

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

A STUDY OF CONSULTANT INTERVENTION  
IN SMALL-GROUP TEACHER LEARNING

by

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A THESIS

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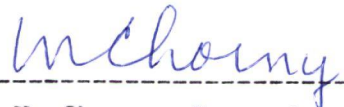
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## ABSTRACT

### PURPOSE

This study was designed to examine the process of teachers' interactive learning as they attempted to improve their professional background and classroom practice in collaboration with a consultant. Data were analysed in light of the theories of Britton, Kelly, Polanyi, Vygotsky and Hunt.

### THE STUDY

The spoken discourse of a consultant and two language arts teachers, engaged in investigating a topic of mutual interest and concern, was examined and analysed. The topic of listening and its application to the classroom situation was defined by the teachers. Within this context, talk was recorded during six small-group sessions, and during two individual interview sessions. Particular attention was focused on the nature and effect of the interventions made by the consultant, and on the role of expressive language, in both participant and spectator role in the learning process.

### CONCLUSIONS

In the process of teacher learning, several elements that operated in a complex interrelated fashion were identified. Intention to learn

and the pursuit of that intention determined the activities in which the participants were involved. Intention was determined through expressive talk, with the consultant and teachers using language to explore, identify and refine intentions. Related to, and underlying intention, were personal constructs which were recognised and shared through spectator role talk.

Expressive talk, particularly in the spectator role, was a key element in the process, providing a means of articulating and discovering thoughts, ideas, possibilities and actions.

The role of the consultant in facilitating, guiding and structuring the learning was evident. Her knowledge of the curriculum and of adult learning provided the teachers with the opportunity to explore their own implicit theories, and to engage actively in the learning process.

Interventions were determined according to the constructs and intentions identified, as well as the level of trust evident in different sessions.

## IMPLICATIONS

Time and support for teachers to work collaboratively in pursuing their professional growth should be provided. The types of inservice presently provided should be examined in light of the importance of intention and constructs in learning, the importance of expressive talk, the establishing of trust, and the role of the consultant as facilitator in the learning process.

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## Chapter One

### A CONTEXT FOR LEARNING

There are educational practitioners and theorists who have operated long enough in the recognition that teaching and learning are interactive behaviours to have become aware that any agency outside the classroom can influence learning outcomes only as its demands are mediated by and represented in the teacher's behaviour. Such a realisation is derived from an increasing sensitivity to the nature of individual learning patterns, the role of intentionality in learning, and the importance of the classroom community as a source of knowledge and understanding (Britton, 1987, p.21).

Over the past two decades, a growing body of research has focused on students' learning in school, specifically on the relationship between language and learning. Emerging from these studies have been points of consensus which are extending and refining learning theory (e.g. Freedman and Pringle, 1980; Chorny, 1985). As a result, teachers are becoming more knowledgeable about the relationship between teaching and learning, and more sensitive to the approaches and strategies they use in working with their students.

### TEACHER AS LEARNER : CONTEXTS AND DIRECTIONS

In recent years there has been a growing realisation that what has been accomplished for enhancing student learning has not been reciprocated for teachers. Teachers are learners, also. Progress in education depends on the continuing extension and refinement of

knowledge that informs their practice. Yet, studies regarding the conditions for enabling and enhancing teachers' professional growth, as well as the processes of their learning, are still infrequent. Even metaphors or models for teacher learning are limited (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Hunt, 1985). Essentially, the elements of theory identified in student learning could be used as a means for examining and enhancing teacher learning, based on the hypothesis that there are points of universality, though differences may also be assumed. This is one of the major assumptions in the theoretical background underlying this study.

### Successful Schools

Impetus for increased interest in teachers as learners has been provided by research studies which have examined what makes some schools more successful than others (Rutter, 1979; Edmonds, 1979; Goodlad, 1983). Several key factors have been identified: the holistic nature of the school; the development of a culture or ethos; and, an emphasis on the relationship between the teaching and learning processes. Of most significance for this study is the suggestion that teachers need to be confirmed as learners, and must be provided with opportunities to grow professionally.

### Staff Development

That on-going teacher professional growth is important has been acknowledged through increased emphasis in research in the area of staff development. Various models and programs have been developed

(Caldwell and Marshall, 1982; Wood, Thompson, Russell, 1981; Joyce and Showers, 1980) and implemented with varying degrees of success. Among the identified characteristics of successful programs are: collegiality and collaboration, experimentation and risk-taking, time, leadership and sustained support, and attention to the individual (Loucks-Horsley, et al., 1987). Significant among the research findings is that staff development may be a requirement or an expectation of school jurisdictions, but it cannot be mandated. The desire to change and grow resides in individuals (Hall and Loucks, 1979) within the established context or culture.

#### TEACHER AS RESEARCHER

As a corollary to the idea of teacher as learner, there is the teacher as researcher. Teachers are being encouraged to examine their own practices and to articulate their implicit theories of teaching in collaboration with peers, consultants and researchers. The traditional "top-down" model of attempting to fit the theory to the practice is being complemented by a more flexible model which involves teachers examining teaching practices and sharing findings with colleagues. Through the talk and sharing in a collaborative atmosphere, teaching practices can be refined and extended in light of current research and theory. Changes in classroom practices are more likely to occur when the teachers are actively engaged in examining the teaching-learning process.

Collaborative action research is one of the alternative approaches to staff development. It is the antithesis of the traditional

large-scale, "one-shot" types of workshop that have been so much a part of staff development. However, by its very nature, collaborative research is time-consuming, involving small groups of teachers working together on a topic of shared interest. Therefore, support is required in both time and resources in order to maximise the potential for growth and learning. Support such as funding, professional development days, and leadership is being given to a certain extent. However, most of the support appears to be affected by budget considerations and the state of the economy. Yet there is evidence of success. Teachers have had the results of their research documented in such publications as Becoming Our Own Experts (Talk Workshop Group, 1982), Explorations in Classroom Observation (Stubbs, 1976), and The Tidy House (Steedman, 1982). In Alberta, teachers have published their research in First Steps (Kappa Delta Pi, 1984) and English Language Arts in Alberta (Alberta Teachers' Association, 1987). Such teachers investigate in their own classrooms the practices that promote student learning. Through sharing these experiences in writing and talk, teachers come to a fuller understanding of what is occurring in their classes and thus gain new perspectives. As Harvey (1983) states:

It is from this concern to make the classroom understood that the teacher then learns through working in a research mode to see the classroom in new ways, and by sharing those discoveries with others learns to show others the real issues of the classroom - the questions that require answers (p.145).

Harvey's emphasis is important for the context of teacher learning. Implicit in what she says is a further question: How do teachers, in learning through the process of collaboration, and, in particular,

through talk, define these questions and how do they attempt to resolve them in relation to their own practice?

## COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

The aim of this study is to examine teacher learning in a collaborative situation. Teachers interact with their students constantly, yet have few opportunities to interact with their colleagues. The demanding nature of the teaching situation generally does not allow time for sharing teaching experiences with colleagues. Yet, learning is an interactive process. James Britton has stated that we cannot leave learning simply to look after itself (1985). Opportunities must be provided for teachers to interact with one another in a meaningful way in order for them to gain new insights and perspectives which, in turn, can be translated into classroom practice. Already in place in some jurisdictions, are consultants who can work with teachers in their learning endeavours.

### Role of the Consultant

An important aspect of the learning process appears to be the relationship between the learner and a tutor. Research by Bruner (1983), Wells (1981), Donaldson (1978) and Britton (1970) stresses the importance of interaction between a child and his "caretaker" in learning both the language and the culture. Vygotsky (1978) also intimates the importance of the experienced adult or peer in guiding children in their "zone of proximal development." In an analogous situation, teachers would benefit from collaboration with a skilful

and sensitive consultant who has more flexible schedules as well as the expertise in working with teachers. The consultant can provide a framework and a structure for the collaborative examination of teachers' practices.

Davies and Aquino (1975) suggest that any collaborative effort has certain requirements:

The effectiveness of any collaborative effort will hinge on the abilities of participants to accurately and honestly assess their capabilities and those of their partners; design administrative and programmatic structures which capitalize on these strengths; and, develop an atmosphere of trust so that no member of the collaboration endeavour feels that she/he is being pre-empted (p. 276).

The consultant, it seems, could attend to these requirements. She is, perhaps, the first step in the process of helping teachers work together to explore their own practices. The role of the consultant is moving from that of expert and evaluator to that of facilitator and partner in teacher learning:

It's fairly easy to walk in and tell someone what to do. It's not too difficult to listen to a problem and say what you would do. To listen to people and then help them think through what is the next best step for them, that is an extraordinarily demanding way to work (San José, 1979).

## LANGUAGE AND LEARNING

Language and learning are inextricably interwoven. As we use language in its many forms, we are each creating for ourselves a view of the world, bringing order and harmony to our existence. This view is the one presented by James Britton, a theorist who has done much to meld

the different theories of learning into a context which has elements of universality:

Language is a highly organised, systematic means of representing experience, and as such it assists us to organise all other ways of representing (1970, p.21).

In developing his theory, Britton drew upon the work of such people as Langer (1953), Kelly (1955), Polanyi (1962) and Vygotsky (1962). Language is a complex symbol system which allows us to develop constructs, or patterns for viewing the world. It also allows us to enter into and understand the construct systems of others, to anticipate events and to extend and refine them. As well, it is instrumental in revealing intentions formulated through a process of indwelling in tacit knowledge. Language is also an instrument of thought either internally, as "inner speech" (Vygotsky, 1962), or externally as expressive language. Language cannot be separated from the culture, including classroom culture; one depends on the other.

### Expressive Language

The focus of this study is on the role of expressive language in teacher learning, with emphasis on expressive talk within a particular culture. Expressive talk is a means of representing ourselves to others, of reflecting on and sharing experiences, of making discoveries, and of building our theories. Talk implies social interaction:

We each build our representation of the world, but we greatly affect each other's representation, so that much of what we build is built in common (Britton, 1970, p.19).

Talk can promote collaboration, which, in turn, can enhance learning.

Gordon Wells (1986) in discussing the role of talk in children's learning states:

Talking and listening are, by definition social and, at least potentially, collaborative. They therefore provide an excellent means for fostering collaboration in learning through the pooling of ideas and the negotiation of points of meaning (p.191).

Recognising the importance of talk, particularly in the spectator role. as part of the process of learning is essential for the continuing growth and development of teachers and children.

#### INTERVENTIONS

An ideal learning situation for teachers might then be one which takes into consideration the context of a consultant working with those who have expressed an intention to examine their teaching practices. The consultant role becomes, in effect, that of a facilitator in that process. The consultant must be able to identify the constructs and intentions of the teachers in order to operate their "zone of proximal development." The interventions that she uses must be appropriate to the context and must be focused on helping the teachers learn. In the process, she herself will learn. The ability to "read and flex" (Hunt, 1978) will determine the kinds of interventions used, whether they be language or process oriented. A key element of the intervention process is to assist teachers in changing their classroom practices to reflect their beliefs and constructs about learning through a process of articulating their own theories and comparing their practices to their theories.

## THE ISSUE

At issue here is the need to provide support systems for teachers to engage in their own learning. The direction is there: however, mere telling is not sufficient. Refinement of practice involves entering into new ideas as well as translating the new ideas into practice. We need to examine how teachers learn in collaboration with others, and, in particular, with an experienced and sensitive consultant. An examination of the types of interventions made by the consultant bears consideration. This study, therefore, examines teacher-consultant collaborative learning with a focus on the interventions made by a consultant in the process of collaborative learning.

## Chapter Two

### A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

Teaching is something we do; research findings are something we come to know; development is the process by which we bring this kind of knowledge into relation with this kind of doing (Britton, 1983, p.91).

The English '83 Institute held at The University of Calgary had, as its theme, "Teacher as Learner, Teacher as Researcher." The institute provided teachers of English language arts with the opportunity to share with one another what David Hunt has termed their "implicit theories of teaching" (1985). Not only did the teachers collaborate with one another, but they also had the opportunity to work with acknowledged experts in the field of language arts teaching. In this interactive atmosphere both teachers and experts were involved in learning and growing; they were, in fact, part of the process described by James Britton above.

The present study was designed to explore ways in which teachers learn when they undertake to extend and refine their informing background and professional competence. Specifically, the study sought to examine the process by which a consultant in English language arts collaborated with and supported two experienced junior high school language arts teachers in developing new approaches to language arts. The primary focus of the study was on the role of collaborative talk in

the growth and development process, and on the interventions made by the consultant to promote teacher learning.

This chapter brings together some fundamental ideas about the role of language in learning, and about the role of the facilitator or advisor in that learning. As well, it develops the importance of the wider context in which that learning takes place. Much of the research in these areas during the past two decades has focused sharply and extensively on children's learning. Only recently has an analogous emphasis on teacher learning begun to be expressed.

### Interactive Theory of Learning

Most researchers now agree that learning does not take place in isolation, but is rather part of a process which includes personal relationships, the environment, the culture and the context of the specific learning. It is contingent upon many factors working together, and not solely on the traditional view of learning as that of the direct transmission of knowledge from one person to another. The Club of Rome in its publication, No Limits to Learning: Bridging the Human Gap (Bolkin, 1979), advocates a move away from maintenance teaching and learning, or direct transmission of knowledge which results in the acquisition of fixed outlooks and information, to innovative teaching and learning which involves creative participation and conscious anticipation. This innovative teaching and learning implies the ability to foresee, to create and choose alternatives, and to be responsible for determining the future. Implicit in innovative teaching and learning is interaction. As Miles Myers states: "the learner must engage in interaction with another person in order to learn, and this social

interaction must occur within some functional social system" (1985, p.109). His view echoes those of Vygotsky who stresses the importance of social interaction, particularly through language and its relationship to the thinking processes. Vygotsky's "fundamental hypothesis" is that "the higher mental functions are socially formed and culturally transmitted" (1978, p.126). Yet there is always consideration for the individual. Vygotsky sees "the relation between the individual and society as a dialectical process which, like a river and its tributaries, combines and separates the different elements of human life" (1978, p.126). Language plays a key role in his theory in that it is "the means by which reflection and elaboration of experience take place," at once both a "highly personal" and a "profoundly social human process" (1978, p.126).

For children in classrooms, the functional social system is established and interaction is possible with a knowledgeable and cooperative teacher. But what of the teachers themselves? If learning is essentially an interactive process, how can teachers be drawn from the isolation of their classrooms (Goodlad, 1983) where essentially they close their doors and pursue their work alone? That teacher learning can and does occur in such a context is not in dispute; however, such an isolated situation lacks the interchange and testing of ideas with professional peers. From this perspective, how can a wider and more satisfying environment be encouraged so that teachers might extend their learning to include collaboration with their peers? It would seem that to achieve this goal, the impetus should come from the individual school working within the framework of the larger jurisdiction. In his research into the effectiveness of schools in the teaching and learning process,

John Goodlad (1983) suggests strongly that for any change to occur, the most effective way is from within the individual school itself. He considers the school to be the primary unit of change and suggests that effective change will occur if two conditions are met:

...first, that of making the school a humane workplace - a good, satisfying place for the humans inhabiting; second, that of making the school a productive workplace - engaged in teaching and learning we associate with quality education (1983, p.55).

The school, then, is a manageable social unit where change can be encouraged; yet not to be forgotten is the role of the individual within that unit. Individuals must have the desire to change and grow, and not all individuals will change in the same way or at the same rate. In any staff development program, individual needs and levels must be considered in conjunction with the needs and goals of the particular school. This idea is reinforced by Caldwell and Marshall (1982) who posit four types of staff development programs based on both individual and institutional needs. The most effective staff development programs appear to be those that incorporate this double but complementary emphasis.

Such an environment provides teachers with opportunities to express their ideas and philosophies regarding teaching and learning, and through that process to accommodate, assimilate, or, in some instances, to discard ideas gleaned from others. Although the learning effort is collaborative, the resultant growth is unique to the individual participant. Thus, the interactive learning situation allows teachers to:

...theorise their own experience, build their own rationale and their own body of convictions. For it is when they are actively theorising from their own experience that they can, selectively, take and use other people's experiences and other people's theories (Britton, 1982, p.11).

In this way the professional role of the teacher will be a role that requires the teacher to:

...define (his/her) service ideals, establish norms for teaching and student performance, study teaching as an intelligent discipline distinguishable from that of researchers and curriculum managers (Myers, 1985, p.118).

An emphasis on collaboration within the school, yet with consideration given to the needs of the school and the individual will:

...create a discourse in which teachers become researchers of their own teaching, developing their own teacher elders to recite and their own classroom data to describe (Myers, 1985, p.118).

## IMPLICATIONS OF AN INTERACTIVE THEORY OF LEARNING

### Language and learning

In educational circles, a person who has integrated the various theories of language and learning into a theory which can readily be used by educators is James Britton. Language for him is the key element in learning. It has a crucial role to play "in its many modes, as the principal instrument of interaction" (1982, p.4). Language is the instrument which the individual uses to bring order to his environment and his experience. It helps the individual grow, aids him in the development of relationships and serves to organise his thoughts.

In developing his theory of language, Britton drew upon the work

of George Kelly and his theory of personal constructs (Kelly, 1955).

Kelly's proposition is that each human being:

...looks at his world through transparent patterns or templates which he creates and then attempts to fit over the realities of which the world is composed (p.8).

Humans can enhance their construct systems by increasing their repertory of them, by altering or refining present constructs, or, in some instances, by subsuming them. In developing constructs, we create our own view of the world. Constructs are unique to us as individuals, but are developed in a social context and as such cannot be developed apart from the cultural milieu. All of us will not have the same construct system; however, we can enter into and understand another person's constructs. Britton feels that language, both internal and external, is the key to entering into another person's construct system, and the means of developing our own construct systems which make us the unique individuals that we are. He has accommodated and refined Kelly's theory within his own. He proposes that:

...by various means of representation, and with the aid of language as an organising principle, we construct each for himself a world representation; that we modify this representation in the light of further experience in order that our predictions may be better; and that we improvise upon it for a variety of reasons (Britton, 1970, p.31).

Our personal construct systems, thus, are factors in the way we learn individually, and in how we learn in social contexts with others.

#### Modes and Roles of Language

Three modes of language are identified in the model that Britton developed: transactional (the language used to get things done),

expressive (the language used that is closest to thinking aloud and making predictions), and poetic (the language used for the pleasure of manipulating ideas imaginatively). In addition to these three modes, he also identifies two roles, that of participant and spectator:

Informing people, instructing people, persuading people, arguing, explaining, planning, setting forth the pros and cons and coming to a conclusion - these are the participant uses of language to get things done. Make-believe play, day-dreaming aloud, chatting about our experiences, gossip, travellers' tales and other story-telling fiction, the novel, drama, poetry - these are the uses of language in the spectator role (Britton, 1970, p.122).

While the participant use of language is basically to "get things done," the spectator role allows us to reflect on our experiences, to shape these experiences into our own world view, and to refine our attitudes and values.

Participant and spectator role are closely related to the three modes of language.

#### BRITTON'S MODEL OF LANGUAGE MODES AND ROLES

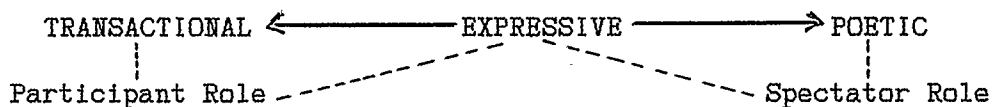


Figure 1

Participant role language is linked to the transactional mode, while the spectator role is linked to the poetic mode. Through the expressive mode, we can move backwards and forwards from the participant

to the spectator roles: "As participants we apply our value systems; as spectators we are concerned to generate values and refine our value systems" (Britton, 1982, p.7).

### Expressive Talk

The present study is concerned mainly with the expressive mode as defined by Britton, particularly in the realm of talk in both the participant and spectator roles. Without the opportunity to talk and discuss, it is difficult to understand the other person or his point of view. Expressive talk is, in part, a form of thinking aloud; it makes knowledge and thought processes available to introspection and revision. Although "language is not thought ... it allows us to reflect upon our thoughts" (Barnes, 1974, p.20). For Britton, expressive speech is the type of language in which people operate when they are thinking and learning collaboratively. It is verbal thought and is closely related to Vygotsky's "inner speech," allowing us to test our hypotheses and to construe our world.

Expressive speech implies interaction and collaboration through which the individuals get to know one another and come to realise the uniqueness of one another's identity. Furthermore, it is while we are using the expressive mode that we begin to organise our thoughts and to analyse our experiences, a process of discovery. However, expressive speech is not used simply for this heuristic reason, but also as the principal means of "exchanging opinions, attitudes, beliefs in face-to-face situations" (Britton, 1972, p.246).

The larger point to be made here is that talk is central to learning. Conventionally it has been accepted for many years that

learning occurs mainly in the realms of listening and reading, as is only too evident in most school systems where, at the extreme, talk has been largely the prerogative of the teacher. Writing, as well, has served mainly as a basis for assessing how well learners have remembered what they have been told, or what they have read. In contrast, within an emerging paradigm of language and learning, it is proposed that learning evolves through talk and writing as well, a view not in opposition to the first, but rather a redressing of an imbalance within an established perspective of education. The point is made in the report of a national committee investigating the state of English teaching in England:

Language has a heuristic function; that is to say, a child can learn by talking and writing as certainly as he can by listening and reading (Bullock, 1975, p.50).

This view has important implications also for teachers' continuing learning. At present, teacher development programs are still essentially based in the conventional view of school learning; that is, they remain largely externally proposed and assume that teachers will learn by listening and reading. The emerging view adds a complementary dimension to this end. Through their talk and writing, and in collaborative contexts, teachers can pursue their own learning and research. Thus they can retain a professional autonomy in and for their own professional growth, a point that Heath (1983) regards as fundamental if schools are to change and improve practice (pp.368-9). However, there remains the question of the process of how teachers learn and change within such contexts, a question that few (Heath being one of the few) have yet explored.

## THE LEARNER AND LEARNING

Already mentioned is the relationship between Britton's view of the learner and Kelly's (1955) theory of personal constructs, a theory of personal knowledge and a belief that each learner is unique. Through personal constructs an individual anticipates and predicts according to her construct system, thus adding to, modifying and refining her store of knowledge and consequently her world view. That knowledge is personal is also acknowledged by Polanyi (1958). Personal knowledge is acquired within particular frameworks or frames of reference, and it is within these frameworks that learning occurs. In any learning situation there are two awarenesses: the focal which relates to the actual learning situation, and the subsidiary which refers to the knowledge we have in our minds. This subsidiary awareness exists largely in tacit knowing which we acquire through indwelling, a reciprocal process - we indwell in it and it indwells in us. It is this tacit knowledge that allows the learner to achieve more in learning, through abilities of which she might not be consciously aware. This process is heightened as she interacts with others. Tacit knowing is released through individual intention, the desire, purpose, direction or interest that the learner has. It is important to speculate at this point about the relationship between personal constructs and intention. It would appear that personal constructs determine or are a factor in the learner's intentions. Research conducted by Sadownik (1982), Montgomery (1980) and Washburn (1978) reveals that the learner is more fully engaged in learning when her intentions are being met, and that through understanding the learner's intentions, the personal constructs of the learner can be

determined. Further, the learner must take into account not only her own intentions but those of the individuals with whom she is interacting. In any communication situation, it is of paramount importance in Britton's context to recognise and accommodate the intentions of the individuals involved. The possibilities exist in any learning situation for individual intentions to be recognised and expressed; or, for the intentions to be disregarded and inhibited by the superimposition of another's intentions, as well as for the intentions to be mediated through accommodation with the more experienced learner's intentions. In the situation where a consultant is working with teachers, it seems, therefore, that it is essential that she be aware not only of her own constructs and intentions, but also be sensitive to the constructs and intentions of the teachers with whom she is working. The latter the skilled and sensitive consultant can do.

According to Kelly:

To the extent that one person construes the construction procedure of another, he may play a role in a social process involving the other person (1955, p.95).

To the extent that a consultant construes the construction process of one with whom she is working, she is able to intervene knowledgeably and appropriately within the collaborative talk. The appropriateness of the intervention is a factor in the other's learning.

### Collaborative Learning

The importance of both language and the learner in the learning process has already been emphasised. What has also been emphasised is the need for collaboration in learning through talk and interaction with another or others. For teachers, especially, this collaboration is

now being seen as crucial if the teaching environment and methods are to improve, for the ultimate benefit of the students in the classroom. For teachers to enhance and articulate their beliefs and theories about teaching, they require the social milieu of professional peers, knowledge of recent research findings and a supportive atmosphere in which they feel comfortable to explore and refine their theories. They essentially must have support to become their own researchers in a collaborative atmosphere.

Nancy Martin (1984) in discussing how to help teachers become their own researchers, emphasises the need for a support system in this endeavour. Her belief that "the conditions for success would seem to be a measure of the collaboration among at least some of the teachers in a school, and some support from school or local administrators for dissemination of ideas and findings" (p.50) is an integral part of the process of teacher learning. She further states that this support must be continuous and ongoing to sustain teachers in their innovations, to provide "social sanction for what they are trying to do" (p.54). Evidence of such support is found in such publications as Becoming Our Own Experts (Talk Workshop Group, 1982), a series of descriptions of classroom action research in Inner London; and First Steps (Kappa Delta Pi, 1984), a series of articles describing teachers' theories regarding teaching in Calgary, Alberta. Support for teachers can take many forms, but for the support to be effective and to promote learning, it appears that it must be appropriate and must mesh with the intentions of the particular cultural or social group.

Already mentioned is the support provided by peers within schools. However, outside sources may also provide at least initial support in

teachers' research endeavours. David Hunt in Canada, and Chris Clark and Shirley Brice Heath in the United States, have been involved in collaborating in schools with teachers on research of the teachers' choosing. Locally, support is provided from the university, but more immediately from supervisors, specialists and consultants with the local boards of education.

One type of support that is essential to learning is that of the trusted adult or peer. Research into children's learning by Bruner (1983), Wells (1981), Donaldson (1978) and Halliday (1975) indicates the importance of the "significant other" in promoting learning and in developing higher thought processes. Bruner introduces the term "scaffolding" to indicate the ways in which the adult helps the child develop from lower to higher levels of learning. Scaffolding involves providing models, patterns, encouragement and support, and takes note of constructs and intentions. The continuous and appropriate interaction between caretaker and child is crucial in learning. Scaffolding in a different form is evident in the research done at the University of Texas in looking at how adults view an innovation or new learning. The researchers, Hall and Loucks (1979) identified seven Stages of Concern that teachers have about an innovation, ranging from personal feelings to management, collaboration and finally refocusing. These stages are hierarchical as are the seven Levels of Use they have also identified. Any consultant working with teachers should be aware of these different levels and draw on scaffolding techniques when intervening with teachers to encourage learning. As well, the consultant must realise that teachers will not all have the same level of concern, nor have the same level of usage of an innovation.

### Zone of Proximal Development

Vygotsky (1978) in developing his theory of learning and the relationship between mind and society speaks of the zone of proximal development. Although his research, in this instance, deals with children, his findings are an integral part of his theory on the development of higher mental processes in everyone. For Vygotsky, the zone of proximal development is:

the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (1978, p.86).

It is of more importance than the actual developmental level for it is in this 'zone' that the learning potential of the subject can be promoted and achieved with the support of the caretaker. The ability to determine the appropriate point of intervention in order to operate the zone of proximal development is a skill required of the more experienced adult or peer.

In keeping with the present study, it would seem, therefore, that the consultant, as caretaker and supporter, plays a crucial role in teacher learning. Collegial support groups tend to be slow in being formed and it rests with the consultant, particularly in large jurisdictions, to provide the help required in promoting teacher professional growth. The role of the consultant, which will be more fully discussed later in this chapter, is one that is slowly changing from that of expert in a subject area to that of a facilitator in teacher learning.

This new role has added implications for the consultant's work and approach. In her leadership role she must be sensitive to all aspects of the culture within which she and the teachers are working. Howard Gardner in his book, Frames of Mind (1983), acknowledges this crucial aspect of personal knowledge:

...progress in a domain does not depend entirely on the solitary individual's actions within his world. Rather, much of the information about the domain is better thought of as contained within the culture itself, for it is the culture that defines the stages and fixes the limits of individual achievement (p.27).

The skill of the consultant in operating in the zone of proximal development, particularly through talk, is thus a factor in helping teachers discover their learning potential.

#### Heuristic Function of Talk

Talk can serve as the vessel on a voyage of discovery for both the teachers and the consultant. Michael Polanyi (1958) has recognised man as a discoverer, in an analogous way to Kelly, who views man as a scientist. In testing our hypotheses and formulating our construction of the world, language and culture are inextricably bound. Through language, the individual "has the potential to make sense of the full range of experiences which he and others in his community can undergo" (Gardner, 1983, p.242). The heuristic function of language as a means of making sense of the environment and the culture has been recognised even in young children (Halliday, 1975). It is evident in Britton's expressive mode in which we explore feelings and ideas, and develop and refine our value systems. The language may be internal, that small inner voice which gives substance to our thoughts and reasonings, or

external which articulates our innermost thoughts. In the interactive context, external speech is instrumental in revealing our constructs and intentions. It defines our being and reflects our view of the world. Expressive speech, particularly in the spectator role, allows us to reflect, to voice our attitudes and opinions, and to reveal our value system. It is important for the consultant in a support role to recognise the heuristic aspect of language, for it is through language that we also discover the constructs and intentions of others.

### Adults as Learners

The consultant, then, must be aware of the role of language in learning, and must also be aware of the level of learning of the teachers with whom she is working. In recent years, as a result of growing interest in adult learning, research has been concentrating on this area. More and more evidence is pointing to the fact that adults do have developmental stages as learners. The difference between adults and children as learners appears to be moderated by experience. Donald Brundage and Dorothy Mackerchar in their review of adult learning theory for the Ontario Ministry of Education make the distinction between child learning and adult learning in this way:

Child learning is viewed as forming (acquiring, accumulating, discovering, integrating) knowledge, skills, strategies, and values from experience, while adult learning is viewed as transforming (modifying, relearning, updating, replacing) knowledge, skills, strategies, and values through experience (1983, p.5).

The factor of experience in this differentiation may be an important and useful distinction. The progression from accumulation of knowledge toward increasing refinement of that knowledge may

generally typify the process of learning through the course of maturity. However, the distinction made by Brundage and Mackerchar appears to be too discrete. The evidence of language studies reveals that adults also form, that children also transform (Donaldson, 1978). It would seem, therefore, that a model with universal characteristics encompassing a view of human learning throughout life would be more informing. It is this characteristic of universality which makes the views of Britton, Kelly, Polanyi, Vygotsky and Donaldson significant and useful.

In his Conceptual Levels Systems Theory, David Hunt (1974) also develops such an encompassing view. His is a cognitive developmental theory which takes into consideration the kind of structure that is imposed on our learning by ourselves, others and the environment. His theory is based partly on that of Kurt Lewin who stated that learning is a function of the person and the environment. Hunt, however, also draws upon the work of George Kelly (1955) and his theory of personal constructs. He believes that people construe the world in a certain way, but that their constructions of the world naturally expand, grow and alter so that people grow from "concrete, undifferentiating, simple, structured individuals to more abstract, differentiating, complex yet interdependent individuals" (Bents and Howey, in Peterson, 1981, p.14). The Conceptual Level Systems Theory suggests that a person's constructs can be modified from a narrow, structured view to a view which assimilates and accommodates new experiences into the existing repertoire of constructs. Through the process, individuals may test, refine and expand existing constructs, as well as at times initiate new ones. Hunt has described different stages of development similar to those described by Piaget, but, unlike Piaget, he does not assign an

age level to stages of development. Rather he sees the stages as cognitively developmental and applicable to both adults and children. It is important to note that the stage an individual is at is not a permanent classification but rather a current preferred mode of functioning. It is also important to note that the opportunity for growth also depends on the environment, one which is concerned with the developmental stage of the learner. Growth occurs when people are placed in an environment which encourages collaboration between persons, whether it be adult-child, teacher-student, researcher-teacher, teacher-teacher, or teacher-consultant; indeed, in any interaction that occurs between people within a common context.

As an outgrowth of his theory, Hunt has developed a model for use between theorists and practitioners, with emphasis on the area of educational and collaborative research in schools. His model emphasises the interactive nature of learning and de-emphasises the role of theory guiding the practice. He sees theory and practice as being reciprocal parts of the same process, an interactive process in which each participant learns from the other.

With the increased emphasis in school systems for teachers to view themselves as learners, and with the increased emphasis on professional development, Hunt's view of the learner also has practical applications for teacher learning. Those involved in helping teachers learn should be looking at the teachers' beliefs, skills, knowledge and intentions, and adapting the learning situation to meet those needs, while at the same time recognising their own values and beliefs about the learning context. Hunt (1980) describes this procedure as being able to "read" (being sensitised to the learner) and "flex"

(modulating the learner's perceived frame of reference). The process through which reading and flexing occur has three main focuses: reflexivity, which allows the tutor to look at her own constructs, beliefs and intentions; responsiveness, which allows the tutor to enter into the constructs and intentions of the learner through listening and questioning; and, reciprocity, which allows for the negotiation of a basis from which tutor and learner can work together.

#### HUNT'S INTERACTIVE MODEL (ADAPTED)

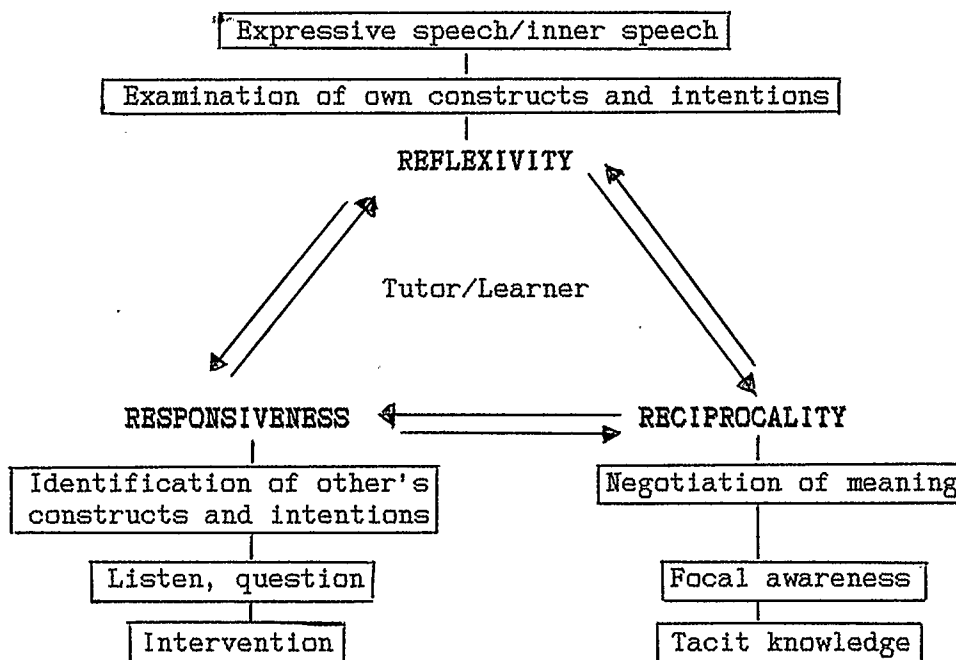


Figure 2

An analogous view to that of Hunt is proposed by Miles Myers. Interaction in a common, shared context is essential to the learning not only of the tutor but of the learner as well. Like Britton (1985), Spencer (1985) and Martin (1985), he perceives teachers becoming

researchers of their own learning. In describing his interaction theory, he states:

For teachers, this new interaction theory has three key concepts: (1) learners have two kinds of simultaneous development, proximal and independent; (2) the literate mind is an internalisation of social interaction among a learner, another person, and a sign system (language, math, visual images); and (3) the lesson ... has both a leading activity and a scaffold or support system negotiated between teachers and learners (in Chorny, 1985, p.108).

Both researchers emphasise learning interactions between teacher and learner, or teacher and consultant. Basic to both models is the identification of intentions and constructs through the negotiation of meaning (Wells, 1981) within a shared, common context, as well as the crucial function of talk, and, in particular, expressive talk in both spectator and participant roles. Through spectator role language, the interacting individuals show and reveal experiences, attitudes and values, communicate intimations of constructs; through participant role language, they advance intention, engage in and progressively articulate their aim or task, ultimately and at best within a shared, common intention. In the context of Hunt's and Myers' models, thus, a skilled consultant, like a skilled teacher, will be able to guide teacher-learners to reflect upon the issues with which they are most concerned. This guided reflection takes place within the specific context of the school and deals with the immediate concerns of the teachers. The process of transforming their knowledge into new learning and practice is the outcome of their intention and individual perspective, enabled by the skilled support of the consultant and realised through the importance of talk in the process:

We need schools that will give teachers opportunities to sit together to discuss what shall be taught, how what is taught can be related to each other and to the world outside of the school... The school must be a place for the growth and recognition of the teacher if it is to be a place that provides for the growth and recognition of the student (Eisner, 1983, p.55).

#### TEACHERS AS RESEARCHERS

In situations where there is support for the teachers to investigate new approaches to teaching and learning, there is the added advantage of their being able to test out some of their findings and have them discussed in the group situation. This, in effect, means that teachers become their own researchers, that they build their own theories. Through examining their own ideas, and through being exposed to new ideas and trying them out, teachers confirm their own theories and use language to refine them. Britton's view is that teachers should constantly examine their teaching through discussing, trying out new strategies, examining what is already happening in their classrooms and integrating new ideas into their repertoires. Language becomes of supreme importance here, as does the role of the consultant or of an informed peer, as someone who can provide alternative strategies and ideas from a different perspective. The aim of the emphasis on teachers' continuing learning and research is twofold. First, is the provision of time and conditions, neither of which has traditionally been sufficiently recognised, to enable teachers to undertake their own learning and research seriously. This is the lesser aim. Second, within this provision is the intention to support

teachers in their learning, to empower them so that they may, in turn, empower students to become life-long learners with the skills and strategies available for learning. In other words, as students can be encouraged to become self-directed learners, not in the sense of learning alone, but rather, independently within an interactive context, so can teachers be assisted as the instruments of student growth. This end is reflected in the fundamental goals of education proposed by Boyer (1985):

Personal empowerment requires that people be able to think analytically and examine information critically; that they be able to think creatively - go beyond the analysis and challenge assumptions, leap out of the present and imagine beyond where they are; and that they are able to act with a clear sense of integrity. Civic engagement requires that people learn how to use these skills while taking full part in the life of the larger community (p.43).

In providing opportunities, direction and incentives for teachers to become their own researchers, we are contiguously providing opportunities for teachers to learn, at the same time acknowledging that they are learners with valuable insights to help us provide for excellence in schooling. These insights may be passed on to colleagues through oral or written communication. The directions for such sharing are being set. Thus, Becoming Our Own Experts (1982) reports research projects carried out by teachers in London, England. Another project, this time involving a researcher who acted as a consultant, is described in Ways With Words (1983): Shirley Brice Heath, a researcher helping teachers with a project on literacy at three socio-economic levels in a community in the United States, encouraged teachers and students to interact with one another as researchers of literacy. In her

relationship with the teachers as both a consultant and a researcher, she observes that "any positive force that my presence played in their implementation of innovations seemed in their view to be possible because I was both insider and outsider" (1983, p.357). In this crisp observation, Heath articulates what may be a most productive stand for an enabling person working with teachers committed to professional growth. The teacher-researchers involved in the project agreed that "neither the current crises nor the existing structures in schools could inspire the kind of imaginative innovations they had implemented" (p.357). The use of a consultant from an outside source appears to provide incentive for teachers to become "empowered" through examining, reflecting upon and refining their practices in the classroom to the ultimate end of empowering students to become life-long learners. This is not to suggest that learning will not occur on the part of teachers or students if there is not an outside source available for consultation. However, for teachers' extended growth, learning undertaken as a complement to their regular classroom work is more difficult. It is here that teachers require the collaborative support of peers, administration and/or outside consultants within the enabling conditions of time and learning situations.

The role of the consultant is, therefore, critical in teacher learning, whether the consultant be from the school system, the university or the school itself. The support provided to teachers by the consultant appears to be a key element. However, in this support, if the consultant is to be effective, other elements must be considered. In any new situation, time must be provided for the participants to get to know one another and to build a trust and respect so that they

will feel comfortable in expressing their views. Once trust has been established, participants can then concentrate on identifying the context of their learning, as, for example, identifying ways of incorporating listening skills into an existing language arts unit. The skill of the consultant becomes important at this point in identifying the intentions of the teachers and in providing relevant knowledge and innovations for helping teachers achieve their goals. Identifying how teachers best learn is also important for the consultant; some teachers may learn best through listening, while others need to see the skill demonstrated or may need to try it out themselves before they can include it in their repertoire. In some cases all these approaches may be necessary. Consultants need, therefore, to have a knowledge of the resources and strategies available in their subject area and to have knowledge of interpersonal skills, particularly the skills of listening, questioning and creative intervention.

Little research appears to have been conducted into the role of the consultant. Within this research, however, there seems to be a shift in definition from that of expert to that of facilitator. Thus, research in the United States, by Berman (1971), Jung (1970) and Little (1952) sees the focus of practice to be assisting teachers in developing more self-awareness and in achieving professional growth. This appears to be the case in the Calgary Board of Education, where consultants are expected to be knowledgeable about not only their area of expertise, but also the teaching-learning process and various approaches to inservice for teachers. "To this end, the consultant as facilitator is seen as providing alternatives for individuals, and as helping them to formulate options and to make responsible choices" (Leithwood, 1982,

p.69), words reminiscent of the urgings of the Club of Rome in No Limits to Learning. Together, teachers and consultant can negotiate a plan for helping realise the intentions of the teachers within a particular context. Although growth implies change, the intention of the consultant should not be to change the behaviour of teachers, but rather to help them gain new perspectives on the teaching-learning process. New perspectives are in themselves the bases of new methods.

### Interventions

An important procedure in the role of the consultant/tutor within teacher learning situations is the use of intervention. This term and its use needs to be defined as it relates to this study. Generally, the term, intervention, has a negative connotation, implying that there is something wrong that must be corrected. The term, therefore, comes to be equated with interference. There is confusion about what an intervention is. Some researchers investigating student learning in language (Searle, 1973; Taylor, 1977; Montgomery, 1980; and Sadownik, 1982) in their analyses, limit their use of intervention to the way in which a teacher's language may promote or limit classroom learning. Regarding intervention confined to talk, other research, particularly by Barnes (1969), has shown that much teacher talk impedes student learning. Studies done by Macrae (1968) and Newton (1974) substantiate this conclusion. All indicate that there is a preponderance of teacher talk in classrooms and that the talk is generally transactional, directive and concerned with appropriate student responses. They add that little provision is made for expressive talk and for personal response. In a teacher learning context, thus, a domination of the talk by the

consultant could, therefore, tend to impede the teachers' learning through denying them the opportunity to use expressive language.

For the purpose of this study, consultant intervention is not construed as correction or interference. Instead, consistent with the study aim of how teachers learn, it is viewed as a positive factor. Specifically, within the perspective of learning presented, and in relation to particular contexts, interventions are items that advance learning. Thus, interventions are defined as any positive comments, acts, or implicit behaviours that promote the growth and learning of an individual. Implied within this frame of reference is also the option not to intervene.

If the interventions made by the consultant are to promote learning, it follows that appropriate interventions must be made. How does the consultant know which are the appropriate interventions? Some will be intuitive, based on her experience as a teacher and a consultant. These interventions will be released from her store of tacit knowledge at the appropriate moment. Other interventions will be deliberate and pre-planned, based on a knowledge of what the teachers' intentions are and what strategies or methods would be best in a particular situation. The interventions will be in response to the demands of the given situation.

### Growth and Change

Implicit in an interactive learning environment such as has been described, there is the prospect of growth and change, not only in the participating teachers, but also in the consultant herself. As facilitator in the process, the consultant must be aware of the

conditions which promote effective growth and change, and must be careful not to assume that her way of learning is necessarily that of the teachers. Working with professionals, she needs to be aware of adult dimensions of learning, an awareness often not apparent in attempts to effect change in education. Malcolm Knowles (1978) posits four assumptions that have relevance here:

1. As a person grows and matures, his self-concept moves from one of total dependency (as is the reality of the infant) to one of increasingly self-directedness.
2. As an individual matures, he accumulates an expanding reservoir of experience that causes him to become an increasingly rich resource for learning, and at the same time provides him with a broadening base to which to relate new learnings.
3. As an individual matures, his readiness to learn is decreasingly the product of his biological development and academic pressure and is increasingly the product of the developmental tasks required for the performance of his evolving social roles.
4. Children have been conditioned to have a subject centred orientation to learning, whereas adults tend to have a problem centred orientation to learning (pp.56-59).

These assumptions reflect the views of learning of others cited in this chapter, principally, Britton, Kelly and Polanyi. All regard growth and change as based in the individual, but developed within social/cultural contexts for individual use toward social ends. These assumptions, combined with Britton's focus on the role of language as the basic component of learning, may be assumed to provide the basis for the consultant's interactions with teachers.

## SUMMARY

Recent research into staff development in education has emphasised the need for collaboration, for the sharing of expertise and for inservice programs designed to meet the needs of its adult learners. All the studies imply the need for interactive learning, for teachers to come out of the isolation of their classrooms. The research also emphasises the need for support, be it from the principal, peers, or outside consultants. The focus is now on the teacher as learner, as the one who can understand the learning process and the reciprocal teaching process based on her own experiences of learning, and her assimilation of new ideas from her peers. Teachers must perceive themselves first and foremost as learners if they are to instil in their students a love of learning, as well as the strategies for becoming life-long learners. Teachers, themselves, have few opportunities to demonstrate the process of their learning in their classrooms. By becoming their own researchers, and by receiving needed support in their endeavours to refine and extend their professional abilities, their opportunities to perceive personal growth will be more readily accessible. The change in perspective from teacher to learner might also allow teachers to become modellers of learning in interactive contexts with their students and peers.

Learning is not an individual act; it is also a social process. The work of Vygotsky (1978) and Polanyi (1958) emphasises the close, reciprocal relationship between the individual and society. Learning in one is dependent on learning in the other. Inextricably linked to learning is language, again emphasised by Vygotsky and Polanyi, and

taken further by James Britton, who defines modes and roles that language plays as the key element in learning. Language for Britton is a means of discovery, as well as a means of testing hypotheses. Through language we are both explorers and scientists, enlarging our view of the world, developing our constructs, defining our values and beliefs. At the heart of this learning is expressive language, where we are free to verbalise our experiences and beliefs and to judge them against those of others. Expressive talk in the spectator and participant roles is an important way in which we define our constructs through intimating our intentions. In a collaborative transaction, what we tacitly know is released within the framework of the interaction.

If teachers are to perceive themselves as learners, they need not only support, but also the opportunity to interact with one another. The quality of the interaction may be dependent on the skill of the supporter. With a skilled consultant as a colleague, a teacher can be guided to increased learning if appropriate interventions are made. This study examines the interventions made by a consultant in a learning situation. Few studies have been done in a similar type of situation. We appear to be only beginning to learn about practising teachers' learning.

## Chapter Three

### DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

These two closely-linked directions, classroom research and a developing self-education, represent the vanguard of current educational thinking about research in English teaching, and the implications go far (Martin, 1984, p.50).

### CONTEXT

The focus of this research is the professional development of teachers working in school. The study grew out of a request by established and effective teachers in a junior high school for assistance from a jurisdictional language arts consultant. The teachers' intention was to modify and enhance the programs that they were teaching; they wanted to improve their professional background as well as their classroom practice.

Within this context was an opportunity to observe and document some aspects of teacher learning. Although, over the past decade, much research has been done on the role of language in student learning, the complement of this process is only beginning to receive attention. This situation, thus, provided an opportunity to generate further understanding about the role of language in teachers' learning.

### AIM

The study was designed to explore the process of teachers'

interactive learning in relation to the socio-cultural context of the school. Essentially, the intention was to examine the nature and effect of teacher-consultant interaction as well as of consultant intervention in teacher learning.

#### SPECIFIC AIMS

The study attempted through a descriptive and qualitative analysis to accomplish the following aims:

1. To examine the nature and effect of teacher-consultant interaction.
2. To identify the interventions made by the consultant, as well as the reasons for the interventions.
3. To examine the role of intention in the interactive process.
4. To identify the role of expressive talk in the interactive process.
5. To examine and identify transfer between teacher learning and the classroom situation.

A subsidiary aim of the study was to examine the operation of personal constructs in the interactive process.

#### PROCEDURE

The data were collected by the researcher while on a professional improvement leave from the Calgary Board of Education. In her previous position as a consultant with that board, the researcher had become interested in the interactions between consultants and teachers and wished to focus on these interactions. To be consistent with the view expressed in Chapter Two, it was necessary to identify two or more

teachers who had expressed an intention to extend and refine their knowledge and skills in the language arts area, the assumption being that learning is more likely to occur if there is an intention to learn and that there must be a perceived need on the part of the teachers for help in growing professionally. The request for help must emanate from the teachers rather than be imposed from an outside source. Two experienced junior high school language arts teachers expressed their desire to find alternative methods of helping their students achieve their potential, particularly in the area of independent learning. They requested help from a system language arts consultant with whom they had worked in a variety of situations over the span of several years. The consultant and the teachers were, therefore, well-known to one another. The consultant and the teachers were also known personally to the researcher who had worked with all three in various workshop and individual settings.

The area of language arts was chosen for several reasons: first, because of the researcher's knowledge and expertise in that area; second, because of the researcher's knowledge of possible subjects in that area through her previous association with junior high school language arts teachers; and, third, because junior high school language arts teachers were more likely to be familiar with the process approach to language arts through their involvement with the new integrated provincial language arts curriculum.

## PARTICIPANTS

The participants consisted of two junior high school language

arts teachers and a consultant from the system Language Arts Team. These three people operated as a group, with the researcher being both observer and participant as the situation allowed.

Both teachers were experienced in junior high school language arts, having taught in the system for over ten years. Their request for assistance was not to find solutions to problems, but rather to acquire new ways of helping their students learn more effectively.

#### Teacher A

Teacher A had joined the staff of the school that year, having moved from another junior high school in a different area of the city. She was, therefore, having to adapt to a new situation and school culture with different expectations and different kinds of students. The request for assistance in dealing with this new situation had originally emanated from Teacher A. Teacher A has much background knowledge of language arts having been continually involved in attending inservice workshops and seminars in that area, and having been involved in developing thematic units integrating the reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing skills, as required by the new Alberta Junior High School Language Arts Curriculum. By the time the research was conducted, the teacher was comfortable in her new position and had become fully involved in the working of the school as a member of various committees. Although the focus of her request had changed, the teacher was still interested in acquiring new skills in the language arts area.

#### Teacher B

Teacher B is the language arts coordinator at the school and has

been for several years. She, too, has had considerable experience within the Calgary Board of Education and has been active in attending inservice workshops and seminars to increase her knowledge and skills. Like Teacher A, she has organised her language arts teaching on the basis of thematic units arising from the interests of the students in her classes. Teacher B was also deeply involved in other aspects of school life, being a member of several committees within the school.

#### Consultant

The consultant chosen for the research study was appropriate in several ways. First, she is an acknowledged expert in the area of the junior high language arts curriculum, having retained her present position for nine years. She has served on many ad hoc committees dealing with theoretical background, curriculum design and program planning for language arts. She is perceived by the teachers with whom she works to be knowledgeable about and to have expertise in the teaching and learning processes.

Second, she has established an atmosphere in which teachers feel free to consult her on many different issues related to language arts. This atmosphere of collaborative learning has been carefully cultivated by the consultant through the provision of inservice workshops, collegial support groups and individual school and classroom visits.

Third, the consultant has an extensive theoretical and practical background in the area of staff development, a recent innovation in the education area. With the emphasis in the Calgary Board of Education on effective teaching to enhance the learning process of all educators,

but with particular focus on the students, it is no longer simply a matter of being expert in a particular subject area. Consultants must be knowledgeable about and skilled in the general processes of teaching and learning and in their relationship to each other. The consultant must know how best to work with teachers so that there will be a transfer to the classroom situation of strategies and techniques that promote learning in students.

Finally, the consultant herself was interested in taking part in the research study, and felt comfortable about being observed. She viewed the study as an opportunity to learn more about her own ways of working with teachers, an integral part of her job. Her intention to learn more about herself was essential to the study. An opportunity for extended work such as the study involved did not usually occur for her due to the nature and extent of her role. She had long felt that working with a few teachers over an extended period of time would in the end be more beneficial than working with many teachers in a compressed period of time.

In keeping with the researcher's intentions that the situation for study be as natural and realistic as possible, the researcher and consultant awaited the opportunity for working with the selected teachers. When the request was made, both teachers readily agreed to take part in the research study with the consultant and the researcher.

Both teachers were enthusiastic about taking part in the research study and were willing to have the researcher act as both observer and participant. The teachers, consultant and researcher were a cohesive group in the sense that they already knew one another well.

## CONTEXT FOR LEARNING

Once the subjects for the research study had been chosen, the parameters of the study were discussed. The study would be naturalistic and evolving. It was established that there would be at least six meetings during a four-month period, and that these meetings would take place during lunch hours, the most convenient time for teachers in their busy schedule. For convenience, the meetings would be held at the school in which the teachers taught. The main focus of each of the meetings would be the discussion of different theories and strategies related to the teaching of language arts in that particular school, specifically in the area of listening. There was no set agenda for each meeting, but rather the agenda evolved according to what had occurred at the previous meeting. In addition to the scheduled meetings, it was agreed that the consultant and the researcher would be available to work with individual teachers and with students in the classroom. It was further understood that teachers would have the opportunity to put into practice in their classrooms any of the new ideas they had gleaned from the discussion meetings.

The main source of the data was, however, the taped discussions during the scheduled meetings, with conversation being the heart of the data collected. Supplementary sources of data were observations made by the researcher, and reflections recorded by the teachers and the consultant at the conclusion of the research project.

### Sequence of Activities

During the four-month period over which the data were collected, the researcher and the subjects met formally on six different occasions. In addition, the consultant conducted a demonstration lesson in each teacher's classroom. The teachers' and consultant's observations of the process were then recorded during one of the scheduled meetings. On the teachers' initiative, the researcher aided in administering the Test of Adolescent Language to individual students from one of the classes. Data were not recorded on the results of the test, but rather on the collaboration between the teacher and the researcher in the administering of the test and on the usefulness of the test in identifying strategies the teacher needed to help her students improve their listening skills.

The schedule of meetings which provided data for the study is summarised below:

Day 1

Initial meeting of the researcher and subjects to discuss the focus for the research study and to establish guidelines for meetings.

Day 2

Discussion of listening skills in general and how they might be integrated into existing units.

Day 3

Examination and discussion of the Test of Adolescent Language.

Day 4

Examination and practice of the Wilkinson Listening Test.

Day 5

Discussion of demonstration lesson and ways of applying the strategy in existing units.

Day 6

Discussion of the listening concepts and skills that were already integrated into units or that had been learned through the interactions with the consultant.

The demonstration lesson occurred between the meetings of Day 4 and Day 5, and consisted of a strategy which encouraged students to listen closely to a taped poem, to recreate the poem, and finally to respond to the poem in writing. Reactions by the teachers to the quality of the writing were recorded.

#### DATA GATHERED

The data gathered consisted of approximately six hours of taped discussions between the consultant and the teachers. In addition, there are approximately two hours of taped interviews between the researcher and the subjects of the research study. These tapes have all been transcribed and are available from the researcher, along with observational notes made by the researcher.

#### ANALYSIS OF DATA

Nancy Martin, in her article, "Researchers and Learners" (1984), discusses some changes in directions of research in English. She describes three shifts of focus: the shift from an emphasis on teaching to that of learning; a shift from external researchers to that of the teacher as a classroom researcher; and, the shift from quantitative to qualitative research studies, and, in particular, the case study. In her rationale for an emphasis on qualitative research, she states:

... in order to study learning processes which  
take place within the network of human  
relationships and institutional behaviours  
which constitute a school, different procedures

are needed, procedures based on observation, documentation of environments and classroom events, analysis of work products and of language samples, and on the keeping of records and personal journals. Any or all of these may be used (p.49).

In accordance with this rationale, the data gathered in this particular case study were analysed qualitatively against the theoretical background developed in Chapter Two, but not restricted by it. The researcher listened to the tapes and read the transcripts and observational notes, focusing on the interactions between the consultant and the teachers to discover the process involved in new learning. Attention was placed, in particular, on the interventions made by the consultant, specifically on identifying the kinds of interventions and their appropriateness to the learning situation. The interventions were also examined to determine whether intentions were being assessed and accommodated by both the consultant and the teachers. As part of the process of intervention and the determining of intentions, the function of talk, particularly in the expressive mode, was examined in both participant and spectator roles. An analysis was also made of the transfer of teacher learning to the classroom situation.

Although the analysis of the data appears to be in specific, separate areas, the researcher was also interested in determining the interrelationships of the various areas described within the context of the learning situation. Thus, the analysis of the data describes the professional growth of two teachers and a consultant in a particular learning situation. Through further analysis of the data, the researcher also hoped to determine the role played by intention, tacit knowledge and intervention in the operation of and possible changes to personal constructs.

## Chapter Four

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

... but Vygotsky, I think, got it; that is between the bit that you can do and the bit that you want to be able to do, is not a black hole, but it's like crossing stepping stones on a fairly fast flowing river. You don't absolutely have to have hands held out to you, but it's good to know they're there (Spencer, 1987, p.40).

The underlying assumption on which this research is based is that the consultant is an invaluable resource in helping teachers in their professional growth and development. In working with experienced, effective teachers, the consultant offers support and knowledge to them in their choice of paths to achieve their goals. The data gathered from observation and recording of the process involved in such teacher learning is analysed with the metaphor of the stepping stones and helping hands in mind. The analysis of the data is organised in chronological order with pauses for reflection by the researcher. The main focus of the analysis is on the interventions made by the consultant, as well as on the role of expressive language in both participant and spectator roles.

### BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

In designing the research study, the researcher had certain variables that she wished to include. The teachers involved would have expressed an interest in investigating new approaches to language

arts; they would be experienced and effective teachers; and, they would have an already initiated relationship of trust with the consultant. The intent of the last variable was to assure that the process could evolve sufficiently to ensure a continuum of data about teacher learning. The consultant was aware of these variables and notified the researcher when suitable subjects were located. However, during the lapse in time between the original request for assistance and the commencement of the research study, the needs of the teachers had altered. They had originally requested help with writing strategies that would help their students become more independent learners. The teachers were still interested in participating in the research study, but the content of the study would need to be negotiated and clarified.

## THE PARTICIPANTS

The participants have already been briefly described in Chapter Three; however, some further information gleaned from interviews conducted by the researcher affords additional insight into the participants' perceptions of one another.

### The Consultant

Joan, the consultant, had been known to both teachers in her professional capacity. A level of trust between the consultant and the two teachers had been established over a period of several years. The teachers regarded Joan as both an effective teacher and as a person knowledgeable about the theory and practice of language arts, particularly in regard to the Alberta Junior High School Language Arts

Curriculum. Both teachers were pleased to have her work with them. In explaining her reasons for initially contacting the consultant, Barbara commented:

I invited her to come and get involved, partly, I think, because we were discussing the strands in the curriculum and we had some debate over things like grammar and, um, listening, and so on. I felt from what Joan had said that it would be interesting to have her come and show me some different techniques to approach things like integrating grammar into what we were doing.

In response to a question about how Barbara came to feel comfortable in inviting Joan to work with her, Barbara responded:

Oh, I guess just from watching her operate with other teachers and picking up how she felt about different projects ...

Both teachers expressed similar views of acknowledging Joan as someone they felt they could call on for assistance and support.

### The Teachers

Barbara had been known to the consultant for several years as a teacher who was willing to take risks and try new ideas. She was endeavouring to reorganise her units of language arts so that they were more integrated, more in line with the new language arts curriculum.

The consultant's perception of Barbara was insightful:

... I think the kids like her and she likes them ... she has good rapport with them and things go well in the classroom and I think they do learn a great deal. And she's very confident in herself as a teacher, and I think that's good for kids because they pick up this note of confidence and they feel, then, I think, confident in their own abilities especially since she tries to get them to rely on their own judgment and not be dependent on her judgment in all things.

In talking about Barbara, the consultant is also revealing some of her basic beliefs about what teachers should be like and where their emphasis should be.

Laura has been associated with the consultant for a longer period of time. She has been the coordinator of the language arts program in her school for several years and is knowledgeable about language arts teaching. The consultant's perceptions of her are:

Laura I've known longer, of course. We took a course together about eight years ago, I think ... a media course ... no, it was a communications course. She's a delightful, bubbly sort of person ... willing to try, willing to experiment with different things ...

The consultant began the research project with a sound knowledge base about the teachers and their styles of teaching.

#### THE STEPPING STONES

The background for the research study having been established, it was now in the hands of the consultant to help the teachers find a path to their goal of learning more about the area of language arts. The scheduled meetings provided a structure within which the teachers and consultant could operate. The meetings also provided a means of describing the data collected. Information from interviews and personal observations gleaned by the researcher extend the description and analysis.

## INITIAL MEETING

Although Laura could not attend this initial meeting, a start was made in determining the area of language arts in which the teachers and the consultant could most profitably work together. The dialogue among the participants was of an exploratory nature where each was trying to understand what her role was in the process as well as attempting to find a common area of language arts in which to work. The teacher, especially, was trying to clarify for herself the role that she would take in trying to accommodate the request of the researcher. As a result, the session covered many topics with one idea generating another until it was obvious that there were many possibilities to investigate that would be of interest to the teacher. At the conclusion of the first meeting, Barbara agreed to discuss the topics covered with Laura, the other teacher involved, and a date was set for the next meeting.

During this session, the consultant played a significant role in directing the proceedings and in keeping the focus and purpose of the meeting in view. Her intention was to negotiate with Barbara in finding out which area was of most concern and which would be most valuable for the teachers and consultant to examine.

At the outset of the meeting, the consultant established the tone and the direction of the meeting by causing both the teacher and herself to reflect aloud on what had occurred previously in their conversations. The reflection dealt, in the main, with the original request that the teacher had made for help in identifying alternative strategies for encouraging students to become more independent in their

writing. Through her explanation of why the writing was no longer such a pressing problem, Barbara reveals to the consultant several things about herself.

1. B: When I first commented on the kids in the school because I'm new here, it had to do with their, uh, reluctance to take new risks. They want to be right, or they want their marks to be right. They're very conscious of their report cards.
2. M: So the school you had come from was quite different in that respect?
3. B: Yes ... and maybe it's because I was there long enough and had taught enough of that grade so that when the kids got to me they knew what my expectations were and they knew that I expected them to assume some responsibility, but I think my classes are getting better now.

She reveals the adjustments that have to be made when moving from one culture to another, each school being unique and having its own way of "doing things around here" (Schein, 1986). She had come from an environment in which she had built up a trusting relationship with students who knew her expectations, to an environment in which she had to start building trust and setting her expectations. Through her talk, she reveals that she is concerned with her students, and wants them to become self-directed learners. This statement is repeated several times during the subsequent meetings and gives us some insight, perhaps, into her construct system. She understands herself as a risk-taker and desires to cultivate the same attitude in her students, to make them learners. In relation to this aim, she realizes that she has to understand the intentions of her students and give them time to adjust.

At this point the consultant intervenes with another possible explanation for the students' reluctance to take risks:

4. J: It could have been that they were not sure where you were coming from and that they were just playing it safe ...
5. B: Yeah, yeah, that's a possibility!
6. J: ... or, it could be that this is the way they had learned to play the game ...
7. B: Right.
8. J: And it's hard to know when you're in a new situation just what's going on with the kids ...

The consultant, in her speculations, is exploring possible explanations, while simultaneously trying to ease a perceived anxiety in the teacher.

9. B : And you see, when I was thinking about what to do, their writing came to mind, and another thing that I really don't teach are the listening skills.
10. J: Really!
11. B: And I don't consciously teach listening skills.
12. J: That would be fun!
13. B: I attended a workshop once and it was interesting and we got all these handouts, but I've never really gone after using it. And I think being in this school the kids could really use some of that. And I could learn something from the whole experience, too!
14. J: Well, this would be a good year to do that because we do have listening projects going on in other schools, and Dr. P. ...
15. B: That's whose workshop I was at!
16. J: ... she's working with three junior high schools, plus some elementary schools ...
17. B: ... so she'd have some ideas ...
18. J: ... so, there's a lot going on there ... and it might be a very good plan to get involved in.

19. B: That's something that you know we're both ...
20. J: It's whatever would be most useful.
21. B: Well, those were the two things that came to mind, and again because I can learn something from that. The kids do a lot of writing, but I'm not sure that I consciously design the writing ... to particular skills. Mine is more react to literature or creative kinds of things.
22. J: Well, it would be interesting to see what you do intuitively, because I would guess that with your length of experience you probably do ....

The process of negotiation is evident in this extract. The consultant is encouraging the teacher to talk about her interests by mentioning that she knows about other teachers who are investigating similar topics, yet she does not limit the teacher to the topic. She reminds Barbara that whatever is chosen should be of use to her. The consultant assures the teacher that intuition about how to teach is valuable. Margaret Spencer (1987) makes a similar statement regarding teachers' intuitions:

From time to time I become impressed with teachers' intuitions; the kinds of things they know, say, about a child's difficulties, or why one class can get on with it or another class can't. These are the kinds of things teachers have always known, really, but when you look at educational research you seldom find reference to that, because on the whole, teachers themselves would describe it with their usual tentativeness as "hunch" or "anecdote" (p.35).

The consultant accepts the intuitive nature of the teacher's approach to writing, but is willing to satisfy Barbara's desire to investigate why the strategies she uses appear to work.

From this excerpt, also, some further information is gleaned about the teacher and the consultant. Barbara reveals that she has an interest

in learning (23), a desire to refine and extend her current practices, while the consultant is revealed as being sensitive to the feelings of the teacher, as well as of being knowledgeable about other projects in the system. Common ground has been established between the teacher and the consultant. It is interesting to note that listening skills were mentioned in the first five minutes of the meeting. Barbara had obviously been giving some thought to a topic for examination. The topic of listening was the one on which both teachers eventually focused, although in different ways.

Although the teacher appears to have focused on writing and listening, the consultant intervenes at this point to confirm the teacher's intentions. She pulls the conversation back to their original discussions and mentions the topic of evaluation. A discussion ensues regarding evaluation, and the teacher reveals that this, too, is a constant area of concern.

Barbara brings the focus back to what to choose as there appear to be several options. She requests the advice of the consultant. The consultant's response reveals her beliefs about teachers having ownership of their own learning. She understands that she, as the consultant, cannot make the decision for the teachers. She has set the stage so that Barbara can see choices.

- 23. B: ... so it would be interesting to find out how to  
do that sort of thing [evaluation] ... Well, we're  
open ...
- 24. J: We've got so many things to choose ... I think  
maybe it's your priority which one you would like  
to do and it's fine.
- 25. B: [to Joan] What do you think?

26. J: I think you need to talk it over among yourselves and I think that I would be pleased to work with you in any of these areas. I think that whatever you decided would be something I would learn from, too.
27. B: Right.
28. J: And if it's okay with Margot ... then I think we should go with what you identify as being the number one thing, remembering that we can work with the others later.

The consultant, realising that it is not only this teacher, but another, who is involved in the decision-making, suggests that she and the other teacher discuss this and make a decision. She reassures the teacher that whatever they choose, she would be able to learn from, too, thus establishing the context for an interactive learning situation among people who respect one another as individuals and as teachers. She requests that they establish their number one priority, assuring Barbara that they will be able to work on other things at a future date. Implicit in the consultant's final comment is a reminder of the need for focus, tempered by nuances of flexibility, freedom and related possibilities. Here is sensitive intervention.

Now that it has been established in the mind of the teacher that her choice of topic will be acceptable to the consultant, the teacher turns her attention to clarifying the process that will be used in the project. At this point she is clarifying the intentions of the researcher and trying to mesh them with her intentions. In this excerpt the researcher (M) participates also.

29. B: Just a second, so I understand, so a lot of it will be the actual planning, the process and meeting, and then we'll try and put that in the classroom.

30. M: ... and your reflections as well ... like when you were talking about the writing process, that you do intuitively ... but now you feel you want to be able to identify ...
31. B: Yes, I would like to identify ...
32. M: ... and that's all part of the process of change ... then there's the teacher as learner ... Joan said it as well, the consultant as learner ... and it's an interactive process ... you have to see a need for it, and you have to have thought ... you've obviously thought about the writing and the listening ... and the exams. You've obviously thought about areas in which you've seen a need to do something.
33. B: Right ... and part of this is just from what we're doing in school. Part of it is from what's being imposed from outside ...
34. J: Uhhuh.
35. B: ... it's sort of brought this to the crunch.
36. M: The other thing I'm interested in is your views on the change from one situation to another ... I'd like Laura's views and yours, and then Joan's as well so that ...
37. J: ... so that it's not just one side ...
38. B: ... the emphasis on one ...
39. M: ... and see what kinds of things come out of it.
40. J: And, you know, if other people were willing to be involved, I think they could be ...
41. B: Now, well actually, we have a resource teacher in this school who is basically a language arts person ... she's very helpful and is really quite a talented and clever person ...

Barbara demonstrates that she understands the process in her first utterance. The researcher elaborates on other aspects such as the reflections, as well as assuring Barbara that the emphasis will be on the process and not on her as an individual. Joan's mention of other

teachers perhaps being involved in the study, brings to mind the resource teacher. Even although the role of the resource teacher appears rather nebulous, Barbara has a view of how she can work with her.

42. J: You've got someone that can work with the kids while you're working ... with the others...
43. B: And we have even toyed with the idea and it was basically because I don't like the timetable here ... but some of the points we can make about it is that we can block and have all the responsibility ... so I said that before I keep complaining, we should try to do something... So at first we were going to offer four thematic units between classes...
44. J: Uhuh...
45. B: ...and the resource teacher was going to be involved,
46. J: Uhuh...
47. B: But I don't think it's going to work this year, unfortunately, but that would be a benefit to the kids to choose ... the thematic unit they wanted to be involved in ... but, anyway, I think people are ready, to team and to, you know... get involved, but it just doesn't seem to have happened yet, so it might be a good way...
48. J: ...it might be a good starting point ...
49. B: ...to get people going...
50. J: ... a way to get people moving and talking together...

Barbara has seen an innovative way of working with the resource teacher. One could hazard that although Barbara cites as the main reason for attempting this collaborative teaching her dislike of the timetable, her beliefs are that such collaboration will benefit the students. Barbara is sensitive to the fact that such innovations take time and

commitment from all parties involved. She is not willing to give up the idea, and in this she is reassured by Joan, who sees the inclusion of the resource teacher as a way into team teaching. Barbara feels that the staff members are ready to be involved more in team teaching due to the involvement of the language arts teachers, in particular, in a project involving the high school and the elementary schools in their area. Through exchange visits, teachers were aware of the activities being used in the other schools. Barbara's perception was that the project had some effect on other staff members, in her own school, who had had the opportunity to meet with and talk to some of the elementary teachers.

The consultant intervenes at this point to draw the conversation back from speculation about what might be done to the task at hand. The consultant at this point appears to feel satisfied that she has a grasp of the teacher's intentions and suggests a plan of action for the next meeting, where the teacher will discuss with Laura what had occurred at the initial meeting and also try to involve some other teachers in the project. A remark by the consultant to the researcher about learning styles evokes from the teacher the subject of gifted students and the school thrust towards providing enrichment opportunities for them. It is agreed that the gifted might be a possibility for the project, but the consultant clarifies her own intentions for the teacher. She reveals her own construction of the situation as being something in which she can be personally involved, and as something that she could use at future times with other teachers. In her capacity as consultant and in the description of her role, there is very little time to work on long-term projects.

51. J: But also out of this could come something that would be really helpful to other people.
52. B: Well, that's what I was ... yes ...
53. J: I think that that's ... that's always in the back of my head, anyway ... that down the road there would be some spin-off value ... because whatever you decide to ... you want to do, you can guess that there probably would be other schools.
54. B: ... that need ...
55. J: ... that need to think about the same kind of thing ... it's always useful for other teachers. It gives you a chance to work with the kids, too.
56. B: Yes. And that's why this [articulation] project has been so good ... don't you think?
57. J: Oh, I think it's been excellent!
58. B: ... just in terms of ... even if just for the teacher exchange and the ... motivation ...
59. J: I'm really happy the way it's turned out ...
60. B: ... and the feeling that you have about what you're doing, or someone else is doing is really positive, I think.
61. J: You're getting all that feedback from people who are quite happy about what's happening to their grade sixes because they know what they're ...
62. B: I don't know whether you know, but one of my recommendations for using money is to exchange teaching assignments ...
63. J: That is a good idea!
64. B: ... for a few weeks or whatever ... either we go up to grade ten or down to grade six ...
65. J: Do you remember that when we were meeting with the articulation project people the same suggestion was made, so it might be time to pick it up again.

The teacher, in responding to the intentions of the consultant, again refers to the teacher exchange project in which they were both involved.

She tests her perceptions about the value and worthwhileness of the project against those of the consultant, and after finding confirmation of her perceptions, reveals that one of her recommendations for the use of school staff development money was to arrange exchange teaching assignments between her school and its feeder schools. The idea is picked up by the consultant and in the discussion, modifications to the idea are suggested. The common bond between the consultant and the teacher is revealed in this excerpt. The interplay of conversation around a common context allows short-cuts in the conversation because of the common understanding. Ideas are generated quickly with a move between participant and spectator role, the spectator role language, however, appearing to release tacit knowledge and to provide the basis for the creation of new ideas (56 - 60). The excitement generated by the project is evident in the intonation of both voices and in the language used in talking about the project.

A pattern of interventions is becoming evident. The researcher is "reading" the teacher's constructs and intentions (30), while clarifying and advancing her own intentions (32, 36). The consultant intervenes to explore and extend possibilities (40, 42, 50), as well as confirming, encouraging and approving the teacher's remarks (42, 48). The consultant reveals her own constructs through intimating the added value to her of the study, thus enhancing the sense of potential (53).

## REFLECTIONS

As the researcher in this study, I had a unique opportunity to observe the process through which a consultant worked with a teacher.

The observations provided for me a way of confirming some of my own implicit theories, not only in relation to the teaching of language arts, but also in relation to my beliefs about the role of a consultant in working with teachers. The idea for this study was one which had its germination during the time in which I, myself, was a consultant. As I became more involved in the job, and as I began to read the research on professional development and adult learning, I realised that I had many questions about my role and the most effective ways in which I could support teachers in their efforts to improve their teaching and "ensure individual student development through effective education" (Dickson, 1983). I had questioned the value of the "one-shot" workshop or school visit, feeling instinctively that there would be no lasting effects and at the same time, therefore, questioning my own usefulness and worth in the position. The opportunity to observe the interactions between a consultant and teachers on a long-term basis would, I hoped, confirm or refine some of my implicit theories about the role of the consultant in adult learning, and, in particular, about the role of talk in an interactive learning situation.

The initial meeting, in which I took the part of participant observer, was a negotiation of meaning in which each party involved tried to clarify her role in the evolving process. I felt that at the end of the meeting, all three people had come to an understanding about the process of the study and what it entailed. The level of concern of the teacher regarding her role in the process was clarified and a degree of comfort with the expectations of the researcher was established.

### Constructs

Barbara was revealed as being very concerned with providing the best possible opportunities for her students. Through discussion with the consultant, she began to voice some of her own implicit theories of teaching language arts, being aware that there were things that she did intuitively, but would like to improve upon. As well as being concerned with her students, she took an active part in the total school context, being responsible for suggesting some innovative ideas to promote change and growth in the school. She showed a willingness to change and grow professionally through soliciting the help of the consultant.

What was of interest to me was the way in which the discussion generated ideas. There was a mixture of participant and spectator role talk, with the spectator talk allowing reflection and the triggering of stories and experiences. The topics covered in this meeting ranged from the initial idea of writing, through listening, common exams and their value, the role of the resource teacher, to the ways in which enrichment could be provided for the gifted. The reflective aspect of the talk also provided confirmation for the teacher about her perceptions of the value of ideas and projects with which she had been involved.

### The Role of the Consultant

The role of the consultant during the initial session was one in which she made sure that the teacher's intentions were clarified for not only the consultant and researcher, but also for the teacher herself. Similarly, the teacher was given the opportunity to understand the intentions of the consultant and the researcher. The consultant appeared to have the revealing and establishing of intentions as the

main item on her agenda, and as such, directed the major part of the meeting. The direction was provided through interventions at what were critical and appropriate moments.

### Interventions

The interventions took the form of bringing the discussion back on track to the main purpose of the meeting, yet not curtailing any discussion that might clarify intentions or reveal constructs. Another form of consultant intervention was providing information for the teacher about topics being discussed. Through the provision of information, the consultant was confirming her credibility as someone who could help the teacher realise her intentions. A third form of intervention was the rephrasing of ideas in the form of questions to reconfirm intentions. The consultant also demonstrated the use of non-intervention (20,26). Periodically, the consultant intervened to support, confirm or encourage the teacher's ideas.

### SESSION TWO

During this session, both teacher participants attended as well as the resource teacher. It was to be expected that the group dynamics would differ from the initial session and that the consultant would have to take this into consideration.

The session begins with the consultant reconfirming the intentions of the teachers with regard to the topic of the research study. The teachers have decided on listening, but would also like to incorporate writing. Uppermost in the teachers' minds, however, appears to be the

topic of computer software. The consultant, being sensitive to the needs of the teachers, participates in the discussion, and in so doing, reveals that she, too, has a vested interest in talking about computer software. The discussion provides a vehicle for the consultant to define her own beliefs about programs, while at the same time providing valuable information for the teachers.

66. B: We're branching out now with previewing software for computers ...
67. J: Oh, really?
68. B: ... because there is money available for each subject area ...
69. L: One of our problems is which word processing program to choose ... we've been using one but some of it is too hard ...
70. J: ... I'm on this curriculum committee, as you know.
71. B: Oh, great!
72. J: ... and one of our jobs apparently is also to preview materials because now we are including software ...
73. L: ... so we'll need input as to which program is best ...
74. J: ... but keep in mind the fact that kids in elementary are going to get pretty sophisticated pretty soon ... they are using Appleworks at one junior high school near here and they use it with the grade nines and maybe with some grade eights because they find, I think, that it's working down ... as the kids are becoming more sophisticated and have more experience with word processing programs. Why don't you give [the teacher] a call and talk to her because they've been into this for quite some time.
75. L: So I was really looking at a word processing program at this point ... but I was also looking

- at a sentence-combining set of software ... it's got potential ...
76. B: ... and a word attack and speller ...
77. J: One teacher has Sensible Speller ...
78. B: That's to actually proofread your own work ... but I think you're [to Laura] actually talking about a program for remedial teaching ...
79. L: ... for practice ...
80. B: ... some of them [software programs] are terrible ... there's so much game that the spelling is incidental.
81. L: There's a bit of game in this one; it's sort of a report ... WE'RE OFF TOPIC, AREN'T WE?

[Laughter]

Although this excerpt was, indeed, off topic, it is interesting in looking at the process through which the consultant helped the teachers to clarify their thinking regarding computer software. The focal reason for discussing the software is the necessity to use the allocated money wisely and for the benefit of the students. Neither teacher is willing to buy a program without first establishing its appropriateness. Barbara elaborates on Laura's intentions (78). She also intimates her own understanding of the need to examine software according to its deeper structures rather than its surface features (80). Laura reveals that she, too, is unwilling to accept the software at face value. The consultant provides practical information for the teachers, further establishing her credibility as a person who is an invaluable resource and who is skilled in her subject area (72, 77). An interesting intervention she uses (74) is that of having the teachers

think about their future students. In so doing, she is providing the teachers with a wider frame of reference for their choice of software.

The discussion is brought to a halt by Laura's sudden realization that the meeting is completely off topic (81). Although the discussion does continue for a few minutes more, its purpose is to bring some closure to the subject of computers at this point.

It is the consultant who now brings the group back on task by reconfirming the teachers' intentions to focus on listening and writing.

The subsequent piece of conversation reveals some interesting insights into Laura's construct system. She had not been present at the initial meeting where Barbara had had the opportunity to clarify the purpose of the research study. Laura has expressed a willingness to participate and appears eager to do so. Her description of what she has attempted so far with her students in the listening area gives some clues as to her view of the world, her belief system. Barbara triggers Laura's recollection.

82. B: ...I know that listening is one of the strands ...  
when I'm teaching, I don't consciously teach  
listening. We'll listen to poetry, but I don't  
plan a lesson.

83. L: I've been trying to do a little bit of it ... but  
I'm not sure what I'm doing is ... you know ...

These words are reminiscent of Barbara's in the initial meeting and reveal an area in which both teachers do not feel confident.

84. B: We do a lot of listening, but it's not structured

85. L: ... structured, yeah.

86. B: ...I'm not expecting a particular result.

In their minds, they know they are attending to the listening strand of the curriculum, but they have not examined their beliefs about listening at a conscious level.

Slipping into spectator role language, Laura reflects on what she has recently attempted to do with listening in her classes.

87. L: The other day I read a short story to the kids and orally gave them the questions and that had interesting results... The next class I put the questions on the board ... the pace was so slow ... but just to hear the story was so ... and to look back and see what they had done - that was interesting.
88. J: Mmmhhhh.
89. L: But I haven't done a great deal. I have a deaf child in my room, so we've [resource teacher and herself] given him a test to see how he compared to the others in the class ... but that's about the extent of what I've been doing in listening so I'm ripe and ready for ... whatever.

Laura shows initiative in having tried some things in her class; she takes risks and realises the potential for doing more with the listening strand. She is open to new ideas and appears eager to learn more that will help her do her job more effectively.

At this point, Barbara interjects with what she is going to do with listening in her Medieval Unit, also revealing that she is willing to take risks and to experiment. She mentions using music as part of the listening skills and the consultant picks up on this to provide a strategy that she has read about in another teacher's thesis. She presents it as an approach that might be used by Barbara, who immediately sees the possibility of transfer to the students. Not only will she be aware of the approach, but she sees the possibility of her

students being able to use the approach and transfer it to different situations. She is constantly thinking of ways in which to help her students become self-directed learners.

90. B: Then you have an awareness and the kids have an awareness ... we're going to be doing other things that will involve this skill. Let's find out what this thing really is ... an awareness kind of thing.

Laura now feels a need to clarify her own role in the study. A similar situation had arisen with Barbara part way during the initial meeting, and it is interesting to note that Laura feels the necessity to step back from the situation and clarify exactly what is expected of her.

91. L: Okay, now, what I have to ask first of all is just what is happening here? I mean, you told me briefly what the research was going to be, but what ... how you ... what's happening?

Both the researcher and the consultant describe the process and the expectations, and the consultant offers to work in the classroom as time permits. She then describes a technique that she has used with adults and would like to try with students. Laura, however, is still confused by what she is expected to teach as the previous discussion had centred on the Medieval Unit Barbara was proposing to revise to accommodate listening activities. Laura had planned to use a different unit of work, and needed confirmation that it was all right to do so. She is assured by the consultant that as long as she is interested in listening and writing, any unit will suffice. Laura clarifies, with the

help of Barbara and the consultant that it is techniques and strategies that are the focus, not the topic of the unit of work.

The mention of techniques brings to Barbara's mind a workshop which she remembers being presented by the consultant and the researcher; it dealt with listening to music followed by writing.

92. B: One of the workshops you two did with Fiddler on the Roof ... you know the music ..
93. J: ... and then you wrote ...
94. B: ... and then we wrote ... we pulled words and ideas out ...
95. J: Mmmhhhh ...
96. B: Remember?
97. J: [sudden realization] Alex did that! That was the workshop he did the morning I had my significant accident on Crowchild Trail ...
98. B: Oh, that's right !
99. J: I was two hours late.
100. B: But that ... whatever we did that day, I really enjoyed doing and it stayed in my mind ...
101. J: And that's a technique you could use with the kids.

Several things appear to be happening in this extract. The expressive talk, particularly in the spectator role, appears to be gradually releasing from the tacit memories of both Barbara and the consultant, ideas and recollections which had lain dormant for some time. The refocusing on listening and writing had triggered in Barbara's mind a workshop which she had enjoyed (92). The consultant remembers the workshop, too, but is not certain about its details. Only when she

realises that, in fact, the workshop had been presented by Alex and not the researcher, does she make the connection with her "significant accident." A rather traumatic experience for the consultant is linked indelibly with a workshop which Barbara had attended. It is intriguing to realise that the workshop is perceived and remembered differently by Barbara and Joan according to their intentions at this moment in time. The consultant, however, picks up on Barbara's intentions and offers the techniques used in the workshop as possibilities for inclusion. Barbara's mention that the ideas had remained with her (101) lends credence to the research conducted by Joyce and Showers (1983) in which he proposes that teachers who practise frequently the skills they have learned will retain these skills and integrate them into their repertoire. Listening to the skill or watching its demonstration is not sufficient for integration into the teaching repertoire. Barbara, although she had remembered the skill, had not had the opportunity to practise the skill and to reflect on her use of the skill.

Realising that Laura not been part of this workshop, the consultant brings the focus back to Laura, perhaps sensing that she is still unsure of the process for the study. She, therefore, addresses her next remarks to Laura.

- 102. J: Now, what unit are you going to be using with the kids?
- 103. L: Well, I'm just doing a short story unit ... I am just going to take the genre approach ... it's the first time I've done it since the olden days.
- 104. J: That should be fine because with the genre unit you should still be able to use all the strands ... because you don't ... it doesn't have to be a unit on a theme or topic ...

105. L: Oh, I see.
106. J: ... and still look at listening and writing strategies.
107. L: So, let me get this straight. What you and I are doing, Joan, and Margot observes, is you're helping me see ways I can work in the listening and writing into my unit ...

Laura talks herself to meaning at the point of utterance. At this point, she visibly, and verbally relaxes and there ensues some quick repartee about help with marking, a subject uppermost in the minds of most teachers of English language arts! This inevitably leads to a discussion of what teachers can do to evaluate listening. Laura offers a strategy she has used and the group discusses it.

Barbara intervenes at this point to suggest that if particular structured strategies were to be carried out, she'd like to know the day and the period. The consultant intervenes by giving a concrete proposal for pursuing intention by referring to two different tests that have been administered in the system schools and that are part of the previously mentioned pilot project. The tests are the Wilkinson Listening Test and the Test of Adolescent Language. In her descriptions of the tests the consultant reveals her own constructs regarding standardised tests. In describing the tests, she points out why they are of interest to her, at the same time revealing that she has given some thought to their content and what they are actually testing. She has done this in discussions with people whom she herself respects.

108. J: ... now Wilkinson's new test is one that is most commonly used, but it is interesting in that it has ... see most listening tests test for content. Do you remember what you heard? ... but the

Wilkinson Test tests for things like register ... what is the appropriate register level? It has a test for phonology and relationships between speakers, and these are areas of listening that are really important but that the traditional tests don't test for.

109. B: Right.

110. J: So, they gave those tests to the kids and recorded the results. Now this is a big study that they've been going on and on with ... but you might like to take a look at the Wilkinson Test and maybe want to try it out. I could give it to the kids if you want to give it to a class just to see how they react...

111. B: Sure.

112. J: ...and I'm interested in it not so much for the test results, but because I think it points the way to teaching strategies...

In this excerpt, the consultant discloses to the teachers her view of the usefulness of tests such as the ones mentioned. In describing the tests, she appears to be conscious of her own intentions in administering the tests (110, 112) and in trying to mesh her intentions with the intentions of the teachers (108). Implicit in this intervention is her intimation of a point of view about tests: they are a means to insight, not a definitive indicator. They need to be judiciously used within a larger informing context.

When the consultant talks about the Test of Adolescent Language, Laura is immediately interested, possibly because the test related specifically to junior high school students. Barbara immediately picks up on the fact that it ties in with all the work she had done at her previous school on the charting of writing properties. Both teachers see the potential for using the test. Their experiences cause interest and validate Joan's suggestion. The consultant is quick to caution that

the results of the tests, if they are given, not be counted for report card marks. Laura sees the possibility that the identified strands in the test might be used as a way of knowing what kinds of listening activities to test. She realises that she does not know the tests and would only be guessing at their possible uses, yet she is making predictions and is foreseeing alternatives. The topic of the difference between teaching listening in the elementary and junior high school is then discussed. It leads to the differences among socio-economic areas, with Barbara thinking in particular about possible differences in listening skills between the good reader and the poorer reader. The teachers are beginning to see these tests not only as ways of attending to the components of the listening strand of the language arts program, but also as ways of developing a listening program itself.

The consultant then mentions a different kind of test that has been used by a teacher in another school. She starts to describe an activity arising from the test, but Laura interjects by saying, "What exactly is the Torrance Test of Creativity?" The consultant admits that she knows little about the test, but is meeting with the teacher later that week and will find out about it then. The researcher informs the teachers that the same teacher is also administering a learning styles test to see if there is any correlation between learning styles and skills in listening. The consultant again reveals her own constructs.

J: Well, that is really interesting to me because I began to wonder whether the kids, the way they performed on the T.O.A.L., didn't have some connection with their preference in their learning style, in particular that speaking component which involves the student being able to repeat verbatim something that the tester has said. I have trouble with that, but ... but I wonder whether somebody who is really a strong auditory person wouldn't do better in that kind of ...

This apparent thinking out loud on the part of the consultant reveals that she is exploring the connections among various theories and research that she has encountered and is trying to reformulate these into her own construct system. Through the talk she is not only posing possibilities for the teachers to think about, but is also actively engaged in learning herself. She is building her own tentative theory.

The interaction triggers in the mind of the resource teacher the deaf boy in Laura's class. Laura describes her reactions to the boy in the class. She knows that he lip-reads well and wonders whether he really is understanding what is going on as he "covers" so well some times. A thought strikes her at this point. She and her class had just spent two class periods watching a musical movie. That this particular student might have some difficulty with the movie had not occurred to Laura until this point, as the boy adapted so well to the events in the class. The resource teacher had not been actively participating in the conversation to this point, yet she has obviously been making her own connections and refining her own view of where the information fits in. It is her mention that causes Laura to ponder about the effect of one of her activities on the deaf boy in her class.

Laura brings the group back on track. She is quite task-oriented. "Where should we begin, then?" The consultant immediately responds by suggesting some things that she might do to get things started.

113. J: What can I do for you? Shall I see if I can ...  
well I know I can ... get these tests ...

114. B: Basically, if you've got some print materials ...  
just things that you have used before ... you  
know, just sort of ... just to remind ourselves  
about what in fact are ...

115. L: Yes ... just what are listening skills ...
116. B: There might be some of those things from those workshops ...
117. J: We have some articles on listening. I don't know ...
118. B: We did a funny one on that on a professional day ... and one person was instructed to talk about himself for a few minutes and the third one was an observer and how frustrated the speaker gets when he is being ignored to the point where some people even grabbed the person and turned him around ...

The mention of articles and workshops on listening reminds Barbara of a particular strategy. The indwelling in the topic of listening is bringing to focal awareness strategies that have resided in tacit knowledge. Without the opportunity to talk about the ideas, what might have happened to them and the intention to learn collaboratively?

Apparently to refocus the participants on the task, the consultant uses the intervention strategy of offering to help in any way she can. She elaborates on this by suggesting a strategy that she might use with the teachers. This strategy reflects the premise of Spencer (1987), Wells (1987), Hunt (1985) and others that researchers should be looking at teachers' practices in order to build theories which can then be refined and extended in practice. The strategy is to examine the Alberta Junior High School Language Arts Curriculum in light of teaching practices being currently used by the teachers in the area of listening. During Session Six, this was, in fact, the strategy used by the consultant. An agenda for the next two meetings is tentatively set to examine two listening tests. The teachers are interested, conscious that

there may be budget implications also if they decide to use the tests with their classes.

- 119. B: Anything about tests sounds really interesting because I know very little about anything in testing.
- 120. L: Plus, if you come across articles that you can send to us by mail or something like that, we could read up on it...
- 121. B: Yeah. I think the reason I sort of like to see or do some of that testing is to reassure myself ... reassure ourselves things that we are doing ... even if we're doing it consciously or ... that we're doing the right things.
- 122. J: Would you like, then, maybe on Friday, if you look at some of the tests on Friday? Then on Wednesday at noon? Then we could finish up anything we haven't done then on the Friday?
- 123. B/L: Sure. That's okay.
- 124. J: ... and also, maybe ... what would be the thing to do? Do you want to look at ... start looking at the curriculum ... at your units or ...
- 125. B: Since we're looking at a time frame and stuff, maybe we ... the units aren't as important as the strategies ...
- 126. L: ... yes. So whatever is going at the moment ... because otherwise you get too tied down ...

In this excerpt, it is obvious that the consultant is a partner in the learning. She is not attempting to impose anything. Through the use of questions (122, 124) she involves the teachers in the decision-making. The times and agenda for the meeting are arranged, but before the meeting finishes, Laura poses a question for the consultant. She asks what specific things the consultant would like to do. Earlier the consultant had expressed a wish to try out with

students some of the strategies she had taught to adults. This indicates a high degree of risk-taking on the part of the consultant. From that one question, an interesting process transpires. The consultant expresses that she would like to try a technique used by Donald Gutteridge, from the University of Western Ontario. The idea obviously appeals to the teachers and within a very short period of time, dates and times have been arranged for the consultant to teach the technique to the students in both teachers' classes.

127. J: I could do the Gutteridge thing ... the extending the ear thing. I've done it with teachers. Never done it with kids.
128. L: Well, that would be interesting.
129. J: I'd love to try it with kids. I do all these workshops with teachers every year so if this will work with kids, I don't know, but I think it would.
130. L: Well, do you want a starting time to do that?
131. B: Do you know what could be done, too? You know we're blocked [timetable]?
132. J: Yes, I do, but I'd like to ... uh ... if ... it should fit with the unit because normally I use ... I use a Ted Hughes poem, Hawk Roosting, and it doesn't fit with what you're doing.
133. L: What is ...
134. J: We need to find another poem, that's all.
135. L: Oh.
136. J: ... a short poem that is quite imagistic, that has a lot of ...you know ...
137. B: Could you do it within a lesson, though?
138. J: Yes ...

139. B: Having fifty's too much to work with ... how about two classes? Then they wouldn't be distracted by each other...
140. J: Because it would likely work better the second time ... but also what I do is normally going to be ... it's longer than a class period so you probably ... so you have to talk about ...
141. L: Is that a problem?
142. J: We probably couldn't do the writing, but we could get started ... but they'd need a little more time to finish it up ...
143. L: Could they write on their own?
144. J: But I don't see why we couldn't find a poem that would fit in your unit. That would be better.
145. L: But what is this Ted Hughes poem? What is it?
146. J: It's about a hawk sitting up in a tree looking down on the world and this is his universe and he creates it and controls it...
147. L: That would be easy to adapt to anything, wouldn't it?
148. J: ... and it's a cruel kind of thing ...
149. M: It might fit in with the Medieval [unit] too if you're thinking about ...
150. J: ... make the analogy with the barons and the ...
151. L: Exactly. It adapts itself to anything.
152. J: I think you could ... but, anyway, we should listen to it and I'll bring it ...
153. L: So what is that now? That's called ...
154. J: Hawk Roosting by Ted Hughes.
155. M: It works well, that poem. We used it in Dr. Chorny's class ... university class ... it was amazing the kinds of things we came out with in discussion ...
156. L: ... creation and control of the world [writing it down]
157. J: That's it, that's it.

158. L: Okay, and I'm sure we can ... I'm sure something like that they could enjoy almost anything ...
159. J: I could come on the fourth or sixth of February to do that ...
160. L: The sixth is all right, the seventh and the eighth are tours...
161. J: All right, if that's too early, the week of the tenth I could come on the Monday or the Thursday.
162. L: Okay, do you want to settle on the thirteenth?

The consultant (127, 129) confirms that she would like to work in the teachers' classrooms. Laura wants to know a time for starting, while Barbara sees possibilities in doubling up classes. Joan appears to have some concerns about the appropriateness of the poem (13, 134, 136) and there ensues an interesting exchange in which all the participants, using their prior knowledge of the poem or the units being taught, rationalize the use of the poem, Hawk Roosting. The researcher is familiar with the poem and by mentioning the possibility of the poem suiting the Medieval Unit, the consultant sees an interesting analogy between the barons and the hawk (150) a possibility that she had not previously considered. Laura creates her own view of the poem, which appears to come as much from the act of writing the idea as it does from the listening (150). The act of writing appears to organize her thinking on the topic. This excerpt is a vivid example of the power of expressive talk as a means of negotiating meaning.

## REFLECTIONS

The composition of the group had changed from the initial session, with the addition of Laura and the resource teacher. As in the initial session, I took the role of observer, which allowed me to examine the way in which Joan worked with this larger group of teachers.

### Consultant Role

As in the initial session, Joan displayed sensitivity to the teachers' intentions. She made a particular effort to ensure that Laura understood the process for the study and that her intentions were being met. In this endeavour she had support from Barbara who helped clarify the process and relate it to what Laura was teaching. Joan had in mind a framework for the meeting, but was flexible in the actual content. Later, in reflecting on the first two meetings, Joan states:

I wanted them to think about aspects of their program that they wanted to zero in on and to work at ... I had no particular preference. I had had previous discussions with them about the possibility of us working there in the school and I wanted to know what Barbara perceived as being the most useful thing we could work at ... we talked a long time about various kinds of things. We talked about evaluation and evaluating writing. We talked about their tests and how she was somewhat dissatisfied with them ... and the department was, as well ... in the end we had brainstormed five or six areas that she felt were possibilities. Now, either before that meeting, or after, I had met with the department and I had taken out the pilot copy of the new curriculum and we had gone through it and had gotten into a lot of discussion which ended, as it always does, with how do you evaluate these things, and how do you teach listening and how do you teach viewing and so on, but it always seems to come in the end to evaluation ... and I really thought that perhaps that would be the

thing they would pick up on as a staff and so I was interested that when we went back the second time that they had decided they were were going to try to investigate the relationship between listening and writing. And I found that an interesting decision because I think that it wasn't their most pressing need, but it indicated a kind of willingness to be adventuresome, to take risks, to ... to go out on the edges of things they were doing and try to look at their practice in those areas.

Joan had entered the process, having some idea of what she felt the teachers might choose as a focus. When her perceptions proved inaccurate, she adapted to the situation and moved on from there. In her comments above, she also indicates her perceptions of the teachers which she uses as a frame of reference in working with them. One might say that she had surveyed the situation, developed a sense of the teachers' constructs regarding language arts teaching, assessed their intentions; then, through an interrelationship of these had determined a course of possible action agreeable to all.

### Interventions

In keeping with the framework, the interventions that Joan made were of a somewhat different nature than in the initial meeting. Once the focus for learning had been established, Joan appeared to be concerned with identifying specific strategies. Through her interventions of describing different strategies and resources, she was guiding the teachers in their move from talking about and examining different practices into putting them into practice in the classroom. The intervention of offering to demonstrate a lesson would be one way of modelling for the teachers the relationship between theory and practice.

### Building Relationships

One of the variables for this study was that an atmosphere of trust be already established. Yet, from the first two meetings, it appeared that this trust relationship must be renewed and refined according to the situation. The participants had not worked in such a small-group situation before, most of the meetings having been in larger groups. Yet both teachers had worked with Joan on a long-term basis in an articulation project. Most of the time, particularly in Session One, was spent in establishing the groundwork for the study through defining intentions and roles. A different kind of trust was being established. The establishing of trust is for Dr. Arthur Costa a key element in helping supervisors, or consultants, work with teachers. In his research on cognitive coaching (1985), he cites the need to look beyond the behaviours of teachers to their belief systems and the way they view the world, and to do this through questioning and talk. This process was evident to me in the way in which Joan used her interventions to encourage the teachers to talk about their beliefs about teaching and their intentions in participating in the study. Expressive talk, particularly in the spectator role, allowed the teachers and the consultant to relate their "anecdotes" and "hunches" (Spencer, 1987). The sharing of stories was encouraged by Joan who listened and responded sometimes with stories of her own. Joan encouraged the personal point of view to be expressed and the teachers in turn responded to the strategy by revealing through their stories a great deal about themselves as teachers. Thus the participants were defining themselves for themselves and the others, at the same time

making discoveries about one another through the collaborative sharing of their stories (Britton, 1972, p.246).

### Role of Researcher

During these first two sessions, I did not take an active part in the proceedings, except to clarify my intentions regarding the process for the study. This allowed me the opportunity to observe the interactions among the participants. It is interesting that Barbara later observed that the part of the demonstration lesson she enjoyed was being able to sit and simply observe her students, a luxury she was not afforded at other times during her teaching. My presence did not appear to inhibit the teachers and the consultant after they had understood the purpose of the study and their roles in it. The situation of ease and trust regarding the researcher had also been established in the context of the preceding collaborative talk.

### SESSION THREE

This session deals for the most part with the examination of the Test of Adolescent Language, one of the two listening tests that the consultant had previously mentioned and in which the teachers had appeared interested. The consultant does not merely describe the test, but invites the participants to try it for themselves. In having the teachers and the researcher work through the test and comment upon it, the consultant is demonstrating her awareness of the emerging paradigm of androgogy: recent research into the principles of adult learning emphasises the need for adult learners to have input into what they

learn, and to be active participants in that learning. Goodlad (1983) stresses the need for teachers to participate in a variety of learning situations, rather than simply be lectured to as a means of learning.

163. J: Part is group, part is individual. There are two sets of tests that have to be done individually. But what I thought we might do just to get into it and see how it works and to see what you think of it, is just to do little bits of each subtest, if you want to do that ... um .. today ...

164.B/L: Sure ...

165. J: ... rather than talking about how it works so you can see how it really does work ... so the first thing you need is the first thing in the student booklet ...

The consultant ascertains that the teachers are still interested in the test (163). Her explanation for having the teachers try the test (165) reveals her constructs about learning as being active rather than passive. Thus, the teachers and the researcher take an active part in the test. The consultant had established the ground rules by mentioning that the participants were free to talk about their feelings and their reactions to the test itself while the test was being administered. Symptoms of test anxiety similar to those demonstrated by students were evident particularly at the beginning of the session.

166. L: Is there another student booklet?

167. J: Um ... right here ...

168. L: Oh, it was under the profile ...

169. B: You have to keep looking through the pile of booklets.

170. J: I've found this is a fun test to do and I found that the kids are really interested ...
171. L: Which one are we starting in on? Do we just use this?
172. B: Um ... do these get progressively more difficult?
173. J: I think they do, so maybe we'd better do a few on the other page.

The language here is transactional in the participant role and is being used to clarify procedures for answering the test. Once the mechanics have been established, Barbara raises the question of the format of the test, trying to establish the intentions of the test developer, perhaps, and a context for herself.

At the end of each subtest, there is discussion about several of the stated answers. Implicit in this is the need for teachers to understand what the test is actually testing and to explain it to their students in that light. The teacher is the professional judge of what is suited to their purposes and beliefs.

174. J: ...they explain very carefully how they arrive at all of these and we can argue about them and I argue with some of them ... parts of them that I ... are really questionable, but when you read this [the manual for administering the test] they've anticipated all the arguments. They've thought about it.
175. B: ... and all the word association things ...
176. J: Well ... and to me this just points out the necessity of teaching things in context, because, of course, this is all context bound ...

The consultant here demonstrates that she knows the test well and has questioned parts of it which do not fit into her construct system. She

encourages the teachers to question parts with which they disagree or which they do not understand.

When the answers to the first set of words associated with pictures are discussed, the teachers, the consultant and the researcher reveal the ones with which they had problems and with the help of the others in the group discover where the problems arose. All are examining the processes they used in trying to answer the questions, practising metacognition. The importance of context is also stressed by the consultant, a fact already acknowledged by the teachers when discussing how they arrived at their answers. The second part of the test entailed listening to three sentences and deciding which two sentences were closest in meaning.

177. B: ...the difficulty with that as opposed to seeing it is that you have to mentally remember the sentences ...
178. L: Well, that's the trouble ... my retention powers are waning!
179. B: ... because you basically can't do anything with that first sentence until you've heard the other two...
180. L: So you never get a choice right away ...
181. M: So what you're doing ... you're making meaning for yourself to interpret the first sentence and then try to match the others...
182. J: But I found that myself I wanted to go with the first sentence as being one of the ones, whereas sometimes it's B and C that go together ...
183. L: ... and not too often ...
184. J: Yeah ...
185. L: But if you want to use A, then at least you've got B and C to pick, but if you don't use A the ...

186. B: See, my trouble is that I'm easily distracted visually while that's going on ... if I don't just sort of stare at something my mind ...
187. M: I was trying to picture the sentences written out so that I could go back to them.
188. B: I tried to listen except that as soon as I'm not ... I ... my mind just leaves what is being said ...

This excerpt is an example of metacognition in action. The participants are discussing with one another the processes they used in trying to arrive at the answers. They have developed their own strategies for solving problems. This has implications for students. Through collaboration and talk, they discover strategies for students to use. The modelling of such collaborative processes by their teachers will also aid in the development of thought processes.

Both teachers become increasingly interested in the test, and are considering the possibility of using it in their classrooms. The consultant offers her help in administering the test. She points out to the teachers that she perceives the test as being a means of developing some listening and writing strategies that might not otherwise have been considered. The consultant has throughout, however, expressed her views on the limitations of the test (174,176) and has emphasised the parts of the test which she feels are of most benefit for students. At every opportunity she encourages the teachers to present their beliefs about tests.

189. L: It's probably more important to get the kids to get the meaning than to look at details first.

190. J: This is my argument ... and you know ... however, I'm prepared to be convinced because they have tried it out both ways in developing the test, and I think, for purposes of scoring and getting standardised test results, they've decided to go with the exact replication.

The consultant brings everyone back on task to administer the rest of the test. The next part is one which the consultant knows might be high risk and, therefore, she explains that few adults can complete the test; she also asks the researcher to attempt the test with her while the teachers observe. This test, which involves exact repetition of sentences which get progressively longer, triggers a discussion first of all on the intonation with which the sentences are repeated. Did the intonation match that of the speaker? The consultant reveals an interesting perception from the teachers in the other two junior high schools while they were administering the test. The students in the lower socio-economic school tended to use no inflection, whereas the students in the upper socio-economic school tended to repeat the inflection the way it was given. The consultant is here revealing her construct system, but is also demonstrating that her constructs are not impermeable, that they can be refined and altered. Later in the session she verbalises this attitude: "I'm really learning a lot just by doing this [the listening test], and by doing it with kids."

The consultant mentions that this part of the test is similar to giving instructions to students in what teachers perceive as a clear manner and having some students put up their hand to ask what had just been said. There ensues a discussion about "teacher language," classroom talk which controls students' responses within the teacher's intention, or as Barnes (1973) puts it, "the language of secondary

school." The discussion also reveals more about the constructs of both teachers with regard to their philosophy of teaching.

191. B: Both of us ... some of us use unusual word orders when we're giving instructions or whatever ...

192. J: Simpler instructions? Maybe shorter instructions? Maybe more redundancy than there is here [in the test], but here you have the embedded constructions that are part of educated speech and many teachers talk this way ...

193. B: Right.

194. J: I think unless you really are conscious of wanting to simplify instructions ... because this is what Barnes calls the "language of secondary education" ... and this is the formal junior high ...

195. L: Do you think that's a good idea?

196. B: I mean you're always conscious of using things that they can associate with and putting them into and that's really formal. You can do that occasionally, but that's where you run a risk of where nobody is understanding ...

197. L: Trying to model the speech?

198. J: I wonder if we do maybe model this kind of speech, but maybe not in situations where it's crucial for the kids to get direction.

199. B: Even although, the kind of literature that the kids are reading, like the young adult literature and so on, isn't written that way. You know, it's written in their everyday speech patterns and stuff they can identify with, and certainly, if you're going to the high school, say in the academic English programs, then there's a place for all that, but, you know I feel ...

200. M: But it ties in with the idea that you expose the kids to a range of things and registers that ...

201. B: We try to do that...

202. J: ... and you do that, I think, keeping in mind what's ...

203. B: ... but I wouldn't like to think that we should be speaking that way all the time ...
204. J: ... but Barnes isn't really suggesting that we should do this ... he's saying this is what keeps kids from learning quite often is that they're struggling with unfamiliar concepts in what is essentially for many kids an unfamiliar language that they're not hearing at home and it's not embedded in their heads ... then it's going to be causing them problems ... and certainly if you start thinking about math class, language becomes a really big source of difficulty.

The discussion about the types of language that teachers tend to use in the classroom ends up as a dialogue between the consultant and Barbara on their beliefs about "teacher language." Barbara, in giving her input, reveals some fundamental beliefs that she has regarding the role of language in learning (199). Her context is always her concern with giving her students the best possible opportunities to succeed in whatever situation. The consultant and Barbara appear at first to be on opposing sides, and the consultant has to clarify with the teacher the concept she is trying to express (204). The fact that Barbara can enter into such a dialogue with the consultant intimates, perhaps, that she views the consultant as a partner in the learning experience. It indicates, also, that Barbara is confident in herself as a teacher, and that she has definite constructs about teaching. The consultant has raised some cognitive dissonance which is forcing the teachers to articulate their assumptions about language and learning.

The consultant moves quickly to the final two parts of the test. She does not belabour the process of having the teachers write the test, but she does have them raise questions about it to make sure that they are clear about the purpose of the last two sections. She acknowledges

that the teachers are still interested in administering the test and reminds them of the next meeting. She also asks if they would like to look at another listening test, this time the Wilkinson Test. Laura remembers the plans for Joan to do the demonstration lesson and is reassured that the consultant is still prepared to teach it.

## REFLECTIONS

### Researcher as Participant

Much of the session was spent in writing and discussing the test that Joan had brought. Of most interest to me was the fact that during this session, I became a participant member of the group, involved in the test-taking and discussion. During the previous two sessions, I had been primarily an observer.

### Consultant as Modeller

The way in which Joan conducted the test modelled what the research into adult learning advises. It provided an opportunity for the participants to interact within a common context, in a non-threatening situation, and in a way in which they were actively rather than passively involved. Goodlad (1983) has stated that it is time to afford to teachers the same considerations that we should give to students - to provide them with a variety of styles of inservice rather than just the lecture method. His views are echoed by Hunt who says that in any interactive learning situation the tutor should be able to "read and flex" to suit the style and cognitive level of the students. Joan obviously realised that through giving the teachers the opportunity to

talk about what was happening during the test they would be able to make sense for themselves and integrate the new ideas into their construct system.

### Constructs and Intentions

The method used by Joan in administering the test allowed for interaction among the participants. From the interaction, the constructs of each were further defined. Joan demonstrated a knowledge about tests and their limitations, feeling that they had to fit into her constructs of language and learning. She stressed the importance of context in administering tests, but the greatest value for her was to use them as a vehicle for developing new teaching strategies. She recognised the value of the tests for establishing standardised scores.

Barbara further defined her view of the role that language should play in the classroom. Even if, by her own admission, she is an intuitive teacher, she reflects a current view of language and learning. She believes that teacher practices should relate to the interests and strengths of the students and that the teacher should be a facilitator in helping the students become self-directed learners. She grasps concepts easily and sees possibilities.

Laura saw immediate possibilities and appeared to want to make decisions quickly and efficiently. She, too, grasps concepts very easily. She is the one who reminds Joan of her offer to teach a class, a sign perhaps that she is the type of person who learns more easily through observing processes. When she is concentrating hard, she sometimes repeats instructions or words out loud as if the hearing of the words will convey more meaning to her.

### Role of Consultant

Joan took the role of expert in this session and directed it quite firmly realising that she has a lot to accomplish in a short time. Although understanding that "change is a process, not an event" (Hall, 1973), she is working within certain constraints, particularly that of the amount of time she can allocate to working with the teachers. However, she did not appear to curtail conversation, choosing appropriate moments to refocus us all on the task at hand. She constantly refers to students' reactions to sections of the test, acknowledging her perceptions of the teachers as people who are concerned with the learning processes of their students and with themselves as learners.

### SESSION FOUR

This session deals with another test of listening, the Wilkinson Test, which had been suggested by the consultant as perhaps providing some insight for the teachers. Noticeable at the beginning of this session is the speed with which the participants set to work with few preliminaries. The teachers are eager to investigate the new test, seeing it as meeting their intentions and providing them with new information. In each meeting, there has been a noticeable bonding of the group with each person feeling at ease with the others, free to express opinions and views. Intentions have been understood and agreed upon and the focus is now on the task at hand.

The consultant begins by describing the test to focus the activity. She once more indicates her own reasons for finding the test interesting.

205. J: ... but I think, the more I listen to these, the more I think they are somewhat basic, like the language, and so on, but I think they're interesting. To me they're interesting because I thought about other areas where we could teach, rather, you know, I'm not sure how useful they are as a test, but they are very useful for thinking about listening because ...
206. B: Sure...
207. J: ... because they point to, if you look at page one there is ... the Test of Content is the usual test. You get the kids to listen to something and then they pick out the main idea and that's certainly one function of listening. And then, but this Test of Prediction which uses context clues; Test of Phonology, differences in meaning, you know, if you say, "Well, that's a fine state of affairs," ... uh ... the meaning is conveyed by the words, not by the tone. Register, which is the one that has really fallen away because we tend to use so much more informal speech within formal settings.
208. B: Right.
209. J: And the Test of Relationship, so you have two people talking to each other and you try to decide what the relationship is ...
210. L: And it's kind of interesting.
211. J: This would be an area, I think, to work on from the teaching point of view.
212. L: Uhuh.
213. J: At least five areas ...
214. L: Well, there was a great ... that would work really well with the communication ...
215. B: ...but we're kind of away from that ...

- 216 J: But there probably are other areas, for example, short stories. You could use it for your character relationships. If I, uh, brought that book, Voices, if you haven't seen it ... because it's all about Canadian language and there are wonderful things in it ... there's a test at the beginning - I think I have an abridged version - that tests things like, do you say vase, vase or vase, and I think there are five different ways to pronounce the word; and do you say sofa or chesterfield; you know, it's the ... it all has to do with Canadian-English and how it's spoken. And then it gets into regional English ... and I know some people who base a whole unit on it and so ...
217. L: That would be good to ...
218. J: ... next fall in your dictionary unit you might find that there will be ways ...
219. L: Yeah ...
220. J: Anyway, what I thought we would do is to play - and if I can find it here [trying to find the correct place on the cassette] - a little bit of the tests so that you can get the idea of how they do it.
221. B/L: Uhhuh.
222. J: I don't think we'll bother with the Test of Content because everybody understands that ...

During this section of the dialogue there is a nice interplay between participant and spectator role language. The consultant begins by reflecting on the tests and why they are interesting to her (205). She uses spectator role language and through that she reveals for the teachers her intentions regarding the tests, a reconfirmation of the ideas she has been focusing on throughout the sessions. Yet she is conscious of the time element and the involvement of the teachers. She appears to be using her reflections to create a mindset for the teachers regarding the tests. She then moves to participant role (207) to

delineate the tests, yet even here there is insertion of spectator role language in her reflections about the various parts of the test. The spectator role in (211) shows that the consultant is relating to the teachers' intentions to help them discover strategies for enhancing the listening aspects of their program. Laura finds the ideas fascinating and again makes predictions about the units in which these ideas might be used (214). She sees relationship possibilities between her point of view and teaching and learning. The consultant, in the long run of participant role language (215), describes a book which might be useful, possibly remembering that the teachers take note of the suggestions regarding materials they might purchase. She anticipates Laura's remark (216) by speculating about the unit in which Voices might be suitably used (217). Participant role language brings the reflection section to closure (220). The dialogue in (222) demonstrates that the consultant is aware of the level of learning of the teachers, realising that for them to examine the Test of Content would not aid in their learning.

The group then begins the actual test with the researcher also taking part. Again the test elicits questions from both teachers. They do not accept things on faith, but think through the reasons for their answers. The teachers project beyond the effect the test is having on themselves to its effect on the students. They also appear to have fun doing the test and the trust level is such that they feel free to reveal answers which did not agree with the test answer, perhaps giving them some insight into the fact that at times there can be logical reasons for choosing the answers you do even if they do not agree with the stated responses.

223. B: The interesting thing is you wonder how kids would do on these tests.
224. L: Yes, I think it would be kind of fun for them to do. But what about number two? I'm not really clear ...
225. B: When you said "Janet's father," somebody else said ...
226. L: "Janet's mother" ...
227. B: That was her mother that said ...
228. L: Okay.
229. B: Just before we go on, the question asked was, "Janet's father - had she heard that fellow's name before?" It was actually the mother that said it.
230. J: Yes.
231. L: Yes, but phonology ... it's a trick kind of question ...
232. J: It is a trick question.
234. L: It doesn't seem to mean ....

Stepping back and looking at a specific answer in the spectator role appears to help the teachers clarify their understanding. The consultant does not intervene in this discussion apart from giving confirmation of the accepted answer. It is interesting that the discussion of the answer arose from Barbara's speculation about the effect of the test on students (223). Although the participants were playing at taking the test, they were gaining insights about how they themselves reacted, as well as considering the implications in administering the test to students.

One particular part of the test evoked an excited reaction from

the teachers, because it related directly to some of the things they were doing with their classes. The test dealt with identifying sounds.

235. L: At first I thought it was down on the beach ...

236. B: Rumbling of the tide coming in ...

237. J: They give you lots of time to answer.

[Sound from cassette recorder]

238. L: That's not an identifiable thing!

239. B: I thought it was a [unidentifiable]

240. J: You put down thunderstorm, siren, whatever, whatever ...

241. M: I put synthesiser ...

242. J: But we don't all identify the same way.

243. B: Is there a right or wrong?

[Laughter]

[More sounds]

244. B: ... a listening centre in a poetry unit.

245. J: Well this is what D. is using it for. She was using it for the introduction to a poetry unit. And she did it before she did the Gutteridge thing, but I think she did it more or less with that procedure because she was interested in the test results as well. But she had the kids write down the description and then extend it themselves, but I think you could do it differently; you could have them maybe try to say what they thought it was but also to write down the words that they associate with it; the words that, you know, the feelings words and that kind of thing. Because they get quite a bit of time. They could be writing more, and, uh, you could use it that way.

246. B: Uh-huh.

247. L: Yeah.

248. M: You know what you could use? The synectics model of teaching.
249. J: Well that is what it is. It's exactly what it is...
250. M: It's a process ...
251. J: ... which is essentially what they're doing, because they say, "What else could it be?"
252. B: I was just thinking of my poetry ... and they had to tape sounds around the house, and then bring them to school. It was kind of a follow-up ...
253. J: Uh-huh ... and I was thinking about your Medieval Unit, because you could get sounds that really fit the unit ... it would be fun ... and get them to do it. Because what D. would have them do then was to take ... to have the kids take the words that they had ... she made the kids do the fourth sound. But I wouldn't do that. I would let them choose. And then they wrote poetry from the words they had written down. And some of it was really quite good.
254. M: Did they do it individually or in groups?
255. J: No, individually ...
256. M: Using poetry forms?
257. J: ... because she was using this almost as a pre-test.
258. B: Yes.
259. J: Some of them wrote rhymed verse, some of them wrote free verse, and some of them wrote really quite sophisticated verse. But, uh, I think you could put in another step where, after the individual listening, and the kids wrote down their words, you could do brainstorming. What are all the words for sound number one?
260. B/L: Uhhuh.
261. J: Put these on the board and then let them write. It wouldn't have to be poetry because if you wanted to have sounds that fit your particular unit you could find things that would invoke images you wanted ... you know, the clatter of armour and so on ...

262. B: Mmmhhhh.
263. J: ... and then you could have them do some writing, which could be poetry or it could be prose, or, uh, just descriptive ...
264. L: There are lots of ways ... lots of things they could do.
- [Voices over]
265. L: What is the idea behind that?
266. J: Just the idea as using it for a stimulus for writing, because they're getting the feelings, the associations, the big picture and all that sort of thing ... and then you could move on to Gutteridge where you're doing some other things ... it's a more structured kind of thing ...

The responses of the participants to the different sounds are interesting in that each person hears something different, gives a different answer. The humour evident throughout all the sessions is once more evident here in (243), a reference prompted by Barbara's original view of her students as being very mark conscious. In talking collaboratively about the test, the participants generate ideas on how to apply the ideas in the classroom (244, 248, 252, 253). These possibilities are tested through the discussion and the participants move from the listening tests to possible new teaching situations, translating the ideas from a narrow focus into potential relevance for teaching and learning within larger contexts of integrated language activities. Joan takes an active part as a member of the group, speculating on the way in which she might adapt the ideas. In her response to Barbara regarding the listening centre (245), she is providing support and confirmation.

The heuristic aspects of talk are revealed. Barbara and the researcher make discoveries and connections (244, 248); both react with a "eureka" tone of voice when talking about the listening centres and synectics. The purpose of the voicing of these ideas is not that they should be integrated into everyone's repertoire, but rather that the individuals involved are sharing the connections they have made between the research and the practice.

It is interesting to examine the interventions made by the consultant in this run of talk. From (235) to (243), the participants are discussing a sound they have just heard. Joan intervenes at (240) to help the teachers focus on the task. She then provides support for the answers that have been given, by putting the purpose of the test in focus (242). After Barbara's heuristic suggestion for possible application, Joan intervenes to confirm and extend the idea. She also suggests that it is possible to adapt it to one's own style (245). She allows time for reflection, an intervention in itself, before responding to Barbara's description of a strategy she had used in her class (252). In this intervention (253), Joan makes the connections for the teacher between the original procedure and Barbara's own unit. In response to a question by the researcher, the consultant elaborates on the technique by giving practical suggestions for application (259, 261, 263). The final intervention in this section, shows that the consultant has been keeping the wider context in mind. She mentions the technique that she is going to use in the demonstration lesson (266). This intervention provides for her an opportunity to further her own intention of having the teachers prepare their students for her visit.

## REFLECTIONS

### Collaborative Learning

In reflecting on what made this session different from the others, I realised that the four of us were working together as colleagues in examining a common interest in language and learning. The previous sessions had provided opportunities for us to understand one another's constructs and intentions; now it was time to focus on understanding the listening process and all that that implied in teaching and learning. Here was evidence of the power of collaboration in generating new ideas and in confirming beliefs about our work. Collaboration is an essential ingredient in any learning situation. It is now being recognised as essential in teacher and staff development programs:

While we have increased personnel, we have not always connected staff in schools for the purposes of sharing expertise, solving problems, and pursuing improvement. Creating collegial or collaborative relationships is a vital strategy for supporting individual and organisational change (Loucks-Horsley, S. et al., 1987, p.8).

Also essential is the on-going nature of the collaboration. Through collaboration, the teachers were sharing stories, experiences and strategies. The development of the collegial support group concept supports this view of learning. Support groups such as the Talk Workshop Group and the Teacher Centre in London, as well as the support groups being created in jurisdictions in North America, recognise this principle. The best-known group in North America is that developed by I/D/E/A in its Principals' Inservice Program (Indiana, 1982). This program has been offered to administrators in the Calgary jurisdiction.

One high school has adapted the process and is using the concept as part of a long-term professional development program (Paquette, 1987).

### Learning is Fun

Evident throughout the session were instances of humour and laughter in a shared, common context. Several times Barbara and Laura indicated that the exercise of taking the listening test was fun. All of us, I think, felt that this was not work but play. In reflecting on this aspect, I am reminded of Vygotsky's view of the importance of play in the lives of children. Obviously, this applies to adults as well!

Margaret Spencer, in her reflections on Vygotsky's work states:

The thing which Vygotsky taught me was that when you were actually working with something in play, there came a moment when you actually stopped playing - you went on playing, but what you began to notice was the nature of the thing you played with. I think that that's more true of language than anything else. Problem-solving seems to me to be just a very refined kind of play (Spencer, 1987, p.34).

In becoming actively involved in the test, all of us were examining in greater depth the nature of the test and of listening, actively reconstructing our own experience.

### Interventions

The context of the meeting dictated to some extent the intervention pattern used by Joan. As in the previous session, she encouraged us to talk about the test, allowing time for this within her agenda. The main intervention used was the contribution of contexts of possible uses for the concepts of listening. She suggested points to consider in relation to teaching strategies that might be used. She is

always conscious of the need to move from discussing theory to putting it into practice.

Because Joan was to teach a demonstration lesson within the next week of this meeting, her intention was to ensure that the lesson would be successful. It was a high-risk undertaking, as it is always difficult to teach another person's class. Joan's intervention was to suggest possible ways in which the teachers might prepare their classes for her visit.

#### DEMONSTRATION LESSON

The consultant had agreed to demonstrate a technique that suited the intentions of the teachers to examine the areas of listening and writing and their correlations. She taught two classes, one for each teacher. The lesson consisted of having the students listen to a poem, Hawk Roosting by Ted Hughes. During the first reading of the poem, students were asked to record words that described their feelings. These words were then collected and categorised. The poem was then read another two times, and during each reading students wrote down words and phrases that appealed to them. These, too, were recorded on the board. After these readings, the students had almost recreated the poem. They were allowed opportunities to discuss the poem at any time. When the consultant was satisfied that the students understood the intent and content of the poem, she had them write about it in any fashion that they chose. This approach was originally used by Don Gutteridge, from the University of Western Ontario.

Both teachers observed the lesson in their respective classes, and completed the writing assignment with the students during the following class period. The consultant could not schedule the time to spend one more period with each class the next day.

#### SESSION FIVE

This session is devoted in part to discussing what had happened during the demonstration lesson. The discussion is initiated by the consultant.

267. J: I am wondering whether, to what degree, that that was because I was strange, and what we were doing was strange, or whether they're just like that.
268. L: They're just like that! They're just ... I have to call their names to get a response. And they ... they've got an answer!
269. J: Uhuhmm...
270. L: But only half a dozen of them will volunteer, and it's always the same people. I've noticed a metamorphosis of this class through the year. Some of them are beginning to have a really good spurt. How do I describe it? They're not snooty, but they're sort of past the stage of these junior high school activities!
271. J: I was just saying to Laura that I wish that I'd written some things down after yesterday because the kinds of things ... just little things, you know, that I noticed along the way, particularly with your class [Barbara's] because they were more verbal ... They were giving me a lot more feedback.
272. B: Yeah.
273. J: But I think, I would be interested in your perceptions of how things went, and the technique itself ... and it would have been nice to complete

the writing assignment, because that's what we're really interested in.

274. L: Well, when it's interrupted like that ... to try to get them back in ... and when I did play the poem again, and there were enough groans to make ... it was not that they had anything against it; there was too much of a gap between ... too much living had happened to them between this and to get them back to the way they were thinking before was just, really ... but we did ...
275. M: Uhuhmm...
276. M: It happens anyway when something new is tried, you know, and it's something different for them.
277. B: Well, I think my class really warmed up and responded well. At first I was a little, you know, wondering how they were going to respond, because I thought there was ... the first words that Joan asked for all tended to be negative. She asked how they felt at this moment ... were they bored, tired, mad, hungry ...
278. J: There wasn't a positive word in the group, and I don't think ... some were more or less what you could call neutral words ...
279. B: Yes.
280. J: ...but nobody felt really pleased ...
281. L: But the poem doesn't do that! It doesn't produce that kind of ...
282. B/J: But this was before!
283. J: ... how they felt at that moment.
284. L: Ohhh ...
285. B: And I thought this was their little show of resistance to this new person coming in, and ...
286. J: ... yes, uhuhmm, so one thing that it would be interesting to look at is, um ... whether or not with your other classes, the ones you're going to work with yourselves, do you get the same kind of reaction. And, uh, maybe, too, a little bit on the time of day, because that was morning ... it was really ...
287. B: That should be better, though ...

288. L: It should be better than ... at mid-day, everybody goes to lunch in our class and so that could have been...

289. J: ...and some of us get quite hungry!

[Laughter]

290. B: The other thing I noticed in that class, and because they are the better achieving of my two grade nine classes, once you said it wouldn't count, two of my best students took virtually no part in it at all ...

291. J: Yes.

292. B: It's just amazing!

293. L: Until I said today, you know, I realised that they weren't going to do anything, so I said this is going to count lots...[laughter] ... how much is a lot?

294. B: I hate having to do that all the time ...

295. L: But if that's the only incentive that they know ...

296. B: Yeah, some of them got past that because they did warm up and start to speak first, but I just watched the class ...

297. J: Uhuhmm ...

298. B: I liked your approach ... I thought it was good.

299. L: Yes, it was interesting.

300. B: Yes, different.

301. J: In your class [Barbara's] I talked a lot more about why we were doing the sorts of things we were doing ... in Laura's class, I don't think I got round to that as much as I'd like to, but we were able to talk about several things that had to do with ...

302. L: How far did you go?

303. J: Same ... same as you ...

304. B: They got a lot more in terms of what they heard the first time or two, and, uh, actually I think

that they could have worked at it, could have worked at it quite a bit longer without relistening ...

305. J: ... and their listening tended to be fairly accurate, having heard this through one time ...
306. B: We noticed that, when they picked out the unusual words ...
307. J: Now that is actually fascinating. The word "sophistry" ... and in both classes ... somebody ... one person picked ... tried it and got, uh, "soft history". Now I think that was interesting because for one thing that indicates a willingness to take risks and a willingness to be wrong and a willingness to make guesses, predictions and so on ... doesn't have to be sense ... and in both cases they said it and they had that puzzled look on their faces, but they knew there was a word there, and they had heard it ...
308. L: They were maybe interested because of its uniqueness ...
309. J: Uhuhmmm ...
310. L: ... and they couldn't believe it.
311. J: This is something we did stop to talk about in Barbara's class. One of the kids had heard it, of course, and we talked ... and then when we came back to try to put down the words, we did ...
312. B: ...and they gave reasons.
313. J: And they gave reasons, and I thought we could have done a lot more with that ... and that would be something to come back to ... I wish we had taped that ...
314. L: Well, we did a little of that ...
315. J: I really wish we had, because, Barbara, there were so many things in there that we could have picked up on ... but because they were just, I wasn't able to sort of ... I think I could have gotten them to go on, but they were giving fairly sophisticated reasons ... good reasons, but they were reasons they could have gone beneath, I think, and, uh, particularly with the image relative to sounds. They picked up a lot of the ... I don't know what you'd call them ... the non-verbal aspects of the poem. They mentioned

claws as being extremely ... but one girl said that she, uh, she didn't make any attempt at a word she didn't know and I think that that's a good listening technique. I think we've got to look at it a little bit because ...

316. B: You stop there because ...

317. J: ... if you stop there you give up. But the boy that was working on sophistry, he didn't ... it didn't stick him ... he just sort of noted it in passing ...

318. B: Yeah.

319. J: ... and wondered about it, but he didn't allow it to get in the way. And I keep going back to reading, you know, that the good readers, uh, make connections; if there's a word they don't know they will use the context before, and the context after, to try to get the meaning. The sort of middle-of-the road readers use the context before, but they won't go to the context after it's used. And then the rest who are really having trouble are not making use of the context at all. They're just, they may try to sound out the word or something, but they're not going for the meaning. And so ... there probably is an analogy there to viewing, er, to listening, but it's so hard, because you almost have to do something like that with them ...

320. B: ... to find out ...

321. J: ... to find out what's going on in their heads.

322. L: I tried a similar thing this morning with a grade eight class. First time I read, they had their eyes closed; they just listened to it. Then the second time I got them to jot down words and phrases on the board ... association of words ... only one girl wrote down things that sort of, she associated with boring; her mind was going off in directions, but you have the same thing when you're just jotting down things. I didn't pursue it because I went in a different direction ... but even now ... I'm much more conscious of doing this sort of thing now.

323. B: Well, I really, as I said to you yesterday, like the idea of "extending your ear" because I think the kids got the idea from what she, you know ...

In this extended excerpt, there is evidence of the atmosphere of trust that has been established. The consultant requests feedback on the lesson which she had presented and the teachers openly and honestly give their views. There is much evidence of support and reassurance for the consultant from both Barbara and Laura (268, 270, 274, 277, 298, 299, 306). It is interesting that the discussion revolves around the reactions and behaviours of the students, and not on the process itself. Speculations are made about why the two classes reacted differently, whether because of a "show of resistance" to this new person (285) or because of the time of day (286). Observations are also made about the intentions of the students with regard to the lesson. Because the lesson would not count towards a report card mark, some students did not engage fully. This causes Barbara some discomfort which fits in with her previously stated constructs regarding her view of learning and intrinsic motivation (290). Laura is more philosophical about the students' attitudes and finds her own solution to the problem (293). As the discussion proceeds, the consultant becomes more involved. Through a reconstruction of her experience, starting with a discussion of how the students reacted to the word "sophistry" (307), the consultant advances, with the help of the teachers, her own theory of learning. She predicts and speculates (307, 315), trying to understand the processes the students used in deciphering the word. She makes connections to reading and finally to listening (319).

Essentially, the excerpt is characterised by spectator role language. The participants are reflecting on a shared experience. Through narrative, they dwell on a reconstruction of elements of the teaching situation. In so doing, they move backward and forward in time

to illustrate what has happened and to consider future possibilities. Several intentions are being addressed throughout the narrative. The first is in relation to the demonstration lesson and on how such an activity may be more successful at another time. As well, an intent of collegial support is operating. Thirdly, there is the intention to explore possibilities for new learning. These three intentions are not operating separately, but rather interweave throughout the talk with varying emphasis. The spectator role talk allows the generation of hypotheses: "was [it] because I was strange?" (267), "I thought it was their little show of resistance" (285), "they were maybe interested because of its uniqueness" (308). In relation to spectator role sequences, generalisations arise: "It happens when something new is tried" (276), "It should be better than at mid-day" (288). Spectator role language also gives intimations of constructs: "I hate having to do that all the time" (294), "But if that's the only incentive that they know" (295), "indicates a willingness to take risks" (307), "if you stop there you give up" (317). The elements of talk, trust, support, constructs and intention are all operating in a complex interrelationship with one another in propelling the participants to exploration and learning.

Towards the end of the discussion, new insights emerge. The consultant expresses the sense of a heightened understanding about the relationship among various ways of conveying and representing experience, while the teachers (322, 323) suggest that they have added new ways of construing their work.

Further insights regarding the lesson were later elicited in the

individual interviews with Barbara and Joan. Barbara's reflections on the lesson were:

I learned a lot from it for two reasons: first of all, it was an excellent lesson, and in terms of an approach, it was terrific. It really made me aware of a way to formally teach the listening process. It also gave me a real insight into my class and how they responded to a new person. And because Joan is such a good teacher - although the class really was resistant, at first, to a stranger coming in and taking over - it wasn't long before they warmed up and really got involved in it.

Barbara confirms that she views herself as a learner. She also demonstrates that she is student-centred teacher.

Joan's memories of the lesson were more vivid and extended, possibly because she was directly involved in a situation which was, in some ways, experimental. She narrates two high points of the lesson:

One thing that interested me - and I didn't know this at the time - was that the students' who gave the most response weren't the bright lights in the class. The bright lights, once they'd discovered this wasn't for marks, pretty well tuned out ... and that was maybe okay because some of the other students got a chance to say something, maybe ... and maybe part of it was there was no right answer.

The second high point had to do with the boy who did not understand the word "sophistry."

... he worked away at it until he got a phonetic equivalent and he got "soft history." He suggested this and we talked about it and we talked about trying to make sense out of what you hear ... and so what he had done was to make a substitution for the word that somehow enabled him to go on listening ... so we talked about some of these things because I wanted him to think about the process as well as the actual activity ... I think that's important for kids to reflect on the process, and I don't think in schools today, they get a lot of opportunity to do that.

The consultant's constructs regarding learning are evident in this selection. She is using with the students similar techniques to those she has employed with the teachers in this study. She encourages metacognition, examining the processes involved in solving problems.

A large part of the rest of the meeting is concerned with establishing a schedule for administering the chosen listening test. Both the researcher and the consultant will aid in the administration of the test to a grade seven class and help will be requested from the librarian and the resource teacher.

## REFLECTIONS

The interesting aspect of this session was the discussion of the demonstration lesson. There was enthusiasm and support for Joan and for the process. Barbara and Laura both reacted differently during the demonstration lesson. Barbara, after the first few moments, became more interested in her students' reactions, while Laura became a member of the class and participated in the process. Barbara did not attempt the lesson in its entirety, but one was left with the feeling that she would when an appropriate occasion arose. Laura used the lesson almost immediately, although not in its entirety. Both had different intentions in observing the demonstration lesson.

### Spectator and Participant Role Language

There was a preponderance of spectator role language at the beginning of the session when the participants were discussing the lesson. The language became much more business-like and matter-of-fact

during the second half of the session. The participants were discussing the logistics of administering the Test of Adolescent Language with one of Laura's classes.

I did, in fact, help to administer the test, but did not record any data for it as it was not part of my agenda for the study. However, in my role as participant-observer, I did provide the support in administering the test.

### Interventions

The demonstration lesson was an extended intervention used by the consultant. Joan's purpose in offering to teach the lesson was to provide an alternative way of helping the teachers judge the merit of the technique while seeing it in action rather than just being told the process. Her other purpose was to model the move from talking about strategies to putting the strategies into practice. Joyce and Showers (1983), in their model of inservice, cite five elements that should be included in any inservice program: theory, demonstration, feedback, practice and coaching. The element which is most likely to result in integration of a new skill into a teacher's repertoire is coaching in which teachers observe one another in classrooms and discuss their perceptions. The demonstration lesson was a crucial intervention in moving toward on-going coaching. Or, one might add, it was learning at the point of participation, and discovering in the context of shared reflective discussion.

## SESSION SIX

In this session, the last of the series, the consultant worked with Barbara in examining the Medieval Unit she was teaching. The vehicle for providing structure for the discussion was the Alberta Junior High Language Arts Curriculum Guide. The consultant's strategy appeared to be to focus on the listening concepts and skills as outlined in the curriculum guide and their relationship to the activities Barbara had used in her Medieval Unit.

The consultant provides focus at the beginning by mentioning that she had heard Peter F. being interviewed on the radio. He had been a guest speaker in Barbara's class and had discussed armour used in medieval times.

324. J: I heard Peter F. being interviewed on CBC ...
325. B: Yes. He was quite good.
326. J: He was good.
327. B: ... and Betty C. that does the brass rubbings is excellent ... all the little vignettes she would tell us as she was getting set up. I think the kids really enjoyed her ... and she's very comfortable with the students ... wasn't intimidated by them at all ...
328. J: That's good, then.
329. B: Fascinating!
330. M: Did you have some sheets for the kids to ... as they were listening ... to take down notes?
331. B: No, I didn't. I was less formal than that ... more informal ...
332. M: That was quite a listening exercise, then!
333. J: Yes, it really was.

The intentions of the researcher and the consultant at this time are to elicit from the teacher examples of the activities she had used in her classroom in connection with listening, but Barbara appears not yet to understand the intent of the interventions. The consultant intervenes to bring the topic back to Peter F. and the types of activities he had used in the classroom, in an attempt to have the teacher elaborate.

334. J: They were listening in this case to a ...
335. B: ... a lecture. He used the board when he was talking about the three kinds of horses that a knight owned ... and he put the names of the types down and explained what they were for. He also had artifacts there ... he'd done his own reproductions of armour. He'd worked these himself in his own workshop ... and the samples of mail that he passed around dispelled some of the myths in terms of armour ...
336. J: Uhhuh ...
337. B: ... how much it weighed ... and the myths particularly about how knights had to be hoisted on to their horses, and, of course, that wasn't true ... they had to be able to get up on their feet and fight ... the armour had to allow them to do this.
338. J: So what did they do? They listened to him and ... they asked questions, and then they went up and looked at his artifacts ... tried the helmets on.
339. B: ... because it's not ... it used to be part of social studies ... we were sort of picking up any of the historical information kind of through osmosis ...

Barbara is still not quite clear about the consultant's intentions, but the intervention of bringing the topic back to Peter F. (132) elicits from Barbara a narrative of the happenings in the

classroom. She appears to be justifying having Peter talk to her students (339), yet, taken in context, this observation (339) perhaps reveals her constructs regarding the wider culture of which her language arts class is a part. In a previous session, she had talked about having students think about their later education in high school.

340. J: ... and so they would apply this information in their research projects?

341. B: Right. And some of the references he made some of the students had come across in their reading.

342. M: That's interesting.

343. B: Yes ... and I thought that would be fascinating stuff for the kids ...

344. J: Actually, the other thing that you mentioned, too, the brass rubbings, that is a real listening exercise, too, because she would be teaching ...

345. B: ... for the instructions ...

346. J: So, they're listening to instructions ...

347. B: Right ...

348. J: ... to instructions ... [writing it down]

349. B: ... for this art form, I suppose ...

350. J: Uhhuh ... for an art form ...

351. B: As well, she had it very well organised because there were a few materials we were using in order for them to ... for example, when it was time for them to do the rubbing with the nylon stocking, they, to get an eraser, had to turn in their crayon ...

352. J: Oh yes ... yes ...

353. B: ... and to get their hanger for their brass rubbings, they had to hand back their eraser. And she also provided them with a little history, a history of each of the ones they had

chosen, to put on the back ...

354. J: Okay, so they were listening to instructions for an art form - for example, how to do brass rubbings ...

356. B: Right.

357. J: So that's a listening activity in itself. Now, would any of that come out in the writing later?

358. B: Probably not ... well, not specifically because they were going to have to repeat the process to explain to everybody else how they did it.

By helping the teacher to indwell in the activities she had used in the classroom, the consultant is helping Barbara focus on their relationship to the concepts and skills in the curriculum. Her interventions (340, 344, 346) are in participant role language which evokes a response from Barbara in spectator role (351, 353). The consultant's question related to writing (357) is designed to focus attention on the original intent of examining listening and writing.

359. B: The other thing I thought these experiences were good for ... they show two people who were really committed to a hobby ... they've made their hobby into something ... more than just something to do in their spare time ... they're experts in something they were just sort of interested in when they started out ...

360. J: Now that's interesting. I wonder if that's somewhere in here? [scanning curriculum guide] But that's a form of appreciation, isn't it?

361. B: Yes, yes, that's what I was thinking ... realisation and ...

362. J: They're doing all these things, aren't they? They would be expressing ... well, maybe not a personal response to the brass rubbing, but, uh, "obtaining additional information or clarification" ...

363. B: Oh, they did that, for sure!

364. J: So that's here ... that's "Listening - four"...
365. B: You know, something as simple as the way she told them to find the edge of the brass. She sort of presses the nylon down in the middle ...
366. J: Yes ... and "evaluating and extending received ideas" ... they're doing that with the armour work ...
367. B: Yes ...
368. J: ... and "appreciate spoken messages of others and identify with the experience of others" ...
369. B: Yes ...
370. J: Isn't that what they're doing? So that's ...
371. B: I would say that was ...
372. J: ... "listening to an expert" ...

In this excerpt, there is an interesting exchange begun by Barbara as she elaborates on the theme of the guest speakers. She is adding to her narrative and in so doing is giving intimation of her views on teaching as having implications for life-long learning (359). The consultant is constantly drawing the teacher's attention to the concepts in the curriculum guide, her intention being to have the teacher make her own connections between her practices and the theory (360, 362, 366, 368, 372). Barbara's words and tone of voice in (361, 363, 369) indicate that she is discovering connections. "I would say that was ..." (371) intimates that she is now beginning to speculate for herself in a larger context.

The consultant moves the discussion to the culminating projects in the Medieval Unit. She will keep recording the ideas as she has been doing, thus demonstrating techniques for the teacher's learning.

373. B: I've encouraged them to do at least one art-type project, but always give a written explanation.
374. J: Uhhuh.
375. B: Some are doing a map of Charlemagne's territories and they should write an explanatory note about the impact ... but they range from everything from looking at the Bayeux Tapestry to monasteries ... there's a real variety.
376. J: Are they going to present these in some way to the class?
377. B: They'll just be visuals. They're not going to have an oral presentation as such ... basically, because it's such a small unit. In social studies they do an expert file which is very similar to the independent study projects that I do part way ... where they pick a topic and then they must present it either orally or in a visual display ... so I've tried to narrow the focus a bit there.
378. J: Uhhuh ...
379. B: A couple of them I've tried to get to compose music from the time period ...
380. J: They're going to perform this, are they?
381. B: Well , the music teacher has loaned me two of his textbooks and there's lots of information. It didn't get them really excited, but they've been reading about it and one wants to ... one boy said (he's a trumpet player) he was thinking of trumpet calls and so on, so he's going to see what he can do ... like tournament or whatever. So we'll see what he comes up with ...
382. M: That will be interesting ...
383. B: And there's also another one where they research the musical instruments and describe them ... one of the girls plays the flute and she is going to talk to the music teacher to get a recorder because that's more authentic.
384. J: They played recorder music for what you'd call a feast or ...
385. M: This would lead nicely into Shakespeare, wouldn't it?

386. B: Oh, yes. I've been telling my students ... I've got a daughter in grade eleven social studies right now where they cover very quickly the medieval period ... they look at feudalism and that's about it, but then they really get into the Renaissance, so this is good background ...
387. J: So they could do that either way. They could listen to records or recorded music and find something suitable for these purposes ... and that fits in with this idea of "appreciation, sensitivity"...
388. B: But then there are a number of them that involve writing, like writing a short story with the setting of the time period. A couple of them are writing fairy tales, because we did look at fairy tales very quickly ... I gave them the common characteristics and I just gave them randomly. After they read them themselves and looked for these characteristics ...

Barbara, in describing her students' projects, reveals much about her philosophy of teaching and learning. She indicates that students have choice in their assignments, choices which are relevant to the students, yet she provides support for them through suggestions of types of projects (373) and provision of resources (381, 383, 388). She does not impose her ideas, but practises her belief that students should strive to make their own decisions within the framework she has provided (381, 383). Barbara is reinforcing the consultant's view of her as a teacher who is using the integrated approach to the teaching of language arts.

The consultant continues to encourage Barbara to describe her classroom practices, each time generalising them to the curriculum concepts and skills. By the end of the session, Barbara is surprised to find that she has covered many of the concepts. She later reflects:

... when we spent time going over the Medieval Unit, looking for listening skills, I thought I really hadn't done anything, and by the time we finished talking, I realised I had done a lot of things.

The session ends in an intriguing fashion. The topic broached by Barbara is evaluation, a topic which had been consistently raised throughout the sessions.

389. B: What about evaluating the listening?
390. J: Well ...
391. B: Would that be in the form, then of the written response?
392. J: I think you could evaluate some things there.
393. B: Yes. [Pause] Should we have some with evaluation?
394. J: That's about the only way. It's like reading. How do you measure the ability to read?
395. B: Yes, that's right.
396. J: It almost has to be in some other form.
397. B: Yes.
398. J: And so, listening to something ... but there again, back to the Wilkinson Test idea. It doesn't just have to be at the content level, because you could devise a listening test ..... where you have a tape and you ask some of these other questions ...
399. B: Yes, that's right.
400. M: Yes ...
401. J: ... "Did these two people speak to each other appropriately?" kind of thing ...
402. B: Yes ... yes ...
403. J: ... or "Are these people friends, or are they enemies?"

404. B: Yes ...
405. J: ... or "Did they know each other, even though they don't say so?" Sometimes you can pick this up non-verbally ... and I wouldn't mind trying to work out something like that if you ever wanted to tackle it. I would be really interested in trying to see, because I think you can do it.
406. M: I think many of the exercises you've done here with listening and then having to write afterwards ...
407. B: Write, yes.
408. J: And also other forms of production, like the brass rubbings ...
409. B: Right ... you're not going to be able to do that...
410. J: ... absolutely not, unless they've been able to...
411. B: ... yes ... listen to the instructions ...
412. J: So I suppose that listening tests, per se, don't always have to be writing tests.
413. B: No, I wouldn't think so.
414. J: It could be a form of doing?
415. B: Okay ... or behaviour ...
416. J: ... or behaviour ... and then some of the things that I think - we tend to call them attitudinal things like "willingness to set aside biases" and "willingness to listen and respond in small group situation" ... these kind of things that are ... really ... you might evaluate with checklists. You know, the elementary anecdotal record is not such a bad idea ...
417. B: Well, what I did with my grade eights as a follow-up to their writing unit ... they were in newspaper groups and I created these groups and then the group had to elect an editor ... they had to choose a time period that the newspaper would reflect and then it was library research and they had to put this together. But for evaluation, for their individual mark, they had to evaluate each other out of ten and they had

to deal with sharing ideas, cooperating, to try to give them an idea ... so that would be that kind of attitudinal thing relating to other kids in the group, to depend on them to get their work done so it could be put in its final form ...

418. J: You see, evaluation doesn't all have to be teacher-directed and it doesn't have to be piece-meal because ... now I can't remember the title, and I never can, but there's a writer called Curtis who writes about evaluations, and he says that writing, er, evaluation falls into three categories - one that he calls prespecified response, and that's like your multiple choice or your true-false or wherever there's an exact, precise answer, something you're looking for and nothing else will do. Then there's another kind ... I wish I could remember what it's called, but it's the kind that when you give the kids an essay to write, and you are expecting that there'll be a certain type of outcome for it because you have set up criteria ...
419. B: Uhhuh.
420. J: ... and I ... Margot, do you remember what this is called?
421. M: No ...
422. J: ...but it's the sort of thing where, uh, a lot of evaluation might fall ... and then there's the third one which he calls "naturalistic" observation, and this can be a check list, it can just be observations ... it can be a check list the teacher uses or the other kids do ... it can be an anecdotal record ... there are all kinds of other things you can do there ...
423. B: Uhhuh.
424. J: ... and then, um, all these things are all kinds of evaluations that you're going to do and you can use all of them for formative purposes, that is for finding out what's going on for teaching purposes ... you can use all of them or some of them ...

The cadence of this sequence moves from the specific to the general in the discussion of evaluation. The two questions posed by Barbara (389, 391) are tentatively answered by the consultant (392, 394). The act of thinking out loud triggers an alternative idea (398) and practical suggestions are made. In keeping with her constructs that you cannot impose ideas on people, she makes suggestions, seeking confirmation from the teacher, while also offering her support in the process. She phrases a summary statement almost like a question (412), with rising intonation at the end, a way of giving the teacher an opportunity to disagree. This is followed by a true question which prompts the teacher to refine the consultant's suggestion (415) by placing it in her own personal context (417). The consultant then translates the idea to a more theoretical level (418), while still including practical applications of the theory.

Essentially, this session is an example of the power of expressive talk in demonstrating to the teacher the realisation of her original intentions and the reconfirmation of her constructs regarding herself as a teacher interested in helping her students achieve their potential. The context of the talk is the exploration of the connection between the unit activities and the listening skills and concepts. Spectator role talk predominates, but is interspersed with participant role talk. In effect, the participant talk appears to be generating the spectator talk. This intricate interplay intimates constructs: "they've made their hobby into something" (359), "I've encouraged them to do an art project" (373), "so this is good background" (386); and, generates hypotheses: "so I suppose that listening tests don't always have to be writing tests" (412), "I thought that would be fascinating stuff" (343). Several

intentions are operating simultaneously. There is an intention to match theory with practice, to provide collegial support, to bring the study to some closure, and to examine the learning that might have occurred.

Interventions play an important role in various ways: raising Barbara's awareness in relating the unit activities to the listening skills (338, 340); prompting talk (357); suggesting possible activities to be used in the classroom (385); keeping the focus on the topic (366, 368); and, providing support (382, 405). Once more, a complex relationship among various elements is operating. The interaction among the elements enables new insights to be gained.

#### REFLECTIONS

This session was marked by a sense of closure. It was the last scheduled meeting of the group to discuss the topic of listening. In itself it was a reflection, a pause to consider what had occurred during the past few months. In structuring the meeting in the way she did, Joan allowed us to reflect on how our intentions had been met. By the end of the meeting, each of us left with a feeling of accomplishment of having achieved our goals. Yet there was little finality about the proceedings. Even at the end of the meeting, there were questions being asked which intimated a continuation of the process, although not perhaps in the same form. Barbara and Laura, have, in fact, become involved in an on-going project which examines the relationship between fine arts and language arts, something that could have been surmised from the types of activities they used in their classes.

## REFLECTIONS : ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW

The reflections so far have been my own ponderings about the process at each step. My original intention had been to have the teachers and consultant reflect individually in an informal discussion with me at the conclusion of the study. During these subsequent discussions with Barbara and Joan, my main aims were to discover what they felt about the process, and to try to ascertain what they felt they had learned.

Barbara, in reflecting on the process, described Joan as a catalyst who "got them going in the right direction." When I asked what she thought might have happened in regard to her teaching of the listening strand, she responded:

I probably would have gone on saying that listening was part of the curriculum, but I don't know what to do with it except in the more formal kinds of things you do such as spelling and dictation, things you assume involve listening skills.

In response to the question about what she felt she had learned from the experience, Barbara responded:

I've really learned a lot from it, particularly in the way of looking at evaluating what I've been doing in the classroom, and particularly when we spent the time going over the Medieval Unit looking for listening activities. I had thought that I really hadn't done anything, and by the time we'd finished talking, I realised I had done a lot of things. I think if you're going to do self-evaluation, it's just made me more aware of that aspect of what I'm doing.

I was also interested in finding out if she had noticed any effect on the students:

I think it's probably more evident with me, my awareness, although, certainly, I'm now intentionally trying to include the kinds of things we talked about and did.

This last comment brought sharply into focus the fact that change is a process that resides in the individual. It takes time, and time must be provided for educators to indwell in the innovations that they are attempting. Personal concerns need to be addressed first before there can be a lasting effect on the students.

The discussion with Joan was of extended length and revealed many insights into her beliefs about herself, her role, and how it was changing. She felt that the process had worked well. She was able to put into practice some of the things that she believed in. She was doing her own testing of hypotheses particularly about the way adults learn and about the role of the consultant in that learning.

I think we have found out that going to a school for one visit over the noon hour may be very nice and social, but it doesn't really have any benefits and it doesn't have any impact on teaching practice except maybe for the ten percent that just have to hear an idea and they can go away and try it. I think that what we were trying to do is closer to what I would like to be able to do, where you can go and spend a fair bit of time ... I wasn't there nearly as much as I would like to have been. I would like to have been able to go and have time with those classes that I taught, to follow up and to complete the lesson I was trying to teach. I would have liked to have had more time talking with the teachers about what they were doing and looking at their units and trying to see where, probably in existence, are things that they would like to teach, maybe are teaching, but don't know they're teaching. So I think that the best professional development happens in the school. It happens on site and it happens over a period of time. It happens when you spend enough time in a group together to build up a kind of relationship that is a mutually confident relationship.

In the matter of her perceptions of what she had learned, she was also very definite.

I always learn something new and probably more so when I have the opportunity to work with teachers who are good teachers ... it gives me more of a chance to learn because of their perceptions of the situation. That, for me, is useful because it gives me, for one thing, a chance to check my perceptions of what is going on against those of somebody else who is equally competent to make those kinds of judgments.

In looking at her learning from another angle, she discussed her role as a jurisdictional consultant in promoting the implementation of the provincial language arts program. For consultants and teachers, there is always a tension between what the curriculum states and what happens in the classroom.

What is interesting is that you have a curriculum and it's theoretical to a large extent. Then the inevitable moment comes when you think, "Now how can I turn that into practice, and learn from it?" And, of course, I could see that that's what was going on. So that's the other side of it, isn't it? That this document is practical ... it has a practical edge to it and that good practitioners are doing those sorts of things now. So, when somebody says, "This is a very nice curriculum, but, of course, you know I don't know how to teach that," then you are able to say that you saw a teacher doing this and this and this, and to me that is teaching these skills that are listed in the curriculum.

From the discussion, I perceived that the teachers and consultant had, indeed, benefitted from the process, and had demonstrated that they had learned something from the whole process.

## THE STEPPING STONES REVISITED

This study was undertaken with the intention of examining the process through which teachers learn. The stepping stones of the collaborative meetings provided the framework for the interaction. From this framework emerged certain patterns.

### The Role of the Consultant

Throughout the meetings themselves, and the series of meetings, it became apparent that there was an agenda which was being followed, one which was flexible and malleable. This agenda was designed by the consultant to accommodate the intentions of the participants. A routine was established for each meeting in which all the participants were actively engaged in exploring teaching and learning processes. The consultant was the catalyst for the learning, the one responsible for ensuring an enabling context for the teachers and the researcher. During the final session it became obvious that the consultant had had a plan for these series of meetings, a plan which demonstrated her sensitivity to adult learners, the change process and the role of language and learning. She was leader, facilitator, expert and learner.

### Development of Trust

Although a certain level of trust had been developed among the participants before the study began, the new context of interaction placed different demands on each participant. It was interesting to observe the differences in the comfort level of the participants from the initial to the final session. How was this atmosphere of trust

developed? The first meetings were devoted to building group cohesion, the impetus coming from the consultant. Time was allowed and the meetings were structured for intimating intentions, for refining constructs and for establishing a common focus. Critical to the success of the project was the meeting of intentions, evidenced by the increasingly active involvement of the participants in the learning.

The amount of risk-taking increased as the sessions progressed. The consultant modelled the risk-taking aspect by offering to demonstrate a lesson in two classes. The teachers became more open and free in their comments regarding their beliefs and constructs, while the researcher's role changed from that of observer to an accepted member of the group. Participants provided support for one another both verbally and non-verbally.

#### Role of Talk

The other major thrust of this study was to examine the role of expressive talk in both participant and spectator role. Through talk, particularly in the spectator role where action was not required, the intentions of the participants were indicated, and constructs were defined. Spectator role talk allowed the participants to indwell in the learning, and for the learning to indwell in them. The talk released tacit knowledge, generated stories, encouraged speculation and hypotheses, and uncovered implicit theories. The talk allowed the participants to make discoveries.

### Patterns of Intervention

Three distinct patterns of intervention were displayed. The first was language interventions. The consultant, especially, was skilled at making the appropriate comment, or posing the appropriate question. All participants used language interventions at various times throughout the sessions. The interventions were used to probe for more information, to encourage speculation and hypothesising, to define constructs and intentions, to provide support and confirmation, to intimate points of view, to describe techniques and strategies, to suggest resources, and to refocus on a topic.

The second pattern was the use of interventions which were more process-oriented. These tended to be context-embedded and included the demonstration, the listening tests and the curriculum guide. The consultant used her knowledge of models and research associated with learning theory and staff development in order to intervene at appropriate moments.

A third pattern observed was one not detailed in this analysis; that of the consultant's "implicit behaviours" (Mehrabian, 1980). Paralanguage, intonation, tone of voice, body posture demonstrated to the participants the consultant's support, approval, enthusiasm and interest.

Finally, the consultant chose not to intervene at different points throughout the process. These points appeared to be when the teachers were "telling their stories" and when she felt that she could not tell them what to do, preferring rather that they make their own informed decisions.

The stepping stones, then, were the process through which all participants became learners. The process was not linear and divided into distinct categories, but was rather a complicated and intricate melding of intention, constructs, support, collaboration, interventions and, particularly, language in the expressive mode. If these essential elements are present and operating contiguously, then the process works.

## Chapter Five

### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

I pin my hopes to quiet processes and small circles in which I believe I shall see vital and transforming events taking place (Britton, 1982, p.11).

The changing expectations of society for schools and schooling place different demands on teachers and administrators. The knowledge explosion has necessitated a shift in focus from the teaching of content to the teaching of strategies and processes for critical and creative thinking. Within this context, the teacher as learner becomes important. Contiguously, there is a growing awareness of the interactive nature of learning and the role that talk plays in that learning. Consequently, the aim of this study was to explore the process of teacher learning in collaboration with an experienced jurisdictional consultant within the context of the school situation.

### THE STUDY

The study involved two effective, experienced junior high language arts teachers and an area language arts consultant. The teachers had requested assistance from the consultant to examine more closely the strategies they were using in their classes, particularly in the area of listening. During a four-month period, the discussions during regularly scheduled meetings were recorded and later analysed qualitatively to determine the process involved in the interactions, the role of

determine the process involved in the interactions, the role of expressive talk in both spectator and participant roles, the role of intention, and the kinds of interventions used by the consultant. Of importance to the study was that there be an already established relationship of trust among the teachers, consultant and the researcher.

## OVERVIEW

At first examination, the context might appear simple: a series of meetings at which the participants discussed a topic of shared interest. Within the situation, however, was a complex interaction of a number of factors. There was the element of time. Because the teachers' decision to pursue professional development was self-sponsored, they had to find and devote their free time, usually noon hours. A further complication arose in trying to match the consultant's schedule with their own. Consequent extended intervals between meetings necessitated recalling and reviewing previous conclusions, as well as reconfirming the collaborative relationship. Within this context of time, and within the collaborative approach, a mutually agreeable and workable agenda needed to be initiated, refined, established and maintained. Simultaneously, an atmosphere of trust needed to be developed. Though the two teachers held respect for one another from previous professional associations, the added factor of their commitment to a learning situation - a context of relative risk and self-revelation for each member - heightened the level of trust needed.

A central element in the process was the role that the consultant had to play. Despite her minimising her central role, ascribed to her

initially, she was still viewed by the teachers as facilitator and expert. Researchers have commented on the often condescending attitude students hold to learning because of their perceptions of the teacher's dominant role; teachers may hold analogous perceptions of central office personnel. Thus, the consultant needed to establish an enabling context within which the teachers would assume participation and responsibility as co-partners. In the process, she attempted to determine their needs and to infer their constructs while intimating her own. Together, they proceeded to evolve a mutual intention, an agenda, and a structure for pursuing it. All these factors were integrated and continuing determinants in the learning process, at one level. However, once intention had been established, the consultant also had to make a specific decision about the concept of learning which might be most effective to realise that intention. Further, though new knowledge enlarges personal perspective, the test of this professional knowledge is in its implementation and refinement in practice. This step, evolved from the preceding elements, the consultant and teachers also took. On the basis of this overview, certain conclusions and implications may be drawn, from the specific context, for further consideration.

## CONCLUSIONS

### The Process

In the matter of the relationship between thought and language, we cannot be certain about our perceptions whenever we attempt to articulate a process: the mind does not release all its secrets.

However, in relation to the process of teacher learning in this study, some elements of the process are hazarded. Though these elements are discussed separately, they are perceived to operate in interrelated ways. Because part of the focus of the study was on consultant interventions, these are also carried in the text, in relation to the constituent elements described.

### Intention

Intention is central to learning. It is our willingness to know, to create for ourselves a reality that will make sense of, and bring order to, our world. Intention is self-directed; it is not and cannot be imposed from without. Once intention has been formulated, we are free to act in accordance with our perceptions, free to take risks, free to make discoveries. In pursuing our intentions, we rely on our store of tacit knowledge, that which we didn't know we knew. Though intention is highly personal, the pursuit of intention tends to be a collaborative venture.

In the collaborative context of learning, the consultant's role is to explore, identify and help refine intentions. She cannot impose her ideas on the others; rather she must facilitate the process of helping the teachers realise their intentions. To do so, she must be skilled in ways of identifying and acting upon them. Thus she listens, confirms, extends, suggests possibilities, and recapitulates and synthesises at points. Continuously, she is testing her perceptions to assure accuracy. Because intention occurs in a specific context, she learns about the context. Because implicit in her approach is achieving learning, she involves the teachers in the activities, and suggests

possible strategies for action. Because of the need to relate the new to the unknown, she integrates the new with the known, while also relating new possibilities. She is operating the "zone of proximal development" (Vygotsky, 1978), enhancing the teachers' potential for learning. Because what is prescribed to be taught is ultimately relevant, she relates activities to the curriculum guide. Through probing the activities in the Medieval Unit, she confirms the perception of teaching skills in context, rather than in isolation. Because "showing" is a way of promoting learning, she demonstrates a lesson, a major intervention involving her in some risk. Because the ultimate goal of the learning is its implementation in the classroom, she ties the learning in with practices, always confirming that they are appropriate. All these interventions are pursuit of intention. Intention is not just determining what to do, but also carrying it through all stages. In the collaborative, on-going context, the consultant is involved in all stages.

### Constructs

If intention is the driving force for action, personal constructs underly intention. Our intentions are formulated in accordance with our construct system, our way of viewing the world. Constructs are patterns that we employ to bring order to and make sense of our world (Kelly, 1955). Constructs, like intentions, are unique to the individual. We may be able to understand another person's intentions and constructs, but we will not have identical constructs or intentions. For this study, the Sociality Corollary of Kelly's theory (1955) is of significance:

To the extent that one person construes the construct processes of another, he may play a role in a social process involving the other person (p.95)

The consultant is acting in just such a role. A main basis for her interventions is a sensitivity to the teachers' constructs. She demonstrates this sensitivity through allowing and encouraging the teachers to share not only ideas, but also experiences, reactions and feelings. She listens attentively to what they have to say, and validates their sharing through being open about her own beliefs, values, experiences, and feelings. She confirms the teachers' perceptions of her as an effective teacher through sharing professional anecdotes and through demonstrating a lesson. She tests, confirms and extends her reading of the teachers' constructs through comments and questions, which are probably prompted subconsciously.

Barbara is revealed as a sensitive, caring teacher. She constantly strives to find the best means of helping her students reach their potential. She believes in the goal of self-directed learning, perhaps because she is, herself, a self-directed learner. Working collaboratively is important to Barbara. Several times she mentions team-teaching. Her participation in this study indicates her belief in collaborative learning. Barbara conveys the sense that she is a confident person, willing to take risks in pursuing her intentions. The latter is evident in her participation in the study. Her intention is to learn different ways in which she can promote learning in her students, while at the same time recognising the learning in herself. She views learning and teaching as not being confined to the one classroom or even to the one grade. Rather, she has a global, holistic

perception, feeling comfortable in integrating into her units other subjects and a variety of learning activities. She views herself as a teacher who sometimes teaches intuitively. When the intuition causes too much dissonance, then she requests assistance. She is constantly searching for new ideas to use, yet she will not put the ideas into operation until she indwells in them for use at an appropriate time. With regard to language and learning, she has strong beliefs, particularly about the teacher's responsibility in that area. The insights she gains from the discussions resonate with her own personal and professional constructs, the professional influencing, perhaps, the direction that she pursues; the personal, a factor in the way she couches her responses.

The same willingness to risk, to provide the best education for her students, to try new ideas is also observable in Laura. The difference occurs in the time taken to transfer the new activities to the classroom. Laura appears to like to try out new ideas immediately, while Barbara tends to ponder them before implementation.

Constructs and intentions appear to be closely linked. In pursuing intention, constructs may be altered as they appear to be in the study. Both teachers acquired a different view of the listening strand of the curriculum. Participation in the study has, perhaps, been a factor in prompting them to be part of a group in their school now examining language and learning in different subjects areas. Both belong to a system support group for integrating language arts and fine arts.

### Expressive Language

A principal means of entering into constructs and intentions is through the use of language, particularly in the expressive mode. Expressive language, closest to the self, intimates constructs and reveals experiences. It is expressive language that is closest to thought, constantly moving and exploring, at times in a seemingly random manner. It generates ideas, builds one idea on another, reveals insights. Often, it will contain the first expression of what will be important ideas. Through the talk, the participants covered a wide range of topics dealing not only with language arts, but also with other subject areas, and topics which impinged upon the education of students. They amassed a wealth of ideas and strategies that they could use in their classes, partly through recall of ideas gleaned from their own experience, and partly from the planting of ideas by the consultant. The talk about listening, in particular, generated a realisation in the teachers that they were already doing many things in the listening area, even at a subconscious level. The talk confirmed and affirmed the role of intuition in teaching.

### Spectator Role

Expressive language in the spectator role, is reflective. Through the spectator stance, we reflect on our experiences, and we reveal our attitudes and beliefs. Spectator role allows us to tell our own "stories" and to reveal insights. Within spectator role language, we carry embedded knowledge and intuitive theory. Talk in the spectator role allows us to build our own theories, and to mesh them with the

theories of others.

The participants in the study, used spectator role frequently. As the trust level grew, the stories became longer and more engaging. When Barbara was discussing the activities she used in her Medieval Unit, it was apparent that the telling of the story allowed her to reflect on what had happened, and to gain insights into why the things she did intuitively were appropriate and valid. The talk had allowed her to step back and view the unit from a different perspective. In the reflections, the consultant guided and prompted the teachers to higher levels of understanding. She encouraged the teachers to examine the activities in the wider context of their beliefs about teaching and learning, to observe relationships among the various elements of the teaching process, and, to speculate about transfer of activities to the classroom.

It was through language, and in particular, through expressive language, that intention was defined; through spectator role, constructs were shared and recognised.

### Trust

The element of trust was present at the outset of the study; however, trust had been established previously under different conditions. Now, a deeper, trusting atmosphere had to be established. This was built throughout the sessions and was recognised through increased participation and engagement in the learning. It was developed through the operation of all of the above elements working together simultaneously.

### Interventions

Interventions have been previously defined in Chapter Two as any positive comments, acts or implicit behaviours that promote the growth and learning of an individual. The interventions are largely the domain of the consultant in this study. Her involvement in the study is an intervention in itself, an important intervention within the collaborative learning context. She provides the continuity within and among the sessions; she is the connection with the body of theory and research in the language arts field; she is knowledgeable about and skilled in working with teachers. Her sensitivity to the teachers' constructs and intentions is revealed through the talk. She senses when the teachers require confirmation and approval for the activities they are doing. She is aware of the backgrounds of the teachers and is able to design the interventions to suit the needs of the teachers. Being aware that talk is sometimes not enough, she uses the intervention of demonstrating a lesson. She is also aware of the appropriateness of non-intervention, of when to sit back and let the stories be told. Knowledge of when not to intervene is an intervention in itself. Because she is aware that modelling is important, she models her own learning through sharing experiences, through posing questions that promote thinking at more abstract levels. The skill is knowing when and at what level it is appropriate to intervene.

### REVIEW

In any collaborative learning situation, there are certain

essential elements as described above. These elements are not discrete; they are dependent on one another, and are woven together in a complex manner. It is the interaction of these elements that promotes learning. However, there appear to be certain elements that are necessary to provide a basis for learning in the collaborative situation. The role of the consultant is an important element in providing the structure or framework within which to work. The consultant should be knowledgeable about the teaching and learning processes and about ways in which adults learn. Expertise in a subject area is desirable, as well as expertise in working with teachers in a collaborative situation. The interventions used should be appropriate to the situation and should lead to helping teachers articulate and put into practice their implicit theories of teaching and learning. The perception of the consultant as expert and evaluator must be changed to that of facilitator of and partner in learning. Once an intention to learn has been formulated, the consultant can work cooperatively with the teachers in assisting them in the pursuit of their intentions. Learning is a process. It is not linear. If innovations are to be implemented, teachers require time, support and leadership in examining and implementing practices that will ultimately benefit the students.

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Until recently, most attempts at teacher development have originated from outside the school. They have been of the "top-down" variety. Traditionally, inservice workshops have been of the large-group, one-shot kind. However, there is a trend away from this

type of inservice to a more "grass roots" level. Knowing what we do about learning, we have to provide opportunities for teachers to actively engage in learning. As the preceding conclusions convey, the conventional approach to teacher development is not enough. Therefore, we need to add to, extend, and refine our approach. However, this has certain implications for practice.

1. One of the crucial elements identified was time. With the increasing demands on schools to fulfill more roles, time is a precious commodity. Increased provision of time for teachers to meet with one another on topics of mutual interest and benefit, is required.
2. On-going support for teachers' learning is important within the school, the larger jurisdiction and the wider community. Support can be moral, monetary, or material. Communication of "what we are all about" as teachers is important.
3. The role of the consultant has already been mentioned as crucial. Implicit in this is that consultants be knowledgeable about their subject area, but, more important, that they hold and articulate a holistic view of the teaching and learning processes. The perception of the consultant must move from that of expert and superior to that of facilitator and partner in learning. Even more crucial is that the consultant have the skills to work collaboratively with teachers in helping them grow and develop.
4. The benefits of on-going, long-term collaboration have already been mentioned. This has implications for the consultants as well as the teachers. They have to set their priorities according to the time they have available and the number of schools who request

their help. There must be opportunities provided for all consultants to collaborate with and to support one another in working with schools.

5. Collaborative learning has implications for the methods of inservice delivery. Innovative approaches are required in order to support this collaborative aspect. Networks, support groups, peer tutoring and coaching are ways of accomplishing this goal.
6. Support for teacher learning can be provided at the school level and at the system level. But not to be omitted is the place of the university in the teaching/learning process. The university can provide a context for teacher learning, particularly in the area of language and learning. University personnel are a useful resource in working with teachers on action research projects which examine teachers' practices and implicit theories. They can provide the necessary research skills and elicit the questions the teachers need to answer. The university is fostering the connection with schools through the provision of summer institutes for teachers, and continuing education courses geared to the interests of teachers.
7. Within the schools themselves, collaborative learning can be encouraged by the administration through the effective allocation of time, resources, and support. The implementation of a long-range staff development plan that recognises both school and individual interests is an essential step in creating the atmosphere for collaborative learning. Support is being given to schools through the provision of a program in which support groups are being formed with schools interested in examining the

area of staff development as it applies to their own schools.

Opportunities will be provided for teachers to talk to one another about plans for staff development in their schools.

8. Within the wider context of the school jurisdictions, there should be acknowledgement of and support for the concept of collaborative learning through the provision of resources and personnel to work with the schools and teachers in their learning.
9. The belief that intentions are key to learning has implications for curriculum programs and their implementation. New curricula are mandated for implementation in the schools. Implementation is generally short with little provision of time, resources and personnel for inservicing the new programs. This has to be done by jurisdictional consultants. The number of new programs being implemented is also increasing, and this is reflected in the organisation of school timetables to fit all the requirements. Although curricula are developed by groups of teachers and generally reflect a perceived need, if these programs are mandated, there is little intention formulated on the part of teachers. Time and resources should be available to provide on-going inservice for teachers, so that they will build ownership and commitment to the program.
10. The Alberta Teachers' Association is now recognising the need for alternative ways of providing staff development. Funds have always been available on an individual basis, but now funding is being given directly to school-based and jurisdictional staff development projects. Closer contact with Alberta Education in providing resources and funding for teachers, particularly in the

implementation of new curricula, could occur. Specialist Councils play an important role in organising conferences for teachers.

They are now beginning to publish teacher research accounts. Yet, they could take a more active part in providing opportunities for teachers to work together at local levels.

Underlying the above implications is a belief that teachers are the key people in providing effective education that will benefit students. Recognition of the interactive nature of learning must be acknowledged. It is not a transmission of knowledge from the teacher to the student, but a collaborative process where both student and teacher are engaged in the business of learning. Support is essential in promoting the concept of collaborative learning among teachers.

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

This study was an attempt to examine how teachers learn within a collaborative context. Several implications for research arise from this.

1. Using a case study approach, research could be conducted into a process of learning through small-group collaboration as described in this study, but extended to include classroom practice. Accounts of teachers' observations of the process and descriptions of their learning could be published.
2. Collaborative action research projects, as described by Hunt and Clark (1985), could be developed involving university researchers and teachers on topics of mutual interest.

3. Teacher circles and support groups are growing in number, but could be further encouraged. Comparisons could be made among the different configurations of groups, whether they be school or university based, or eclectic. The process of learning in different group configurations could be examined.
4. It would be interesting to conduct a similar study to this in different subjects and at different school levels. Do the same conclusions still hold true when the variables are altered?
5. An examination of the process of learning when the participants in the project are unfamiliar with one another might provide interesting data in comparison to this study. Similarly, would the same conclusions hold true if the teachers were inexperienced?
6. A closer examination of the role of intention in teacher learning is warranted, particularly with respect to the implementation of new curricula and programs.
7. Further investigation is required into the role of consultants as "cognitive coaches."
8. The role of the consultant has been described in this study as an essential element in teacher learning, at least in providing an initial structure for the learning. How a consultant works with teachers warrants closer investigation, particularly in the area of implicit behaviours and the affective.

#### RETROSPECTS AND PROSPECTS

I had an intention when I began this research. The intention was strong and arose from my experience as a consultant. The position of consultant can be exhilarating, frustrating, confusing and exciting.

It demands flexibility and a tolerance for ambiguity. It also demands a particular type of skill in working with teachers. My years as consultant have had a great impact on my beliefs about teaching and learning.

My intention, then, was to confirm my view that consultants have a definite role to fulfill in teacher learning as a facilitator of that learning. I wanted to observe how a consultant worked with teachers in a small group on an on-going basis. As a rule, I had been able to visit teachers only once or twice during the year. Too often, inservice offerings were of short duration, leaving me with the feeling that more could be accomplished if there were adequate time.

The series of sessions that I participated in and observed for data for this thesis proved to be a learning experience that confirmed my concept of the role of the consultant. After each session, I left exhilarated and encouraged. What I had surmised would happen, was happening. Collaborative learning was occurring.

Once more, I have assumed the role of consultant. The position is one that is not subject specific in the conventional sense. The task is to work with a small number of schools, to help them implement their staff development programs and school improvement plans. Within this newly-created position is the possibility of redefining the role of the consultant in terms of facilitator for school staffs and groups of teachers. There is the prospect of developing some innovative approaches in ways of working with staffs. I, too, "pin my hopes to quiet processes and small circles in which I believe I shall see vital and transforming events taking place."

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