, thinking about thinking, to generalisation of learning and consider how my own learning within the thesis has been supported through thinking about ideas encountered within literature, through discussion with research supervisors and through empirical research.

Chapter Ten: Conclusions and summary: 'The quest'

In Chapter Ten I revisit the research questions, critiquing the Religious Studies, Citizenship, Critical Thinking and Philosophy and Ethics curricula as vehicles for promoting spiritual, moral, cultural and social provision in education. I suggest that teachers may use narrative within the curriculum and within communities of inquiry (Lipman, 2003) to enhance ethical awareness and to present models for evaluating and judging moral dilemmas. In reviewing the notion I have developed of pupil self-determination, I evaluate pedagogical practices potentially in tension with one another: providing scaffolding and support on one hand, and encouraging increasing independence and confidence on the other. I attempt to define pupil self-determination in such a way that it encompasses ethical intent, as an alternative to autonomy as a central educational aim. Observations and suggestions are offered for teachers who might consider using the community of inquiry model (Lipman, 2003) within their own situations. I use Ricoeur's (1986) hermeneutic methodology and his doubts concerning methodology as a means of reflecting upon the methodology used within this thesis, extending my conception of what research methodology consists in. I also show how teachers can use philosophy as a rich resource that supports their quest to resolve difficult tensions that education presents. I urge teachers to look beyond the orchestrated systems of which they and their pupils are part and to embrace creatively

the opportunities for personal enrichment offered by children's involvement in philosophical inquiry.

Stenhouse: The General Second Record; Personal influences upon research

Stenhouse (1993), extending Hexter (1972), understands several factors to be simultaneously operational within empirical research. Primary and secondary sources contribute to empirical research (documentation, field notes, videos and interviews); research coherence also depends upon researchers' professional attributes, their skills, knowledge and the thinking they bring to bear upon the research process, their 'Professional Second Records'. Furthermore, the 'General Second Record'; the totality of factors that contribute to researchers' entire consciousness, including the influence of past experience upon researchers, affects research (Stenhouse, 1993).

In addition to explaining the broad structure and scope of the thesis, this introduction affords me, as teacher-researcher, the opportunity to describe relevant personal experiences and professional interests influencing this research, as Stenhouse suggests is appropriate. Stenhouse asserts the necessity for researchers to recognise the totality of their life experiences as contributing to their research, and researchers' responsibility to disclose to readers aspects of researchers' experience that enable readers to develop critical insight into the person of the researcher. Establishing 'dependable intersubjectivity', i.e. the critical understanding of the researcher by the reader, supports research reliability.

Foucault (1995), who views power as a network of relations and strategies permeating society, describes how societies' institutions 'produce' truth and knowledge by establishing and circulating that which will be considered true. The power wielded by institutions is integral to this mechanism. Walford (1998) cites Paechter's view that the demand for researcher-biographies is a coercive practice illustrating the power relations operational within research communities and is therefore to be resisted. I regard Stenhouse's recommendations justifiable within a thesis involving the contested issues of norms, moral values and ethics, acknowledging that the researcher's personal values not only cannot, but should not, be obscured.

Stenhouse considers that researchers' biographies support rigour, another contested issue (Hollis, 1994; Thomas, 1998; Walford, 1998). 'Facts' cannot exist independent of our interpretation of them and theories can influence what is recognised as factual (Hollis, 1994), so research cannot claim to be objective. In addition, Ricoeur (1991) explicates ideology as a form of knowledge operating invisibly within society, a society's accepted underpinning values and prejudices, influencing how thinking is shaped and conditioned, challenging, possibly contradicting, and thus inviting exploration of the very possibility of individual freedom, self-determination and autonomy. The recognition that researchers are situated, finite individuals and that achieving a perfect and critical understanding of others is impossible is implicit within Stenhouse's General Second Record. I therefore uphold Stenhouse's recommendation: research proceeds from the premise that achieving sufficient understanding is possible and necessary to the continuation of discussion and the extension of thinking (Hollis 1994).

Personal context

In describing relevant aspects of my General Second Record, I acknowledge the strong influence and motivation of my personal values upon my interest in pupils' fullest development, moral development and their development towards being self-determining individuals. In seeking ways of effecting overarching curriculum statements of values, I am challenged to fully support individual development without increasing self-absorption, narcissism and selfishness, but rather simultaneously developing attitudes of respect and care for others. Neither epistemology nor research can claim to be value-free. Even defending critical thinking relies upon a normative element: our belief in the right to be critical is itself not neutral, but presupposes certain political conditions (Ruitenberg, 2004). The presence of presuppositions and values makes criticism essential. So while, as a researcher, I cannot and would not wish to describe the research undertaken as value-free, every attempt has been made towards rigorous self-examination and self-criticism.

Being a researcher requires reflexive awareness of the specific traditions in which one is situated: in my case, my upbringing, experiences of living in South Africa and emigrating to the United Kingdom.

Within my extended family, love, mutual respect and tolerance are highly valued. I believe that experiencing a caring environment as the norm nurtures individual flourishing, thereby supporting the emergence of self-confidence and the capacity for self-determination, and that it also provides not only criteria for evaluating and judging other external situations and relationships, but attitudes of care towards others. This may be stating the obvious, yet I believe it to be an important element in understanding the inherent values with which I approach this research and my view of education. I wish for others the experience of the good life and believe that, at its best, education can and should provide experiences that support Ricoeur's ethical aim to 'work towards the good life, with and for others, in just institutions' (1992). I consider that education possesses emancipatory potential in working towards individual and social betterment.

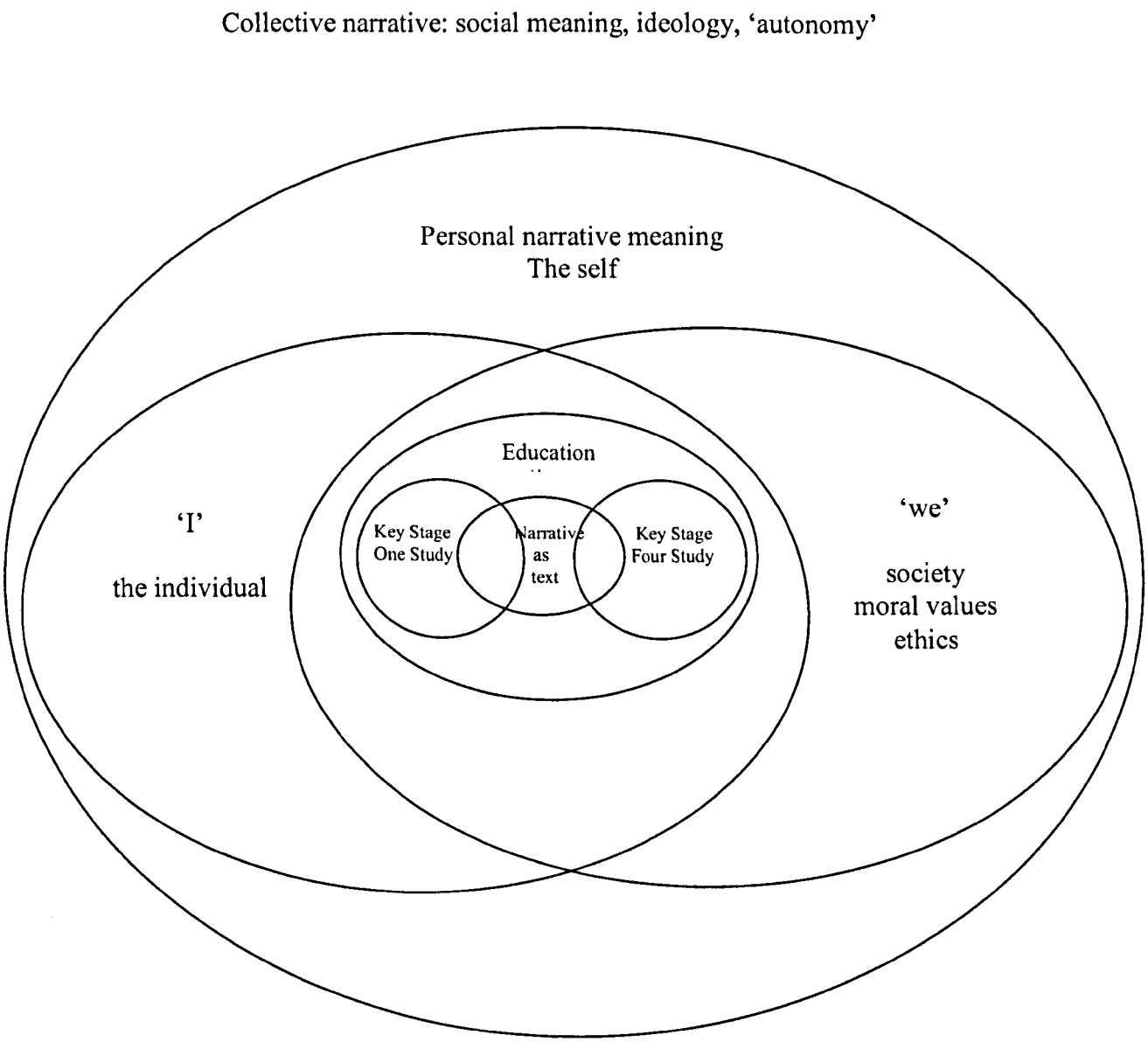
To this idealistic end, I hope that educators will continue to engage in the unofficial debate about the ends of education, thereby revealing 'who they are' (Vokey, 2003). Vokey suggests that teachers could start to bring about radical educational change by doing what they are able to within their own spheres of influence, irrespective of the nature of the external structures of education, an idea that resonates with Foucault's belief that individuals involved in power relations can act to resist, escape, subvert or transform situations (2000). Teachers might challenge restrictive external structures, but they should also continue to focus upon the values necessary to sustaining social life and to developing pupils' capacity for advanced thinking. Booker's (2004) Jungian orientation suggests that the enduring nature of humankind's concerns since primordial times is illustrated by the small number of basic plots or themes into which all stories can be categorised. Booker considers social regeneration, the human need for progressive renewal through succession, as the most fundamental task each one faces. Each individual is viewed as an heir, born to inherit and worthy to succeed. Teaching thus embodies a central human need: that the young grow up fit to take on from those who went before.

My experience of living in South Africa until relatively recently, has relevance for this research. The sharp contrast that existed between my own positive early experiences and the harsh realities experienced by the majority of South Africans prior to 1994 stimulated an interest in morality (for the moment simply defined as the rules that govern behaviour) and ethics (behaviour based upon these rules, with consideration for the specific nature of the situation), definitions based upon Ricoeur's 'Little Ethics' (1992).

My emigration to the UK constitutes a significant personal event, relevant to this research. Emigration, accompanied by heightened awareness of different cultural norms, pedagogical practices and issues within education as my professional sphere of interest has illustrated vividly to me, as researcher, the extent to which the individual's thoughts and actions are embedded within specific traditions and norms, and the extent to which ideology can remain hidden, as Ricoeur describes (1991). As an immigrant encountering a new ideology, I lacked the commonality of shared background, experiences, understanding of social conventions and familiarity with the hidden and overt systems and structures that enable societies to function. Having taught in schools in South Africa and in England, I observe the many similarities shared by education in both countries, but also the differences. I am aware of my own earlier failure to interrogate assumptions and of my continuing situated perspectives, an awareness that results in increased reflection and uncertainty, qualities that I consider favourable within researchers.

Figure 4 represents an attempt to illustrate how my own understanding, as individual and as researcher, is influenced by society's 'narrative understanding' (Lyotard, 1984), acknowledging this influence upon my own conceptions of epistemology. I view the concepts and elements examined within this thesis as part of a narrative quest for meaning.

Figure 4: Mapping of concepts



The individual is represented as embedded within society's narrative and ideological influence (Lyotard, 1984; Ricoeur, 1991) (including the enlightenment ideal of autonomy), social and moral norms and the pervasive effects of power relations (Foucault, 2000): the collective means by which meaning and order are created. I seek to explore and extend personal meaning and understanding of the ethical aim of the good life; what this means for me personally, professionally and as a citizen, recognising the overlappings and interrelationships between the individual and the

collective good life. Within my professional capacity as practitioner-researcher, I explore, in two case studies, how textual narrative and discussion can be used to stimulate ethical awareness in pupils of different ages.

SECTION ONE:
Exploration of theoretic themes

CHAPTER ONE

Philosophers and the 'I' word – the Individual

'On an individual level, we end up with fully objectified subjects who take their very objectivity as a form of subjectivity. For example, a postmodern individual may well construct his or her personality out of an amalgam of consumer goods, fashion statements ... in other words out of objective phenomena. And yet this utter loss of subjectivity is combined, in our society, with a resounding emphasis upon the 'individual', on the uniqueness of each and every 'person'.'

(Hawkes, 1996: 184)

Introduction: What is the individual?

The central dilemma explored within this chapter is whether individuals can experience freedom, given that they are created and shaped by the societies in which they live and by whose norms they are influenced. Two principal aims of England's National Curriculum are stated to be:

- the provision of opportunities for all pupils to learn and to achieve
- the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and preparation of all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life (OFSTED 1994).

The notion of 'the individual' is thus central within education, which strives towards individuals' fullest possible personal development. Carr (2000) identifies student self-determination or autonomy, examined more fully in Chapter Three, as the most valued aim of post-war liberal education, an aim that implicates the individual. Carr's seemingly unproblematic definition of self-determination as the capacity for autonomous life choice, assumed within education to be normatively good, disguises philosophers' struggles and disagreements concerning the notions of identity, the individual and the capacity for individual freedom. Kant (1781/1998) imbued the word

'autonomy' with specific meaning for philosophers, namely self-legislation directed by reason, but in everyday language it is associated with ideas such as independence, assertion, capacity for decision-making and choice concerning one's own actions and affairs, concepts worthy of further exploration.

As the title of this thesis suggests, self-determination is interrogated as a fundamental aim within liberal education, as a reflection of the Western tradition within which it is situated. Two questions arise, concerning firstly, the grounds of possibility of autonomy and secondly, its desirability as a fundamental aim of education, referred to within this chapter, and examined more fully in Chapter Three. The former question is investigated in this chapter through reference to Freud, as a psychologist, and selected philosophers, whose contrasting views concerning 'the individual' illustrate difficulties associated with the notion of autonomy, towards which, I would suggest, educators might adopt a more critical approach. My teacher-research is based upon the premise that one of the central aims of education should be to facilitate pupils' holistic progress towards the good life, understood in this chapter in the broad sense of the individual 'living well', without individuality being in opposition to the collective good life.

But what shapes our understanding of individuality, which Hawkes (1996) suggests is foregrounded in postmodernity (supposing that we accept the notion of postmodernity), and individuality which Foucault (1977, 1995) perceives to be created in modernity by surveillance, examination and normalisation processes that conceive subjects as objects? What constitutes 'the good life' for individuals? Consideration of several philosophers' contributions to the exploration of these questions and Freud's (1915/1985, 1930/1985, 1933/1985) reflective psychological perspectives may help in formulating a response. The philosophical overview is selective rather than exhaustive, providing relevant insights from various periods, from ancient Greece (c370BC and c350BC) to the present, and offering a selected spectrum of philosophical thought that can be used to inform educators' thinking concerning pupils' individuality.

I consider here Freud's (1915/1985) description of 'the individual' as a combination of primitive impulses, brought under reign by civilizing influences. Aristotle's limited conception of individual freedom; happiness attained through exercising the virtues in accordance with a unified world view (c350BC/1953) is complemented by Foucault's

(1988) descriptions of the methods, the 'technologies', through which individuals in ancient Greece (Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, for instance) are perceived to have gained self-knowledge. Foucault links the ancient Greeks' self-knowledge to ethical intent by revealing that self-care was perceived as prerequisite to the capacity to care for others. In this chapter, I relate Aristotle and Foucault's ideas to each other to illustrate their differing heuristic conceptions regarding the individual: Aristotle suggests that individuals should develop towards set standards of perfection, the virtues, whilst Foucault rejects such definitions. Foucault (1977) analyses the social and political conditions that effected the emergence of a modern understanding of individuality, and asserts that individuals can constitute themselves hermeneutically (1995).

Kant (1785/2002), the proponent of autonomy through rationality, asserts an Enlightenment claim for individual freedom. For Kant, the individual possesses supreme authority through living in accordance with the laws of reason, a deontological stance that prompts questions of the relationship of liberation to duty.

Heidegger (1977) and Adorno and Horkheimer (1979) are concerned that mass society imposes constraints upon individuals that threaten to overwhelm their sense of selfhood, potential threats within bureaucratic and managerial education systems, explored in Chapter Three. Lyon (1999) contributes an understanding of factors within postmodernity which destabilise traditional identity-formation, whilst Lyotard (1984) urges the realisation that new opportunities are thereby created, suggesting that the individual is not just an effect of the conditions of modern life.

Ricoeur's (1992) conception of the individual provides an exemplar of individual identity that educators might fruitfully accept, as he presents a hopeful view of the self-reflexive individual reconciled with society. Ricoeur identifies *idem,* individuals' unchanging character, and *ipse,* the reflexive self, as distinguishable components of identity. Ricoeur's work addresses ideas central to this study. On the one hand, educators strive to help pupils to develop self-confidence and acceptance regarding who they are: self-respect and the dependability of 'sameness', Ricoeur's *'idem'*. On the other hand, educators also strive towards individuals' development, progress and the capacity for change-within-continuity, Ricoeur's self-reflexive *'ipse'*.

This chapter concerning the good life for the individual is complemented in Chapter Two by the themes of ethics and morality, the 'collective' good life. The focus on the individual separately from society is artificially imposed within these chapters for the purposes of clarity: any moral world view necessarily incorporates both the individual and social dimensions; the former relating to what makes a life worthwhile, the latter to our relations with others (Norman, 1998). Philosophers and psychologists alike recognise the interplay between these distinctive dimensions: the individual is socially determined.

Freud: Love and aggression

Before exploring philosophers' contributions, brief consideration is given to Freud's philosophically-oriented psychological perspective (1915/1985, 1930/1985, 1933/1985). Freud conceives the individual as a combination of two instinctual drives, both of which are necessary to survival and continuation of human life. Following Freud, these instincts comprise eroticism, or the need for love; and destruction, the aggressive drive. Eroticism, the human need for love, whose aim is not necessarily sexual, is the *internal* factor responsible for transformation of egoistic primitive impulses, turning egoistic impulses into social impulses: individuals are willing to sacrifice other advantages in order to be loved. Upbringing and the social environment are the *external* factors through which this transformation is effected. As the individual matures, external factors are replaced by internal factors: the establishment of the super-ego, the internalised authority, renders obsolete the fear of being found out by others and the accompanying loss of love, as self-legislation develops.

In Freud's rather 'biological' view of human evolution, individual behaviour is interpreted as the struggle for life of the human species. For Freud, the idea of freedom is linked to the instincts and few can experience instinctual freedom: in the primal family, only the head of the family enjoyed instinctual freedom: other family members regulated behaviour accordingly. Society demands the suppression of instinct. Freud views civilisation as a process whereby the possibility of happiness is exchanged for security.

Freud's arguments invite interrogation. On the one hand, Freud understands the primal need for love and approval as sufficiently strong as to demand satisfaction, hence the willingness to sacrifice other advantages for it. On the other hand, he believes the satisfaction of strong impulses to result in mere security, whereas I would argue that satisfaction of very strong needs might legitimately be described as yielding happiness.

Another ambiguity emerges in *Why War?* (Freud, 1933/1985), in which Freud describes the emergence of the pacifist: one with a constitutional intolerance of war, evolved through organic processes accompanied by modifications to the psyche, including the displacement of instinctual aims and the restriction of instinctual impulses. But I do not find Freud's argument altogether convincing: if an instinctual, primal drive (the destructive/aggressive drive) is modified or overcome to satisfy another instinctual drive (eroticism/love), then the drive for eroticism and love has taken primacy. It could be argued that the suppression of instinct is, therefore, not only instinctual, but necessary. And if the pacifist's intolerance of war is constitutional, *Eros,* the love instinct, is not necessarily being constantly challenged by the destructive impulse.

So, while Freud traces the emergence of neurotic disorders to the increasing suppression of instinct through societal demands, my personal conjecture suggests a possible increased prevalence of neurotic disorders, were the primal instinct of eroticism to remain unsatisfied. Education, an interface between the child and society, is a constituent of the external factors implicated in satisfying the child's instinctual drives. The primacy Freud attaches to the satisfaction of *Eros* might justify an inversion within education of the prioritising of knowledge-transmission. Primacy might instead be given to promoting emotional and social development, a suggestion Goleman's (2003) *Destructive Emotions* might be considered to support. Warnock (1992) recognises cognitive, emotional, social and other areas of development as increasing pupils' control over their lives. Freud views education as playing a central role in the continuation of civilisation, identifying the two psychological characteristics essential to effecting this continuation as the strengthening of the intellect in order to govern the instinctual life and the internalisation of aggressive impulses. Freud's reliance upon reason to effect self-subordination of the instincts shares a certain resonance with Kant's ideas concerning self-legislation (2002).

Freud's conception of the individual as a locus of instinctual drives is not suggestive of any notion of autonomy or individual freedom: his account of self-legislation through the intellect could be described as reason engaged in an ongoing evolutionary battle to subordinate the instincts as a means to human survival. For Freud, the instinctual drives are the primal motivators: conscious thought and the intellect are secondary. However, inconsistencies are apparent: the assertion that attitudes towards war (thinking) can translate into organic pacifism suggests the possibility of heuristic rather than determinist change, supporting an interpretation that strong intellectual convictions yield permanent alterations to the psyche. Freud's recognition of subliminal processes reveals a deep respect for the human capacity for thinking not dissimilar to philosophers', but how do philosophers conceive the individual?

Aristotle and Foucault: Two conceptions of hermeneutics and the individual

In contrast with Freud's biological and rather deterministic view of the individual, I now explore the views of the individual offered by Aristotle (c350BC/1953) and Foucault (1988, 2000), grouped together here because of the complementary insight into Aristotle's conception of the individual that Foucault contributes.

For Aristotle, individuals are defined exclusively within their relationship to a unified, teleological worldview or logos. Following Aristotle, individuals are created by God, with needs and wants of a certain, deterministic kind (MacIntyre and Ricoeur, 1969). Interestingly, whilst Aristotle appears accepting of hierarchy and privilege, Plato before him appears to promote recognition based upon personal qualities rather than inherited status:

> *'...we said that if a degenerate offspring was born to the guardians he must be sent away to other classes, and likewise if a superior to the others he must be enrolled among the guardians...'*
>
> (Plato, c370BC/1961: 665)

Despite differences in ancient and contemporary understanding of the individual, Aristotle's philosophy has much to offer contemporary educators: happiness, an

inherently pleasant psychological experience independent of external circumstance, is attained through a lifelong venture requiring agents' highest intellectual capacities rather than the temporary satisfaction of external desires. Those who possess pleasure in life itself experience the good life. For Aristotle, pleasure can be found in *praxis,* virtuous actions that are intrinsically and instrumentally good, whether practical or speculative, but intellectual activity brings greatest happiness because using the intellect is a self-sufficient, self-enhancing activity, an end in itself, and fundamentally definitive of the individual and humanity. The individual *is* intellect: intellect makes us human. Aristotle relates the intellect and morality: the intellect defines humans as rational beings, and our humanity gives rise to an understanding of moral actions and feelings. We can see that Aristotle offers a holistic vision of the individual comprising emotions, actions, the intellect, morality and humanity.

Despite Aristotle's being recognised as a founder of modern science (Magee, 2001), he considers that living in accordance with the virtues of courage, moderation, wisdom, piety and justice provides knowledge of how to respond in practical situations, rather than rules of logical argument. Virtues are defined with reference to the opposing polarities of which they are the ideal midpoint, the 'golden mean'. *Phronesis*, Aristotle's notion of practical wisdom, recognises the place for individual creativity and flair in right action, rather than appealing exclusively to reason and adherence to moral law, attributes of ethical decision-making that Ricoeur (1992) develops further, as explored in Chapter Two.

Foucault offers a useful explanation of the development of the notion of the individual, from the ancient Greek culture (Aristotle's milieu) of self-care through self-knowledge, through Western society's inheritance of Christian morality and its emphasis upon self-renunciation, to the modern view of the individual as both an individuated self and a person defined within the social order (1977/1995, 1988). Foucault (1995) suggests that social, political and economic practices of the 18th century effected the emergence of a modern understanding of individuality: increased surveillance, recording, distribution and classification of individuals simultaneously created both the conception of the individual as a single entity and positioned the individual within a social system, a positioning viewed by some as overwhelming to the individual (see Adorno and Horkheimer, below).

Educators may be suspicious of rugged individuality (Smith, *in* White, 2003). Foucault, following Nietzsche's rejection of religion, attributes contemporary Western ambivalence and suspicion towards self-care to the West's inheritance of Christian morality, where, paradoxically, self-care becomes self-renunciation through self-knowledge and confession. By contrast, the ancient Greeks embraced positively self-knowledge as essential in caring for the self. Plato shows that attitudes towards self-knowledge and self-care predate Aristotle:

> *'Then if we should sufficiently train the mind and turn over to it the minutiae of the care of the body...we should be acting rightly.'*
>
> (Plato, c370BC/1961: 648)

Foucault (1988) emphasises that only those who had cultivated self-care sufficiently and mastered themselves were deemed capable and responsible to extend care toward others, as illustrated by Plato:

> *'...and having first attained to self-mastery and beautiful order within himself, ... self-controlled and in unison, he should then and only then turn to practice...'*
>
> (Plato, c370BC/1961: 686)

Chapter Five explores further the role played by Plato's texts, featuring Socrates as his teacher, as a technology through which Socrates' dialogues develop self-knowledge: letters of self-disclosure were written as exemplars to help friends in their quest for self-knowledge (c370BC/1961). These texts create a kind of public sphere for the interrogation of ideas.

In contrast with Aristotle's defined world-view, Foucault believes that scope exists for individuals to constitute themselves through a variety of different practices:

> *'All my analyses are against the idea of universal necessities in human existence. They show the arbitrariness of institutions and show which space of freedom we can still enjoy and how many changes can still be made.'*
>
> (Foucault, 1988: 11)

Here Foucault refers to institutions' role: psychological, medical, penitential and educational in shaping a certain idea of humanity that has become accepted as normative. Foucault (1988) views disciplines such as economics, biology, psychiatry and medicine as manifestations of the human desire for self-understanding and as the

means engaged in developing humanity's self knowledge, akin to Hirst and Peter's (1970) view of knowledge as publicly mediated modes of experience.

Following Foucault (1988), individuals can constitute and transform themselves by acting hermeneutically upon their thoughts, bodies, behaviour and modes of being, thus attaining a state of happiness, whether this happiness is viewed as purity, wisdom, perfection or immortality: individuals are therefore thinking subjects with agency; the capacity to act purposefully. As an educator, I reflect that Foucault's notion of the self-creating individual presupposes sophisticated levels of self-awareness, of detachment in viewing oneself as an object and of imagination. Discussion that aims to support the emergence of some of these attributes occurs in the case studies.

However, Foucault (2000) also recognises individuals as situated within webs of power relations, the effects of which are so pervasive as to control the very production of knowledge that society recognises as 'true' by endorsing and thus maintaining in circulation, certain information. So, following Foucault, individuals cannot escape the influence of power relations: autonomy is impossible. Foucault thus addresses a central dilemma regarding individuality: limitations to freedom. Following Foucault, power relations affect but do not entirely define individuals: individuals always have choices about how they respond towards the effects of power. I find Foucault's analysis of power helpful in articulating the tension surrounding the notion of personal freedom because it recognises the unavoidable influence of institutions upon the individual, emphasising the interrelations between society and its individual members and the power relations between members, whilst also reserving a place for individual choice.

Both Foucault and Aristotle thus embrace technologies of the self in heuristic self-knowledge. Aristotle recommends that we strive towards specific virtues within a stratified society, with a unified theory of knowledge that assumes that truth can be defined and attained, whilst Foucault (1994b) views the individual as possessing the capacity to think beyond prescribed horizons in exploring identity, acknowledging the paradox concerning interpretation of interiority (personal depth, conscience, or the search for truth) which involves the interpreter in descending into him/herself: as interpretation reveals what was hidden, interiority, in effect, disappears. Interpretation therefore makes possible the creation and the disappearance of the individual.

Hermeneutic interpretation is limitless: endless introspection and interpretation can result in the disappearance of the individual, who becomes indeterminable (Foucault, 1994n), an issue Ricoeur (1992) addresses through his notions of *idem* and *ipse*, explicated below.

Kant: The autonomous individual

Kant uses the term 'the enlightenment' to refer to freedom from superstition, dogma, prejudice and blind adherence to social custom (1785/1996). In this study, the term 'the enlightenment' represents a view of knowledge as an accurate reflection of reality: knowledge, viewed as true, rational, provable, correct, infallible, systematic and objective, assumes a privileged and powerful position.

For Kant (1781/1998), Enlightenment autonomy is possible because reason, rather than any external authority, is considered the ultimate basis of decision-making. Kant believes that the good life is achieved through living in accordance with certain fundamental and universal principles, moral laws, 'goods' that are, for Kant (1785/1958), non-negotiable, enduring and true: fulfil your duty, never lie, respect others. Kant's deontological philosophy reflects a stable worldview that assumes the possibility, through reason, of defining right and wrong with certainty, precision and objectivity. Kant's notion of the good life is therefore definable and attainable for every individual: act rationally (in accordance with universal moral laws) and you will know yourself to be acting correctly. Autonomy is thus practised through submission to reason. Kant's positioning of the rational subject as able to interrogate external authority changes irrevocably the conception of the individual, precipitating contemporary views of the individual as both autonomous and situated and finite. Lyon suggests that postmodernism may be *'the self-seeking narcissism one might expect of the Enlightenment's autonomous self'* (1999: 91).

The notion of the autonomous individual has become a central educational aim within liberal democracies, yet I suggest that certain of Kant's ideas may be difficult to reconcile within education:

- The certainty that one is morally 'correct', that one can justify behaviour on logical grounds and in accordance with the *categorical imperative:* act upon principles

valid for all beings at all times (1785/1958), may offer personal assurance, but seems particularly cerebral, formulaic and unsatisfactory on an emotional level. Encouraging reason as the exclusive criterion for decision-making neglects the importance of other important aspects and attributes. Furthermore, such certainty might be associated with arrogance; denying the possibility of fallibility. Certainty closes off further moral investigation rather than encouraging such interrogation as an ongoing process

- A framework of universal moral laws leaves no room for specific individuals or specific circumstances. Moral law that demands obedience to specific deeds rather than appealing to attitudes is repressive: *'His weakness lies in his not having seen that the ethical attitude inserts itself between the two,* [good will and concrete action] *and so mediates the realization of the will in action.'* (Kemp, 1988: 82)
- The individual, perceived as rationally autonomous and thus free from the dictates of external authority, is exhorted to accept certain universal, almost dogmatic, moral laws as objective truth, undermining the importance of critical and reflexive self-examination. With Kant, reliance upon dogma is not avoided, but the dogma of external authority is replaced by a personalised dogma
- The value of interdependence and co-operation may be neglected where autonomy assumes primacy. Kant's notion of the autonomous individual as self-legislating and superior to external authority is suggestive of independence and self-reliance that possibly discourages mutually supportive attitudes of co-operation and consideration that I regard as necessary to pupils' ethical development

Kant's (1785/1958) emphasis upon obligation to duty as central to the good will, the decision to act according to moral reason, irrespective of natural feeling and possibly against happiness, contrasts with contemporary educators' efforts to be sensitive towards pupils' personal satisfaction in the learning environment and the directive to consult pupils' feelings on matters that affect them (DfES 2001). Kant's view of the individual is also paradoxical. On one hand, some aspects of individuality such as subjectivity appear diminished by the emphasis upon reason. On the other, the freedom from external authority gives the individual unprecedented freedom, a potentially unacknowledged tension educators face regarding developing pupils' critical thinking (Cuypers, 2004; Thompson, 2004). Rorty (1980) strengthens further Kant's brand of

autonomy, to a notion of strong assertion in which the individual is unlikely to experience society as potentially overwhelming, as do Heidegger, Adorno and Horkheimer.

Heidegger, Adorno and Horkheimer and Lyotard: the threatened individual, and a postmodernist reply

Heidegger (1962), Adorno and Horkheimer (1979) are concerned for the survival of the individual in the face of mass society. For Heidegger (1962), *Being*, individual existence, defies definition but is nevertheless important, as is the notion that the individual *is*, that individual existence is unlike that of other entities because individuals have understanding and responsibility for who they are. In Heidegger's ontological view of existence, individuals can partially shape the world and themselves through openness to the world: the good life is characterised by deep understanding developed through meaningful communication: the *Authentic self*, the *I self*.

In contrast to Heidegger, Rorty (1980) rejects the suggestion that the individual is anything more than an accumulation of feelings and sensations. The nebulosity of differing views of identity may contribute to educators' wariness concerning anything apart from the measurable and demonstrable, regardless of the perceived importance of identity-formation. Yet teachers often describe their most rewarding professional experiences as occurring when lesson objectives are surpassed in ways that cannot be planned and lessons are observed to impact upon individuals on a personal level, as this practitioner's excitement about a dramatic production illustrates:

> *'That's the kind of thing we're striving for...the feeling of being able to express how you feel, disregard others' faults, and only see the good and enhance the good.'*
>
> (Walford, 1998: 50)

The practitioner is excited by aspects of the production beyond the measurable, which might be interpreted as a concern with the survival of authentic selfhood, simple freedoms and the dignity of human life for which Heidegger fears. Following Heidegger (1962), the collective pressure of mass society forces individuals to adopt a *They self*, an everyday self, presented to acquaintances, as integral and necessary to being part of society, but in tension with the individual's *I self*. Heidegger believes that

systems and processes that arise within mass societies demand conformity, remove the individual's capacity for choice and, in so doing, render individuals part of the machinery of society whilst limiting their potential for personal development and engendering anxiety and alienation, concerns relevant to a study of self-determination: managerial functions and bureaucracy are recognised as influencing education (Forrester, 2000; Hartley, 2000; Reid, 2000).

Adorno and Horkheimer (1979) argue that the individual has become a victim of society's acceptance of a certain view of knowledge: increased reliance on facts, the prioritising of pragmatic and applied thought, and the neglect of and accompanying weakness in critical thought, which results in anxiety about deviating from social norms. Adorno and Horkheimer warn that individuals' capacity for reflective and critical thought is eroded by the dominance of positivistic epistemology; knowledge conceived as the measurable. Such conceptions have led to unchecked growth of economic productivity and technical apparatuses that support society and improve standards of living, but become disproportionately powerful in controlling individuals. Their view is that the individual all but disappears in serving the social apparatus, becoming increasingly pliable in the absence of critical thought that would examine social and economic processes which devalue humanity whilst creating the illusion of increased spiritual extension. Following Adorno and Horkheimer, the culture industry is sufficiently powerful to manufacture people's desires and lifestyles whilst suggesting the existence of abundant choice. Individuality and freedom are myths.

By inference, Adorno and Horkheimer might consider the good life to reside in an extension of the individual through reflection and critical thought in conjunction with practical (applied) thought.

In contrast with the above damning vision of the individual in highly industrialised societies such as England, Lyotard (1984) emphasises some of the potentially positive aspects of postmodern epistemology:

- Sensitivity to and ability to tolerate irreconcilable differences is reinforced
- Difference and dissent stimulate creativity and invention

- By adopting a critical stance towards the privilege accorded exclusively scientific forms of knowledge and authoritarian nation states (as described above), individuals recognise the value of traditional knowledge and the place it has in binding and regulating the functioning of communities
- Rejecting the power of scientific forms of knowledge empowers individuals: reflection and exercising personal choice increases personal freedom
- Lyotard's acceptance and endorsement of the value of difference could be interpreted as encouraging an awareness of the other or as encouraging openness to possibility

Expressed values within contemporary education broadly reflect Lyotard's positioning of the individual: sensitivity is valuable, difference is desirable and criticism is valued. Following Lyotard's argument, the good life for the individual, influenced by knowledge as provisional, is situated, implying relative flexibility for individuality, but requiring self-reflexive activity: identity formation may be a more complex process where individuality is less circumscribed and where greater difference is accepted. Lyon (1999) ascribes such acceptance to:

- challenges to epistemology
- changes to stable family and social groupings, in which individuals developed their identities
- rationalisation of systems, organisation and bureaucracy
- changes to structures of authority, such as the church, and increasing secularisation
- social expectations of increased self-discipline and surveillance as means of maintaining order

Ricoeur (1992) offers a description of the individual that addresses both determined and indeterminable conceptions.

Ricoeur: Continuity and change

Ricoeur's hermeneutic philosophy represents a rich resource for educators who desire that pupils should experience the good life through reconciling individual freedom with social constraints. My own conception of individual flourishing accords with Ricoeur's, as it links increased capacity for self-determination and agency with ethical

behaviour that avoids selfishness. But the close interdependence between the individual and society can obscure potential and actual conflict: social order and continuity is threatened by strong individuality, whilst conversely, creativity can be grossly inhibited by social forces (Mol, 1976). Ricoeur (1992) suggests that others are necessary to the development of self-respect, achieved when individuals can appraise themselves as good against the moral norm. Considering the widespread acceptance within Western society of self-respect as normatively good, it is reasonable to assume that educators desire its development as an educational aim.

Ricoeur's philosophy presupposes meaning and purpose, an assumption contested by many, including those postmodernists whose rejection of metanarratives implies loss of meaning (Lyotard, 1984), and explicitly denied by others such as Nietzsche, whose nihilism contradicts purpose (1990) and Strawson (2004), later in this chapter. For Ricoeur (1992), individuals possess agency in actively working towards the good life characterised by unity or wholeness, in which disparate elements and dualities are synthesised: the intellect and emotions, consciousness, will and faith. Ricoeur believes that uniting the logical, the ethical, the existential and the sacred creates sense:

> *'For my part, I should say that freedom is the capacity to live according to the paradoxical law of superabundance, of denying death and asserting the excess of sense over non-sense in all desperate situations.'*
>
> (Ricoeur, 1995: 207)

Following Ricoeur, the device of narrative creates meaning and personal unity, the harmonious resolution of an individual's narrative past, present and future. Narrative is implicated in identity-formation because identity or self-perception is inextricably interwoven with society's norms and values and the symbols it uses: personal happiness, the ultimate goal that motivates humans, is achieved not in isolation from others, but *with* and *for* others.

According to Ricoeur, the individual's possession of a concept of self is a prerequisite to the good life, because it is to this self that individuals ascribe agency and thus responsibility:

> *'**Moral imputation** consists in a kind of judgement, saying that humans are **responsible** for the proximate consequences of their deeds and for that reason*

may be praised or blamed. Such a judgement relies on the previous descriptions of the agent as the owner and author of his or her action and, beyond this, on the identification of the person as a basic particular and of the self as implied in the self-designation of the speaking subject.'

(Ricoeur, 1988: 98, emphasis Ricoeur)

Character, influenced by habit, which provides distinctive traits, and also identification with others, is a non-chosen component of the individual, the source of attributes that influence choice (Muldoon, 2002; Simms, 2003). *'Idem'*, the stable, unchanging component of identity creates a sense of constancy and loyalty necessary to ethical behaviour: trust and self-respect can only develop where promises can be made and kept, where individuals are dependable. Through identification with others, the individual encounters and is influenced by other people's norms and values. The *'ipse'* component of identity represents change that occurs without destabilising constancy and loyalty, because the decision to change comes out of *idem,* character, the origin of all choices. Ricoeur's model mediates between conceptions of the individual, satisfying deontological, determinist and constructivist views.

Full exploration of Strawson's (2004) criticism of the notion of narrativity is, regrettably, beyond the scope of this thesis. However, I wish to investigate a few challenges, worthy of more extensive exploration, which Strawson issues regarding Ricoeur's conception of the individual and of 'narrative identity'. Firstly, Strawson challenges the notion of 'self' as inner mental presence, the 'from-the-inside' character of self-experience. Strawson distinguishes the 'Episodic' (someone who does not consider the 'self' as something that was there in the past and will be in the future) from 'Diachronics' (people who view the 'self' as possessing relatively long-term continuity), although he suggests that these styles are neither absolute nor without exception: individuals of either predominant style may experience features of the other. Given the acknowledged overlap between styles, I question the practicality, perceived benefit and desirability of such classification. Within Ricoeur's descriptive term 'unified', I would, moreover, assume variety, supported by his recognition of plurality within individuals (1992: 224) and his recognition of historical and fictional influences upon *'immanent narrativity which equates a human life with one or many "life stories"* (Ricoeur, 1988: 98). I therefore question the substance of the differences between himself and Ricoeur that Strawson claims. Strawson's reference to 'people

deepening in valuable ways' (2004: 8) resonates with the notion of a 'self' possessing continuity. Strawson also suggests that the past is alive in the way it shapes the way one is in the present. Again, this suggests the implication of a 'self' in a process-of-becoming, not dissimilar from Ricoeur's *ipse*, change within continuity.

Other similarities between Strawson and Ricoeur are apparent: Strawson acknowledges the necessity of large-scale unity-seeking, calling it 'form-finding'. The differences Strawson claims therefore seem to me a matter of degree rather than of radical opposition, although Strawson sees them as opposed. I agree with Strawson's suggestion that the past is alive in the present through the way it has influenced the individual, and that this is the way ethical development occurs (Ricoeur's *ipse*). Strawson's ascription to good poetry of past memories (unimportant in themselves) which become inseparably part of one although now forgotten and nameless is similar to Ricoeur's (1977) interest in the meaning created by myth, mystery, and metaphor. This textual narrativity is examined more fully in Chapter Four.

Strawson's rejection of narrativity seems to arise from his experiencing strong narrative views as hegemonic and potentially damaging to those whose views differ, suggestive perhaps of his perception of narrative ontology as exclusive. However, by distinguishing 'diachronics' from 'episodics', Strawson is himself guilty of maintaining exclusive divisions that he finds distasteful.

Ironically, Strawson cannot escape narrativity: in describing himself as 'episodic' and 'anti-narrative', he narrates a (narrative) conception of himself as genetically 'anti-narrative', illustrating how narrative's temporal dimension contributes towards the broad acceptance of the notion of narrative that Strawson challenges. Jameson confronts the problem of '*how to do without narrative by means of narrative itself*' (1984: xix).

Although Strawson (1986) demonstrates logically that individuals cannot be self-determining, he considers that they nevertheless experience themselves as exercising freedom of choice, essential to moral agency.

Ricoeur's contested view of life as meaningful is not pursued further within this study beyond supporting the suggestion that individuals ascribe meaning to life through imposing narrative forms to life events, creating a life-story. Narrative meaning is convincing because:

- temporality inevitably creates a sense of narrative
- the individual's character is viewed as informing the hermeneutic process
- conceiving life as unified (to a greater or lesser extent) supports ethical motivation necessary to social life
- narrative meaning can remain independent of teleology
- narrative meaning is necessary to avoiding nihilism. Nihilism, although thought-provoking, is inconsistent with educational aims: education presupposes purpose: the individual as an active, thinking agent, engaging with the world and with others to bring about the good life

But further exploration of 'narrative' will have to wait until Chapter Four.

I would suggest that teachers could accept as desirable for pupils Ricoeur's model of the individual as possessing the capacity for change whilst maintaining core stability. Ricoeur also offers a view of society's norms and values as legitimate influences upon individuals, through engagement with others and identification with the role models made available to them. For Ricoeur, the dimension of personhood, derived from communion with humanity outside of oneself, does not result in individuality being subsumed by collective society. Possessing a sense of self is necessary to the individual's recognising others' free will.

Ricoeur (1992) links the individual's self-esteem with motivational intent towards others' well being, involving both contemplation and practice, in a synthesis of theory and action that extends beyond Aristotle's practical wisdom by considering both the individual and Kant's universality. I consider the strength of Ricoeur's philosophy to lie in its surpassing the relatively unreflexive elitism of Aristotle and dogma of Kant, eschewing infallibilist attitudes yet remaining affirmatory, holding together seemingly contradictory modes of behaviour. Kearney (1998) emphasises that Ricoeur's philosophy is emancipatory in attempting to align actual experience with utopian expectations.

Implications for education

Differing views of the individual have profound implications for educational aims, an issue explored more fully in Chapter Three. From the above investigation, however, I suggest that, within education in England, individuals' development is addressed in limited ways, confined by narrow conceptions of development as competence in functioning within a technologically advanced society. I argue that educators should not lose sight of a broader conception of the individual than educational structures currently accommodate, so that aims might truly encompass multiple aspects of human flourishing. Psychological and philosophical perspectives concerning the nature of the individual have been explored and several important issues identified that educators might consider with regard to individual development:

1. Following Freud (1985), intellectual development can help the individual to overcome destructive primal impulses: intellectual mastery is therefore necessary to the continuation of human evolution. Freud acknowledged that he could not provide a reason why Eros, the primal love impulse, strives to combine individuals, families, races, peoples and nations into one great unity. I suggest that education has a role to play in strengthening the intellect, but should not neglect other fundamental contributors to human happiness. As discussed above, Kant's rigorous focus upon reason and moral law lacks the multi-faceted recognition of the whole individual that Aristotle values: development of the intellect, personal attributes, flair and emotions, all of which should be important within education.
2. Ancient philosophers, Plato (c370BC/1961) and Aristotle (c350BC/1953), propose the importance of self-knowledge and self-care, which Foucault (1988) describes as a basis for care for others. Ricoeur's (1992) focus upon identity formation suggests agreement with this principle. Following the ideas implicit within these philosophies, educators should strive to facilitate the development of individuals with a secure sense of self. Educators cannot support the assertive, autonomous individual with sovereignty to decide what principles shall be binding, with insufficient consideration for future and collective goods, in which Rorty's critics suggest his conception of individuality consists (Malachowski, 1990). Education can support a limited view of autonomy as one aim amongst other important aims. With these considerations in mind, the notion of ethical pupil self-determination,

self-expression, exercising choice and being consulted in matters that concern them, will be further explored and developed.

3. Aristotle's focus on the individual did not emphasise care for others as an end, yet virtuous individuals nevertheless supported social cohesion and flourishing. Philosophers suggest the continuing importance of the social bond, irrespective of their ideas concerning the means of legitimation for the social bond, an issue raised by Lyotard (1984). A central issue within contemporary education is to find ways of tolerating and celebrating difference without yielding to relativism. MacIntyre (1969) links the assumption that there is no determinable human nature with the assumption that rival moral views are irreconcilable since there are no shared criteria for resolving disputes. It is essential that educators model respect for individuals as well as appropriate methods of solving dilemmas.
4. Associated with the previous point is the philosophical concern for ethical intention within the good life for the individual. Ontology, the study of belief systems, is fundamental to philosophy, and, by implication, to education. Irrespective of their world-views, philosophers demonstrate commitment towards a conception of the good life grounded in ethics and a valuing of the individual, even if, as Adorno and Horkheimer, they lament its loss: implicit within descriptions of that which is deplorable are suggestions of that which is desirable. Philosophers confirm the fundamental principle that the individual is important and that it matters what kind of people we are, a principle that should apply within education.

Summary

This chapter has explicated Freud's and a small number of philosophers' views of the good life with the individual as the central focus. An extreme reduction of the selected psychological and philosophical views regarding the individual and autonomy is as follows:

Freud: The individual is shaped by biological evolution and suppresses primal drives in the interests of survival. By inference, autonomy is a constructed notion. Teleology equates with survival.

Aristotle: The individual is part of a determined, ordered and purposeful unity: individual happiness is attainable through virtuous living.

Foucault: Teleological perspectives and external authority are illusions. The individual cannot escape the effects of power relations, which control knowledge and truth production. Autonomy is impossible, but individuals can create themselves hermeneutically.
Heidegger: The effects of mass society threaten the fragile, authentic self. Autonomy is an ideal rather than a possibility.
Adorno and Horkheimer: The individual cannot withstand the hegemony of scientific and technological thinking. The ideal of autonomy is sacrificed.
Lyotard: In the absence of metanarratives, the individual is indeterminate, situated and finite, resulting in greater freedom and greater complexity in identity construction.
Ricoeur: Despite the dissolution of metanarratives, individuals create meaning through narrative form. Autonomy in the sense of independence is impossible: others are implicated in the constitution of the self. Autonomy in the sense of agency is both possible and desirable.
Strawson: Individuals cannot be self-determining, yet they inevitably experience themselves as possessing freedom of choice, a belief necessary to the ascription of moral agency.

Philosophers use textual narrative as public debate to interrogate ontology and epistemology. The presentation of philosophical arguments reveals philosophers' personal values and intellectual integrity: rigorous interrogation and detailed explication shows a deep respect for conventions that resonates with Nussbaum's (1990) views that textual form and language expresses an implicit statement of shared procedural values independent of the views held. Chapter Four further examines *narrative*, representing a desire to communicate with others and Chapter Five explores the procedural values of *public discussion*; as elements essential to the empirical work, in which children engage in age-appropriate forms of philosophical discussion modelled by these philosophers.

Philosophers, academics, educators and individuals share a narrative aim towards understanding. This chapter has considered conceptions of the individual and how interaction with others shapes self-knowledge. Different conceptions of the good life for the individual have been explored. The close interrelation between the individual

and society leads towards a focus on values, truth, morality and ethics: the content of Chapter Two.

CHAPTER TWO

Philosophers and the 'We' words: Society, Morality and Ethics, The Collective 'Good Life'

'... what is ethics, if not the practice of freedom, the conscious practice of freedom? ... Freedom is the ontological condition of ethics. But ethics is the considered form that freedom takes when it is informed by reflection.'

(Foucault, 1994: 284)

Introduction

In Chapter One, the notions of the individual, personal freedom attained through knowledge and the good life for the individual, were explored. However, the good life for the individual cannot be defined in isolation from the collective good life. This thesis is premised upon the assumption that society wants, indeed needs, its members to be disposed towards virtue rather than vice, or, in Freud's terms, individuals willing to subjugate destructive impulses to satisfy erotic impulses (1915/1985). It might therefore be argued that education, in reflecting and serving society, must prioritise pupils' ethical development, the good life, as a central aim. The success of such an aim is dependent upon teachers' self-conscious commitment to furthering this aim, through acting as role models and being aware of their classrooms as ethical environments. However, I consider that education within England currently prioritises transmission of a certain kind of knowledge above ethical development, towards which it is insufficiently responsive.

This thesis describes an ethical endeavour within education, begun in Chapter One's exploration of 'the good life' for the individual and now extended by exploring 'the good life' as it characterises human relations within institutions comprising society: ethics is the name for the aim of an accomplished life (Ricoeur, 1992). Following Ricoeur, esteem of the other is fundamental to esteem of oneself, who can be

impartially viewed as an 'other'. This chapter examines the notions of morality, ethics and values, which are central to the collective good life. It explores:

- Understanding of 'morality' and 'ethics'
- Whether it is possible for individuals to be self-critical, informed by Ricoeur's (1991) exploration of ideology and utopia
- The tension between the good life for the individual and for society
- The guidance philosophers offer teachers regarding ethics, informed by Aristotle (1953), Kant (1958), Nietzsche (1990) and Ricoeur (1992)
- Whether education can legitimately aim towards virtue, or must, following O'Neill (1996), limit itself to justice

Interaction with others is potentially both satisfying to the individual and frustrating of the individual's desire for self-expression, as Rorty (1989) recognises. This chapter examines the role and limits of the notions of ideology and of individual freedom, using Strawson's (1986) examination of human beings' belief that they can act as purposive agents, thereby assuming responsibility for their actions, and Ricoeur's (1991) use of the notions of ideology and utopia to mediate the opposition between possible individual delusion and institutional hegemony: balancing individual and social claims. These philosophers identify tensions relevant to a study of morality and ethics within educational institutions as social environments: how can desirable and necessary conformity to moral norms be encouraged without encouraging unthinking complacency? How can pupils' engagement with moral dilemmas and expression of moral values be supported rather than prescribed, so that pupils *are* self-determining? What are the limits to critical challenge?

I use philosophy as a resource that informs my aim to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The complexity of this aim is seldom acknowledged by policy-makers, yet diverse curriculum subjects such as Religious Studies, Philosophy and Ethics, Citizenship and Critical Thinking attest to the challenge educators face in attempting to address aims whose means of realisation is not agreed even among moral philosophers: Aristotle favours *particularism:* consideration of particular individuals and their circumstances, Kant *universalism,* principles to be applied to all in all times and places. (These useful descriptive terms are employed by

O'Neill, 1996.) For Aristotle (c350BC/1953), the good life is realised through *praxis,* cultivating the virtues through good action. Aristotle's ancient virtue ethics remains attractive to contemporary ethicists, partially through its reworking by MacIntyre (1981) and Ricoeur (1992), who develop Aristotle's *phronesis,* practical wisdom, providing a model for resolving moral dilemmas that incorporates consideration for universal justice and particular circumstance. The Key Stage One Study, the case study involving six and seven year old pupils, described in Chapter Seven, is based upon an examination of young children's understanding of several 'Aristotelian' virtues (friendship, fairness, goodness, honesty and courtesy). Kant (1785/1958) conceives individuals as possessing the capacity, through principled reasoning, to act correctly and autonomously. A possible attraction for educators of Kant's morality is its universality, avoiding the indeterminacy of moral relativism: it answers to demands for justice in supporting certain fundamental moral laws. However, it is inherently inconsistent, simultaneously implying the possibility of social harmony (achievable if everyone acted according to reason and the moral law, which Kant suggests is objectively true) and the possibility of individual autonomy. Nietzsche (1990) challenges the Enlightenment metanarrative upon which Kant's thinking depends, illustrating the postmodern doubts characterising contemporary education, which, paradoxically, co-exist alongside an implied acceptance of the (Enlightenment) secular and scientific worldview and the reassurance offered by positivist devices, which Hartley suggests act as a means of '*Shoring up the pillars of modernity*' (2000). Ricoeur's (1992) view of ethics is proposed as a model based upon universalist principles, with recognition of particularism, which offers educators guidance that achieves the following:

- it explores the positive in Aristotle's virtue ethics, recognising the particular, and
- it addresses the requirement for referencing morality upon principles of universality and the moral norm, and
- it avoids the overly formulaic nature of Kant's brand of reason.

Terminology

In considering the meanings of various words that feature prominently in this chapter and throughout the thesis: values, moral values, morals and ethics, Weston's (2002) definitions serve as a starting point upon which to build:

- Values: those things we care about, that matter to us, those goals or ideals we aspire to and by which we measure ourselves, others, or our society
- Moral values: specific kinds of values; those values that refer to the needs and legitimate expectations of others as well as ourselves (for instance, expecting to be treated with respect, honesty and care)
- Ethics: the study of moral values, the deliberate process of thinking them through, criticising and revising them

'Morality' and 'ethics' are often used interchangeably or inconsistently (Weston, 2002). Several of the different meanings philosophers attach to each will be explicated and their arguments considered, to inform meanings of the words as used in this thesis.

'Morals' or 'Ethics'?

The word 'morals' arises from 'mores', the recognised, traditional rules, habits and customs shared within a society, and understood to be both good and morally binding. Weston suggests that moral values are those lived out in the everyday actions that we undertake without the application of conscious thought (2002). For Weston, 'ethics' refers to going beyond lived values, to thinking critically about them. Ricoeur distinguishes morality from ethics:

- 'Ethics', applied morality, denotes the aim of an accomplished life
- 'Morality' refers to the norms that are intended to embody this aim, which are characterised by their claim to universality and by an effect of constraint (1992).

For Ricoeur, part of the role of ethics is to evaluate the need to adjust norms according to the nature of specific situations.

Wood (2002) and Norman (1998), amongst others, disagree that the notion of morality should be characterised, in part, by constraint, suggesting that focusing upon the limiting function of morality and the demand for universal conformity is too coercive. In the lack of consensus surrounding the use of the word 'morality', critics emphasise its negative connotations whilst supporters suggest that its positive status be restored. Negative connotations of 'morality' may have arisen through its historical association with rigorous, conservative behavioural codes enshrined within religion and considered synonymous with morality. Yet Wood (2002) emphasises Kant's intention that 'morality' should denote the opposite of submission and unthinking obedience to

religious authoritarianism; the secular, self-determining decisions about the good life that individuals make with reference to their own judgement concerning right and wrong.

Norman (1998) reviews the narrow (and in his view, incorrect) conception of morality as being associated with alienating features: imposed laws that must be obeyed; its character of self-denial, constraining one to forego one's own interests; and strong individualism. With the exception of the latter, these negative features may partially explain morality's being associated with unthinking obedience: a hindrance to judgement and choice.

However, Adorno prefers the use of the term 'morality' to 'ethics' (meaning nature), which he perceives to be a softened version of 'morality' (2000). Adorno conceives the correct meaning of 'morality' to consist of reflection upon the real paradoxes, tensions and contradictions that arise when theoretical mores (cultural norms) have lost their authority and potentially become repressive and degenerative on the one hand or ineffectual and illusory on the other. For Adorno, 'morality' captures the conflict in interests between the individual and the universal and requires reflection upon knowledge and the production of consciousness. Without thinking, action is merely activity for its own sake. Thus Adorno can be seen to use the term 'morality' to mean the same conscious, deliberate process that Weston (2002) refers to as ethics, the study of values, of thinking through, criticising and revising thought.

MacNiven (1998) further distinguishes between moralists, who wish to convert others to sharing their moral principles and moral philosophers, who deliberate about the theoretical and practical aspects of behaviour, principles and rules. According to MacNiven, moral philosophers presuppose the freedom of thought and conscience of their audiences, and do not attempt to persuade others to share a particular point of view, although he argues that persuasion to share moral views is not necessarily undesirable, a controversial and particularly relevant issue for teachers, as some of my research data reveals. Lipman's (2003) views on this matter are presented in Chapter Ten.

The use of 'moral values' within this thesis

'Moral values' will be understood to comprise theoretical and practical elements, consisting in normative moral codes and behaviour, their inherent function being to describe acceptable standards of behaviour. The meaning assigned to 'morality' within this study upholds Ricoeur's (1992) conception of the nature of norms as universal and constraining: it is neither possible nor desirable to avoid altogether certain fundamental and legitimate constraints: the rights of each individual can be realised only whilst they do not harm others or limit others' equal rights. Educational institutions are reliant upon moral values for their everyday functioning, in implicit, unexamined and unacknowledged ways. Pupils and teachers are obliged to adhere to rules and to follow codes of conduct. Positively, morality prescribes minimum standards of behaviour, but negatively, can result in 'working to rule'. The limitations of morality are clear: firstly, the letter of the law can be obeyed without consideration for the spirit of the law and secondly, rules can be followed blindly.

The use of 'ethics' within this thesis

I use the word 'ethics' to indicate a critical, self-conscious reflection on and enacting of moral values, reflection that aims to clarify, integrate and prioritise moral values, in keeping with Ricoeur's (1992) aim of an accomplished life. My idea of ethical behaviour is that it should augment morality, by considering the spirit of the law beyond its immediate content. I do not consider ethics a specialist subject exclusively confined to investigation by expert moral philosophers and academics, but rather in the everyday sense of Aristotle's *phronesis,* a practical wisdom that guides behaviour through the application of (universal) social norms within a particular situation. Ricoeur (1992) and O'Neill (1996) insist that it is desirable and possible to align the two fundamental, and historically diverse, strands of thinking regarding ethical concerns: particularist and universalist. Aristotle will serve as an example of a particularist philosopher, Kant as a universalist, Nietzsche as a nihilist and Ricoeur as a philosopher proposing an ethical model that incorporates both principles by extending Aristotle's virtues model.

Before exploring further these philosophical contributions, it is necessary to consider whether humankind can be self-critical, in view of social conditioning and others' implication in individual identity formation. Social norms and values regulate the

functioning of communities and the individuals who comprise them, constituting what is considered normal practice within a community, its accepted habits and standards of behaviour. A community's ideology is the body of opinion, or dogma, that shapes its values. Ricoeur (1991) suggests that one way of achieving the *distanciation* necessary to self-criticism is to view society through the apparently opposing polarities of ideology and utopia in order to allow each to inform the other, thus avoiding a single-dimensional, uncritical perspective. This idea is not dissimilar to Aristotle's method of defining virtue; the 'golden mean' between opposites. 'Ideology' and 'utopia' are defined to facilitate Ricoeur's (1991) comparison:

> '... *ideology ... an interpretative scheme used by social groups to make the world more intelligible to themselves.*'
>
> (Bullock and Trombley 1988: 414)

> '*Utopia is the perfect society that is found nowhere – on earth, at least...utopia functioned as a critical political and moral standard by which to judge the institutions and practices of European societies.*'
>
> (Bullock and Trombley 1988: 902)

Ideology: is self-criticism possible?

Ricoeur (1991) describes ideology as the means of organising social and psychological processes, making social functioning possible through consolidating human order and providing pattern to a course of action. Ideology performs a necessary role in acting as a conservative force within society. However, ideology can also obscure the truth by distorting or concealing reality when ideas are presented as if they were the only rational, valid ideas and alternative thoughts are discouraged. Such ideology is repressive and, as Adorno (2000) warns, degenerate too: in the absence of close scrutiny, ideology appears as the legitimate representation of accepted custom, thus conflicting with real morality.

To avoid this potential danger, Ricoeur (1991) considers necessary the exploration of the notion of utopia alongside the notion of ideology: utopia represents a means of standing outside of and distant from one's situation, using creative imagination to suggest alternative perspectives, potentialities and possibilities. Critical appraisal is

made possible by utopia's necessary detachment from the immediate situation. Ricoeur asserts that utopian imagination provides a possible means of moving towards aligning the actual with the ideal.

Following Ricoeur, utopian ideas, without ideology, lack the cohesive structure and order necessary to bring about any real change, remaining ineffectual and ethereal. Ideology, without utopian thought and critical appraisal, becomes repressive. Ethics involves interrogation of the ideology that justifies the prevailing system, to ensure that authority's claim to legitimacy is continually challenged.

Ricoeur thus recognises ideology as possessing potentially positive and negative properties: positively, ideology makes coherent social life possible; negatively, ideology may be overly controlling because it renders correct, natural, sensible and acceptable the norms, standards, customs and culture of one's own group, hence personal prejudices, invisible to oneself, remain unexamined. The ways of one's own group seem natural, perhaps even superior, to the ways of other groups. Following Ricoeur, the prejudicial favour accorded one's own group is seldom extended equally to other groups, so they remain for us somewhat strange, incomprehensible and inaccessible, a reality demonstrated by Aristotle's failure to interrogate his elitist assumptions. The view of the individual as possessing the capacity for reflexive self-examination and for agency, reasoned action, is implicit within Ricoeur's analysis of ideology and utopia.

Hawkes (1996) suggests that a postmodern view of the individual as possessing these capacities may not be justified:

> *'But what if that interior self, the mind, were itself artificial? What if the core of the person's identity, his* (sic) *'personality', was nothing more than a conglomeration of images and attitudes assimilated from the external environment? In that case, it would make no sense to criticize someone because his image failed to correspond to his 'true' personality. The very concept of an independent personality which could be separated from someone's material actions would be brought into serious question.'*
>
> (Hawkes, 1996: 1, 2)

This quotation illustrates the challenge posed to the notion of the individual as possessing the capacity for reasoned action and moral responsibility.

Strawson (1986) suggests that a belief in the possibility of free agency is fundamental to moral theory: people need to feel that they can be responsible for their actions, thus properly deserving of praise or blame. Yet Strawson shows the impossibility of freedom (self-determinism) through infinite regress:

- The notion of free action is premised upon the notion of rational action (action for which reasons can be provided)
- Reasoned action depends upon cognition
- If one is to be responsible for acting reasonably one must be responsible for cognition
- To be responsible for cognition one must have chosen one's cognitive state
- But principles of choice are necessary to choice with regard to cognitive state
- To be truly responsible, one must be responsible for having these principles, etc.

Whilst showing freedom to be impossible, Strawson nevertheless believes that individuals cannot but believe that they are free because they experience freedom; the reality of self-consciously making decisions. Determinism; the belief that actions are determined by causes beyond our control, and random outcomes; a view of actions based wholly upon chance, are both incompatible with the view of agency that individuals inevitably hold or act upon. Strawson suggests that philosophers encounter incompatible conclusions that they must somehow reconcile: individuals can accept truth as itself inconsistent and thus revise their whole notion of truth and falsity, or accept the view that they are imperfect, finite and inconsistent and have inconsistent world-views. Similarly, Ricoeur (1986) considers experience so complex as to resist reduction, description and definition.

'I' and 'We': hand in hand or in conflict with each other?

Another possible point of ethical tension appears with regard to the relative importance placed upon the individual and upon society, which is reflected in the fundamental distinguishing characteristics of *particularist* and *universalist* approaches towards ethics. Norman (1998) asserts that any moral worldview necessarily includes the

individual's relations with others: particular individuals, social groups, local communities and all other human beings and he reminds us that these moral relations also extend to others in previous and in future generations. Notions of the good life necessarily encompass the entirety of our interactions with others. Individuals' greatest personal fulfilment may arise from interpersonal relationships. Through empathy, humans experience satisfaction or distress regarding occurrences affecting even complete strangers. Being human involves identification with others, feelings of loyalty and responsibility towards others, care for others and enjoyment of their company.

However, ethical dilemmas can arise when the legitimate rights and needs of the individual/s within a specific situation differ from prevailing morality, inflexible legislation, or the conflicting demands of moral rules. Different philosophies reflect the relative priority accorded the individual or society. For instance, Ricoeur (1992) suggests an asymmetrical interpretation of the golden rule characterised by loving consideration towards the other; a superfluity of generosity from oneself towards the other rather than a strictly reciprocal equality of treatment. Ricoeur can thus be interpreted as supporting a view of the good life that gives positive weight to consideration of others.

By contrast, Rorty (1980) elevates the status of the individual. Following Rorty, individuals should adopt attitudes of ironic detachment towards the notion of moral values, conceived as utilitarian constructs that function to preserve the status quo, constructs to which individuals are not bound to subscribe. Rorty (1989) rejects the possibility that the individual's projects can be melded with those of society; that the private and the public can be unified. Rorty ultimately arrives at a minimal ethical requirement, in subordinating (private) autonomy to the (public) avoidance of cruelty, based upon humanity's common sensitivity to pain and humiliation. Yet Rorty also believes a sense of human solidarity to be important. Inherent contradictions are therefore apparent within Rorty's thinking: whilst claiming that individuals are not bound to subscribe to constructs, he nevertheless proposes an ethical construct that should bind all, thus illustrating the potential tension inherent in describing ethics in terms favourable to both individual and society.

I explore ethical approaches suggested by four leading philosophers: Aristotle, Kant, Nietzsche and Ricoeur. The selection illustrates differences between Aristotle, a particularist; Kant, a universalist; Nietzsche, neither; and Ricoeur, who proposes a melding of universalist and particularist ethics.

Aristotle: a particularist

As a particularist, Aristotle (c350BC/1953) regards the inculcation of the virtues within individuals as the prime means of eliciting the ethical behaviour from which happiness derives. The virtues of honesty, courage, compassion, justice, etc, should be practised over the course of a lifetime: the individual should consciously strive towards cultivating the virtues in seeking personal happiness as the highest good. Focus upon the utility-value of virtues, as the means by which this end is attained, suggests personal benefit rather than intrinsic worth. However, as the exercise of the virtues occurs within the social realm, Aristotle's ethics is saved from the accusation of entirely selfish motives because others also benefit, albeit incidentally.

Aristotle does not describe social morality, yet he successfully conveys his moral worldview, inferring that the social and civic life of a nation state thrives if comprised of virtuous individuals. Aristotle considers the state not merely justified in inculcating a certain moral character within its citizenry, but indeed, duty bound to create an environment supportive of morality. (England's compulsory Citizenship Curriculum comes to mind). Blackburn (2001) agrees that the moral environment, the surrounding climate of ideas about how to live, is important in influencing perceptions; what is considered acceptable or unacceptable, what dues the self and the other expect, and the emotions; what causes shame, embarrassment, pride, or any other emotional response. Blackburn conceives individual consciousness as derived through judging our perceptions of how we stand for others. In short, Blackburn concurs with Aristotle in perceiving that the environment moulds identity, although he does not propose the imposition of specific standards or beliefs. Focus on ideology and contemporary perception of the implication of others in identity formation may raise doubts regarding individuals' ability to judge society critically, objectively and dispassionately, doubts alien to Aristotle's stable and teleological worldview:

'...submit ... to the guidance and intelligence in some form and a right system with truth in it.'

(Aristotle, c350BC/1953: 309)

For Aristotle, the young should be trained to take pleasure in the right things; the virtues.

By current perceptions, aspects of Aristotle's confidence in individuals' ethical capacities may appear overly optimistic, perhaps even misplaced:

'The good man shows his superiority in his power of seeing the truth in every department of conduct. He is the standard and yardstick of what is fine and pleasant.'

(Aristotle, 350BC/1953: 89)

However, Aristotle acknowledges a possible tension between the ideal and reality in describing, for instance, how public expressions of honesty might differ from acts. He does not envisage universal application of his elitist views: the cultivation of the intellect and morality guide the elite, whereas women, slaves and the masses (who know no moderation, are governed by passion and are not capable of reason and logic) are governed by fear of the law as a means of compulsion. In contrast to Aristotle's elitism, contemporary education aims towards equality of access and the removal of barriers to education (DfES, 2001), but this difference should not blind educators to valuable aspects of Aristotle's philosophy.

The relevance of Aristotle's philosophy for educators

1. Following Aristotle, humankind is not naturally good: training and education are necessary to moral development. Contemporary educators concur that it *is* desirable that children be disposed towards virtue rather than vice, which *is* dependent upon the moral climate in which they are reared, it *is* desirable that adults act confidently as role models.
2. Aristotle suggests that externally orchestrating a moral environment, by means of institutions of state, supports individual transformation. The relationships Aristotle views as necessary within a social system are hierarchical: it is the state's duty to ensure happiness for its citizens and the duty of citizens to help their own children and others to become good. The state's means of achieving a happy and stable

society is through making good laws. By implication, only if laws are good can the institutions of state, such as education, achieve desired ends.

3. Individuals should need to appeal to neither logical deduction nor the letter of the law in decision-making: virtuous thinking based upon considered moderation shapes response. *Phronesis,* practical wisdom, guides action. Aristotle suggests that thinking about the good life unites with bringing about the good life through action: *praxis*, action that is both instrumentally and intrinsically good, unifies thought and action. Aristotle makes a case for the individual as possessing the capacity and confidence to assume responsibility for actions.
4. Aristotle's approach towards the emotions and the intellect is holistic. His philosophy also validates elements of subjectivity. He does not separate the emotions from the intellect, asserting instead that intellect must guide the emotions, but emotions play a role in informing morality. Aristotle considers that happiness can only become reality when emotions are within reason, otherwise desires remain insatiable. Nietzsche (1990) is sceptical about moderation as an ideal, associating it with individual submission to the herd, to a loss of personal identity and a subversion of will-to-power.

Aristotle supports the necessity of law, but affirms practical wisdom as providing ethical guidance in instances where law fails to take account of particular situations.

Kant: a universalist

Kant (1785/1958), as a universalist, believes that rational agents, applying fundamental principles; the golden rule, the categorical imperative and respect for persons, can define 'right' (ethical) behaviour. Kant's (1781/1998) notion of working towards the good life assumes a rather cerebral character: the demand for 'rationality', acting in accordance with reason, demands logic and consistency. Metaphysical matters are not viewed as incompatible with mathematical reason, or the truth of modern science, although 'doctrines of sensibility', i.e. facts that can be demonstrated by sensory data, are privileged (Kant, 1781/1998). However, whereas the natural sciences are limited to the realm of appearance, metaphysical beliefs can be justified through rationality, and through rationality, moral law can be defined. Following Kant (1996), it is always right to act in accordance with moral law, irrespective of inclination, feeling, or

circumstance: the worth of humanity is not determined by its attractiveness but is grounded in the rational respect due to each person, which is an end in itself.

Certain tensions inhere within Kant's morality. The Enlightenment notion of individuals being their own supreme authorities presupposes individual freedom and agency, yet Kant's (1996) belief that will (submission to moral law) is implicated with with 'freedom' effectively replaces an external source of authority with an internal, but equally dogmatic, source. The potential danger to ethical behaviour is apparent of the absence of self-reflexivity and accompanying attitudes of infallibility.

Kant's strong emphasis upon the autonomy of each individual might be feared to encourage the advancement of the good life for the individual at the expense of the collective good life. But, following Kant, reason demands the golden rule of equality: recognition that another's needs and desires are recognised as worthy of the same consideration as one's own. In the introduction to Kant's text, *Practical philosophy: The Cambridge edition of the works of Immanuel Kant* (1996), Wood traces Kant's interest in egalitarianism and the dignity of humanity to the inspiration of the writings of Rousseau, notably *The social contract* and *Emile.* Kant considers that respect for the other, as an end in itself, demands certain undeniable duties and prohibitions of every rational being: 'ought' signifies an obligation to do something that has value as an end in itself:

> *'Do that through which you will become worthy to be happy.'*
>
> (Kant, 1998: 679)

Personal happiness is not the guide to action, instead moral self-esteem develops as action is aligned with duty.

Kant's principle of respect for persons opposes utilitarianism in demanding that people are never treated as means to an end, but always as valuable in their own right, preventing individuals from harming another, irrespective of the potential gains or advantages that result from the action.

Kant provides individuals with a means of formulating moral laws: Kant's categorical imperative urges individuals to act only in such a way that they could wish everyone in a similar situation to act on every occasion. For Kant, certain actions will always be

wrong because their outcomes, although possibly favourable for me here and now, would not be favourable if everyone, at all times, were to act in such a way and acting upon a maxim that one could not wish were universal law is irrational. Kant therefore accords some laws foundational (objective) truth; they possess deontological status.

Justice demands universality, yet I consider justice insufficiently sympathetic of specific situations. Kant provides no way of resolving the claims of conflicting laws (for instance not to hurt others and not to lie, when truth-telling would cause another pain). Where Kant's principles do not provide a means of resolving this difficulty, Aristotle's *phronesis* seems to do so. I consider universality an attractive feature of Kant's moral philosophy, but his reliance upon rationality less attractive.

The relevance of Kant's philosophy for educators

1. Kant's focus on reason and rationality suggests development of the intellect as the proper aim of education, including independent, critical and logical thought; a focus upon scientific methods of learning; encouraging free discussion of ideas and defending a place for pupils' metaphysical beliefs. In Chapter Three I argue that current education within England focuses too heavily upon knowledge attainment, which may, wrongly, be considered as constituting intellectual development, possibly reflecting Kant's privileging of the *phenomenal* (that which appears directly to the senses and can be demonstrated) over the *noumenal* (that which is thought, but not demonstrated). Within education the phenomenal may be recognised as valuable and as easy to address. The noumenal, consisting in concepts, is more nebulous and can therefore, I argue, be neglected within education operating within a scientific paradigm. In the same way that Kant seeks not only to criticise and limit metaphysics, but also to defend it from empiricism, so my project within education is to criticise, limit, but also defend, ethics within education and defend it from technical rationality.
2. Kant's worldview, dependent upon enlightenment confidence in science and the commensurability of knowledge, has been significantly challenged by the postmodern view of knowledge as provisional and personal, precipitating a crisis in contemporary education as a reflection of broader society. Traditional education is based upon Enlightenment assumptions that must be interrogated. However,

teachers may experience an erosion of confidence in their role with regard to moral values, compounded by relativism.

3. Universality does provide a just structure necessary within educational institutions. However, as pupils progress in development they are less satisfied with strict equality as the exclusive basis for decision-making.

Nietzsche: a nihilist

In contrast to Kant's view of humanity as possessing the capacity for rational action, Nietzsche suggests that all human activity can be explained by drives and desires, or 'will to power'; the universal and necessary imposition of the individual upon the world, the desire to make an impact. Nietzsche (1990) believes survival and self-gratification to be humanity's prime motivations and the factors responsible for the construction of morality. Although, following Nietzsche, morality may appear to have been imposed by the world, values are derived from the cultural group of which one is a member. For Nietzsche, all activity, including seemingly selfless behaviour such as philosophical reflection and friendship can, in the final analysis, be attributed to the utilitarian gratification of selfish desires. Nietzsche challenges the possibility of the autonomy of thought and logic: consciousness, far from being autonomous of instinct, is directed by the instinct for self-preservation.

Thought and action viewed as nothing more than the influence of drives, renders one individual's views and values no more valid than any others'. Nietzsche suggests that philosophers' fundamental prejudices are merely made respectable and justified by reasoning that obscures and denies their prejudice. He believes that individuals should adopt an attitude of detached irony towards their existence, a suggestion at odds with the fundamental principles of enlightenment education.

Nietzsche's assertion that it might be better not to discover that many of the values to which one subscribes are false, implies that critical thought and reflection may not be in one's best interests: the knower cannot become unknowing, and going against one's cultural group entails deep distress.

Nietzsche's rejection of morality reveals his own value system: it may be better that a judgement be life-enhancing than that it be true, which speaks of a desire for the good life in the absence of a belief in its being possible. Certain paradoxes are evident within Nietzsche's philosophy: on the one hand his notion of will to power as primary motivator suggests assertion, passion and drive, which is incongruent with his description of individuals' lives as submission to slave-like existence. Moreover, the proposed attitudes of ironic detachment are inconsistent with 'will to power'. Neither does Nietzsche's relativist claim that norms and values cannot be evaluated, necessarily follow from the recognition of cultural influences upon values. If this were so, one would not recognise that certain ethical responses answer more adequately than others within a specific situation. I argue that, despite inherent limitations, individuals must attempt to examine critically their own and their culture's values and beliefs and hence transform themselves. Nietzsche's assertion that values are merely utilitarian renders the possibility of ethical growth impossible. The paralysis-inducing personal doubt and moral relativity accompanying Nietzsche's nihilism are features affecting contemporary education.

The relevance of Nietzsche's philosophy for educators

1. Nietzsche's recognition that reflection and critical thought can lead to despair might serve as a warning to contemporary educators who embrace critical thinking uncritically: critical thinking may result in revealing the unpalatable and irreconcilable, as Strawson (1986) acknowledges.
2. Nietzsche's assertion that all are philosophers reflects his belief that moral values are merely self-serving, however sophisticated their presentation. Educators may endorse Nietzsche's assertion that all are philosophers for different reasons: that reflection is, inclusively, accessible for all.
3. An acknowledgement by educators of the cultural basis of moral values may, in contradiction of Nietzsche's relativist claims, encourage pupils to interrogate assumptions and prejudices rather than succumbing to the paralysis of relativity.
4. Nietzsche's determinist emphasis upon 'will to power' might represent a caution to those educators inclined to bestow upon agency too great an emphasis. Elements of doubt preserve critical judgement and self-reflexivity.
5. Nietzsche's rejection of enlightenment metanarratives might serve as a stimulus to interrogating education's enlightenment assumptions.

Ricoeur

In contrast with Nietzsche's rejection of ethical endeavour, ethics; aiming towards the good life, is central to Ricoeur's philosophy. In *Oneself as another* (1992), Ricoeur explores the particularist and the universalist conceptions of ethics, drawing upon the strengths of both and incorporating a Kantian emphasis on morality and justice within an Aristotelian focus on practical reason as a means of approaching moral dilemmas. The role Ricoeur perceives narrative to play in facilitating ethical aims will be more comprehensively investigated in chapter four. This chapter explores Ricoeur's view of the ethical intention:

> *'...aiming at the "good life" with and for others, in just institutions.'*
>
> (1992: 172)

Ricoeur's conception of the good life

For Ricoeur, the 'good life', the ultimate end of our action, is a full life, characterised by a 'superabundance of meaning', 'generosity' (rather than equal reciprocity) and 'love' (rather than adherence to moral rules). For instance, Ricoeur suggests that the *equality* implied by the golden rule, 'in everything do to others as you would have them do to you', does not go far enough in suggesting the ideal of loving behaviour shown towards others: further *care* is desirable; 'love your neighbour as yourself'. 'Love' implies a relationship that extends beyond the strict measure of equality, one that includes qualities such as compassion and selfless giving. Following Ricoeur, action motivated by principles of love may at times require ethical deliberation and judgement that extends beyond obedience to moral law: ethics; aiming towards the good life, has primacy over morality; respecting the moral norm.

O'Neill (1996), in exploring the moral standards that can be expected of all people, asserts that only justice can be demanded: the asymmetrical relationship that Ricoeur describes requires individual virtue, which can be offered by generous individuals but not expected of them by others. Following O'Neill, the injunction to 'hurt no-one' is just, therefore legitimate, whilst the injunction to 'help everyone as much as you can' extends beyond legitimate expectation. However, it is the generosity of Ricoeur's brand of ethics that commends it to me: ethical endeavour based upon exact equality

suggests a minimum standard rather than an aspirational aim (although even this minimum standard of equality is not always attained).

The 'self' and the 'other'

For Ricoeur, the primacy of ethics over morality does not render the norm irrelevant, indeed Ricoeur emphasises that the ethical intention encompasses action *with* others and *for* others. Consideration of individuals' actions against norms ensures that personal ideas are tempered by existing standards, thereby avoiding individualistic thinking and delusion: narcissistic self-love results when self-esteem is not tested against the norm of respect for others. Moral norms provide standards whereby individuals can judge the worth of their actions: appraisal of one's actions as good, using the moral norm as the criterion for judgement, develops the individual's self-respect. Ricoeur supports the universality and restraint of Kantian norms, but considers that, in exceptional circumstances, acting ethically might conflict with acting according to moral norms. Where no sure norm guides decision, Aristotle's practical wisdom, *phronesis,* may be required. Practical wisdom involves particularist virtue: Ricoeur endorses the value of personal character, attributes and creativity.

Ricoeur (1992) refers to 'the self' rather than 'I' or 'myself' (personally), to show that individuals possess the capacity to view themselves with less immediacy, as universalised selves whose actions can be appraised as good, becoming worthy of self-love. The 'self' is thus not associated with egoism, but with dispassionate appraisal. The distanced 'self' can be the friend of the personal 'I'. One realises oneself through 'the other'. Ricoeur builds on the ideas of Aristotle (it is for himself most of all that each man wishes what is good) and Plato (it is the best part in oneself that one loves) in suggesting that ethical individuals must be their own friends. Following Ricoeur, ethics is based upon friendship, an equal sharing, in justice tempered by love and in realising oneself through 'the other'.

Just institutions

When Ricoeur (1992) talks of institutions, he refers to the bonds of common mores shared by a historical community and to interpersonal relationships that exist outside of face-to-face interactions. The notion of just institutions encompasses a conception of justice for all third parties, extending beyond serving the limited interests of one

particular group: striving towards bringing about freedom of every other that is similar to my own. Ricoeur interprets justice in light of love: the good life extends well beyond desiring justice in the sense of equal rights, which are, ultimately, reducible to a utilitarian calculation. In Ricoeur's notion of justice, relationships of equality between myself and another yield to asymmetrical relationships in which I am willing to perceive myself the potential aggressor rather than the potential victim. Levinas (1990), too, considers asymmetry to be integral to the good life. However, for Levinas, the 'other' to whom unequal obligation is due is an authority figure. The difference is clear: Ricoeur's asymmetry is inspired by perception of potential personal dominance and, therefore, compassion, Levinas' by obedience.

I find refreshing Ricoeur's suggestion that placing oneself at another's disposal diminishes the severity of living according to rules, especially in contemporary society, which *'reduces everything to a level of cost-benefit analysis'* (Lyon, 1999: 40). For Ricoeur, re-interpretation yields an endless possibility of happiness; individuals become human when they integrate their desire to live well with a desire for the good life for society. Similarly, O'Neill (1996) argues that the seemingly irreconcilable differences between universalists and particularists, represented respectively by deontology (Kant) and virtue (Aristotle) can and must be reconciled in practical reason.

The relevance of Ricoeur's philosophy for educators

1. Ricoeur's willingness to go beyond strict mathematical equality seems to me to be a necessary ideal for educators who wish to encourage pupils towards relationships of care and consideration rather than the merely functional. Ricoeur's philosophy reveals a capacity for human happiness that is missing from rigorous rationality, utilitarianism and postmodernism.
2. Mindful of the importance of the 'self' in the ethical endeavour, education has a part to play in contributing to pupils' formation of self-love and self-respect through self-appraisal against the norm.
3. In order to facilitate the development of practical wisdom, teachers might model, explicitly, judgement processes that come into play where conflicting norms provide no definitive guidance for action.

4. Pupils could be supported in understanding the virtue of friendship. Ricoeur's work suggests the centrality of empathy in creative imagination that enables one to relate fully to another. He suggests that narrative is one means of developing and heightening empathy, a matter investigated more fully in Chapter Four, and central within the case studies.
5. Ricoeur's ethical aims offer a sufficiently sensitive and inclusive model for use in multicultural institutions, where moral norms must not only be respected but also interrogated and evaluated.
6. Teachers might support ethical development by encouraging pupils' capacities for self-conscious reflection: Ricoeur's 'distanciation' (1986).
7. Both the universal and the particular are seen as vital within an education aiming towards supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development.

Summary

This chapter has investigated how philosophy acts as a resource that informs ethical attitudes and provides models of ethical approaches:

Strawson (1986) shows that freedom of choice is impossible, yet emphasises that notions of moral agency depend upon notions of freedom: individuals necessarily consider themselves to exercise freedom of choice, and hence to be deserving of praise or blame.

Ricoeur (1996) demonstrates how the notions of ideology and utopia can be used as different vantage points, facilitating criticism: individuals can create sufficient distance from their personal ideas and beliefs to interrogate prejudices. Ricoeur believes self-conscious reflection to be possible if dialectic activity between interpretation and empiricism is maintained (1986).

Aristotle (1953) proposes individual virtue and personal excellence in acting according to the 'golden mean', as the means of developing ethical behaviour.

Kant's (1958) ethics is based upon the premise that humans are capable of using rational thinking to arrive at universal moral 'truths'.

Nietzsche's (1990) nihilism denies the validity of teleology and metanarratives, suggesting the adoption of attitudes of detached irony towards ourselves.

Ricoeur (1992) suggests the necessity of both particularist features of virtue and universalist morality in developing adequate ethical aims and responses, an assertion

supported by O'Neill (1996). Relating Ricoeur's (1992) conceptions of ethics and morality to education, universalist morality is necessary in establishing and maintaining norms that provide a framework of standards and rules that pupils accept as fair and consistent. I suggest that such frameworks nurture a sense of security: pupils know what is expected and can judge their own behaviour against the norm, which, following Ricoeur, supports the emergence of moral self-respect. However, particularist morality is necessary when unusual or unique occurrences render application of the norms unjust. Hence Ricoeur's model answers to the complexity of experience within education, where stability and challenge must co-exist. These ideas concerning ethics underpin Chapter Three's focus upon educational aims.

CHAPTER THREE

Education's task: Developing 'I' *and* 'we'

'The main purpose of education is to help people to live a better individual life and also to contribute to the improvement of wider society.'

(Davies, Gregory and McGuinn, 2002: 113)

Introduction: Can philosophers help teachers?

This chapter explores how philosophy can guide teachers' response to seemingly irreconcilable challenges they encounter. Philosophers of education's work forms a starting point, developed later in the chapter through reference to Aristotle (c350BC/1953), Foucault (1994) and Ricoeur (1995). Analytic philosophers, Hirst, Peters and Dearden, who contributed to philosophy of education in England in the 1960s and 1970s, provide a basis for contemporary writers' critique of education within England as a post-industrial, pluralist liberal democracy, seeking to maintain political credibility and economic competitiveness and to further develop social inclusion. This chapter investigates issues regarding the aims of education in promoting personal development and simultaneously conserving and transforming society. As education is considered a vehicle for promoting the good life, it is involved in an ideological and utopian enterprise, as examined in Chapter Two with reference to Ricoeur (1991).

The principles of Enlightenment emancipation, personal development through academic and intellectual activity, are inherent within and necessary to education conceived as transformational. Yet I explain my perception that the traditional notion of autonomy may be too closely associated with attitudes of infallibility, insufficiently reflecting the provisional nature of knowledge, hence my reservations concerning autonomy as a central educational aim (Hirst and Peters, 1970). I develop the more limited conception of pupil self-determination, which seeks to maintain a focus on pupils' capacity for self-expression and experience of agency.

Education in England faces challenges arising from the now-dominant epistemology within technological societies; knowledge conceived as *technical rationality*;

Habermas' term implying that the human action controlling environments can be accurately and instrumentally quantified:

> *'The kind of knowledge which counts in advanced technologised societies ... knowledge of facts and figures and how to use them. In this view, the purposes of education are systematically rewritten as knowing how to make a profit and gain competitive advantage, a leaning, in Aristotelian terms towards* techne *(excellence in skillful making) rather than* phronesis *(excellence in wise practice).'*
>
> (McNiff 2002: 60)

Chapters One and Two have illustrated the importance to the ethical aim of the good life of Aristotle's *phronesis.* Other important values are easily neglected when demonstrable outcomes are the primary focus of education (Carr, 2005), thus threatening the free intellectual inquiry essential to democratic society (Becher, 1989), and suggesting the distorted view that learning consists in knowledge accumulation rather than the development of cognitive capacities (Shayer and Adey, 2002) and causing the centrality of morality in education (Davies *et al*, 2002) to be overlooked.

Education towards the good life is also challenged by the effects of postmodernism's moral relativism; the accompanying insecurity, suspicion and powerlessness that can be engendered, which Scott-Baumann (2003) addresses, inspired by Ricoeur's philosophy. Scott-Baumann explores the Citizenship Curriculum's potential to counter postmodernism's effects and challenging educators to view themselves as agents capable of effecting change.

Ricoeur's philosophy may be particularly attractive to contemporary British educators because it suggests possible responses to potentially problematic features within education:

1. Views of epistemology can present challenges. In an information-rich age, extensive information could be potentially overwhelming to individuals, inspiring contradictory attitudes towards knowledge. On one hand, factual information (and positivism) enjoys a position of supremacy within education, as within society characterised by a scientific world-view. On the other hand, knowledge is also seen as limited, provisional and rapidly changing. Educators may experience uncertainty

about the relevance and 'durability' of what is taught. Ricoeur's hermeneutics emphasises doubt and difficulty as valuable in journeying towards knowledge.

2. Technical rationality within education cannot recognise nor adequately address the multiplicity of meaning and experience of learners within pluralist societies. Ricoeur's interest in narrative and metaphor supports a view of the incommensurable as rich and vital, rather than, as instrumentalist models may construe it, a frustration. Narrative provides a creative development beyond the narrow confines of rationality.
3. It is possible for educational initiatives such as the curricula for Citizenship, Religious Studies, Critical Thinking and Philosophy and Ethics, which might be interpreted as attempts to address social and communitarian values, to proceed on a superficial level without addressing ontology. Ricoeur's work preserves ontology as the basis for action.
4. In the face of apathy and uncertainty, Ricoeur's philosophy encourages individuals to believe themselves capable of and responsible for action.

Later in this chapter, Ricoeur's work is used to address more fully current complexities within education; educational aims and the notions of autonomy and self-determination.

Epistemology in education: rationality and subjectivity

Certain epistemological assumptions within education demand closer examination in confronting current problems. McNiff (2002) refers to three typologies of knowledge, the first and second of which, I suggest, are observable within contemporary education in England:

1. Technical rational, propositional or '*know that*' knowledge. Knowledge consists in an abstract body of external facts and figures that can be transmitted. The act of knowing can here be supported by reference to external sources as evidence.
2. Procedural knowledge or '*know how*', where claims to knowledge are supported by demonstration of skills. This knowledge type, as the one above, can be incorporated unproblematically within current education and motivated by the importance to a nation's economic competitiveness of a skilled workforce.
3. Personal or tacit knowledge, a subjective knowledge arising possibly through experience or genetic inheritance, which is not dependent upon rationalisation nor

external authority; a typology I consider to be insufficiently recognized within education.

I consider problematic the conception in narrowly instrumental terms of learning. Stated aims of the England's National Curriculum include, **firstly** '*to provide opportunities for all pupils to* ***learn and to achieve***' and **secondly** ***'to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development*** *and to prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life'* (emphasis added). The explained interdependence between the aims reveals the instrumental nature of the aims of the National Curriculum: ultimately, contemporary education aims to raise standards (of a technical rational type):

> *'These two aims reinforce each other. The personal development of pupils, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, plays a significant part in their ability to learn and to achieve.* ***Development in both areas is essential in raising standards of attainment*** *for all pupils.'* (emphasis added)
>
> (National Curriculum Online, 09/12/06)

I suggest that personal development is valued for instrumental rather than intrinsic reasons. Quantifying educational effectiveness within League Tables exacerbates instrumentality.

Another difficulty arises when intellectual development is equated with knowledge-acquisition rather than with the use of knowledge in solving problems. The contributions of theorists such as Piaget to understanding cognition as developmental have been challenged by evidence that learning is grounded in social situations (Wood, 1998). Thinking involves the application of humanly relevant concepts: thinking and language are dependent upon context and purpose (Bruner, Goodnow and Austin, 1986). Narrative genres and social context are implicated with thinking: when presented with a problem, research subjects converted displays into mini narratives in order to help solve the problem (Bruner *et al*, 1986, Donaldson, 1978). The notion of narrative is explored in Chapter Four, as a precursor to the use of textual narrative in stimulating thinking within the case studies described in Chapters Seven and Eight.

Associating learning exclusively with demonstrable outcomes and specific kinds of cognition and rationality can be seen as limiting full development, including personal

(ethical) development. Indeed, difficulties with rationality are encountered again in Chapter Six, with reference to research within the social sciences. 'Rationality' contributes towards a view of learning as objective, the *'disinterested pursuit of knowledge'* (Pendlebury, 2005:55). Without negating critical understanding, justification, reason, evidence and critical inquiry, Pendlebury examines how education might acknowledge subjectivity (and I include the 'tacit' knowledge described above within 'subjectivity'). Pendlebury emphasises feminists' perception of subjectivity as vital in respecting learners' humanity rather than for what they know and in creating a caring world in which to live. Subjectivity is thus seen as central to providing the curriculum with meaning. Pendlebury's 'epistemic communities', which share and maintain resources for acquiring and maintaining knowledge, are also caring communities.

Dearden (1984) conceives intellectual education as consisting of cognitive content (curriculum content), discernment (being alert for inconsistency / inadequacy / invalidity) and development of moral character (assuming responsibility for intellectual standards), which tends to support feminists' claim (Pendlebury, 2005) regarding subjectivity-related gender difference. However, Dearden's acknowledgement of the necessity to critical thinking of imagination (1984) and Peters' (1973) belief that good education must strengthen the imagination so that ideas can be connected and their significance appreciated, reveals that thinking and learning cannot be limited to technical rationality. Similar epistemological issues are addressed within Kant's notion of the *noumenal* and Ricoeur's explication of the hermeneutic interpretation of textual knowledge, addressed in Chapter Ten. Dearden acknowledges without challenge education's neglect of the subjective:

> *'... not all learning, and not some of the most educationally valuable learning, can be formally assessed, which poses a difficult dilemma in a harsh political climate which insists on the formally quantifiable as being alone real or worthwhile.'*
>
> (1984: 136)

Aims of education

Changes to community life, economies and industrialised production in developed societies have necessitated an evolution from traditional, informal instruction and

knowledge-transmission within successive familial generations, towards formal, external, mass education (Abbott and Ryan, 2000). The overarching statement of values of the National Curriculum reflects the potential tension between education some view as transformative (Abbott and Ryan, 2000) and other as conservative (Foucault, 2000):

> *'Foremost is the belief in* ***education ... as a route ... to ... the well-being****, of the individual.'*
>
> *'...Teachers have to reappraise their teaching in response to the changing needs of their pupils and the impact of social, economic and cultural change...* ***Education only flourishes if it successfully adapts to the demands*** *and needs of the time.'*
>
> (National Curriculum Online 09/12/2006, emphasis added)

It is unclear whether education is conceived primarily as serving social, political, economic, or humanist aims, although the mutual dependence between education and the economy is acknowledged (Becher, 1989; Dunne, 2005) as is the role of education in transmitting ideology (Davies *et al*, 2002). However, 'education' and 'development', with which it is inextricably associated, are assumed to be normatively good (Hirst and Peters, 1970). 'Education' purportedly speaks of understanding, sensitivity, attitudes and dispositions, not merely knowledge and skills, suggesting perhaps that pupils may currently be schooled rather than educated. Davies *et al* (2002) believe education to be, fundamentally, a moral enterprise contributing towards building a better world, a belief I share.

Teaching and authority structures within schools are designed to facilitate the transmission of knowledge (Hirst and Peters, 1970), yet, following Hirst and Peters, educated individuals can engage in critical thinking, act autonomously, possess specialised knowledge and demonstrate aesthetic sensitivity. However, I would argue that knowledge transmission influenced by instrumental rationality may be inconsistent with the desired attributes Hirst and Peters describe. Autonomy does not derive from learning an accepted body of knowledge. Education as knowledge-transmission is largely cerebral, existing almost exclusively for extension of the intellect, a limited view in which individuals' capacities are conceived in terms of 'the mind' rather than of 'the person'. I prefer Warnock's (1992) conception of education

as a vehicle for satisfying individuals' desires to exercise increasing control over their environments, which makes an explicit link between learning, intellectual development, the satisfaction of drives and Enlightenment freedom; some constituents of my personal notion of self-determining education.

Values and England's National Curriculum

Liberal democracies depend upon cognitive, technical and creative competence, and require strong social and public institutions. Hence education plays a fundamental, although marginalised role in the development of individuals' moral values. Differing views concerning the identification and role of core values may explain teachers' ambivalence towards pupils' personal development: Trigg (2005) suggests that certain specific fundamental moral values exist as objective, universal truths, whilst Warnock (1992) argues that, within pluralist societies, shared understandings cannot be assumed nor attained. Stated values underpinning England's National Curriculum include:

- Personal development
- Equality of opportunity for all
- A healthy and just democracy
- A productive economy
- Sustainable development
- Valuing ourselves, our families and other relationships
- Diversity in society and environment

Honesty, justice, trust, and sense of duty are identified as core virtues.
Pupils are to be taught the principles for distinguishing right and wrong.

(Statement of Values, National Curriculum Online, 09/12/06)

The laudable statement of values does not describe principles for distinguishing right and wrong, nor how to resolve potentially conflicting values (such as a productive economy and sustainable development), justifying my concern with ontology and a focus on how dilemmas are to be debated. Stated aims of education may contain inherent normative contradictions, as, in this instance, between prescription and autonomy, endorsed as a core educational value:

> *'The school curriculum should pass on enduring values, develop pupils' integrity and autonomy.'*

(National Curriculum Online 09/12/2006)

German academic, Ruhloff (2004), states the functions of education as he observes them rather than as stated ideals, revealing the potential use of education as a vehicle for greater social control:

- to develop the kind of functioning that civil community requires
- to stabilise conviction systems
- to discipline adolescents
- to position adolescents for employment
- to personalise and socialise adolescents

As these statements show, education is charged with preparing individuals for society, a fundamentally conservative and potentially oppressive function in view of Carr's (2004) assertion that decision-making within current education is based upon the politically and economically driven interests of the powerful rather than the individuals' interests, a circumstance lamented by Herbst (1973) over three decades ago. Herbst deplores the consumerism that drives education: students and skills acquired are debased and rendered merely a means to a social end; the machinery of society grooms individuals for being used. Herbst reveals the unseen workings of ideology in conflict with the principles of personal emancipation through education.

A liberal education and autonomy

Liberal education is concerned primarily with the freedom of the learner (Lovlie and Standish, 2002). Similarly, Peters (1966) opposes the restriction of education to extrinsic ends, such as producing material goods.

Philosophers of education hold divergent views; some consider government involvement in education as essential in ensuring equality of opportunity, whilst others view it as a threat to individual liberty (Carr *in* White, 2003). Liberal education is associated with lifestyle choices: the state should not prescribe a distinctive lifestyle (Davies *et al*, 2002), a view that conflicts with statements of values of the curriculum. Following Davies *et al*, the state should exist to serve the individual: society has allowed government to exercise too much control over schooling. However, they consider legitimate education's transmission of democratic ideology, respect for the law, tolerance of others' beliefs and a commitment towards discussion rather than

violence, indeed democratic ideology is essential in enabling pupils to judge government.

Closer consideration of these issues reveals their association with moral values. Walker (2005) suggests that liberal education consists in individual liberty, equality of respect and consistent rationality: the tension between individual liberty and equality of respect necessitating consistent rationality. In effect, this position re-states the incompatibility between particularist and universalist morality, with consistency i.e. rationality as arbitrator. Yet rationality cannot claim to be objective or value-free (Hollis, 1994). Stated thus, it is apparent that the irreconcilable particularist / universalist opposition is maintained. This problem at the heart of rationality has implications for the notion of autonomy, premised upon the rationality central to Kant's philosophy and the Enlightenment justification of rationality as independent of external authority.

Other important aspects of liberal education flow from the principles of autonomy; decision-making based upon one's own conceptions of what is of value in life: tolerance is the logical outcome of respect for others viewed as equals similarly desirous of living according to their interests and values (White, 2003). However, in addition to autonomy's internal inconsistency, Foucault denies that individuals can operate outside of power relations: individuals' preoccupation with freedom and their refusal to submit to power they experience evidences the fields of power within which individuals operate (Foucault, 2000).

Irreconcilable tensions within liberalism become evident: the avoidance of prescribing one kind of lifestyle above another is inherent within liberalism, yet the normative valuing of individualism inherent within a valuing of autonomy constitutes prescription of values (Smith *in* White, 2003). Moreover, Smith argues, autonomy may be less attractive than it first appears: individuals acting independently may be less effective in achieving social reform than might collective action. Individualism might be construed as a male value: women may not place an equally high value on independence (Pendlebury, 2005). My own concerns with autonomy conceived as independence relate to the need for global citizens, faced with global environmental, cultural and political challenges, to recognize interdependence and mutual co-

operation as essential to responding to challenges. I associate autonomy as independence with infallibility, which may encourage isolationist, assertive/aggressive attitudes. Heyting and Winch (2004) view democratic, capitalist societies as valuing critical rationality and self-determination so highly that they potentially threaten societal maintenance. Heyting and Winch suggest, moreover, that individuals maintain social order on a personal level through internally ordering their own individuality in accordance with a notion of autonomy that could be equated with self-restriction rather than emancipation.

Whereas, previously, value-neutrality was advocated in the interests of respecting learners' dignity through avoiding authoritarian forms of 'moulding' and 'shaping'; information was to be presented dispassionately (Hirst and Peters 1970), the National Curriculum now explicitly rejects value-neutrality in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (National Curriculum Online 09/12/2006); a sudden about-face inconsistent with maintaining the educational aim of autonomy. Moreover, rhetoric concerning pupil and teacher autonomy is misleading: pupils enjoy neither social nor economic independence (Jones and Wallace, 1992) and teachers are perceived as technicians delivering prescribed curricula (Carr 2003). In view of the problems associated with autonomy, I reject autonomy as an educational aim and develop a more limited, but creative notion of self-determination that retains important principles underpinning autonomy.

Self-determination: A defensible educational aim

Chapter Two described Strawson's (1986) assertion that individuals' perception of themselves as self-determining regarding choices is essential to moral responsibility; being properly deserving of praise or blame (see Chapter Two). Pupils' belief in and experience of self-determining agency is central to not only moral development, but to motivation, and, following Cashmore (1984), to disaffection which arises from feelings of impotence in the face of limited future prospects. I view the development of pupil self-determination as essential to self-expression and ethical decision-making: pupils need skill in evaluating a multiplicity of opportunities and in meeting the challenges inherent in living in modern society. Following from this principle, educational practice should support empowerment of individuals to maximize their

potential growth as human beings, not merely to increase technical rational knowledge. Teachers should support pupils in developing self-expression and management of own learning, with a focus upon responsibility and consideration of others.

Education is undoubtedly concerned with fulfilling a dual function: the development of self-regulation in the sense of developing reasonable emotions and behavioural responses (Aristotle 1953), and developing pupils' independence and the assumption of greater responsibility, which may be construed as children's natural desire to exercise increasing control over their world and their affairs (Warnock, 1992) or as 'will to power' (Nietzsche, 1990). Seemingly incompatible demands are thus held in tension: education must initiate children into the received wisdom of their cultural heritage, but children's views must be listened to and respected as participants in decision-making that affects them.

Increasingly, the status of children as individuals separate from their family is recognized (UN Convention on rights of children, 1989). The power relations inherent within adult-child relations are key factors in the debate about rights and self determination, but may be downplayed because, as Warnock (1992) recognises, being liked and loved is not a matter of rights: relationships cannot be externally imposed. Establishing trust between adult and child, learned within the family, is necessary to developing the sense of self prerequisite to self-determination (Walker, 2005).

Another potentially problematic issue relating to children's rights concerns conflict resolution, where adults' and children's opinions differ concerning what is in children's best interests. Davie and Galloway (1996) suggest that school policies regarding self-determination require further development, believing that the practical experience of decision-making and having views respected is necessary to developing efficacy in decision-making, understanding of society and of the self. However, I consider a further advantage of policy development to be the explicit addressing of power-relations inherent within education and the responsibilities practitioners assume *in loco parentis*. "Power-relations" may be conceived pejoratively, when wrongly equated with domination. Foucault's (1994b) views on legitimate power-relations within education are explicated later in this chapter. I argue that teachers' rightful authority and responsibility, which should support pupils' development of security and

trust, is easily eroded by confusing authority with abuse of power. Consequently, teachers may become unsure of their own role, fearing it to conflict with pupil self-determination. In exceptional circumstances, coercion may even be necessary to teachers exercising a duty of care in the best interests of all. Necessary (minimal) paternalism should be explicitly acknowledged within policy documentation.

Self-determined learning is the fundamental procedural principle of well-directed education (Walker, 2005). Children must experience learning as a matter upon which they are consulted if the relationships of trust and respect that support the emergence of self-determination are to develop. Moreover, consultation increases ethical agency by motivating commitment to maintaining agreed norms. Rigid curriculum structures that prescribe only certain kinds of subjects and thinking, with a primary focus on assessment and a lack of time are not supportive of practices conducive to self-determination: evidence that pupil self-determination is not really valued. Following psychologist Carl Rogers (2007), personal actualisation or freedom develops when the experimental self, rather than the safeguarding self, is supported (Fisher, 1990). Technical rationality has ethical implications on an institutional level: schools trapped by performative measures like league tables might be described as practising 'institutional safeguarding'.

Initiatives such as 'Teaching for Learning' offer increasing opportunities for self-managed learning associated with self-determination. Increased pupil self-determination has implications for teacher education: where pupils self-manage learning, teaching expertise, developed through formal learning and sustained practical experience in working with pupils, is required (Walker, 2005).

Criticism of critical thinking

Critical thinking is associated with self-determination. A seldom-acknowledged feature of critical thinking, essential in challenging prejudice and complacency, is its potential to destabilise because there is no easy way to limit it. Davies *et al* (2002) question what holds society together and what limits to unacceptable action are imposed where critical thinking is encouraged. Ethical climates for learning and for debate among pupils are necessary, making explicit the norms guiding critical thinking, including the

requirement also for creative and caring thinking (Lipman, 2003). The unseen workings of ideology are illustrated by the recent introduction of a certain (limited) brand of Critical Thinking Curriculum, which creates the illusion of encouraging critical thinking, which reinforces rationality's hegemony (Scheurich, 1997) by suggesting that the incommensurable can be reduced to 'correct' answers. Despite these reservations, I welcome the Critical Thinking Curriculum, as its principles acknowledge a valuing of broadening conceptions of learning. Ricoeur's ethical 'aim towards the good life, with and for others, in just institutions' (1992: 172) suggests a productive approach towards managing critical thinking, which should not proceed with an exclusive focus upon logical argument, but also accompanying ethical attitudes.

Educational reform and attitudes towards learning

Politicians' control over education (Carr, 2004) and punitive inspection regimes, does not support the development of the relationships of trust necessary to self-determination. Later in this chapter, antidotes to postmodern suspicion are explored further, with reference to Ricoeur (1986). Self-determination as an educational aim makes extensive demands for educational reform, including current curriculum content and pedagogy, the separation of politics and education, and changes to teacher education. Shayer and Adey (2002), Neo-Piagetian theorists, recognise that time must be allocated to learning if it is to be viewed rightly as developing the intellect rather than as the accumulation of knowledge. Educational change can only occur within the context of wider socio-political change (Dunne, 2005). The thought of large-scale educational reform is indeed daunting and can lead to paralysis if change is perceived impossible: systems are self-perpetuating.

Education is revealed as reflecting broader social, economic and political attitudes. Donaldson (1978) suggests that pupils being considered educational 'failures' results from the social demand for convenient, cheap labour, denigration of manual labour and society's preoccupation with rank order. She argues that emotional development has suffered cultural neglect, despite the possibility for education to emphasise emotional as much as intellectual development and the importance of feelings to thinking (Donaldson, 1992).

Warnock (1992) supports the role of feeling in guiding moral judgement, because feelings are necessary to changing attitudes: morality must be capable of generating commitment. Social constructivists Sharron and Coulter (1996) suggest the legitimacy of teaching as an act that mediates values and morality, providing the emotional involvement in learning considered necessary to ensuring motivation and energy.

In addition to intellectual rigour, the implication in cognition of narrative, emotion, the imagination, the subjective and attitudinal factors, shows the impoverishment of education reduced to technical rationality, which reflects the philosophical problematic of subject-object. Philosophers' broad and distanced perspectives can be used as resources to invigorate tautologous debates.

Philosophers and education

Aristotle: Reasonable emotions

Aspects of Aristotle's (c350BC/1953) thinking may have advisory potential for application within contemporary education. Ideas that no longer withstand interrogation nevertheless open lines of inquiry for teachers.

Aristotle's emphasis upon the fullest development and exercise of individual capacities compatible with social life, is relevant for educators generally and for the empirical work described later in the thesis, as are many aspects of his moral philosophy, summarised in the table below. Application of the virtues, as the golden mean, and *phronesis,* practical wisdom, to individual development prevents 'fullest development' from becoming self-indulgence or over indulgence.

Figure 5's brief encapsulation of relevant aspects of Aristotle's thinking provides possible guidance for teachers: behaving according to society's moral norms and standards is desirable, preferably through ethical self-regulation (practising virtues), or moral constraint (obeying justice). An idealised picture emerges of the virtuous, intellectually developed, reasonable, verbally persuasive and eloquent individual, ethical in action and intention, respectful of society and motivated to embrace discovery and learning. Parts of this description are resonated by the Citizenship

Curriculum (2007), although the focus of the latter also incorporates an explicit component relating to democratic government. Educators may find particularly relevant Aristotle's *praxis:* good actions for the self and others and *phronesis:* practical wisdom, essential for deciding what is good in specific circumstances.

Figure 5: Aristotle, advisor on contemporary education

Aristotle	Possible implications for teachers
1. Human life forms part of an ordered whole that is progressing towards a purposeful end-point (telos).	a. Encourage pupils to view their acts as meaningful in contributing to a better world. b. Each person has a part to play.
2. The way to achieve happiness is to cultivate the virtues, which are the mid-point, 'the golden mean' between extremes, the vices. Justice, generosity, courage, self-respect and modesty are virtues.	a. Consideration of extremes of opposing concepts might help to deepen and broaden understanding of the mid-point concept. b. Contemplation and reflection are integral to developing the virtues. c. It is possible to identify certain virtues that all can espouse. (This idea might be particularly relevant to and explored by teachers within multi-cultural educational settings.)
3. It is the duty of the state and of parents to inculcate learning of the virtues in the young.	a. Aristotle considers learning to be imparted by superiors, rather than as mutual discovery. b. Adults' paternalism is legitimate. c. Pupils must conform to society's norms. Unlimited self-indulgence, self-assertion and inhibition are equally damaging.
4. To be reliable, knowledge (discourse) must be grounded by that which can be experienced.	a. Appropriate areas of study include those that relate to the physical world itself rather than metaphysics. b. Desires and emotions must be reasonable.
5. The world is a place of wonder and fascination.	a. Motivate pupils to view learning positively. b. There is always more to discover: retain an enquiring mind.
6. Discourse, debate and rhetoric are implicit within learning and are necessary to stability within the social sphere.	a. Pupils' need the thinking of others to help them develop their own thinking (in line with the thinking of the educational psychologist Vygotsky). b. Facility with language and language structures (such as logical deduction) is necessary to intellectual development. c. Freedom of speech is important in regulating social matters.
7. Developing the intellect brings the highest form of satisfaction.	a. Intellectual development is an integral part of educational endeavour.
8. The elite act ethically. Others respect society's laws through fear of punishment.	a. Aristotle holds exclusive views. The good life (and, by implication, education) is for the elite: wealthy males.

(Source: M Plint)

A short comment about each of the ideas described in the above table is appropriate.

1. Contemporary educators, as a body, do not subscribe to a teleological worldview. Individuals who do so might be ambivalent about acknowledging personal views to

pupils. I argue that in its aim towards betterment, education cannot altogether separate itself from the idea of telos: 'education' assumes a directed progression. My empirical work starts from the position that it is not only reasonable, but necessary, to defend a liberal hope because pupils must believe and experience their behaviour and intentions as important and worthy in increasing understanding and harmony: they must experience the affirmation of self-appraisal. Even protagonists of teleology, such as Rorty (1989), endorse such liberal hope. The ontological basis of the case studies is that education and individuals within institutions can contribute towards making the world a better place. The potential danger is acknowledged that pupils may feel they are playing a pre-determined role because certain (minimal) conformity is essential.

2. The Key Stage One Study was conceived with discussion of certain virtues as a primary means of observing pupils' understanding of them and to explore whether using narrative to further illustrate a specific virtue might appear to deepen understanding. Teachers can employ a 'dialogue' between opposing ideas to reach new understandings, illustrated by Ricoeur's (1991) investigation of 'ideology' and 'utopia', an activity that clarifies understanding rather than blurring concepts.
3. The National Curriculum asserts the state's agreement with Aristotle that teaching of morality legitimately resides within education. This thesis is based upon the assumption that moral development occurs within the entirety of the individual's experience: parental and other relationships, formal and informal education, narrative and many other influences. The empirical work expressly aims not to teach or prescribe 'moral law' but to explore and develop personal understandings and to investigate the feasibility of developing ethical understanding within contemporary educational structures.
4. In my empirical work, discussion is based upon pupils' experience, involving explanation and justification of thinking and recognising the implication of the subjective. Discussion therefore aims to make discourse reliable and emotions reasonable, and aims to develop consideration of personal and others' perceptions.
5. Wonder and fascination are aspects of learning easily lost when pupils are directed exclusively towards narrowly defined goals. One of the main aims of the empirical work was to provide a forum for discussion outside of narrow parameters. Aristotle recognises the importance of imagination to learning, a matter already discussed.

6. Arnhart's *Aristotle on political reasoning* (1981) investigates the priority Aristotle gives to various forms of oratory: discourse, debate, rhetoric and sophistry. The Citizenship Curriculum confirms public debate as necessary to stability within the political sphere. The case studies relating to this thesis focus on encouraging public discussion within a framework of respect for others. The Key Stage Four Study explores whether certain forms of oratory such as debate differ fundamentally from others such as philosophical inquiry. Descriptions of observations made during the study, comparing debating and philosophical inquiry are included in Appendix 7.
7. Within contemporary capitalist society, it is doubtful that the development of the intellect would necessarily be considered as yielding life's greatest satisfaction and Aristotle recognises that the life of the intellect is not universally appealing. Developing the intellect is, however, a primary aim of education. Recent studies provide quantitative evidence of pupils' increasing intelligence quotient scores through regular engagement in philosophical thinking and improved grade-attainment through self-managed learning strategies (Trickey, 2003). The case studies associated with this thesis are not based upon instrumental aims, but on the goods internal to philosophical inquiry.
8. Aristotle's elitist views are insupportable; indeed, inclusion and widened access to education are priorities within contemporary education. However, as the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and Every Child Matters (2003) documents show, educators cannot become complacent regarding learners' equality of opportunity.

Foucault: Power, legitimate authority and avoiding domination

As explored earlier in this chapter, Foucault denies the possibility of autonomy on the basis of power effects, but believes that individuals can be self-determining: they can be self-defining and can subvert or resist the effects of power. Foucault addresses explicitly the legitimate exercise of authority within education, potential abuse of authority and responses to abuse:

> *'I see nothing wrong in the practice of a person who, knowing more than others in a specific game of truth, tells those others what to do, teaches them, and transmits knowledge and techniques to them. The problem in such practices where power – which is not in itself a bad thing – must inevitably come into play is in knowing how to avoid the kind of domination effects where a kid is subjected to the arbitrary and unnecessary authority of a teacher, or a*

student put under the thumb of a professor who abuses his authority. I believe that this problem must be framed in terms of rules of law, rational techniques of government and ethos, *practices of the self and of freedom.'*

(Foucault, 1994b: 272)

Foucault here recognises that law and government are necessary, but insufficient in preventing abuse of power relations: *ethos*, culture, ethical intent is central.

Promoting values in education may be met with suspicion, because of the potential for indoctrination: the abuse of power. However, as Foucault shows, the potential for domination inheres within education generally, because of the power relations involved and not exclusively in relation to values in education: in fact, values in education and ethical behaviour are prerequisite to avoiding the abuse of power.

Ricoeur offers solutions

Ricoeur's interpretive hermeneutic approach, consistently revealed within his prolific writing but nicely summarised by Lowe (1986), addresses fundamental ideologies affecting postmodern society and education within it:

'... I have asked myself to what point the desacralization of the modern world is a fact *that is simply to be noted...I am surprised to see how many critical thinkers, whose suspicious nature is elsewhere limitless, capitulate before what they take to be the verdict of modernity and adopt the ideological function of science and technology in a most naïve fashion.'*

(Ricoeur, 1995: 63)

Alternating conceptions of and attitudes towards epistemology exist, neither satisfactory: unreflective reliance upon a positivist scientific world-view or the impotence of relativism. Ricoeur offers a view of epistemology that accepts the validity of the scientific model, yet also incorporates hermeneutics, the interpretation of texts (and of actions too, since Ricoeur suggests that actions can be 'read' as text). Following Ricoeur, refinement of understanding occurs progressively; re-interpretation resists finitude. He supports an exploratory approach that remains open to new perspectives, a view of knowledge vital in challenging an education reduced to certainties and demonstrable outcomes, which belies the complexity of knowledge. Ricoeur challenges the autonomy of empiricism, emphasising that supposedly 'factual' information should be subjected to analysis and interpretation rather than being

accepted blindly. Thus, knowledge is not seen as hard fact that closes off thinking but as open to development: rationality, empiricism and ontology inform epistemology.

Ricoeur's view of knowledge supports personal involvement in critical analysis: interrogating knowledge to create new understandings. Ricoeur models, for teachers and pupils, rigorous juxtaposition of and dialectic mediation between ideas, to explore creatively new meanings that emerge through thinking.

I suggest that critical analysis and ontology might guide teachers' attitudes towards the glut of rapidly changing information they encounter. Subjecting knowledge to interrogation inevitably introduces doubt and difficulty: Ricoeur affirms struggle as part of the development towards the good life. The incommensurability of knowledge discourages complacency and certainty, attitudes of infallibility and potential arrogance.

Ricoeur's focus upon narrative and the way metaphor contains multiple and often partially hidden meanings is not dissimilar, in my experience, to complex learning processes in which a multiplicity of factors past and present, inherent within and external to pupils and communities combine, interrelate and overlap, influencing and developing pupils' understanding. Foucault illustrates attributes of thinking by referring to *bricolage,* literally, using discarded building materials to fashion something new and Piaget's *decalage* describes the solidification and extension of thinking as more adequate understanding gradually evolves from inadequacy (Hersh, Paolitto and Reimer, 1979). Current curriculum and assessment structures possibly pressurise teachers into overlooking the value of this diversity for creativity and for extending understanding.

Ricoeur's view that narrative imbues experience with meaning relates to education as a vehicle for creating and transmitting meaning: education performs a narrative function. Academic disciplines can be viewed as manifestations of the shared attempt to explore experience in the world, rather than as exclusive territories (Becher, 1989), an approach that might enlarge pupils' view of learning.

Ricoeur recognises the subjective and objective as valid to epistemology. Applied within education, pupils' whole experience, the self as both myself (the immediate lived-in body through which I experience life subjectively) and as an other (the more distanced view of myself through which I can perceive my actions and thoughts reflectively) makes possible a dialectic process supporting the self and critical awareness necessary to successful self-managed learning and increased pupil self-determination.

Figure 6 illustrates my own interpretation of the value of Ricoeur's philosophy, applied to the challenges of technical rationalism within education.

Figure 6: A possible Ricoeurian response to the effects of postmodernism and technical rationality within education

Postmodern attitudes	Ricoeur
Knowledge is limited and situated. Action in the light of the meagre, flawed information is pointless. We can't be wise.	Be wise through actively, creatively and ethically exploring all available knowledge, conflicting and complex as it is, acknowledging its limitations and the fallibility of one's understanding.
There is no proof that action will prove effective.	There is no proof that action will prove effective. Ontological perspectives may guide action.
Thinking and values relating to the problem differ. All points of view are equally valid: it is impossible to evaluate the best course of action.	Critically analyse empirical data. Consider also subjective and ethical responses. Act, continuing scrutiny in reflexive, dialogic activity.
The problem is too large and nebulous for individuals or government to deal with.	The problem is large and nebulous. Individuals and nation states should act with ethical intention.
'Good' and 'bad' are relative. Hope is irrational.	Humans are fundamentally good, therefore hope is not irrational. In some instances, seeming irrationality may be ethically acceptable because knowledge is incommensurable.

(Source: M Plint, based upon interpretation of Ricoeur 1986, 1989)

Summary

In this chapter, I have suggested that developing ethical pupil self-determination should be a central aim of education: pupils' fullest personal development compatible with ethical behaviour towards others. Pupils must come to a realisation that exercising freedom might sometimes entail restraint; that temporary pleasure may be delayed or forfeited in achieving more important goals and that responsibility is the counterpart of freedom: individuals consider their acts free inasmuch as they are responsible for their choices (Strawson, 1986). Kemp (1988), referring to Ricoeur, expresses nicely how restraint differs from repressed freedom:

> *'But the interdiction that value imposes in the divide between that which one has preferred on the basis of deliberation and that which one desires spontaneously is not a simple repression of human life...In order for the interdiction to become truly repressive... it is necessary that it become instituted as a moral law which provides authority in the Kantian manner...'*
>
> (Kemp, 1988: 68)

Ricoeur elaborates upon Aristotle's assertion that 'Whoever is master of his pleasures is free in his actions and open to happiness' (Ricoeur, 1986: 97): a reminder that

responsibility and happiness exist in productive tension. I consider this fusion of happiness and responsibility a vital challenge to education. Education that aims to increase personal freedom must involve the learner in responsible decision-making, which demands reform to the culture within and structures of education.

If, as rhetoric suggests, values in education, that is, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and pupil self-determination are to succeed as educational aims, radical educational reform is necessary, consisting in:

- De-coupling education from politics, to avoid over-reliance upon reductive positivist measures 'proving' educational 'effectiveness'
- Providing educators with increased professional autonomy in making and implementing decisions, based upon educational rather than managerial criteria
- Changing cultures within schools to support pupils' self-management, boosting self-confidence and motivation
- Changing teacher education to develop skills that facilitate increased pupil involvement in managing a learning process utilising disciplined inquiry, discussion and reflection

I argue that the restriction of technical rationality, the dominant epistemology within the British education system, fails to account adequately for, and is insufficiently responsive to, human action. My empirical work explores further how a broader conception of epistemology within education might emerge, epistemology that allows elements of subjectivity to co-exist with reason and evidence (Pendlebury, 2005). Foregrounding pupil self-determination in learning and conceiving pedagogy as inquiry influences teacher-pupil relationships and pedagogy. The properties of narrative, claimed by philosophers to engage individuals' immediate identification, and narrative's perceived capacity to present an ethical world that prompts personal reflection is interrogated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

Narrative and Language

'The world of text of which we are speaking is not therefore the world of everyday language. In this sense it constitutes a new sort of distanciation that we can call the distanciation of the real from itself. It is this distanciation that fiction introduces into our apprehension of reality... Through fiction and poetry new possibilities of being-in-the-world are opened up within everyday reality.'

(Ricoeur, 1995: 43)

Introduction: The scope of 'narrative'

A term such as 'narrative' may be so broadly applied that it becomes meaningless without closer definition. 'Narrative' is used within a variety of contexts, including, for instance, psychotherapy, bereavement counselling and business, where employees' anecdotes concerning working practice are collated in order to make sense of organisational features and to design possible interventions for improvement (Callahan, 2005). In order to avoid potentially misleading assumed meanings, it becomes necessary to establish how 'narrative' is used within this thesis. Chapter One addressed the broad conception of narrative as providing individuals' and society's fundamental means of constituting and organising thinking and understanding (Lyotard, 1984); the idea that individuals make sense of their lives through conceiving events as possessing textual qualities (Ricoeur, 1992). Ricoeur considers narrative to be implicated in thinking, understanding and identity-formation. Strawson (2004) challenges Ricoeur's thesis concerning narrativity and identity-formation. Foucault (1988) recognises text as a technology used in ancient Greece for developing self-knowledge. As a linguist, Abbott (2002), similarly conceives narrative as relating to the totality of people's lives, not restricted to literature: narrative and language are defining human traits because all activities and events take place in time. Sequential events create an impression of cause and effect. Narrative is the 'form-finding' organisational structure for thought about time (Strawson, 2004).

Chapter Two focused upon the idea of 'metanarrative' or 'grand narrative', denoting the Enlightenment view of knowledge as theoretical unity, examining the impact on the fields of epistemology and morality of the rejection of the metanarratives of church and science associated with Enlightenment thinking. Chapter Two also investigated the part played by narrative in enhancing consideration of the 'other', and thus in moral development (Ricoeur, 1992). Lyotard (1984) closely associates the term 'narrative' with traditional knowledge and cultural wisdom: narrative's suggestion of cause and effect links it with the idea of 'teleology' or 'end':

> *'The formal problem involved might be expressed this way: how to do without narrative by means of narrative itself? On the political and social level, indeed, narrative in some sense always meant the negation of capitalism ... Yet narrative also means something like* teleology.*'*
>
> (Jameson, 1984: xix)

Chapter Three investigated the involvement of narrative understanding within education. The role of narrative in thinking was observed through children's imposition of narrative structures to support problem-solving when presented with intellectual challenges (Bruner, Goodnow and Austin, 1986; Donaldson, 1987). Narrative devices are thus implicated in constructivist learning, where existing understanding is used as a basis for new learning. Academic disciplines can be conceived as manifestations of attempts to make narrative sense of the world. Ricoeur and Lyotard consider narrative not merely as a new field of research but as central to thinking, a kind of thinking as legitimate as abstract logic (Jameson, 1984). I consider that education should acknowledge the elements of subjectivity implicit within epistemology as valuable in supporting learning. Narrative is implicated in epistemology: academic disciplines, including the discipline of philosophy, are reliant upon narrative as a means of explication and are similar to narrative in possessing traditions and histories (Lyotard, 1984). Philosophy, in possessing unexamined (narrative) 'myths' within metanarratives, fails to meet its own demands: philosophy presupposes and is dependent upon rational, logical, argument, yet philosophical discourse originates in phenomena such as beliefs, which are not produced nor sustained through logic (Le Doeuff, 1991; Rorty, 1980).

'Narrative' as used within the thesis title, refers to using stories to promote the development of moral values, so in this chapter I explore 'narrative' with specific reference to textual material, including speech and writing, such as myths and legends, parables, fairy stories and fiction. Philosophers and linguists make substantive claims regarding the power of narrative, the attempted expression of human meaning and truth (Ricoeur, 1986), to issue ethical challenges, claiming that both the form and content of language possess inherent ethical dimensions (Nussbaum, 1990). I explore these claims and challenges to the claims, to determine narrative's potential suitability for use as a stimulus to discussion about moral dilemmas within the empirical element of the thesis, which makes possible a practical evaluation of claims concerning narrative. Chapter Seven describes how textual narrative in the form of fiction extends six and seven year olds' discussion and thinking about moral values presented as 'Aristotelian virtues'. Chapter Eight describes how text presents 14 and 15 year-old adolescents with moral dilemmas for discussion that explores their narrative understanding (Lyotard, 1984).

The contributions of linguists, literary critics, psychologists and philosophers are included in my investigation of four main foci of narrative understood as storytelling and its relation to human lives, learning and moral development:

1. The role of various genres of narrative, as story-telling, in contributing to knowledge and understanding of ourselves, our own and other societies (Abbott, 2002; Bage, 1999; Bettelheim, 1975; Booker, 2004; Hawthorn, 1987).
2. Philosophers' claims that narrative serves as an ethical interface between the individual and society, with particular reference to the work of Ricoeur (1992), Nussbaum (1990) and Foucault (1988).
3. The relationship between language, a shared textual code, and thinking and learning (Lipman, 2003; Mercer, 2000; Vygotsky, 1934/1962).
4. The relationship between narrative and epistemology and the challenges it raises: narrative aspects of qualitative research methodology may help to sustain the credibility and illusion of objectivity and validity of quantitative methodology (Foucault, 2000; Walford, 1998).

1. How stories contribute to knowledge and understanding

Philosophers consider myth, metaphor and poetry to be particularly powerful narrative forms; a power Ricoeur attributes to language's capacity to affect individuals' subjectivity and objectivity, bridging the divide between feeling and reason (Ricoeur, 1986: 102).

Narrative genres

'Once upon a time'

Myth and folk or fairy tale represent the accumulated experience and wisdom of a society: myths' majestic themes and superhuman heroes carry spiritual force, focussing upon inner processes and dilemmas rather than events (Bettelheim, 1975). Similarly, fairy tale characters illustrate inner attributes: the presence of virtue and evil in everyone and the alternative choices individuals face. Following Bettelheim, fictive characters personify inner conflict without being prescriptive, allowing readers and listeners to engage in imagined implications and consequences and thus arrive at individualised solutions, whereas fables moralise. Fairy tales possess similarities with biblical texts with regard to employing religious motifs (similarities between fairies and angels come to mind). Fairy tales' unrealistic nature makes clear that inner processes rather than reality in the physical, external world are the main concern (Bettelheim, 1975). Biblical stories, fairy tales and heroic legends are conceived as traditional ways of inculcating moral values (Stephens, 1992). Cohan and Shires (1988) assert that the identifiable conventions of poetics make fiction recognisable as narration, even to young readers; a theme that is investigated within the Key Stage One Study, where young pupils confront the notion of the 'truth' of a fairy story, which they recognise as fiction.

Parables describe and prescribe

For Ricoeur, parable is a genre demanding choice and action: narrative mediates between description and prescription. By providing a vision of the good life (Kemp and Rasmussen, 1988), parables prompt a response from readers. The value of parables lies partly in the unexpected, extravagant, extraordinary and eccentric, which shock the reader's complacency (Ricoeur, 1995) and invite reflection and interpretation. Following Ricoeur, parables employ a logic of abundance and excess rather than of reciprocity, an asymmetry that produces 'distanciation', or rupture, between ordinary

and literary experience, prompting individuals to re-evaluate taken-for-granted perspectives. However, although the parables Ricoeur selects to illustrate his argument reveal the unexpected, I suggest that many parables are not characterised in this way, being simple analogies that invite identification with shared experience. I consider the attraction of parables to lie in their avoidance of didactic prescription: instead, the power of suggestion stimulates moral reasoning that supports the development of self-determined ethical maturity. 'Sermonising' and 'flat' characters may be uninteresting, stylistically unappealing and unconvincing (Bettelheim, 1975).

Realism: life in miniature

Readers are attracted by the presentation of realistic rather than idealistic characters, such as the real, rounded characters in Louisa May Alcott's 'Little Women', whose flaws are revealed to the reader (Mailloux, 1998). Following Mailloux, these adolescent characters' involvement in reading represents their developing self-discipline: reading of books supports the development of inner stability. Personal reform takes place as the girls read 'Pilgrim's Progress'. Intersubjectivity and intertextuality, multiple layers of social meanings and underpinning ideology and rhetoric (Stephens, 1992), further enhance interpretation.

Within fiction, an irreplaceable form of human knowledge, seemingly 'real' characters and a 'real' world can be presented to readers more distinctly and vividly than may be possible from personal experience (Rustin and Rustin, 1987), because fiction offers:

- A miniaturised image of society through which children can learn about society
- Characters with whom children can identify immediately and intimately, without the distancing that adults erect between themselves and fictional characters
- A scaling down to manageable size of strong emotions and concerns, thus establishing and maintaining internal resilience. For instance, fear of abandonment might be reflected within a character's temporary separation from a parent
- Opportunities for the expression of conflict
- Benign projections of feelings that enable change to occur
- Encounters beyond a child's immediate environment, through which a new aspect of the self can develop
- New understandings through vivid dialogue, imaginatively presented

- Insight into types of personalities
- Form to children's experiences of their inner world

The immediacy of readers' identification with heroes can only take place within a genre such as the novel: in the epic tale, readers and characters are too distanced for identification to occur (Bakhtin, 2002). Ricoeur (1986) similarly believes that narrative's immediacy affects individuals' subjectivity, but he asserts that narrative also supports objectivity; it provides sufficient distance to enable readers to recognise their own (limited) views compared with others'. Narrative thus appeals to reason and feeling, both of which were revealed in Chapter Two as necessary to ethics:

> *'On the one hand, reason, as an openness to the totality, engenders feeling as an openness to happiness. On the other hand, feeling interiorizes reason and shows me that reason is my reason...'*
>
> (Ricoeur, 1986: 102)

The media: soap opera and narrative news

Many of the themes presented within fairy tales: family life, sibling rivalry, the wicked stepmother, love, marriage and death and parting, share similarities with soap opera, thus linking contemporary narrative with its distant origins (Carter, 1990). The most fundamental, least trivial aspects of human life change most slowly, which explains the enduring relevance of certain themes: poverty, war and class struggle (Hawthorn, 1987). Stories are central within contemporary life: individuals spend time listening to and reading stories and watching television; even the news is presented in narrative form (Booker, 2004). Narrative's implication in the presentation of both historical and current events is relevant within the Key Stage Four Study, in which adolescent philosophers and debaters draw upon newspaper articles and information conveyed through the media.

The above brief exploration of various literary forms illustrates why textual narrative can serve as a vital vehicle for engaging with personally non-lived, but imaginable, experience.

Narrative as spiritual guru

Narrative enhances knowledge and understanding of mental life and emotional experience (Rustin and Rustin, 1987), arising from and seeking to assuage humankind's existential anxieties such as the need to be loved, the fear of death, the fear of being appraised as worthless and the love of life (Bettelheim, 1975). The psyche shapes and is shaped by narrative: stories reflect the inner workings of the psyche (Booker, 2004) and also convey the message that a good, rewarding life is possible despite adversity (Bettelheim, 1975). Stories are therapeutic because they enable individuals to arrive at their own solutions, by working through complex and ambivalent feelings represented by characters in stories. Internal pressures are released and externalised as they are made comprehensible through characters' actions.

Jungian approaches to personality formation, based upon the notion of 'archetypes', memory traces of ancestral history, emphasise two fundamentally beneficial attributes of stories (Bettelheim, 1975; Booker, 2004). Firstly, by telling children fairy stories, adults encourage children to entertain ideas of overcoming giants: thus to believe themselves capable of great success. By so doing, adults permit and approve children's desires to get the better of those (adults) in power over them, including parents; unconscious feelings that might otherwise elicit guilt. Stories act as a mechanism through which adults empower children, engendering feelings of worth to succeed their predecessors. Secondly, stories help children to discover their identity and encourage them to follow this with confidence: to accept problems without being defeated by them (Bettelheim, 1975) a function towards which education might aim, as discussed in Chapter Three.

Narrative as knowledge and intelligence-booster

Literature plays a fundamental role in creating positive feelings that support emerging rationality and sustain individuals in adversity (Bettelheim, 1975). Considering the high value placed upon folk-lore, this may not be an excessive claim: stories introduce individuals to society's view of reasoned thinking and reasonable action, thus supporting the emergence of cognition. Lyotard (1984) describes how societies use stories to define the criteria that will be used to evaluate success, competence and what is permissible within that society: the kind of social response a hero/ine receives bestows legitimacy or approbation upon his/her actions. Ethics is thus implicit within

culture (Siebers, 1992). Lyotard (1984) equates traditional knowledge, or culture, with narrative knowledge, challenging scientific knowledge's claim to be non-narrative knowledge, a matter I address later in the chapter. Stories develop the intellect through holding attention, stimulating the imagination and clarifying the emotions (Bettelheim, 1975), containing more meaning than that of which the individual is conscious, conveying both overt and covert meanings that act upon the conscious, pre-conscious and unconscious.

In view of young readers' strong identification with characters and additional subconscious meanings conveyed, it might be argued that stories' effects might as soon be potentially negative as positive; an argument underpinning film censorship. However, Rustin and Rustin (1987) and Stephens (1992) argue that these potential dangers are avoided in children's literature through narrative's assumption of hopeful moral and ideological positions, explicated later in this chapter.

Ricoeur encourages the use of metaphor in increasing meaning and creating new understandings through appealing to the imagination in fresh ways (1977). Narrative is thus associated with increased cognition. Ricoeur's rigorous interrogation of the use of metaphor and the Aristotelian connection between philosophical thinking and rhetoric illustrate the close critical and academic potential that literary scholarship and literary criticism possesses. Critical reading can be encouraged to challenge ideology presented through narrative (Stephens, 1992), indeed, one of narrative's functions can be to challenge dominant ideology (Bakhtin, 2002; Rustin and Rustin, 1987).

2. Narrative as an ethical interface / as hermeneutics

In hermeneutic philosophy, the non-egoistic self encounters and interprets text; symbolic meaning (Ricoeur, 1986). For Ricoeur, thought starts from the text: the implication of language and narrative in interpretation into meaning of the physical world and its events that exists independently of humankind's perception of it, supports a hermeneutic approach recognising that we think in signs, imbuing 'things' and 'events' with intent. Narrative is an inescapable interpretative mechanism (Ricoeur, 1992).

Within our culture, morality provides the assumed purpose for writing history and fiction: the objective of historical fiction is to create exemplary models for behaviour (Stephens, 1992), a view endorsed by Siebers' illustration that many readers of Jane Austin's 'Pride and Prejudice' identify with the characters of Elizabeth and Darcy, thereby engaging in ironic self-reflection (1992). Following Siebers, when readers laugh at literary characters, they are really laughing at themselves: reading provides a point of ethical engagement for the reader. Siebers suggests the near-inevitability of reference to literary characters and settings when attempting to sustain lengthy abstract theorising about ethics. He views ethical engagement with narrative and moral philosophy as inextricably linked, attributing the emergence of the Western classical tradition to Plato's translation of Homer into philosophy. The contributions of Ricoeur, Nussbaum and Foucault, as philosophers who specifically address narrative's relationship with morality, are included in this chapter. Chapter Five examines closely the claims made by Plato (c370BC/1961) concerning the benefits of speech and his rejection of writing; textual narrative.

Ricoeur: plots, characters and actors

For Ricoeur, fiction provides a privileged means whereby readers and listeners can encounter morality because in a story, characters' moral attributes can be understood as influencing the unfolding of the plot. Ricoeur explicates the narrative characteristic of life, the relation between the 'who?' and the 'what-and-why?' (1988: 96): individuals are the *characters* in their life stories, they *narrate* their stories through perceiving and relating events as meaningful, and are the *authors* of their stories when they perceive and create agency: deliberated action. And to every life story there is at least one *listener*: the individual.

For Ricoeur (1988), human language projects human action into the linguistic, practical, and ontological realms, hence involving philosophers in analytic philosophy (semantics), phenomenology (pragmatics) and hermeneutics (interpretation). At a semantic level, identification of the singularity of persons involves physical and psychical dimensions (my / mine), implicit within which is distinction from others. But linguistic analysis converges with phenomenology because action is a speech act:

> *'human action is **spoken** action ...on the one hand we speak about actions as events happening in the world: in this sense, the theory of action is the*

province of semantics ... On the other hand we designate ourselves as the agent of our actions ...The theory of action, then, appears as a province of pragmatics.'

(Ricoeur, 1988: 95, emphasis Ricoeur)

Recognising oneself as something in the world, having pre-understanding of belonging to the experience of the objective world, also introduces ontological dimensions.

Following Ricoeur, by ascribing agency to our acts, individuals enter the ethical realm, because when individuals evaluate themselves, they are judging themselves against standards of excellence. As we have seen Strawson (2004) rejects Ricoeur's (1988, 1992) association of narrative identity and ethics. Strawson rejects Ricoeur's conception of life as unified, despite Ricoeur's assertion that *'Historical narratives ...and fictional narratives, are grafted onto this immanent narrativity which equates a human life with one or many "life stories"* (1988: 98). Individuals' perception of 'otherness' within themselves emerges from their perception of being actors in their own lives, and thus able to appraise their own actions as good or unworthy. Narrative makes possible self-reference: perceiving the self as an 'other' with the same rights and responsibilities that others possess. For Ricoeur, intersubjectivity, the shared narrative through which individuals revise and therefore construct their personal identities, can be established with literary characters as with other individuals: judgements of others' actions can influence the individual. Hermeneutics comes into play, as individuals interpret the 'who' of action.

As has been discussed earlier in this chapter, culture is closely associated with narrative knowledge (Lyotard, 1984), and social norms constitute the accepted moral standards within society. Thus, for Ricoeur (1992), narrative is linked to ethics: actions in everyday life are shaped and judged by approval and disapproval. Construction of meaning within the individual is never value-neutral; individuals, as readers, are obliged to take a stance with respect to ethics. Humans view life as more than mere meaningless existence. Narrative's association with the notion of teleology and the desire to live an examined life has always been recognised (Lyotard, 1984). Many philosophers, including Foucault, Lyotard, Rorty and Strawson, reject Ricoeur's belief in a unified, teleologically meaningful life. Nietzsche's (1990) nihilism utterly opposes teleological views, yet Nietzsche seeks them.

How is the problem surrounding the interpretation of life as meaningful to be resolved? On one hand, teleological perspectives are associated with discredited metanarratives, on the other hand, Nietzsche's nihilism, life conceived as utterly meaningless, is depressing and unconvincing because Nietzsche's reflective behaviour demonstrates an ethical endeavour. I would argue that ethical endeavour, the desire for the good life, constitutes a teleology towards personal meaning. The interpretation of events as meaningful sequences rather than unrelated events is necessary to ethical development: consideration of the consequences of actions is implicit within ethical reasoning.

Nussbaum: Emotion guides rationality

Nussbaum (1990) claims the existence of a relationship between literature and moral philosophy, tracing a connection between language and the style and content of literature: authors' ethical attention and deliberation is illustrated in their language usage. To give appropriate consideration to the presentation of content involving moral dilemmas is, following Nussbaum, to adopt an ethical position. For Nussbaum, literature's mystery and indeterminacy presents an attractive and accessible vehicle for ethical engagement: readers are not obliged to engage in intellectual interrogation of abstract rules of morality or reasoning: general moral guidelines are considered non-prescriptively. Whereas emotion is often associated with irrationality and imprecision, Nussbaum considers it appropriate that emotion should inform the ascription of priority within certain situations. Nussbaum asserts that the appropriate implication of emotion in decision-making strengthens rationality rather than detracting from it.

Nussbaum therefore defends the Aristotelian prioritising of the particular over adherence to universal rules, without the abandonment of general rules as guiding principles that steer perception. For Nussbaum, literature provides a locus for the recognition of the emotions and the principles appropriate to ethics. Universal principles apply within literature, but the focus is upon specific characters and events. Like Siebers (1992), Nussbaum argues that such ethical involvement may be encountered more often within literature than philosophy.

Foucault: writing, a ' technology of the self'

Foucault believes self-knowledge a quest fundamental to human nature: the central motivator underpinning all human endeavour, and narrative in the form of journal-keeping, one technology through which self-knowledge can be developed (1988). The ancient Greeks thus used narrative as an interface that, in recording personal activities and thoughts, facilitated self-care and reflection perceived as prior to care for others, supporting the development of self-mastery; certain personal attributes and specific ways of behaving. Writing afforded a means towards self-knowledge and self-care. Following Foucault, Socratic writings, letters and treatises can therefore be interpreted as a means of activating self-awareness that ultimately translates into care for others, and of helping friends in their efforts to do so.

Foucault emphasises that, within the Western tradition, self-discernment is always socially mediated, dialogical activity, whether written (journals, diaries), spoken (counselling, confession, psychoanalysis) or self-reflective. Narrative is implicit within these 'technologies', whereas the Eastern tradition embraces the emptiness of (non-narrative) meditation, a different technology of self-care (ibid).

3. Language, society and learning

Language and society

Narrative conceived as meaning-making is prior to language; language is a tool for communicating meaning. Language, a system of signs; written, spoken and non-verbal, can only be interpreted by individuals who are part of a community and thus understand the language conventions and the meanings negotiated with others: communication is a public act (Cohan and Shires, 1988). Understanding connotations within language seems natural, instinctual and universal, but is achieved through cultural and historical mediation.

Language, learning and thinking

Language is the medium that makes thinking possible, hence language development and the development of thinking are interdependent (Vygotsky, 1934/1962). Following Vygotsky, language is understood to serve two main functions: it is both a cultural and a psychological tool (Mercer, 2000). As a *cultural tool*, language enables shared

knowledge to develop. Personal knowledge, investigation and reflection arise from a social and historical base of cumulative cultural wisdom, making possible the continued existence of human societies. Epistemology can be viewed as a story that has its own history that extends back in time, inevitably influencing the way it unfolds in the present and influences the future. This research degree can be likened to the telling of a minute part of a continuing, complex narrative, from the perspective of a situated character. Research thus performs a narrative function: a quest for growth in human knowledge and understanding, a continuation of humankind's cultural evolution, a phenomenon Booker (2004) describes as "The Quest", one of the seven basic plots into which all stories can be categorised.

As a *psychological (cognitive) tool*, language facilitates organisation of thoughts, reasoning and planning and reviewing of actions (Vygotsky, 1934/1962; Mercer, 2000). Teachers can use effectively language's psychological facility: question and answer sequences can be used to facilitate the development of understanding. Mercer (2000) identifies some of the characteristics of effective teachers:

- Teachers use questioning to reveal initial levels of understanding and then adjust teaching accordingly, to develop and extend understanding
- Questioning is used to encourage pupils to reason and to reflect, to make sense of their learning, which is thus not confined to the transmission of content. Metacognition, the making explicit of thought processes, facilitates future problem-solving
- Teachers view learning as a social process, using pupils' contributions to build common knowledge within the class: Lyotard's (1984) conception of 'narrative' epistemology

Socratic questioning, a specific kind of repetitive questioning, and philosophical inquiry, a form of procedural discussion, fulfil these characteristics of effective teaching, and are therefore used within the case studies comprising the empirical element of the research study.

4. Narrative: research, epistemology and ontology, Lyotard (1984)

The validity challenge concerning quantitative and qualitative research methods within the social sciences has an extended history. Lyotard (1984) challenges claims that

scientific knowledge is narrative-free, asserting that research is affected by narrative form. Rigour and accuracy, supposedly attained through 'confessional' ethnographical accounts, are shaped by certain conventions, including that of narrative: researchers may portray themselves heroically, making ground-breaking claims, or anti-heroically, emphasising innumerable research difficulties or failures (Walford, 1998). Narrative research fails to provide the claimed increased rigour, but may, moreover, render more plausible the claims to rigour of quantitative or positivistic methods, allowing these to retain illusions of scientific validity and value-freedom.

Narrative research, lacking the (illusory) credibility offered by positivistic data, may be more easily disregarded by educational policy-makers. Research is legitimated through performativity, the ability to measure, which increases the researcher's ability to produce proof, that is, to produce criteria for judging truth (Lyotard, 1984). As has been discussed, the term 'narrative' operates at different levels: qualitative methodology, in describing explicitly the researcher's motivations, reflections and interpretations, acknowledges narrative concealed by quantitative data, interpretation of which similarly depends upon narrative.

However, as Lyotard uses 'narrative' to refer to the textual nature of thinking itself, both qualitative and quantitative methodology are encompassed. Impartiality and objectivity are impossible: all practitioners are situated and finite and thus bring prior assumptions to interpretation. What passes for knowledge is pervaded by value-judgements (Hollis, 1994). Epistemology, the nature of knowledge, cannot escape ontology, values and beliefs. The kind of knowledge for which proof can be produced may be limited and sterile (Lyotard, 1984).

In examining how the notion of narrative truth avoids relativism, Heikkinen, Huttunen and Kakkori (2000) discuss various philosophical viewpoints: the correspondence theory, the coherence theory and pragmatism. They suggest that scientific communities may use the coherence theory to form a metanarrative, in which what is considered true is what does not contradict other accepted narratives:

> '*The scientific community allows and encourages its members to choose the specific problems, which they assume can be solved within the existing paradigm. Other kinds of problems are excluded, for example, by labelling*

them as metaphysical, by referring them to another discipline or simply by claiming that they are too problematic to be worth solving.'

(2000: 4)

Truth as coherence can thus result in strengthening existing understandings, possibly insulating scientific communities from examining socially important problems because of the absence of accepted instrumental and conceptual tools for doing so.

The influence of narrative within the social sciences could be described as being responsible for bringing about a paradigm shift in the way knowledge is viewed: the linguistic turn taken by the social sciences is now taking a further turn towards narrative in the move from scientific realism toward constructivism (Heikkinen et al, 2000). My own research reflects narrative elements: my motivations and professional interests are reflected in the nature of the research questions, and the research process itself possesses a temporal sequence that can be narrated.

Critical reading: Can narrative live up to its claims?

If literary characters can influence readers' (or listeners') behaviour and dispositions, how is this influence effected? Bettelheim (1975) suggests that identity formation is effected through positive identification with firm personalities. Children are affected on the basis of characters' embodiment of attributes rather than ideas of good and bad morality. Fairy tales promote morality not because virtue wins out in the end, but because the hero/ine is attractive to the child, who thus chooses to identify with him/her and to be like him/her: As has already been discussed, it is not only children who identify with characters, but adults too.

Readers may be exposed to characters' psychological processes through characters' diaries, letters and confessions (Bakhtin, 2002), enabling characters' moral thinking and reasoning to be depicted to readers with greater clarity than the thinking of readers' own acquaintances. But is simply reading or listening to narrative sufficient in itself to effect ethical change, and is change not dependent upon the nature of the content and the inclination of the reader towards self-reflexive engagement? Bakhtin (2002) suggests that the existence of the suspense that entices the reader to continue reading is only possible because sufficient immediacy exists between the reader and

characters. It might be argued that sufficient relationship or identification that compels the continuation of reading is also sufficient in motivating ethical engagement, irrespective of the reader's conscious reflection and evaluation. Ricoeur considers certain texts such as parables, 'true narrative', to be of particular ethical value because, in revealing a difference between good and bad, they serve as an ethical model to orient life. However, Hawthorn (1987) challenges categorisation of text (such as 'light fiction' or 'literature' or, indeed, Ricoeur's 'true narrative'), warning against scholarly efforts to establish facts from interpretative opinions, a challenge addressed in section 4.

Certainly, the reader's collaborative involvement is necessary to interpretation (Abbott, 2002): the text is not entirely within the author's control. Elements of self-determination within the reader are implicated in interpreting text. Ricoeur suggests that interpretation is itself a moral activity because it involves intent:

> *'The transcendence of speech centred upon the verb, and the verb revealed its soul of affirmation. In moving the accent from signification in general (which was understood rather in the sense of 'noun') onto verb, we move it also from the truth-intention to the freedom-intention.'*
>
> (Ricoeur, 1986: 36).

I would suggest that unreflective reading does not guarantee moral engagement, that certain texts and circumstances stimulate only limited moral engagement: superficial reading of light material is unlike the enduring significance of a classic or Ricoeur's 'true narrative'. Ethical engagement is not necessarily established with all narrative: it is dependent upon the nature of text and personal involvement in and reflection upon text. Both authors and readers might cultivate critical attitudes:

> *'And the bestsellers of fiction, as of poetry, have commonly been persons convinced of their special fitness to dictate the correct emotional behaviour; to the uncritical they are fatally persuasive.'*
>
> (Q Leavis, 1932: 195)

Interrogating ideology within narrative

Nussbaum and Ricoeur view narrative as a means for ethical engagement because it offers readers viewpoints for consideration that may differ from or challenge their

own. Ricoeur suggests that providing other perspectives thus supports individuals' cognitive distancing of themselves from their immediate, unexamined responses, encouraging self-reflexive activity. However, I argue that this enterprise might, in itself, remain incomplete in the absence of individuals' ability to detect and therefore to interrogate, challenge, subvert, or reject ideology within literature. Ideology is pervasive, inhering in everything that is able to influence public opinion, the media, books, schools, associations, etc. (Wolfreys, 2004).

Exposure to fiction can socialise and acculturate children by transmitting and encouraging the internalisation of invisible beliefs and ways of viewing the world, operating explicitly, through advocating specific social practices, or by implicitly conveying accepted practice: the perception that a book is free of ideological presuppositions arises when a close match exists between the societal presuppositions hidden within the text and the reader's presuppositions, hence ideology can remain invisible (Stephens, 1992).

Rustin and Rustin (1987) and Stephens (1992) argue that narrative's potential for negative influence is avoided by the hopeful orientation of ideological assumptions inherent within children's literature:

- Victory over hardship (Bettelheim, 1975), which is somewhat similar to 'belief in human endeavour' (Stephens, 1992)
- Pain can be involved in realising potential (ibid)
- Mature love overcomes the fear of death (Bettelheim, 1975)
- Children's stories should be integrative, forgiving, and reconciliatory, thus facilitating hope (Rustin and Rustin, 1987)
- Extravagant wishes are futile (ibid)
- Belief in freedom and opportunity (ibid)
- Education is advantageous (ibid)
- Imagination is important (ibid)
- A conservationist vision of the good society (ibid). Carter's (1990) view is somewhat different: following Carter, heroic optimism creates utopian rather than conservationist ideology. Siebers (1992) argues that characters' failure to fit into society can be presented as virtuous, when society is corrupt.

- Characters should balance masculine qualities (power and order) and feminine qualities (feeling and awareness) (Booker 2004)
- Evolutionary certainty of continuity of human civilization (Stephens 1992)
- Closure, and possibly a positive outcome (ibid)
- Belief in action as superior to inaction (ibid)
- Promotion of social change through the theme of the child's development towards adulthood (ibid), which resonates with Ricoeur's (1992) notion of a 'unified', meaningful life

Ideology can be contradictory and ambivalent. For example, boys are given the impression that they should be mischievous, yet mischief is, simultaneously, punishable (Stephens, 1992). Paradoxically, independent, individual, assertive behaviour and the theme of weakness overcoming or outwitting strength are approved. Independence and individuality are at odds with the themes of co-operation.

Narrative's claims to influence moral values can only be realised if readers recognise and criticise ideology. Q Leavis, appalled by the reading public of 1932's lack of discrimination, believes that education is required to enhance reflection and its associated positive effects on the intellect and morality:

> *'There is not reason why... the teaching of English... should be for the intelligent... Some education of this kind* [critical awareness] *is an essential part of the training of taste...'*
>
> (Q Leavis, 1932: 214)

Readers are not necessarily highly susceptible to the text; susceptibility is determined by whether a subjected or interrogatory position is assumed (Stephens, 1992). Moreover, authors may intentionally attempt to change dominant societal ideological assumptions through narrative: children can explore different world views through narrative situated outside dominant cultural, religious, moral and economic spheres, a phenomenon that is, according to Stephens, becoming more commonplace within pluralist societies despite the challenge publishers face regarding smaller markets for such books. It hardly needs saying that if, indeed, narrative were to successfully effect sociological change, the utopian view would thence have become the dominant ideology, in turn inviting interrogation.

How can readers exercise control over text, instead of being controlled by it? Control is supposedly achieved because readers understand themselves to be playing a kind of game with authors, the rule of which is that fiction is presented as though it were true: readers, including children, understand that it is 'only a story' (ibid). In the empirical element of the theses, primary and secondary school children's interrogation of text was inconsistent. In the Key Stage One Study, young pupils recognised the traditional story of the three little pigs as fiction. They were confused by *The **true** story of the three little pigs, by A Wolf* (Scieszka,1991) (emphasis added): its title suggests it to be true and its presentation imitates that of a newspaper; yet children could also identify it as fiction, being familiar with characteristics of fiction. The traditional version, easily recognised as fiction, was nevertheless considered 'more true'. These young children demonstrated the emergence of interrogatory rather than subjected positions in beginning to adopt critical approaches to text. Their responses support Rustin and Rustin's (1987) claims concerning the capacity for explicitly fictive characters to nevertheless present a form of reality to children to which they relate. In the Key Stage Four Study, pupils discussed bias in media coverage, yet, inconsistently, failed to interrogate their own prejudices. So, while it seems that pupils *may* detect ideology, doing so cannot be taken for granted, hence the importance of Ricoeur's (1986) insistence that hermeneutics be informed by rigorous and extensive reference to epistemology: wide access to varied sources supports self-reflexive activity.

Stephens (1992) claims that critical reading can be encouraged through intertextuality, the interrelationship between pre-texts (original or traditional versions of stories), new texts and the audience, which challenges existing understandings. Texts may explicitly foreground pre-texts in re-telling a familiar story, a feature of *The true story of the three little pigs, by A Wolf,* mentioned above. 'Fractured' fairy tales, re-workings of traditional fairy tales, can destabilise meanings and result in the rejection of ideology.

The kind of narration employed offers readers a further means of controlling textual interpretation (Stephens, 1992): in first person narration, readers realise that the perspective provided is situated, and that it may therefore be unreliable, distorted or incorrect; in omniscient narration, the narrator overtly controls the reader, explicitly revealing areas of shared or common knowledge-assumption. Following Stephens, the

reader is most highly susceptible to ideology in focalisation, where the reader identifies strongly with the main character. Stephens' claims assume, inappropriately, sophistication and experience among readers.

'Carnivalesque' texts challenge culture, promoting non-conformist views by inverting polite ways of behaving or dealing with taboo subjects (Bakhtin, 2002). Playfulness, mockery or the triumph of weakness over strength may challenge authority or seriousness. In 'carnivalesque' texts, the hero (possibly a fool or a clown), exposes cultural norms, as does the device of situating the main character as naïve, a stranger, or the uninitiated within a strange culture, as occurs in *Alice in Wonderland* or *Gulliver's Travels.* Children reading such narratives realise that official (distorted) ideologies have been sanctioned within that culture.

As we have seen, Lyotard argues that at a social and political level, narrative has always been associated with a negation of capitalism, and also a negation of science (1984): narrative destabilises the legitimations of science by showing narrative to be implicit within science itself. Whilst science judges narrative knowledge as mere fable, science legitimates itself through the very narrative forms it rejects: science claims new 'discoveries', 'breakthroughs' and 'solutions'. In similar vein, Hawthorn (1987) emphasises the difficulty of distinguishing facts and interpretative positions. It seems that readers may not always be conscious of ideology within narrative. More experienced readers and politically and socially informed readers may be critical towards text in a way that enhances their ethical responsiveness.

Conclusion

Textual narrative is one of the few ways left in which contemporary society engages in self-examination: narrative acts, therefore, as the guardian of society (Hawthorn, 1987). I would suggest that in literate societies, text could be considered to have assumed the place of oral traditions, creating a virtual public sphere. I support the view that text facilitates the examination of public morality, but do not interpret fiction as exclusive in possessing this facility: all kinds of text, fiction and non-fiction, and spoken as well as written discourse and action 'read' as text (Ricoeur, 1981) are used in examining morality.

However, text in the form of fiction may offer a particularly accessible and attractive means of engaging with ethical dilemmas, and is one that can be utilised within curriculum structures. As has been discussed, a further advantage of narrative is that it is non-prescriptive: self-determination, freedom, the capacity for choice, is essential to ethical reasoning and ethical development. Ethical capacity is not required where behaviour is pre-determined. Narrative provides a suitable vehicle for creative ethical engagement in responding to the aim of pupil self-determination and to elements of subjectivity. Donaldson (1987), post-Piagetian psychologist who questions important aspects of Piaget's work, emphasises the importance to children's motivation and personal involvement in learning of strong feelings. Narrative can effect the strong interest viewed as prerequisite to learning, including moral learning.

The next chapter links the initial section of the study, comprising the literature review, with the empirical work. Through intersubjectivity and intertextuality between literature, the empirical research and the person of the researcher, new understandings emerge from the concepts examined within these chapters and the hermeneutic experience of doing teacher-research.

CHAPTER FIVE: APPLIED PHILOSOPHY

Language: Thinking, writing, talking, justifying and explaining

'...the way in which one articulates certain questions has something to do with the research method that one tends to identify with. So there exists a certain dialectic between question and method.'

(van Manen, 1990: 3)

Introduction: Combining speech and textual narrative in philosophical inquiry

In this chapter, I move towards applied philosophy as a basis for the empirical element of the thesis, revealing how the themes of the literature review underpin the research methodology described in Chapter Six. In this chapter I explicate the distinctive characteristics of debate and philosophical discussion within communities of inquiry, in contributing to moral development consistent with self-determination and the good life. I interrogate Plato's (c370BC/1961) writings criticising writing and defending speech, to reveal distinguishing features of speech and text. Plato's ideas about writing contrast with the thinking of the philosophers explored in Chapter Four. Nussbaum (1990) and Ricoeur (1992) perceive that textual narrative plays an important role in individuals' lives and potentially contributes to individuals' moral development. In Chapter Nine, Plato's perceptions are once again interrogated, with reference to observed experience within the case studies undertaken, illustrating the intertextuality between literature, the person of the teacher-researcher (Stenhouse, 1993), and experience within the life-world, the ethnographic research setting.

The literature review has acted as a virtual 'public sphere', making possible my dialectic involvement with various philosophers, psychologists and linguists. This interrelationship with text and my discussions with research supervisors has supported the development of my own understanding, which suggests that pupils might similarly benefit from engagement with others' ideas through these means. In this chapter I

consider the potential of applied philosophy within the empirical element of my research to create for pupils literal public spheres, enhanced through intertextuality introduced by narrative, i.e. virtual public spheres. To illustrate the activity characteristic of my involvement with various philosophers and its influence upon the research process, I explicate Plato's hermeneutic influence upon the research described in the chapters that follow:

- I read Plato's thoughts projected into Socrates' dialogues, recorded as text: I gather 'data' from Plato, to hermeneutically extend my own experience through his experience (all human experience and interaction can be read as text: Ricoeur, 1981)
- I reflect upon Plato's thinking with reference to other philosophers' and psychologists' thinking, which creates intertextuality and a virtual 'public sphere' in which I gather and compare data from others
- I observe children's debate and philosophical discussion, gathering data derived empirically
- I analyse the 'fit' between my observations of pupils within a research environment and Plato's and others' descriptions
- I record my response in writing: the dialectic process of separating the knower from the known, making external understanding that is internal (van Manen, 1990)

Lipman's (2003) 'community of inquiry' and Philosophy for Children (P4C) (SAPERE, 2003) incorporate the principles of Socratic questioning, as practised in ancient Greece. I explore features of the community of inquiry and of Socratic questioning to determine their potential for use within research, in which narrative (text and speech) within a public forum makes possible the exchange of ideas. The case studies described in Chapters Seven and Eight represent my attempt to take seriously the stated centrality of the educational aim towards pupils' fullest personal development; spiritual, moral, cultural and social, the centrality of values (National Curriculum, 2006) and the civic, social and political aims of the compulsory Citizenship Curriculum (2007). The research questions previously addressed through the literature review are now extended actively through an increasingly practical

dimension. In the case studies I interrogate and develop pedagogic practice through applied philosophy, suggesting that thoughtful, engaged and committed teachers might use philosophy to liberate their own thinking and to help their pupils to think creatively, thus supporting values education and pupil self-determination. The case studies serve as exemplars of potentially more encompassing pedagogic possibilities.

A central theme: values education

Throughout the literature review and empirical element I have focused upon 'the individual' and 'personal freedom', issues of abiding professional interest that are part of my 'lived experience' (van Manen, 1990): my pedagogic relation with pupils within educational institutions, from which the research questions and methodology are derived.

A tension exists for teachers and pupils involved in research, in balancing norm-governed social positions and roles within systems, with personal interpretation concerning the latitude of these roles (Hollis, 1994). Educational environments, like other social institutions, are both restrictive and enabling. This notion resonates with Foucault's conception of individuals as inextricably part of, and enmeshed within, webs of power to which they respond and to which they contribute, rather than viewing power as imposed upon individuals (Foucault 2000). In the case studies, I propose combining narrative literature and the community of inquiry as models for encouraging discussion about morality in a way that is sensitive to Hollis' (1994) concerns regarding norm-balanced social positions (such as traditional teacher-pupil relationships). I argue that narrative can introduce for discussion the moral conceptions of others, providing viewpoints for consideration that are not generated by teachers, thus avoiding positioning that pupils might hesitate to interrogate, minimising teacher-dominance and the effects of power-relations and thus supporting the development of pupil self-determination.

The case studies' incorporation of applied philosophy forms a project quite distinct from theoretical approaches towards educational theory, addressed in Chapter Three, of philosophers of education such as Hirst and Peters (1970). The practical nature of the case studies extends beyond critique: pupils and teachers are actively involved

within a research situation in which semantics, pragmatics and hermeneutics might be employed (Ricoeur, 1988). One of the characteristics (and attractions) of action research is that it represents a vehicle through which reseachers can live out their values:

> *'Linguistic meanings do not always communicate how we try to live our lives. It is important, therefore, to develop theories which go beyond words and show the living-out of the concepts. The meanings we give to our lives are the actions we take as we try to live our values in our practices...Dominant conceptual forms of theory, though a useful starting point, are insufficient by themselves.'*
>
> (McNiff, 2002: 9)

The case studies aim to explore ways of overcoming some problematic features of current education in England that challenge values education: rationality and the technical apparatuses that support rationality (Foucault, 2000), as reviewed in Chapter Three. I suggest that alternative educational activities and pedagogy can and should be used to challenge the self-reinforcing dominance of rationality.

Moral philosophy invites teachers to question beyond functional issues of how best to achieve finite academic ends within education as it is currently formulated, encouraging critical and creative thinking. It supports diminished dependence upon bureaucratic approval for validating practice, in the same way that Socratic questioning techniques, described later in this chapter and used within the case studies, challenge pupils to formulate and express their personal beliefs. Responsibility and freedom are like reverse sides of the same coin (Ricoeur, 1986), hence teachers wishing to role-model responsible personal freedom must conceive themselves as possessing sufficient personal autonomy from dominant systems to make possible critique and action.

Rapid change of societal values and culture prompts support of values education. My interest in values education is not motivated by a desire for conservation, but seeks to provide pupils with tools that equip them in living the good life. The declining influence of the church and the increasing influence of government within education and the increasingly secular, multicultural and technological nature of society inevitably affects value systems (Chadwick, 1997). Following Chadwick, current differences in educational aims held by government and church reflect the deep conflict within society regarding values: for church schools, the purpose of education

is to develop integrated human beings, an aim in tension with government educational aims. Some state-led initiatives result in increased competition between schools, creating negative social effects such as mistrust and revealing potential tensions between educational policies and the effects of their implementation (Chadwick, 1997).

Consumerism in education within post-industrialist societies (Ritzer, 1998), poses further challenges to values education, affecting and possibly threatening the values associated with liberal education. Rationality is self-perpetuating: parents' reliance upon league tables as criteria guiding school selection validates narrow positivistic measures of education, despite parental dissatisfaction with the effects upon values education, as revealed by the quotation contained in the next paragraph. Values education seeks to avoid the instrumental treatment of individuals rendered possible by bureaucratic systems.

The first research question, 'In what ways is it possible for schools to provide for the development of values education within the context of current government initiatives?' represents a pragmatic attempt to identify ways of providing for values education within existing restrictive curriculum structures. The potential loss of curricular teaching time that could accompany extended exploration of values presents an ethical consideration for teachers working within current frameworks and calls into question matters such as curricula, curriculum planning, centralised control of education and teacher autonomy. The Key Stage One Study and the Key Stage Four Study, described more fully in Chapters Seven and Eight, conducted within two different educational settings, reflect the challenges to values education experienced at Infant and Key Stage Four levels. Robertson, a parent writing independently of this study, describes her personal experience of the different approaches towards values education in the primary and secondary school age-ranges:

> *My children went to a primary school that went out of its way to encourage children to think about their behaviour and the effect it had on other people. It used circle-time discussions to talk about co-operation and responsibility, and children were always told to listen to their conscience, which would guide them. But at secondary school it all went out of the window. Bullying was*

widespread and no teacher ever seemed to talk to pupils about anything but coursework and exam results.

(Robertson, 2005)

This quotation suggests resonance between parental values conceived as traditional, narrative knowledge (Lyotard, 1984) and values education within the primary sector. Individuals' opinions are developed through their society's knowledge and customs: culture represents the consensus reached within the society regarding what is judged good (ibid). I consider that educational institutions currently impart moral values through a range of formal and informal means, but primarily through the culture existing within a school; the 'hidden curriculum': a school's ethos, teachers' modelling of ethical behaviour and in the course of teachers' and pupils' ordinary working relationships and procedures; implicit practices which this study seeks to make explicit.

Building on the definitions of values, moral values and ethics provided by Weston (2002), exploring values education is understood within the case studies to include:

- providing pupils with opportunities to explore *values,* those things they care about, those *things that matter* to them and those goals or ideals they aspire to and measure themselves, others, or their society by
- pupils' exploration of *moral values*: specific kinds of values; those values that refer to the needs and legitimate expectations of others as well as themselves (for instance, expecting to be treated with respect, honesty and care)
- pupils' exploration of *ethics* as the conscious, deliberate process of thinking through, criticising and revising moral values

The empirical work provides opportunities for pupils to explore moral values and moral dilemmas in a planned, explicit fashion.

Narrative supports moral engagement

In exploring explicit ways of supporting non-prescriptive values education, I take inspiration from the many philosophers who believe textual narrative to offer seemingly unrivalled resources for reflection about moral values (Lyotard, 1984;

Nussbaum, 1990; Ricoeur 1988; Rorty, 1989). Indeed, Rorty (1989) suggests that novels are vehicles for thinking critically about culture: they facilitate moral reflection in the same way that religion did in the past. For ancient Greeks, self-care journals and public dialogue facilitated moral reflection (Foucault, 1988). The second research question, '*In what ways can narrative extend learners' thinking about moral issues?*' represents a means whereby I as teacher-researcher can interrogate philosophers' claims regarding narrative fiction and textual narrative's ability to substitute, functionally, for narrative forms of public dialogue, such as the rhetoric, debate, dialectic and Socratic questioning practised in ancient Greece and considered vital to social 'justice', the term Plato uses as we would the word 'morality': 'justice' should be understood within a moral, rather than legal, context (Hamilton and Cairns, 1961). Hamilton and Cairns reveal the relationship between Platonic morality and politics: as individuals are social beings, specifying what morality consists in is political.

A public sphere

The Key Stage One Study and the Key Stage Four Study seek to re-create the public sphere of ancient Greece that modern democracies lack. The community of inquiry described below is a specific kind of public sphere. If, as Rorty (1989) suggests, literature acts as a contemporary 'virtual public sphere', the case studies, utilising narrative text to stimulate public debate and discussion, might be interpreted as offering heightened capacity for mediating narrative meaning, offering a double hermeneutic.

Socrates, Plato's teacher in ancient Greece, is the leading speaker in the dialogues contained in Plato's *Republic,* dialogues considered to constitute the chief foundational characteristics of Western philosophical, political, logical and psychological thought (Hamilton and Cairns, 1961). The ideas contained within the dialogues are attributed to Socrates, yet it is unclear whether the ideas put forward should be attributed to Socrates or Plato (Cross and Woozley, 1964). Foucault considers the matter academic, in proposing 'Death of the author', Foucault rejects reference to authors' 'early' or 'later' thinking, focusing instead on the unity of the writing (Mills, 2003).

In contrast to contemporary philosophers who celebrate the value of text, as written narrative, Plato rejects the suggestion that text is valuable (although history has proved him wrong). *Phaedrus*, written around 370BC, contains detailed consideration of the relative merits of many forms of discourse, including writing of speeches; recording speeches in text. Paradoxically, Plato's rejection of text does not deter him from writing, although his presentation of texts as dialogues suggests a possible attempt to overcome the disadvantages he associates with text. Plato's justification of the superiority of the spoken word over the written will be interrogated briefly because of its relevance to the case studies, which incorporate both language forms.

Caution is necessary when interpreting ancient writings in the light of contemporary understandings. For instance, in ancient Greece, Aristotelian rhetoric was originally a theory of argumentation involving logic, hence its relation to philosophy, a theory of style and a theory of composition (Ricoeur, 1977). However, following Ricoeur, rhetoric lost its relation to philosophy and its Aristotelian avoidance of flattery and subtle threat and has now come to be associated exclusively with figures of speech, thus reducing its scope as a technique for the self-conscious, philosophical use of language as a legitimate persuasive device. The inherent danger of modern rhetoric is that effective oratory can degenerate into the false manipulation of thinking rather than moral use of argumentation (Ricoeur, 1977), whereas Aristotelian rhetoric represented a fusion of the power of storytelling with the power of ethics (Siebers, 1992). Debating, another form of public dialectic, shares many of the features of philosophical discussion, but embraces assertion and persuasion, setting out to win support. Debate differs from Socratic questioning and philosophical discussion in that debate does not require that individuals espouse arguments made, whereas Socratic questioning relies upon personal conviction. I argue that the procedural and motivational values of Lipman's (2003) philosophical inquiry retains the fundamentals of Aristotle's rhetoric, and is therefore suitable for use within the empirical element of the thesis.

Extracts from Plato's *Phaedrus* provide a valuable resource for interrogating the language forms to be used in the empirical work. In each example that follows, I 'converse' with Plato by offering my initial interpretation of Plato's words, Plato's writing, and my response to his expressed view.

Plato's claims concerning the superiority of speech over text

- Plato suggests that text lacks substance: it seems to say something rather than actually doing so, merely resembling reality.

Plato: '*...written words...* seem *to talk to you* as though *they were intelligent...*'

(Plato, c370BC/1961, 521, emphasis added)

Mary: I consider that speech certainly is immediate, affording the hearer personal experience within the speaker's presence, with access to intonation and additional non-verbal information that cannot be captured within text. However, as you yourself demonstrate, devices such as direct speech partially overcome this claimed failure of immediacy. Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter Four, linguists conceive literature as possessing the potential to represent 'reality' more vividly than life experience, because presentational devices employed can emphasise strategically certain aspects (Rustin and Rustin, 1987). Similarly, Ricoeur (1986) conceives narrative as providing both immediacy and distance, able to address readers' subjectivity and objectivity, so your claims cannot be upheld.

- Text is limited, serving as a reminder of what is already known, rather than a source of new knowledge. Appeals to it for greater understanding do not generate greater insight.

Plato: '*...if you ask them* [written words] *anything about what they say, from a desire to be instructed, they go on telling you just the same thing forever...*'

(Plato, c370BC/1961: 521)

Mary: I interpret you as referring to inadequacy of information provided within a single text, for the purposes of instruction, a shortcoming that reading of supplementary texts may remedy. Moreover, text as recorded speech has an advantage over 'live' speech: it can be re-read to improve comprehension. I disagree with your implied denial that different interpretations can be generated from text. Indeed, Ricoeur (1986, 1995) considers the hermeneutic potential of text to be one of its chief advantages in resisting closure and finality.

- Writing can be distorted and misunderstood when it is read by a different audience than that for which it was intended.

Plato: '*...it doesn't know how to address the right people, and not address the wrong...*'

(Plato, c370BC/1961: 521)

Mary: Writers cannot control who reads text once it is in the public domain, nor can they control its interpretation. It may be claimed that speech is less open to misinterpretation because the speaker's context informs meaning: in situation, ideas can be framed for their target audience, and tone of voice and body language can further support understanding, but interpretation nevertheless remains beyond control.

- Misunderstanding or lack of understanding about text has to be referred back to the author for clarification.

Plato:'*...when it* [writing] *is ill treated and unfairly abused, it always needs its parent to come to its help, being unable to defend or help itself...*'

(ibid: 521)

Mary: Speaking provides opportunity for immediate clarification through questioning. I agree that this feature of speech is invaluable in facilitating understanding, in fact, the importance I place on a certain kind of deep discussion is demonstrated in my intention to use philosophical inquiry within my empirical research. However, technological advances in contemporary life perhaps render text less subject to limitations than was previously the case. Individuals can exchange ideas through the medium of text, as is illustrated by philosophers whose lengthy exchanges about certain key points of thinking support clarification, justification and reappraisal of thought:

> '*Jurgen Habermas, the German philosopher born in 1929, although not a hermeneuticist as strictly defined, is, however, an important correspondent with and critic of Gadamer.*'

(Sherratt, 2006: 95)

- Teaching is more beneficial than pupils' accessing information independently. The practice of 'telling' through written communication, rather than teaching in a way that increases pupils' understanding, is a charade: pupils appear to understand without having a sound grasp of ideas.

Plato: '*...it is no true wisdom you offer your disciples, but only its semblance, for by telling them of many things without teaching them you will make them seem to know much, while for the most part they know nothing...*'

(Plato, 1961: 520)

Mary: Even where independent learning is encouraged, few would disagree that discussion increases understanding, especially where ideas are complex. The premise of the case studies is, indeed, that discussion enhances meaning and that sharing of ideas in community not only enables individuals to clarify their own thinking but to evaluate it against others'; '*...with and for others...*'(Ricoeur, 1992). The principle of comparison of personal with others' perceptions is vital to epistemology (Ricoeur 1986): it avoids delusion, self-interest and increases objectivity and rigor. Learning is understood as socially-mediated (Vygotsky, 1934/1962).

- Well-read individuals may conflate knowledge with wisdom, to social detriment.

Plato: '*... and as men filled, not with wisdom, but with the conceit of wisdom, they will be a burden to their fellows.*'

(Plato, c370BC/1961: 520)

Mary: You imply that speech aids the development of socially-mediated wisdom in a way that text alone does not. I consider that discussion has special advantages. However, learners' attitudes and motivation determine the nature of the understanding and wisdom derived from speech or text, rather than the language form itself.

- Speech is of unquestionable legitimacy because it originates within a context. For Plato, speech is more effective than text because it can present the truth adequately and defend the truth.

Plato:[serious discussion, the art of dialectic must be practised with] *'...a soul of the right type'*

(ibid: 522)

Mary: It is vital to approach matters worthy of deep interest with attitudes of openness and inquiry. However, your description implies exclusivity. I would suggest that the creation of conditions conducive to serious discussion, such as the procedural values of the community of inquiry, supports a certain kind of involvement conducive to developing *'souls ... of the right type'*. You are experienced in philosophical discussion, whereas I have little exposure to discussion within the public sphere. I would like to speak with you once again, after I have developed my thinking through examining other philosophers' ideas and have had the experience of observing children's philosophical discussion.

Plato's limited approval of writing

Plato concedes approval of certain kinds of writing, such as speech writing, but only if certain conditions are fulfilled (ibid: 522). Firstly, Plato demands 'true knowledge' and close definition to clarify divisions and limits of the subject. Secondly, Plato suggests that the writing must be structured according to the nature of the audience or the address will fail in its aim to explain or persuade. Plato thus reveals his determinate and determinable conception of language and interpretation, as I contest, does Scheurich:

> *'The language ... is not bounded or stable; it is persistently slippery, unstable and ambiguous from person to person, from situation to situation and from time to time.'*
>
> (Scheurich, 1997: 62)

The problem of interpretation cannot be avoided: interpretation, including sensory, experiential and imaginative interpretation, is prior to and applicable to all knowledge (Hollis, 1994). Hollis questions the correspondence of symbols (words) to reality, introducing also the problem of Other Minds: how one mind can know what is in

another's mind. A 'double hermeneutic' is required in understanding another's action: interpreting an interpretation.

Despite these reservations regarding interpretation, Gadamer conceives textual interpretation as made possible through three crucial factors (Sherratt, 2006), which I suggest might be applied to narrative in its broader sense as text or speech. Firstly, text is assumed to have some authority, some 'truth', to have something to impart to the reader that will be meaningful and inform the reader's life. Secondly, understanding is affected by the reader or interpreter, who, constituted by historical tradition, approaches the text from a socially-informed perspective, which is therefore not particular to an individual. In this respect, Gadamer lends support to Plato's view that certain writing might be better understood by some groups (those with similarly socially-informed perspectives) than others. Thirdly, understanding involves projecting forestructured thoughts onto the text. The hermeneutic circle is thus formed by the interaction of the text, the reader, and the reader's thought projected onto the text. Gadamer insists that incorrect understandings obtained through incorrect thought projections will rectify themselves as reading progresses, an assertion Habermas contests. I would argue that despite the potential ambiguity and endless interpretative possibilities of language, the act of using language demonstrates general acceptance that it communicates meaning.

For younger pupils whose verbal communicative ability exceeds facility with text, Plato's preference of speech over writing may well be more relevant than it would be for older learners. However, other positive attributes of discussion outweigh technical considerations of reading competence: active personal engagement, with others, deepens conceptual and personal understanding.

Narrative texts within the case studies

In the case studies, text and speech are not placed in opposition to each other. Possible issues of invalid interpretation are minimised, as participants discuss understandings together and the teacher-researcher asks questions to clarify meanings where desirable. The texts used within the Key Stage One Study include published stories by popular

authors of children's fiction. Source materials from SAPERE's P4C handbook, newspaper articles and other sources were used in the Key Stage Four Study. Pupils' preparation of debate presentations drew upon personal opinions; perspectives and information encountered through social influences (Lyotard's (1984) 'culture', already discussed) and the media.

Models for philosophical activity

In the same way that public debate in ancient Greece relied upon certain procedural norms, the case studies would require procedural models: the community of inquiry, Socratic questioning and debating, models utilising procedural values that render them particularly suitable for application within values education activities.

Socratic questioning

Socratic questioning is based upon Socrates' conviction that individuals can be led to knowledge through answering questions. Plato believes participant knowledge to be dependent upon participants' direct personal effort and involvement in discussion, that even skilled dialecticians cannot, through questioning, do for participants what they must do for themselves (Vlastos, 1991). Socrates' advice to participants was to 'Say only what you believe': moral truth consisting in true beliefs is discovered through an argumentative method of philosophical dialectic (ibid). For Socrates, questioning provides an exploratory method: using logical principles to show inconsistencies between true beliefs and false beliefs realigns thinking about the false ideas, bringing them into line with the true. Socratic questioning resonates with Piaget's (1932) and Kohlberg's (1981) 'cognitive conflict'.

Hamilton and Cairns (1961) consider that, as is the case with modern novels, the stylistic form of the Socratic dialogues permitted the portrayal of playfulness, bitterness, irony and fairness. I would suggest that text's capacity to evoke, in readers, emotive responses to attitudes portrayed, renders it a particularly suitable medium for exploring moral influences. Following Vlastos (1991), Socrates ironically uses the disavowal of knowledge to explore knowledge: Socrates' claim to ignorance concerning one kind of knowledge works because of our implicit understanding that he possesses another kind of knowledge. What is said is not what is meant. For young

children involved in the Key Stage One Study, the issue of whether what was being said was what was meant played an important role in one of the inquiries.

The community of inquiry

Lipman (2003) ascribes the concept of the community of inquiry to C S Peirce, a creative academic whose work towards the end of the 19th century influenced Dewey, and who conceived of logic as essentially social in nature. Originally, the term 'community of inquiry' referred exclusively to scientific communities, but Peirce broadened it to include any community using agreed procedures to attain shared goals. School classes act as communities of inquiry when students engage in certain kinds of behaviour. Students:

- listen to each other respectfully
- build on others' ideas
- support opinions with reasons and expect others to do so
- work together in drawing inferences
- seek to identify and challenge assumptions

I consider these procedural values as important as discussion content.

The features of self-criticism and of community make the community of inquiry model particularly suitable for use in the case studies. Whereas tradition-bound community may not practise self-criticism, a community of inquiry claims to be self-critical, being dependent upon scientific operations. Discussion in a community of inquiry differs from conversation: it has a sense of direction and dialogical structure. Values of reasonableness, creativity and care for others are implemented within the process, with potential social and cognitive benefits including:

- A self-motivated desire for rigour, challenging the adequacy of own and others' thinking
- A focus on expressing ideas accurately
- A willingness to share with others
- Respect for others' ideas
- Tolerance of others' ideas
- Increased trust and understanding
- Direct involvement in own learning

The kinds of philosophical questions to be addressed within the inquiries are not factual, although they may be informed by events and situations in the physical world, according with Plato:

> *'In the physical sciences hypotheses are tested by experimental means, but the philosopher's resource is thought in the form of a conversation with himself or others.'*
>
> (Hamilton and Cairns, 1961: vi)

Plato considers logical truths to be more valid, more objectively true, than the facts of physical science (ibid): he thus recognises the persuasive force of the rational. Plato's methods of searching for knowledge; conversations, dialogues providing exposition and example, and series of questions, rely upon the principles of reasoning. Successful communities of inquiry (Lipman, 2003) assume shared levels of trust, attitudes of co-operation and a desire to learn from each other. They utilise relationships and pedagogy that differs significantly from traditional teacher-pupil relationships: the traditional teacher/pupil, expert/learner hierarchy dissolves, establishing a community of equals in which peer learning is respected.

Characteristics of philosophical discussion

Philosophical discussion demands rationality, but the focus is upon sustained reflection and upon investigating meaning. Philosophy for children aims to develop metacognition, thinking about thinking, which incorporates emotive experience, conscious mental activity and the teaching of thinking skills (ibid). Philosophical discussion differs from conversation, characterised by a strong personal component with a weaker appeal to logic: in philosophical discussion the reverse is true. However, both assume mutual support: conversation is innocent of ulterior purposes and dialogue aims at understanding better one's own convictions. Practical philosophy takes place within a community and requires co-operation. Within both case studies, the philosophical inquiries were premised upon certain assumptions:

- Fallibilism, the acknowledgement that one might be wrong, is fundamental to the kind of philosophical discussion to be engaged in

- Consensus of opinion is not expected. The focus is on examining prejudices, justifying thinking, providing reasons and evaluating claims by weighing the relative merits of arguments rather than arriving at definitive 'truth'
- All contributions are recognised as enhancing understanding

Summary: Applied philosophy

In this chapter I have shown how my personal interest in and involvement with philosophy influences the methodological approaches towards empirical research that I consider suitable within my context. The use of narrative, Socratic questioning devices and philosophical inquiry within the community of inquiry and debate are viewed as legitimate ways of encouraging pupils towards an awareness of social as well as individual 'goods' because these processes are not coercive, but require individuals' critical cognitive involvement. By engaging in these activities, pupils would be seeking the good *'with and for others in just institutions'* (Ricoeur, 1992). Using these models, I believe that personal development and ethical development occur simultaneously. Aspects of moral reasoning which have exercised great philosophers through the ages, might be introduced within the case studies through samples of text contextualising a specific area of interest and adapted as appropriate for different age groups.

SECTION TWO: The empirical element

CHAPTER SIX

Research methodology and pupil self-determination

'Dominant conceptual forms of theory, though a useful starting point, are insufficient in themselves. It is important as well to develop forms of theory which enable us to show the meanings we give to our lives through action.'

(McNiff, 2002: 9)

Introduction

This chapter documents my struggle, as one sceptical of the validity claims of social science methodology, yet also wishing in some way to claim validity for tacit knowledge, to select research methods that enable me to explore broad philosophical perspectives within particular educational institutions. In this attempt, I personally confront the apparently irreconcilable divide between objectivity and existence (Hollis, 1994), and social scientists' attempts to surmount it: attempts doomed to failure because *'The power of scientific method can be used to deny the possibility of exploring positions that do not fit either the analytic or synthetic paradigms...'* (Scott-Baumann, 2006: 57). I am therefore faced with a dilemma: how to implement case studies, in light of contradictory personally affirmatory ontology and scepticism regarding method. Considering conceptual and explanatory inadequacies, do I opt for 'best fit' methods that fail to satisfy my ethical intentions, or devise methods that may fail to satisfy social sciences validity criteria? The philosophical underpinnings contained within the literature review influence profoundly the research methodology and provide the major research focus: the modest research methods selected receive limited attention, functioning as tools supporting this exploration, in keeping with Thomas and James' perception that *'A preoccupation with method (and not just with grounded theory) makes for mirages of some kind of reliable knowing, and this in the end makes us almost more concerned with the method than the message.'* (2006: 791).

The community of inquiry model is conceived as a means of interrelating the disciplines of philosophy and education: philosophy is applied within empirical research. The substance and the form of my research questions make the exploratory case study a particularly suitable research method (Yin, 2003), as explained more fully later in the chapter. The overarching approach of the empirical work is that of the reflective teacher-researcher, situated within mainstream education. I attempt to explore theoretical perspectives concerning the individual, ethics, education and narrative, within the tradition of social science. However, the social sciences paradigm ultimately maintains the traditional status of the researcher and research subjects with inherent constraints to pupil self-determination, so I adopt instead the principles of the community of inquiry, despite the possible loss of validity this entails. The paradigm shift involves the teacher and pupils together as co-researchers participating in a joint venture.

This chapter is divided into three sections. Section A, a literature review of relevant qualitative research methodology, reveals influences supporting the adoption of an overarching approach as reflective teacher-researcher and the limits to autonomy of the researcher of social science, as explicated by Foucault (Foucault, 2000; Mills, 2003; Sherratt, 2006) and Hollis (1994). Section B reviews relevant aspects of research ethics. Section C briefly describes the research methods applied within the case studies, the Key Stage One Study and the Key Stage Four Study, described fully and analysed within Chapters Seven and Eight respectively.

Children in the Key Stage One Study explore, weekly, five Aristotelian virtues, supported where appropriate by Socratic questioning (Plato, c370BC/1961) and a relevant fictional story (Ricoeur, 1992), within a virtual public sphere, the community of inquiry (Lipman, 2003). I record field notes, illustrating the discussion content in a wall display and keep a reflective journal. Each week, parents complete brief questionnaires comprising open-ended questions.

In The Key Stage Four Study, over an eight-week period, pupils attending a Debating and Philosophy Club engage with moral dilemmas through involvement, on alternate weeks, in debating and philosophical inquiry about dilemmas introduced through

narrative (Ricoeur, 1992). I write field notes and keep a reflective journal, creating intertextuality by comparing theory and practice. At the end of the school term, pupils complete questionnaires comprising open-ended questions requiring qualitative responses.

Section A – Literature review: Research methodology

Ontology and epistemology

Ontology, the branch of philosophy which deals with the investigation of what we believe exists, our belief systems and the nature of existence (Magee, 1998), reveals the close relationship between ontology and values: things matter to us because of belief systems. It therefore seems plausible to suggest that choice of a research area reflects something of the researcher's ontology; that which is believed worthy of knowing. Furthermore, following social theorist Bourdieu's assertion that '... *the individual, and even the personal, the subjective, is social, collective...*' (1992: 126) and his theory of social and educational reproduction, ontology is not unique to individuals, but reflects social conditioning and constitution. On this reading, it is inappropriate for individuals to claim to possess their 'own' thoughts and beliefs; their personal ontologies. Scheurich (1997), who positions himself as a postmodernist researcher, that is, one who rejects modernity's epistemological claims giving primacy to reason and rationality, suggests that researchers should recognise and acknowledge archaeological influences upon their ontologies. Scheurich reveals something of his ontology when he invites Western researchers not to '... *think or assume we are doing good works or creating useful knowledge ... or critiquing the status quo ..., we are unknowingly enacting or being enacted by 'deep' civilizational or cultural biases...*' (ibid: 1). This conception of ontology as culturally influenced resonates with my personal experience: I perceive my personal ontological biases as having been formed within a less industrially and economically developed and less secular cultural community than that which exists in England, and observe that my ontology differs from dominant ontological biases within education in England. These influences lead me to concur with Scheurich's archaeological conception of ontology, with accompanying rejection of the supremacy of rationality and of epistemology conceived exclusively within social sciences methodology.

Ontology's influence upon methodological approaches is illustrated by the hopeful and affirmative nature of Ricoeur's recognition of 'mystery' that exceeds rationality's inherent restraint and narrowness. Ricoeur (1992) supports Aristotle's arguably less rigorous, but more generous, form of logic over the strict logic of Kant's rationality in determining caring solutions to ethical dilemmas. I concur with Thomas' (1998) argument that within education, the primacy accorded rationality perpetuates the myth that it is the only orthodox conceptual framework, thus disallowing other ontological positions such as recognition of tacit knowledge or a place for subjectivity (Pendlebury, 2005).

Epistemology, the investigation of the nature of knowledge: what we can know, is central to philosophy (Magee, 1998). Selected references from Magee reveal the importance to epistemology of avoiding relativism and establishing validity; the trustworthiness of interpretation: Aristotle emphasises *logic* in pursuing knowledge; Kant implicates *the senses and reason* as involved in apprehending and verifying knowledge; for Frege, *logic* yields objective truth; the Vienna Circle insists that *positivistic, scientific methods* validate knowledge; and analytic philosophers implicate close examination of *language structures* as yielding knowledge (ibid). However, postmodernist researchers challenge the legitimacy of validity claims, despite the remaining dominance, within education, of 'naïve realism': a perspective that assumes that *'conventional social science research methods unproblematically ensure accurate or valid representations of reality'* (Scheurich, 1997: 30). Scheurich argues that the adoption of more comprehensive, contextualised approaches in attempting to overcome these limitations merely reinforces the modernist assumption that reality can be accurately reflected. He therefore promotes acceptance of a pluralist epistemology that recognises relativity and multiple truths.

Thomas' (1998) interrogation of faith in the ordered and rational within education describes the negative consequences of the reluctance to pursue less structured, but possibly more productive, methods of inquiry. The first consequence is that certain rationalistic features must be maintained within research, dooming it to mere reproduction of formulaic elements. In addition, acceptance of a certain kind of thinking and rationality as the only acceptable model of mind is accompanied by pedagogical reliance upon technological adjustments to practice. My own exploratory

approach within the case studies is premised upon the importance of tacit knowledge in judging responses within 'live' situations such as teaching and learning.

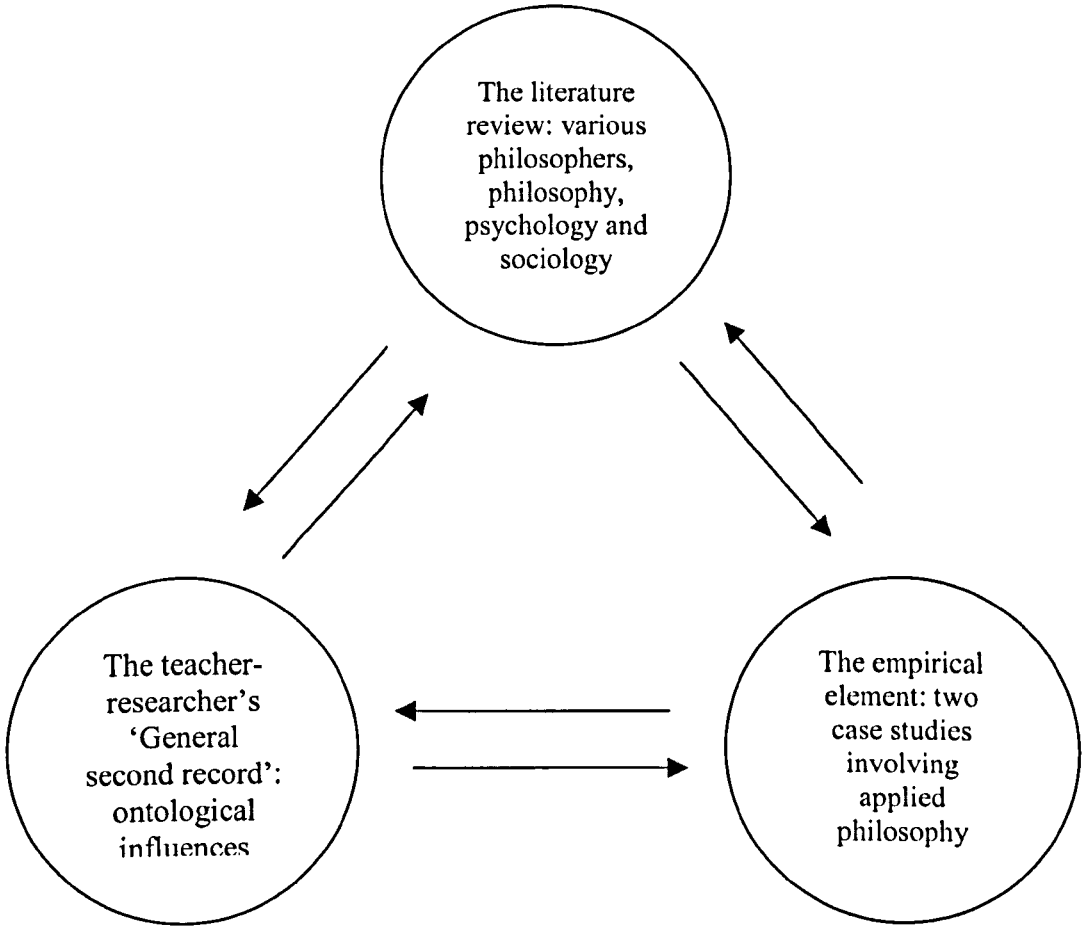
The relationship of interpretation to sense-data is at the heart of doubts concerning the correspondence between that which is seen and 'reality'. Furthermore, theory may relate specifically to cognitive faculties (sensibility, understanding and reason) not verifiable through sense-data: the *noumenal* (Kant, 1781/1998). Following Kant, individuals are rational beings; their reason enables them to act according to conceptions of moral laws, which for Kant have objective status, as sense-data perceptions have objective status. Hume believes that the imagination plays a role in interpretation, Popper conceives individuals as predisposed to seek regularities, and the problem of 'other minds'; individuals' interpretations of other's interpretations, exercises philosophers (Hollis, 1994).

Epistemology, and hence research, rests upon the not unproblematic assumption that language adequately represents and communicates reality. Gadamer suggests that interpretation of text involves the projection of forestructured thought onto text (Sherratt, 2006). In the tradition of *hermeneutics*, the rules of deciphering applied to a world of symbols (Ricoeur, 1986), this thesis is based upon the notion that text, and action 'read' as text, can be re-interpreted to extend understanding. Ricoeur's methodology, examined in greater depth in Chapter Ten, suggests that empiricist data, including that yielded by such forms as technical rational knowledge, should be critically analysed and reflected upon, thereby facilitating re-interpretation through a dialectic in which empiricist and hermeneutic dimensions inform each other. I am attracted by Ricoeur's approach because it validates both empiricist data and interpretation, thereby eschewing relativism and providing reference points for thinking and also moves beyond exclusive reliance upon positivism and technical rationality.

Dialectic activity broadly describes the research methodology utilised within this thesis incorporating mixed research methods. The researcher's reflection upon and critical analysis of the literature review is one form of dialectic activity between the person of the researcher (Stenhouse, 1993) and the texts, action and reflection within the case studies another. The research activity might be thought of as operating within three

interrelated interpretative dimensions that Ricoeur (1988) applies when humans are the subject matter of philosophy: semantic (interpretation of textual, symbolic meaning – although, in this instance, not linguistic analysis), phenomenal (pragmatics, the interpretation of action) and hermeneutic (examining thinking). Intertextuality establishes a form of epistemological triangulation, through the interrelationship of intradisciplinary perspectives (the contributions of different philosophers), interdisciplinary perspectives (philosophical, psychological and sociological), empirical research and the researcher's reflection, as illustrated in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Intertextuality between research elements



Epistemology, power and autonomy, and the 'General Second Record'

The empirical element of the research degree represents an attempt to explore alternative research methodology, drawing upon Philosophy for Children, or P4C (Lipman, 2003). Philosophers of education's philosophical underpinnings are reflected in differing views of desirable aims of education (Carr, 2005): my own values, prejudices, inclinations and beliefs underpin the thesis, notions encompassed within Stenhouse's (1993) 'General Second Record', and described in the introductory chapter to the thesis. Stenhouse urges teacher-researchers to be aware of and to make their readers aware of the presuppositions brought to research, so that 'dependable intersubjectivity' is enhanced. Stenhouse believes that revelation of the researcher's biography supports validity by informing readers' judgements about the researcher's

objectivity, thereby supporting epistemological trustworthiness. However, as these validity criteria have no independent status, provision of a biography would not satisfy the scientific community. I nevertheless perceive my personal experience as a South African emigrant to England to strongly influence my research.

Davies, Gregory and McGuinn (2002) express the hope that education might advance a 'better world'. Similarly, Enlightenment hope underpins my research aim that through pupils' experiencing increased capacity for exercising responsible, ethical decision-making characterised by self-critical awareness of knowledge as provisional and situated, they recognise humanity's mutual interrelatedness and interdependence. The ethical dimensions of my research are more important to me than others' perceptions of its validity, yet Ricoeur (1986) reminds me that my ontological and epistemological position must dialogue with others'. I must consult social science but need not allow it to dictate: a productive tension must be maintained.

Hollis (1994), a rational analytic philosopher, conceives epistemology as shaped by the rival traditions of explaining (empiricism) and understanding (interpretation), which reflect underlying positions regarding the social world as similar to or different from the natural world. Scientists cannot be detached from their efforts to explain and understand: *'Individuals are always set about with social constraints, especially with inherited obligations.'* (ibid: 101). According to Hollis, individuals possess both social and personal identities and the self, which provides latitude in interpreting roles: an acknowledgement of the legitimacy of my selectivity, as researcher. Individuals' inevitably norm-governed social identities and reasons for action cannot be disentangled: making rational choices is dependent upon normative expectations of what is strategically rational for social agents (ibid). Therefore, interpretation of theories and choice among theories always contain a normative element: the values-laden criteria for rational acceptance.

Chapter Four explicated philosopher Foucault's denial of researchers' autonomy, impartiality and detachment (2000), due to the implication of power relations within the control over what counts as knowledge, and therefore of knowledge-production. Following Foucault, education, an institution of social science that claims to perform a therapeutic role, imposes supposedly detached scientific knowledge through its

disciplinary regimes which, whilst purporting to challenge the establishment, maintain it: doing research helps to create and maintain the illusion of the objectivity of the science regime in which we are currently living (Sherratt, 2006). Following Foucault and Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992), epistemological 'truth' is supported by a range of practices and institutions whose authority society accepts. University students' ideas, Foucault suggests, are brought into line with mainstream establishment thinking through shaping conceptions of the academic (Mills, 2003) through mechanisms such as:

- Hierarchical observation: being observed by someone in authority
- Normalising judgement: the practice of punishing non-conformity through micro-penalties regulating individuals' time, activities, behaviours, speech, bodies and sexuality
- The examination of the individual, producing visible data in files, documents and records (Smart, 1985)

My own experience of being a student undertaking a research degree endorses the influence of received cultural wisdom transmitted through literature review and the support of supervisors. However, whilst I recognise the research community as being influenced by archaeological factors (Scheurich, 1997), power effects (Foucault, 2000) and social reproduction (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992), the use of hermeneutic interpretation (Ricoeur, 1986) and the influence of my General Second Record (Stenhouse, 1993) may yield fresh personal and professional insights.

Foucault champions the 'specific intellectual's' potential to work within a particular field of expertise to undermine and challenge oppressive institutions from within (Mills, 2003). As an intellectual, Foucault (2000) resists contributing to the functioning of political parties' power structures, which he believes should, instead, be criticised, so he does not offer solutions. Although Foucault downplays individuals' ability to transform society, he asserts that individuals can bring about political change: power does not only constrain; resistance to power produces new forms of behaviour:

> *'And if I don't say what needs to be done, it isn't because I believe there is nothing to be done. On the contrary, I believe that there are a thousand things*

that can be done, invented, contrived by those who, recognising the relations of power in which they are involved, have decided to resist them or escape them.'

(2000: 294)

So, despite Foucault's perception that researchers are not autonomous and that power 'creates' knowledge, he ultimately maintains an Enlightenment positioning towards freedom, to which I liken my own hope and scepticism.

The challenge of validity within the social sciences relates equally to quantitative and qualitative methodology, although quantitative research may mistakenly appear more objective and therefore valid. The case studies, situated within the reflective practitioner-researcher approach, are subject to the potential tensions Walford (1998) associated with reflexive research. On one hand, my reflexive research utilises narrative devices which may obscure its cultural base whilst suggesting transparency. On the other hand, my qualitative research may appear less scientific and more subjective and value-laden, with the possible consequence that it may lack credibility and be taken less seriously.

Making decisions: Qualitative and/or quantitative research?

I wished to identify research methods suitable for the case studies; methods consistent with increased self-determination for pupils and teachers; methods suitable for small-scale exploratory research, i.e. methods fostering inquiry rather than prescription; requirements therefore somewhat inconsistent with the notion of validity, discussed above, demanded by logical positivism, the dominant epistemology in the Western world since the early 20th century (Carr, 2004) and its insistence that all 'knowledge' conform to scientific principles. My agreement with Carr's view that the widespread, uncritical acceptance of the scientific ideology now dominates education in such a way as to marginalise reasoning about politics or morality, leads me to reject research methods modelled on technical rationality and operational effectiveness, despite the possible undermining of the value and validity of the research in the eyes of decision-makers in education and of the research community that may result. I argue that researching values in education inevitably challenges contemporary education construed as an applied science, in which teachers are described as technicians and learning as exclusively demonstrated by performatively measurable skills (Carr, 2003).

The case studies could be interpreted as challenging the drive towards demonstrable outcomes that concerns Ruitenberg (2004): when education is linked to economic productivity, educational research becomes increasingly tailored towards providing empiricist and quantitative models for serving specific ends such as time management or problem solving skills. The case studies are free of such external encumbrances only because the Citizenship Curriculum is non-prescriptive at Key Stage One level and because the Key Stage Four Study runs as an extra-curricular activity.

Reviewing trends within empirical educational research, Benner and English cite a decrease in research based upon rigorous conformity to exclusively scientifically-formulated criteria: research has '*...given up the futile search for universally valid positive laws of education to practice a form of educational research modelled on critical rationalism.*' (2004: 419). Benner and English attribute the proliferation of qualitative research within the sphere of education to researchers' interest in what constitutes effective pedagogy, including the contexts and conditions in which teaching and learning take place. Indeed, these features rendered qualitative methodology more suitable within the case studies than quantitative methodology.

Lipman's (2003) community of inquiry, outlined in Chapter Five, offers a suitable procedural model for engaging pupils in philosophical discussion about ethics, but I wished to determine how it might translate within the social science paradigm. Might the key to suitable methods lie in investigating language structure, a focal point of certain research methods examining language usage? *Ethnomethodology,* a sociological approach discussed by Gilbert (1993), recognises participants' practical reasoning skills as constituting a sense of social action, which can be revealed by analysis of participants' communication. According to Gilbert, 'conversational analysis', 'discourse analysis' and 'the linguistic repertoire' aim to reveal subjects' beliefs, actions and events by referring to them in specific ways. These methods are premised upon the rationale that limited ranges of specific linguistic terms tend to be used repetitively, enabling interviews or conversational exchanges to produce data that can be coded and analysed to reveal not only recurring themes but also the speaker's way of defending his account against scepticism.

Initially, I had considered whether discourse analysis, the examination of the regularities and features of accounts (May, 1993) might be adapted within the case studies to produce data for coding and analysis of language used by pupils during philosophical inquiry. For instance, data coded might include the vocabulary range and incidence of relevant keywords. However, the inquiry process itself constituted the sphere for exploration and observation, rendering discourse analysis unsuitable as an analytical tool because of its limitations in respect of capturing other important aspects of pupils' complex interactions. It could not illuminate the nature of children's engagement with a discussion topic, their ability to sustain deep concentration on the topic, their attitudes towards others, nor the influence of others' opinions on their own.

The case study

Yin (2003) describes the case study as a research method, an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon in its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident: the deliberate covering of contextual conditions. The case study as a research strategy *'comprises an all-encompassing method – covering the logic of design, data collection techniques, and specific approaches to data analysis.'* (Yin, 2003: 14). I intend that the Key Stage One Study and the Key Stage Four Study be characterised by this coherence. The notions of children 'doing' philosophy about moral values within a community of inquiry; a specific kind of moral environment, supported by Socratic questioning and narrative are integral aspects of the research design and implementation.

Ethnographic research and qualitative methodology

'Ethnography', 'qualitative inquiry and 'case study', virtually synonymous, possess the advantages of yielding qualitative data providing rich description, explaining processes and considering local contexts (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Moreover, Miles and Huberman suggest that qualitative data provide insight into the consequences of specific events: words ordered into stories might become more meaningful and memorable to readers than numerical information, but reliability and validity of qualitative data can be doubted because of the possibility of researcher bias (ibid). In contrast to analytic philosophers' view, embodied by Dearden, Hirst and Peters in the

1970s, that values should be eliminated in the interests of scientific neutrality (Carr 2005), I viewed values as a necessary and desirable element within the case studies.

Teacher research

Within this thesis, the terms 'teacher research', 'practitioner research' and 'action research' are understood synonymously as a means whereby teachers can invigorate pedagogy (Freeman, 1998; Mills, 2000; Stenhouse, 1985, 1993). I suggest that teacher-research, intended to empower and democratise teachers, assumes a degree of teacher autonomy perhaps more accepted during the 1970s and 1980s than is currently the case.

Action research is considered a potentially powerful agent of educational change because the attitude of those undertaking such research is that of embracing action, progress and reform rather than stability and mediocrity (Mills, 2000). It might therefore be argued the attitudes of researchers rather than the research activities are responsible for change.

Whilst some challenge the ability of anyone centrally involved in teacher-research to conduct inquiry objectively (and, by implication, credibly), others challenge the efficacy of outsider research to facilitate change and development (Robson, 1993). I do not consider any research value-free, therefore I view teacher-researchers and professional researchers as possessing equal potential for objectivity. Robson demystifies practitioner research, viewing it simply as systematic and sensitive inquiry, encouraging teacher-researchers not to de-skill themselves by devaluing their experience in watching and talking to people.

Teacher-research provides a means of bridging the division between teaching, the end of which is pupils' knowledge, and research, the end of which is knowledge of the teaching-learning process (Freeman, 1998). Following Freeman, teacher-research involves adopting a questioning orientation that leads to inquiry within a disciplined framework, which enables findings to be communicated to others and research to be scrutinised by other scientific disciplines, thereby developing recognition for teaching as an autonomous professional body. Whereas Freeman is concerned about teachers'

low professional status by comparison with that of sociologists and psychologists and wishes to overcome the latter's traditional dominance of educational research, the rationale of encouraging pupils towards philosophical inquiry aims, on the contrary, to overcome disciplinary barriers (Scott-Baumann, 2006). Indeed, I consider that a strong focus upon discrete academic disciplines contributes towards content-saturated curricula and discourages metacognition.

In contrast with Freeman's desire that teachers should conduct research independently of others and thus raise the profile of teacher-research, the current British government agenda is based upon joint evidence-based research in which professional researchers and teacher-researchers work collaboratively (Watkins, 2006), a trend that I consider may conserve teachers' relatively limited status and autonomy. I am suspicious of the government agenda for more evidence-based research of a certain kind, which could endorse specific technical measures of effectiveness and models of research, further increasing their dominance whilst minimising the potential difficulty of relating general large-scale research findings within specific contexts.

I consider my overarching research approach in the thesis to be that of the reflective teacher-researcher, to emphasise the coherence between the literature review and the empirical element, which uses Yin's (2003) all-encompassing case-study research method.

Practical difficulties and tensions surround teacher-research:

> *'There is a real tension in the need for the school to have outputs, and research doesn't always have productive output in that way.'*
>
> *'...the culture (for teachers to get involved in research) in schools is not there because the time is not there.'*
>
> *'...it (teacher-research) inevitably impinges upon colleagues.'*
>
> (Watkins, 2006: 15)

It is noticeable that challenges are conceived as essentially practical, rather than ethical, in nature and that teacher-research is perceived as offering unique opportunities for professional development. Authors writing about research ethics strike a more measured, cautionary chord. Their primary focus is not the opportunity for personal and professional growth that research offers teachers, but the protection of

the rights of research subjects. Later in this chapter and in Chapter Eight I argue that traditionally conceived research ethics possess potential for negative as well as positive consequences.

Section B: Research ethics

Informed consent

Research conducted within educational institutions may involve minors, whose attendance at school is compulsory, and whose knowledge and understanding of the subject matter of the research is uncertain. Therefore, the ethical requirement to obtain subjects' voluntary consent to take part in research presents challenges. Homan (1991) conceives voluntary consent as comprising various elements:

- Possessing the legal capacity to give consent
- Being situated such that free choice is exercised in the decision to be involved in research
- Possessing sufficient knowledge and understanding of the subject matter of the research to enable informed decision-making

These criteria may be interpreted less stringently in some circumstances, for instance where research involve minors, but freely given consent of subjects should be obtained as far as is practicable (Homan 1991).

The ideals of informed consent are frequently compromised when headteachers or teachers, acting as 'gatekeepers', taking decisions on children's behalf (McNamee and Bridges, 2002). However, I argue that the notion of informed consent in educational research involving children as participants is inconsistent: educational practice routinely requires that educational professionals make value judgements on the basis of pupils' best interests, as discussed in Chapter Three. The importance of informed consent for research fails to account for the way pupils are regarded in the entirety of their educational experience. Whereas I as a teacher conceive children as agents; research participants, research ethicists conceive children as vulnerable minors and research 'subjects'.

Whilst supporting the ideals of informed consent, I contest the practicability of being informed and of consenting, irrespective of the age of research participants. Being

informed requires that the subject is made aware of and understand all aspects of the research, an impossible requirement, especially with regard to ethnographic and exploratory research, the shape of which may only emerge during the research process.

The notion of *consent* requires participants' capacity to choose participation freely on the basis of their own reasoned judgement, not the result of coercion or undue influence. Such demands challenge teacher-researchers: the view that pupils' rights may be infringed by those acting *in loco parentis,* who make decisions on behalf of children (McNamee and Bridges, 2002) contrasts with those who express confidence in professional judgement (Mills, 2000; Stenhouse, 1993). Tension reflects the potentially conflicting views of the child as dependent upon others for protection, or as needing and able to develop the capacity for decision-making. McNamee and Bridges cite Alderson's (1993) argument that children may possess greater wisdom than is realised, and that the continued intervention of well-meaning adults in children's decision-making hinders their developing capacity to make judgements independently.

Because children were the subjects in my empirical research, it was necessary to submit the research proposal to the university Ethics Committee, for ethical review by the committee. The committee approved the proposal after queries had been satisfied concerning recruitment and text selection for the Key Stage Four Study.

The primacy of teaching

Following Freeman (1998), the following ethical principles should guide classroom-based research:

- the primacy of teaching must be maintained, so that the teacher's responsibility to help pupils learn and develop is never jeopardised and
- decisions about research must be taken with consideration for the pragmatic constraints imposed by classroom situations

In the case of the Key Stage One Study, research would take place within lesson time, dealing with ordinary lesson content, hence, the primacy of teaching was maintained, with consideration for pragmatic constraints. The Key Stage Four Study was planned

as an extra-curricular activity because of the prescriptive nature of the curriculum and the associated pragmatic constraints. Far from detracting from pupils' learning and development, the case studies aimed to enhance learning in the educationally neglected area of moral development.

Anonymity, confidentiality and privacy

The ethical requirements for anonymity and confidentiality are widely accepted: anonymity protects the identity of individuals and organisations involved in the research; confidentiality relates to agreement with those involved about what will be done with their data. Miles and Huberman (1994) include the issue of privacy as a further element for ethical reflection. Privacy relates to the unintentional divulging by subjects during research of more information than they would wish to make known and which they feel may threaten their interests. All three elements were considered in the case studies. Anonymity and confidentiality would be protected in the way observations were reported. Material shown to Ph.D. supervisors would already have been anonymised. Data would be used solely for the purposes of the research project, stored safely on a PC outside the public domain for the duration of the project, and destroyed upon its completion.

Power relationships and nurturing pupil self-determination

The effects of power relations between pupils and teachers (Foucault, 1994b) and my valuing of pupil self-determination, explicated in Chapter Three, are themes of the research in additional to being ethical considerations. I agree with Davie and Galloway's (1996) perception that children's independence is fostered when teachers and other adults conceive children as possessing the capacity for self-determination, irrespective of age and that '*the conditions for the development of self-determination are identical to the conditions for its exercise*' (Walker, 2005: 81). My decision to undertake philosophical inquiries with children in the case studies is based upon the need to approach research and moral development in a way that is consistent with supporting the development of pupil self-determination.

Stangor's (1998) warning concerning 'co-operative responding', individuals' (possibly unconscious) desire to respond to questionnaires in ways that they perceive might please the researcher, is particularly relevant to teacher-researchers.

Section C: Research questions and methods

Research questions

My professional role as teacher of Key Stage One pupils, and later, Key Stage Four pupils, offered convenient opportunities for implementing research questions, making possible the exploration of different forms of philosophical inquiry suited to respective age groups. Despite Hollis' (1994) reminder that researchers possess social as well as personal identities, and notwithstanding his emphasis that notions of rationality are regulated by social norm, my thinking accords with Foucault's (2000): that individuals are not only coerced by power but can also resist power (if they recognise it) and act within their situations. Operationalising the research questions represents my pragmatic attempt as teacher-researcher, to respond, within my situation, to developing pupils' capacity for critical thinking and caring attitudes.

Question 1: In what ways is it possible for schools to provide for the development of values education within the context of current government initiatives?

The case studies seek to discover:

- How can, and how do, pupils encounter and develop moral values within educational institutions, not only through the 'hidden curriculum', but also through planned, explicit exploration of moral values?
- What opportunities can be provided for discussion of moral issues?

Section B addressed ethical issues concerning the primacy of teaching (Freeman, 1998), which I am careful not to compromise (see Chapters Seven and Eight).

In the Key Stage One Study, informed by the psychological theories of moral development of Piaget (1932) and Kohlberg (1981), young children would explain and, hopefully, deepen their understanding of certain pre-selected 'virtues' during a circle-time activity, 'Thinking Time', within the Citizenship framework. This activity would form part of the normal school day, revealing primary schools' comparative curriculum flexibility. Focus upon the virtues arises from Aristotle's assertion that virtue is productive and preservative of goods, hence the greatest virtues are those that confer benefits on others (Arnbart, 1981). Aristotle implicates becoming self-sufficient with goodness, associating pupil self-management and self-determination with ethics.

Aristotelian virtue is located at the ideal midpoint between opposite extremes, for instance bravery at the midpoint between foolhardiness and cowardice. Concepts are understood partially through examining associated binary oppositions (Rorty, 1991): understanding of virtues might be deepened through examining such oppositions.

In the Key Stage Four Study, the secondary school curriculum structure's inflexibility necessitates the use of an extra-curricular activity time for the research, a Debating and Philosophy Club, based upon my conviction, supported by Lipman (2003) and Marx (1995) that pupils' engagement with moral values is not necessarily secured through transmission of curriculum content.

Question 2: In what ways can narrative extend learners' thinking about moral issues?
Narrative plays an important role within the case studies, acting as a stimulus and a means of extending understanding, as explicated in Chapter Four with reference to philosophers Nussbaum (1990) and Ricoeur (1992), linguists/literary critics (Bakhtin, 2002; Rustin and Rustin, 1987; Stephens, 1992) and, in Chapter Five, Plato (1961). Ricoeur believes that narrative ascription provides a vehicle for the development of moral values because narrative enables individuals to view themselves as an 'other', and thus to evaluate their own actions and motives as they would others' motives and actions: actions can be 'read' as text (1988). Narrative's 'distanciation' thus supports objectivity, whilst narrative also supports subjective elements: affective involvement with fiction enhances empathy for others (1992). Discussion has textual qualities and can be conceived as narrative, as Socratic dialogues illustrate.

The case studies consider the following aspects of narrative:

- Does narrative encourage pupils to think about and discuss moral issues? If so, what influences on thinking are observable?
- What kind of narrative encourages moral engagement and what criteria identify suitable texts for use in philosophical inquiries with children? Ricoeur (1988) privileges 'true narrative', that which reveals the difference between the good and the bad. Certain novels help individuals to become increasingly autonomous and to become 'less cruel' (Rorty, 1989)

- In the Key Stage Four Study, pupils' perceptions are sought concerning the value of narrative within philosophical inquiry

Within the Key Stage One Study, pupils explore their narrative understanding of an Aristotelian virtue (Lyotard, 1984), textual narrative then provides possible contexts for further exploration, followed by further discussion. Using textual narrative thus seeks to deepen and extend existing narrative understanding. The teacher-selected stories relate to the weekly circle-time virtues-based topics:
Being a friend: *The rescue party,* Butterworth (1993)
Being fair: *Farmer duck,* Waddell (1991)
Being good: *Shaleen goes swimming,* Smith (1995)
Being polite: *I want my dinner,* Ross (1995)
Being honest: *The true story of the three little pigs. By A. Wolf,* Scieszka (1991)

Within the Key Stage Four Study, textual narrative illustrating moral dilemmas is used as an initial stimulus to pupils' identification of a philosophical question for deep exploration, issues such as courage, bravery and foolhardiness; knowledge, understanding and wisdom; responsibility and duty; and resolving conflicting demands. I selected a range of suitable texts from the samples included in the SAPERE P4C handbook (see Appendix 8), newspaper articles and other sources. Pupils selected texts of their choice from within this range. Pupils' points of interest ('hotspots') are converted into philosophical questions for sustained inquiry.

Question 3: *How can teachers legitimately encourage pupils to make decisions that reflect an awareness of public as well as personal 'goods'?*
The further questions that arise from this question are:

- What pedagogy supports the development of respect and tolerance for others?
- How can philosophical inquiry be adapted for use with different age groups?
- Is encouraging pupils to think of others shaping their thoughts?
- What influence is legitimate?
- What coercive practices are to be avoided?

This question explores the complex ethics involved in the legitimate role of teachers in matters relating to values, as addressed in Chapter Three through reference to philosophers and educators. As teacher-researcher, I wished to guide and facilitate discussion, clarifying meanings and developing individuals' capacity for thinking and self-expression, but to avoid coercive shaping of children's ideas by the teacher or peers. Field notes should reflect children's intended discussion content and meaning, involving complex epistemological issues which were partially addressed in Section A. It was necessary to decide in advance the extent of teacher participation in discussion. Chapter Seven addresses fully the contested place of teacher-participation in discussion, which Piaget (1932) rejects on the basis of power relations, but can also be viewed as providing essential scaffolding (Portelli and Reid, 1995). As discussed in Chapter Three, teacher self-determination is implicated in pupil self-determination through teachers' modelling of positive behaviours. Chapter Three also addressed the potential dangers of confusing the notions of responsibility and coercion: teachers ultimately retain responsibility for classroom practice, so the ideal of following the inquiry where it leads cannot compromise teachers' duty of care. This tension illustrates the moral dilemmas teachers may encounter, for which ethical judgement in conflict-resolution is required, as discussed in Question 4, below.

In both case studies, children's decision-making concerning their level of involvement in discussion is respected. In the Key Stage One Study, pupils can confine their participation to listening rather than taking part in discussion. Chapter Seven investigates the reality of this theoretical ideal. In the Key Stage Four Study, participants volunteer to join the club and determine their level of participation. Pupils select textual narrative and suggest questions for philosophical inquiry, exercising self-determination in exploring issues and dilemmas of interest to them. The teacher attempts to be an equal participant in philosophical inquiry rather than unduly influencing pupils' thinking.

Within the community of inquiry, the teacher ensures that all participants are able to voice their opinions in an atmosphere of trust and respect, supporting democratic norms of respect for minority ideas and freedom of expression (Mill, 1859/1996). Consensus of opinion is not expected. In the Key Stage One Study, children initially contribute in turn, ensuring equality of opportunity to express views. The creation of

an atmosphere of trust is explained in Chapter Seven. In the Key Stage Four Study, the procedural norms followed are those of communities of inquiry (Lipman 2003).

Question 4: How is student self-determination defined?

The principle of pupil self-determination, explicated in Chapter Three, is central to the case studies. Using Lipman's (2003) community of inquiry model involves accepting the intellectual freedom and the intellectual integrity to 'follow the inquiry where it leads', a requirement that places in tension the practitioner-researcher's dual role in accepting equal status with other research participants, thus in one sense relinquishing hierarchical status, whilst simultaneously meeting the ethical demands to manage the research process. The relevance is revealed of Chapter Three's exploration of inherent contradictions involved in imposing limits to critical thinking (Davies *et al*, 2002), illustrating the necessity and importance of judgement, unrecognised within technical-rational frameworks. Notwithstanding these tensions, I suggest that teachers' engagement in action research carries an implicit values statement (McNiff, 2002) concerning teacher autonomy.

The community of inquiry offers features congruent with self-determination and philosophical and psychological theory, features that also interrelate with the centrality to epistemology of validity, within social sciences research methodology:

- Its self-critical nature (Ricoeur's distanciation, 1986)
- Discussion of ideas within a community, allowing comparison of own with others' thinking (comparison against the moral norm, Ricoeur, 1992)
- Discussion has a sense of direction and a dialogical structure, providing scaffolding for thought (Plato, c370BC/1961)
- Its requirement for reasonableness (Aristotle, c350BC/1953)
- The encouragement of thinking for oneself, explaining thoughts, examining thoughts and justifying opinions (Plato, c370BC/1961)
- The creative component that stimulates lateral thinking (Ricoeur, 1986)
- Consensus of opinion is not a requirement (Foucault, 2000)
- Others' thinking challenges the adequacy of own thinking (Kohlberg, 1981; Piaget, 1932; Ricoeur, 1986)

Research Methods

Literature review

Within this thesis, relevant literature is interrogated to extend understanding through interpretation of the interrelationships between various distinct but not exclusive disciplines; philosophy, psychology and sociology, creating intertextuality facilitating the researcher's critical awareness: it is not merely a rich backdrop to the research, but is integrally part of the research. The literature review is complemented by an empirical element, comprising two descriptive case studies, which provide a means of analysing the applicability and usefulness of theoretical perspectives (Ricoeur, 1986).

Empirical research

The empirical research blends various qualitative, ethnographic features: social interaction with participants, direct observation, counting, collection of data through questionnaires and open-endedness regarding the direction of the study. The ethnographer plays an active role in the research process, especially relevant within the Key Stage One Study, involving six and seven year old children:

> *.....and some effort to 'think' oneself into the perspective of the members, the introspective process Weber called 'verstehen'.*
>
> (Gilbert, 1993: 157)

The activities comprising the field of research would be pre-planned for each case study, yet the heuristic nature of philosophical inquiry and of exploratory research rendered impossible and undesirable the imposition of pre-determined structures of analysis. Mixed research methods would include descriptive qualitative data recorded in field notes, the practitioner's reflective journal and parental and pupil questionnaires asking open-ended questions, the analysis of which yields predominantly qualitative interpretation, and a limited amount of quantitative interpretation: observable, measurable difference is relevant within parts of both case studies.

Construction of theory and designing methods for gathering data are necessary considerations within social science research (Gilbert, 1993).

Construction of theory: Key Stage One Study

The theoretical perspectives of the empirical research explore how and if moral reasoning can be encouraged (Piaget, 1932; Kohlberg, 1981; Donaldson, 1987; Aristotle, 350BC/1953; Ricoeur, 1992) through using narrative to stimulate moral reasoning and to enhance pupil empathy with 'the other', thus simultaneously supporting pupil self-determination and care for others. Narrative, the use of the 'Know-Nothing Baby' (a device for directing and managing discussion) and wall displays to create and maintain awareness of the virtues, support the research. The research investigates one way of conducting a community of inquiry (Lipman 2003) that might be enhanced, refined or indeed discarded in future inquiry. The inquiry formed a part of the class's routine circle-time activity within the Citizenship Curriculum framework. Five virtues were explored in this 'Thinking Time', over five consecutive weeks.

Data collection and research methods: Key Stage One Study

- **Field notes** taken by teacher-researcher during 'Thinking Time' activity, where pupils direct explanations towards the 'Know-Nothing Baby'. Despite the impossibility of objective observation, Bruyn's (1966) criteria may contribute towards increasing accuracy in observations:
  - Time – the greater the time the researcher spends with the group the more adequate observation will be
  - Place – the more closely the researcher works with the group, the better
  - Social circumstances – variety of activity and varying the status of the researcher in relating to the group leads to more accurate interpretation
  - Sensitivity to language – observation is more accurate when the researcher is familiar with and sensitive to the way participants use language
  - Intimacy – openness or barriers affect the accuracy of interpretation
  - Social consensus – interpretation is more objective if the researcher is able to check with the participants whether they agree with a given interpretation

As I was the research group's teacher and worked closely with research participants, I was sensitive to many of these issues, thereby, following Bruyn, potentially increasing observational accuracy.

- **Parental questionnaires**, in contrast with sophisticated constructions such as May's outline of stages in questionnaire construction (possibly more applicable to large-scale research and statistical analysis) (1993: 83), consisted in a simply stated 'sentence starter' requiring completion and a brief description of familial values (see Appendix 2 and Appendix 3) i.e. providing exclusively descriptive, qualitative data. The questionnaires were used experimentally to support my understanding of children's thinking and did not involve attitude scales nor attribute causality.
- **Teacher-researcher's reflective journal (J1)**. Relevant entries are contained within Chapter Seven.

Data analysis, Key Stage One Study

Tabulating or codifying pupil and parental responses in various ways might support analysis clarity, infusing a limited amount of quantitative data into primarily qualitative research. Analysis would reveal whether:

- additional meanings were contributed to the discussion after the story had been read, i.e. whether narrative prompted further discussion. If so, the suggestion might be supported that using narrative as a moral stimulus can contribute to enhancing perception, extending understanding and developing thinking
- thinking moved towards greater convergence or divergence as an inquiry progressed, or over successive weeks, and the related issue of possible peer-group pressure in encouraging children to change their minds or conform
- thinking became more simplistic or more complex as an inquiry progressed. The qualitative nature of responses prior to and after reading of the narrative might differ. Thinking might become more sophisticated and nuanced as discussion progressed if understanding was being enhanced. However, if pupils became tired or bored, responses might become shorter, less varied or more simplistic
- young children's empathy with others was encouraged through narrative: whether they understood different perspectives
- pupils practised the principles of respect and tolerance within a democratic process that gives equal opportunity to all rather than acting egocentrically

A full description of the Key Stage One Study is contained in Chapter Seven. Figure 8 provides an outline of the interrelationship between children's narrative understandings

(Lyotard, 1984; Ricoeur, 1988, 1992) and their possible extension through textual narrative.

Figure 8: Procedural model, Key Stage One Study

Exploration of children's narrative understanding
through Socratic questioning, using the 'Know-Nothing Baby'

⇓

Introduction of text

⇓

Further exploration of narrative understanding

Construction of theory: Key Stage Four Study

A philosophy club for Year 10 pupils was proposed to run as a weekly extra curricular activity, following afternoon lessons, at a co-educational day and boarding school. The focus of the research supporting personal development would be the development of relationships of trust among club members (Baron, Field and Schuller, 2000) and developing procedural norms within the community of inquiry (Lipman, 2003) over its first eight weeks in operation, the perceived benefits of public dialogue (Plato, c370BC/1961; Aristotle, 350BC/1953) and pupils' metacognition concerning the potential benefits of philosophical inquiry. As will be explained in Chapter Eight, the envisaged Key Stage Four Study was adapted considerably during its implementation, for practical and ethical reasons.

Data collection and research methods: Key Stage Four Study

- **Field notes** taken during philosophical inquiry did not fulfil to the same extent all of Bruyn's criteria (Gilbert, 1993), listed in the Key Stage One Study, above, because I did not teach the pupils who joined the club. Nevertheless, as I worked at the school where the Key Stage Four Study was conducted, I was sensitive to these issues and the need for careful observation to support accuracy. The quality of field

notes relies upon the researcher's interest, commitment, quality of observation and of analytic abilities (May, 1993).

- **Self-completion Pupil Questionnaires**, requiring reflection upon open-ended questions and descriptive responses. The attractions of questionnaires over interviews are that anonymity is supported and questionnaires are time-efficient to administer. Clarity and avoidance of leading questions are important considerations (Newell, 1993) (Appendix 6 contains the pupil questionnaire).
- **Teacher-researcher's reflective journal (J4)**. Relevant entries are contained within Chapter Eight.

Data analysis, Key Stage Four Study

Analysis would reveal whether:

- the nature of discussions changed during inquiry sessions and over the course of the school term
- attitudinal / behavioural change could be observed, such as group dynamics, the development of more open discussion, trust, or tolerance
- pupils were self-reflexive
- possible ideology in narrative could be detected and interrogated by pupils

The inquiry model used in the Key Stage Four Study is adapted from a model presented through a Philosophy for Children (P4C) course for practitioners, run by SAPERE, the Society for Advancing Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection in Education, outlined in Figure 9:

Figure 9: Procedural model, Key Stage Four Study

Introduction of text

⇓

Choice of philosophical question

⇓

Exploration of narrative understanding

Generalisability of findings

The case studies are samples of specific small-scale research and do not claim wider generalisability, although they aim to illustrate pedagogy and ways of implementing values education that might be used more widely and further developed by interested practitioners. Furthermore, the community of inquiry model has been used extensively in America for several decades (Lipman, 2003; Portelli and Reed, 1995) and is increasingly recognised within England's educational sphere, as the existence of organisations such as SAPERE demonstrates.

Summary

In this chapter I struggle with the notions of epistemology and social sciences methodology and remain dissatisfied with existing research methods. I therefore begin to evolve suitable ways of encouraging pupils to explore morality, using hermeneutic methodology possibly mistrusted by social sciences because of its reliance upon interpretation and researchers' reflexivity. However, Ricoeur's (1986) approach, examined in greater detail in Chapter Ten, involves me as teacher-researcher in a dialectic, reflexive relationship between research epistemology, empirical research and literature.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Key Stage One Study: Thinking Time Three Pigs, A Wolf, and the 'Know-Nothing Baby'

Introduction: Values and knowledge?

This Chapter describes empirical research exploring how Key Stage One pupils of six and seven years of age can engage in philosophical inquiry supporting moral development. Pupils' narrative knowledge (Lyotard, 1984) of Aristotelian virtues, explored through their explanations to the 'Know-Nothing Baby', is extended through textual narrative in the form of fiction. Section A contains a literature review of relevant theory of cognitive development of psychologists influential in education; Piaget and Vygotsky, and Piaget and Kohlberg's theories of moral development, interrelating psychological theory concerning cognitive conflict with philosophical perspectives. The Key Stage One Study investigates Piaget's theory that children's reasoning, capacity for critical thinking and moral reasoning is dependent upon invariantly staged cognitive development.

I argue that cognition, although important within education, is not necessarily reflected in moral values. Hollis (1994) reveals the mistaken Enlightenment assumption that scientific and moral progress would occur together, the equating of scientific development with progress, by drawing attention to the possible negative uses to which science can be put. Philosophy should thus be as influential within education as psychology is. As discussed in Chapter Six, philosophers show that value-judgements pervade epistemology by influencing how information is interpreted and how choice occurs among competing theories (ibid) and philosophers remind us that certain accepted forms of epistemology, such as technical rationalism, may lead to individuals being treated instrumentally. However, major advances in philosophical thinking are frequently linked with breakthroughs of scientific thinking: one upheaval stimulates re-assessment of knowledge in another (Magee, 1998): intersubjectivity exists between cognition and moral philosophy. Ricoeur (1986) insists that empiricism and hermeneutics should inform each other.

In Section B the methodology and methods used in this case study, briefly explained in Chapter Six, are examined in greater detail and relevant information about the inquiry sessions is described, followed, in Section C, by analysis of the case study.

Section A: Theories of cognitive and moral development

Cognitive development

Many cognitive interventions in education have been influenced by Piagetian theory of cognitive development (1932), as occurring in progressive and invariable stages. Shayer and Adey (2002) draw upon Piaget and Vygotsky in formulating principles for cognitive development, arguing that learning should come to be viewed as the development of intelligence; the ability to simultaneously process many aspects of reality, to be flexible; and to develop interpretive skills, rather than being viewed as the accumulation of knowledge. The community of inquiry model used in the Key Stage One Study and the kind of philosophical discussion undertaken is consistent with these principles for cognitive development, although not the focus of the research (see Appendix 1). Three important features of successful intellectual intervention are identified from evaluations of various cognitive intervention programmes, cognitive features of thinking that are incorporated alongside the 'caring' features within the Key Stage One Study:

- Cognitive conflict is successful in the construction of thinking; observations that conflict with current thinking induce accommodation
- Metacognition, thinking about and discussing different thinking actions, increases the efficacy of thinking
- Bridging makes thought processes available across ranges of contexts (Adey and Shayer, 1994)

Another feature of exploration within the community of inquiry is its social nature, which accords with Vygotsky's (1934/1962) emphasis upon the social nature of learning and cognition: not only is learning reliant upon the use of language, a shared social tool, but learning takes place through human interaction. According to Vygotsky, teachers can support learning by identifying the 'Zone of proximal development', the point at which pupils' conceptual development can be extended.

Effective teaching for cognition, as within the philosophical inquiry practised in the Key Stage One Study, incorporates:

- using questioning and answer sequences to guide development of understanding through reasoning and reflection, rather than exclusively to test knowledge. Through questioning, teachers identify pupils' initial levels of understanding and adjust their teaching accordingly. Socratic questioning techniques are premised upon their ability to guide development of understanding (see Chapter Five; Plato, 1961). Socratic questioning in the Key Stage One Study takes the form of a reiterated sentence starter, to sustain deep inquiry within a specific area of interest (the 'virtue' investigated), in contrast to Vygotsky's questioning, which aims to lead children's thinking towards a predetermined point of 'discovery'
- teaching procedures that pupils can use to make sense of experience and problem-solve, rather than exclusive teaching of content, using metacognition, part of the case study emphasis. Pupils are encouraged to make explicit their thinking and teachers to explain the purpose of classroom activities. The Key Stage One Study foregrounds the importance of thinking by calling this specific circle-time activity 'Thinking Time'
- treating learning as a social, communicative process, in which pupils exchange ideas, take an active and vocal role, and use each others' contributions to construct 'common knowledge' of the class, the rationale upon which Lipman's (2003) community of inquiry model is based

Following Vygotsky, children learn from peers as well as teachers, a feature of the Key Stage One Study, in which enhancement and deepening of understanding occurs through discussion with peers and through narrative, which stimulates cognitive challenge at Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development' (a notion resonant of Piaget's (1932) notions of 'accommodation' and 'cognitive conflict'; Kohlberg (1981) uses 'adequacy').

Vygotsky conceives language and thought as inextricably interrelated, and reflected by the relationship between the individual and society, sharing some of the characteristics of language which interest philosophers, for instance Lyotard (1984), Nussbaum (1990) and Ricoeur (1977, 1986, 1989, 1991). Following Vygotsky, language is both:

- a *cultural tool*, used to jointly develop and continue the knowledge that constitutes

'culture'

- a *psychological tool:* the fusion of language and thought shapes the individual's mental development, enabling the individual to organise thoughts, reason, plan and review actions

Social constructivists Sharron and Coulter (1996), citing Feuerstein's experience of raising the achievement of large numbers of deprived children who immigrated to Israel in 1948, urge teachers to be transparent in sharing with pupils their values and moral values. They argue that values provide meaning for learning, ensuring that pupils experience the emotional and energetic motivation for learning and they suggest that teachers in England should consciously assume the role of the agents of social reproduction by supporting children's acquisition of thinking skills and of culture. Many teachers might feel ambivalent towards conveying such 'enthusiasm' about values, yet might acknowledge the influence of particular teachers on their own disposition towards (or against) a subject, ascribing learning to inspirational teachers as well as inspirational teaching, as Yin's dedication illustrates: *'This book is dedicated to Hans-Lukas Teuber, who made research a lifelong goal for all who studied with him.'* (Yin, 2003). My decision to manage philosophical inquiries without contributing to discussions appears to conflict with this view, yet I believe my values to be implicit within the Key Stage One Study research area, methodology and ethos. Strong shared moral values positively influence attainment through promoting a sense of individual worth (Munn, 2000).

It is fair to say that generally, by comparison with South African teachers, teachers in England approach values education tentatively, wishing to avoid undue influence upon pupils' values, possibly equating revelation of teachers' values with coercion. Scott-Baumann (2003) recognises similar differences between Indian, Kenyan and English teachers. I suggest that the assumption within education in England is that teachers should suppress their own values; that authority is wrongly associated with domination, whereas I argue that suppressing legitimate authority weakens pedagogy. Incongruously, teachers willingly share factual information, but deny pupils insight into others' values.

Moral development: Piaget and Kohlberg

Participants' responses are later used to interrogate the relevance of Piaget's (1932) and Kohlberg's (1981) theories of moral development within the Key Stage One Study.

Piaget's was influenced by Durkheim's view that moral education essentially consists in teaching children to limit themselves obediently to society's moral rules and to dedicate themselves to benefiting society and Kohlberg's theory, in turn, evolved from Piaget's (Hersh, Paolitto and Reimer 1979). Durkheim's conception of moral education is echoed within the Curriculum 2000 statement of values, aims and purpose, which encourages children to commit themselves to accepted virtues, reminiscent of Bourdieu's theory of social reproduction (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Concern with normative behaviour and also with critical thinking that may challenge norms inheres within education.

Piaget, Vygotsky and Kohlberg's thinking regarding the role of cognitive conflict in stimulating development shares similarities (Adey and Shayer, 1994): children should experience co-operative activities in relationships of mutual respect. However, Piaget and Kohlberg disagree about adults' role in supporting development. Piaget (1932) suggests that authority figures should not participate in these peer activities because of the power relations between teacher and young student and the nature of the child's blind obedience to adults. However, Kohlberg (1981) suggests that transmission of teacher values is inevitable and unavoidable, challenging the notion that teachers can avoid influencing pupils through non-participation in discussion.

Piaget suggests that it is helpful for children to participate in formulating rules (rather than having rules imposed by adults), even before cognitive development for true social activity is fully established. This suggestion resonates with Davie and Galloway's (1996) protection of 'potential autonomy' and Pritchard's argument that denying children opportunities for developing decentred thinking because they are assumed incapable of decentred thinking until well into their school years, reinforces and prolongs egocentricity, impeding the development of moral sensitivity (Pritchard, 1995).

Piaget's staged development and 'decentring'

The traditional association of Piaget with cognitive rather than affective development imposes an incorrect and artificial separation: Piaget recognised that intelligence operates in both cognitive and affective areas of life (Hersh *et al*, 1979). Pupils in the Key Stage One Study would, theoretically, be situated within Piaget's stage of preoperational thought (two to seven), although age delimiters are approximations only. Piaget considers children younger than six or seven years of age to be incapable of decentring, imagining themselves in another's position and reasoning what this would mean, because of their egocentricity. Donaldson (1978) challenges the validity of Piaget's theory, arguing that Piaget's methods, and therefore interpretation, are incorrect: younger children are indeed capable of decentring, when appropriate social meaning and purpose, contextualisation, is provided (using narrative devices). Bruner et al (1986) and Wood (1998) similarly recognise the role of narrative in creating meaning that supports reasoning. The children in the Key Stage One Study demonstrate partially ability to decentre, as discussed in Section C.

Piaget (1932) recognises two broad stages in children's judgement of right and wrong, between the ages of six and twelve. According to Piaget's theory, the moral developmental stage of children in the Key Stage One Study (six and seven years of age) should mean that they obey without question the 'sacred laws' that have been laid down by adults, viewing acts of obedience as good and non-conformity as bad. Rules are viewed as an arbitrary, external code obeyed, without internalisation, because children find their identity in submitting to adult rules. Piaget suggests that the child therefore has no conscience and does not consider intention or motive in actions, judging behaviour on the basis of objective responsibility: the bigger the mess, the worse the offence, regardless of circumstance or intention. Actions are considered to be wrong because they are punished: if they were not punished the action would be considered acceptable. Following Piaget, young children do not understand mutuality and reciprocity in relationships. As children mature, heteronomy, being controlled by emotions, desire or impulse, gives way to increasing freedom from heteronomy. Elements of these characteristics were evident within the discussion of Key Stage One Study participants.

Following Piaget, from approximately ten years of age, children conceive actions as wrong if they conflict with mutual trust. (Moral philosophers such as Ricoeur (1992) would share Piaget's valuing of mutual trust). As cognitive and social development occur, moral rules, now understood as an agreed set of rules that regulate social activity, become internalised. I would argue that children in the Key Stage One Study demonstrated elements of this valuing of trust, as discussed in Section C.

Following Piaget, from approximately 12 years of age children begin to reason about moral rules, generalizing them and extending them progressively towards reaching universality, a process in which confrontation with adult authority is viewed as inevitable (Duska and Whelan, 1977).

Kohlberg and cognitive conflict

Kohlberg's (1981) seven-stage model describes the logical, sequential steps through which, he believes, morality develops from childhood to maturity, as current thinking is challenged by thinking one level above the current level. The child finds this level of reasoning attractive because it offers more adequate answers than the child's existing thinking and is presented at an attainable level: children restructure their own reasoning when they evaluate their own views as less adequate than higher reasoning to which they have been exposed. The child is unable to engage with a level of conceptual thinking that is too far above his own. Kohlberg therefore favours discussion that introduces (limited) cognitive conflict as a stimulus to more adequate moral reasoning, guidance that I consider can be followed without stringent attention to the seven-staged model, application of which might present practical challenges. To identify with certainty the current stage of each child within a class (age delimiters are only guides) and then to offer the 'correct' amount of cognitive conflict at the appropriate level is nigh impossible.

Kohlberg emphasises that individuals' inherent capacities must be respected, therefore appropriate stimulation must be accompanied by support and acceptance (Duska and Whelan, 1977). In the Key Stage One Study, narrative and Socratic questioning provides support in a way that respects participants' capacities and avoids artificial acceleration, consistent with Kohlberg's view that learning environments in which

pupils experience democratic processes support emerging moral development.

Section B: Research description

The research group

Number of pupils in research group - 12 pupils

Age of pupils in research group – ten pupils of six years of age, two pupils of seven years of age

Gender of research group – eight boys, four girls

The Key Stage One Study was conducted in a small, independent primary school, located in a rural area. Class sizes range from approximately 12 to 18 children. I was the class teacher of the research group, a Year 2 class in which the majority of the pupils were in their third year together as a group. Although the feeder area for the school is considerable, socially and culturally the children attending the school formed a homogenous group, from families who prized education and enjoyed networks of trust based upon shared experience, reciprocity and the sharing of mutual goals, as explicated by Baron, Field and Schuller (2000). The research group could therefore be described as possessing social capital: the shared features of social life such as norms, trust and networks, that, following Baron et al, enable groups to work together effectively in achieving goals.

The classroom environment

Much routine classroom activity implicitly supports the development of moral values, self-determination and enhances social interaction; but desirability of practices and outcomes are seldom stated explicitly. The community of inquiry makes explicit the classroom atmosphere, social norms, values and interpersonal skills conducive to investigating values through discussion. By comparison with previous year-groups, the research group was noted in the school for its composition of highly individual personalities who did not, at the time of research, function as a cohesive group, despite two previous years of schooling together. I hoped that implementing an inquiry to which both process (procedural norms) and content (virtues selected to enhance understanding of social norms) were central might have the serendipitous effect of improving social cohesion and knowledge and understanding:

'Each learner experiences complex transactions within himself or herself [...]. As groups come together this complexity multiplies. All this suggests that learning communities are dynamic, complex, exciting and generative. Networks of unpredictable meanings emerge from these learning communities.'

(Donahue, Van Tassell and Patterson, 1996: 4)

The community of inquiry model of discussion as implemented within the Key Stage One Study proposes the following to be important:

- what we speak about
- pupils' contributions to discussion
- showing respect for others within group situations
- creating an environment conducive to reflection, in which pupils have time to think
- creating an environment safe for risk-taking, where pupils' contributions are valued
- listening to others' responses
- reflecting upon others' views
- explaining one's own thinking
- exploring cognitive conflict

Process of the weekly philosophical inquiry session

Each week the children would explore one Aristotelian 'excellence' or 'virtue', following the process:

- The teacher introduces the virtue for discussion, using a 'Socratic' sentence-starter i.e. 'Being a friend means...'
- Children take turns describing to the 'Know-Nothing Baby' their understanding of the chosen topic, before passing it to the next child.
- Children are invited to add any further insights to the topic by raising hands.
- A story is read that illustrates the virtue and related themes.
- Children are invited to contribute any new or further insights to the body of information previously discussed, by raising hands.

Research methods

Pupils' contributions to 'Thinking Time' discussion and other observed behaviours would be recorded as ***field notes***, for developing into *mounted wall displays,* to raise

and sustain children's and parents' interest in the project. Field notes have the attraction of allowing researchers to *'participate in social relations and seek to understand actions within the context of the observed setting.'* (May, 1993: 112) because the meanings of actions are interpreted with reference to the environment.

A particularly appealing *furry toy* performed a critically important role in the inquiry process. This 'Know-Nothing Baby' was used exclusively for the 'Thinking Time' activity, and 'lived' in the cupboard at other times. The toy can be manipulated to curl up tightly and 'peep' at individuals, its beady eyes appearing to look directly at them. I hoped that children might find the creature engaging and respond to it on a creative, affective level. By addressing their perceptions to the toy rather than the researcher, I hoped to avoid participants' possible attempts to shape answers to gratify me (Stangor's (1998) 'co-operative responding') in consideration of power relations (Foucault, 2000; Piaget, 1923). The creature, neither human nor animal in appearance, a friendly, but shy alien creature, provided many advantages, described in Chapter Nine. As the 'Know-Nothing Baby' knew nothing about humans, children were asked to explain to it their understanding of what it meant to be, for instance, 'A Friend'. Children would pass the 'Know-Nothing Baby' to the person to their right when they had made a full explanation of the concept. The teacher would re-iterate the sentence-starter in each instance. Children would have as much time as they required in which to articulate thoughts; others would know when their turn was coming: the self-monitoring process required minimal teacher-intervention.

The sessions were planned to take place after a playtime, to reduce possible restlessness. Creating an unhurried atmosphere of quiet calm and thoughtfulness was important, so foreseeable disruptions were avoided. I would not describe the research as 'naturalistic' (May, 1993) despite its taking place within lesson time and involving a teacher and pupils because, unlike ordinary curricular lessons, there were no predetermined learning (content) objectives. Parents would be invited to complete ***parental questionnaires***, the purpose of which was to observe congruence or difference between parents' and pupils' perceptions. As teacher-researcher, I would keep a ***reflective journal***. Reflective remarks might include analysis, method, ethical dilemmas, own frame of mind, and points of clarification (Miles and Huberman, 1994)

and, importantly for the case study, reference to theoretical ideas or research themes informed by philosophers or psychologists.

In relation to my empirical work, distinctions made between inductive and deductive methods seem inapplicable. Participant observation is described as inductive, questionnaire design deductive, enabling researchers to formulate and test ideas using questions (May, 1993). However, in my research, the literature review has already informed areas of specific interest (moral values, narrative, self-determination), therefore observation arguably offers scope for deduction in addition to induction: the foreknowledge with which I, as teacher-researcher, approach the research situation influences interpretation (Ricoeur's 'hermeneutic circle'). Hence, I consider my observation to be a hermeneutic (interpretative) rather than a phenomenological process, where 'phenomenology' refers to personal and intuitively perceived experience of the world.

A disadvantage of the field notes is that they do not allow for repeatable access to discussions, as would be possible with video or audio recording (Gilbert, 1993). Although this potential difficulty might have been overcome by tape-recording sessions, the children's voices could not easily be recorded clearly and I was concerned that introducing unusual technical elements might be counterproductive to efforts to maintain an ordinary lesson context. Because children spoke in turns, I was satisfied with the field notes.

Managing the research: selectivity and intervention

The researcher must take decisions regarding the selection of research methods and the structure of the relationship with the participants and the setting studied (Freeman, 1998). Within the case study, in addition to research methods selected, attention was given to the decision to use convenience sampling, which had several additional advantages to the saving of time, money and effort, suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994):

- the unique opportunities offered by the children's stage of development (Piaget's stages of moral development in young children, discussed in Section A)
- the size of the group, which I considered ideal for philosophical inquiry

- my being the group's teacher and previous involvement with the group afforded me intimate knowledge of the group, supporting accuracy of observation (see Chapter Six, Section C)

The virtues to be explored were selected to encourage cohesion and co-operation, referred to in my letter to parents seeking consent for the research (Appendix 1). The classroom atmosphere was managed to render it conducive to sustained, uninterrupted thinking. Aspects for analysis were selected.

The extent of teacher-researcher intervention in the process and involvement in discussion, was pre-specified. As far as possible, I wished children to self-manage the inquiry process, and I wished to elicit responses from pupils without participating in the discussion, to act as facilitator rather than teacher, in line with Piaget's (1932) concerns about power relations and Kohlberg's (1981) concerning artificial acceleration. I repeated the 'leader' statement 'Being a friend means...' in the manner of Socratic questioning, but did not explain the topic, comment upon children's contributions, or attempt to direct the course of the responses. Pupils' contribution thus determines the conceptual level of discussion, and pupils can follow lines of thought that interest them. My verbal participation in philosophical inquiries would be limited to clarifying meaning through questioning, avoiding possible shaping of discussion by raising leading questions.

Young children are not always skilled in verbalising thoughts or understanding accurately, so particular insight is therefore required in perceiving the full meaning of what they say:

> *'It is a common but naïve assumption that the understanding of a word is an all-or-none affair: you either understand it or you don't. But this is not so. Knowledge of word-meaning grows, it undergoes development and change.'*
>
> (Donaldson, 1978: 73)

Certain kinds of research require the researcher to play an active role in the research process (Gilbert, 1993), 'thinking oneself into' the perspective of the participants. Observation of non-verbal communication can enhance understanding of what is verbalised. However, reporting and analysis would be restricted to what was observed and recorded in field notes.

Focus upon thinking

Calling the philosophical inquiry sessions 'Thinking Time' makes explicit the nature of the activity undertaken. Children were encouraged to think about what they wanted to say prior to responding, thereby encouraging independent thinking and avoiding repetition of 'I think the same as ... (another child's name)'. Verbalising ideas requires framing of perceptions, making explicit understanding and providing opportunities for children to challenge and refine ideas, to weigh others' ideas and to reconstruct their own thinking (Lipman 2003). Explanation directed to the 'Know-Nothing Baby' supported listening to others' explanations. The narrative then introduced might challenge the adequacy of children's thinking by introducing different elements to discussion: stories socialise children into wider worlds than those of their limited experience (Bage, 1999) or might encourage thinking at a higher conceptual level (Piaget and Kohlberg's 'cognitive conflict', Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development').

Parental consent and questionnaire

A letter sent to parents explained the purpose of the research, informed them of the school's consent to the research, and sought their consent to my using lesson content for research purposes, assuring confidentiality and anonymity (Appendix 1). Parents were invited to raise any questions or objections to the proposed research, and I appealed for parental assistance with a questionnaire, sent out weekly for the five-week duration of the inquiry.

All parents consented to the use of lesson content for research. Responses from nine of the twelve families were represented in the weekly parental questionnaires. During the research period, parents spontaneously expressed their satisfaction that 'values' were on the agenda.

The Parental Questionnaire, consisting in a few open-ended questions (see Appendix 2) was designed to gather descriptive data, such as parents' suggestions regarding their child's likely understanding of the 'virtue' and related information about values within the child's family unit. The envelopes containing questionnaires were given to parents when they brought their children into school in the morning. The topic was discussed

by pupils during the school day. Parents returned their sealed questionnaires when they fetched children from school. In this way, parents' and pupils' responses to topics would be provided independently of each other, but parent-child discussion about the topic might follow after the school discussion.

Parents were asked to provide a spontaneous response to questionnaires, for two reasons. Firstly, spontaneous answers are likely to be sincere. Secondly, on a practical level, completion in less than five minutes might help to ensure the successful return of questionnaires. The questionnaire was a purely exploratory way of involving parents their child's learning. Data provided by parents might prove interesting in relation to pupils' contributions and parental inclusion in this research might inform parental involvement in possible future research. It was expected that in some instances parents might correctly predict their child's responses, whilst the responses of children who demonstrated more complex and sophisticated thinking might prove harder to predict. Parental questionnaires contribute towards achieving methodological triangulation: checking research from more than one perspective, possibly using different research strategies (Macdonald and Tipton, 1993). Methodological triangulation was provided through field notes recording observations of children's responses, parental questionnaire responses and my reflective journal entries (J1 – the Key Stage One Study Journal) as teacher-researcher. However, as discussed in Chapter Six, intertextual and intratextual triangulation was provided through the interrelationship of philosophers', psychologists' and sociologists' ideas within the theoretical review, the empirical research and my 'General Second Record' (Stenhouse, 1993): my ontology and genealogy (Scheurich, 1997).

Generalisability of findings

Potential cognitive or moral development amongst pupils cannot be ascribed to the inquiry because of children's ongoing maturation and evolving competencies (Wilson, 1981). The small sample size, unique composition of individuals within the group and the cultural and economic homogeneity of the group limit the generalisation of findings to other groups. However, as was the case with Wilson's (1981) research group, there is no suggestion that the individuals investigated were so unique that conclusions should not be expected to apply elsewhere. Miles and Huberman (1994)

consider a disadvantage of convenience sampling, such as the Key Stage One Study group, to be its potential compromise to credibility, a possibility outweighed, I suggest, by the compensations already described. The deliberate choice of the case study method is to facilitate examination within the practitioner's own environment, to *'cover contextual conditions – believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study.'* (Yin, 2003: 13) rather than to suggest broad generalisation, but it might nevertheless inform other situations.

A degree of personal transformation seemed inevitable because of the nature of the inquiry process, the content of the discussion and the awareness in selected virtues raised among parents and pupils. Lipman (2003) believes that communities of inquiry promote reasonableness among participants; rationality tempered by judgement. Participants are treated as reasonable beings, that is, as individuals with the capacity for using reason. I suggest that actions such as taking turns to speak, showing awareness of and consideration for others, listening to others, sustaining co-operative participation in joint inquiry are observable behaviours associated with values that might arise from the inquiry process.

Section C: Analysis of the Key Stage One Study

The effect on children's thinking of using narrative

a. Decentring and egocentricity

Analysis of the children's responses prompted me to reassess Piaget's (1932) assertion that until approximately seven years of age, children are fundamentally egocentric and have not yet developed the ability to decentre; unable to view physical and social phenomena from any but their own particular perspective. Matthews supports the reliability of Piaget's investigation as replicable (cited in Portelli and Reed 1995), but Donaldson (1978) argues that Piaget's methods did not provide the contextualisation necessary to understanding, and that when context is provided, children are indeed able to demonstrate decentred thinking.

In the Key Stage One Study, narrative provided contextualisation and constituted 'bridging': enabling the application of thought in one sphere into another sphere, pedagogy which Adey and Shayer (1994) recognise as stimulating cognitive

development. For instance, the narrative *Farmer duck,* used in the second session, which explored 'Being fair', inspired careful consideration of additional dimensions of fairness than had arisen in children's own discussion. Appendix 4 contains a sample of the *Farmer duck* narrative, which tells of a lazy farmer who gets a duck to carry out his chores. The exhausted duck's animal friends support the duck by chasing the farmer away and sharing the farmyard chores. In the ensuing discussion, children interrogated the possible consequences to the farmer of the animals' action. Reasoning, explaining thinking and imagining consequences was evident, as was decentred thought. For instance, one child said that the farmer's being chased away was fair for the animals but not for the farmer. The child described a future scenario in which the farmer was destitute, as the consequence of this action. This child imagined the situation from the perspective of another actor: 'He has no home and no money and nothing to eat', thinking that suggests the inadequacy of Piaget's assertions concerning decentring.

It was fitting to values education that the first inquiry session explored friendship, an Aristotelian (c350BC/1953) virtue, because philosophers view friendship as a virtue central to ethics. For Plato (c370BC/1961), a friend is like another self, because what one loves in a friend is the best part in oneself. Friendship is ethical, a great external good, because esteem for a friend requires that the self maintains personal ethical standards. Ricoeur (1992) explains how friendship, according others consideration equal to the consideration one desires for the self, leads to justice. Following Piaget's emphasis upon egocentricity, one might expect young children's orientation towards friendship to be self-serving rather than self-denying. I expected a predominantly self-centred orientation to friendship, but was proved wrong. A simple tally (in Figure 10) indicates that only four of the 12 children's responded that friendship exists for their benefit; for example:

> *'Being a friend means a friend helps you and is kind to you and plays games with you.'*

The other eight children's responses were oriented towards others:

> *'You help them if they get hurt.'*

Figure 10: Pupils' orienting of the self in relation to friendship

Personal benefit orients friendship	Consideration for others orients friendship
4	8

One child's explanation of friendship illustrates that young children are capable of the kind of generosity in ethical behaviour that, in Ricoeur's view, recognises human dignity:

'You play the games they want to play and you sit next to them at lunch.'

Following Ricoeur, for ethics to be valid as an expression of human dignity, generosity must be expressed, even where reciprocation of interests is excluded or limited. Ricoeur believes this universal ethics to be based on narrative tradition, on the experience of daily life, from which evolves the attitude that I do not hold myself to the rules of strict equity in relations with others, but act generously toward others (Kemp, 1988).

Ricoeur (1992) focuses upon reciprocity as establishing ethics: One treats the other as a valued self, and esteems what is good in the self as one esteems that which is good in the other. Children's initial thinking regarding friendship, prior to the reading of the narrative *The rescue party*, demonstrated a limited orientation of reciprocity, mutual trust, pleasure and care. Only two of twelve responses included sharing:

*'You sit and look at a book **with them**.'*

*'You play **together** in the swimming pool.'* (emphasis added)

At this initial stage in the inquiry, the other ten responses regarding relationships were stated in terms of the way in which I relate to my friend or the way in which my friend relates to me. This situation changed dramatically after the story, as a sample of responses demonstrates:

'Friends laugh together.'

'Friends lie down and rest together.'

'Friends have tea together.'

'They go on picnics.'

'Friends help each other.'

'Friends care, so they call for help.'

'Friends talk together.'

'Friends watch each other do things.'

'Friends look for things together.'

The content of these responses partly reflects the events occurring in the story, but the children's predominant orienting of friendship towards the self or the other has changed to an orientation emphasising reciprocity and sharing in doing things together.

b. Empathy

Ricoeur (1992) believes that empathy for others supports ethical development, and that narrative helps individuals to appreciate a character's situation. The second session, 'Being fair' illustrates the accuracy of this perception. In *Farmer duck*, the children's strong support of the duck; small, tired and undervalued, might be attributed to their identification with and empathy for the character. Similarly, one child's empathy for the farmer accounts for the concern expressed about the farmer's subsequent well-being.

c. The introduction of cognitive conflict to children's thinking

Cognitive conflict (Piaget, 1932; Kohlberg, 1981) was evident in several of the inquiry sessions, but was perhaps most pronounced in the fifth session, 'Being honest', complemented by Scieszka's *The true story of the three little pigs. By A. Wolf.* The wolf tells his side of the story, in which he claims only to have been innocently borrowing a cup of sugar with which to cook his grandma a birthday cake, when his huge sneezes accidentally kill the pigs.

Cognitive conflict arose because the children were familiar with the traditional tale of the *Three little pigs*. Scieszka's version was new to all of them. The source of the conflict arose from their narrative understanding of the traditional tale, Lyotard's (1984) socially accepted and transmitted understanding, as discussed in Chapter Four. On a rational level, pupils were able to think in the abstract and identify both stories as fiction because, for instance:

- *That is **not** true*
- *It is not real*
- *Pigs can't talk*

- *Pigs can't build houses.*

But, having established that both stories are fiction did not influence the children's perceptions regarding the 'truth': children described the traditional story of the three little pigs as being 'better' and being 'more true' than Scieszka's version, although they could not offer supporting justification for their thinking. In one sense, that of narrative understanding, the traditional story is indeed 'more true' than Scieszka's version. However, children's inability to justify thinking suggests that, in this respect, thinking level remained constant.

Conflict of opinion arose over the wolf's guilt or innocence. Some children felt that, in the traditional version, the wolf deserved to go into the pot because he was being horrible to the three little pigs. The title *'The true story of the three little pigs. By A. Wolf'* and its presentation as a newspaper article caused confusion. The children reasoned as follows: the title of the story proclaims its truth, the wolf claims to be innocent and his story is plausible, and the book is presented to look like a newspaper (therefore 'factual'), so the wolf must be telling the truth. Despite this reasoned conclusion, children were unable to reconcile their reasoned thinking and their beliefs, as the tally of votes below illustrates. I did not want to suggest an easy resolution to these conflicting thoughts, in keeping with Calvino's assertion that using literature to create a model of values can only yield results if it is difficult and indirect (cited in Kearney 1998). Eventually, one of the children suggested that the wolf is both good and bad, good because he just goes to get a cup of sugar for his grandmother's cake, and bad because he eats up the pigs. This reasoning opened up a new line of reasoning, which became increasingly complex: the children's current thinking is being challenged. Some pupils defended the wolf's consumption of the pigs on the basis of utility: since the pigs were dead anyway, waste might as well be avoided. Another child says that the wolf is bad because he doesn't really want to borrow a cup of sugar, he just wants to eat the pigs.

It seemed that voting on whether the wolf wanted to borrow sugar or eat the pigs might help the children to clarify their thinking. The conflict present even at the end of the discussion is evident from the results of votes:

The wolf lies:	1
The wolf tells the truth	11

Yet

The wolf is good:	4
The wolf is bad:	8

As discussed earlier, an element of Piaget's (1932) theory of moral development relevant to this age-group is the judging of behaviour on the basis of objective responsibility. The accuracy of this element of theory was made evident by one child's assertion that the wolf is bad because the 'cops' see all the sticks and straw and bones (not because he is guilty as such, but because of the evidence and the extent of the mess caused).

As already discussed, Piaget, Kohlberg and Vygotsky suggest that children are attracted to thinking at a level above their existing thinking. I challenge the view that children's thinking can be neatly classified at a level, because within this session children demonstrated both transition in thinking and maintenance at a level of thinking, as discussed above.

d. Convergent and divergent thinking, complex and ethical thinking

In all inquiry sessions except for the fourth, 'Being polite', the nature of the thinking demonstrated by pupils became broader and more complex after the narrative had been read, that is, narrative extended thinking beyond the initial explanations that repeated questioning elicited. An example from the first session, 'Being a friend', illustrates this point. As noted earlier, pupils initially explained friendship in terms of what others do for me, or what I do for others; the notion of mutual sharing was limited. However, after the reading of *The rescue party,* responses included dimensions of caring, and increased awareness of the other's welfare and of mutuality. Some responses, for instance, were:

'Friends help you to be happy again when you are hurt.'

'Friends ask if you are OK.'

'Friends feel scared and worry if their friends are in danger.'

Narrative did appear to influence and broaden understanding. Thinking became more complex as the inquiry progressed.

In crude positivistic terms, reading stories was shown to generate further responses. In the first session, a count of the proportion of additional responses after the story showed it to have generated approximately as much extra discussion as had been presented initially:

Number of initial responses, prior to story	16
Number of additional responses, after story	13

An example of the restructuring of thinking as a result of cognitive conflict comes from the second session, 'Being fair', in which the majority felt it was fair that the lazy farmer had been chased off his farm (for sample narrative, see Appendix 4). The child who said it was fair for the animals but not for the farmer explained and justified thinking, but the others were not persuaded. This phenomenon corresponds with Kohlberg's assertion that, when presented with alternative perspective, children do not switch positions, but rather begin to reconstruct their thinking (Hersh, Paolitto and Reimer, 1979). The child's explanation stimulated others to adjust or justify their thinking. The animals' actions were rationalised by appealing to the facts about the farmer's laziness: he got his just desserts, and by suggestions that being chased by the animals was to the man's benefit because he would get some exercise and become thin. This session demonstrated that even young children are capable of reasoning and justifying their choices. The statements described above were raised spontaneously by the children. I had not intervened in their thought processes, the narrative had provided the stimulus for the resulting discussion.

The fourth session, 'Being polite', proved the exception regarding divergent thinking. In this session, pupils' interest became focused upon table manners, about which all were in agreement. Discussion revealed children's perceptions regarding received norms of social etiquette and convention. Responses were detailed and children found the topic interesting. I was somewhat surprised by the dominance of the children's preoccupation with table manners and infer, as a possible explanation, that young children are particularly aware of the social norms being imparted. It appeared that

these 'adult laws' were not interrogated, but were accepted as 'sacred law' (Piaget, 1932). The large degree of consensus that characterised this topic might also possibly suggest that this relatively homogenous social group shares largely similar views concerning social conventions.

In the fifth session, the children's increased capacity for complex thinking over the five-week inquiry series was demonstrated. In line with parents, I expected that the topic 'Being honest' might produce a rather bland discussion consisting in 'Tell the truth' or 'Don't lie'. However, discussion included the notion of keeping of promises, as part of honesty:

> '*If you tell someone they can come to your party and then you don't invite them, that's not honest*',

which brought to mind Ricoeur's (2003) focus on the necessity of keeping promises as fundamental to the development of friendship and trust amongst humans. For Ricoeur, the individual's remaining constant in character is a prerequisite to moral action: keeping one's word is acting morally. Another element of honesty that emerged in discussion related to being dependable:

> 'Honesty means if you're sure you'll play with your friend.'

Another child said that admitting to something (naughty) was being honest. It can thus be seen that the children's thinking showed greater sophistication than expected.

Influence of philosophical inquiry upon pupil self-determination

Part of the inquiry process was self-managed by pupils, who passed the 'Know-Nothing Baby' to the next child as each completed his or her contribution. The benefits of the pupil-managed process included:

- providing opportunities for pupils to practise self-determination: children judged when they had expressed their thinking fully
- providing children with as much time as they required in which to articulate thoughts
- creating security, because the children could gauge when their turn would come
- minimal teacher-intervention
- increased focus upon thinking and content rather than upon process-management

Using the community of inquiry model supported the exercising of pupil self-

determination as a self-management device, one that might be developed, though metacognition, to self-managing other areas of learning.

Philosophical inquiry also supported self-determination regarding thinking: in the vote previously described, eleven children held one opinion, only one held a contradictory opinion, and was sufficiently courageous to maintain this stance. Discussion ensued regarding whether the individual was right or wrong not to agree with the others. One pupil expressed the opinion that if most of the group's thinking concurred, the individual *should* also do so: conformity was viewed as normatively good, supporting Piaget's (1932) assertion that younger children view acts of obedience as good and non-conformity as bad. The individual demonstrated self-determination in her conviction that the wolf was only pretending innocence, whilst the majority self-righteously believed themselves correct. It was evident that community of inquiry procedures support reasonableness: behaving courteously towards those holding differing opinions, discussing and being able to justify an opinion.

Influence of the community of inquiry upon behaviour

Although it would be advantageous to compare the analysis of the Key Stage One Study regarding the possible influence of philosophical inquiry on emotional, social and cognitive development with other initiatives in this field (Lipman, 2003; Palermo, 1995; Tricky, 2003) in the interests of brevity, I confine the description to this case study.

a. Social and emotional influences

The community of inquiry model proved productive and suitable with regard to values education. Children listened carefully and considerately to others and contributed willingly and thoughtfully. I partially ascribe the children's focussed attention to the introduction of the 'Know-Nothing Baby' into the learning environment. This device had a positive influence: children appeared to respond to it on an emotional level. They handled it gently, addressed their explanations to it, spoke quietly, and were reluctant to return it to the cupboard for safekeeping until the next week's session.

Aspects of observed social behaviour within the community of inquiry (Lipman 2003)

that would benefit pupils in other situations included:

- taking turns to speak
- listening attentively to others
- responding to others' opinions critically but without ridicule
- agreeing to differ
- examining their own thinking
- weighing evidence
- experience of democratic decision-making
- practising reasonableness
- viewing individuals as possessing the capacity to be rational

Discipline issues and lack of attention were absent from the inquiry sessions.

b. Cognitive influences

The cognitive skills valued within a community of inquiry may have positive effects on development (Trickey, 2003). Aspects of cognitive behaviour that were observed in the inquiry sessions included pupils' ability to sustain concentration for extended periods of time, to grapple with ideas that they found conceptually challenging and to seriously consider views that differed from their own. Whilst this cognitive development cannot be ascribed to the inquiry sessions, my own experience of undertaking this thesis attests that growth in understanding and increased facility for conceptual challenge develops through focused and sustained discussion, in my case, with my supervisors and through literary review. This challenge is illustrated by this extract from my reflective journal, recorded after reading Donaldson (1992), a post-Piagetian who provides a theoretical framework for exploring emotional and intellectual development:

> *'Reading Donaldson's "Human minds". Trying to 'get inside' her thinking about modes. She talks about 'value-sensing transcendent mode' as an experience that is accepted to be ineffable*...(Here follows reflection about my own thinking)...*Into what category* [Donaldson's] *would this mental/emotional state be classified?'*
>
> (J1 30/05/04)

In the same way that I perceive my own understanding in specific areas to develop through guidance and intertextuality, it seems plausible to suggest that the reasoning

children demonstrated is supported by the provision of specific, planned opportunities for engaging in sustained thinking.

The Parental Questionnaires

An example of a questionnaire return relating to the first inquiry session, 'Being a friend', illustrates the values of one family represented. Parents were asked to predict their child's response to the sentence starter 'Being a friend means...'. This parental response explains the family values:

> *'Looking after them, being kind to them especially when they are hurt or upset. Mutual support and tolerance of friends' 'bad' traits (everyone has good and bad / irritating aspects – we choose which we want – good, and choose to ignore or reject the bad).'*

In this instance, the parent's prediction concurred with the child's (more limited) response:

> *'You help them if they get hurt.'*

Of course, such concurrence did not always occur. In the fourth session, most parents expected that their children would equate politeness with saying 'please' and 'thank you', with only one mentioning table manners, which transpired to become the focus of pupil discussion, so in this instance parents' and children's responses differed considerably. Appendix 3 contains a sample comparison of children's and parents' responses from the second session, to the notion of 'Being fair means...'

The value of the parental questionnaire consisted in:

- parental interest and involvement in children's learning
- encouraging opportunities for parents and children to discuss values
- making parental values explicit

In all instances, mothers rather than fathers completed the weekly questionnaire, perhaps suggesting that in most of the families in the sample, child-rearing roles are defined along traditional lines despite half of the mothers being in full-time employment and several others in part time employment. Other possible explanations are that mothers tend towards greater social acquiescence than do fathers, or that mothers consider this research as relevant, or that they relate to the notion of values in

education relatively more than fathers might.

Ethical issues affecting the practitioner-research

a. Informed consent and self-determination

McNamee and Bridges' (2002) concerns regarding the possible compromising of the ideals of informed consent are reflected in my journal, which reveals the conflict I experienced about using a class activity in a dual capacity:

> *'My dilemma therefore centred not around the technicality of being ethically correct with regard to the school and parents as gatekeepers, but related to the use of children's participation in an ordinary lesson (for which educators routinely assume participation to be forthcoming) with the notion of informed consent. The practice of assumed involvement in circle time suddenly became an issue not previously encountered. It forcibly reminded me that self-determination in schooling is often an ideal rather than an actuality for students. As teachers, we do not and indeed could not consult with children regarding their preferences and choices in every situation. [...] Their compliance in terms of participating routinely in lessons is assumed [...]. Furthermore, young children's desire to please the teacher sits uncomfortably with the notion of informed consent. To what extent is the value-laden norm of expected active participation of students in group-sessions in opposition to their rights to individual choice? Young children do not question when the teacher asks them to be seated for circle time, they comply eagerly with the request. Lessons are not chosen. In this sense, our circle time was not chosen, yet I was using it for research that implied informed consent. Even explaining that I would record the children's responses and use them later for studies I was undertaking did not allay this vague sense of unease.'*
>
> (J1, 12/02/04)

As can be noted from the entry, the notion of informed consent brought to the fore many dilemmas regarding self-determination. It is ironic that my own research is in tension with my ideals relating to pupil self-determination. As the exploration of methodology in Chapter Six reveals, the benefits of educational research are considered to outweigh the need to wait for subjects to achieve maturity (McNamee and Bridges, 2002). McNamee and Bridges cite Alderson's argument that decisions

made on children's behalf by well-meaning parents and professionals undermine children's ability to develop mature competence with regard to consent or refusal, i.e. self-determination. Alderson considers the development of self-determination as the key to all other rights. According to Alderson, many adults' prejudices lead them to have low expectations of minors that become self-fulfilling, whist high expectations should rather be the focus. This particular view of children, as vulnerable minors, is the one that university ethics committees are obliged to assume in their role as protectors of rights. However, it is a view that may, I fear, reinforce stereotypical and potentially limited views of children's capacities and, potentially, induce insecurity and erode the autonomy of teacher-researchers.

I would argue that children's routine participation in lessons is assumed, predisposing them to voluntary participation in classroom-based research. Ethical considerations of research set in conflict the ordinary responses to teaching and learning and the learning in the inquiries. Epstein, conducting research with a Year Five class (children three years more senior than the children involved in the Key Stage One Study), articulates her concerns about the notion of informed consent:

> *'It seems that on one level that I am doing it with the children's knowledge and consent. But there still seems to be a level at which such knowledge and consent are hollow fictions.'*
>
> (Epstein, 1998: 36)

Epstein suggests that children's ability to give informed consent may depend upon various factors, some of which are within the researcher's control; for instance, the nature and amount of information provided. Epstein includes, among factors beyond the researcher's control, the extent to which children are accustomed to being consulted, a concern reflected in my journal entry, above and the possible withholding of parental consent, which precludes participation in research, possibly against the child's wishes.

b. Power relations

The effect of power relations upon children's desire to please adults, referred to in connection with self-report measures used in questionnaires by Stangor (1998) as 'co-operative responding', has possible ethical and validity implications. The use of the 'Know-Nothing Baby' represented an attempt to overcome children's potential efforts

to frame responses in ways that would please me, the teacher-researcher. One might be particularly conscious of co-operative responding when framing questions neutrally for use in a questionnaire, but be relatively unaware of the same phenomenon in general discussion. It is, furthermore, impossible to evaluate the extent to which cooperative responding might occur within the classroom environment, although I am unaware of any effort on the children's part to frame responses in open discussion in such a way as to meet with my approval. In fact, it seems more probable that the content of the discussion receives the focus of their thoughts and that they are as yet too unsophisticated to be influenced by the researcher's interests, yet the possible existence of co-operative responding must be conceded. The issue of 'Other Minds' (Hollis 1994) potentially affects validity and self-determination.

Piaget's (1932) suggestion that moral development should be encouraged through peer activities rather than teacher involvement demands interrogation. Peer activities planned by teachers render teacher involvement more indirect, but not absent from moral development. In the philosophical inquiries, narrative provided moral stimulus, reducing direct teacher influence, but selection of narrative and of methodology nevertheless exerts influence. Furthermore, Portelli and Church's (1995) suggestions regarding the legitimate role of teachers differ from Piaget's. They assert that teacher involvement, an essential part of scaffolding, assists the development of reasoning and is therefore a duty of responsible teachers.

c. The primacy of teaching as an ethical dilemma

Initially, I did not share McNamee and Bridges' (2002) concerns that pupils taking part in research could potentially suffer harmful effects through the loss of curriculum time, as this inquiry series was planned to take place during weekly circle time. However, journal entries show that even this issue required judgement as I considered how to establish an atmosphere conducive to open discussion and trust whilst maintaining dedicated curriculum time that would not be intruded upon by the group's growing awareness of appropriate behaviour, enhanced through discussion topics:

> *'The children come in after playtime willing to discuss incidents. I do not really want to encourage this, as it takes curriculum time. Yet I feel dishonest in having initiated this awareness of social behaviour, and feel I must acknowledge its validity. I feel slightly irritated by having to deal with*

playground incidents that should have been resolved at the time they took place. Retrospectively, I acknowledge that this is unreasonable and that the children's growing awareness makes their reporting incidents inevitable. What is required is a means of dealing with issues raised at appropriate times in ways that will not compromise learning.'

(J1, 08/10/03)

It was necessary to weigh the relative merits of the benefits of the research itself, against the potential loss in teaching and learning time. However, I deemed this particular challenge to be temporary in nature: pupils could be encouraged to communicate at appropriate times. This entry does, however, highlight the prevalence amongst young learners of matters associated with the 'hidden curriculum' and the way these matters ordinarily encroach upon curriculum time. It also prompts concern regarding 'tight' curricula that give primacy to learning objectives at the possible expense of fundamentally important social and moral development.

These issues presented unanticipated ethical complexities. I experienced as a reality the gulf that exists between the possible perfection suggested by research theory and the practical limitations to implementing ideals.

Conclusion: The experience of doing teacher-research

As explicated in Chapter Six, doing teacher-research is generally viewed as instrumental in improving teaching and learning situations, but tensions exist. My own experience of doing teacher-research was indeed stimulating and worthwhile, but not simple. Such research may involve risk-taking and the making of educated guesses that may fail to be substantiated (Mills, 2000). I consider that these aspects of action research, about which teachers may be uncomfortable, are exacerbated by prescribed curricula demanding demonstrable outcomes, which discourage risk-taking and, it could therefore be argued, the maintenance of a critical dialectic stance towards practice.

Although Mills (2000) implies that action research can help to prevent mediocrity, in my experience, teachers continually evaluate practice, alter approaches and incorporate change into practice, albeit informally. Teachers' attitudes towards pedagogy may be

more fundamental than engagement in research. Nor should innovation be prioritised above improvement: 'tried and tested' pedagogy may evolve from reflective practice that maintains a questioning orientation. Teacher-research is intended to empower practitioners. However, advocating that teachers undertake more formal research in preference to teacher reflection may have the opposite effect than the liberation intended: teachers may, instead, feel obliged to conform to scientific paradigms, following Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992), Foucault (2000) and Scheurich (1997).

In terms of teacher autonomy, I acknowledge my fortunate position to have worked within a sufficiently flexible primary school setting, where daily routine could accommodate the teacher-research. I did not, therefore, experience the research as personally empowering, but appreciated this relative autonomy more clearly in hindsight, by comparison with undertaking teacher-research within a secondary school setting. The demands on time and energy essential to focused planning of action research must be acknowledged: where heavy demands are made on teachers' time and energy, engaging in teacher-research would be difficult. Teachers' capacity for practising autonomy within the practical sphere is associated with curriculum and time constraints, political factors within the institution in which the teacher-researcher works and the extent of the demands made upon teachers' personal resources.

Stimulus methods akin to Socratic questioning were effective in developing shared understandings, which were further enhanced by narrative. The Key Stage One Study supports Ricoeur's (1992) assertion that narrative can be used to develop morality: narrative engages individuals in developing personal responses, their own ethical narrative. By interrogating narrative to discover meaning, reconstruction of thought occurs. The case study shows the potential for simultaneous development within several spheres; emotional, cognitive and social, which cannot be compartmentalized. Common areas of interest are evident between traditionally dissociated disciplines such as philosophy and psychology. The community of inquiry does not set in opposition the potential tensions between notions of education as primarily socialising or cognitive processes.

An inescapable paradox inheres within teaching: abuse of one's position of power and privilege to influence minors who do not as yet think critically is unethical, yet it is

impossible to teach without beliefs guiding one's entire modus operandi.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Key Stage Four Study:
The Debating and Philosophy Club
'...a debate is...an organised row.'

(Pupil questionnaire response: Appendix 7, Question 5, Pupil B)

Introduction

Voter apathy, particularly amongst young people, in many advanced democracies, suggests a perceived reduction in the vitality and relevance of the public sphere. Moreover, Greenfield (2006) suggests that the extensive use of electronic communications technology may affect thinking and communication patterns. I would argue that tight curriculum structures within education further reduce opportunities for deep discussion of moral issues, despite the government's attempt to revitalise civic involvement (Crick, 2000). The introduction of initiatives such as the compulsory Citizenship Curriculum in 2002 illustrates concern at government level regarding the decline of civic involvement. Scott-Baumann (2003) suggests the desirability of developing a means of spanning the gulf separating the Citizenship Curriculum and postmodern culture, proposing global citizenship as one such means. I consider that Philosophy for Children (P4C) represents another bridging mechanism that approaches creatively many of the values and moral issues the Citizenship Curriculum seeks to address.

In the Key Stage One Study, described in Chapter Seven, the community of inquiry (Lipman, 2003) was used to create, on a reduced scale, a contemporary public sphere incorporating the functions of the ancient Greeks' public sphere. Narrative proved an effective means of stimulating discussion about selected virtues that provoked, sustained and extended thinking. In the Key Stage Four Study, philosophical inquiry is modified for use with secondary school pupils. Opportunities are provided for the reflection and discussion previously developed through the ancient 'technologies' of self-knowledge, such as dialogues and letters to friends (Foucault, 1988; Plato, 1961).

This chapter contains three sections, the first of which describes my approach towards empirical research, resulting from my dissatisfaction with the dominance of technical rationality within traditional social sciences research methodology (Thomas, 1998; Schon, 1995), the lack of validity accorded to alternative ways of knowing and the need for fundamental changes to planned research in light of practical influences. Although I decided to place less emphasis on social sciences methodology, its influence still had the effect of constraint: I experienced doing 'exploratory' research as more demanding than using research-community approved research methods, partly because of the greater requirement for reflexivity, which may induce doubt. Research methods; field notes, the teacher-researcher's reflective journal and the Pupil Questionnaire, serve as tools supporting exploration of the development of moral reasoning and pupil self-determination. I describe my frustration with doing research in which control was shared, in comparatively restrictive time-frames. Indeed, the decision to offer an extra-curricular Philosophy Club testifies to the lack of opportunity for deep thinking offered within existing curriculum frameworks.

Section B describes the influence upon research of trust and its counterpart, doubt. Relational trust needed to develop between participants and towards me as teacher-researcher. Providing cognitive conflict (Piaget, 1932), possibly through debating topics or moral dilemmas presented through narrative, is a way of creating the doubt concerning assumptions that stimulates moral reasoning. This epistemological doubt is healthy in supporting attitudes of fallibilism (Ricoeur, 1986). I address doubts concerning trustworthiness of research about moral values, perceived by many as messy and unreliable (Scott-Baumann, 2006).

Section C offers an analysis of salient features of the Key Stage Four Study, as perceived by research participants: the pupils and myself, with brief reference to relevant aspects of the philosophy of Aristotle (1953, Arnbart 1981), Kant (1958) and Nietzsche (1990), as three great figures within Western Philosophy. In addition, certain ideas of Ricoeur (1986, 1992), whose work addresses complex issues and is of recurring importance within this thesis, are explored.

Section A: Methodology

The aim of the Key Stage Four Study was to observe the features characterising the starting and running of an extra-curricular Philosophy Club which used narrative as a stimulus by presenting ethical dilemmas that promote pupils' thinking about moral issues. Sustained and focused philosophical inquiry would take place within a 'community of inquiry' (Lipman, 2003), a contemporary 'public sphere', as explored in Chapter Five.

The exploratory element of the envisaged research lay in what might be observed, and consequently analysed, relating to the development of group dynamics and any other features that might arise phenomenologically. This is not to suggest that the process and methods were unplanned, rather that the research focused upon features of the philosophical inquiry process for novice philosophers. Careful attention was given to ethical and practical matters. The case study might be described as 'action research' because it enabled me, the teacher-researcher, to 'live out my values' (McNiff, 2002) concerning values in education. My potential role as change agent was indirect; to provide an environment that pupils might experience as conducive to non-prescriptive investigation of personal attitudes and perceptions. Through reflection, I hoped to improve my own practice in managing philosophical inquiries and better understand how I might support potential development of pupil self-determination conceived as ethical self-expression and self-management.

Pupil self-determination, a major focus developed within this thesis, arises partly from the related notion of individual freedom, beset with inherent contradictions and tensions: individuals cannot be free, yet they believe themselves to experience freedom through the decisions they can effect (Strawson, 1986). Similarly, despite the absence of certainty and proof of the research activity's potential to influence ethical change, I could only conceive it supporting this attempt. Nor was I ultimately concerned to 'prove' that philosophical inquiry *would* produce moral change, I believed it worthwhile doing because it *might* do so but also because I consider that it embodies the principles of Aristotelian *praxis,* action inherently and instrumentally good. This thesis is based upon my belief in the capacity of education to increase personal freedom, yet Bourdieu reminds me, as a researcher acting as a social scientist, to

practise reflexivity, the self-conscious examination of the assumptions inherent within the discipline (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992); in this instance, educators' assumptions that education can increase personal freedom. Scheurich (1997) suggests that the individual conceived as subject-centred should yield to the development of a non subject-centred view, which recognises individuals' social archaeology and interdependency.

My professional experience suggests that interrelations between individuals-as-subjects and non subject-centred experience within the social sphere is at the heart of educational practice. Taking my ontology seriously was risky to my research, yet I wished to trust to it whilst realising that it runs counter to social sciences methodology and its demand for certain accepted kinds of validity (Scheurich, 1997; Thomas, 1998, 2006). The roles I assumed were theoretically incompatible in their challenge to traditional power-relations: I would try to become an equal co-participant with pupils within the community of inquiry, whilst retaining the practical management functions and ethical responsibility for the group, as well as attempting to maintain sufficient objectivity and 'distance' from the group, for the purposes of research observation. I was to be involved, yet separate, both subjective and objective, participant and researcher; complex roles to co-ordinate. Yet Ricoeur (1986) accepts ambiguity and incommensurability: the complexity of lived experience need not and cannot be reduced to the finite. I assumed an overarching methodological approach as reflective teacher-researcher despite acknowledgement of limitations to researchers' understanding, perception and self-reflexivity.

Characteristics of the school in which research was conducted

The research was undertaken at a co-educational, independent day and boarding school with strong traditions, at which I was a full time member of staff. The majority of pupils, of whom approximately 60% were male, boarded. Most pupils were British, but the school, situated in a large town, also attracted international students. The academic curriculum was offered during the morning and early afternoon, followed by a range of extra-curricular games and activities, in which sport enjoyed high status. Each term, different activities were offered. A philosophy club was offered to Sixth Form pupils, but had not been offered to younger pupils when the research took place.

Methods

The intended research consisted in starting a Philosophy Club and:

Tape recording, for five consecutive sessions, stages 4 and 6 of the inquiry process outlined below, which would support analysis of the nature of discussion at an early and late stage in the discussion process

Making brief ***field notes*** of observations of social processes and other features of discussion, which would support reflection and enable me to comment upon the pupils' ethical conduct concerning the rights of others

Keeping a reflective journal**, (J4)**, the primary focus of which was to relate theory to practice and to explicate the skills required of practitioners when starting a philosophical inquiry group. Comparisons between the Key Stage One and the Key Stage Four Studies would be made possible through reference to J1 and J4, the respective case study journals.

Pupil questionnaires or interviews with pupils were considered as a possible means of triangulating data.

The inquiry process

The philosophical enquiry sessions, based upon the Philosophy for Children (P4C) model (SAPERE, 2003), were to follow the sequence:

1. Pupils read aloud, in turns, a paragraph from the stimulus material.
2. Individuals identify 'hot-spots': issues of interest within the text.
3. Pairs or small groups discuss and re-frame the issues as questions that would be philosophically interesting for extended discussion and write a question onto a whiteboard / flipchart, along with questions proposed by other pairs or small groups.
4. The rationale of each question is explained briefly by its 'authors', so that all understand the salient points involved.
5. One question is selected by democratic process, for discussion in small groups.
6. A member of each small group shares a summary of the group's thinking during the plenary session.
7. The teacher concludes the inquiry by reflecting on salient features of the discussion, so that a resting point is reached in the ongoing discussion.

Ideally, I hoped for a group size of between 12 and 16 pupils. The club would not meet in a classroom, if possible; the rationale being that meeting in an alternative venue (a boarding house) might encourage lateral, creative thinking by disassociating philosophical inquiry from more narrowly academic 'learning'. A more neutral alternative venue might be found, if preferable.

The research group

Observation of pupils' attitudes and dispositions towards reasonableness, manifested in consideration of different alternatives rather than assuming their own opinions to be 'correct' was central to the Key Stage Four Study. I found the group, comprised of intellectually able male pupils challenging to work with because some pupils displayed attitudes of intellectual superiority and academic imperialism (Scheurich, 1997), which I found unattractive:

> *'...The composition of the group is interesting. All members are able pupils. Perhaps they are not used to their views being challenged by peers?'*
>
> (J4, 24/01/05)

Some pupils' initial approach to philosophical thinking was not particularly reflective, nor inquiring. Their certainty in expressing ideas revealed attitudes of infallibility, in opposition to the principles of communities of inquiry and moral philosophers (Ricoeur, 1986).

Confronting unexpected complexity

The original research plan was modified considerably as a result of practical influences. Recruitment to the Philosophy Club presented a significant hurdle. As a new teacher at the school, teaching a small minority of Key Stage Four pupils to whom the club was offered, few pupils knew me. Extra-curricular activities for the forthcoming term were chosen towards the end of each preceding term. Activities were advertised by posters placed on boarding-house notice boards, an appropriate means of recruitment for established activities, but not necessarily for a new activity differing from the kinds of activities routinely offered. The effects of these remote recruitment processes were amplified by research ethics constraints, which precluded active recruitment.

Four boys attended the first Philosophy Club meeting. Co-incidentally, another new teacher was starting a Debating Club. Philosophy Club members expressed dual interest in philosophy and debating and suggested a group merge, agreed unanimously by the Debating Club members. The Debating and Philosophy Club produced a sample group for this case study of eight pupils and two teachers. Debates and philosophical inquiries would run on alternate weeks, led respectively by the responsible teachers.

This merge resulted in changed focus, making possible an exploration of the distinctive features of philosophical inquiry and debate as exemplars of discussion within the public sphere: debating presents morality through supporting and contesting moral issues; philosophical inquiry offers opportunities for deep reflective thought. However, the underlying cohesion of the originally envisaged case study was threatened by the dual foci of debating and philosophical discussion: different skills might be required of pupils and of teachers managing activities. Additionally, shared leadership would result in partial loss of control over the procedural norms. I responded to these challenges by including within the literature review a focus upon rhetoric and debate, informed by Plato, Aristotle and Foucault. The interrelationship in research between theory, practice, text and action illustrates the attraction of the case study viewed as a cohesive, holistic research methodology (Yin, 2003).

Characteristics of rhetoric and debate

Chapter Five explored the role of public discussion, central within the case studies: ancient Greeks recognised open dialogue as fundamental to 'justice', meaning morality, and therefore fundamental to social functioning. Aristotle views the persuasive argument constituting rhetoric (to which I liken debating) as essential to statesmanship and politics (Arnbart, 1981), believing the use of rhetoric justified because its validity relies upon public norms and upon rules of logic and reasoning, even though it lacks the rigor and exactness of science. Lyotard's (1984) explanation of narrative understanding as derived from tradition and culture shares similarities with Aristotle's justification of rhetoric through appeal to public opinion or 'common sense' as a valid foundation for rhetoric. Following Aristotle, rhetoric must operate in accordance with logic and reason, not merely an irrational appeal to the emotions.

However rhetoric's association with practical goals is considered to justify its appeal to the emotions as essential in motivating individuals to action (Arnbart, 1981).

Debating, like rhetoric, therefore provides a public forum for investigating moral issues through inviting interrogation and evaluation of the opposing arguments offered. Debate's reliance upon logic and reason sits comfortably within education's logical-positivist paradigm. In contrast with Socrates' injunction that philosophical discussion proceed from sincere belief (Plato, 1961), debating's persuasion is instrumental; it does not require commitment to values defended; reason justifies. Because the aim of debating is to win, it unavoidably contains a combative element and is therefore potentially in conflict with the procedural values of philosophical inquiry, which had been selected because it possesses certain attractive features for promoting moral values:

- It is both intrinsically and instrumentally good, features of Aristotle's *praxis*.
- It focuses upon caring and creative, as well as reasoned, thinking (Lipman, 2003), acknowledging elements of subjectivity.

Many of the attractive features of philosophical inquiry are shared by debate. Both:

- are public forms of discourse whose validity appeals to public norms
- rely upon rules of logic and reasoning
- invite investigation of moral issues
- invite evaluation of the arguments offered

However, as Figure 11 shows, distinctive differences exist between philosophical inquiry and debate:

Figure 11: Differences between philosophical inquiry and debate

Philosophical inquiry	Debate
Interrogation challenges public norms. Individuals compare own views with public norms.	Appeals to public norms. Acts conservatively
Assumes possibility of fallibility	Assumes attitudes of infallibility
Includes consideration of subjective elements	Appeals to the emotions to motivate action, yet also to reason and objectivity
Consistency between own values and issues discussed (Plato, 1961)	Own values may differ from those being supported in argument
Supports tolerance of other views	Suggests that 'opposing' views are invalid, therefore suggests intolerance

(Source: M Plint)

Developing a pupil questionnaire

Triangulation supporting validity (Gilbert, 1993) required that pupils' perceptions balance my impressions and experience concerning the possible differences between using debate and philosophical inquiry as vehicles for examining moral dilemmas. The Pupil Questionnaire (see Appendix 6) contained open-ended questions, designed to yield comparative and other qualitative data, such as:

- Did pupils experience both forms of dialogue as equally effective in stimulating thinking about moral issues?
- Might pupils suggest that one process contributes towards supporting ethical behaviour as evidenced by empathy or tolerance more effectively than the other?
- Did either process affect attitudes and behaviour more effectively than the other?
- Which activity did pupils prefer and why?
- What did pupils perceive the purpose and value of debating and philosophical inquiry to be?

Care was taken to word questions simply, unambiguously and without bias (May, 1993). Using a self-report questionnaire had the advantage of providing an efficient way of collecting this data, maintaining pupil anonymity and avoiding co-operative responding to gratify the researcher (Stangor, 1998), which interviews might jeopardise. Four pupils completed the questionnaire at the end of the term in which the Debating and Philosophy Club met, two of whom had originally opted for the Debating Club, and two for the Philosophy Club. Because the data collected was

descriptive, the nature of responses was more important than the number of participants completing questionnaires. Appendix 7 contains a compilation of pupils' questionnaire responses.

Section B: Trust and doubt, debates and philosophical inquiries (or mistrust, arguing and thoughtless discussion)?

The notions of trust and, inversely, doubt, are relevant to this research in two distinct ways, firstly, in relation to the nature of interrelations between group members, their mutual confidence and reliance, and how this might affect their willingness to share common goals and secondly, in relation to epistemological 'certainty'.

Relational trust

Relational trust is assumed to be important to effective group functioning (Baron, Field and Schuller, 2000), as both a necessary precondition for and as a result of effective interaction. Pupils participating in the Key Stage Four Study did not necessarily share homogenous backgrounds, would not necessarily know each other and had not been involved in this kind of activity before. Additionally, they might be situated in competition with each other within other school situations. Peer-group influences upon adolescents might affect the research.

At the first joint meeting of the club, I explained my dual interest in offering a club and in conducting a research project. Confidentiality and anonymity were discussed and pupils agreed to my use of field notes and reporting upon the content of sessions within research. However, a couple of pupils expressed hesitance concerning the use of a tape recorder. Although a simple explanation about my reasons for wishing to do so might have sufficed in overcoming hesitation, research ethics concerning possible persuasion or coercion (explanation might be misinterpreted) and my desire that relationships of trust with participants should evolve, prohibited my doing so. Paradoxically, the process of establishing an atmosphere of trust was integral to the research, yet one of the primary means of examining data for evidence of the emergence of trust was now lost to me, also affecting analysis of debates and philosophical discussions and hence research trustworthiness. I realised the alluring

(although personally unconvincing) comfort offered by the 'certainty' of the traditionally accepted and trusted social sciences research methods.

The removal of this means of triangulation from the research undoubtedly weakened the claim to reliability and rendered descriptive observation and the practitioner-researcher's journal the only methods available to me at this stage. Pupil questionnaires or conducting interviews with pupils would be necessary for triangulation. It proved impossible to make field notes or to write down pupils' contributions to discussions during sessions because I was managing the philosophical inquiries. General remarks about the content of discussions and about other aspects of the inquiries could only be recorded in my journal afterwards, which would cast doubt on their accuracy. Strawson suggests that, even where individuals avoid intentionally revising their 'narratives', unconscious revision takes place (2004). To minimise this effect, Pupil Questionnaire responses have been given prominence in analysis, although I believe that reflection can support the researcher's objectivity, as demonstrated later in this chapter. On a personal level, I was finding conducting research a very much more uncertain business than the impressions of directed research plans presented within research literature, a feature of doing educational research that Walford (1998) acknowledges.

In each philosophical inquiry, the narrative passage selected by pupils from the resources provided was read aloud in the round, without apparent embarrassment; an observation that suggests the existence of a certain level of relational trust among participants. Questions generated for possible selection for philosophical discussion such as *'Should I trust someone blindly?'* and *'Why is failure so terrifying?'*, reveal the risk-taking that may be involved where discussion involves personal revelation; hence the necessity of an atmosphere of trust. A questionnaire response suggests that pupils did not necessarily experience, within the community of inquiry, sufficient trust to support self-expression:

> '*... a lot of people would rather not expound a more extreme view even if it were the one they hold in truth...*'
>
> (Appendix 7, Question 11, Pupil B)

Several possible and non-exclusive explanations exist: that adolescence is characterised by reserve, that adolescents are particularly vulnerable to peer pressure,

that trust had not developed within the inquiry group, or that for some other reason the individual did not wish to discuss a particular point. The retrospective acknowledgement of possible reticence during discussion reveals the effect of constraint inherent within perceptions of others' regard, which contradicts the spirit of inquiry as non-judgemental: in practice, theoretical principles of inquiry may not be fully realised.

In philosophical inquiries, it is essential that pupils exercise self-determination regarding the personal information they wish to disclose to others. Although privacy is an ethical principle of research (Miles and Huberman, 1994), I consider it applicable within all educational environments, not only research environments. The previous questionnaire response suggests that self-determination relating to privacy may have been exercised in this way.

Epistemological trust

With regard to pupils' attitudes towards epistemological trust, by which I mean assumptions towards knowledge and self-reflexivity, individuals to whom the Debating and Philosophy Club appealed were well-read, articulate, intelligent and interested in political affairs: certain parallels existed between research participants and the Aristotelian elite. As Ricoeur's (1986, 1989) hermeneutic philosophy continually reiterates and demonstrates, epistemological doubt in the form of self-reflexive criticism and the maintenance of a vibrant and vigilant relationship between knowledge and understanding, empiricism and interpretation is essential.

I did not observe that debate induced epistemological doubt: argument had the appearance of entrenching opinions, as discussed further in Section C. On occasion, philosophical inquiry was shown to induce sufficient epistemological doubt in the form of self-reflexive criticism to challenge assumptions. In this instance, doubt acts positively in creating cognitive conflict (Piaget, 1932, Kohlberg, 1981):

> *'Looking into the story of the 'Professor and the Ferryman' made me think more about what is important in life.'*
>
> (Appendix 7, Question 6, Pupil C)

My impression of the limited way in which even the philosophical inquiries promoted values such as an acceptance of fallibility is evident in this journal entry:

> *'... All are able pupils. Perhaps they are not accustomed to their views being challenged by peers? A few have an air of slight superiority. This [developing openness to real inquiry] is not going to be straightforward, as all the members of the group seem to be strong personalities.'*
>
> (J4, 24/01/05)

I was disappointed about the limited nature of change observable with respect to pupils' self-reflexivity and procedural norms within the community of inquiry, although progress was evident over successive sessions:

> *'...pupils treating others' ideas with real consideration. Less interruption whilst others speak...'*
>
> (J4, 07/03/05)

Further reflection concerning my dissatisfaction with the research revealed my frustration that theoretical expectations were not fulfilled and that research was not proceeding as planned. This acknowledgement suggests that it may be possible for one subjectively involved in research to yet retain a degree of objectivity: my disappointment was due to the mismatch between what I hoped, but failed, to observe. I would therefore suggest that reflection, a non-technical-rational activity, supports researcher awareness of the possibility of bias. Technical-rationality or scientific method is not therefore the only way of supporting objectivity, although *'The power of scientific method can be used to deny the possibility of exploring propositions that do not fit either the analytic or synthetic paradigm, such as moral, ethical and faith-based propositions.'* (Scott-Baumann, 2006: 57). Although complex and lacking in measurable outcomes, I argue that such research need not necessarily be less valid than positivist approaches.

The Pupil Questionnaire completed at the end of the school term restored in me a sense of relative satisfaction with the research. Pupil Questionnaire responses indicated a greater degree of pupil self-reflexivity than had been perceptible to me as observer.

Responses also revealed trust in me as teacher-researcher: pupils made no attempt to safeguard individual anonymity, despite the arrangements I made to ensure it. I had experienced greater difficulty 'reading' adolescent pupils' interpersonal transactions than I had the Key Stage One pupils'. During the course of the research I had begun to doubt the tacit knowledge about which I had previously been confident, yet ironically the social sciences methods of which I had been dismissive allayed this doubt.

Section C: Analysis of the Key Stage Four Study

Analysis of debates

Teacher-researcher's perceptions of debate

Within the Key Stage Four Study, investigating values within education was explored in respect of pupils' engagement with moral dilemmas presented through *content* of debates and philosophical inquiries and the development of *procedural values*: respect for others, tolerance, reasonableness and self-critical attitudes (Lipman 2003). With regard to content of debates, pupils were well-informed on the topical issues that featured, such as:

'The international acceptance of democracy would bring about world peace'

'A benign dictatorship can be preferable to democracy'

'The war in Iraq is justified' and

'Complete freedom of the press is in society's best interests'

However, disappointingly, pupils did not appear to interrogate their ideological assumptions. For instance, pupils did not appear to challenge the media's stereotypical presentation of the American public, despite acknowledging the media's potential to present biased information and to influence public opinion. The pupils did not apply this insight self-critically to their thinking and thus did not perceive their own bias:

> *'... the pupils' unexamined prejudice against* [President] *Bush surprised me... pupils had discussed the ability of the press to manipulate...'*
>
> (J4, 21/03/05)

However, pupils' detailed responses to the pupil questionnaire, an illustrative sample of which is included below, possibly suggests greater interrogation of thinking than was apparent to me.

For the first debate, entitled *'The international acceptance of democracy would bring about world peace'*, pupils had been consulted about whether they wished to argue for or against the motion and most had prepared a presentation. Formally structured debate would embody the procedural norms of a philosophical inquiry. Pupils were seated at opposite sides of a large table. My colleague chairing the debate explained that members of opposing teams would make their arguments in alternating order, with a summing up of each argument at the end; a structure soon abandoned. The pupils identified strongly with the positions they had assumed and, in their impassioned state, interrupted other speakers. Although supposedly an observer, I found myself unable to refrain from handing out paper on which pupils might record points to raise at the appropriate time. Pupils appeared unconcerned about the relatively unstructured nature of the proceedings. My colleague, pleased that ideas were being exchanged, did not object to interruptions.

Whilst the movement of the discussion was rapid and exciting, the directions it took were erratic and the opinions of less assertive pupils inevitably went unheard. Generally, however, pupils seemed satisfied with the debate. In later discussion with my colleague, it was agreed that pupils should be asked to hold objections until opposing speakers had concluded their presentations. Despite this stated ideal, practice during subsequent debates did not differ noticeably from the first. Over time, unstructured discussion gradually increased. Assertive pupils inevitably dominated the discussions, an interesting phenomenon in relation to self-determination and one that reveals the necessity for 'just institutions' (Ricoeur, 1992); for specifically creating a model 'public sphere' protecting freedom of expression.

I consider that although pupils exercising self-determination may choose not to express an opinion, when opportunity for expression is denied, pupils are not self-determining. I perceived as detrimental the loss of opportunity to practice truly democratic public debate in conformity with procedural values. Mill (1996, originally published 1859) offers a justification for minority groups' or individuals' freedom to express opinion. Such freedom is in society's interests: silencing dissent robs all of opportunities to change their own opinion (if it is shown to be incorrect) or to apprehend clearly the

reasons why their opinion is, indeed, well founded. It could therefore be argued that unstructured debates deprived the group of a potential opportunity for moral change. Dominant members of the group assumed infallibility, violating the democratic principles of tolerance and respect. The practice of overriding another within debate, though possessing the appearance of freedom of expression, threatened it. Moreover, I perceived that the lack of structure was accompanied by less sustained, focused thinking: discussion on the chosen debating topic tended to become a generalised political discussion.

As an observer of the debates, I was impressed by the breadth of pupils' general knowledge. It was clear that many pupils prepared their presentations and read around the agreed topic during the preceding week. They thus possessed 'narrative knowledge'; knowledge drawn from traditional cultural sources (Lyotard, 1984).

Pupils' perceptions of debate

Pupils' responses to the questionnaire do not suggest dissatisfaction with interruptions and debating procedures, which is significant because, during debates, I observed the thwarted efforts to contribute of two questionnaire respondents. A possible explanation is offered by a pupil's perception of debating, implying that interruption may be considered acceptable in argumentation: he suggests that *'a debate is in itself an organised row...'* (Appendix 7, Question 5, Pupil B). The value of triangulation is apparent: pupils did not share my perception regarding 'undesirable' procedural norms. Evaluation based upon one perspective might be biased, incomplete or incorrect. However, as explained above, my judgements were informed by specific principles regarding protection of the minority voice, one aspect of procedural values important to me but apparently relatively unimportant to the majority of the pupils.

The following pupil responses to Question 1 in the pupil questionnaire are included here in their entirety, to illustrate pupils' breadth of response, with emphasis added. In analysing later points, relevant details will be extracted for the sake of brevity. A full transcript of pupils' responses to the questionnaire is included in Appendix 7.

1. What is the purpose of debate?

Pupil A. *' The purpose of debating is to* ***broaden your mind*** *essentially. Debating is* ***argument without violence****, and thus one can argue effectively over an* ***important issue from a point of fact rather than force****. After a successful debate, with* ***all points considered****, there should be a general* ***majority to one point*** *than the opposite. However, the point of view of which you uphold is* ***influenced strongly by your understanding of self and morals****, which leads into [Question 2]'*

Pupil B. *' Specifically a debate ought to be a discussion* ***aimed at reaching a conclusion****, with different people setting different cases. As to purpose, however, I feel that debate is as much about* ***finding purpose*** *in the first place.* ***Understanding different views*** *and their origins and indeed* ***searching the validity of one's own view, in comparison with others****, is as integral to a debate as any conclusion that is made. Rather than an attempt to change people I feel that a good debater would do better to* ***observe rather than blindly argue*** *in the face of indomitable stubbornness. Armed with these observations a good debater may argue better and from a* ***true point of vision****.'*

Pupil C. *'To* ***argue a case for your views*** *on certain topics in a* ***coherent and authoritative*** *way.'*

Pupil D. *'The purpose of debate is [to] create a* ***convincing argument****, but in the process, you* ***probe deeper in the subject matter****.'*

Pupils consider that debate possesses the potential to act as a vehicle for moral engagement. Figure 12 interprets extracts drawn from Question 1 of the Pupil Questionnaire, although it does not exhaust questionnaire references to the moral values pupils hold or are aware of in connection with debating.

Figure 12: Pupils' reference to moral norms in connection with debate

Pupil response	Interpretation of moral values
*'...to **observe rather than blindly argue** in the face of indomitable stubbornness...'*	Adjusting one's own behaviour in accordance with other's attitudes is desirable.
*'...argue better and from a **true point of vision**...'*	The pupil values accuracy of expression thinking, respecting procedural values (Lipman, 2003).
'...probe deeper in the subject matter...'	Substance rather than superficiality is valued.
'...argument without violence...'	Discussion is preferable to violence.
*'...with **all points considered**...'*	Breadth of perspective is valuable.
*'...debate is as much about **finding purpose** in the first place...'*	Contrasting with Nietzsche's (1990) nihilism, purpose is valued, the existence of purpose is assumed and judged good. This response resonates with Murdoch's (1970) argument that Good matters.
***'...Understanding different views** and their origins...'*	Tolerance and understanding are valued. Socially-transmitted traditional wisdom is recognised as influencing understanding. Situated and provisional epistemological assumptions are implicit within the response.
'...searching the validity of one's own view, in comparison with others...'	Comparing personal views with others' is recognised as valuable, resonating with Ricoeur's idea that self-respect is achieved when self-esteem has *'passed through the sieve of the universal and constraining norm'* (1992: 215): self-respect arises from judging oneself favourably against (constraining) social norms.

(Source: Pupil responses extracted from Appendix 7, interpretations M Plint)

Similarly, pupils imply or state that debate has the potential to act as a change agent, as shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Pupils' perceptions of debate as a vehicle for change

Pupil response	Interpretation of response
'...*to* ***broaden your mind***...'	Debating enlarges understanding, i.e. it brings about changed perceptions.
'...***argument without violence***...'	Argument, by implication, is an alternative means of change, either through mediation or 'scoring' of intellectual 'points', i.e. forceful arguments cannot be denied, and must therefore effect some change, even if it is in the form of conceding reluctant acknowledgement to oneself.
'...*with* ***all points considered***...'	By implication, one's thinking may change as a result of encountering others' perspectives.
'...*debate is as much about* ***finding purpose*** *in the first place*...'	Debating encourages deep thinking concerning issues possibly not previously considered.
'...***Understanding different views*** *and their origins*...'	The response reveals elements of 'subjectivity' that Pendlebury (2005) seeks to retain simultaneously with reasoned, logical, scientific and critical thinking; acknowledging humanistic factors as valid and of the importance of acknowledging the influence of epistemological 'archaeology' (Scheurich, 1997).

(Source: Pupil responses extracted from Appendix 7, interpretations M Plint)

Debate and developing critical thinking

Adey and Shayer (1994) and Shayer and Adey (2002) investigate the means by which intelligence can be accelerated through planned intervention. Their work focuses on higher order thinking skills and the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. Figure 14 illustrates pupils' analysis of the effect of debate upon cognition:

Figure 14: Pupils' responses relating to the effects of debate on cognition

Pupils' response	Interpretation of response
'...*to* ***broaden your mind***...'	To extend thinking and understanding.
'...*one can argue effectively over an important issue* ***from a point of fact rather than force***...'	The persuasive force of empirical information, reason and logic appeals to another's (inadequate) thinking, like Kohlberg's (1981) moral reasoning, which moves from inadequate towards more adequate responses. Ricoeur's (1986) hermeneutic approach recognises the interrelationship between empiricism ('fact') and interpretation.
'...*with* ***all points considered***...'	Ricoeur (1986) supports this multi-faceted approach towards epistemological rigor, and conceives knowledge as incommensurable.
'...*there should be a general* ***majority to one point*** *than the opposite*...'	This response suggests that claims must be decided by reference to additional criteria beyond the self.
'...***aimed at reaching a conclusion***...'	Even if consensus is not reached, more adequate thinking may develop. Thinking is here revealed as a purposeful activity: discussion is not aimless, but has a sense of direction.
'...*the point of view of which you uphold is* ***influenced strongly by your understanding of self and morals***...'	This pupil recognises that individuals cannot stand outside of themselves in a truly objective sense; all are situated, a view that accords with that of Hollis (1994), Schon (1995), and Thomas (1998).
'...*debate is as much about* ***finding purpose*** *in the first place*...'	This response suggests, like Socrates, that individuals' unconscious knowledge can be drawn upon (Plato, 1961).
'...***Understanding different views*** *and their origins*...'	The response accepts that reasons exist for differing perspectives, (which does not necessarily imply that all opinions as equally valid).
'...***searching the validity of one's own view, in comparison with others***...'	This response acknowledges the value of higher order thinking skills: interrogation, analysis, evaluation.
'...***argue a case for your views*** *on certain topics in a* ***coherent and authoritative*** *way*...'	This response honours organisation of thinking, the discipline of clarifying thinking, intellectual rigour.

(Source: Pupil responses extracted from Appendix 7, interpretations M Plint)

It is interesting to compare pupils' questionnaire responses, above, with Nietzsche's (1990) radical thinking, which challenges the kind of foundational thinking in which traditional education is grounded; a perceived feature of adolescence is their challenge to traditional thinking and to authority. Nietzsche's nominalist view of morality, based

upon his belief that philosophers disguise and justify basic drives for power by using words to obscure, is not in evidence amongst these pupils' responses, which reveal earnest rather than ironic or nominalist approaches. Whilst Nietzsche (1990) promotes playfulness in thinking, pupils responded with intent toward both the debates and the philosophical inquiries: neither apathy nor postmodern doubt was observed. Nietzsche's radical thinking destabilised the philosophical thinking of his time (Sherrat, 2006). Radical challenges to accepted norms illustrate the potential inherent within critical thinking to destabilise the existing order in a way that might be ethically unacceptable within educational institutions. The Key Stage Four Study embraces the notion of playfulness in encouraging lateral thinking and imagining utopias that challenge ideology (Ricoeur, 1991) but it recognises the ethical limits to engagement in critical thought within education. In direct opposition to Nietzsche's scepticism regarding morality, the case study implicitly defends Murdoch's (1970) view that 'Good' matters, that good is preferable to bad.

Positive and negative features of debate

Pupil questionnaire responses articulate features of debate, which I have categorised, in Figure 15, as positive or negative for the purposes of clarity and brevity.

Figure 15: Pupils' perceptions: Positive and negative features of debate

Positive features of debate	Negative features of debate
Presents arguments without violence	*There has to be a winner and a loser*
Increases understanding of views and their origins	*Speaking is a bit difficult*
Enjoyment of thought, formulation of an argument and analysis of different ideas	*Hypocrisy when everyone has the same view*
Gives you ideas and access to new reasoning	*Even if told to argue another way, a debate can descend into an hour long complaining session*
Challenges the validity of own views	*Broadsides of rhetoric or venom generated*
Considers important issues	

(Source: Appendix 7, Pupil Questionnaire Question 8: 'What aspects of debating did you enjoy?' and Question 9: 'Were there any aspects of debating that you found to be unsatisfactory?')

Pupils suggest the potentially negative features of debates as including its competitive nature and the compromising of self that can be experienced when individuals are required to argue a stance that opposes personal belief. Debate in the Key Stage Four Study is thus recognised as possessing the potential for moral engagement, although possible limitations are also acknowledged. Features of philosophical inquiry are now reviewed, to determine how it compares with debate.

Analysis of the philosophical inquiries

Teacher-researcher's perceptions of philosophical inquiry

The complexity of the four texts that pupils selected for philosophical inquiry ranged from relatively simply narrated stories to a more sophisticated newspaper article. A summary of the simplest text; '*Courage*', is provided below. Other texts designed to present moral dilemmas were drawn from the SAPERE handbook (2003): '*The Professor and the Ferryman*' (included in Appendix 8) and '*Newswise*', a simulated newspaper article. The final text was a newspaper article, '*Youngest holder of Queen Victoria's honour*' (The Times, 2005). The suitability of the text for sustained inquiry seemed to depend upon the moral significance of content rather than upon the complexity of the plot or the sophistication of the presentation, as this summary plot illustrates:

Courage

An ageing emperor wanted to choose a suitable successor, so he called all the young people in his empire together, gave each one a seed to plant, and asked them to plant it, water it, and return one year later to show him what they had grown from the seed. Ling did as instructed, and checked every day to see what would grow, but nothing did. Others began to talk about the plants that were growing from their seeds. Ling just knew he had killed his seed. A year later, Ling wanted to evade taking his barren pot to the emperor for inspection, but his mother insisted that he do so. He felt a failure. The others laughed at him and he dreaded the emperor's reaction. To everyone's amazement, Ling was proclaimed emperor. The old emperor explained that the seeds they had been given had been boiled, so they would not grow. Ling was the only one with the courage and honesty to bring back the seed that the emperor had given him.

The questions framed from this story were:

'What about peer pressure?' (Arising from the pressure Ling felt when others' seeds were growing and his was not.)

'Should I trust someone blindly?' (Arising from Ling's mother's persuasion to face the emperor empty-handed, against Ling's will.)

'Why is failure so terrifying?' (Prompted by Ling's fear of failure and humiliation.)

'How can I apply this kind of wisdom in my day to day life?' (Regarding courage and honesty.)

(J4, 24/01/05)

Pupils' framing and selection of worthy questions for discussion is an important aspect in determining the depth (and therefore the 'success') of philosophical discussion: the most sustained inquiries were those in which pupils suggested and selected 'substantial' questions for investigation. I had pre-determined that I would exercise minimum influence over question selection, as the rationale for the inquiries was to

recognise and develop pupil self-determination by providing experience of self-determination.

Initially, Socratic questioning in the form of simple repetition of the questions was necessary to maintaining the pupils' focus on the question. My journal reveals the challenge experienced in initiating the inquiry process:

> *'I am alarmed at how frequently the boys interrupt each other and stray off the [their own] chosen topic, how little they are reflective about what they say... I need to keep up the Socratic questioning to help steer a course that brings us back to the topic question. All of this is fairly demanding for me...'*
>
> (J4, 24/01/05)

Pupils' initial difficulty with sustaining reflection reduced as pupils became more familiar with the inquiry process. Questioning to clarify pupils' thinking was necessary at times. Discussion reviews in plenary sessions became lengthier as the term progressed.

In the interests of brevity, my perceptions regarding the ability of philosophical discussion, narrative and the community of inquiry to support moral reasoning and to act as agents of change will be limited here, but will be reflected in the interpretation of pupils' questionnaire responses. Change and development may not be evident to an observer: the problem of 'Other minds' (Hollis 1994), which, as explicated earlier, I experienced as teacher-researcher.

The inherent limitations to proof are apparent within any activity that claims to produce specific outcomes, even 'demonstrable' outcomes such as information-transmission, but even more so outcomes like the promotion of critical thinking or moral engagement. Neither teacher-researchers nor educators can guarantee that pedagogy *will* result in specific outcomes, nor are outcomes always visible or observable, nor can development be ascribed to pedagogy. Triangulation may help, but is only a supporting mechanism. I judge pupils' questionnaire responses to be honest because they describe unsatisfactory, as well as positive, elements of their experience. Furthermore, the depth of responses suggests that pupils enjoyed the cognitive stimulation of metacognitively reviewing debating and philosophical inquiry activities.

Pupils' perceptions of philosophical inquiry

Philosophical inquiry and moral values

Pupils perceive that philosophical inquiry facilitates engagement with moral values. Figure 16 contains pupils' responses to Question 2 of the Pupil Questionnaire: 'What is the purpose of philosophical inquiry?', and my interpretation of responses.

Figure 16: Pupils' perceptions regarding philosophical inquiry and moral values

Pupils' response	Interpretation of response
*'It is important to have solid grounding in **morality**'*	By implication, philosophical inquiry promotes morality.
*'Having a grounding in morality is necessary for all **personal inquiry**'*	The personal is implicit within philosophical inquiry, and morality is implicit within deep personal exploration. This response reflects Ricoeur's (1992) view of the unity of narrative identity and its implication in morality.
***'Expanding ideas**, with **no consensus** in view'*	Holding matters 'open' is important in maintaining inquiring attitudes. Reaching finite certainty brings cessation of thought. By implication, this response indicates tolerance of others' views and their right to hold different views.
*'It allows us to see **differing angles** on topics'*	By implication, one's own perspectives are compared with differing perspectives.
*'To **discover your views** and thought on issues in life'*	Philosophical inquiry leads to self-knowledge, it is a 'technology of the self' (Foucault, 2000).
*'To probe **deeply** into subject matter'*	Philosophical inquiry seeks after a depth of understanding; in itself, a moral position.

(Source: Pupil responses extracted from Appendix 7, interpretations M Plint)

Philosophical inquiry as change agent

Figure 17 contains pupils' perceptions that philosophical inquiry can effect change. Several imply that the absence of persuasion through argumentation may be conducive to open-mindedness.

Figure 17: Pupils' perceptions regarding philosophical inquiry as change agent

Pupils' response	Interpretation
'...allows us to see differing angles on topics where we hold views ourselves...'	Comparing opinions may influence thinking.
'...being able to challenge yourself as well as others...'	Self-reflexive criticism develops thinking.
'...if these ideas can be sufficiently expanded or manipulated, the person may convince himself of the answer, which is the best way of getting a point across...'	Pupils may move towards adopting more adequate reasons (Kohlberg, 1981).
'...Looking into the story of the 'Professor and the Ferryman' made me think more about what is important in life.'	Evidence of self-reflexivity induced through narrative.
'...philosophical debate would have a longer lasting effect...'	Implicit in this statement is the perceptions that philosophical discussion results in change.
*'...Philosophical inquiry is more likely, to my mind, to change my views...a person is **more pliant** in these circumstances and **more willing** to think beyond those bounds set by one's own mind.'*	This response refers to attitudinal factors related to change. By implication, the absence of defensiveness inherent within adversarial debate may make pupils more responsive to ideas within philosophical inquiries.

(Source: Pupil responses extracted from Appendix 7, interpretations M Plint)

Figure 18 shows pupils' perceptions that both debating and philosophical inquiry have the potential to act as change agents. Although this tabulation shows debating and philosophical inquiry as equally likely to effect change, extracting 'Yes/No' answers may oversimplify or distort. The descriptive responses listed in Figure 17 above support an interpretation that philosophical inquiry may be more encouraging of change.

Figure 18: Pupils' perceptions: Debating, philosophical inquiry and change

	Debating would influence me to change	**Philosophical inquiry would influence me to change**
Pupil A	*Yes and No*	*No*
Pupil B	*No*	*No*
Pupil C	*No*	*Yes*
Pupil D	*Yes*	*Yes and No*

(Source: Extracted from Pupil Questionnaire, Appendix 7, Questions 5 and 6)

Philosophical inquiry and developing critical thinking

Pupils' statements attesting to the cognitive stimulation offered by philosophical inquiry are contained in Figure 19.

Figure 19: Pupils' perceptions regarding philosophical inquiry and critical thinking

Pupils' perceptions	Interpretation
'*...we might find a point which all sides have both interest and views...*'	Commonality of interest might be discovered.
'*...more willing to think beyond those bounds set by one's own mind.*'	This response reveals the individual's metacognition about paradigm shifts being made possible through analysing thinking acts. Shayer and Adey (2002) suggest that individuals use language as a tool for describing different thinking actions.
'*...being able to challenge yourself as well as others...*'	One can challenge others' and own assumptions.
'*...understanding, reasoning, decision-making...*'	Thinking skills used in critical thinking and philosophical inquiry
'*...to discover your own views and thought on issues of life.*'	To make explicit one's understanding requires that thinking be clarified.
'*...testing your own understanding...*'	Philosophical inquiry provides opportunities for clarification.

(Source: Extracted from Pupil Questionnaire, Appendix 7)

Pupils' comparisons of debating and philosophical inquiry

Pupils perceived both debating and philosophical inquiry as exemplars of engaging with moral values.

Similarities identified include:

- broadening the mind (expanding thinking)
- consideration of multiple points of view
- persuasion based upon discussion rather than physical force
- opinions are influenced by beliefs
- exchanging views
- many skills in common: listening, understanding, reasoning, decision-making

Differences consist in:

- debating culminates in reaching a majority decision, whereas philosophical inquiry does not expect to reach 'truth'
- the aim of debating is to win. A feature of philosophical inquiry is that there are no winners and losers.

Teacher-researcher's reflections upon research

Perhaps the research observation period of one academic term was too short a period in which to observe the attitudinal change and the development of trust. Alternating debate and philosophical inquiry appeared unhelpful in developing a sense of shared purpose amongst pupils, possibly influenced by teachers' differing management styles and the differing attributes the activities required of pupils. Attentive listening and critical consideration of others' viewpoints are skills required in both philosophical inquiry and debate, as pupils' responses, contained in Figure 20, show:

Figure 20: Pupils' perceptions:

Skills required for debate and philosophical inquiry

3. Which skills are used in presenting an argument in debate?	**4. Which skills are used in philosophical inquiry?**
Pupil A. *Listening, understanding, contemplating, affective argument, rhetoric, reasoning, decision.*	***Pupil A.*** *Listening, understanding, own views put forward and being able to challenge yourself as well as others, reasoning, decision-making. Also a strong sense of self.*
Pupil B. *Rhetoric, knowledge of language and knowledge of the subject are all obvious skills necessary for the pursuit of a conventional debate. However, I feel that observational skills, memory and the ability to analyse information and integrate it with one's argument is important also.*	***Pupil B.*** *It would, to my mind, appear that there is no particular skill connected with philosophical inquiry lest it be the ability to absorb information and to analyse it. Of course when it comes to stating one's views I'd say that all the skills that are important in debating are of import here also.*
Pupil C. *Rhetoric, listening.*	***Pupil C.*** –
Pupil D. *Inclusiveness – to rally your support. Identification of opposing theories, to obliterate them.*	***Pupil D.*** *Questioning oneself. Searching for questions.*

(Source: Appendix 7, Questions 3 and 4)

Although the skills required by debate and philosophical inquiry show considerable overlap, in debates, pupils took an adversarial stance whereas philosophical inquiry proceeds co-operatively even when different views are held: attitudinal approaches differ considerably. Whereas Pupil D's notion of 'inclusiveness' in debating, in Figure 20, consists in rallying support to 'obliterate the opposition', Pupil A acknowledges the subjective as influencing philosophical inquiry. I would suggest that

philosophical inquiry supports pupils' capacity to entertain opinions that conflict with personal opinion. In the Key Stage Four Study, I perceived philosophical inquiry to have two main advantages over debating. Firstly, philosophical inquiries were more inclusive, enabling all pupils, not only the more assertive, to contribute. The rights of an individual or minority party to be heard is an important one if greater understanding of moral issues is to be encouraged, and more especially if change of moral viewpoints is to be possible. Structured debate, where parties adhere to procedures, enables minority views to be expressed and respects others. Secondly, the nature of the discussion in philosophical inquiries was characterised by an unhurried interchange of theoretical ideas in addition to a sharing of personal perspectives, attitudes conducive to consideration of others' views and deep consideration of personal views.

Conclusion: Philosophers and the Key Stage Four Study

Aristotle, adolescents and the intellect

Certain aspects of Aristotle's (c350BC/1953) view of the good life are particularly relevant to the Key Stage Four Study: in exploring moral dilemmas, pupils referred to opposing polarities in consideration of situations. Basing the Key Stage Four Study outside of curriculum frameworks was seen as the only way of providing opportunities for lateral thinking dissociated from measurement and assessment regimes, thus making possible the wonder and fascination Aristotle associates with knowledge and the freedom to follow the argument where it leads.

Aristotle's interest in forms of language; rhetoric and debate, and their role in public discourse that develops social justice is relevant to the Key Stage Four Study, within which freedom of speech is taken to mean freedom to express thoughts openly and accurately, in a socially acceptable fashion, rather than freedom interpreted merely as lack of restraint.

In contrast to Aristotle's idea that the state and adults are responsible for inculcating the virtues, the Key Stage Four Study was premised upon the Vygotskian (1934/1962) notion that social intercourse (including peer discussion) supports learning. Teachers' input is limited; discussion content relies upon maximum pupil engagement, in keeping with Socrates' assertion that even skilled practitioners cannot do for pupils

what they must do for themselves: pupils' direct involvement and effort is necessary to learning (Vlastos 1991, see Chapter Five).

The idealised characteristics of the mature and virtuous individual described by Aristotle (1953) are broadly consistent with those espoused by the Citizenship Curriculum (2002), although the latter is inclusive rather than elitist. Moreover, the Citizenship Curriculum also aims to develop pupils' capacity for critical thinking. The Key Stage Four Study encourages pupils' use of critical thinking as an essential element in the development of morality. Aristotle's moral elitism, i.e. that the good life is attainable for educated males of the ruling elite, demonstrates his failure to critically examine prevailing ideology in the light of universality and thus reveals the insufficiency of virtue as an exclusive means of developing morality, as discussed in Chapter Two.

The certainty of Kant

Kant's Enlightenment confidence in science and rationality resonates with the underpinnings of traditional Western education. However, Kant (1781/1998) simultaneously focused upon the *noumenal* as the realm that answers to the need for fulfilled living that is elevated above the potentially banal *phenomenal*. Kant's sustained regard for both the *phenomenal* (things as they are, as they appear) and the *noumenal* (non-empirical matters) are apparent in the rationale underpinning the Key Stage Four Study, which implicitly rejects education based upon knowledge conceived exclusively as facts and skills (the *phenomenal)*. The Key Stage Four Study sought to challenge the unchecked privileging of rationalist knowledge by introducing discussion topics that could not be declared 'correct' or 'incorrect', but required a nuanced personal response.

Ricoeur: Resolution?

Ricoeur (1992) proposes that narrative can be used to judge hypothetical action against the ethical norm, and it is in this sense that pupils' thinking is 'freed' to be playful and inventive, rather than in the Nietzschean (1990) sense of radical challenge that lays less emphasis upon moral regard for others. The notion of using fiction to conduct thought 'experiments' therefore possesses some similarities with Nietzsche. However, narrative encompasses thinking also about possible consequences ensuing from action.

A Ricoeurian 'rule of thumb' for resolving seemingly insoluble moral dilemmas, that adolescents (among others) might find particularly helpful is his regard for norms, but not at the expense of specific situations: general moral standards apply, but exceptions are recognised. Narrative embodies and illustrates this principle, without prescribing or reaching finality. The principle that ethical intent is more important than moral law is also one that pupils may use in matters of conscience. Hence, following Ricoeur, it may occasionally be justifiable to overrule moral norms, which usually guide action.

In considering others' possible perceptions concerning the validity of the research methods used in the Key Stage Four Study, I was encouraged by Schon's (1995) notion of 'reflection-in-action', which challenges confidence in exclusively scientific and rationalist underpinnings of knowledge. Schon suggests that professionals' actions cannot be described only in terms of demonstrable, rigorous order: professionals use a kind of tacit knowledge that brings unique flair to practice. Teachers and pupils are disadvantaged by education framed exclusively within technical-rationalism. I concur with Thomas' view that reasoning is essential to analysis of arguments, yet that parameters exist to the usefulness of rationality in teaching and learning (Thomas, 1998). Lyon (1999) examines the necessity to analysis of modes of systematic inquiry, of a unifying core that supplies criteria for judgement and makes sense of the fluid, thus supporting pluralism but not complete relativism.

Was I satisfied with the research conducted and the methods I used? Certainly, the qualitative nature of the exploratory research made data difficult to express succinctly, but Van Manen (1990) recognises this as a positive characteristic of phenomenology, the personal, intuitive perception of the world, because potentially distorting structures are not imposed upon results.

The Key Stage Four Study supported the view that narrative can be an effective vehicle for stimulating moral discussion, in debates (where supporting information was obtained from a number of non-fiction, but possibly biased, sources) and in philosophical inquiries (in which a greater proportion of fiction was used).

From a personal perspective, despite disappointments and frustrations, I believed the Debating and Philosophy Club a worthwhile activity, continuation of which may have yielded more satisfying longer-term results for pupils and for my research.

CHAPTER NINE

Drawing upon the case studies:'Infants' and adolescents think and talk about stories

'It would be a mistake to think of this language simply as a grid, already shaped, which is thrown over [the child's] experiences by others. For his development crucially depends on the kind of interlocutory stances he is enabled to take in significant conversational settings (and hence in his own inner reflections).'

(Dunne, 1996: 145)

Introduction

The Key Stage One and Key Stage Four Studies, described and analysed in Chapters Seven and Eight respectively, yield varied data. The 'housekeeping' job undertaken in this chapter is to interpret data to inform teachers' practice, examining practical influences upon conducting philosophical inquiries with children of different ages. The community of inquiry is examined as an alternative means of creating contemporary public spheres, upon which the notion of democracy is premised. I evaluate the effectiveness of using narrative and of using the community of inquiry to stimulate ethical discussion, reflecting upon the influence of trust upon group dynamics. I suggest that metacognition about engagement in philosophical inquiries is valuable to pupils. Plato's (c370BC/1961) defence of discussion as superior to writing enables me to evaluate the merits of text and of discussion in the light of practical experience. I conclude that discussion, reflection and metacognition may enhance the value of textual narrative, which Ricoeur (1992) privileges with reference to morality.

Missing, feared dead: the public sphere

The ancient Greeks' forms of public discourse are no longer practised within contemporary Western culture and opportunities for ordinary conversation and discussion may be restricted. Foucault (1988) traces the diminution, by the Hellenistic era, of dialogue and the emergence of writing as a preferred 'technology' utilised in self-knowledge and self-care and in helping friends with regard to ethical matters, of

which Socrates' letters, 'literary pseudodialogues', a fusion of dialogue and writing, are an example. If the historic demise of the role of dialogue in ethical matters dates back to the Hellenistic era, we should not be surprised if individuals within contemporary society were ill-prepared for sustained verbal dialogue: advances in communications technology may encourage solitary pursuits and alter the nature of interpersonal communication. Indeed, neurobiologist Baroness Greenfield (2006) suggests that technology may be impacting upon contemporary culture, changing the human brain and ways of thinking and learning. Communications technology that renders communication instant, informal and accessible may also fragment working and communication patterns, possibly reducing opportunities for sustained discussion in others' company.

Chapter Three explores concerns educators in England express regarding current restrictive curriculum frameworks and the effect upon the educational milieu of the narrow focus upon academic standards and the corresponding neglect of moral development. A Key Stage Four Study pupil's questionnaire response supports the view that opportunities for 'real' speaking and listening to others are rare: he describes *'listening to other people's questions'* as an aspect of philosophical inquiry that he particularly enjoyed (Appendix 7, Question 10, Pupil D). Hence, he was interested in others' thinking processes in interpreting narrative. Opportunities for such receptivity towards others' thinking and the experience of extended thinking activities, in collaboration with others, may be lacking within education. A Key Stage Four pupil states: *'I have not really thought about any matter in a seriously deep way since I left the club...'* (Appendix 7, Question 7, Pupil D). Pupils indicate that they appreciate *'Seeing other people's point of view, testing my own understanding.'* (Appendix 7, Question 10, Pupil A), *'The exchange of ideas... And the analysis of information and ideas is often quite fun...'* (Appendix 7, Question 10, Pupil B) and *'Thinking more deeply about what is really important.'* (Appendix 7, Question 10, Pupil C). These responses suggest that pupils found the philosophical inquiries stimulating and rewarding.

Where pupils are inexperienced in undertaking extended exploration of issues, it might be expected that sustaining focus might present challenges to all pupils, but especially,

perhaps, younger pupils. Yet the Key Stage One pupils were as successful as the Key Stage Four pupils in this respect, as shown later in this chapter. Key Stage Four pupils' discussion was erratic in the first philosophical inquiry:

> '*... the boys interrupt each other and stray off the chosen topic...Random ideas and interjections characterise the beginning half of the discussion and I need to keep up the Socratic questioning* [repetition of a simple question] *to help steer a course that brings us back to the topic question...*'
>
> (J4 entry, 24/01/05)

Chapter Seven reveals that the thinking of children in the Key Stage One Study was not solely limited to identification within the approximate age-bands described by Piaget: children of approximately the same age worked at different conceptual levels. Teachers of young children should not assume philosophical inquiry to be too sophisticated for use with young pupils: Palermo too suggests that '*First Graders can do philosophy*' (1995: 249).

Strong feelings are important in providing the necessary impetus to intellectual tenacity (Donaldson, 1992). Opportunities may be rare, within the classroom, for the exploration of topics selected exclusively on the criterion of interest. In curricula that perhaps aim to encourage values within education, such as the Religious Studies, Citizenship and Philosophy and Ethics curricula, content is defined, limiting scope for investigation of matters on the basis of their interest to pupils and revealing the rhetorical nature of pupil autonomy.

Power (1998) suggests that the ambiguous status and dual identity of subjects such as Personal, Health, Social and Cultural Education may result in uncomfortable and undesirable tension, irrespective of whether the subjects' pastoral or academic dimension is emphasised. Power cites Goodson's assertion that within assessment-based academic educational milieu, non-assessment-based subjects' status is low. The implication is that teachers of academic subjects might not support the introduction of non-assessed activities such as debating or philosophical inquiry, despite the capacity they offer for deep, creative, lateral, caring and reasonable thinking. It is ironic that, notwithstanding concern teachers may express about the restrictive curricula that limit or prohibit certain valuable kinds of thinking, the valuing of an academic curricular focus is simultaneously maintained. Curricula are endorsed and perpetuated through

the cultures Becher (1989) describes in *Academic tribes and territories: Intellectual enquiry and the cultures of disciplines.* Although valued instrumentally by politicians and bureaucratic management, as 'proving' effective learning, such cultures restrict broader thinking.

Drawing upon research experience

The case studies differed in several important respects, which, in turn, influenced the nature of the philosophical inquiry and of the research process. Interpretation of research data can inform pedagogy suitable for philosophical inquiry. The Key Stage One Study took place in lesson time, with my school class of six and seven year-old children. The Key Stage Four Study participants were adolescent boys of approximately 14 years of age who chose participation in a Debating and Philosophy Club offered as an extra-curricular activity.

Curriculum structures and consistency

Within the Key Stage One Study, I enjoyed relatively more control regarding specific curriculum structures and daily routines than was the case with the Key Stage Four Study. I would suggest that the privileging of curriculum activities resulted in higher parental, pupil and collegial status being accorded the learning within the Key Stage One Study than that within the Key Stage Four Study as an extra-curricular activity. However, in the Key Stage Four Study, this (lower) status might be compensated by the attraction to pupils of extra-curricular activities' more relaxed atmosphere, which does not preclude intellectual rigor: pupils might approach this situation with increased openness and enthusiasm.

Shared responsibility for debates and philosophical inquiries in the Key Stage Four Study introduced complexities, arising from teachers' inexperience in joint undertakings and practical time constraints: opportunities for thorough discussion of extra-curricular activities may be limited. Moreover, pre-specified procedural norms could be consistently applied within the weekly inquiry process in Key Stage One Study, but not in the Key Stage Four Study: different procedural norms applied within the philosophical inquiries and the debates, possibly influencing their effectiveness in effecting change. The alternating of debate and philosophical inquiry in the Key Stage

Four Study may have proved overly ambitious: initial consistency may contribute towards success with the introduction of new forms of public discourse. However, in themselves, both debating and philosophical discussion were considered vibrant forms of discussion. Debating is viewed as *'Understanding different views and their origins and indeed searching the validity of one's own view, in comparison with others...'* (Appendix 7, Question 1, Pupil B) and philosophical inquiry as enabling one to *'... discover your views and thought on issues of life.'* (Appendix 7, Question 2, Pupil C).

In the Key Stage One Study, pupils self-managed their behaviour and chosen level of involvement, waiting for turns and maintaining concentration. The 'Know-Nothing Baby' proved useful as a self-management device: pupils could judge *when* their turn to contribute was coming and were assured *that* their turn would come. Pupils listened to and thought about others' explanations to the 'Know-Nothing Baby', in preparation for their own explanations. This device supported Key Stage One pupils in attentive listening, following procedural norms, showing tolerance and providing cognitive and emotional focus. Donaldson suggests that 'emotions' relates to value feelings regarding important issues that matter (1992: 13), a possible explanation for the success of the 'Know-Nothing Baby'. It would be worth exploring whether an object such as a smooth stone or a conch shell might similarly support older pupils' procedural self-management within philosophical inquiries.

Similarities can be detected between certain features of philosophical inquiry and the Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATH) programme, an emotional education curriculum developed, originally, to support deaf children in managing their emotions but now applied more broadly. PATH focuses upon helping children to calm down, increasing awareness of emotional states in others, discussing feelings, planning and thinking ahead and considering how one's behaviour affects others (Greenberg, 2003). Here, as in the philosophical inquiries and in narrative, the subjective is recognised and discussion is viewed as important in developing understanding of the self in relation to others.

In addition to the self-management already described, I further attribute the Key Stage One Study's enhanced focus upon thinking to its being a whole-group activity,

resulting in greater coherence, a sense of shared purpose and a cognitive excitement in developing upon others' ideas. The varied activity within the Key Stage Four Study: whole-group work, small group work and work in pairs, required a higher level of pupil self-management. However, procedural norms develop with practice and experience:

> *...Procedural norms [are] developing: pupils [are] treating others' ideas with real consideration. [There is] Less interruption whilst others speak. More feedback in plenary – [pupils] seem to like whole-group discussion – [perhaps because the increased] breadth of ideas [is] stimulating...'*
>
> (J4, 07/03/05)

Group composition, the learning environment and trust

The pupils in the Key Stage One Study, a single-form year-group, were accustomed to working together in class. Moreover, co-operation and respect were valued and encouraged within this environment at all times, not only within the philosophical inquiries. The structure of the learning environment at secondary schools differs considerably. Relationships of trust existed between the participants in the Key Stage One Study and myself as their teacher, whereas in the Key Stage Four Study, trust had not been established between the pupils and the (new) teachers responsible for the Debating and Philosophy Club. Young pupils' relative dependence upon adults may render them more accustomed to trusting teachers than might adolescent pupils, establishing independence and exercising greater discernment concerning trust. Trust is perceived as important to societal collective intelligence, because it makes experience more communicable: developing the art of conversation breaks down barriers that inhibit free communication (Brown and Lauder, 2000).

In these case studies, trust is considered as an ontological influence and intrinsically valuable, but trust is also acknowledged as possessing instrumental benefit. The circularity of 'trust' is demonstrated through its contribution towards social flourishing, and being a result of social flourishing. I consider trusting relationships to be supportive of philosophical inquiry. In the Key Stage One Study, the relational trust and the dependability within the process enabled pupils to concentrate on the content of discussion. In the Key Stage Four Study, pupils' openness towards reflective

metacognition in completing Pupil Questionnaires not only reveals their trust towards me as teacher-researcher, but was, I believe, of major benefit to them.

Ricoeur (1986) refers to another important dimension of trust and its counterpart; suspicion. Paradoxically, suspicion in the form of ontological and epistemological criticism contributes towards confidence: by questioning assumptions we work towards becoming more secure regarding what we think and understand, whilst acknowledging fallibility. By being practically involved in philosophical inquiries, I suggest that pupils develop trust and confidence in their expressive abilities and also develop ethical self-reflexivity, important to supporting pupil self-determination.

Research participants' degree of self-determination was influenced by their age. As the Key Stage One Study was part of regular lessons, pupils accepted without question their involvement in the research; one of the areas of personal conflict I experienced with regard to the issue of informed consent. Yet they participated with absorption attributable to voluntary, freely chosen involvement. Following Donaldson '*...we enjoy best and engage most readily in activities we experience as freely chosen.*' (Donaldson, 1987: 118). Young children's responses are likely to be more spontaneous and transparent, demonstrating less of the 'filtering' or 'self-editing' that develops with greater social maturity and adolescents' concerns with peers' and teachers' perceptions (Kohlberg, 1981), in addition to adolescents' increased emotional control (Greenberg, 2003). In the Key Stage Four Study, pupils practised self-determination regarding participation in the Debating and Philosophy Club as an extra-curricular activity.

The research groups differed in relation to gender. Boys and girls comprised the Key Stage One Study group; Key Stage Four Study participants were exclusively male. The possible influence upon the nature of discussion of gender is beyond the scope of this research, but may be worthy of further investigation. Gendered attitudes towards discussion and debate might provide a possible explanation regarding my discomfort with debate I perceived as 'unruly' or 'assertive', which neither (male) participants nor my (male) colleague perceived as unsatisfactory. Feminist writers suggest gendered approaches towards epistemology (Pendlebury, 2005).

The Key Stage One Study participants were of mixed ability, whereas all the members of the Debating and Philosophy Club could be described as able. This club, offered in competition with other extra-curricular activities, including popular sports, appealed to a particular group, whose characteristics undoubtedly influenced attitudes towards and the nature of the discussion:

> *'...might the discussion be more 'balanced' with a group of more mixed ability, or would these pupils* [current group members] *simply dismiss others' contributions? Does philosophy only appeal 'naturally' to this sector?'*
>
> (J4, 07/02/05)

This journal entry reveals the particular challenge presented by attitudes of exclusivity. Discussion within the Key Stage One Study group was accessible to all, despite evident differences in levels of cognitive development, suggesting that all pupils can enjoy philosophical inquiry and find it stimulating.

Close continuing involvement with pupils

As I taught the Key Stage One Study group, the working relationship between teacher and pupils did not represent a departure from the norm. In the Key Stage Four Study, by comparison, the pedagogical characteristics of teacher-as-facilitator, emphasising collaboration and joint inquiry differs significantly from the curriculum teaching persona, the 'academic expert' within a subject specialism.

Being the class teacher of the Key Stage One Study group provided opportunities to observe pupils' growing awareness of the implications of and application within social situations, of topics discussed in inquiry sessions:

> *'The children suggest that 'Jim' should be rewarded for socially acceptable behaviour at playtime...'*
>
> (J1 20/09/03)

Such pupil awareness cannot be directly ascribed to the philosophical inquiries, yet this concern for the other had not been noted in the group's two preceding school years. I would suggest that continuing involvement with a research group may sustain the focus and influence of research: Key Stage One Study parents and pupils continued to refer to the philosophical inquiries six months afterwards:

'Yet another parent comments upon the importance of social development, indicating her strong support of the inclusive ethos evident within the class. She is also impressed by the increased maturity of the children.'

(J1, 17/03/04)

I interpret these unsolicited parental comments as indicators of parental approval and their association with the research project of social changes occurring within the group. By comparison, I did not teach pupils in the Key Stage Four Study and I judge that its effects diminished sooner:

'I have not really thought about any matter in a seriously deep way since I left the club.'

(Appendix 7, Question 7, Pupil D)

Does narrative support ethical development?

In the Key Stage One Study, a story related to each discussion topic played an integral role in stimulating children's imagination, motivating them to engage with the ideas suggested by the text, extending and sustaining cognitively complex discussions in a manner uncharacteristic of the pupils' normal interactions. I would suggest that this may have happened because pupils' initial exploration of their own understandings supported strong identification with characters or situations within the selected narratives, interactions with others and with oneself as another to which Ricoeur (1992) ascribes ethical development. Stories facilitate this recognition of otherness. For Ricoeur, friendship is foundational to the notions of justice and ethical behaviour, and friendship with others is necessary to being the friend of the self. Following Ricoeur, thoughts and motives ascribed to fictional characters may be exchanged, by the individual, into action designated to the self: the 'other than self' may be incorporated into self-affection. Fiction therefore provides unique ways of enhancing individuals' capacity for experiencing, which are not encountered in lived experience:

'...It thus appears that the affection of the self by the other than self finds in fiction *a privileged milieu for thought experiments that cannot be eclipsed by the 'real' relations of interlocution and interaction. Quite the opposite, the reception of works of fiction contributes to the imaginary and symbolic constitution of the actual exchanges of words and actions. 'Being-affected' in*

the fictive mode is therefore incorporated into the self's being-affected in the 'real' mode.'

(Ricoeur, 1992: 330)

Ricoeur's ascription of friendship as the basis of justice and ethics relates to the ethical insight provided by Key Stage One children's focus upon the experiences of characters within the stories. For instance, in *Farmer duck*, although pupils were supportive of the animals' act of solidarity with their friend, some were also sympathetic to the farmer's resulting destitution; a sympathy I would suggest arises from empathy experienced through friendship. Young children were able to view ethical outcomes from multiple perspectives. Their doing so accords with Ricoeur's brief description of ethics as consisting in a relation between doing and undergoing:

'...the good you would want to be done to you, the evil you would hate to be done to you...'

(Ricoeur, 1992: 330)

In the Key Stage Four Study, *textual narrative* played a more prominent role within philosophical inquiries than it did in the debates because text was physically present and directly referred to during the inquiries. However, the influence must be recognised of the influence of textual narrative, spoken and written, upon pupils' opinions and understanding. In preparing debate presentations, pupils drew upon and were influenced by, others' perspectives, encountered through the media and through conversations. Narrative is thus recognised as being so immediate as to be constitutive of the individual's ideas, supporting Lyotard's (1984) conception of narrative as culture: individuals within a society develop their opinions through the society's knowledge and customs. Culture represents the consensus reached within the society regarding what is judged good. Following Lyotard, traditional narrative knowledge is constituted by the sum of a culture's communications, spoken and symbolic.

In some instances, simple texts proved very successful in initiating and sustaining discussion. Foregrounding moral dilemmas through texts specially created for this purpose may in fact be less provocative than intended, as this perceptive pupil response reveals:

'... Stories are more about the suggestion of an idea, though a story might easily become so explicitly for a point that it leaves less room for thought. Stories, good ones, are open to interpretation and are in that way a good starting point for thinking about a certain question or interpretation of an idea.'

(Appendix 7, Question 12, Pupil B)

Considering Key Stage Four pupils' intellectual sophistication, age and evident interest in and knowledge of current affairs, I expected that they might respond more positively to newspaper articles than to the prepared texts included within the SAPERE handbook. However, newspaper articles had no obvious advantage in sustaining discussion over these simpler sample materials, such as *'The professor and the ferryman'* (Appendix 8) and *'Newswise'*, a simulated newspaper article.

Pupils expressed their approval of the use of narrative in inquiries and identified several functions narrative served:

Pupil A. *I think the stories helped to stimulate thinking and allowed a deeper conversation because you got past the hard first thoughts quickly.*
Pupil B. *Using articles is often a good idea because it brings about thought about contemporary culture and life and also allows people to learn about current affairs. On top of this articles are often in people's minds at the time. Stories are more about the suggestion of an idea, though a story might easily become so explicitly for a point that it leaves less room for thought. Stories, good ones, are open to interpretation and are in that way a good starting point for thinking about a certain question or interpretation of an idea.*
Pupil C. *By putting an idea into a relevant topical context.*
Pupil D. *They provide a situation for you to think about, rather than having to conjure questions up out of thin air.*

(Appendix 7, Question 12)

Following these responses, functions that narrative serve include:

- to support deeper thinking (Pupil A)

- to provide a context for theoretical ideas (the '*hard first thoughts*'), that made them easier to conceptualise (Pupil A)
- to introduce cultural considerations to discussion (Pupil B)
- to provide contemporary relevance (Pupil B, Pupil C)
- to increase knowledge (Pupil B)
- to satisfy pupils' awareness of topical issues within the media that, by implication, are worthy of discussion ('*articles are often in people's minds at the time*')(Pupil B, Pupil C)
- to provide provocative ideas and multiple interpretations rather than explicit solutions (Pupil B, Pupil D)
- to provide stimulus for initiating discussion (Pupil B, Pupil D)

Ricoeur privileges fiction in imaginative engagement (1992, see earlier quote). In the Key Stage Four Study, three of the selected texts for philosophical inquiry were fictional, one was a newspaper report. I would ascribe pupil engagement with texts to the insight texts provided into other individuals' responses to events. Newspaper articles may report events 'externally' rather than focusing upon individuals' 'internal' thoughts and feelings, possibly affecting pupils' personal identification with characters. My expectation was incorrect that pupils would find particularly appealing the newspaper article describing a young soldier's act of heroism: *Youngest holder of Queen Victoria's honour* (The Times, 2005). This article had no noticeable advantages over other texts in stimulating philosophical discussion.

One of the fictional narratives which was very successful in doing so, titled *Newswise*, (SAPERE, 2003) was formatted to simulate a newspaper article. In this text, by contrast with the authentic newspaper article described above, the personal circumstances and motives of the characters are clearly described, inviting identification. The value of prepared texts such as the SAPERE sample materials may lie in their clarity in describing characters' circumstances and motives, and in presenting complex moral dilemmas. With the newspaper article, initial discussion was required to examine possible thoughts, feelings, motives and personal attributes of the soldier before a moral dilemma could be formulated. From a practical perspective, the

limits to available discussion time make attractive the use of narrative that meets certain criteria:

- it describes a situation depicting in some way the good you would want done to you or the evil you would not want done to you
- it asks participants to care about characters by providing insight into the characters' personal experiences, thought, motives and feelings
- it involves complex situations, revealing different possible courses of actions, decisions and perspectives

Plato and the case studies:
Does the community of inquiry support ethical development?

In contrast to Ricoeur's and other contemporary philosophers' celebration of the value of text, as written narrative, Plato (c370BC/1961) views writing as extremely limited, as explicated in Chapter Five. What do the case studies reveal regarding Plato's assertions? I once again converse with Plato, this time possessing greater experience of the role of narrative and speech within the case studies' philosophical discussions, and possessing increased exposure to other philosophers' ideas.

Plato: '*...they* [written words] *go on telling you just the same thing forever...*' (ibid: 521: 275d).

Mary: When texts are used as stimulus to discussion rather than to instruct, the focus is upon the generative power of text rather than its immutability. In the Key Stage Four Study, one of the benefits of text was that pupils could refer back to particular areas of interest to frame questions: specific sections might stimulate further investigation. Meanings developed from textual interpretation and re-interpretation. It is valuable for pupils to realise that there is not always one 'right' answer and that reducing complexity may be undesirable: Ricoeur emphasises the richness offered by complexity (1986), Lyotard the opportunities offered through ambiguity and pluralism for increased tolerance and personal freedom (1984). In these case studies, text enabled pupils to experience and confront complexity and to tolerate incommensurable views.

Plato: '*... the composition... drifts around the place, getting into the hands not only of those who understand it, but equally of those who have no business with it...*' (Plato, c370BC/1961: 521: 275e).

Mary: I am unsure whether you are primarily concerned with readers' possible choice of inappropriate reading material, or with the author's lack of control over who reads text and its interpretation once it is in the public domain. However, as communication, most usually with others, is the purpose of writing, your concerns regarding readership are puzzling. Nevertheless, from my experience in the case studies, particularly the Key Stage Four Study (as explained earlier in this chapter), I agree that in order to sustain philosophical inquiry, writing must possess certain characteristics, so in this sense, certain writing *is* particularly suited to specific readers. Discernment is, indeed, required, if writing is to serve adequately as stimulus for further discussion.

However, it could be argued that an elitist bias is discernible in your work, that you wished your ideas to be accessible only to certain individuals. Your description of guardians controlling prisoners' access to knowledge in *The Cave* (c370BC/1961) would support this interpretation. From my exploration, earlier in this chapter, of the influence upon discussion of the composition of inquiry groups, I suggest instead the possible merits of avoiding cultural homogeneity and intellectual elitism, which possibly limit philosophical discussion; acting as a potential disadvantage rather than an advantage. In the Key Stage One Study, pupils' different levels of cognitive development appeared beneficial to all: discussion clarified and extended the thinking of those explaining and the recipients of explanations.

Ricoeur regards the very attributes of writing about which you have apprehensions, as advantages:

> '*Thanks to writing, discourse acquires a threefold semantic autonomy: in relation to the speaker's intention, to its reception by its original audience, and to the economic, social and cultural circumstances of its production. It is in this sense that writing tears itself free from the limits of face-to-face dialogue and becomes the condition for discourse itself* becoming-text.'
>
> (Ricoeur, 1996: 152)

Plato: '... [writing] *needs its parent to come to its help, being unable to defend or help itself...* ' (Plato, c370BC/1961: 521: 275e).

Mary: I infer that you are concerned that writing can be decontextualised and misinterpreted, which reveals your intention that a text be interpreted 'correctly', that is, in one specific way. Instead of this emphasis, the attraction of texts used in the philosophical inquiries is their openness to different interpretations. Certainly, one of the attractions of discussion is that questions can be asked and perceived misconceptions immediately addressed. However, I view positively readers' creative imagination: in these case studies, texts stimulated thinking by contextualising situations and providing personal identification with the characters, which motivated engagement.

Plato: '*...by telling* [your disciples] *of many things without teaching them you will make them seem to know much, while for the most part they know nothing...* ' (ibid: 520: 275a/b).

Mary: I think you are suggesting here that simply reading text may lead to superficial knowledge of facts rather than real understanding. This is a concern I share with you. Q Leavis (1932) associates uncritical reading with a decline in culture, although unreflective reading behaviour possibly reflects rather than causes such decline. Education's focus upon transmission of factual information rather than engagement with ideas does not support readers in developing critical attitudes towards reading. In the case studies, text was discussed fully, with the explicit purpose of developing understanding and attitudes of inquiry; encouraging pupils to view themselves as seekers of knowledge rather than as knowledgeable, as potentially fallible rather than certainly correct.

Your suggestion that reading encourages superficial cognitive engagement fails to acknowledge that discussion can be as uncritical and unreflective as reading. With Foucault (1994b), I would argue that it is the nature of the engagement that determines its value rather than its external presentation as speech or writing, which is why I consider philosophical inquiry to possess particular benefits regarding interrogation,

explanation and justification of thinking. Key Stage Four pupils' lack of self-interrogation in some discussions was evident. Despite improvements noted in pupils' attitudes towards each other, discussion did not guarantee self-examination; attitudes of intellectual superiority were not sufficiently challenged and possibly contributed to a lack of examination:

> *'...Sophisticated thinking was evident, yet the pupils' unexamined prejudice ... surprised me...Yet pupils... were not disposed to interrogate their own thinking and assumptions...I would have expected more application of criticism to own understanding...'*
>
> (J4, 21/03/05)

Plato: *'Then anyone who leaves behind him a written manual ... on the supposition that such writing will provide something reliable and permanent, must be exceedingly simple-minded; ... if he imagines that written words can do anything more than remind one who knows that which the writing is concerned with.'* (Plato, c370BC/1961: 521, 275c)

Mary: My own interrogation and application of philosophy reveals the inaccuracy of these assertions. Ancient writings such as yours and Aristotle's remain relevant to contemporary issues. Hermeneutic interpretation and re-interpretation of texts can yield increased self-understanding, as hermeneutic philosophers demonstrate. Your challenge concerning the reliability and permanence of information is particularly relevant in connection with the rapid evolution of information within contemporary information-rich societies, rendering enduring values even more important and elusive.

Plato: *'...written words... **seem** to talk to you **as though** they were intelligent...'* (ibid: 521: 275d, added emphasis).

Mary: I agree with you that words themselves are not intelligent and that grappling with ideas supports emerging understandings, hence my concern regarding pupils' limited opportunities for such interrogation of moral values. A secondary school pupil's questionnaire response, quoted earlier, to the effect that he had not thought deeply about anything since leaving the club, confirms that mere exposure to text (or

speech) does not guarantee engagement with ideas, an engagement suggested by Aristotle's notion of *praxis.*

Examining more closely the idea of *praxis,* speculative or practical action that is both intrinsically and instrumentally good, with reference to the philosophical discussion within the case studies, may help to determine whether such discussion could be said to support pupils' ethical development. Aristotle believes that happiness is achieved by *doing* good, through aesthetic behaviour that intentionally conforms with commonly desired norms (those valued by humans equipped with reason and speech). The empirical work was designed to encourage pupils towards such action. Theory, action and language are non-oppositionally involved in praxis: it is because humans have reason and speech that they can theorise, extending their behaviour beyond survival needs and the instinct of conservation towards considered action (Jervolino, 1996). Discussion within the case studies aimed at this unifying function of praxis: using normative procedures for discussion (action) in the form of speculative action (thinking), comprising theory (examination of ideas) and aesthetics (ethical intention towards extending understanding). This practical philosophy is both ethical and political: *'human activity proper to the rational, free man, who lives and partakes in a community of free, rational people (the polis)... Praxis is to dwell and act in solidarity.'* (Jervolino, 1996: 67/68).

But I would suggest that, in 'doing' practical philosophy, pupils' involvement is also related to the Aristotelian notion of *phronesis,* practical wisdom, because in phiolosophical discussion, pupils are developing a capacity for discernment through reflection. Through initiation to interpretation of texts by way of *praxis,* active cognitive involvement with texts, pupils are acting hermeneutically by trying to develop the capacity for judgement and understanding, i.e. for *phronesis.*

Metacognition: thinking about thinking

The Key Stage One Study showed that even young pupils sometimes practise metacognition spontaneously and are aware of thinking as a process:

> *'... 'Jane' asked ...[for] a chance to think before responding...'*
>
> (J1, 04/09/03)

In addition to such unsolicited references to thinking, discussion about thinking can assist pupils to recognise behaviour or situations that support thinking and generalisation of thinking to other situations. I consider one of the most productive aspects of the Key Stage Four Study to be the effect of the pupil questionnaire in retrospectively focusing pupils' thinking upon the nature of the activities in which they had been involved. Reflection provided opportunities for identification of the skills, processes and features of thinking associated with debate and philosophical discussion. The richness of questionnaire responses, analysed in Chapter Eight and contained in Appendix 7, suggests the value of this metacognitive practice. Indeed, reflective learning journals are widely used, in conjunction with other traditional methods of teaching and learning, to make explicit the evaluation of successful learning activities (Moon, 2003).

Pupil metacognition supports pupil empowerment: pupils' ideas are taken seriously and pupils recognising how they can contribute to their learning (Lipman, 2003). Following Lipman, group discussion of procedural values developed within communities of inquiry highlights for pupils the benefits of democratic values for the group and for individuals. Lipman considers that metacognition, comprising emotive experience, conscious mental activity and the teaching of thinking skills is one of the primary aims of philosophical thinking. Fallibilism, the acknowledgement that one might be wrong, is fundamental to philosophical discussion (ibid) and to ethics (Ricoeur, 1986) and has the effect of encouraging open-mindedness and tolerance. Philosophical inquiry focuses upon examining prejudices, justifying thinking, providing reasons and evaluating claims by weighing the relative merits of arguments; attributes that are by no means to be assumed: the teacher leading philosophical inquiries must sometimes be exceedingly resourceful in questioning. Sadly, this desirable 'reasonable' activity may inadvertently further support the unexamined privileging of rationality and rejection of tacit knowledge, a major personal criticism of current education in England.

My research journals are a resource for personal metacognition, enabling me to analyse and identify practices that aided or hindered discussion, and to trace the emergence or development of certain ideas.

The case studies call into question the work of Piaget (1932), regarding decentred thinking and Kohlberg (1981), regarding stage progression. During philosophical inquiries, Key Stage One Study pupils, whose age was similar, thought in different ways. I prefer to describe thinking as divergent rather than trying to relate it to stage descriptors. Understandings moved towards more developed concepts. It seemed that the very encountering of, at times, insurmountably difficult thoughts produced the greatest stimulation: the challenge provided the motivation. Donaldson's (1987) challenge to Piagetian theory illustrates the potential danger with staged-progression descriptors such as those offered by both Piaget and Kohlberg: they might suggest limits to the development of pupils' thinking instead of encouraging practice that extends thinking. As will be discussed more fully later, philosophy provides a vantage point from which to interrogate the significance and usefulness within education of devices such as stage descriptors.

Extending thinking appears to occur more readily where appropriate support is present: difficult thinking might, in the absence of support, have led to feelings of disempowerment rather than motivation. Developing language for thinking supports metacognition. Educators recognise the desirability of developing pupils' metacognitive skills. The Critical Thinking Curriculum (2006) aims to teach pupils specific skills in considering credibility of evidence, assessing and developing arguments and resolving dilemmas. Whilst I support curriculum initiatives that encourage critical thinking, the initiatives do not necessarily allay my concerns about current education. They maintain the current separation of the cognitive and the caring and creative domains and the associated instrumentality and reduced focus upon personal responses to values. Assumptions concerning rationality remain unexamined: curriculum structures may further endorse rationality whilst failing to acknowledge limits to autonomy and critical thinking. Philosophy supports reflection and reflexivity towards such phenomena.

Philosophical ideas particularly relevant to the case studies

Nietzsche's (1990) promotion of attitudes of detached irony and of adopting a playful approach towards exploring ideas, is of relevance to the case studies. Nietzsche's

notion of detachment resonates with Ricoeur's (1986) 'distanciation' explored more fully in Chapter Ten, but I prefer Ricoeur's notion because it suggests explicit self-evaluation within a context, whilst 'detachment' suggests disinterested neutrality and would not produce the identification with characters which provided motivation for discussion. 'Distanciation' also seems more descriptive of observed behaviour: pupils both empathised with narrative characters and generalised about situations; their emotional involvement did not preclude cognitive distance. Narrative's strengths may lie in its capacity to introduce, if not 'playfulness', contextualised alternative responses that:

- encourage individuals to take themselves less seriously and to overcome preoccupation with the self by introducing others' projects and motives. Paden (1988) describes two traditional and contrasting methods for overcoming preoccupation with the self; Christian spirituality, encompassing the notions of purity and the Puritan notion of self-abasement and the Zen-Buddhist idea of practising emptiness and self-forgetfulness. Whereas neither of these practices is necessarily appropriate within education, narrative offers an accessible alternative
- focus upon others' situations rather than one's own, thereby achieving a greater degree of detachment with regard to moral thinking. Removing the 'I' from a situation renders it less personal. I find narrative attractive because it renders a situation less personal, without a loss of immediacy
- invite non-prescriptive, imaginative participation

Kant's (1785/1958) notions of the *phenomenal*, sense data, and the *noumenal*, thinking and reasoning to which sense data does not apply, were encountered and were challenging within the context of the research projects. As researcher, my focus vacillated between my observations of overt, and thus verifiable, behaviour and the vaguer, but equally real, sensed instances: moments in which some important change occurred, such as a pupil's expression of self-doubt. Both realms were necessary to the research; research focused exclusively on the phenomenal would have been banal, research focused exclusively upon the noumenal, nebulous.

Adopting *Ricoeur's* framework concerning moral dilemmas was useful when I encountered unexpected situations within the research process. Ricoeur (1992) suggests that the moral norm be respected wherever possible, yet he also recognises that in exceptional situations, acting justly may require the application of different criteria for judgement. Respecting the moral norm influenced the research, as illustrated, for example, by pupils' reservations about the intended tape-recording of inquiry sessions, prompting my decision not to do so despite perceiving that explanation might dispel doubts. Yet, with regard to my reservations concerning informed consent, I judged that ethical intent and principles could be followed even though research participants' full understanding could not reasonably be guaranteed. In practice, I used Ricoeur's suggestions to provide solutions within problematic situations.

Summary

In this chapter, I have suggested that when pupils are involved in the process of philosophical discussion within a community, a public sphere is created, which acts as a ground for the practise of Aristotelian *praxis;* in this case, pupils' active involvement in thinking, inherently and instrumentally good. Shared exploration develops individuals' personal insight and self-determination through *'privileging the process of ongoing dialogue... rather than the ... goal of total consensus.'* (Rainwater, 1996).

Professionally, it was exciting to observe how discussion supplemented Key Stage One pupils' exposure to challenging concepts and extended thinking over the course of inquiry sessions. Similarly, I as researcher and novice philosopher grappled with applying large philosophical ideas within limited situations, often uncertainly. My Ph.D supervisors' scaffolding of my own thinking through discussion, provocative questioning and suggestions regarding further relevant reading serves as an analogous model for extending pupils' moral and philosophical thinking. Although my supervisors and I are situated within a research community and therefore enact educationally and socially reproductive roles (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977; Foucault, 2000; Scheurich, 1997; Thomas, 1998), such intellectual support was essential to me. I experienced the research community as both constraining and liberating. With Foucault, I reject the notion that individuals' situations utterly subsume them.

(Foucault, 2000). Indeed, individuals can use existing systems and mechanisms to their advantage.

I have used philosophy in several distinct ways within this chapter. Foucault's interest in the technologies of self-knowledge has influenced me to consider the nature and role of communication within a contemporary public sphere. The empirical work proceeds in relation to theory; psychological (cognitive development and metacognition), sociological (trust) and philosophical (narrative). I have dialogued with Plato, relating his ideas to communities of inquiry and to other philosophers' thinking. Case study as research methodology (Yin, 2003) has enabled intertextuality and intersubjectivity to be established. Reflection upon the case studies enhanced self-understanding of personal values and moral values important to me.

CHAPTER TEN

'The quest'

' I understand [these virtues] prior to any downfall as a flowering or realisation of man's potencies or functions. In short, I understand them as complete affirmation and not as coercion and negation. Duty is a function of evil ... Virtue is the affirmative essence of man prior to all downfall and all duty that forbids, constrains, and saddens. '

(Ricoeur, 1986: 98)

Introduction

As an immigrant to the United Kingdom, the expectations regarding moral values that I bring to the educational arena are those formed within an emergent country experiencing social, economic and political metamorphosis. In similar vein to Tony Blair's expressed desire, as recent British Prime Minister, to reintroduce respect as a foundational moral principle guiding behaviour, 'moral regeneration' has been placed on South Africa's national and educational agenda through a high-profile campaign consisting in extensive media coverage and story books for children. The campaign aims to address social problems, including the AIDS and HIV pandemic, through moral values: hope, forgiveness, acceptance, responsibility, selfless love, honesty, compassion, perseverance and self-control. England's National Curriculum identifies honesty, justice, trust, and sense of duty as fundamental. Irrespective of which specific virtues are considered fundamental, if their identification leads to discussion and debate, certain objectives will have been achieved.

Within England, as a secular, post-industrial society, ambivalence exists regarding the role of the teacher as neutral educator or role model. The status of moral values is not necessarily agreed within wider society, nor within education that reflects it. Attempts to address moral values may be interpreted with suspicion, as a possible infringement of individual rights to self-determination implied if morality is associated with submission and 'duty', or with doubt resulting from an acceptance of relativism. Education in England is influenced by politics and by market forces: rhetoric suggests

that parents and pupils, within a consumerist framework, have more choice and can therefore exercise greater self-determination. However, self-determination should not be confused with proliferation of choice, a postmodern phenomenon (Lyon, 1999).

Against this backdrop, it would be surprising if teachers did not experience as challenging the prioritising of the multiple aims of education and allegiances due to parties involved in education: pupils, parents, wider society, colleagues, inspectors, policy-makers, employers, politicians, the global community and the teachers themselves. I suggest that teachers' ontology, guided by reference to an epistemic community, a *'group that shares and maintains resources for acquiring and developing knowledge'* (Pendlebury, 2005: 58), might guide teachers in evaluating competing claims, enlarging the scope for self-determination of teachers and pupils. Teachers need to be sustained and, possibly, emboldened personally and professionally if they are to serve as effective role models for pupils.

In this chapter, I celebrate the distance covered in generating more adequate responses to the research questions and I encourage teachers to think differently about education. Observations concerning doing philosophical inquiry with children are offered for the consideration of others wishing to explore its use within their own settings. The chapter ends with a review of my dual use of philosophy as a resource that sustains me in my aim towards the good life, offering new perspectives for consideration, and as a methodological tool supporting research. Lowe's (1986) description of the methodological approaches Ricoeur uses in hermeneutic philosophy offers a framework for reviewing methodology within this thesis.

Final revisiting of research questions

Question 1

In what ways is it possible for schools to provide for the development of values education within the context of current government initiatives?

This thesis recognises the challenge to values education of prescriptive curriculum and assessment structures, despite the prominence within policy directives and the inspection of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development. Various curricula: Religious Studies, the Citizenship Curriculum, the Critical Thinking Curriculum and the Ethics and Philosophy Curriculum, can be interpreted as efforts to address values

within education. I view radical educational reform as essential to the further development of pupils' ethical self-determination: creation of cultures of trust that support risk rather than safeguarded learning. Recognition of ontology and of the subjective is inextricably implicated within values.

Learning conceived as technical rationality is limited, but favoured by management structures because positivistic measures suggest the certainty that other forms of knowing and interpreting cannot provide. Yet, 'subjective' knowledge should be recognised within education and might be realised through modifying current structures to incorporate fundamental elements of alternative educational environments such as Pendlebury's (2005) 'epistemic communities' or the learning supported by Lipman's (2003) 'communities of inquiry'.

Alternative models of education such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) aim towards a broader conception of learning. The IB, which conceives open-ended reflection and community service as essential elements of education, is increasingly popular, particularly within the private education sector. The growth in private schooling in England in the past decade (The Independent, 2007) suggests that independent schools benefit from greater flexibility and to the opportunities offered to pupils for extra-curricular involvement. It might be argued that this trend suggests parental endorsement and valuing of broader conceptions of learning.

A sincere attempt to address values in education would require a paradigm shift in underpinning reliance upon positivistic measures of performance as the exclusive criteria for evaluating education. Such educational reform would involve changes to current initial teacher education and increased trust in teachers' professionalism. Investigation of certain features of teacher education in England, particularly centralised control and measures of accountability (Hartley, 2000; Reid, 2000), expose the inappropriate assumption of 'teacher autonomy'. Teachers within English primary schools experience a tension between professional autonomy and managerial control (Forrester, 2000).

Rhetoric concerning the promotion of moral values in education is likely to remain unsubstantiated whilst education is coupled with party politics: statistics 'proving' the

improvement of literacy rates or attainment at GCSE or A-level exacerbate technical rationalist conceptions of learning.

The removal of pressure on schools to produce exclusively measurable outputs, currently viewed as necessary to improving standards, would endorse the importance of other values, perhaps even beyond academic achievement. Reduced reliance upon statistical analyses and exploring alternative methods of evaluation has potential advantages:

- Instrumental methods of evaluation confine curriculum content to the narrow learning that conforms to assessment methods rather than expanding thinking.
- Simplistic measures create the illusory impression that standards of education are improving, whereas improved attainment in narrow areas occurs to the detriment of broader education. Statistical representations, although sometimes useful to supplement other information are, therefore, not merely irrelevant, but misleading and inadequate.
- Pedagogy focused upon attainment encourages compliance with formulaic procedures rather than creativity, lateral thinking and inspiring Aristotelian attitudes of awe and wonder.
- Alternative methods of evaluation demonstrate trust in and respect for teachers' professional standards and judgement.
- Measurement suggests that knowledge acquisition is more important than thinking:

  '*...we will not be able to get students to engage in better thinking unless we teach them to employ criteria and standards by means of which they can assess their thinking for themselves.*'

  (Lipman, 2003: 75)

Moral values and the curriculum

Attempts to address ethics through the content of disciplines-based curricula erroneously assume that knowledge-transmission results in attitudinal and behavioural change. However, by way of example, the Religious Studies curriculum may offer knowledge of different faiths without inviting potential increments in understanding and tolerance. Such understanding may incidentally result from comparison of

religious and cultural traditions, but further possibilities inherent within this curriculum area may remain unrealised:

> *'... knowing more is not equivalent to thinking better...Paradoxical as it may seem, teaching the facts about a subject cultivates a distanced, theoretical attitude toward that subject rather than a practical one.'*
>
> (Lipman, 2003: 76)

Similarly, cognitive gains realised through logical or critical thinking interventions do not automatically translate to a means of evaluating moral dilemmas. It is encouraging to observe that in the Critical Thinking Curriculum, problems are embedded within narrative scenarios, grounding potentially abstract activity within a practical sphere. However, arriving at logically 'correct', final answers implies that application of formulaic thinking can yield moral certainty. Study of philosophy, psychology and religion shows that certain complex fundamental human issues resist finality. Dedication to confronting the full complexity of lived experience is reflected in Ricoeur's stringent attention to methodological details; his exhaustive exploration of multiple facets of a problem, exposing their resistance to commensurability and his conscious resolution to avoid attempts to reduce problems to simplistic terms, thereby arriving at closure (Lowe, 1986). Ricoeur's hermeneutic approach invites further engagement and the acceptance that the activity of seeking truth is important, not the answer.

The English Literature curriculum focuses upon technical aspects of language usage, so pupils' engagement with the moral issues contained within texts should not be assumed. Williams (2005) considers that the subject-matter of literature is widely used with didactic intent, particularly within civic or political education, in his rejection of Oakeshott's denial that literature can contribute significantly to moral development. When textual narrative is used as a stimulus for philosophical inquiry, the focus is not upon technical aspects of language, but upon lived experience; issues of moral interest illustrated by the text. Moreover, philosophical inquiries are not committed to arriving at pre-specified teaching objectives: philosophical questions are pupil-generated and the teacher does not manipulate discussion towards specific predetermined understandings. The non-didactic procedure supports pupil self-determination by avoiding prescription and teacher domination, and enables moral thinking to emerge

organically, by which I mean without artificial acceleration, against which Kohlberg warns (1981).

Curriculum areas such as drama, art, role-play and sculpture may present alternative vehicles for stimulating moral questioning. For instance, Marx (1995), an American teacher, provides a detailed description of a Euthanasia Trial, a four-month project in which successive groups of secondary school pupils were involved, incorporating four phases:

- Introduction: teaching pupils methods of collaborative inquiry and logical thinking.
- Trial preparation: half the group familiarise themselves empathetically with narrative texts based upon actual cases, practising dramatic effects they will use in the trial, the other half prepare for their roles as jurors, exploring issues such as the detection of prejudice, bias and exaggeration.
- Experience: use of intellectual and emotional understanding within the courtroom.
- Reflection and summation: charting a logical statement of experiences within a community of inquiry.

This ambitious initiative was born of Marx's conviction that teaching about euthanasia does not challenge pupils personally, in the way that experience and reflection challenge. It illustrates Marx's professional autonomy in adjusting traditional pedagogy and creatively harnessing pupils' affective engagement in precipitating moral change. England's current curriculum and assessment structures do not support such initiatives.

Through the above exploration of the possibilities presented through various curricula for engagement with moral values, I suggest that, although offering a limited degree of incidental engagement with moral issues, opportunities are lacking for deep discussion. It does not appear that addressing moral values can be achieved through imposing new curriculum directives. In view of the current culture within education, teachers might instead commit themselves to cultivating and expressing, as role-models, intellectual and moral virtues (Vokey, 2003), restoring attitudinal agency to conceptions of professionalism. Philosophical distancing from immediacy, necessary to evaluation of the usefulness and desirability of specific educational phenomena, supports this increased professional autonomy.

Question 2

In what ways can narrative extend learners' thinking about moral issues?

Ricoeur (1992) explores the development of self-esteem and self- respect through individuals' self-appraisal against society's moral norms. Ricoeur views narrative identity as essential to individuals' imputation of responsibility. Individuals must conceive themselves, through their actions, as deserving of praise or blame, therefore as narrative characters capable of influencing their own life-plot through ethical action. For Ricoeur, textual narrative supports the development of ethical self-understanding because characters' moral attributes and actions contribute to the plot of a story by creating a sense of cause and effect. Following Ricoeur, fiction makes possible a kind of insight and empathy not experienced in reality, which individuals can incorporate their own understandings. Psychologists such as Bruner, Goodnow and Austin (1986) implicate narrative in problem solving, in creating human meaning that supports cognition. Narrative thus supports reasoning, including moral reasoning.

Narrative text such as the recorded wisdom of philosophers, including ancient thinkers like Plato (c370BC/1961) and Aristotle (c350BC/1953), provides an epistemological and ontological resource for interrogation, challenge and development, making possible infinite dialectic activity.

Following Nussbaum (1990), values are implicit within language itself, through the author's submission to structural norms and devotion of care to narrative construction and philosophical exposition. F R Leavis, a literary critic, intends to maintain the distinction between literary criticism as separate from philosophical linguistic analysis, yet he reveals their potential interrelationship in describing how Blake's poetry conveys a sense of honesty, a *'personal thisness of his experience ... in which significance inheres.'* (1982: 3). Leavis' reference to the *'thorough grounding, testing, and refining of critical judgement and conclusion in a scrutiny of the data, a process necessarily long-drawn-out and distractingly complex'* (ibid: 23) shares characteristics of philosophical activity. Ricoeur (1989) explores the relationship between speech and language and the possibility of using linguistic sciences within phenomenology, the personal experience of the world through intuitive perception, thus extending phenomenology and enhancing hermeneutic interpretation. In Ricoeur's (1986 and

1989) methodology, discussed in greater detail later in this chapter, for instance, Ricoeur suggests that structuralism can be situated within phenomenology to establish a dialectic between the limited truth attained at a lower (and necessary) level of language as objectified and the open, infinite character of higher speech.

Within the empirical component of this thesis, stories were used to stimulate thinking, in a process which itself possesses narrative characteristics. Engagement in a progressive process over a temporal period enables reflection to occur. Metacognition or similar self-conscious evaluation involves narrative activity, requiring subjects to distance themselves from their immediate involvements and actions, viewing themselves instead as objects, a methodology Ricoeur (1986) describes and utilises.

My experience within both the Key Stage One Study and the Key Stage Four Study provides persuasive evidence that the benefit to children's moral reasoning of narrative is significantly supported by discussion within a community of inquiry. The scaffolding of thinking offered by Socratic questioning and of an environment conducive to sustained reflective and interrogatory discussion of open-ended questions supported the extension of thinking. Planned intervention and time dedicated to discussion enhanced the value of narrative as stimulus.

Question 3

How can teachers legitimately encourage pupils to make decisions that reflect an awareness of public as well as personal 'goods'?

As discussed in Chapter Three, tension may exist between educational aims involving the individual and involving society. I suggest that the educator's task is to avoid instrumental treatment of pupils engendered by managerial and bureaucratic structures, thereby respecting pupils' individuality and humanity, whilst also avoiding the potential excesses of individualism that threaten group interests. An ethical focus upon moral values in education of necessity precludes indoctrination. Lipman (2003) suggests acceptable methods of persuasion within communities of inquiry, which are understood as communities of trust, where power relations are not violated:

- Educators (and others) can cite their experience, showing authority through personal lived experience. The specific characteristic of the community of inquiry, that teachers and pupils assume the status of equals in learning, is important in

showing that the use of the word 'authority' is not suggestive of establishing hierarchical status.

- It is permissible to appeal to the child's experience in attempting persuasion.
- Attempts at persuasion through argument are permissible where the child can offer counter argument, as is possible within the relationship of trust within the community of inquiry. Lipman considers the benefits of this method as presenting an adult point of view and offering a model of a reasonable response. Using rhetoric, irony or complex logic will cause the young child to withdraw and is both counterproductive and unethical, an abuse of power.
- Persuasion through the kind of reasoning that helps pupils to reveal their own understanding through following a line of inquiry (i.e. the principles of Socratic questioning) is effective in extending, justifying and co-ordinating knowledge.

I concur with Portelli and Church that teaching need not consist in extreme teacher-domination nor child-centredness, but that teachers have a '*...responsibility... to share with children what we know, and, at the same time, to value, respect and build upon what the children themselves bring to the process...*' (1995: 111). I suggest that teachers' self-expression can add creative dimensions to education.

Empirical knowledge and moral reasoning should be viewed as complementary to, rather than in competition with, each other, where reasoning complements knowledge by placing it in a practical plane involving judgements. The community of inquiry presents experience in Aristotelian *praxis*, action that is intrinsically and instrumentally good. Narrative contextualises the judging of moral dilemmas through means of Aristotle's *phronesis,* or practical wisdom. The community of inquiry therefore enables primacy to be given to ethical intention rather than moral law, in line with Ricoeur's 'Little ethics' (1992).

Question 4

How is student self-determination defined?

The centrality within education of the aim towards personal autonomy is associated with the Enlightenment notion of increasing individuals' freedom and capacity for self-expression through education, a worthy enterprise. However, I have explicated why I consider 'autonomy' to be problematic when applied within educational contexts:

- Part of Kant's ethical meaning of autonomy as willed self-legislation has been lost within everyday usage. Possible influences of secularisation, human rights legislation and consumerism, render current meaning as self-legislation within secular law, associated with ideas of individual rights and choice. I share Benporath's concerns that recognition of children as rights-bearers *'creates the risk of obscuring children's vulnerability and erroneously presenting them as capable of independent decision-making and self-guidance'* (Benporath, 2003: 128).
- Foucault and other philosophers contest the possibility of autonomy, describing human behaviour and identity formation as socially mediated and constructed, rendering the notion of autonomy facile. The notion of rationality itself is shown to be situated and finite.
- Interdependence and communal responsibility for the global environment is becoming increasingly important, reducing the attractiveness of rugged independence.
- Pupils are, unavoidably, positioned as dependents: autonomy is unrealisable.
- Autonomy, as an organising device, can be abused: recent government proposals suggesting greater autonomy for schools amount to increased fiscal control rather than control over educational practice.

For these reasons, I suggest that pupil self-determination, which retains important principles associated with 'autonomy', might prove a more desirable and defensible educational aim. Self-determination, based upon the principle of agency, empowers and motivates by encouraging pupils' development of self-confidence, motivational attitudes and the capacity for self-expression and responsible judgement in matters concerning the individual, and, advantageously, recognises:

- individuals as socially situated, influenced by time, place and circumstance
- pupils' dependent status, whilst maintaining a future focus in protecting potential for development
- individuals' legitimate influence over matters that affect them, which reinforces ethical consideration towards others

Ethical pupil self-determination might thus be defined as self-expression with consideration for others through just action; a definition closely allied to Ricoeur's

ethical intent, his *'aim towards the good life, with and for others, in just institutions'* (1992: 172).

Learning from the empirical work

The empirical element of this thesis reveals the potential offered by the 'community of inquiry' model for more extensive use within education. Firstly, the community of inquiry model is shown to *support the emergence of self-determination.* Teachers and pupils share equal status, so teachers are not positioned as experts upon whom pupils rely. Pupils are empowered through pedagogy that supports their active engagement and accepts their thinking. It is even plausible to suggest that in this forum, pupils' questions, to an extent, free teachers from the orchestrated roles within imposed systems that are traditionally demanded: following inquiries where pupils lead can be liberating for all. Teachers remain ethically and professionally responsible for maintaining a group culture necessary to trust and for evaluating and managing contributions (Portelli and Church, 1995).

I consider one of the most important and exciting elements of my empirical research to be associated with its focus upon pupil self-determination, which challenges the customary positioning of children within research as subjects. Paradoxically, participatory research with children is recognised as presenting challenges relating to rigour and reliability, yet is argued (at government level) to result in 'better research', i.e. more effective decision-making as a result of research outcomes (Scottish Executive Publications, 2006). Here, children's participation in research could be viewed as part of a child-as-rights-holder or child-as-consumerist trend. In my research, however, children are not 'consulted' about extraneous phenomena, but contribute in an integral way to the research process itself; they are co-explorers, directing the research content internally. Tokenism forms no part of this research. This form of research is exhilarating for the teacher-researcher *because* it involves an element of risk and assumes trust in children.

If moral values such as respect really are to be prioritised in the educational agenda, *attention to procedural details is an important part of modelling* the integrity necessary to developing a community through democratic means. The Key Stage One

Study demonstrated that commitment to social processes, far from being inconvenient and irrelevant, supported social cohesion. Time devoted to pupils' behaviour and attitudes was not only intrinsically worthwhile but also, incidentally, instrumental in extending intellectual challenge. The procedural norms within the community of inquiry encourage self-managed participation and thus differ considerably from standard authoritarian sources of discipline, which, in assuming pupil compliance, can easily foster disaffection. These participative procedures, which support the development of responsibility, demand fundamental attitudinal and structural changes within education, but the empirical work showed them to be both intrinsically and instrumentally worthwhile.

The case studies showed that *appealing to both feelings and reasoning affected attitudes*, thereby effecting ethical change: education should not be exclusively reliant upon rationality as justificatory. A participant in the Key Stage Four Study is personally challenged to change through exposure to fictional text and discussion rather than through (logical) debate. Similarly, in the Key Stage One Study, pupils' identification with textual characters provides the motivation for reasoning, including moral reasoning. Identification with the central character, the wolf, in *The true story of the three little pigs* (Scieszka, 1991), led young children to re-evaluate at length their assumptions of guilt, innocence and truth. Exclusive use of analytic and critical thinking may prove inadequate in arriving at acceptable solutions in applied situations (Fisher, 1990): interaction between analytic and divergent, creative thought augments possibilities. Aristotle's *phronesis,* practical wisdom, supports the inclusion of the intellect, emotions, societal norms and personal characteristics in informing behaviour. Ricoeur's (1986) hermeneutic approach, explored more fully later in this chapter, illustrates how empiricism and interpretation should interrelate (1986).

The case studies illustrate that extended directed discussion supports pupils' moral, social and intellectual development, therefore suggesting possible changes to pedagogy. Pupils' discussion was characterised by the association Vygotsky (1934/1962) recognises between language and concept-development: language provided a structure for shaping, constituting and developing thinking. Pupils were able to describe and analyse thinking processes, including the purpose and benefits of

reflection in interpreting the immediate, limited context with reference to a wider context.

Pedagogical pointers for philosophical inquiries

1. Practitioners should pause, allowing thinking time before expecting pupils to answer. This not only demonstrates trust in a pupil's ability to answer, but models the expectation that complex questions are not easily answered. Allowing thinking time also enables the teacher to respond to pupils' contributions thoughtfully (Fisher, 1990).
2. Restating pupils' responses shows acceptance of their ideas. Requesting elaboration helps to clarify meanings (Fisher, 1990).
3. Facilitating involves scaffolding during specific junctures in the inquiry to help pupils to sustain talking and thinking (Lipman, 2003). Skilled questioning challenges without threatening, inviting sharing, co-ordination and analysis of ideas. However, the practitioner should avoid monopolising questioning: encouraging pupils to believe in their own capacity to ask questions and find the answers. Skilled questioning helps to ensure that:
   - a suitable (i.e. substantial) question for philosophical inquiry is selected
   - working definitions are agreed for necessary keywords for discussion
   - the focus of the philosophical question for discussion is understood
4. Practitioners can model the thinking skills desirable for pupils to develop by voicing their own thinking processes, showing that ideas take time to develop. Teachers might say, for instance: 'I'm wondering about...', 'Are there any problems with my thinking?', 'Is my thinking consistent?', 'I need to consider whether I've covered all relevant aspects.' (Fisher, 2003).
5. Practitioners should encourage pupils to recognise reflection as the key to self-transformation (Marx, 1995).
6. Prior thought should be given to specific areas of inquiry that may be inappropriate for discussion and a decision taken whether to put them 'off limits' at the outset or to do so if they are suggested as possible questions for inquiry.
7. If text is to be used as the stimulus for philosophical discussion, appropriate content, interest and moral complexity should be considered. Knowing the pupils is invaluable in identifying suitable materials.

Being a teacher-researcher, using Ricoeur's methodological approach

In this thesis I have tried to use philosophy in two distinct ways: firstly, as a resource and secondly as a tool. In presenting a spectrum of thought upon which emergent philosophers like myself can draw, philosophy acts as a resource to support personal attempts to 'do' philosophy as part of a narrative journey towards meaning. Magee's (1998) *The story of philosophy*, for example, provides an overview of the most important aspects of thought of prominent philosophers, starting with the ancient Greeks and looking towards the future. Such a publication illustrates the wealth of diverse thinking brought to bear on perennial questions about human experience, acting as a thought-companion revealing the approaches philosophers have adopted in engaging with often irreconcilable problems.

But in drawing upon the ideas, approaches and methodology of others, philosophy also serves as a tool for comparing, clarifying, refining, extending and challenging personal ideas, increasing self-conscious reflexivity, in a manner not dissimilar to a virtual community of inquiry. I find Ricoeur's methodological approach particularly helpful because he mediates between diverse epistemological influences, such as the indeterminacy of moral relativism and the inflexibility of rationality. His approach appears trustworthy not because it claims solutions, but because it meticulously examines all relevant aspects. I attempt to use Ricoeur's approach as an illustrative tool, to explain my own research in this thesis. Lowe (1986) presents Ricoeur's methodology, in which Ricoeur refers to Husserl's 'phenomenology'; personal psychic experience of the world as it is intuitively perceived, as consisting in three dimensions.

1. 'Distanciation'

Firstly, Ricoeur's examination of epistemology emphasises the necessity of avoiding interpretation based upon self-enclosed introspection. Ricoeur therefore endorses Husserl's insistence that in phenomenology, description arises from the object's (the researcher's) distanced reflection: viewing the self not from the immediacy of the experience (myself) but from a more distant vantage point (the self as object):

> *'This will be done by means of a reflection of a 'transcendental' style, i.e., a reflection that starts not with myself but with the object before me...'*

(1986: 5)

Within this thesis, this element of Ricoeur's approach is illustrated by the use of others' perspectives as a tool to augment personal distanciation within the overarching research methodology of the reflective teacher-researcher:

- The designation 'teacher-researcher' positions the researcher as being constituted firstly as an objectified, acting subject within the research and also, secondly, as having the personal, lived-in body experiences taking place within the research process. Both experiencing and reflecting upon experience are integral to the research.
- In conducting literature reviews, my own thinking, as researcher, is challenged by others' in the same way that Ricoeur's ideas are mediated through reference to others' contributions (he names, amongst others, Aristotle, Kant, Husserl, Freud and Marcel). My criteria for selection of philosophical perspectives for inclusion within the thesis is based upon presenting varied viewpoints that inform, endorse or challenge personal ideas concerning morality, to increase rigour by reducing unexamined thinking and subjective opinion. I have used quotations to emphasise certain key ideas, to acknowledge others' influence, or to use another's voice to support a personal perspective, simultaneously acknowledging that personal understandings are not formed in isolation, but develop through reference to others.
- Variety in research methods and triangulation support the practitioner-researcher's efforts to approach the personal within the research from a 'distanced' position.
- As researcher, I am self-consciously aware of the orchestration required in shaping data and ideas to express them intelligibly to the reader. Distanciation is necessary within this dialectic: critical thinking and metacognition are imposed upon personal thoughts. Within the empirical work, philosophical inquiry in which the teacher-researcher is situated as a co-inquirer requires conscious separation of the roles of 'contributor' and 'manager'. I have therefore attempted to 'brackett off' certain elements whilst closely examining other aspects.

2. Applying distanciation to phenomenology

However, I concur with Ricoeur's perception that in our finitude we are consituted as and inevitably remain highly subjective, despite our best efforts to eliminate subjectivity. In order to increase epistemological rigour, Ricoeur therefore engages in

hermeneutic activity: he incorporates the empirical sciences within phenomenology, juxtaposing them and setting up a dialectic, as is illustrated by this view of linguistic models for language and speech analysis and interpretation:

> *'To the extent to which the aim of structuralism is to put at a distance, to objectify, to separate out the personal equation of the investigator the structure of an institution, a myth, a rite, to the same extent hermeneutics buries itself in what could be called 'the hermeneutic circle' of understanding and believing, which disqualifies it as a science and qualifies it as a mediating thought.'*
>
> (Ricoeur, 1989: 30)

Ricoeur's (1989) philosophical examination of Freud's psychoanalytical theories represents an example of his methodology. 'Distanciation' approaches complex problems by standing back from them and introducing rigour-inducing empiricism, allowing exploration of areas within the whole, proceeding by way of detour.

I find attractive Ricoeur's incorporation of the empirical sciences hermeneutically within phenomenology, because doing so extends and invigorates phenomenology, maintaining its open and provisional nature, and avoiding the potentially narrow confines of empiricism and the illusion of truth that empiricism assumes and implies (Thomas, 1998). This productive tension between empiricism and interpretation avoids reductive tendencies. Freud's (1930/1985) philosophical explanation of the suppression of the primal impulses within an evolutionary process offers an example of Freud locating his psychoanalytic theories within phenomenology and engaging in hermeneutics.

Examples of this aspect of Ricoeur's methodology used as a tool within this thesis include:

- reference to elements of psychology such as Piaget's developmental models and empirical research about intelligence (Adey & Shayer, 1994; Shayer & Adey, 2002; Trickey, 2003), which complement the thesis focus. Observing and challenging features of Piaget's psychological model enabled me to reflect upon the philosophical thinking demonstrated by pupils in the Key Stage One Study and to explore pedagogy as a means of enhancing pupil self-determination through creating cognitive conflict

- situating phenomenologically, technical-rational structures within contemporary education in England enables these structures to be considered amongst others in evaluating education, rather than viewing them as the only valid criteria

Ricoeur believes that the process whereby the conscious temporarily loses itself in engaging with other ideas makes possible fair and honest consideration of other people's thinking, even if we then disagree, and results in the emergence of new consciousness (Lowe, 1986). This is true of my personal experience: an enriched professional appreciation has arisen through engagement with others' understandings.

3. Challenging reason with complexity

Ricoeur's (1986) extended approach ensures that the application of distanciation to interpretation cannot result in the pride of self-sufficiency. Kant conceives reason as able to achieve a totalising finitude, whereas Ricoeur suggests that reason cannot come to rest because it continues to be challenged by complexity that resists reduction to definitive forms of understanding. Ricoeur not only rejects the possibility but also the desirability of reaching 'truth'.

> *'This is what happens in the Kantian doctrines which push the chain of motivation back to the phenomenal level and concentrate everything which accrues to the subject in the action of a thinking aimed at objectivity. Everything is saved but nothing is gained; for the subject who is given shelter in this way is neither myself nor anyone at all.'*
>
> (Ricoeur, 1989: 214)

Ricoeur asserts that certain complex meanings such as those encountered in metaphor, symbol, myth or narrative, remain inaccessible, intangible and continue a metamorphosis that cannot be contained, as reflected by Ricoeur's vocabulary: 'polysemic', 'mystery', 'enigma', 'semantic richness' and 'surplus of meaning'. The complexity of the whole sustains reflection through refusing to allow either the self or the other to be reduced and objectified: reason is denied finality.

Elements of this thesis reflect Ricoeur's third dimension. For instance, research questions reflect the challenge to reduction, finality and rationality which 'values', 'the self' and 'the other' present within education. The complexity and resistance to definition of the spiritual, moral, cultural and social dimensions is irreconcilable with the managerial attempt to reduce these to demonstrable outcomes. Having recourse to

moral principles engenders personal relief that fundamentally important aspects of humanity, interpersonal relations and professional practice elude formalisation. However, the unrelenting managerialist drive towards 'certainty' can cause tension and exacerbate the erosion of teachers' confidence, hence my focus upon self-determination and self-confidence for teachers as well as pupils.

The support my research offers for the acceptance of alternative, unprovable, ways of knowing might liberate teachers by increasing confidence, if they can accept the paradox that knowledge viewed as provisional should indeed induce critical caution, but not debilitating doubt: teachers might view incommensurability as enriching rather than frustrating. In keeping with the complexity Ricoeur supports in avoiding reductionism, I perceive that teacher authority and pupil self-determination need not be mutually exclusive if teachers are committed to ethical and reflective practice. Ricoeur's affirmatory hermeneutics overcomes the corrosive self-doubt that can accompany moral relativism. Through Ricoeur's mediatory approaches, ideas usually conceived as mutually exclusive can be held in productive tension: agency with fallibilism, fallibilism and uncertainty with assurance, action with reflection and tacit knowledge with technical-rationalist epistemology.

Conclusion

One of the main tasks of the thesis has been to interrogate the problematic aspects of the Enlightenment notion of autonomy, whilst endorsing the founding educational assumption that greater knowledge and understanding can bring about an increase in personal intellectual freedoms. I propose that educators replace the notion of autonomy as a primary educational aim with that of self-determination: the aim towards self-expression and the development of responsible decision-making capacity, based upon *praxis*, the assumption of agency. I also urge educators to challenge the misplaced confidence encouraged by a view of knowledge as reducible and finite; technical rationalism and the accompanying focus upon demonstrable outcomes. Many philosophers have sought to mediate the fundamental tension between understanding and reason:

> *'The route I propose to explore is opened up by the important distinction instituted by Kantian philosophy between understanding and reason...I address*

myself directly to the dialectical part of the two Kantian critiques: *Dialectic of theoretical reason and Dialectic of practical reason. A philosophy of limits which is at the same time a practical demand for totalisation – this, to my mind, is the philosophical response to the kerygma of hope, the closest philosophical approximation to freedom in the light of hope.'*

(Ricoeur, 1989: 413)

Exploring the notion of personal freedom exposes limits to epistemological understanding of the external world and limits to self-knowledge. Foucault's (2000) implication of the effects of power in shaping the knowledge that is accepted as true, reveals the situated and provisional nature of knowledge. Yet Ricoeur's (1992) philosophy affirms the capacity of moral agents to act towards the aim of the good life. Ricoeur's terminology 'I' and 'self' motivates my suggestion that educators striving to support pupils' ethical development might focus upon the development of two dialectical dimensions, the intrapersonal and the interpersonal. An intrapersonal focus recognises the importance to individuals' holistic development of an internal dialectic between subjective and objective experience, encompassing emotions, attitudes, dispositions, personal characteristics and cognition. An interpersonal focus recognises the dialectic between the individual as personal and social self, interrelating with others.

The values we hold constitute our culture: their transmission is one of the most important aspects of education (Warnock, 1992). Undoubtedly, teachers should demonstrate understanding of other cultures. I also appeal to teachers to share their personal conceptions of the virtuous person by doing and being what they desire pupils to become. Teachers free to express their beliefs and values role-model this self-determining behaviour to pupils, including their responsibility for decisions:

'...You cannot change the world immediately, but you can change your piece of it, and you can influence others to change theirs. This is a powerful methodology for social change. It is a process of individuals deciding that they want to change their own lives and then coming together as communities of like-minded practitioners who mobilise themselves for action...'

(McNiff, 2002: 86)

My experience in the Key Stage One Study and the Key Stage Four Study shows that viewing moral values as important and believing oneself capable of effecting change can, indeed, support pupils' exploration of moral values.

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APPENDIX

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Appendix 1

Parental Consent Letter, Key Stage One Study

Date

Dear parents

Re: Consent to use class discussions in research degree.

As part of our circle-time activities, I believe it would be helpful for the Year Two children to explore concepts related to social skills and social awareness, the aim being to enhance co-operation and social interaction amongst class members. Concepts dealt with will aim to develop understanding, provide insight, increase empathy for others and so encourage ethical attitudes and behaviour.

I am undertaking a research degree at present. It would be very helpful if I were able to use the observations and discussions of class-work in that context. With any information used, strict confidentiality is maintained. The school, the class and individual pupils remain anonymous. The school is agreeable to classwork being described in my research. I hope that you will agree to my using general observations in connection with our classwork within the context of my university studies. Please let me know by (Date) if you have any reservations in this regard.

Please do not 'prime' the children for these activities in any way, as I am interested in hearing the children's spontaneous responses to various topics.

Should any parent wish to participate in this project by providing a parental viewpoint, I would be interested to hear from you. The responses required are not onerous in any way and are quick to complete (taking under 5 minutes a week). I shall provide more detailed information to all interested parties once I have received your responses.

Yours sincerely

M. P. Plint

.....

Parental response

I am willing to participate in the project.

Name:.....

Appendix 2

Sample of Parental Questionnaire, Key Stage One Study

Dear parent,

Thank you for volunteering to assist with this research. Please respond to the statements below spontaneously. I would appreciate your instantaneous response, rather than a lengthy one. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers.

Please return your completed response form this afternoon.

Yours sincerely

M. P. Plint

.....

Record number

My child is likely to describe 'being a friend' as .....

.....

Describe what aspects of friendship your family particularly values.

.....

.....

.....

Appendix 3

Sample: Comparison of Children's and Parents' responses to 'Being fair means...'

Child's response	Parent's prediction of child's response
If some are on a team and there are more on the other team, that's not fair.	Being given the 'same' as siblings – kisses, hugs, gifts etc. d be particularly valued by each child being given individual attention to do something of their choosing with either of us, without the others being involved.
If everyone in the class is ganging up on one person, one has to leave (the gang) to be with the other person and tell the others to be nice.	Where everyone gets the same number of things, or, when you care about someone and they care about you just as much. If one person has a windfall (eg. a sweetie from an aunt) and that windfall is shared / offered to loved ones (ie. Sister) (but sometimes mama too). Fairness to us is a balance between "just deserts" and "responsibilities in a caring relationship." If something is earned through hard graft, it is less open to communal attack.
If you've got 10 sweets, you give 5 to the one and 5 to the other.	Being treated the same as others. When *** complains about having a babysitter, I point out that mum and dad spend a lot of time taking her and sisters to parties, clubs, friends etc and we like to do it for them but we also like to go out and it is only fair if she lets us have fun too.
If some people are playing a game and only five are allowed to play and no one can join, that's not fair.	Keeping your word, not cheating. Agreeing on what we are doing and not going against that, so we are thinking of others. Also, fair play with games, either board games or sporting games.
If you say "You've got to stay here because you're too young." that's not fair. (If other people are going out)	Being allowed to have or do what his siblings are allowed / have. Having the same reward / punishment / expectations of behaviour for all children (with some allowance for age variations), all at parent's discretion, of course.
If you have 5 people in one team and 7 in the other, one could go over.	
If there are two people and one starts not to agree with the other, if one has more toys than the other in a game, he could give some toys away so they agree that they have the same amount.	
When you play tennis, someone might have	Taking it in turns.

more balls to hit, so they could each have 5 balls to hit.	Being treated equally, eg when one child is bought a new outfit for a special event, the other one will be too (but maybe at a later date). Or Taking it in turns to use the computer or the climbing harness.
Someone has 6 on their team and 4 on the other. Someone should leave one team so there's five and five.	Having what other people have or doing what they are allowed to do. When we treat others the way we want them to treat us. To have as close to the 'same' treatment etc. as is reasonably possible.
When you have a packet of crisps and you have to share them with your cousins and there are a lot of cousins, you give one out and then another so everyone gets the same amount.	If she had a packet of sweets she would share because that would be fair. If she gave a friend something to play with that she was playing with but of which there was only one.
In football or a team game, if someone's got really hurt and it's not a free kick or a penalty, then that's not fair.	Having the same things as other children. For each member of the family to choose an activity over the weekend and all being involved.
If you take off one (from a number-line), which is higher, you have to get another one so they can have the same each. (i.e. numerical equivalence)	

Appendix 4

Sample of narrative used in Key Stage One Study

Although the word 'fairness' is not used in the narrative *Farmer duck* (Waddell, 1991), the story worked extremely well in the Key Stage One Study, where it acted as a further stimulus to children's exploration of the notion of fairness.

The first page of the picture book illustrates the duck carrying a laden tray of food to the unshaven farmer, who is reading the newspaper in bed. There is a half-empty box of chocolates on the bed, with wrappers strewn around. The farmer's clothing is draped over the bottom of the bed.

> *'There once was a duck who had the bad luck to live with a lazy old farmer. The duck did the work. The farmer stayed all day in bed.*
>
> *The duck fetched the cow from the field.*
> *"How goes the work?" called the farmer.*
> *The duck answered,*
> ***"Quack!"***
>
> *The duck brought the sheep from the hill.*
> *"How goes the work?" called the farmer.*
> *The duck answered,*
> ***"Quack!"***
>
> *The duck put the hens in their house.*
> *"How goes the work?" called the farmer.*
> *The duck answered,*
> ***"Quack!"***
>
> *The farmer got fat through staying in bed and the poor duck got fed up with working all day.'*
>
> (Waddell, 1991)

The duck's farmyard friends, the hens, the cow and the sheep, feel sorry for the duck. One night they plan, without the duck's knowledge, to remedy the situation. Next morning they creep into the house of the sleeping farmer...

> *'They squeezed under the bed of the farmer and wriggled about.*
> *The bed started to rock and the farmer woke up, and he called,*
> *"How goes the work?"*
> *and...*
>
> ***"Moo!"***

"Baa!"
"Cluck!"
They lifted his bed and he started to shout,
and they banged and they bounced
the old farmer about and about and about,
right out of the bed...

and he fled with the cow and the sheep and the hens mooing and baaing and clucking around him.

Down the lane...
"Moo!"
through the fields...
"Baa!"
over the hill...
"Cluck!"
and he never came back.'

The duck awoke and waddled wearily into the yard expecting to hear,
"How goes the work?"
But nobody spoke!'

(ibid)

The cow, the hens and the sheep return and explain the situation. The illustration shows the duck jumping in delight and the animals' satisfaction.

'Then mooing and baaing and clucking and quacking they all set to work on their farm.'

(ibid)

Extract from:

Waddell M (1991) *Farmer duck* (London: Walker Books Ltd)
Illustrated by Helen Oxenbury

Appendix 5

Parental Consent Letter, Key Stage Four Study

Date

Dear (Parents' or Guardians' names)

I intend to offer a philosophy club for Fourth Form pupils, in which pupils explore their understanding of certain topics of interest through reflection, discussion and debate. Such inquiry helps students to develop the ability to be critical, caring and creative in their thinking.

(Pupil's name) has shown an interest in joining this club, which is to meet for an hour on Monday afternoons, during the activities session.

I request your consent to refer to the contents of the discussions in the doctoral thesis of my research degree. Confidentiality and anonymity of individuals and the school would be protected in the way observations are reported. I propose audio-taping certain discussions for transcription. Data will be used solely for the purposes of the research project, stored safely on a PC outside of public domain for the duration of the project and destroyed upon its completion.

Please e-mail me on (school e-mail address) by (date) should you have any queries concerning, or objections to, (Pupil's name)'s involvement in this philosophy club.

Yours sincerely

Mrs M P Plint

Appendix 6

Pupil Questionnaire: Debating and Philosophy Club

Debating and Philosophy Club Questionnaire

There are no correct or incorrect answers to the following questions.
Please answer as fully as you can.

1. What is the purpose of debate?

2. What is the purpose of philosophical inquiry?

3. Which skills are used in presenting an argument in debate?

4. Which skills are used in philosophical inquiry?

5. Did any of the debates change your thinking concerning the matter being debated? Yes / No.
Please explain your answer.

6. Did any of the philosophical inquiries change your thinking concerning the matter being explored? Yes / No. Please explain your answer.

7. Might debating or philosophical inquiry be more likely to influence your thinking concerning an issue?

_____ Why?

8. What aspects of debating do you enjoy?

9. Were there any aspects of debating that you found to be unsatisfactory?

10. What aspects of philosophical inquiry do you enjoy?

11. Were there any aspects of philosophical inquiry that you found to be unsatisfactory?

12. Can you think of any advantages of using stories and newspaper articles to stimulate thinking about moral dilemmas?

Appendix 7

Compilation of pupils' responses:

Debating and Philosophy Club Questionnaire

1. What is the purpose of debate?

Pupil A. The purpose of debating is to broaden your mind essentially. Debating is argument without violence, and thus one can argue effectively over an important issue from a point of fact rather than force. After a successful debate, with all points considered, there should be a general majority to one point than the opposite. However, the point of view of which you uphold is influenced strongly by your understanding of self and morals, which leads into [Question 2]

Pupil B. Specifically a debate ought to be a discussion aimed at reaching a conclusion, with different people people setting different cases. As to purpose, however, I feel that debate is as much about finding purpose in the first place. Understanding different views and their origins and indeed searching the validity of one's own view, in comparison with others, is as integral to a debate as any conclusion that is made. Rather than an attempt to change people I feel that a good debater would do better to observe rather than blindly argue in the face of indomitable stubbornness. Armed with these observations a good debater may argue better and from a true point of vision.

Pupil C. To argue a case for your views on certain topics in a coherent and authoritative way.

Pupil D. The purpose of debate is [to] create a convincing argument, but in the process, you probe deeper in the subject matter.

2. What is the purpose of philosophical inquiry?

Pupil A. Philosophical inquiry is important because if you know and therefore have a solid grounding in moral (etc.) and reasonable views, then other things grow from it. It is like a building block that is necessary for all other personal enquiries.

Pupil B. Philosophical inquiry, in my view, is to do with the expounding and expansion of ideas but with no conclusion or concensus in view. In this sense it is purposeless. However, once again I feel that we'd do better to use philosophical discussion as a standpoint for a debate and observation as in this way we might find a point which all sides have both interest and views.
Alone however philosophical inquiry has great merit and allows us to see differing angles on topics where we hold views ourselves.

Pupil C. To discover your views and thought on issues of life.

Pupil D. The purpose of philosophical inquiry is very similar to that of debating, but you don't present the argument. You may also probe deeper into the subject matter.

3. Which skills are used in presenting an argument in debate?

Pupil A. Listening, understanding, contemplating, affective argument, rhetoric, reasoning, decision.

Pupil B. Rhetoric, knowledge of language and knowledge of the subject are all obvious skills necessary for the pursuit of a conventional debate. However, I feel that observational skills, memory and the ability to analyse information and integrate it with one's argument is important also.

Pupil C. Rhetoric, listening.

Pupil D. Inclusiveness – to rally your support. Identification of opposing theories, to obliterate them.

4. Which skills are used in philosophical inquiry?

Pupil A. Listening, understanding, own views put forward and being able to challenge yourself as well as others, reasoning, decision-making. Also a strong sense of self.

Pupil B. It would, to my mind, appear that there is no particular skill connected with philosophical inquiry lest it be the ability to absorb information and to analyse it. Of course when it comes to stating one's views I'd say that all the skills that are important in debating are of import here also.

Pupil C. –

Pupil D. Questioning oneself. Searching for questions.

5. Did any of the debates change your thinking concerning the matter being debated? Yes / No. Please explain your answer.

Pupil A. I hadn't thought about the debating topics we did beforehand, so once the debate had started, I gathered by opinions. However, most of my own personal decisions landed in the middle, so yes and no.

Pupil B. My opinion here is not really. Though there was no shortage of good ideas and well structured debate, I feel that I did not change my mind about the subjects being debated. Changing a person is in itself in difficult, stubborn views, faith in ideals or even pig-headedness all contribute and as a debate is in itself an organised row I feel that the views of those who argue rarely change, unless a person is particularly flexible or holds no real views on a topic or is or (in very rare cases) is someone who is sufficiently well learned and has a good stock of rhetoric to argue a good case. Of course one could give up also.

Pupil C. No. The debates I was arguing for were ones in which I believed.

Pupil D. Yes. A single debate, even though I held the view against it, won me over by being presented extremely well and clearly defining the terms in a way that you could not argue with.

6. Did any of the philosophical inquiries change your thinking concerning the matter being explored? Yes / No. Please explain your answer.

Pupil A. No. Although I enjoyed and reasoned with the matters being put forward, I stuck with my views. I think it is much harder to change a person's base moral understanding and to have done that would have been amazing.

Pupil B. I feel that philosophical inquiries often heighten awareness to a topic and raise knowledge of and interest in a subject but rarely, I feel again, do people change their ideas. What is more important here is the expansion of ideas and, in a sense, if these ideas can be sufficiently expanded or manipulated, the person may convince himself of the answer, which is the best way of getting a point across. (i.e. getting someone to think of it themselves)

Pupil C. Yes. Looking into the story of the 'Professor and the Ferryman' made me think more about what is important in life.

Pupil D. Yes and No. It did not change my opinions of the matters but it did enable me to see life from a different angle.

7. Might debating or philosophical inquiry be more likely to influence your thinking concerning an issue? Why?

Pupil A. Debating would over a short period of time, while I think a philosophical debate would have a longer lasting effect. Debating gives you ideas and access to new reasoning so it is easier to change your mind.

Pupil B. Philosophical inquiry is more likely, to my mind, to change my views. Mainly because there is less emphasis on an argument, rather it is a case of exchange and a person is more pliant in these circumstances and more willing to think beyond those bounds set by one's own mind.

Pupil C. Debating. Because I can hear other people's views and then compare them with my own on an issue.

Pupil D. I have not really thought about any matter in a seriously deep way since I left the club, but I can see how viewing things from different sides can help.

8. What aspects of debating do you enjoy?

Pupil A. Arguing over important issues, and broadening my mind.

Pupil B. I enjoy the thought and formulation of an argument and the analysis of different ideas. I also enjoy looking at the roots of people's views and how that is translated into the views being expounded.

Pupil C. Being able to discuss and argue about topical an important issues.

Pupil D. Success and presenting a successful argument.

9. Were there any aspects of debating that you found to be unsatisfactory?

Pupil A. No

Pupil B. I detest the idea that there is a winner or a loser, in any argument. No one wins unless the opposite side is convinced of the other's argument. I also find speaking a bit difficult but, being integral to any exchange of ideas I'd be rather daft to complain about that. I also dislike the hypocrisy that floods a debate when everyone has the same view. More often than not, even if told to argue another way, a debate can descend into an hour long complaining session.

Pupil C. --

Pupil D. Simple really – losing.

10. What aspects of philosophical inquiry do you enjoy?

Pupil A. Seeing other people's point of view, testing my own understanding.

Pupil B. The exchange of ideas without the broadsides of rhetoric or venom generated by debate is often quite pleasant. And the analysis of information and ideas is often quite fun.

Pupil C. Thinking more deeply about what is really important.

Pupil D. Listening to other people's questions.

11. Were there any aspects of philosophical inquiry that you found to be unsatisfactory?

Pupil A. No

Pupil B. Quite often I feel philosophical inquiry has the potential to be mildly patronising in the sense that a lot of people would rather not expound a more extreme view even if it were the one they hold in truth. I also found that philosophical inquiry like debating can become very dull if everyone has the same view. In this sense I suppose topics must be carefully chosen.

Pupil C. --

Pupil D. Not really.

12. Can you think of any advantages of using stories and newspaper articles to stimulate thinking about moral dilemmas?

Pupil A. I think the stories helped to stimulate thinking and allowed a deeper conversation because you got past the hard first thoughts quickly.

Pupil B. Using articles is often a good idea because it brings about thought about contemporary culture and life and also allows people to learn about current affairs. On top of this articles are often in people's minds at the time. Stories are more about the suggestion of an idea, though a story might easily become so explicitly for a point that it leaves less room for thought. Stories, good ones, are open to interpretation and are in that way a good starting point for thinking about a certain question or interpretation of an idea.

Pupil C. By putting an idea into a relevant topical context.

Pupil D. They provide a situation for you to think about, rather than having to conjure questions up out of thin air.

Appendix 8

Sample of narrative stimulus for philosophical inquiry, Key Stage Four Study

The Professor and the Ferryman

There was once an old ferryman who lived in a hut by the River Ganges. For as long as anyone could remember his family had rowed boats across the river. His father had been a ferryman, and so had his grandfather before him.

Indian folktale from *Stories for thinking,* Dr Robert Fisher

Fisher R (1996) *Stories for thinking: A resource book for teachers* (York: Nash Pollock)