

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Attending to the Teaching of Reading:

A hermeneutic circle of researcher, teacher and learner

by

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

CALGARY, ALBERTA

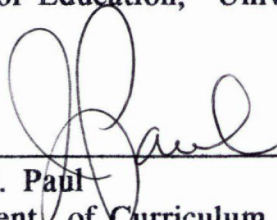
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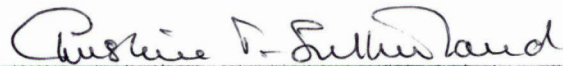
The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Attending to the Teaching of Reading: A hermeneutic circle of researcher, teacher and learner" submitted by Christa Fox in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.



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ABSTRACT

This is a study of the lived-experience of a teacher. As well, this study is a reflection of the researcher's evolving interpretive understanding of what it means to deepen an understanding about the teaching of reading literature through conversations. The teacher was led to explore her practice in her experience between the tensions between human meaning and representational meaning and, between subjectification of self and objectification of others. Woven throughout the thesis is the argument that the modern sense of self-understanding, a centering on the development of an independent individual self needs to be reconceptualized to include a sense of interdependence, of finding oneself in relation to others. The sense of interdependence leads to a transformation of understanding about the teaching of reading literature. That is, the teaching of reading literature in the life-world resides in the relationship between children, teachers, text and topic at hand.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to Dr. C. Gordon for her patience and unwavering support throughout the course of this project. I had the privilege to experience her pedagogic understanding of the difference between guiding and directing students. She guided me with a thoughtfulness that allowed me to pursue my own journey.

Special appreciation goes to Dr. J. Paul for his commitment to me and my work. His poetic ear and sound advice in organizing and editing my drafts were true gifts. He has been a source of knowledge, guidance and inspiration during the writing of this thesis. His contribution to me as a student and a person is unique and immeasurable.

To my collaborator and friend, Ada, I am especially grateful for her willingness to share her questioning self in this research. She taught me more than she will ever know about what it means to "practice" being who one is in every breath. I am indebted to the children, Sam, Cloe and Charlotte, for helping me shape my understanding of reading. Their enthusiasm to dialogue with me about their experiences have contributed greatly to my work.

To my friend, Pat Young, who was always there, guiding me through the underbrush of writing a thesis, a heartfelt thank you. Finally, a thank you that goes beyond words to my husband, Andrew, who's unwavering love and support made all this possible.

DEDICATION

To Andrew Peter Fox

who listens for the "roar

which lies on the other side of silence"

with a loving mindful heart

and

the late Günther Püschner

who in his quest to listen for the roar

inadvertently brought me here.

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CHAPTER 1

A PILGRIM'S PROCESS OF BECOMING

I am not going anywhere, I am only on the way. I am making a pilgrimage. Hesse, H. (1951).

In the middle of my journey I came to find myself in the "subjective underbrush of [my] own research experience" (Peshkin cited in Beck & Black, 1991, p. 138) where a straight way was lost. I was caught between what I felt about reading literature and what I thought about reading literature. My feelings were secured in a windowless box of emotions and my thinking was ensured in a windowless box of abstractions.

This windowless box of abstractions contained my view on education, specifically my understanding of reading. In a disciplined fashion I attempted to understand reading within the psychological concepts of motivation, comprehension monitoring, problem-solving, and self-control. As such, thinking about reading in this way is considered a cognitive activity which can be explored in a rational manner that brings practice and abstraction together. A cognitive orientation claims to assist one to understand what goes on in the activity of coming to read because meaning is provided through structured observation and consistent measurement within a reasonably controlled environment. Over the past two decades (1980 - 1990), educational researchers have explored this cognitive understanding about reading.

However, in recent years the cognition-exclusive orientation to reading research has been challenged by scholars such as, Athey (1985), Pintrich, Marx, & Boyle (1993) and Winograd & Gaskin (1992). Although the defined box of cognition has provided a purposeful understanding of reading as an information processing activity it

has virtually ignored the "feeling" component, the windowful box of emotion, within most readers. The cognitive focus has been limited to the understanding of the reading process and to learning how to read. Whether or not children *choose to read* has not been considered to any large extent.

I felt, along with Pintrich, Marx, & Boyle (1993), the box of cognition has not adequately explained why children, who seem to have requisite reading strategies, do not activate reading strategies consistently when reading. Because it was reasoned that feelings and emotions also play an important role in reading, researchers (Athey, 1985; Dreher, 1990; Shapiro, 1993; Winograd & Gaskin, 1992) have begun to explore this virtually neglected box; the elusive, evasive, opaque box of affective variables. I, too, joined this exploration in reading to seek inside the windowful box of emotions, in particular, to examine it in relation to metacognition.

Seeking Cognitive Self-Understanding

When looking at reading research from a cognitive psychology perspective, reading can be defined as a cognitive process where individuals thoughtfully select appropriate strategies to enhance their comprehension (Winograd & Paris, 1989). Thoughtful selection of cognitive strategies is guided by metacognition. Metacognition, in turn, generally refers to people's thinking about their thinking; thinking about their self-system. People reflect on what they know about their own cognitive resources and regulate these resources accordingly (Garner, 1992). More specifically, Gordon (1994) expanded the definition of metacognition in reading as the

practice of carrying on an internal conversation with text and of being aware of that conversation. Further, the reader's conversation with text revolves around content, process *and feelings*. This internal conversation is intentional and enables the reader to thoughtfully reflect and control learning while reading.

Traditionally, the type of reading material used in studying metacognition has consisted of isolated passages specifically created or adapted for research use, or expository passages selected from informational classroom textbooks (Garner, 1992; Garner & Alexander, 1989; Dreher & Singer, 1986). These contrived, controlled, or informational reading materials are logical choices when looking at how people learn and how people go about learning about their learning to read. Isolated passages or expository passages reduce some of the fuzziness of working with a broad range of unpredictable reading materials usually found in classrooms or chosen by individual students. These research passages provide specific content usually related and organized into concepts and ideas which can be isolated, retrieved, identified and counted. These research passages seem to lend themselves to the exploration of metacognition in reading for just these reasons. Internal reflection and analysis is easier to explore and identify with a relatively rigid content-oriented text where multiple interpretations are more or less limited. This allows the researcher to control the information that the subjects under study receive. The cognitive box can be explored a little more easily.

Little attention has been devoted to knowledge and control of the self-system in the reading of literature (Gordon, 1992). Literature has a type of wild freedom about

it. It is not as easily harnessed and mastered for examination as expository passages or specifically designed reading passages. Peterson and Eeds (1990) view the reading of literature as the reader living in the book where the story "illuminates what it is to be human as it describes the joys, triumphs, and sorrows of specific characters" (p. 15). Internal reflection to explore one's reading processes and analysis of content could easily be clouded and repressed by a personal and emotional interaction with literature. The evocation of one's feelings (or aesthetic reading) when "living in a book" could obscure the view of the self-system. Getting "caught" by one's emotions could be viewed by some as an obstacle needing to be overcome. What then, is the role of metacognitive involvement in the reading of literature? This is an area of research that to me beckoned to be explored.

The term aesthetic reading comes from Rosenblatt's (1978) aesthetic theory response. According to Rosenblatt, a reader is not a passive recipient of a static predetermined text. Instead, "the reader's attention is centered directly on what he is living through during his relationship with that particular text" (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 25). Reader response theory, in a fashion, similar to metacognition, asks the reader to consider reading as something she does with text during reading. The reader and text have a relationship where the meaning of the text is negotiated with the author which evokes a literary work, a "poem." The poem is centered not on the reader or the text, but rather on the lived-through-experiences the reader brings to the text. The response is structured by the language of the text (Sheridan, 1991). Rosenblatt coined this lived-through-experience a transaction. A transaction is described as an event in

which a "particular mood of the moment, and a particular physical condition [is part of a] never-to-be-duplicated combination" (Rosenblatt cited in Beach & Phinney, 1992, p. 126). Thus, transactions are filled with emotions, associations and reflections. Rosenblatt observes and celebrates the unique, very personal and individual transaction that occurs for the reader and text in a particular moment in time.

In the last few years reader response theory has influenced classroom life (Beach & Phinney, 1992; Eeds & Wells, 1989; Labercane, 1990; Sheridan, 1991). More and more teachers are now using reader response theory (in connection with literature such as poems and novels) as a foundation for the planning of reading programs. Many classrooms are purposefully stocked with novels, plays, and poetry. Children are having more opportunities to read literature through an approach such as Reader's Workshop (Atwell, 1987) where children are allowed to behave as real readers, reading self-selected books over a period of time. Likewise, Community of Readers (Helper & Hickman, 1982) encourages children and teachers to read and meet with text in collaborative ways. Similarly, the traditional sustained silent reading times which exist in many schools encourage children to read literature as well. It seemed to me the opportunities to explore the self-system, in the reading of literature *within* the classroom context were readily available. It is possible, then to have the opportunity to enter and explore the actual world of teachers and students "living in books" within the basic patterns of classroom life. Thus, the original question for my qualitative study emerged from the desire for an understanding of metacognitive process in reading literature with students and a teacher in a classroom setting. The

initial questions were:

1. What is the role of metacognition in reading literature?
2. How does reading literature affect metacognition?

It seemed fitting to explore the life-world of a teacher and three students within a qualitative case study. Case studies provide access to "the drama of the commonplace" (Stake, 1988). So my desire was to explore the "drama" of one's reading processes within the common gathering of classroom life. This inquiry was a search, then, for an enriched understanding of metacognitive processes in reading literature with students and a teacher in a classroom setting.

Furthermore, the exploration of metacognition using a case study approach invites a focus on discovery, insight, and understanding from the perspectives of both the researcher and those being studied (Merriam, 1988). In order to capture and portray the metacognitive involvement in reading literature, data collection occurred over a four month period. Initially data were collected from two teachers and four children. After the first month in the two classrooms it became evident that the data gathering became too complex and would yield too much raw information. Therefore, data gathering continued with just one teacher and three of her students. The intention was for data to be collected through observations, interviews and artifacts. Interviews, ranging from an unstructured exploratory approach to interviews that were loosely guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored, were to be conducted with both students and teacher. The artifacts collected were the teacher's journal reflections, students' response journals, and writing assignments.

From Seeking Evidence to Finding a Path of Inquiry

Merriam (1988) writes that the researcher in a qualitative case study is of utmost importance. She states, "the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Data are mediated through this human instrument..." (p. 19). At the onset of my research, I tried to be a human instrument. At the onset of my research, I understood the data on metacognition, outlined in the previous section, with clarity and a sense of comfort and certainty. However, it was a "fixed" understanding of data that I found "out there," outside of me, in journals and textbooks. In comfort I understood how to apply these definitions to the process of reading by a well-known set of cognitive skills and strategies. There was a sense of assurance and reassurance about this type of self-understanding about metacognition.

Although metacognitive strategies are not easily visible in readers, I was confident that with the use of a qualitative case study design I could "dig deep," and bring to the surface confirmation and, perhaps, discover new relationships within the knowledge base of metacognition. From a schema-theoretic view, I thought I had the background knowledge, a well-developed framework, a well-developed belief system, for the data relating to metacognition that I would encounter in the classroom. I felt the possibilities, depending on my "tolerance for ambiguity" (Merriam, 1988, p. 37) as a researcher, were limitless. I believed a case study offered me the opportunity, in its very lack of structure "to adapt to unforeseen events and change direction in pursuit of meaning" (Merriam, 1988, p. 37). I thought I had prepared, in some way, to expect the unexpected. After all, I was in charge of my research. I thought, that in my

methodical preparation, I had equipped myself for the unexpected. I was wrong.

Early on in my journey something happened. I did not happen on to something, something happened to me, something acted upon me which made me think I lost control. I was no longer a "human instrument" seeking knowledge. "The text [metacognition] must be allowed to [insisted on] speak[ing]" (Gadamer, in Crusius, 1991, p. 96) and I listened. I was no longer in control of my belief system and, thus, lost control of the meaning of metacognition, the mindedness of metacognition. Some researchers have suggested that it is on the basis of beliefs, not facts, that research proceeds (Harste, Woodward & Burke, 1984). I could no longer clearly proceed with a qualitative case study. I could no longer clearly understand the meaning of metacognition within the bounded, minded system that I had imposed on it. The more time I spent in the classroom, the less understanding I had of what I was trying to seek with my research questions, and consequently, the less understanding I had of what it meant to be metacognitive. I recall early in my observations, I wrote, "... it's a tug of war between my humanness and the mindedness of metacognition. Can you feel things about reading if you don't feel them within you from living?" (Field Notes, 21/10/93). Perhaps what was happening was that I was beginning to understand that I was the language I was speaking. I was beginning to respond to the need to question what I was doing. Perhaps the questions were a need to respond to my own self-minded understanding to the value of my research question.

I found in Hermann Hesse's novel, *Siddhartha*, a way to address my apprehension with seeking minded answers. The novel presents a response by

Siddhartha, the protagonist, to his old friend, Govinda who had asked Siddhartha if he was also a seeker of the right path. Siddhartha responds:

When someone is seeking it happens quite easily that he only sees the thing that he is seeking; that he is unable to find anything, unable to absorb anything, because he is only thinking of the thing he is seeking, because he has a goal, because he is obsessed with his goal. Seeking means: to have a goal; but finding means: to be free, to be receptive, to have no goal. (Hesse, 1951, p. 140)

I was trying to seek answers to my questions in a minded manner within the midst of living in a vibrantly human classroom community. I was seeking inside the teacher and children, to pluck from them, facts for compilation, facts that would compliment and enhance my preconceived research goal. Perhaps, in retrospect I was beginning to understand the difference between seeking evidence and finding a path of inquiry.

Attending to a Hermeneutic of Self-Understanding

Something rare happened when I listened, deep from within, to the questions that were constantly surfacing to my consciousness. The questions that surfaced continuously challenged my assumptions and beliefs about minded understanding, about metacognition. What had been a clear and grounded fixed belief of a minded self-understanding, of metacognition, was no longer there. I ended up in a "real fix." The meaning of metacognition became a swampy and murky amoeba-like understanding, constantly mutating. A different type of self-understanding, not a minded meta-understanding, started to impose itself on me. Whatever I did to get my research on track with respect to my original question did not make a difference. My research project did not make sense to me because of a new, elusive embodied

understanding within me. This embodied understanding somehow made me listen in a different manner to the teacher and students.

It was my understanding of the meaning of metacognition grounded in a scientific paradigm that was now being called into question. Unbeknown to me, I had been asking - What does it mean? - type of questions, interpretive questions, hermeneutic questions. Hermeneutic questions breed a living-on-the-edge because "interpretive work flies in the face of" (Jardine, 1992, p. 108) building objectivity. Interpretation at work is lightning striking the human heart. Hermeneutic interpretation reshapes the heart.

My hermeneutic questioning took me by surprise. In Murray's words (1989) "surprise, though exciting, may be a discomforting gift. When we are surprised we often do not like what we discover" (p. 10). This discovery, this alien-in-my-midst, created havoc in me the student/researcher. I wanted to find concepts grounded in the classroom context, I wanted to draw generalizations. I wanted to be a credible researcher. I thought I was in charge, I had prepared for the unexpected, and as a result, I expected the expected. I was devastated. Murray (1989) observes "surprise is usually read as failure" (p. x). I certainly viewed this as a failure. I thought I had lost my ability to learn.

The hermeneutic questions, however, continued to knock on my soul. I pushed beyond my fear of failure and listened from within, to a deep earthiness, and found a way of being in the world with the teacher and the students. I listened and found a hermeneutic stand-point, different from a qualitative view-point, to experience my

researching differently. My initial purpose to examine metacognition became mutated as I hermeneutically pushed and pulled metacognition from its self-minded introspective box until the edges became blurred. According to Gadamer (in Weinsheimer & Marshall, 1989), self-understanding does not reside in self-minded introspection where individuals turn themselves into objects of reflection. Instead, Gadamer's meaning for self-understanding is "knowing one's way around" (Weinsheimer & Marshall, 1989, p. xvii). It is a cultivation of a "practical philosophy of life, a way of living . . . that emphasizes becoming more fully *who* one is" (Sparks, 1992, p. 37).

It was an opening for a different research question, an opening for a much broader question. I made a decision, I moved from a scientific understanding of metacognition that asks for a self-understanding about our "willingness to take risks for understanding . . . [to be] receptive to the opportunities for introspection and self-regulated learning" (Garner, 1992, p. 27) to a hermeneutic understanding of "knowing one's way around" that asks to "become more fully who one is" (Sparks, 1992, p. 37). Thus, my research question changed, from an exploration of metacognition, from - What is the role of metacognition in the reading of literature? to a hermeneutical conversation about - What does it mean to deepen an understanding about the teaching of reading literature?

A second question emerged when I turned to a hermeneutic inquiry - What does it mean for a researcher to undergo a transformation of her own self-understanding? My involvement in the classroom through observations, dialogue and

written reflections affected me as a human being, affected me as a re-searching human being. I found it necessary to try to understand my being as the research progressed. I did not remain neutral and static but was deeply involved in the life-world of the classroom. In regards to this purpose Smith (1991) writes:

... any study carried on in the name of hermeneutics should provide a report of the researcher's own transformations undergone in the process of the inquiry: a showing of the dialogical journey ... Underscored here is a profoundly ethical aspect to hermeneutic inquiry in a life-world sense; namely a requirement that a researcher be prepared to deepen her or his own self-understanding in the course of the research. (p. 198)

I was prepared "to deepen [my] self-understanding in the course of the research." My methodology could not live without being connected to the human beings in the classroom. I lived in collaboration with the teacher and students in the classroom. My voice intermingled and wove *through and with* the teacher and the students. I could not separate out their voices from mine. The research became a vibrant living tapestry of interconnected fibers of lived-meaning. I had to try to make sense and learn from what had happened.

The intention of this thesis, then, is to open up the possibility of researching how teachers, students, and researchers nurture a sense of understanding about the teaching of reading literature through conversations. This involved asking how a teacher understands the teaching of reading and how students understand the reading of literature. My supposition is that teachers need to have an understanding of the teaching of reading literature and students need to have an understanding of reading literature that takes into play more fully who one is in relation to others. My argument is that the modern sense of self-understanding, a centering on the

development of an independent individual self, needs to be reconceptualized to include a sense of interdependence, of finding oneself in relation to others. Educational research needs to inquire into how teachers and students participate in an event of understanding with others, and how, or whether, this event contributes to a continuous renewing of self-understanding.

What you are about to read is a thesis that explores, interprets and offers an understanding of the teaching of reading literature. Structurally, the thesis reflects this intent through a series of thematically connected movements. Each thematic movement speaks of an evolving sense of understanding that resonated in a dialogue of meaning among the teacher, students, and researcher.

Also, each movement in this thesis has a voice, a voice of rhythmic structure and character that forms a part of the extended composition of the life-world of a teacher and her three students in a particular classroom over four months. Each movement has a flow of language that reflects an evolving interpretive relationship between researcher, teacher and student participants. The first movement consists of a questioning at a societal level of this researcher's understanding of the life-world. The second movement locates the questioning of a theoretical understanding of the life-world within a declaration of how to proceed. The third movement encounters a teacher and this researcher in a sympathetic vibrating tension that resonates with speculation and questions about self-understanding within a recursive language that makes self-other problematic. The fourth movement, the research journey takes on a different language. The language is much more hermeneutical in how self and other

become lost in the subject at hand. It is this losing of self which allows for an event of self-understanding to become interpretable. The fifth movement is a confirmation through the voices of the children of the themes generated. And finally, there is a resonating movement that returns to the original difficulty of inquiring into the teaching of reading literature and what it means to inquire into the topic.

CHAPTER 2

QUESTIONING AND UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

That's what learning is. You suddenly understand something you've understood all your life, but in a new way. Lessing, D. (1992).

In the middle of my research, the research called into question my understanding of the world in my research. My research is a simple narrative, an exploration of a teacher who was questioning her practice with my help. And in doing so, in helping her question her practice, I questioned my practice as a researcher. But, there was something else happening as well. The teacher and I are also representatives and reflections of societies and paradigms. The little conversations we had back and forth are like a small version of the large versions of discussions that are going on in our culture and society in whole. Therefore, it made sense to explore these larger issues at the societal level in this literature review because they are going to inform my conversations and descriptions later in the thesis.

When my research work called into question my understanding of the world, the notion of voices presented itself to me. I knew immediately that it was an appropriate metaphor for this literature review. Thus, this literature review is an attempt to connect a series of voices to my interpretive inquiry into an exploration of understanding a teacher, her three students, and a researcher with respect to the teaching of reading literature.

The notion of voice resonates throughout my interpretive study. The notion of voice is often thought of as speech, an expression of words. But as the etymology of

the word suggests, voice from Latin, *vocare* means "to call" (Webster's Dictionary, 1983, p. 1320). Layers of multiple voices -- some loud and shrill, some quiet and silent -- "called" to me during the formation of the thesis. In this chapter two voices called to me. First, I heard the thunderous voice of modernity that speaks and honors the language of natural science, a language that privileges individuality and logocentrism. Then, there was also the mute but persistent call of the post modern condition, a voice that called into question my understanding of modernity.

This chapter is the result of several questions which vibrated within, which would not let me go. It was the questions about the tension between modernity as a desire for a unified perfect self attainable through logic and reasoning in tension with the post modern condition that problematizes modernity by allowing "things that are beyond the control of modernity to speak" (Borgmann, 1992, p. 4). In describing this tension the backbone of my hermeneutical endeavor is made present.

The Voice of Modernity

There are significant dominant paradigms that are the backbone of teacher education programs and subsequently also dominate schools. The participant in this study is a graduate of an education faculty, not unlike other education faculties, that privileged a certain way of preparing teachers for the classroom. The vast majority of that preparation is modernist in its thinking. Modernist thought personified declares itself as being reasonable and impartial. Modernist thought believes in the notion of an objective lens, of value-free knowledge and, of universality (Smith, 1992).

Modernist thinking is the dominant and prevailing feature of Western contemporary culture and society.

To further discern an understanding of modernity I traced back its meaning. Modernity, from the word modern, comes from the Latin word *modo* meaning "just now" (Borgmann, 1992, p. 20). "Just now" conjures up, brings to mind, the immediate, the moment, the current, or the contemporary. "Just now" *is* the present. *Just* now indicates a breaking from the past, a severance from what has gone before. The break with the past has been voiced in many ways: "that was then and this is now; those were the ancients, we are the moderns" (Habermas cited in Borgmann, 1992, p. 21). The past has been replaced with the present in its pursuit for a better future.

The past, nevertheless, exists within the present. Berman (1989) and Borgmann (1992) suggest modernity is the grand schematic structure that establishes humankind's deepest consciousness and unconsciousness. All of its history, from the Greeks, through the Age of Enlightenment, to the space age has been a step by step building of the playing field called modernity in which this society exists. According to Berman (1989), over the period of time, who we are as modern human beings is a reflection of the cultural context in which we live. The modern world is pervasive, the modern world is everywhere. So, when a child is born into this society, wrapped in pink or blue, subconscious choices already dictate how a child should and should not behave. Humankind, through all of the body senses, learns the rules, learns all kinds of ways how you should and should not behave within this grand schematic

structure called modernity. Two interrelated themes are embedded in modernity, the notions of individualism and logocentrism. The first theme, sovereignty of the individual, is the crowning force of modernity. "Individualism names what many people consider the finest achievement of modern civilization" (Taylor, 1991, p. 2). Individualism is a theory where the interests of the individual is paramount. Individualism is a theory where the self is a center "from which it then imposes its schemata on the world" (Jardine, 1992, p. 27). Individualism is rooted in Kant's notion of Enlightenment:

Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another. This immaturity is self-imposed when its cause lies not in a lack of understanding, but in a lack of resolve and courage to use it without guidance from another. (in Jardine, 1992, p. 24)

Being independent of others and becoming self sufficient continues to be a common modernist goal. Individualism is a theory that believes in maintaining the political and economic independence of the individual. It stresses individual initiative, action and interest. An individualist pursues an independent course of thought and action.

Individualism with respect to education is when teachers are asked to put into practice teaching strategies and methods which will develop highly independent selves. To become independent learners who are able to make appropriate decisions for themselves is encouraged throughout the educational system. The more autonomous and self-reliant individuals can be, the more they are admired and viewed as successful in society. It is deemed gracious to lend a hand but it is deemed successful not to need a helping hand.

The simple example of how teachers come to teach in the school system reveals the second modernist theme, logocentrism, manifested through the primacy of method. The primacy of method promises a sense of order through rational thinking, through rational language. "This means engaging in a work of persuasion" (Taylor, 1991, p. 72) where you can establish in reason what is involved in the individualism of self-fulfillment. Taylor believes there is a powerful moral ideal behind the individualism of self-fulfillment. According to Taylor, a moral ideal is a "picture of what a better or higher mode of life would be, offering a standard of what we ought to desire" (p. 16). This standard of what we ought to desire is based on a claim that "some forms of life are indeed higher than others" (Taylor, 1991, p. 17). Taylor suggests this standard is a deep expression of individual authenticity. He believes that there is a moral force to the authenticity of self, to the "ideal of authenticity," that of "being true to oneself in a specifically modern understanding of that term" (p. 15).

Modernity, in theory, calls for people to be authentic human beings. The ethics of authenticity calls for a rejection of the demands of external conformity. Instead, the ethics of authenticity calls for a listening "to my own originality that only I can articulate and discover" (Taylor, 1991, p. 29). So, through articulation, through articulate reasoning, the self can be more clearly defined in its quest for a perfection of self-understanding. In Taylor's words, "you can argue in reason about [authenticity] and about the conformity of practices to [authenticity]" (1991, p. 23). Taylor suggests that logic and reasoning can determine what it means to be authentic. According to modernity, articulate reasoning, logocentric language, is the driving

engine of an individual's authentic self-understanding.

Questioning the Voice of Modernity

The first section was a description of modernity's concept of individual authentic self-understanding through articulate reasoning and logocentric language. In this section, modernity's voice is in tension with the mute but persistent call of the post modern condition. This mute but persistent voice called into question my understanding of modernity. The post modern condition questions the quest of modernity -- the perfecting of the individual through articulate reasoning and logocentric language.

Significant tensions are embedded in modernist thought. One of the tensions is manifested in the most dominant sense that modernity privileges, in the sense of language. The language that modernity utilizes is what Derrida (in Smith, 1992) characterized as being logocentric. In this regard, Smith (1992) describes logocentrism as:

. . . driven by a desire to establish human meaning through an anchoring of it in constructs and categories, which can then be taken to "represent" an original reality. The representations in turn accrete to form the stable capital of culture, which then can be manipulated, taught, and disseminated as the pure sediment of a people's organized life. (p. 252)

The language of modernity is a distinctive discourse of "prediction and control" (Borgmann, 1992) where human meaning is represented through rules of rhetoric and logic. However, human meaning is also humanly alive. Human meaning also comes from the body, "from the guts, from intuitions and deep feelings which are equally

important avenues of insight and awareness" (Fox, 1990, p. 97). Logocentric language, which privileges clear and distinct ideas from the head, pushes aside meaning that is "revealed in passion and therefore puts aside all the [meaning found in] pain and joy" (Fox, 1990, p. 98). Pain and joy are lived meanings in tension with representational meaning. Meaning revealed in passion is not easily harnessed into representational language based upon prescription, exposition and logic. Thus, lived meaning cannot be taken to represent an original reality. Rather, lived meaning is unpredictable, full of interpretive possibilities, always ready to burst forth in any given circumstance. Lived meaning, although marginalized in Western contemporary culture and society, is always there ready to call representational meaning into question. This calling into question is a post modern orientation. A post modern orientation to lived meaning "serves to protect the full play of interpretive possibilities at work in any situation" (Smith, 1992, p. 253) because life is not always predictable and logical. Life is caught up in history, in imprecisions, and in mere opinions.

Another tension rooted in modernity is in Cartesian subject/object dualism. Dualism is a way of seeing life in terms of Either/Or. Either representational language or lived language; either me or you; either up or down; either work or play. Berman (1989) observes that humankind has a tendency to see the world in black and white, to believe that things are somehow divided -- humans and animals, earth and sky. Modernity, based on that ingrained human tendency to see things in duality has laid the foundation of the separation of subject/object thinking.

The subject/object dichotomy is prominent in Western thought. The

subject/object dualistic view is found in the rationalism in philosophy, in the empiricism in science, and in the applied science of technology. It is another reflection of the human tendency to have a didactic understanding of the world. The modernistic self with its contemplative mind wants an objectified "world of abstract laws, fixed regularity, whose jurisdiction is universal and potentially ideal, completely knowable and predictable" (Crusius, 1991, p. 13). While this objective voice of reason can unravel a specific either/or situation into one preferred distinct meaning, it allows no other voices to "float in and out, through, and around the specificities at hand" (Smith, 1992, p. 248). So, voices that speak of the body, that speak from intuition, and speak through other cultural realities contaminate data and are, therefore, methodically excluded. Thus, the objective voice of reason is not a voice that actually lives within the physical world. Its dwelling place is the meta-physical world. Humankind, however, lives within the physical world and a tension with metaphysics of how things should ideally be is always at play. For example, humankind has started to question the privileging of metaphysical meaning when it talks of a "spiritual crisis, something [having] gone badly wrong with the ways of the West" (Crusius, 1992, p. 12).

A third tension existing within the tension of subject/object dualism is the objectification of other human beings. The objective voice of reason provides the modernistic self with the means to reduce not only things and ideas to the status of objects but other people as well. The modernistic self abstracts experiences with others into subject/object thinking where he/she, the subject, treats people as if they

were objects. Thus, experiences with people are treated as if they were broken, disconnected, separated into me and them, as if the belonging together of people was unimportant. Crusius (1992) calls this disconnectedness "homelessness, [an] inevitable outcome of subject-object thinking" (p. 12). This sense of homelessness is deeply entrenched in the public and private lives of people represented in Western social practices and Western institutions.

Through the objectification of others, the self assumes a dualistic up/down view of life. A dualistic up/down view of life can be found in the modernistic symbol of "ladder-climbing" (Fox, 1990, p. 45). Ladder-climbing is modernity's way of getting ahead to be included in the way a modernistic life should be lived. In ladder-climbing individuals are constantly focused on and striving for another new rung, another new goal. If the top of a ladder has been reached, individuals will often look for a new ladder to take its place. Thus, the dedication, concentration, and exertion continues in a similar fashion with a newly established goal. This frantic effort to reach new heights is in the service of self-improvement, towards the potentially ideal concept of self-perfection.

There is little room on a ladder. In "climbing the ladder of success" the modernistic self must be astutely aware of other individuals climbing as well. The modernistic self, through the methodology of objectification, can scrutinize other people in the climbing. On the ladder, the modernistic self can objectively study people who are on the rung above and those who are pushing from below. This objectification is necessary because climbing the ladder requires individuals to

compete with each other for the limited spaces available on the next rung.

Competition is a modernistic characteristic which is built into ladder-climbing. Competition is a cornerstone of Western culture and society which automatically implies the notion of winners and losers. In order to win individuals must play by the modernistic rule of competition which believes that everyone has a fair chance of winning by having an equal start at the beginning of the "climb to success." Modernity considers competition acceptable even "healthy" as long as everyone knows and plays by these rules.

What is of interest here are the words fair and equal. According to Webster's Dictionary (1983) fair means "conforming with the established rules" (p. 445). A "fair" chance, then, implies that individuals must support, in action, the didactic understanding of the metaphysical world that is modernity. In other words, to have a "fair" chance of winning individuals must already be living in support of, in the mainstream of modernistic life. Modernity's mainstream in Western culture is the powerful middle class majority. So, a "fair chance" of winning, could certainly be enhanced if individuals were already part of the middle class. The powerful middle class majority believes in the "fair chance" of winning because they usually win. The powerful middle class majority already has a more "equal" start at the beginning of the climb up the ladder of success than other people, marginalized people who are excluded from the middle class.

The word "equal" is defined as "capable of meeting the requirements of a task or situation" (Webster's Dictionary, 1983, p. 420). The middle class majority is

capable of meeting the requirements to win at a competition. People who are excluded, marginalized from the middle class are often unequal, are often unable to meet the expected requirements. This inability to meet the expected requirements creates further tension between marginalized groups and the middle class, creating a further questioning of modernity. Although some individuals in marginalized groups question or refuse to join the competition, others try to make themselves "equal" by adopting two modernistic characteristics, the determination to work hard and, the willingness to personally sacrifice in order to succeed.

These modernistic characteristics are reflected in modernity's creation, in theory, of the ideal autonomous individual. Autonomous individuals have the modernistic characteristics, the requirements necessary to pursue what is considered in the modern world to be the good life of luxury living -- "professional success and commodious freedom" (Borgmann, 1992, p. 39). Individuals need to be proficient and efficient in both their professional and private lives. Proficiency and efficiency requires a commitment to hard work at the occasional expense of personal sacrifices. The image of the autonomous individual conjures up people who are highly successful professionally and have the "commodious freedom in the ways they prefer to shape their private lives" (Borgmann, 1992, p. 39). These individuals "claim their privileges [of the good life] as the fruits of their rugged and individual efforts" (Borgmann, 1992, p. 47).

The fruits of rugged individual effort are often reflected in Western culture's and society's preoccupation with consumerism. The consumption of goods is an

integral component of modernity (Borgmann, 1992). An increasing consumption of goods is not only considered economically desirable, it is also enthusiastically supported by members of society. The "material results of production shapes our conduct profoundly" (Borgmann, 1992, p. 110). Consumerism is an underlying reason for individuals to strive to achieve even greater goals on the "ladder to success." It provides individuals with the freedom to make life more comfortable, more enjoyable, more glamorous. It allows individuals to surround themselves with "things" that reflect the modernistic ideal of "success" in a culture of consumption.

Yet, there continues to be a sense of dissatisfaction even with these "successful" individuals despite their relative material wealth (Crusius, 1991). This is another example of the post modern condition raising its head. People continue to strive for more improvement in the self and in the products with which they surround themselves. People continue to look for alternative ways, better ways to fill up their lives. This preoccupation with the need to fill up their lives with consumer goods to satisfy the self has a post modern ring to it. It speaks of the "inevitable outcome of subject-object thinking -- [of a sense of] alienation" (Crusius, 1991, p. 12).

Autonomous individuals have alienated themselves from others. In a culture of consumption, autonomous individuals have forgotten of their belonging together in the world with others.

Having described some of the tensions within the Western society and culture as a whole has led me back, full circle, to the tensions between modernity and the post modern condition that can be found specifically in daily life. For example, I heard the

mute but persistent call of the post modern condition in the classroom where I conducted my study. The first tension embedded in modernity that I experienced was with Ada, the participant in this study. Ada was asking epistemological questions about her practice.

Teachers do not live in meta-physics, in theory alone, they live in practice. They live in tension between theory and practice in the life-world of the classroom. Teachers, like Ada, realize especially as they try to refine their practice, that some bigger epistemological questions keep reappearing. Ada was questioning her practice. She questioned -- How do I know that I'm doing a good job with my students? During the course of the research more and more epistemological questions rattled her practice. She questioned -- How do I know what I'm doing in my classroom is certain in spite of the fact that I have theoretical knowledge? How do I know which theories continue to be most trustworthy? How do I know the strategies I select are best? Ada searched for validity checks - from what a student said; from comments a parent makes; or, from her own reflections.

Experience, at times, can make a person question. Experience, at times, can shake a person to question. Sometimes these bigger epistemological questions rattle on, cannot be stilled. Sometimes these questions continue to appear and reappear calling everything into question. Ada's calling into question her practice was her experience of the post modern condition.

For me, a second tension rooted in modernity developed as I already indicated in Chapter 1, through my questioning about what I was doing with respect to my

research. Although I was purposeful, I was direct, I was involved in a modernistic understanding of metacognition that could be explored in a particularly prescribed and rational manner, I experienced the post modern condition. When my research world came into contact with the life-world of the classroom, the epistemological questions started to come forth. The epistemological questions were there every day. Did I treat the children fairly? What do I do with the private information they trustingly shared with me? Ada is asking for help! How can I help Ada in her questioning of her practice without compromising my research goal? All these questions of doubt lived with me in the life-world of the classroom. Theoretically they did not exist. Theoretically I knew exactly what I was to do. Theoretically I knew what I wanted to do with metacognition. Theoretically I had my answers in how to proceed.

In practice, living in the life-world of the classroom with Ada and the children, there was a call into the present, but not the metaphysical presence. The metaphysical presence is theoretical about the present. I, living in the life-world of the classroom, was living in the moment of the present questioning the theory that informed me to live in that moment. Living in the moment in the life-world with Ada and the children made me attentive to the tensions that echoed from within, the tensions between -- human meaning and representational meaning and, subjectification of self and objectification of others. This attentiveness led me to another horizon.

Attending to the Hermeneutic Voices

Located in the tensions between the modern and the post modern world there

was revealed a more encompassing horizon -- hermeneutics. In that regard, my discussion on hermeneutics is limited to specific thoughts and ideas in relation to this thesis. I have been selective in choosing what to discuss and what to discuss in relative detail in order to have a conversation with the "life-world" conversations about self-understanding that I had with the teacher and three children.

Crusius (1991), in simple elegance, calls hermeneutics the art of interpretation, the art of interpreting the human life-world. Its aim is to understand understanding itself, to create, to give birth to any idea that can assist in deepening an understanding of what it is that is being investigated, in this case, deepening an understanding of self-understanding within and among a teacher, her students and a researcher. In this regard, Smith (1991, p. 200) writes "implicit in hermeneutic inquiry [is] its inherent creativity. Hermeneutics is about creating meaning, not simply reporting on it." This sets apart hermeneutics from other qualitative research approach, a system which is grounded in an attempt at generating an absolute understanding of other people's thoughts and actions strictly from their point of view. Hermeneutic inquiry, in contrast, stresses dialogue, has the character of true conversation, where people have the experience that there is much to be said to one another. These conversations are not based on the most plausible interpretation, or the most persuasive argument. Rather, when someone is engaged in a hermeneutic conversation:

... there is a certain quality of self-forgetfulness as one gives oneself over to the conversation itself, so that the truth that is realized in the conversation is never the possession of any one of the speakers or camps, but rather is something that all concerned realize they share together. (Smith, 1991, p. 198)

Hermeneutics is about the conversations that we are. It is a giving of "oneself over to conversation" with others to create a mutual understanding in an atmosphere of "self-forgetfulness". The forgetting of self, the losing of self, is a giving up of a logocentric way of thinking, a giving up of single-minded operational control. The focus is no longer on a single-minded possession of my meaning, my interpretation, but rather, the focus is on a conversation of mutual human meaning making. My subjectivity has not been eliminated from the investigation, but rather, my subjectivity "[has been taken] up with a new sense of responsibility - to make proposals about the world we share with the aim of deepening our collective understanding of it" (Smith, 1991, p. 201). Mutual human meaning making, where each self is lost in the subject at hand, is genuine dialogue.

I want to argue here that genuine dialogue in hermeneutics, also has, surprisingly enough, a place for self-understanding, for "finding oneself in relation to others" (Smith, 1991, p. 198). It is my understanding that hermeneutical self-understanding is not grounded in a self-possessed form of self-understanding, a single self-minded understanding as a sense of self-possession. A self-possessed form of self-understanding isolates the self, examines and contemplates itself in an attempt to improve itself. Hermeneutical self-understanding is not experienced as a knowledge product to be acquired through executing a specific set of procedures or methods, but rather, hermeneutical self-understanding is grounded in a collective dialogue of human meaning-making with others. Human meaning making is an opportunity to participate in an event of self-understanding. A collective dialogue invites the conversationalists

to participate in a circle of understanding where each conversationalist listens to the other, interprets what has been said, and in turn, has the opportunity to renew his/her self-understanding through the contributions and interpretations of others.

To participate in an event of self-understanding demands a caring dialogical movement back and forth between self-understanding, the understanding of others, and new self-understanding. A genuine dialogue allows the conversationalists to participate in an event in which self-understanding becomes interpretable. The opportunity to make interpretations during genuine conversations is ever present. "To understand is to interpret, to say what one understands, or more precisely, to participate in the event in which the understood interprets itself in language" (Weinsheimer, 1991, p. 119). According to Gadamer (cited in Weinsheimer, 1991), interpretation *is* understanding within the players' understanding of the language of which they are a part.

This thesis is grounded, then, in the belief that self-understanding evolves and is renewed through continuous conversations of mutual human meaning making. Self-understanding is concerned with:

. . . the question of human meaning and of how we might make sense of our lives in such a way that life can go on. . . . it is about finding ourselves, which also, curiously enough, is about losing ourselves; that is, giving up the precious 'fundamentalist' logocentric impulse in the name of greater freedom and dignity. (Smith, 1991, p. 200 - 201)

The issue, then, is deepening our understanding of living meaningfully in the life-world. It is a question, then, of how we can make sense of our living in the world so that life can go on with "greater freedom and dignity." Therefore, down the bones,

hermeneutical self-understanding continually asks the questions of - Who am I? and, - Who am I becoming in the human life-world?

This thesis is not an attempt at responding to these questions in hope of some definitive answers but rather an attempt at having a conversation with the questions. I take up the task of documenting and interpreting the coming to an understanding of what enables and maintains the continuity of the teacher's, students' and researcher's shifting and growing awareness of who they are and what they are doing in the life-world of the classroom. It concerns itself with what it means as an individual to have a continuing sense of self-understanding within the lived world. More specifically, this is a thesis about a woman in her classroom with her children trying to discover something about the act of teaching reading, her children's attempt to discover something about the act of reading, and a researcher's attempt to discover something about the act of doing research. In our attempt to discover something about the act of teaching reading and the act of reading, in our evolving attempt at genuine dialogue, we became aware of, and heard over time a hermeneutical consciousness at play. Smith (1991) describes hermeneutical consciousness "as a deep sense that something has been profoundly heard in our present circumstances (p. 201)." In our particular circumstances, I listened to a hermeneutical consciousness at play. I listened to a deep tapestry of sound and ever so gradually I gave myself over to listen, to cultivate my capacity to listen. There was no turning back. By giving myself over to a hermeneutical consciousness I had entered the life-world of interpretive research.

A hermeneutical consciousness is not a self-minded consciousness, but rather a

consciousness that allows an unminding mind to return to its body, to return to the bones of embodied consciousness. Embodied consciousness welcomes a mind within a body that "belong together in the world, *in Being*" (Crusius, 1991, p. 16). Embodied consciousness offers an opportunity to re-member the mind and body within the world. Embodied consciousness offers another kind of listening, a listening that is not within the minded-self, but a listening that allows the mind to sink into the body, a listening that allows the mind to be grounded in the body where thinking is channelled through the body of felt experience. This type of listening "goes down, down into the lower chthonic body" (Levin, 1989, p. 75), deep into the lower body's felt sense of experience, deep into the lower body's felt sense of *being*. "The gift of our embodiment is, in sum, the body's recollection of *Being*" (Levin, 1989, p. 7).

Here, I want to argue that listening to the lower body's felt sense of *being* requires a different interpretation from a metaphysical understanding of Being. In the history of Western metaphysical framework, Being "usually means essence, the unchanging features of something that make it what is" (Crusius, 1991, p. 95). The term essence can be traced back to the Greek word *ousia*, which means "the inner essential nature of a thing, the true being of a thing" (van Manen, 1990, p. 177). In the metaphysical framework, then, Being is considered an entity, a state of being, or an exploration and search for the ultimate ground, the ultimate Being of a thing. So, to be asking for the Being of something is to explore and inquire into the very nature of something, to be exploring the meaning of some phenomenon. The search for an essence, for a concept of being identifies a discourse in which "there is already at

work a process of reflection, or speculation, that ensures, however unconsciously, a decisive foreclosure in our experience with *Being*" (Levin, 1989, p. 7).

In the context of this study, however, in metaphysical terms, *being* is nothing, *being* is no thing. For what I am calling *being* is a break from metaphysics, a split off from Western thinking "by attempting to think the Question of Being in an *opening* way" (Levin, 1989, p. 7). I am going to interpret *being* using the work of David Levin (1989). In Levin's words:

'Being' refers very specifically to the disclosure, the audible fact, that our auditory situations, and all the audible beings we encounter in them, constitute an essentially open dimension of meaningfulness. The 'presence' of Being, the Being of beings, is simply the audible manifestation of this dimensionality. (p. 5)

To be able to hear this "open dimension of meaningfulness" we must disregard our everyday habits of listening. "Mere hearing", Heidegger (in Levin, 1989) says, "scatters and diffuses itself in what is commonly believed and said" (p. 17). Most often we hear only what everyone else hears, the prevailing discourse of our time. To be able to hear beyond the prevailing discourse to an "open dimension of meaningfulness" we must return to the body. Levin (1989) makes the point:

Our hearing is in fact an *ontological* organ: an organ always already inherent in, belonging to, and attuned by, the openness of the dimensionality of *Being* as a whole, presencing for our hearing as an auditory field, a sonorous field. (p. 16)

Levin (1989) suggests that we need to learn a way of listening that is more ontologically attuned, more open to knowing *being*.

A more openness to *being* requires a certain ontological listening, a preparedness to "listen-*for* a kind of openness-to-the-world-as-a-whole. It is alert,

vigilant, receptive, attuned" (Levin, 1989, p. 83). A listening-*for* a kind of openness-to-the-world-as-a-whole requires a listening-*to* the sounds that are made within the world-as-a-whole.

This listening-*to* is a concentrated attention, silent patient, willing to *take the time* to listen carefully. It is a listening that requires some discipline -- to avoid being distracted, to fine-tune one's hearing, to *stay with* what is sounding long enough to achieve a real familiarity, or perhaps a certain intimacy. (Levin, 1989, p. 84)

This *listening-to* requires the bodily connection to feelings. In feeling, "a state opens up, and stays open, in which we stand related to things, to ourselves, and to the people around us" (Heidegger in Levin, 1989, p. 219). As Heidegger indicates, it is critical to cultivate our capacity for feeling and connect our deep sense of feeling to the *listening-to* within the world-as-a-whole. When listening is rooted well in feelings, grounded in a "bodily felt sense of situated being" (Levin, 1989, p. 219), we are receptive and respond with genuine care. This embodied listening creates a consciousness that deepens "one's sense of the basic *interpretability* of life itself" (Smith, 1991, p. 199).

In the middle of gathering my data I heard a consciousness at play. In the service of answering specific questions on metacognition, my responses were in turn called into question -- right to the soul of my understanding of the world. That moment not only pointed to a questioning of understanding the world but that moment also invited a call to proceed.

CHAPTER 3

ATTENDING TO A WAY OF PROCEEDING

The smallest piece is the whole, the whole is contained in the smallest fragment of self. Fischer, L. (1983).

I remember, sometime in November (1993), sitting, located at the side of the classroom observing Ada and the children participating in Reader's Workshop when a sense of onions overcame me. I remember, watching Ada and the children I found it unavoidable - I couldn't stop sensing onions. The common, garden variety type of onion would present itself to me over time, again and again, as I continued to observe and participate in Ada's classroom. Even though, at the time, thinking of onions didn't make a lot of sense to me, still, there have been many occasions in my life when something may not have made sense. Yet it called me to learn in order to make sense of it. So, I did not ignore my thoughts of onions and considered learning from this persistent sense of non-sense. I allowed myself, at the time, to be led by the sense of onions.

Thoughts of onions during the months of November and December (1993) in Ada's classroom, reminded me of a quote of Alan Garner, a British novelist, that I had read many years ago. I paused and looked up the quote. Garner talked of his writing as if it were an onion. He made the point, "an onion can be peeled down through its layers, but it is always, at every layer, an onion, whole in itself. I try to write onions" (Garner, 1977, p. 197). A spark flew. The spark had to be fed. When you peel the onion, when you slice the onion, the onion is consistent from the outer layer to the inner layer. Could this be an organizational metaphor for my thesis?

At this point in my research, I had gathered all kinds of data from Ada and the children. I had multiple pages of transcripts, field notes and reflections. I would methodically, faithfully, after a morning in the classroom, try to "recover the theme or themes that [should be] embodied and dramatized in the evolving meaning and imagery of the work" (van Manen, 1990, p. 78). No matter how hard I tried, no matter how much time I spend, nothing seemed to connect my data, nothing seemed to make sense to me. van Manen claims that "grasping and formulating a thematic understanding is not a rule-bound process but a free act of 'seeing' meaning" (1990, p. 79). I "saw" nothing meaningful. Being lost in my data, not being able to see anything meaningful obviously enhanced one of my other senses. Blinded by my data I heard the call. All my looking had made me deaf, until I listened to the call of onions.

Being Metaphorically Attentive to Onions

Onions! Surely, to tell someone that I organized my research work in terms of onions would be to have the work considered nonsensical. But, I have. I climbed down from my head and listened to my embodied sense of onions. And surely, a nonsensical concept like onions as an organizational metaphor is delving into ambiguous spaces. Yet, I did it. I listened from below to my sense of onions. But just as surely, I believed there was something to be learned from this sense of onion that I had. This constant sense of onions called me not to push it aside, even in this important writing.

My overwhelming sense of onions needs to be read not literally but metaphorically. Gadamer named literalism as a "logical ideal of the ordered arrangement of concepts taken precedence over the living metaphoricity of language" (cited in Jardine, 1992, p. 140). Onions, then, as a logical ideal would only be considered a precise and an unambiguous term that corresponds to a "widely cultivated Asian herb of the lily family with pungent edible bulbs" (Webster, 1983, p. 825). To take this further, onions, then, can literally be tailored with precision in scientific language, can be defined objectively, clearly and accurately. Ambiguity is ambitiously controlled by a faith in logic, a faith in literal language. For this thesis, however, I will be reading my overwhelming sense of onions metaphorically, in the "living metaphoricity of language" (Gadamer, cited in Jardine, 1992, p. 140).

By reading my sense of onions metaphorically, I "[underwent] an experience with language . . . by entering into and submitting to [language]" (Heidegger cited in Jardine, 1992, p. 206). An experience with language is an opening, a portal providing unknown opportunities to make the familiar strange and the strange familiar *if* there is a welcoming of "the nature of language [to] play with us" (Heidegger cited in Jardine, 1992, p. 206). One can, *if* there is a welcoming, to be played with "the memory of forgotten syntax" (Fischer cited in Jardine, 1992, p. 141).

The etymology of the word "onion" opens a portal as an organizational metaphor for my thesis. van Manen (1990) observes that "being attentive to the etymological origins of words may sometimes put us in touch with an original form of life where the terms still had living ties to the lived experiences from which they

originally sprang" (p. 59). Such is the case with onions. Reclaiming some of the past within the word "onion" "puts us in touch" with a "memory of ways" (Berry, 1983, p. 73), a memory of associations, which when paid attention to, reconnects us to "a willingness to live the language of our lives more deeply" (van Manen, 1990, p. 59).

"Onions" can be traced back from Latin, to the word *union* which talks of "a oneness; the growing together of several parts; a unified condition" (Webster, 1983, p. 1290). To hear the word "onion" connected with the word union provides an opportunity for a hermeneutic listening to an echo of lived meaning, such as the union of conversations among teacher, students and researcher.

In the *Dictionary of Symbols and Imagery* (de Vries, 1974), the 500-year-old meaning of "onion" is "unity; the component parts from one organic whole" (p. 123). Could it be that the conversations I had with Ada and the three children were not isolated comments that dealt with a particular sense of time and place? Perhaps, the conversations were "the component parts from one organic whole." Perhaps, the conversations were a "unity" *in* meaning. Maybe I don't need to look any further than the conversations with Ada and the children. Maybe the conversations are it. Maybe, the conversations are bound together by the notion of what the life-world of the classroom entailed. So, when I listened to the teacher's and students' comments, I was hearing both the specificity and the generality of the life in their classroom all at the same time. So, organizationally, then, perhaps when I was observing in the classroom, when I saw a slice of classroom life, the slice was really metaphorically the whole. And, what I was exploring in the classroom was like the consistency of an

onion, layer upon layer, "one organic whole."

Therefore, metaphorically speaking, all the data, all the information that I collected for this research project can be peeled through its layers because at every layer of the research it was still Ada and the children, at every layer it was still onion-like. Maybe the sense of onions was setting my research free. Maybe, the onions were saying that I didn't have to look any farther but rather to look at what was before me. Be attentive to that at hand. I didn't have to look for the core of something, nor was there a little gem in the middle to be found, there was no interpretive pearl in the middle of the data oyster. The conversations with the children and the conversations with Ada were the ground upon which to offer the interpretation of the classroom.

Furthermore, de Vries (1974) writes that "onion" also refers to "the cosmos in perfect living equilibrium" (p. 123). Exploring the word cosmos led me to the Greek *kosmos* meaning a "harmonious universe" (Webster, 1983, p. 295). The conversations are in harmony with the life-world. The conversations have a harmonious interdependence that resonates with universal meaning. One is all and all is one. More specifically, perhaps the conversations were not only about Ada's teaching of reading and the children's reading of literature at that moment, the conversations were also in harmony with Ada's teaching of reading and the children's reading across multiple moments. Furthermore, the conversations were not only in harmony with Ada's teaching of reading and the children's reading across multiple moments, the conversations were also in harmony with teaching reading and reading in general

across multiple moments. As I looked at a slice of Ada's classroom, I began to extrapolate. I began to make larger kinds of suggestions and hypotheses about who this teacher was, who she became, who I was as a researcher and who I became, and who the children were and what they were doing together in Ada's classroom. The conversations were the consistency of an onion. It was all an onion whether you sliced it, diced it, rearranged it, or fried it, it was still an onion. Thus, the metaphoricity of "onions" offered me the invitation to provide a hermeneutic interpretation of these moments by returning my research to the original difficulty of its initial task - to inquire into and interpret the life-world of a specific classroom for the purpose of generalizing about the layers alive in most classrooms with respect to the teaching of reading literature.

Being Methodologically Attentive to Onions

Attending to my notion of "onions" provided me with "a certain *methodos* -- a way . . . where something could be revealed" (van Manen, 1990, p. 29), where something could be discovered. This "way", this method, was not rule-governed by a certain predetermined set of procedures and techniques. In contrast, the path, the method was a "*gathering of* and [a] *reflecting on* lived-experience[s]" (van Manen, 1990, p. 63).

From the onset of my research I wanted to gather data in Ada's grade 5 Language program. Ada's original preference, however, was for me to observe and gather information from the grade 7 Language program which she taught along with

the grade 5 Language program. Ada felt "more comfortable teaching grade 7 than grade 5, and in her estimation the grade 7 program was running smoother" (Field Notes, 23/09/93). She thought I would be able to gather "more data from this better program with older students" (Field Notes, 23/09/93). Ada viewed the grade 7 program as having more possibilities for my research because she believed she was more efficient and effective at the grade 7 level than with the children in grade 5; she had "things more under control in grade 7, [she knew] where [she was] going with the children in grade 7" (Field Notes, 23/09/93). Teaching the children in grade 5 had become somewhat "of a struggle over the years" (Field Notes, 23/09/93).

However, as a researcher, I saw more possibilities for my research with the children in grade 5. I saw the grade 7 program as limiting. At the time, the thought of working with 'budding' teenagers was an unsettling and somewhat frightening idea. Although I was not a novice teacher, and I had enjoyed teaching adolescents in the past, I considered myself a fledgling researcher -- a novice researcher with limited experience. I felt I did not have the confidence as a researcher to gather data from what Nancie Atwell (1987) calls "the nature of adolescents --restlessness, volatile, and social" (p. 25). I saw safer and more comfortable possibilities for gathering data in what seemed to be the charming attempt at reading by their younger brothers and sisters despite Ada's offer to the contrary.

As I reflected upon and wrote about this tension between Ada's suggestions and my beliefs, I noticed the irony of the situation. Ada had a desire to be seen in a good light and I had the desire to have a controllable case study. We were at odds for

the same reason - control. This tension between Ada's suggestion and my beliefs was unexpected. After all, Ada had invited me to do my research in her classroom. She wanted me in her classroom as a researcher so she could continue to match new theory to her practice (Field Notes, 24/9/93). In a manner of speaking, Ada wanted some theoretical verifications to her teaching of reading. At the onset of the research, I believed I could provide Ada with some theoretical underpinning in the comfort of the grade 5 program. At the beginning of my data collection, I believed that as a university-based researcher I had "more equal footing" (Allen, Buchanan, Edelsky, Norton, 1992, p. 360) than Ada as the classroom-based teacher, in influencing the choice of research sites. In my arrogance, I insisted on doing my research with the children in grade 5. Ada agreed.

During the course of writing the thesis, however, I became aware that although Ada's invitation gave me a way in to her classroom, Ada, as the classroom-based teacher, had the ultimate control in determining the choice of research sites. After all, the research site was *her* classroom. She could have insisted on the grade 7 program securing the idea that she would be shown in a good light. Moreover, she could have told me to leave. Instead, she let me win. She complied with my demand. Ada let me have the grade 5 group with which I was more comfortable, the situation which I thought showed more potential. During the writing of the thesis I realized that Ada's desire to be shown in a good light was overcome by her desire to learn, to learn more about her own teaching practice. Even though her desire to learn more about her own teaching practice might not have been the question to which she consciously

responded, it was there. Her desire to learn was calling her to comply with my demand.

In this initial tension of my desire for site control as a researcher and Ada's desire to show control of her classroom site, there emerged something from deep inside both of us that kept bringing us together to work things out. We discovered in working out a research direction something unexpected. We encountered an unexpected desire to learn, a "desire to make meaning" (van Manen, 1990, p. 79). In our desire to learn, we discovered an unexpected sense of freedom about how to proceed. What was to flow eventually from our commitment to focus on the grade 5 program resulted in Ada having a freeing up of her understanding of who she was as a teacher and specifically what she was doing as a teacher of reading. I had a sense of a freeing up of my understanding of who I was as an emerging researcher attentive to an exploring of reading in the classroom.

My exploration of reading in Ada's classroom occurred over a four month period. During this time sixty-three classroom visits were made and a total of one hundred-forty hours was spent observing and interacting with students and teacher. I was in the classroom four days a week (Monday to Thursday) for approximately ninety minutes each day. During the ninety minutes I would sit located at the side of the room observing Ada and the children or, I would be interacting with the children while they were engaged in independent activities. Initially, I used what van Manen (1990) calls "an indirect method of close observation . . . which requires that one be a participant and an observer at the same time" (p. 69). I entered and attempted to

participate in the life-world of Ada and the children in such a manner that a close relationship developed. I came to understand what I was doing as the observation relationship evolved was to maintain a "hermeneutic alertness to situations that allow[ed me] to constantly step back and reflect on the meaning of those situations" (van Manen, 1990, p. 69). I collected written descriptions of anecdotes as I was participating and observing in Ada's classroom. During the drive home from each visit, I reflected on the events and conversations that had occurred in the classroom on that particular day. Once I was home I reread my classroom observations and wrote my reflections and interpretations of the daily events. Over time, through my written reflections and the sharing of some of the written reflections with Ada, I became more aware of some of the "artificial attitudes" (van Manen, 1990, p. 69) I held as a researcher. I started to recognize some of my own biases in my observations. My awareness allowed me, over time, to be a more thoughtful participant observer. My observations and interactions as a participant observer were recorded, interpreted and reflected on in approximately two hundred pages of field notes. Although I am unable to attach the two hundred pages of field notes, I have attached a sample of my field notes in Appendix A.

In addition, seventeen transcribed interviews were conducted with both teacher and students. I held the interviews with Ada in private, at school, in her home, or in my home. Most often we met an hour before school in an administrative office that was empty at the time. On three occasions when no time was available during the school day we met in the evening at one of our homes to conduct the interview. My

interviews with Ada developed very quickly into "conversational interviews" (van Manen, 1990, p. 66) where the conversational relationship tried to focus on what it means to have an understanding about reading literature. Initially, our conversations resulted in some "unstructured and open-ended interviews . . . [that went] everywhere and nowhere" (van Manen, 1990, p. 67). With practice I found a sense of direction that made it unnecessary to ask too many questions. Silence was often an effective prompt for Ada to reflect and proceed with her telling. Occasionally I would repeat Ada's last comment in a questioning manner that prompted her to continue sharing her experiences and reflections. At one point Ada wrote in the personal journal she kept on the research experience, "I'm reading this transcript, smiling, at your questions, Mrs. Fox! You certainly have learned the craft of asking open-ended questions!" (Journal, 10/11/93). With respect to my conversations with Ada I have enclosed in Appendix B a transcript of a section of one of our many conversations.

My interviews with the three children were conducted out of the classroom as well, often in a quiet corner of the library or, on occasion, in the guidance counsellor's office. I prepared for the interviews with the children with more forethought than for my conversational interviews with Ada. In talking with the children I drafted a more detailed list of potential questions to be explored. For an example, please see Appendix C. I found the children, being as young as they were, required more thoughtfulness on my part to share their thoughts and feelings about reading literature. Furthermore, I wanted to have the opportunity to reflect on the questions prior to the interview to reassure myself that the questions were easily understood. I wanted to

avoid intimidating situations that could make the children feel uncomfortable.

I reviewed all transcripts of conversations with Ada and the children. The reviewing of transcripts with Ada was an "occasion to reflect with [her] . . . on the topic at hand" (van Manen, 1990, p. 63). Afterwards, I made notes/comments about our reflective conversations in my field notes. One such example is found in Appendix D. The reflective conversations and my notes on these conversations often guided the dialogue that was to follow in our future conversations. Hence, our on-going reflections on the conversations transcribed on paper quickly turned our dialogue into hermeneutic interviews where our reflective conversations turned Ada into a "collaborator of the research project" (van Manen, 1990, p. 63).

Reflecting with the children on our transcribed conversations was different from my on-going reflections with Ada. While the children knew the transcripts were our conversations written down on paper, they tended to view the transcripts more as a piece of written text that needed editing. Their focus was often on the grammatically correct usage of words and the notion of complete sentences. Thus, my conversations with the children ended up to be more of a gathering of lived experiences than an "occasion to *reflect*" (van Manen, 1990, p. 63) with them on the lived-experience of reading literature.

A personal journal on the research experience was another form of data collection. Ada maintained a personal journal of written reflections on our conversations to "reflect on significant aspects of her past and present [teaching] life" (van Manen, 1990, p. 73). The intent of the journal was to provide Ada with the

opportunity for further involvement of previous discussions, clarifications of ideas, and exploration of conflicting thoughts. Ada wrote ten responses consisting of fourteen pages of single spaced handwritten notes during the research study. An excerpt of one of Ada's reflections and a response to a transcript can be found in Appendix E. While I read each response after it was written, I did not respond in writing to her journal entries.

And finally, I also collected artifacts of the children's work. The children gave me permission to copy their response journals, writing folders, Language learning assignments, and report cards as another source of data. For a sample of the children's work please turn to Appendix F.

So far, in this section I have made an attempt to distinguish, for the sake of clarity, between the gathering of lived-experience material, the data, and the reflecting on lived-experience material, the analyses, during my stay in Ada's classroom. It is important to note that "these two acts, however, are not really separable and they should be seen as part of the same process" (van Manen, 1990, p. 63). For example, collecting anecdotes and personal experiences through audiotaped conversations and written accounts required Ada and the children to reflect on a particular experience that they had lived. Therefore, the collection of data and the analyses of data are intertwined in the life-world of the classroom.

Another major source of analyses during and after my data collection was in the form of conversations. I shared my research text in the form of conversations with colleagues, professorial advisors and friends. I had frequent informal conversations

with these people to "gather [their] interpretive insights" (van Manen, 1990, p. 100) to my work. Our conversations were a collaborative activity based on a common orientation of meaning making focusing on the potential themes in my data. These collaborative conversations became an "art of testing" (Gadamer cited in van Manen, 1990, p. 100) my data. The art of testing "consists in the art of questioning-- meaning to 'lay open, to place in the open' the subject matter of the conversation" (van Manen, 1990, p. 100). "To place in the open the subject matter of the conversation" required the participants to be in a "conversational relation" (van Manen, 1990, p. 100). Participants in a "conversational relation" do not stand firm on eloquent debates or argumentative confrontations, rather participants in a "conversational relation" walks side by side in a dialogic relationship where the situation resembles "what Socrates called the situation of 'talking together like friends'" (van Manen, 1990, p. 100) in order to strengthen the hermeneutic text. Such was the case when I "tested" the bizarre notion of onions with one of my professorial advisors.

I also had continuous conversations with myself regarding the lived-experience material I had gathered. Most often, I used my daily walks as a time to allow thoughts and ideas to come to my consciousness in order to get some sense of understanding from my data. For thoughts and ideas to come to my consciousness I talked aloud as I walked. I found, by attempting to transform my thoughts into language, new ideas had an opportunity to develop. Oral language seemed to give my thoughts some clarity in order to develop some understanding of my data. By the time I finished my walks I had taken my thoughts into the realm of oral language. At that

point I was able to take the skeletal language of new ideas to the computer in order to play with them more fully in the initial stage of writing about the data.

After I had left Ada's classroom, after I had collected my data, and started to write the thesis, my sense of understanding my research data took another hermeneutic turn. My intra-personal conversations intensified and another form of consciousness developed; "a consciousness that is created by the act of literacy-- reading and writing" (van Manen, 1990, p. 124). I began to sense that "writing [was] the method" (van Manen, 1990, p. 126). "Research is the work of writing-- writing is its very essence" (Barthes cited in van Manen, 1990, p. 124). I came to understand my understanding through the process of constructing the text of the thesis.

As I wrote the thesis, two things would happen simultaneously, in a tension-like manner. I experienced the fear of losing control of my understanding at the same time that I was renewing the nature of my understanding (Sheridan, 1993). My understanding continuously changed. As a writer, I discovered that when I read what I am writing now, tomorrow or the next day I will read it in a "regenerative and adaptive [way and] reach new understanding" (Sheridan, 1993, p. 14). At times, my writing, that I read to understand at a later date, "surprised" me in its new understanding. This regenerative understanding, as Sheridan (1993) described, emerged as I re-read the transcripts and field notes after I completed my field work. Another surprise happened. Understandings of my required readings from my graduate courses would re-emerge and mingle with my reflections on the transcripts and field notes. This in turn, led me back to re-reading those required readings which,

once again, turned into "a regenerative and adaptive struggle to reach new understanding" (Sheridan, 1993, p. 14). I had no possession over this understanding, it was a new understanding always being regenerated, always acting upon me. Although I re-experienced the fear of losing control as I wrote, writing somehow "fixed" those thoughts on paper. In some mysterious, nebulous way, writing held the alien-in-my-midst in a space between certainty and uncertainty. "[Writing] externalize[d] what in some sense [was] internal; it distance[d] [me] from [my] immediate lived involvements with the [lived-experience material I had gathered in Ada's classroom]" (van Manen, 1990, p. 124) and allowed me to "measure the depth of things, as well to come to a sense of [my] own depth" (van Manen, 1990, p. 127).

It was when I "lost control and lived in a space between certainty and uncertainty" that my sense of onions as an organizational metaphor had the opportunity to evolve. Writing externalized my internal metaphorical understanding of the word onion. In other words, "there [was] a subjectifying and an objectifying moment in [my sense of onions] in the way the word [onion] allowed [me] to understand the world" (van Manen, 1990, p. 129). As previously stated, the organizational metaphor of "onions" allowed me to go into the text and out of the text at the same time. It was a hermeneutic way of proceeding that both captured me and set me free.

After I left Ada's classroom I continued to study the lived-experience descriptions that I had gathered: the field notes; Ada's journal; the conversations with Ada; the conversations with the students; and the students' artifacts. It wasn't until I

was well into working through all the data that I realized that what I was doing was very much an analogue to what I had written about in respect to the onion. I was looking at the holes in my data, then I was looking at the parts in my data, and then, I started to look at the *whole* in my data. I discovered, as I was part way through my work, that what I was doing was organizing my descriptions about Ada's classroom and my theming of these descriptions with respect to the clarity that was introduced to me by the sense of onion. It is the sense of onion that has made me attentive not to overlook the original difficulty in the *whole* of the conversations. That is what called me back to the data. The lived-experience descriptions were calling me, were making me "tearful", were irritating me. The lived-experience descriptions were calling to me and were saying to look at them as a *whole* and to show them in their original difficulty.

What you are going to read in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, will be my "working through" all of the data I have gathered in a manner that allowed me to go into the text and out of the text at the same time. In my "working through" the data I will be offering themes. In order to prepare for the themes in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, I am going to offer an example of how the sense of onion allowed me to clarify what was before me. So, I am going to present a piece of data and then I am going to show how I worked through the data to develop the themes.

The sample piece of data that I am offering is in the service of the *whole*. I engage in the conversation with Ada, and as a researcher, I bring my research into conversation with the conversation with Ada. Here, then, is a sample of an original

conversation that I had with Ada about her teaching of reading:

- C: What about reading strategies?
 A: Your question is - what do I think of them?
 C: When do you teach them?
 A: Umm . . . probably not as frequently as I should. (pauses)
 If I'm going to teach them . . .
 C: Does instruction fit?
 A: I see that it has a place. But as you go through changing how you teach, as in my reader's workshop, that is a big step. It takes a while to figure out where direct instruction fits. It has to go in there. I just haven't figured out where with the grade 5's. With my grade 7's, yes. It's almost a lecture format. But I haven't found where it fits with the grade 5's yet. Note taking in that format doesn't work. Modeling, yes. I just haven't done it yet. Now, I have in the past with other groups, taught direct reading strategies throughout the year. And it should have a place in the instruction. I wonder . . . I don't know . . . This is where I struggle. I have my traditional approach. And now I have this new information . . . I haven't been able to put the two together.
 C: How would you describe your reader's workshop? What do you teach?
 A: I see reader's workshop in two ways. I see it as a way to help develop the habit of reading. The students have for the most part a 100% control over what they read. And they read for a longer period of time in class. And I've had parents say, "my child now reads all the time." And they credit the reader's workshop program because of that. I also see in the future using the reader's workshop in a more technical way for the direct teaching. For me those two haven't come together yet. I haven't figured out what role I'm to play in directing and guiding. So, it probably, right now, the program has been more for the pleasure component, the habit of reading, the joy of reading, and the experience that we get from reading a good book. But it hasn't had the technical elements to that. (Transcript, 11/1/94)

Here is how I engaged, as an example, with this conversation. I read through the conversation several times. In reading through this conversation many tensions

became evident. My work began by identifying the tensions between words. For example, the tension between: "when do you teach them" and "if I'm going to teach them"; "traditional approach" and "new information"; "directing" and "guiding"; "pleasure component" and "technical elements"; "students have 100% control over reading" and "groups are taught direct reading strategies"; and "in the past" and "in the future." The tensions between words seemed like competing voices in this conversation. The tension between words showed me there were themes here. At one point, Ada seemed to be in the service of her students and yet, she also seemed to be in the service of theory. At another point in the conversation, Ada seemed to be in the service of wanting the children to have the freedom to have fun with literature, but at the same time, she wants to control their reading in a technical manner. Likewise, there was a tension between Ada wanting the children to experience the pleasure of reading, and yet she still wants to incorporate the working on reading strategies. Furthermore, there was a tension between Ada wondering if she is right in her teaching approach, and Ada still requiring to act in the classroom using a teaching approach. All of these tensions are in this conversation. But, for the sake of clarity I have chosen only one of the invitational tensions. The one I want to follow, at the moment, is what Ada meant by the notion of teaching literature.

Despite the richness in the language before me, there is a real sense of tension in this conversation between what Ada says about the teaching of literature for pleasure and what she says about the teaching of technical reading. Although I flesh this out in detail in Chapter 5, briefly, here is how my working through this

conversation had led me down to the real struggle and tension between teaching literature technically and teaching literature for pleasure.

Ada was saying that the "technical teaching" and the "pleasure teaching" "haven't come together yet." Ada's conversation about her teaching of reading in the classroom spoke of her specific struggle, her struggle to incorporate a popular instructional idea she encountered in her professional reading. As a professional in the business of education, Ada was receptive to buying into new teaching practices. She was ready to consume the latest, specialized theoretical approach to reading, Reader's Workshop. She thought she had to bring the two reading perspectives, the teaching of reading for proficiency and the teaching of reading for pleasure, together. Ada was struggling with the notion of teaching reading for proficiency and teaching reading for pleasure.

If Ada was talking about the struggle to combine the two reading perspectives and I was responding to this struggle, what does this say about teachers in general who are struggling with the notion of teaching reading for technical proficiency and teaching reading for pleasure? How many of us -- how many teachers -- are trapped between these two desires? This notion of the profession looking for, trying to consume the best theory, between pleasure and proficiency indicates a dichotomous approach to teaching. Educators, living in a modern world where two distinctly different ways are often viewed antagonistically, never think the two, pleasure and proficiency, as living together. Although I worked these ideas out in detail in Chapter 5, the germ of the idea began with the way I read this particular conversation.

I will take the germ of this theme, in the service of the whole, a little further. Many teachers in the profession, look for new and innovative ideas to assist in becoming better teachers. At this consumerist level, those are appropriate desires to have as a teacher. Teachers seek to ground themselves in new theory to hopefully become better teachers and provide better teaching/learning for students. The desire to look for new and innovative ideas to improve teaching/learning holds on to good intentions. But, what then, was really at stake here? In trying to find, to search for the best theory to consume, many teachers may find they become consumed by the theories themselves. Conscientious, caring teachers, like Ada, end up with more theory than they can teach. Teachers, very much at the mercy of a deep-rooted Cartesian dualism, feel they have to make a choice of what they are going to serve up in their time-restrictive classroom. For Ada, the choice -- the dualistic choice was an either/or situation -- either pleasure reading or technical reading. Do teachers become the consummate consumers of theory? How can teachers who are inundated with multiple theories and methods, continue to consume the new items on the menu in order to serve up "the latest" in the ever changing desire "for the better"? Is this the underlying struggle that many teachers unconsciously face?

As the above example illustrates, this is the kind of movement I went through with respect to my data. When I read the data I usually began with the tensions. I looked for the tensions between what Ada said to me and what I said to her; what she said and what she wrote, and the tensions between what Ada said, wrote and did; what the children said to me and what I said to them; what the children said and what they

wrote, and the tensions between what the children said, wrote and did. By being attentive to these tensions I was able to follow the thematic leads that were developed in Chapters 4, 5, and 6. What will be discovered in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, is my working through the details of the data by engaging in conversations with the data. Thus, Chapters 4, 5, and 6 are very narrative in nature. Through conversations I was able to move in and out of the data, elevating the data to service the whole. Certainly, the data has to do with Ada and her classroom, but I used the data as an opportunity to question the larger meaning of classrooms.

The description and the analysis offered in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 follows the methods outlined in this methodology chapter. The methods described in this chapter appear to lead the research question by the hand. This is a misreading, however, for "methods cannot be determined by fixed signposts. They need to be discovered or invented as a response to the question at hand" (van Manen, 1992, p. 29). It is important to reinforce that the methods described in this chapter were discovered as a response to my research question -- What does it mean to deepen an understanding about the teaching of reading literature? Thus, the methodology is in the service of my question.

What follows now, in chapters 4, 5, and 6 respectively is a look at the evolution of Ada's voice in her classroom; an exploration of the multiple layers of Ada's voice; and the layers of the voices of three children in Ada's classroom.

CHAPTER 4

THE OTHER SIDE OF A TEACHER'S VOICE

... that roar which lies on the other side of silence. Eliot,
G. (1922).

In a chapter dedicated to describing the evolution of Ada's teacher voice, it may seem ironic, but I begin with a few comments about my voice as a researcher. Simply, some declarations need to be made about my perspective and what you are about to read about Ada's teacher voice. As has been previously indicated there was a change in my voice as a researcher that runs parallel to the evolution of Ada's voice.

The Researcher's Voice

Entering Ada's classroom as a researcher meant that a new member had been added to the community. Spending four mornings a week for four months with a teacher and her students makes you a community member. I asked Ada about my membership in her classroom.

You've become part of the classroom. For example, with this last writing piece I had a question, at the beginning, before they self-evaluated - Who have you shared this story with? Your name came up quite often. You walk in and out. You don't make a big deal about working with Cleo or Sam. There's no status, special treatment, whatever. You are just part of the class. (Interview, 18/11/93)
I do what I do whether you are here or not. I don't ever feel that you are evaluating me or the situation. I look forward to the time we reflect and have our conversations. I like it when you are there, it makes me more reflective of what I do. (Field Notes, 3/11/93)

As stated earlier, Ada encouraged me to do my research in her class. She wanted to become more aware of herself as a practitioner, in hope that this awareness

would transcend her teaching practices (Field Notes, 24/9/93). Initially she made the point, "I will be able to use what you come up with as a possible confirmation, to see how the theory matches up with what I do" (Field Notes, 24/9/93). Ada was an eager and confident participant interested in seeing which theory would interpret her actions in the classroom. van Manen (1982) calls this an attempt to find the permanent, certainty, and structure in the practical life of the classroom world. Ada, from an epistemological perspective, wanted me to inform her of theory that would explain her practice in a regulating and rational manner. It was a turning away from master texts to a turning to a "master" researcher to inform her of practice.

As indicated in an earlier part of the thesis, I did begin this study with the mind to master research and seek some tentative conclusions about metacognition. Initially, I was hoping to provide Ada with some master answers that could possibly explain her actions and the actions of her students. Instead, I found an elusive mystery to research which led me, not to mastery, but to a mysterious uncertainty.

This mysterious uncertainty prompted the following conversation:

- C: How is this working for you Ada? What are you getting out of this?
- A: At this point I'm not getting much on reading and writing. The questions that you ask seem to be similar ones to what I have asked all along. Why am I doing this? Is this giving me what I need? What do I need to do to guide these students into a different direction? I realize you can't give me too much information on what you know because part of your research is seeing how I question and how I go about that. But up until now, no. It's just been, being able to talk about some of the questions that I have had for a long time.
- C: I don't have the answers. Research is new to me as well and I'm adjusting as I go along. (Interview, 30/11/93)

This conversation was a turning point for Ada and me. Revealing my non-expertise as a researcher allowed for different conversations to take place, conversations based on collaboration. Over time, we collaborated, explored in dialogue and reflected on paper, together, the happenings in Ada's classroom. Our conversations were no longer a one sided dialogue with questions, rather, they became a dialogue with others, with life. Our conversations brought to life our thoughts, our discoveries, and our responses to the story we lived in her classroom. Life-dialogue with others nurtures a different kind of reflectivity. We discovered our individual values and beliefs, biases, and preconceived ideas which in turn, led to new relations, new meanings in what we experienced and did (Kvale, 1983). For example, Ada wrote:

Your point on calmness has remained in my thoughts. It's one of those things that has become an integral part of my day. So much so, I don't see it as anything unusual . . . until you discussed it with me! (Journal Response, 11/11/93)

As Peshkin (in Beck & Black, 1991) observes, "Knowingly or not, I think we all are . . . in the subjective underbrush of our own research experience" (p. 138). Our dialogue, at times, was a spark that explored our subjective underbrush and allowed for the creation of new thoughts and ideas for both of us. It is in this context that I offer this chapter about the evolution of Ada's voice as a teacher of reading in a grade 5 classroom.

Ada's Early Voice

During one of our early conversations Ada spoke of her teacher voice, a

minded voice, a separate voice deep within her that rose to the surface as she stepped over the threshold into her classroom.

I never let go of being the teacher in the classroom. (Pauses and looks out the window) No . . . I never let go of my teacher voice. It's like your brain changes. And you don't analyze everything. But it makes this shift and most of the things that come out are in a . . . a teacher voice. And all the reactions and all those sort of things are aside (pauses) because you put yourself in this . . . it's like a compartment. Here you are now, you are in this compartment. You have a job to do and this is the way you do it. And then I can go into the staffroom, and there, it is totally different . . . (laughs) Then the "crap and gut" conversations come out! (Interview, 21/10/93)

As a teacher, Ada's self-understanding assumed a specific way of being with the children in her care. According to Ada, she became the teacher by placing aside "the crap and gut" and put herself in a teacher "compartment" where she had "a job to do" and "a way to do it." She went about her job within the "teacher compartment" in an efficient and deliberate manner. This compartment contained her teacher self, a separate self, a minded self, which she called forth when leaving the staffroom to enter her classroom.

Ada, in this original statement, talked with a sense of certainty as she described herself as a teacher. Having brought to our conversations eight years of teaching experience with grade five, and continuous confirmation from students, parents and administrators of her teaching excellence, she thoughtfully responded to my questions with self-assurance. Never letting go of her teacher voice had proven itself to be a successful way of living in the classroom. Her personal "reactions and all those sort of things are [put] aside" when she entered her classroom. Her "brain changed" and the teacher voice took over allowing Ada to be consistent, predictable and e-

emotionally steady when being with her students. Listening to Ada, I got the sense that, physically, her teacher voice had taken her over. In the classroom, she lived the part of the teacher voice as a self-contained whole where the wholeheartedness of who she was as a human being has been "put aside," out of the way, where it couldn't interfere with the job at hand.

Ada considered herself a teacher who is a life-long learner. She wrote:

Being a life-long learner means that few things remain consistent. Each situation has components worth repeating and other components in need of replacing. Thus, every year of teaching has seen little repetition, and more creation. (Self Evaluation, 25/3/94)

Ada actively created learning situations for herself, by herself ". . . all of my learning has been from books" (Interview, 11/1/94). She "encounters things in *The Reading Teacher*," reads "a suggested book [or] picks up a book [in a bookstore] that will help [her] teach reading that will suit [her] teaching style" (Interview, 11/1/94). She has used Atwell's (1987) book, *In the Middle*, as a guide for the Reader's Workshop component of her Language Learning Program. Furthermore, Ada spent part of her summer "[reading] research on how students acquire knowledge and use language" (Self Evaluation, 25/3/94). Last year, Ada explored Piaget's Stages of Development in relationship to students' journal writing in Reader's Workshop. She was questioning "whether students can respond on the level that [she's] asking them to" (Interview, 10/11/93). Ada tried to figure things out for herself, by herself. She was an independent life-long learner whose quest was for self-improvement in order to fine-tune herself as a teacher.

Ada turned to both a scientific and a humanistic understanding of teaching to

develop her teacher self. She gained abstract knowledge from authoritative texts and used their theoretical perspective and their practical interpretations in her classroom. Like most of us, Ada had a need to feel that she was doing the "right thing" with her students. "...this is my fourth year of doing it [Reader's Workshop]. And to me, it is still very new" (Interview, 11/1/94). She was circumspect, cautious, and careful in her teaching, turning to "experts" in distant texts for objective guidance.

Over time, Ada continued to seek a comfortable home for both theory and practice in her "teacher compartment." For Ada, cognitive reading theory has been invaluable in her ability to teach within the compartment.

... and then I took a reading course. And I was given ... through the course I was given ... it was broken down into the three components of reading - what you do before, what you do during, and what you do after. And just having that basic understanding of the three parts ... And then, some of the theories that go with reading ... And following that, came the strategies and activities you could use. That was the best thing for me to put it all together. If I wouldn't have taken that course I would still be struggling with how do I teach reading. (Interview, 11/1/94)

Master texts and knowledgeable authorities have provided Ada with a structured approach to her teaching of reading strategies.

The etymology of the word "strategy" opens a portal for a deeper understanding of Ada's contemporary teacher practice. "Strategy," from the Greek, *strategia*, meaning generalship, is a commander of troops who has plans for an area he governs. The commander employs individual strategies to afford the maximum support he requires to govern a group. Ada, in her implementation of strategies, was looking for maximum support in her teaching to fortify her teacher compartment.

Strategies are something official, tangible, and reliable that she could turn to for guidance and reassurance in her teaching. It offered her a sense of control, a sense of being in command.

Ada called the teaching of reading strategies "a very technical process . . . because the teacher imposes goals and conditions" (Interview, 11/1/94). Ada was self-assured in her imposition of goals and conditions in this technical teaching role.

And teaching technically like I'm doing now in the fantasy unit . . . That lends itself to teacher directions at this point. So I can pick, very easily, lessons to teach because it is so much more structured. So that, by the time the year is over they (students) will have had exposure to most of the reading strategies and how to use them. (Interview, 11/1/94)

Technical teaching lent itself to Ada's understanding of the world. She found a home, as an independent learner, in a strategic way of knowing and saw that as the ideal for her students as well.

Ada viewed "technical teaching" as an efficient and effective way of teaching the reading process. She wanted her practice in the classroom to follow theory in a reliable manner. It appeared to me that Ada had a desire for external theory to be "brought in by the expert to stand before action in order to inform it" (van Manen, 1990, p. 153).

Ada's Changing Voice

As I discovered in the conversations with Ada, the voice that she thought was self-contained, minded and pure, that spoke about her as a teacher, the voice she assumed when she went into the classroom, was not singular. In fact, it was a series

of several voices.

One disruptive voice emerged from Ada's status as an independent learner. As an independent learner, Ada had isolated herself with selective master texts to show her "the way" of finding answers to her educational questions. Over time, self reflection with a disembodied text had become a lonely internal monologue for Ada. Others recognized her loneliness. Ada's principal was aware of her isolation and was troubled by it. He stated, "[I am] concerned about Ada being so alone. She needs someone to talk to. It's good that you are here." (Field Notes, 6/12/93).

I, too, was concerned about Ada's loneliness as a teacher. Her continuous effort to construct knowledge through an internal monologue, turning inward, in isolation, was a lonesome way of living in the world. It appeared to me as if she wanted to fill herself up with the "right" voices in hope of developing a perfect teacher voice. Even here, at this early point in the study where Ada was searching for knowledge in the "official places," there was a hint of something lacking. She wanted to talk about her practice. She stated, "I look forward to the times you come and we talk. It makes me more reflective of what I do" (Field Notes, 3/11/93). As a participant in her classroom, I knew that Ada had a need to "figure things out" in a conversational kind of way. It was difficult for her to construct knowledge in a vacuum. Knowledge is constructed in an ongoing dialogue, with others. In a genuine dialogue there are no subjects, but rather participants who open themselves up to each other and lose themselves in the topic at hand.

A second disruptive voice called from the practical every day life of Ada's

classroom, Ada found that real life intruded on her technical teaching. "And I'm overwhelmed a lot of the times by everything that happens in the classroom" (Interview, 28/11/93). Technical teaching was continuously complicated by the human messiness of classroom life. She wrote:

It's overwhelming! In theory, teaching fits in a nice package: curriculum; school/community philosophy; unit/daily plans; and evaluating progress. Except, the four stages are to meet the needs of 25-30 students. Now add to the formula learning needs, personalities, family situations and prior knowledge. The process becomes very complicated! My primary concern is with the group. I usually let that drive the specifics of my program. This means there are many planned lessons with unexpected outcomes! (Journal, 25/11/93)

These unexpected outcomes, at times, overwhelmed Ada. She was unable to fit theory and practice together into a "nice package."

It was as if Ada longed for her own distinctive voice and discourse. "The distinctive discourse of modernity is one of prediction and control" (Borgmann, 1992, p. 2). Ada was looking to predict the outcomes of her teaching and control the learning of her students. She was looking to capture something, to tie it down with precision and control in order to do it right. She wanted to operate in an efficient and effective kind of way to make herself a better teacher. What she discovered of course was a human messiness that made her aware of more questions than answers. She discovered that she wasn't really who she thought she was.

According to Schleiermacher (cited in van Manen, 1990), practice always comes first and theory comes later as a result of reflection. Although Ada reflected on her practice as well, it was different from Schleiermacher's reflection. She wrote:

I spend time reflecting as I drive to and from work. Each day is a

modification or experiment to improve a situation. Few days end with complete success. I think my students sense my interest and are willing to participate in my 'lab work.' (Journal, 25/11/93)

In contrast to Schleiermacher, Ada re-examined her practice, to see how closely it mirrors the theoretical authorities she had embraced. This type of reflective mirroring speaks of Schon's (1983) reflection-on-action where teachers attempt to create meaning of the problematic aspect of classroom life through problem setting and problem solving. Ada's introspective reflection on her teaching continued to be, at this point, a re-looking, a "seeing-as" (Schon, 1983), from a distance, at problems she encountered in order to find solutions to "improve a situation."

It was somewhat paradoxical that it was in Ada's positivistic, empirical, natural scientific language that the significant *Other* appears. Grange (1989) points out:

By learning to speak, the subject lets the law of culture into its being, and thereby, acknowledges the presence of the *Other*. Henceforth, that *Other* will speak through the subject, and the quality of that speech - full, empty, banal, repetitive, strained, serene, delusional, or evocative - will express the level of satisfaction attained by the subject's collaboration with the world of culture. (p. 164)

Ada's collaboration with modernist thinking expressed a dispassionate view of her teaching world through an objectifying lens of scientific description. In her attempt to experiment and improve her teaching, Ada pointed out, in her dualistic language, what her classroom was not. In the duality of her language, Ada excluded the fact that her classroom could be a place that was playful, a place that was built around the interest of subjective human beings, a place where the individual might be as privileged as the group. The humanness of classroom life will always intrude, make us question, and will, somewhat reluctantly, invite uncertainty into our lives. Within this uncertainty,

through our questions, Ada and I created a re-searching relationship in which we came to know what Hebdige (cited in Fahlman, 1993) calls "the alien-in-our-midst, the *Other*."

The alien-in-our-midst started to problematize Ada's life in her classroom. We initially set up the research study to look at Ada's minded teaching, the teaching of metacognitive strategies. She was using me to understand herself better as a teacher and I was using her to get certain answers to my research questions. We thought we were solving some problems in her classroom. Ada thought she could improve her teacher voice through more knowledge, more strategies when in fact her knowledge and strategies were taking her away from the real question, the hermeneutic question of -- What does it mean to deepen your self-understanding? What we didn't realize at this moment was that we were problematizing her life as a teacher and my life was being problematized as a researcher.

The Other Voice Within Practice

It is evident in the conversations reflected in the data that at this point a somewhat different Ada emerged. Our conversations were no longer about Ada's relationship to herself, but rather, our conversations started to revolve around her relationship as self to others, the children in her class who have selves of their own.

For example, a topic which appeared to disturb Ada significantly during our four months of dialoguing, and which served to crystalize her thoughts about her teacher voice, was mentioned to her by me as a result of an impression I had made by

my second visit to her classroom. I wrote in my Field Notes:

Ada's organization, sense of purpose, and calmness permeates throughout the classroom. The classroom is clean, organized and calming itself. There is very little clutter. Notebooks, texts, hand-ins are all stored in a tidy manner. This component of organization appears to be important. It adds to the calmness of the room. Ada is calm - at all times? Where is Ada in the responses? Where are her feelings, values, biases? Are they shared with the students? Do they need to be? (14/10/93)

I shared my impression of this sense of calmness with her. Ada gave a matter of fact response. She said:

It's what I work on. It's part of my personality. I wondered if I could do this, but it works. (Field Notes, 14/10/93)

Although, at the time, it appeared to me that Ada dismissed my comments about her calmness, I was acting, unknown to me, as the interested *Other*. By presenting my observation to Ada, I had brought to speech a component of Ada's way of being in her classroom. Ada returned and alluded to her calmness often over our months of talking together. She wrote, "Your point on calmness has remained in my thoughts" (Journal, 1/11/93). That brief conversation seemed to have been a portal, an opening for us to be a little more adventurous, a little more daring in our reflections on her teaching.

Ada was becoming aware that she could not control everything and was finding a way of living with the unexpected. "Each day when I come in, it's the little time I take to just make sure that on this day . . . [I] accept things as they come" (Interview, 28/11/93). Ada's way of living, calmly accepting things as they come, "had a powerful effect on anyone (teachers, parents, children) entering her classroom"

(Journal, 1/11/93). "It is calm, reassuring, and accepting. The children are drawn to her, they feel safe, and are comforted by her calm manner that she will take care, set things aright in their world" (Field Notes, 17/11/93). She stated, "the students welcome this aspect. Most often they comment on the fact that I don't yell. They feel safe and comfortable because of this" (Journal, 1/11/93).

Ada's calmness, however, did have an authoritative sway of the official teacher (Heidegger cited in Aoki, 1990, p. 1) about it. It was a watchful, empathetic relationship over the learners in her care. This empathetic acceptance, this sense of calmness, permeated throughout the classroom community. Ada reflected on how she went about accepting life in her classroom:

There are so many things that I do in the day that if I give up too much for some things then I won't have the energy to respond in the right way later. Each day I try to preserve that energy. It just . . . it gets me through so that each class that I have gets the same . . . the same amount of interest . . . the same expectations . . . the same preparation. Because my big thing is fairness for all. Fairness with discipline, fairness with expectations, and fairness of what I can give. It is making sure that I can give something of myself to each class. It's what I work on. This [calmness] is part of my personality. (Interview, 28/11/93)

Ada calmly oversaw her students so she could be fair to them all. According to *Webster's Dictionary* (1983) the word fair implies an elimination of one's own feelings, prejudices, and desires so as to achieve a proper balance of conflicting interests. Therefore, from the perspective of modernist thinking, it is possible to claim that Ada was able to set her ego-centric feelings aside by not becoming emotional, by remaining fair and calm. Moreover, it could be asserted that her insistence on being calm and fair was her ability to be objective, free from self interest, prejudice and

favoritism, when she interacted with her students in the classroom. From a modern perspective, Ada was demonstrating good teaching behavior, the type of behavior, as parents have told her, that is admired and appreciated in teachers (Journal, 1/11/93). Many parents, perhaps living in chaos themselves, value and cherish Ada's persona of being calm and seemingly unemotional, of being fair, of being just to their children. They were assuming, from observations, that Ada's calmness is an unemotional fair way of dealing with their children. Parents were interpreting Ada's actions from what they see. Seeing, however, isn't necessarily the same as being. The modernistic way of seeing is a flat way of seeing things. A flat way of seeing does not allow for light to get in. Flat light only reflects, it bounces back to the self, it never lives in being.

I would like to suggest a different interpretation. I propose that Ada's calmness could be viewed in a different kind of way. Listen to Ada.

I think of the saying, the calm before the storm. In my world I try to minimize the storms by staying calm. (Journal, 1/11/93)

I propose that in fact, Ada's calmness was the eye of the storm, the eye of the hurricane, the retreating to the center of the self. Ada was trying to shelter herself, to protect herself, to give herself a little chance to recover from the passionate human messiness of classroom life. Ada's calmness was a response to that passion. *Passio*, from the Latin, means to suffer, to be acted upon. The responsibility Ada felt as a teacher for her students acted heavily upon her, acted passionately upon her. Ada told me:

And I'm overwhelmed a lot of the times by everything that happens in the classroom. And sometimes it is just too much of a responsibility and I know lots of times I go home and I am exhausted. And I carry

all this stuff with me - how am I ever going to teach this kid to do this by the end. (Interview, 28/11/93)

Responding to passion was overwhelming and confusing to Ada. In her modernist thinking, in her modernist passion to be in control and be the one to act upon her pedagogy this feeling of being acted upon was extremely difficult to bear. Ada tried to minimize the storms of passion acting upon her by remaining calm and being fair to all her students.

The alien-in-our-midst was starting to act upon Ada, however. The voice of the *Other* was being heard. Ada started to become aware of the passion of teaching acting upon her. She wrote:

In keeping with my goal of being a life-long learner, I remain interested in my job. I accept my limitations, constantly striving to make my days meaningful for myself and my learners. Above all, **I remember** (my emphasis) that my students are human beings. This gives me the patience to deal with the positive and the negative. I try to be proactive rather than reactive with student relations. In doing so, I often discover the initial problem is a sign of other more serious issues. (Self Evaluation, 25/3/94)

Ada's quest to make her days meaningful for herself and her learners and reminding herself of her humanness suggested that she was trying to reconnect her teacher self with self. Ada, in her attempt to re-member her humanness, to befriend that which she had made a stranger of, was seeking the *Other*. Matthew Fox (1983) talks of this as a "befriending the deeper self within us, of befriending our passions, our deepest feelings of ecstasy and of pain" (p. 281). For Ada, befriending the passions which acted upon her was a very different and extremely difficult undertaking. She was no longer looking inward to examine her passion for teaching by befriending expert

knowledge generated from research that had validity to it. Rather, Ada was trying to befriend the teaching which was acting upon her, which was being passionate with her. Ada's voice was changing. The question concerning Ada's compartmentalized teacher voice, attuned to children in a minded teacher-like manner, at the beginning of this chapter became a question of necessity.

The intensity and the scope and depth of Ada's questions about who she was as a teacher were very evident in her relationship to her practice. Classroom life became more problematic for Ada. She began to engage in another type of reflection as well. She called it "a bit of an experiment" (Interview, 11/1/94) where creation took place during her teaching. She wrote:

Creation is the life line of teaching. It is what keeps new ideas flowing and allows for change. Being free to change means the program will remain fresh, I become an integral part of the learning process and the students discover the joys and challenges of acquiring new knowledge.
(Self Evaluation, 25/3/94)

Ada had a place for reflection-in-action (Schon, 1983), a kind of knowing-in-practice.

Ada revealed that she reflected in the midst of her teaching life and reflection-in-action became an integral part of her learning process. As Schon suggests, being able to "see and understand new views is not enough; their adequacy and utility must still be discovered in action. Reflection-in-action necessarily involves experiment" (p. 141). As evidenced below, Ada experimented with the curriculum within the living vitality of classroom life.

. . . the university teaches you how to plan, unit plans and daily plans. I've always had very thorough plans but lately I've found that those thorough plans are restrictive. So I spend the time to do the plans and often times I won't allow the change to occur because of all the work I

have done. There will be a bit of an experiment going on now, with keeping an idea list and jotting those ideas down and taking my time in smaller pieces to allow an activity like this. It's opened up a whole bunch of other lessons for me. (Interview, 10/11/93)

Ada's experimentation tells how her reflection-in-action continued to challenge her abstract knowledge of authoritative text. Ada's university experience reflects a pedagogical framework of planning the curriculum and then instructing it. Ada started to question this dominant voice of the curriculum plan. The questioning led her to develop a sense of self that allowed her to control and select knowledge as she needed it, during her teaching. Bruner (1986) calls this sense "reflective intervention" (p. 132). According to Bruner, this sense of self has the "ability to penetrate knowledge for his [her] own uses" (p. 132). Ada learned to welcome the unexpected during her lessons and responded to the unanticipated with an openness which allowed her to pick and choose, from her repertoire of knowledge, a more suitable direction, or even multiple directions, depending on the needs of the individual learners in her care.

Although Ada wasn't even quite sure that she was questioning her practice, the responsive teacher in her was already making changes in her practice. It was these changes that, in turn, pointed to other possibilities.

The Other Voice Beyond Words

There was another voice in Ada that wove itself in and out of our tapestry of conversations, that became more dominant with time, that I, as a researcher, could not ignore. At times, Ada talked about her teaching as a "feeling," a knowing she had. As a researcher, I tried to explore what she meant by "that feeling." In our

conversations I prodded, poked, and probed to untangle the meaning of this knowing feeling.

- C: The last time we talked I asked you about reading lessons and you had this look on your face . . . like something caught your attention. What were you thinking?
- A: It reminded me of the struggle that I have with Reader's Workshop. And as we were talking, something came to mind. It's really difficult to teach a mini lesson in Reader's Workshop. The kids want to read! And I feel that I'm invading their pleasure, their space, their activity. And so I struggle with how mini lessons fit into Reader's Workshop. And I always get a sense from the students that when I give a mini lesson - When can we read? When can we read? I'm still feeling my way. I know technically how it should run. It's just that I haven't got the feeling of knowing how it should run.
- C: The feeling of knowing? What do you mean?
- A: I have a sense that it is right and that it is a good thing for the kids to do. But I haven't got a sense as a teacher yet.
- C: When you say a sense, that you need a sense that it was right as a teacher. What do you mean?
- A: When I have a sense or a feeling that something is right, there is a naturalness to it. And I just know it feels natural.
- C: Feels natural?
- A: Yes. I have thought about that, and that's my feeling right now. (Interview, 11/1/94)

Ada and I had a number of these conversations. As much as I tried, I could never obtain what would be accepted as a rational explanation. As a teacher, however, I knew intuitively what Ada was talking about. It is a deep-rooted understanding of teaching that is beyond words. Competent teachers usually know more about teaching and learning than they can say. Good teachers seem to demonstrate a "kind of knowing-in-practice, most of which is tacit" (Schon, 1983, p. viii). At times, after much struggling, our conversations would reflect this assumption with me accepting phrases such as: "I had a sense that it was right (Interview, 11/1/94); I get a feel for

what they need (Interview, 10/11/93); I'm still feeling my way (Interview, 21/10/93); and, It didn't feel right (Interview, 29/12/93)." This thread of "knowing feelings" meandered throughout our conversations. As a researcher, I always started with a prodding, questioning approach and Ada would try to come up with some plausible answers. Most often, the teacher in me ended up accepting what she knew based on her experience and sense of knowing and my experience and sense of knowing. Her knowing seemed to be based in her actions and not based in words. Our conversations, however, were continuous attempts (on my part) to put into speech something beyond words.

Ada's voice had changed. The compartmentalized voice at the beginning of the study, that she could call upon, as if it was extraneous to her being, had changed. The compartmentalized voice had been mutated into something different. The compartment had become more embodied. Ada was acknowledging feelings as opposed to strategies, tacit knowledge as opposed to procedural knowledge, and contextual knowledge as opposed to text knowledge. There was less of a gap between who she was as a human being and who she was as a teacher. She was getting closer to speaking in a harmony of voices. This harmony was evident in the strength of her early voice. As strong as she was in respect to her early beliefs, she was as equally committed to her questioning of beliefs.

Ada's Polyphony of Voices

Ada, having engaged in these tensions, where she tried to capture the teaching

world in a clear and precise manner, and then having this world problematized down to her very basic question about who she is as a teacher, became a different kind of teacher. Ada discovered a voice, different from, but not opposite to her compartmentalized voice. This voice vibrated in the tensions between significant issues in Ada's evolving understanding of her practice. Three of those issues that demonstrate just how different this voice of Ada's was, involved the tension between self and other, parenting and teaching, and risking and be-longing. This voice lived in the spaces of certainty/uncertainty, security/vulnerability, and of being centered/marginalized. In this space human beings are called upon to dwell with otherness.

Of Selves and Others

Ada's previous way of thinking, of being an autonomous life-long learner as a teacher, actually required her to live alone, to be engaged in independent monologues with ideas in texts. Ada was engaged in climbing an upward journey into abstractions which was a drive away from the body, the mother, the earth. Our deepening participant and researcher relationship, however, brought forth, in Ada, a mass of questioning which led her into the midst of earthiness.

Our questioning conversations ushered in a re-turning, a turning about, a revolution of being for Ada. She was returning to an understanding that her subjectivity included a space for her students' subjectivity which may be different from her own. Understanding that others are subjective human beings involves a

revolutionary change from prizing a sense of independence to cherishing a connected interdependence. Ada seemed to be showing an appreciation for a connected interdependence, knowing that you are different from somebody else, but, realizing that you can almost approximate what the person would feel as another by wondering about them in a subjective kind of sense. To clarify, with respect to subjectivity, then, Gadamer (cited in Aoki, 1993, p. 265) understands it as "a fusion of horizons, an inter-subjectivity fused into a we." A section in Harper Lee's (1965) novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, illustrates as a narrative version of what it means to be inter-subjective. At the end of the novel, Scout, the eight year old protagonist, stands on the Radley porch wondering about Boo Radley as a human being. She tries to see things as Boo might see them.

Daylight . . . in my mind, the night faded. . . . Summertime, and his children played in the front yard with their friend, enacting a strange little drama of their own invention. . . . Fall, and his children trotted to and fro around the corner, the day's woes and triumphs on their faces. Winter, and his children shivered at the front gate, silhouetted against a blazing house. Winter, and a man walked into the street, dropped his glasses, and shot a dog. Summer, and he watched his children's heart break. Autumn again, and Boo's children needed him.

Atticus was right. One time he said you never really know a man until you stand in his shoes and walk around in them. Just standing on the Radley porch was enough. (p. 293-294)

Scout was able to "stand in Boo's shoes" and sense a connectedness with a lonely frightened man-child. And I, the reader, standing on the porch with Scout, felt that connectedness as well. This sense of connectedness seemed to be what Ada now recognized as a place where human beings dwell in otherness. Levinas (in Aoki, 1993b) speaks of this as the authentic relationship between a human self and a human

other. Levinas believes in the ethicality within the relationship between self and other. Ethically, the self has a primary responsibility to others. Ada, like Scout, had started to de-center herself in an attempt to relocate herself within her own understanding of *Other*. This understanding, now included, a new found sense of responsibility for the *Other* as part of her self-hood. In a pragmatic sense wondering about the ontological relationship between self and other was grounded in Ada's reflection on teaching and parenting.

Of Parenting and Teaching

One particular reflection about the relationship between parenting and teaching comes to mind. This specific reflection embodies Ada's gradual shifting awareness of self-other understandings. She reflected:

Some teachers, I think, get set in a certain way of teaching and that's just how they teach. Ever since I had my son, Glenn, [four years ago] I realized that you can't do that because children are all so different. He is so unique, he is his own person, quite separate from his mom and dad. You just can't teach one way and expect that it is good enough. (Field Notes, 28/11/93)

Although I entered Ada's classroom some four years after the birth of her son, Ada's life as a parent was reborn because of her present questioning of who she was as a teacher of her parents' children. Not only is this questioning about the relationship of parenting and teaching evident in our conversation it is also evident in her practice. When Ada accepted living with her students in the classroom in this way, she was questioning "the idea that pedagogic conduct is the executive function of a theoretically prepared rationality or ethics" (van Manen, 1982a, p. 46). The birth of

her son four years ago began to help her to understand and honor the uniqueness and connectedness of each child present before her now. Ada started to attune herself to each individual child in her classroom. In doing so, Ada was questioning her own misunderstandings of the relationship between teacher and child. My reading of Max van Manen's (1990) inquiry into the nature of pedagogy comes to mind:

The parent experiences the newly born as an appeal, as a transforming experience to **do** something: to hold the child, to protect the child, to make personal sacrifices for the benefit of the child, and to worry perhaps if everything is all right. The first overwhelming sense a new parent experiences is often this ability of a natural responsiveness: response-ability, the unfolding of our pedagogic nature. As new parents, before we have a chance to sit back and reflect on whether or not we can accept this child, the child has already made us act. And, luckily for humankind, this spontaneous needfulness to do the right thing usually is the right thing. (p. 146)

The recalling of the birth of her son brought forth, in Ada, "an unfolding of her pedagogic nature." In understanding the condition of being a parent, her son brought Ada to an awareness of the possibilities of subjectivity, of otherness. Now, each child in Ada's classroom, just like her son, had become a subjective human being with a will, a spirit, and a soul. She could no longer "teach one way and expect that it is good enough." The questioning childness embodied in her son nurtured her awareness of the uniqueness of each child as a connected subjective human being.

Ada, by decentering herself as a theory grounded teacher within the questioning *Other*, became aware of and came to know a growing sense of her pedagogic being. This sense of pedagogic being brings to teaching a grave sense of responsibility. A sense of responsibility, in turn, reflects a deep understanding of what Hannah Arendt (1961) calls "the natural relationship between grown-ups and children" (p. 184). A

sense of pedagogic being embraces the fact that children are "developing human beings" (Arendt, 1961, p. 184). This state, this beingness, that is occupied by children calls upon children to grow. Adults, both parents and teachers, play a significant role in this growing. A child is born into a family, which is part of a larger family, which is influenced and responsive and reactionary to a whole public world. At some point our culture recognizes a formal teaching and learning environment where the parents hand over, in loco parentis, the responsibility to the teacher when their child leaves the private domain of their home and enters the house of education. Although Ada had always professionally accepted this responsibility, it was only after deep questioning of her practice did she accept the responsibility pedagogically. Ada had accepted this unique responsibility as an intermediary for the child, between the parent as other and the world as other.

Of Risking and Be-Longing

Another example of the tensions was in the issue of how Ada came to the understanding of risking and belonging. At the beginning of the study, Ada thought she was looking for a home in a world where there was a clear and distinct foundation of knowledge. She lived in surroundings that were familiar, conventional, and unobtrusive. She belonged to modernity where self-mastery is at the core of Being. She felt bound to consider the children/herself and teaching/learning objectively and prospectively, to determine the best future possibilities for self and others. Yet, within her attempt to predict and control her behavior, and her students' behavior, she

experienced the unexpected. She sensed an uncomfortable foreignness, a disenchantment with a world that objectifies people and glorifies competitive, rugged individualism at any cost. She stated:

I'm not a fan of competition. Ideally I would like to think that the reward comes from a student seeing that they've done their best work. That doesn't happen. The reward comes from the feedback I give them. In a conference I will say - This is something that you do really well. I don't make it public. Although there are times when students do really well, we need to share. Again, if you can reward without creating competition, that would be ideal. (Interview, 18/11/93)

The notion of individualism runs deep in our culture. The Cartesian world stands rigid and unyielding in its glorification of individualism as a means to an end. The goal of Cartesianism is the perfection of mankind in a minded world. The Cartesian subject needs to "master the earth" (Jardine, 1992, p. 33). Cartesian ideals have taught that winning is a must no matter how heavy a price. Winning is the minded perfection of the human being.

Although Ada belongs to this latest form of Cartesian understanding of the world, which is called modernity, which has become a hyperactive state of tensions (Borgmann, 1992) because the stories are beginning to unravel, she longs for something different. Ada had a longing for a different type of home, a different relationship with the earth, and found herself, unexpectedly, homeless. Ada's sense of homelessness is a "sense of living among objects to which one no longer belongs" (Weinsheimer, 1985, p. 4). Crusius (1990) points out:

Homelessness is the inevitable outcome of subject-object thinking. The contemplative self is an alienated self. It does not belong to the earth . . . This self does not belong to history, for the contemplative mind wants most of all a world of abstract law, fixed regularity, whose

jurisdiction is universal and potentially ideal, completely knowable and predictable. (p. 12-13)

History, an extension of our dwelling place within the earth, has been severed from modernity's life. History, in the Cartesian world, is found in dust covered books, in classrooms where names, dates, and places are memorized. The memorization is isolated and unattached from the life-world. I found this sense of isolation from the life-world, this sense of unattachment, this homelessness in Ada's classroom.

The poignant conversation about Ada's compartmentalized teacher voice with which I started this chapter needs to be told to its ending. The "gut and crap" (Interview, 21/10/93) conversation needs to conclude this chapter.

- A: And then I can go into the staffroom, and there, it is totally different . . . (laughs) Then the 'crap and gut' conversations come out! Sometimes I can go home and my husband will say in some sort of a conversation - "Don't talk to me like I'm in grade 5." So it doesn't automatically shut off when you leave. But it automatically turns on when you start.
- C: And . . . was that, was that like you and Sarah in the staffroom? Was that like when you and Sarah talked about *The Last Wolf of Ireland*? Is that what happens when you can't read the last chapter in this book aloud to the children? You lose your teacher voice? Is that what it is?
- A: Yea . . . (thoughtfully)
- C: I just thought of this now.
- A: Yea . . . I could have this same conversation with my students **though**. Because you and I are talking about literature, and we teach them to respond to literature. That conversation, why I can't read the last chapter to them, I've had that conversation with them. That wasn't really . . . no . . . that wouldn't be completely. . .
- C: Is it what the book does to you that . . . that . . . changes the role you have?
- A: I think it's more a common element rather than a change. There's commonness with something, say a book, that everybody in this atmosphere has read. I can talk about that with you or my grade 5 students and I am still talking about the same thing.

How I felt when I read it. I wouldn't change what I said to you or my grade 5's.

C: Sarah saying, "I hate reading that last chapter. And you said the same thing. I'm asking - Is this because you have to leave the box?"

A: No. In that case it's because of my emotions. I would have to read it aloud and I couldn't. I don't do anything but cry. I know that about myself. And I've explained that to them before. And I've had a grade 7 student come in . . . and I've told them "I cannot read this to you." I couldn't stand outside the room. My emotions would still be the same. I've tried. I've only read that ending silently once. The emotion I had when I finished reading that chapter . . . I made the mistake of reading it in the school, on a prep. I had to go in to a student washroom, and have that sort of emotional release. I had to gather my composure somehow to go into the staffroom at lunch. So, it's just that . . . an isolated incident when one does that.

C: And what will you do this year?

A: I'll get someone else to read the last chapter.

C: A student, a friend?

A: I had . . . it depends on where I'm at. I had, last year, a grade 7 student come in and read it to them. He's done it two times for me already. I just couldn't read it. I just can't do it. I talk to the students about it and they understand.

C: How do they respond?

A: I don't talk about it until just before it needs to be read. I don't want all this hype that goes around with it. Then I have someone step in and do the reading. It is unbelievable! I stand outside the closed door and I've had students come and join me. Because they start to cry and out they come. And that's fine, to do that. And some just sit there and the emotion is there. And then I come back in (when the reading is finished) and we talk about it. And some students will read it again on their own to make it more personal and some won't.

C: Why do you leave the room?

A: It's too sad to listen to. There are certain things that I don't like to hear and this ending is one of them. (Interview, 29/10/93)

This early response of Ada's was in a language that was specific, univocal, unambiguous, sanitized and closed. It was a safe response with no risk of involvement. The words for gaping, painful wounds oozing blood were never spoken.

In this language there was no "gap in time . . . broken in the middle" (Arendt, 1961, p. 10) for *The Last Wolf of Ireland* (Malterre, 1990). It is a pedagogy oriented to dismembered facts from emotions which can be disseminated in a tightly controlled and sequential order after the experience. These dismembered facts have no people attached to bloody the rational thinking. Ada, in Cartesian discomfort, could assist children to master rigid explanations spoken as truths in a rote like fashion after living through it. It sanctions an "unreflective desire to help children" (Smith, 1988, p. 174). And teachers can try to remain painless, robot like, in their "pedagogy oriented to closure" (Smith, 1988, p. 174). The reading of the last chapter of *The Last Wolf of Ireland* is a variation of the same theme. "We do not have to *live through* such suffering" (Jardine, 1992, p. 49). Understanding something intellectually is not enough; sometimes it is worse than not understanding at all.

But something more is involved that is even harder to talk about because it is only slightly understandable, and that is the part that suffering plays in the economy of the spirit. It seems plain that the voice of our despair defines our hope exactly; it seems, indeed, that we cannot know of hope without knowing despair, just as we know joy precisely to the extent that we know sorrow. (Berry, 1990, p. 62)

In the logic of Cartesianism there is the desire to save the children from the contamination of life. The young are seen as pure, unsullied, washed of 'the sins of the world.' The children are viewed as pure hope and joy, the essence of how life should be. Many teachers, in an unreflective desire to help children, shield the children from despair and sorrow. They shelter the children into a rhythmic numbness.

Look Jane! Look! See Spot run. I like Spot. It is fun
to see him run.

Soon, the child becomes the teacher, living in a rhythmic numbness of self-existence where there is no longer a listening for the deep brutal growls of the earth. The screaming babies kicking bloodily into the world are no longer heard. The memory is lost. "When a community loses its memory, its members no longer know one another" (Berry, 1990, p. 157). The dispassionate modernist no longer knows the *Other* in the children. Humanity has been isolated "as some substance which needs nothing but [its contemplative self] in order to exist" (Jardine, 1992, p. 47). The contemplative self is an alienated self. It has no home life.

The re-membering of *The Last Wolf of Ireland* conversation persisted with Ada over time. Ada wanted to keep our conversation going. She spoke to me again in April 1994, two months after I had left her classroom, about that particular conversation. We spoke:

- A: You know, this year I stayed in the classroom while the last chapter [of *The Last Wolf of Ireland*] was read. I stayed and listened.
- C: You did! Why?
- A: I don't know what the difference was. Maybe I could hear it again. It was still hard to listen too, but it was time for me to hear it again. I've always had lots of questions, but now, I'm not afraid of experiencing them. I've always questioned why I was so saddened by the book. When I went to hear it again I didn't go in to find an answer but I allowed myself to experience the sadness. (Phone Call, 28/04/94)

Ada was no longer living by thinking alone. She had a longing for a sense of be-longing, a sense of attachment to the earth. She allowed herself to experience the sadness with the children in her care. Ada and the children lived through the sadness together. During that telephone conversation with Ada I thought of Estes's (1992)

writing of Wild Woman:

. . . over time to learn the deepest aspects of psyche and soul, to hold on to what we have learned, to not turn away, to speak out for what we stand for . . . all this takes a boundless and mystical endurance. When we come up out of the underworld after one of our undertakings there, we may appear unchanged outwardly, but inwardly we have reclaimed a vast [sense of otherness]. (p. 455)

There was risk in Ada's voice. Ada's voice over the telephone had a howl to it, a sound of something wild and free. Ada had reclaimed a sense of otherness.

The evolution of Ada's voice as a teacher has documented a reclaiming sense of self in relation to the *Other*. This reclaiming sense of self in relation to the *Other* will be explored in the next chapter. Chapter 5 will offer conversations with Ada about the act of teaching the reading of literature. These conversations reflect an evolvment of a hermeneutical language where the self and other become lost in the subject at hand. It is within the event of the losing of self that allowed for the emerging of several themes about the act of teaching the reading of literature that are specific not only to Ada's classroom but to classrooms in general as well.

CHAPTER 5

THE LAYERED VOICES OF A TEACHER'S PRAXIS

Possibility and limitation mean about the same thing. O'Connor, F. (1955).

This chapter offers an interpretation of Ada's teaching of reading. In this chapter I explore the tensions Ada experienced as she, in turn, explored her understanding of reading and the teaching of reading in her classroom. In my explorations of Ada's experiences, two reading programs made themselves visible -- a reading for technical proficiency program and a reading for pleasure program. What is to follow is an exploration of the two programs and the tensions that existed within and between them.

A Call to Mind and Being Mindful

One of the reading programs Ada had developed in her grade 5 classroom could be described as a technical program for proficiency. In this reading program Ada taught in a manner that she called "teaching technically" (Interview, 11/1/94). She defined reading in this program as "a very technical process that the children go through because the teacher must impose goals and conditions" (Interview, 11/1/94) on how to read for meaning when reading literature. I heard a tension embedded in Ada's definition of her "technical" reading program. She was uncomfortable "imposing goals and conditions" on her students. Yet, she believed "technical reading" to be important enough to be a significant part of her Language Learning program.

In the following reading lesson, Ada demonstrated what she called her

"technical" approach to teaching:

- A: When reading, good readers predict. (Shows the cover of a picture book.) Predict what this book might be about.
(Students give Ada a variety of predictions.)
How many of you ask questions when you're reading?
(Many students put up their hands.)
Why do we ask questions?
- S: To help us understand and change what we are thinking.
- A: Ask yourself some questions as I read. (Ada reads the first three paragraphs. The students are altering their predictions aloud as she reads. Ada reads on.)
- S: Just as we suspected!
- A: (Ada reads on. Stops.) Any questions?
- S: Why is she (the main character) half seal and half human?
- A: (Ada listens but does not answer the questions. She continues to read. Students start making more predictions aloud.)
- S: I wonder if the mother could leave her children.
- A: (Ada does not respond but continues to read to the end of the story.)
What were the predictions? How did they change? When we read we always make adjustments to our predictions because we are making meaning. (Field Notes, 5/1/94)

Ada's "technical" teaching of reading voice was enthusiastic (Field Notes, 5/1/94) when she shared information about reading strategies with her students in a large group situation. Ada taught her technical approach to reading to the whole class in order to make the use of specific reading strategies visible to all children. By modelling strategic reading and discussing its use, Ada made "strategy use public" (Garner, 1992, p. 22). The children had the opportunity to discuss strategy use with Ada and with each other. Discussions among the children about metacognitive strategic reading allowed the "children [to] learn from each other" (Garner, 1992, p. 22) as well as from Ada.

Meaning making through the use of reading strategies was the goal of Ada's technical approach to reading. In this particular reading lesson, Ada and the children

made meaning through the use of a specific reading strategy -- making predictions. The children, through Ada's instructional guidance, had the opportunity to use a specific reading strategy and examine its use while reading. The children had the opportunity to behave metacognitively. They had the opportunity to "examine [an aspect of] what they know about their own cognitive resources and to regulate those resources accordingly" (Garner, 1992, p. 19).

Ada guided the children in their self-examination of strategy use in a caring and accepting manner. There was no indication of preference to a certain prediction. She accepted all the children's predictions in a similar fashion. She wanted to make the children feel comfortable, to support them in their attempt at strategic reading. She hoped to instill a sense of confidence in her students that would allow them to risk, "to initiate, or persist in cognitive/metacognitive activit[ies]" (Garner, 1992, p. 23) in order to reach a reading goal. Ada understood that a favorable attitude toward reading is generated by feelings of success. And, in order for her students to experience reading successes Ada "imposed the goals and conditions" (Interview, 11/1/94) of her "technical reading program" on them. Ada's persistence in providing alternative strategies is grounded in the belief that "attributes [comprehension] success to effort" (Garner, 1992, p. 23). By providing her students with a repertoire of strategies to assist them when needed they have the opportunity to select a suitable strategy to determine an appropriate understanding of text. Thus, successful comprehension could be available to each one of her students, if they chose to make the effort.

By imposing her "technical" teaching approach on the children, Ada was able to teach specific reading strategies in an effective and efficient manner in the classroom. In my observation of the classroom I wrote:

The children are responding with familiarity to this approach. I asked one of the students, Cloe, - "Have you been taught like this before?" Cloe responded - "Lots. We brainstorm, predict and talk about stories." Ada is bringing their reading strategies to a conscious level. The children's predictions and wonderings aloud, are enthusiastic. They were eager to respond. The conversation about reading strategies blended in with the students' responses about the meaning of the story. (Field Notes, 5/1/94)

The students' conversation about reading strategies indicated that they were familiar and comfortable with Ada's teaching of metacognitive strategic reading. Their conversation showed their desire to learn, their desire to become better readers. The children understood the difference between "legitimate work-related conversation from idle chatter" (Garner, 1992, p. 22). The children were engaged in a work-related conversation about their learning how to read better. The children understood what it meant to discuss a story with a specific purpose, to discuss a story with a strategic purpose. They understood that they had a job to do -- to comprehend a piece of text, "to get to the product" (Garner, 1992, p. 23). And they proceeded to discuss with Ada the most effective and efficient way to arrive at a specific meaning.

Although Ada had reservations about her "imposing" meaning on literature, she continued to look for more strategic approaches to reading literature. Ada was "not completely happy with [her strategic] teaching of comprehension" (Transcript, 10/11/93). She continued to look for other suitable strategies to teach, to assist her in teaching the children how to comprehend more effectively. With concern she said:

. . . this is where I struggle. [The students] still don't understand what comprehension means even though I've used synonyms and examples. My approach will be this -- and this is the first year that I will do this. I will use the Question-Answer-Relationship (QAR) strategy. I will start off modelling. So in doing that, the next step will be for them to write... and I will use the QAR chart [label them as either right there, think and search, and on my own] to guide them. And then we'll go from there. And I'm not sure where it's going to take me. It's like an experiment . . . But that's the one thing I'm not happy about... that they don't understand comprehension, that they don't understand what I'm looking for. (Transcript, 10/11/93)

Ada, through direct instruction, provided her students with more opportunities to learn new comprehension strategies. Ada's persistent attempt to teach reading strategies reflects the belief that "a great many strategies must be [explicitly] taught by teachers and practiced by students" (Garner, 1992, p. 21) for them to become metacognitive strategic readers. Ada continued to strive to help her students become better comprehenders. Her scaffolding of strategies, her thoughtful guidance, and her direct instruction reflected her desire for her students to be successful metacognitive strategic readers. Ada wanted to provide her students with a multitude of strategies to choose from when comprehension break-down occurred. She wanted her students to have the skills necessary to read well. She wanted her students to be successful in their comprehension of text. So, she provided her students with a multitude of reading strategies through her technical reading program.

Ada's search for more strategies to add to her students' repertoire of strategies is in a manner of speaking a way to assist her students in becoming self-sufficient and effective independent readers. In a way, Ada was turning her students toward more choices, more flexibility, more freedom to choose in how to understand what they

were reading. In a sense, Ada provided her students with an insight into the power of metacognition which in turn allowed her students to feel a sense of "positive self-control" (Mc Combs, 1988, p. 150) over their reading.

I discussed independent reading with Ada in one of our conversations.

C: Something else that I'm wondering about in your teaching is the idea of independence . . . reading and, in a sense, learning.

A: (Laughs) I'm laughing because . . . It's interesting that you brought that up. I don't think of it so directly, but it is. It is probably, what I think is **the** most important thing in the classroom. It is an underlying theme that runs through my teaching of reading.

C: Why is independence **the** most important thing?

A: It's a way . . . it's a start for them to take control of their own reading . . . learning actually. This is a central part of their learning throughout the day. Because... if they are to learn from instruction, they have to become independent. Part of being a good reader, a good learner is to monitor, listen, and check on what is happening. They become responsible. If I encourage their independence I don't have to spend time on such things as repeating, or getting them to listen. It really has to do with learning, so that I can teach and they can learn. I'm not spending all my time on directions. It gives the students freedom in the end because they are not relying on the external to manage their learning, but on the **internal**. The students do it for themselves and are not made to do it by external forces.
(Interview, 29/12/93)

For Ada, developing the self as an independent reader/learner is not only a vital component to a healthy sense of self but also a primary goal of education. The more the children understand about their learning to read, their needs, what works for them, and how they react to learning, the more effectively they will be able to function in their world. Ada believes, along with Backlund (1990), that children who develop a greater self-awareness also have the opportunity to develop a greater level of self-confidence. Self-confidence gives students the courage to explore and take risks in

their learning. Taking risks in learning allows students to "be receptive to opportunities for introspection and self-regulated learning" (Garner, 1992, p. 27). Thus, students have the opportunity to develop more effective and efficient reading capabilities.

Ada felt a strong sense of responsibility to provide her students with a reading program that included a practical means-end relationship. After all, Ada seemed to indicate this was what the world demands of student preparations. This requirement for successful metacognitive strategic reading is also a part of the elementary/junior high school curriculum, and, as such, an expectation of Ada as a professional teacher. She taught the children about strategic knowledge and modeled for them the use of appropriate reading strategies in the context of reading literature (Field Notes, 5/1/94).

Despite the richness in the spoken language of metacognitive strategic teaching/learning that was presented before me in the conversations Ada had with her students and myself, there was something else calling, there was something else present. There was another voice "float[ing] in and out, through, and around the specifics at hand" (Smith, 1992, p. 248). As I reread the conversations between Ada and the children, and between Ada and myself, a real sense of tension presented itself. Although I abstracted metacognitive experiences from Ada's teaching and the children's learning, I was unable to push aside the lived experiences with Ada and the children in the classroom. This lived experience of metacognition, this lived meaning was in constant tension with the abstracted metacognitive experience. As I wrote the thesis, I came to a tensive understanding that metacognition is not what I thought it

was. Metacognition is much more complicated and deeper than I thought. As I wrote, I discovered a real sense of tension between the notion of metacognition and the lived experience of metacognition. I wonder then, what does this tension say about the teaching relationship with children?

In the modern sense, metacognitive reading strategies can be a self-sufficient and effective way of helping children feel a sense of control over their reading. Teachers provide children with the tools to gain this control. In this regard, a sense of personal control over a number of strategies provides the reader with the flexibility and the freedom to choose the most appropriate strategy for the particular reading situation at hand. In this sense, metacognition is serviceable and useful to the reader. Metacognition, in the modern sense, can be understood as a form of freedom, as a turning toward independence, as a turning toward self-reliance.

Metacognition, however, is somewhat paradoxical in nature. While metacognition can be understood as a turning towards *independence*, it can also be understood as a turning away from *interdependence*. When being metacognitive, readers use an objective voice of reason as they engage with a text by themselves. Being metacognitive excludes the opportunity for dialogue with others. Readers hear the voice of text in isolation away from other readers. When being metacognitive, readers attach their hearing to self-minded thought, there is no place in self-minded thought to listen to the voice of the other. When being metacognitive, there is no opportunity for a connection with others. The voice of the other is drowned out by the goal of self-sufficiency and self-reliance. In the modern world it is "unreasonable"

to be interdependent with others. In the modern world of teachers, it is more "reasonable" to be independent in your reading through metacognition, through a metaphysical grounding of theoretical application.

Furthermore, metacognition is also a turning away from as well as a turning toward freedom. "For the more tightly controlled an [understanding of meaning becomes], the more surely [it] suffocate[s] the very thing it is attempting to clarify or set free" (Smith, 1988, p. 276). In the modern sense, metacognition offers a flexibility in reading that privileges a certain kind of freedom. It privileges a certain way of reading. In Ada's attempt at providing metacognitive strategies to set the children free in order they be in control of their reading, she also confined the children to a specific control of selected strategies that do very specific things with respect to reading. In her desire to set the children free, Ada confined the children to control their understandings of specific texts in a particular strategic manner. Ada confined the children to a specific template of what it means to understand what is read.

In Ada's calling to mind the use of new reading strategies in order to help her students become more self-sufficient, more metacognitive readers, a mindfulness to a tension, a sense of something otherwise lacking started to impose itself on Ada.

I've been questioning . . . I've been questioning when I'm imposing these restrictions on them [students]. I've had that on my mind. So I've given myself three weeks to take in response journals with the freedom of what they write, when they write. There's been little direction with it. And I did that on purpose this time so I can get a feel for what they need. And . . . when it's done, I'm not sure. (Transcript, 10/11/93)

Ada was reminded of the tension between being mindful and being minded. Ada's

questioning led her to search for more theory. Her questioning was grounded in her professional need to have expert-sanctioned theoretical foundation to what she did in the classroom with her students. The irony is the more she sought good theory upon which to base her practice, the more her practice became riddled with questions. Ada assumed that what was lacking in her "technical" teaching was what she called her other reading program "reading on that other side, the reading for pleasure" (Interview, 11/1/94).

Self-Will and Goodwill

Conversely, operating in tension to the technical reading program, Ada also had what she identified as a "teaching on the other side, the reading for pleasure" program (Interview, 11/1/94). Ada had a continuous growing interest in the teaching of reading that questions, "What do readers naturally do when they read?" (McCormick Calkins, cited in MacKenzie, 1990). For Ada, the reading for pleasure program possessed the potential to develop a style of teaching that appealed to her sense of teaching self that reflected her own passion for literature. She explained to me:

I went all through school never experiencing that feeling for enjoyment. It wasn't until my last year of university, when I had a professor who started each class by reading a book to us, and that's when I finally experienced that feeling. *The Giving Tree* was the book that made me experience that feeling for the first time. (Field Notes, 21/10/93)
I want to help develop the pleasure component of reading, the habit of reading, the joy of reading, and the experience, that feeling that we get from reading a good book. (Interview, 11/1/94)

Ada's description of pleasure reading reminded me of Charlotte Huck's (cited in Mac Kenzie, 1990) comment, that "good teachers teach reading; exceptional

teachers inspire a love of reading." Ada was personally "hooked on" reading. Ada tried to inspire the reading for enjoyment in her grade 5 students. It appeared to me that she was driven by her own love of reading and wanted to induct a new generation of young children into a pleasurable reading community. When Ada talked about what she wanted for the children in terms of participation in her reading for pleasure program she said this:

. . . first, good readers have a **real** interest. They [readers] see reading beyond reading just a book for the purpose of completing my expectations. They love reading for . . . just for **what it is**. The second thing is . . . I look at how they interact with the text. They interact beyond just telling me what the story is about. They show me that they think about what's happened. They offer some judgments and evaluations of the character and the elements. And the third thing would be **how they talk** about it. And that could be in a conference, or in discussions. I think of Charlotte when I think of a good reader. She just absorbs everything and can experience, deeply, what has gone on in the book vicariously, or by using her own experiences. (Interview, 18/11/93)

Ada's understanding of a "good reader" in her reading for pleasure program was the child who was able to choose an "aesthetic stance" over an "efferent stance" (Rosenblatt, 1978). Ada wanted the children to put aside the efferent stance when reading literature, and she wanted the children to put aside the focusing on goals and objectives to be carried away with the reader after the reading. For this component of the Language Learning program in her classroom, Ada would have liked her grade 5 students to focus their attention on a more personal level, to focus their attention to the more personal lived-through experience of a literary work. By choosing an aesthetic stance the children had the opportunity to be "absorbed in what [they] are thinking, feeling, seeing, and what [they] are living through during the reading event"

(Rosenblatt, 1980, p. 386). Rosenblatt (1985) calls this lived-through experience the literary evocation, "the process in which the reader selects out ideas sensations, feelings, and images drawn from his [her] past linguistic, literary, and life experience, and synthesizes them into a new experience" (p. 40). Thus, the response to what is read becomes more personal, more meaningful to each individual, more self-contained.

Ada understood this personal lived-through evocation. She experienced this pleasure herself when she read. Ada assembled the children in her class to share the pleasure of books and to share their personal responses to the books, in the hope, that the children would experience similar personal lived-through evocations, in the hope, that each child would become a member of a significant reading community.

Ada was concerned about the children in her program. She wondered how to go about the teaching of reading for pleasure. She wanted the children to learn the criteria for membership, but she was not sure whether she could teach the criteria, the pleasure of the personal lived-through evocation she had read about in theory. She wondered:

This is what I don't know. I don't know if you can teach reading for pleasure. But, I do know that you can share the experience of reading for pleasure. There's a component where we share books and share responses. I think of certain readers who read for pleasure, and for other readers, the pleasure component, often times, doesn't even exist. (Interview, 11/1/94)

Ada was hoping that the children who have not experienced the pleasure that reading a "good book" can provide, will stumble on it, just as she did, by continuous reading and witnessing the expression of aesthetic experiences of others. It was Ada's hope, that in time, all of her students will have that "certain condition," that her students will

have the ability to experience an aesthetic response necessary for membership in the community.

The children in Ada's classroom had a continuous desire to read. I wrote:

During the reading there is such a sense of calmness in the room . . . and yet, I sense an intensity and a sense of purpose as well. These three things, calmness, intensity, and purpose permeate throughout the room. The students are reading. deeply reading. They love it! There is no fooling around. Some children moved to sit with friends, others stayed where they were, and others isolated themselves in a remote corner to read. It is fifteen minutes of **uninterrupted** reading; a relative short time, but in a classroom context, I think, fifteen minutes of uninterrupted time is long. (Field Notes, 14/10/93)

At times, the children, the reading pleasure-seekers, started books, abandoned them, and tried to find other ones that would give them "that feeling." Most often, children found the elusive experience of the aesthetic pleasure, the "literary evocation" that Ada theorized about, and they consumed book after book during the workshop times. The children who did not experience much of the evocation feeling continued to search for it. They often crowded around the children who did, and in dialogue, they questioned. No child gave up shopping for "that [pleasurable] feeling," that state of personal contentment, during my four month stay in Ada's classroom.

Ada, continuing in her struggle to help her students experience aesthetic responses when reading, attempted different approaches. One such approach was her attempt to teach "what makes an effective response" (Transcript, 11/1/94). And I continued to probe and pursue her explanations, her clarifications about each new attempt she made in her teaching of reading pleasure.

C: Can you expand on your comment in Cloe's response journal.
You wrote: "My responses in your response journals are clues or

questions. The questions you don't need to answer. They are there to help you focus."

A: I find sometimes when they write there is some missing information when they start something but they don't go any further with it. And rather than my writing a long paragraph in response to it, I often will just focus in one or two little things that their response lends itself to . . . such as character, predictions, setting. My one or two line sentence . . . it's a wide open sentence that could lead to another response, that could help them become aware of their meaning. I attach a checklist to that to give them some ideas.

C: When you talk of checklists . . . you're talking about statements? . . . questions? . . . to explore?

A: Yes. I take their response they wrote . . . And it would be their way of reading my clue and their response to see if there was a broader way that they could have done that. (Transcript, 25/1/94)

Ada encouraged her students to interpret their reading, privately, in their response journals, in hope of taking her students toward what Rosenblatt calls "self-understanding, self-definition, and self-criticism" (cited in Sheridan, 1993, p. 89). Ada was attempting to have the students dialogue and write about their "subjective attitudes as readers, [which are] essential components of any real reading" (Evans, 1987, p. 27) in their response journals. Ada's hope was that her students would learn how to develop fuller, deeper interpretations of literary texts. Ada's goal was for her students to learn how to think critically and be able to support and prove their interpretations, their truths, through reflective clear and precise language. Ada's "one or two line questions or sentences" were to guide the students toward a defensible interpretation, a defensible truth. Ada's hope was grounded in a belief that she was guiding the reading of her students toward an excavation of some deep, truthful meaning, toward an ideal core of truth. Ada's grounding belief in the ideal core of truth is an "implicit

deep belief in the univocal character of the world, and, thereby, the univocal character of true speech" (Jardine, 1992, p. 64). The life-world of the classroom does not have a univocal discourse, the life-world of the classroom is not plucked from its roots, from the earth "infrastructured by essences . . . to express how things *already stand* with us in the world" (Jardine, 1992, p. 69). The life-world of Ada's classroom is ambiguous, multivocal, and multilayered.

Over the course of my stay in Ada's classroom, however, I fell under the spell of her reading for pleasure program. I wrote:

The concentration, the involvement, the commitment of the children to their reading can be felt in the room. Everyone is engaged in the reading. (Field Notes, 18/10/93)

The camp of concentration was enticing. The sanctioning of "the reader to find his tongue, to speak of [his] her experiences" (Freund, 1987, p. 14) is alluring. I knew what Ada was providing, I felt the excitement, I felt the pleasure the children experienced. After all, I know the feeling well, being a reader myself. The researcher in me, however, always tried to break that spell in order to "spell it out."

Ada's reading for pleasure program is not only a layer of her teaching, it is also the core of her teaching. So, in my writing about the core of her teaching, the layer I reviewed in Ada's reading for pleasure program, embedded in reader response criticism, I am really writing to the heart, to the center, to the core of Ada's relationship with the children. I wonder, then, what does reader response criticism say about the teaching relationship with children?

In the Western world there is a prevalent modernistic tendency to prioritize the

subjective self over objectifiable others. Meaning seems to exist in and for the self, housed in the defining self. Aspects of reader response theory seems to nurture the building of the self through and with the voice of the text. "While reader response critics credit the text with varying degrees of influence on interpretation, they are alike in their contention that in the end it is the reader's private response that constitutes meaning" (Harker, 1991, p. 70). In this regard, Iser (1978) writes, "[while interpretation occurs between] the poles of text and reader, we comprehend a fictional text through the experience it makes *us* (my emphasis) undergo" (p. 189). Ada and her students were looking for that type of a relationship with text, a relationship that would nurture the building of self. They were looking for a relationship with literature that would provide them with a sense of personal meaning, a sense of personal challenge, a sense of personal satisfaction, and hopefully, a sense of personal contentment. Ada and her students were looking for an ideal core, for an essence of truth discoverable in literature that provided self-enlightenment. The students, under Ada's guidance, in their discussions and writings with each other and the text, sought to negotiate evidence, to haggle over a point, and to eventually come to a conclusion, for the time being, about the meaning of text in relationship to themselves. The reading of literature as a self-engaging activity, however, is in effect a misreading. It is a misreading that "[puts] language purely at the service of the [self]-will" (Smith, 1992, p. 258).

The reading of literature as a matter of only servicing the self-will has grave consequences. "Self-will, aware of the finitude of the self, desires to possess the

other. [Reading] then becomes a matter of extending the power of the self over subject matter and [other subjects]" (Carson, 1991, p. 4). Literary criticism becomes an elegant "linguistic museum" (Smith, 1992, p. 255) where a reader's ability to express herself/himself eloquently will ultimately determine the self-willed truth. In order to debate this truth, the reader has to eventually *view* the other subjective reader as object, to be able to prove or disprove, through logical dialogue, what the other subjective reader says and believes. There is no space for other beliefs, for other subjectivities that may be different from the subjectivity of the eloquent self-willed truth. This type of subjectivity is exclusive, dominating, and intentional in nature with little sense of responsibility for others. This type of subjectivity privileges subjectivity to the extent that it objectifies everyone else's voice. The voice of self-willed truth objectifies otherness. This is the naked truth. "Nothing is innocent" (Caputo, 1989, p. 59).

A genuine relationship with text and other readers does not express itself in self-will, rather a genuine relationship expresses itself in goodwill. "Goodwill does not desire to incorporate the other, rather it respects the other as already being whole and inexhaustible in its possibilities" (Carson, 1991, p. 4). A relationship based on goodwill and respect for the other provides an opening for a different kind of dialogue, a humane dialogue that is open to listen to the other. In this regard, Smith (1991, p. 198) writes:

When one is engaged in a good conversation, there is a certain quality of self-forgetfulness as one gives oneself over to the conversation itself, so that the truth that is realized in the conversation is never the possession of any one of the speakers or camps, but rather is something

that all concerned realize they share together.

This quality of self-forgetfulness, "giving oneself over to the conversation itself," can be easily misinterpreted by theories of interpretation, and become an onion-like "snake charm" (de Vries, 1974)) as well. It is easy to assume, for people of one culture, that differences in interpretations have been worked out in conversation within a "like-minded" community. A "like-minded" cultural community can assume an understanding of a text by making the text like the community. A "like-minded" school/classroom community assumes, "because [they] can understand only on [their] own terms, that the text cannot be understood and at the same time understood to be different from [them]" (Dasenbrock, 1991, p. 17). This type of reading, then, becomes an empty preserving of sameness among members. What is needed is a genuine hermeneutics of cultural difference "that can understand texts different from us and understand them to be different from us" (Dasenbrock, 1991, p. 17). Readers, who can give themselves over to the conversation itself, who have the quality of self-forgetfulness, can read, deeply, for "the point of reading is to learn, at least for a moment, not to be" (Dasenbrock, 1991, p. 17).

Playing With Listening and Playfully Listening

Just as inviting and disconcerting the experience was when I observed Ada's two reading programs, I was also compelled to respond to the notion of silence in her classroom. The encounter with silence was most remarkable, not when Ada was teaching technical reading or reading for pleasure, but during two weeks when her

teaching of reading fell silent in the classroom. The notion of silence spoke volumes to me. All I experienced was silence; an alluring and disturbing silence. Ada and the children spoke a silent language, a language that was loud in silence. The notion of noise and silence is one more layer of Ada's teaching.

Ada's increasing concern about the role of reading with the grade 5 students continued to grow during the school year. She talked of her struggle:

It's the struggle that I have with the grade 5 reader's workshop. I just have to make the shift to give mini lessons that are structured, use the overhead, use chart paper. I think it's more the grade 5's coming from a primary school. The elementary structure is very different from the junior high structure. I just haven't been able to make that shift with them. It is really difficult to teach a mini lesson in reader's workshop. Although it lends itself to that, the kids want to read. And I feel often that I'm invading their pleasure, their space, their activity. And so I struggle with how mini lessons fit into the workshop for the grade 5's. And I always get a sense from the students that when I give a mini lesson . . . "when can we read? When can we read"? I don't know. It's very awkward. I say to myself, "Should I give a mini lesson now? But, I'm sensing the kids don't really want one now. They want to read. **They always want to read! We haven't had a mini lesson for two weeks! I must stop the reading.**" (Transcript, 11/1/94)

Ada couldn't continue with her search. In her frustration of not knowing what to do, she stopped doing. She stopped both -- the teaching of "technical reading" and the teaching of "pleasure reading" -- "for two weeks" (Transcript, 11/1/94). For most of those two weeks, there was no strategic reading lesson and there were no mini lessons on pleasure reading from Ada. There was the occasional informal conversation, there was the occasional chatter among the children, but, for most of the two weeks there was silence. All of them -- Ada and the children -- just read individually, independently, in silence.

In her honesty, Ada was restoring classroom life to its original difficulty; living in the tension between doing and saying, the tension between knowing when to read and knowing when to talk about reading. The pedagogic link to knowing when to do something is much more difficult than knowing why or how to do something. Ada knew why it was important for the children to read and why it was important for the children to talk about their reading. She had a theoretical foundation. She also knew how to let the children read and how to talk with them about their reading. Yet, Ada was struggling. She was struggling with "knowing when" to "make that shift" from reading to talking about reading. Although Ada "sensed" the children's need to read, the children's desire to read, and she listened to her senses, and let them read, she was troubled. She had to "stop the reading." After all, time is a commodity. There was a curriculum to teach. Allowing children to "just read" over any extended period of time could be viewed as a mismanagement of time.

There was, in Ada, a vague unknown knowing, that to be a teacher and to teach is not simply a matter of delivering the curriculum on time. There was in Ada a willingness to listen to "her senses." There was a willingness to risk and listen internally to her body. Living in modernity has severed this willingness to listen to the body. Modernity has "tacitly assume[d] that the body has nothing to tell us, has no knowledge or information" (Berman, 1989, p. 109). Life in modernity has focused on meaning in the head, on visual external descriptions. For life in modernity, only the visible is real.

For Ada, life at that time in the classroom was "first and foremost a somatic

one" (Berman, 1989, p. 108). Ada listened differently, listened openly. Somehow, she allowed the mind to sink into the body. She was able to be attentive to a bodily listening from below, from the "ground of silence" (Levin, 1989, p. 74). Ada was able to listen attentively, to a recollection from below, in silence.

Ada did not look for silence, she did not seek silence, rather, she stumbled on it and fell into the empty space of silence. She maintained:

I can't explain it. I still maintain I can't take credit for this desire to read. Because I just barely started my reader's workshop and I never had to establish the atmosphere. And you saw, in writer's workshop, it's not the same. They just love to read as a group. There are still the odd ones who struggle but they, too, sit down to silently read. And I know this fills that need . . . that need to read silently. (Interview, 28/10/93)

This empty space of silence is not a comfortable place to be in the Western world, it is not welcomed in modernity. Life in modernity is marked with a visible absence of silence. Modernity nurtures man-made noise, nurtures self-made chatter, and finds silence to be an uncomfortable void to be avoided, to be filled up. Silence that simply expresses beingness demands to play with listening but there are few players game to play with listening in modernity. Most Cartesian players can only toy with silence, on the surface, for "unconsciously [silence is] seen as threatening, [as] something potentially dangerous" (Berman, 1989, p. 20). Silence makes Cartesian players feel uncomfortable, "feel closer to what language can't reach" (Rilke, 8.101), closer to something which defies mindedness, which defies the laws of metaphysics.

As I wrote the thesis, I understood that Ada's response to the children's "need to read" was, in a manner of speaking, a way to cultivate silence within herself and

the children. To cultivate silence requires a silencing of the ego, a silencing of the "everyday hearing to the ego-logically constituted structure of subject and object" (Levin, 1989, p. 233). A silencing of the ego clears a neutral space for an authentic mode of listening. This mode of listening is a playful listening, a listening free of attachments, of object-fixations, a listening which tries to neutralize ego dominated attractions and aversions. This playful listening tries to suspend the normal and habitual judgments of everyday living and open up to the "field of sound as a whole, understanding that, by virtue of this openness, we are giving thought -- returning thought -- to the openness of Being as such" (Levin, 1989, p. 229).

Playful listening is an embodied listening. An embodied listening is a joyful childlike listening that acknowledges an attunement to the "ground of the auditory situation" (Levin, 1989, p. 210). Adults, over time, lose their groundedness, their bodily felt hearing, to the metaphysical world of subject and object, logic and reason. The children, being as young as they are, in Ada's grade 5 class, were still embodied, close to the ground, still had the opportunity to listen freely and hear the interplay between subject and object. This interplay allows for a listening that "finds itself inseparably intertwined with its object . . . in which the function of representation has become subordinate to the interplay [itself]" (Levin, 1989, p. 234). This is the echo, that Ada heard in the silence to which she responded. Ada responded to her feelings, to a sense she felt, to an embodied understanding of what it means to read. She provided the children time to read with the text, intertwined with the text. As a responsible teacher she had a curriculum to teach, time was limited, but she responded

to an embodied understanding of what it means to read and gave the children time to read.

Ada's persistence in forsaking dialogue, in forsaking responses, to let the children read, concerned her. She stated, "it's just that struggle back and forth with what I am suppose to do and when I'm doing it" (Interview, 11/1/94). She could not resolve her struggle through reason. She knew there was no logic to it. But, somewhere, rooted deep inside her, rooted in her body, she had a feeling. The feeling was not altogether clear, not entirely intelligible, not highly certain. Yet, Ada listened to her feelings and heard the echo at the time. Ada, full of concern and fear, was receptive to the echo, listened with a letting go, let it carry her back into the silence (Levin, 1989) and allowed the children to read.

Pedagogy then becomes a vocation to live and act within the difference between what we know and what we do not know, that is, to be drawn out to what calls from within and beyond ourselves. (Smith, 1988, p. 276)

Ada's struggle with responding to her feelings and listening to the echo reflects a living in Cartesian discomfort. In the life-world it is "unreasonable" to listen to the echo. In the life-world of teachers, it is more "reasonable" to see truth through a metaphysical grounding of theoretical application. Theoretical grounding clearly takes care of the business of learning. Theoretical grounding reasons out what should be done in the classroom and guides teachers and students in how it should be done. After all, learning is a serious business, and the business of learning is an industry set up to deliver the theoretical "goods," leaving little time for play. Ada, however, "listened to [her] experience with truth instead of listening to reason" (Levin, 1989, p.

246). She listened to her students, and in her listening, her hearing was able to reach out in compassion. She listened to the echo and played with the silence.

As a researcher I was panic stricken during the two weeks of silence. I did not welcome the silence, I had a deafness to the silence, the silence frightened me. As a researcher, I wanted noise that I could record. As a researcher, I felt the silence was a dualistic tragedy. The silence was not bearable, the silence was not comforting, and, in order to bear, in order to be comforted, I often returned to filling the space with my talk. At the time, I was not able to fully receive this gift of silence, "the gift of a resting-place, an *Aufenthalt*, for the quiet recovery of the weary soul" (Levin, 1989, p. 79). As a researcher, in the classroom at the time, I could not honor the silence, I could not honor the "listening openness" (Levin, 1989, p. 232), therefore, I could not hear.

Understanding must always be renewed. As I wrote the thesis, I listened to the tension in the silence and I renewed my understanding of the silence in Ada's classroom. I no longer considered the silence as tension, rather, I welcomed the silence as a "hermeneutic opening, a clearing silence" (Levin, 1989, p. 244) opened to listening.

This clearing silence echoed a new listening to the interpretations presented before you. In retrospect, the observations of the two distinct reading programs reveal several emerging themes that are specific to Ada's classroom. These emerging themes wonder about the interpretations of mindedness, self-will, and listening, just talked about.

The Complexity of Simplicity and the Simplicity of Complexity

In this section I venture to explore what Ada called her reader's workshop where she attempted to balance the two reading programs. As a reader of literature, I admired Ada's desire to have her children experience "good" feelings about reading. As a fellow teacher I also admired her pursuit of greater technical proficiency in her students' reading. And as a researcher, I observed her attempt to balance her reading demands -- technical proficiency with enjoyment and pleasure. This tension to balance reading technically and proficiently and reading for pleasure and enjoyment somehow came together in what Ada called her reader's workshop. As a researcher I wanted to explore what was at the heart of Ada's version of reader's workshop.

In witnessing Ada's version of reader's workshop, and in talking to Ada and understanding her tension between reading for technical proficiency and reading for pleasure, and the fact that it seemed to be set up antagonistically, I have come to the realization that:

To get to the simplicity of a thing, you have to go through the complexity, and only once you've gone into and through the complexity can you state the simplicity. (Slater Blythe, 1989, p. 84)

It became obvious to me that there was something at the heart of Ada's version of reader's workshop that made her teaching of reading for pleasure and enjoyment very much like her teaching of reading for technical proficiency. So, I want to look closely at Ada's understanding of reader's workshop.

I talked to Ada about her mini lessons. Ada and I talked about the lessons to each other. The first thing I noticed was that when Ada framed her instruction

regarding reader's workshop I recall writing:

The mini lessons are mini. They touch on basic things, necessary things, but they are so short. There is no time for elaborating direct instruction or scaffolding. How will these children learn all there is to know in the short time that Ada has with them? (Field Notes, 8/11/93)

I recall when I witnessed the mini lessons that I wanted students to read with a sense of intentionality that moved them from concreteness towards abstraction. Perhaps, that significantly influenced my reading of what I saw in Ada's workshop.

Now, upon reflection what called me to be attentive to the notion of Ada's version of reader's workshop was the fact that it seemed more like a workshop with more purpose. It was as if the workshop was not a workshop. Perhaps when I was observing reader's workshop, it was almost akin to what I would call a sweat-shop as opposed to a workshop. By sweat-shop I mean a place where literature is used for specific, clear, visible and tangible objectives. It is a place where the business of learned objectives is busily taught. A sweat-shop focuses on teaching children to become efficient and effective users of strategies for technical reading and for pleasure reading. Efficiency and effectiveness are important and essential components to the daily learning objectives of technical reading and pleasure reading. The purpose of such a shop is to meet the daily objectives at hand.

Ada set up her version of reader's workshop to solve a problem, to meet her objective of bringing the two reading programs together. Listen to Ada:

I have a lot of information on both sides but I haven't brought the two together. I have my traditional approach - the teaching of background knowledge and also of reading strategies. And now I have this new information. I'm using Atwell's book, *In the Middle*, and I've changed how I teach. That is a big step. Direct instruction has to go in there. I

just haven't figured out where. And it should have a place in the instruction. This is where I struggle. (Interview, 29/12/93)

In her teaching reading technical voice, Ada expressed her desire for certainty, for objectivity, and for clarity. These desires reflected those so evident in the modern condition. These are desires long standing and representative of modern living. The focus is on trying to determine what is true. Ada's initial overall aim in reflecting on her teaching was to create an objectively true means of teaching reading in her classroom. The life-world of her classroom, like every classroom, however, is not to be captured in a rational theoretical explanation that can be predicted and controlled to determine the 'right' way of proceeding. Rather, the life-world of every classroom is a web of interconnected subjective human beings who come together over a task at hand -- in this case, reading. And in her quest for 'new' knowledge about how to better teach reading Ada continued to struggle, to live in tension with her two reading programs.

There was something happening in Ada's version of reader's workshop, a tension that called what I was seeing into a crisis. Ada and I continued to talk.

C: What do you **teach** in your reader's workshop?

A: I'm struggling to find that right now with the grade 5 students. I haven't figured out what role I'm to play in directing and guiding. Take response journals for example . . . The response expectations for the grade 5 students have been wide open. With the grade 5 students I'm **still not sure!** It's interesting because I have taught grade 5 for years. (Interview, 11/1/94)

Ada had no answers for me. She was not sure how to direct and guide her students in technical proficiency when they were reading for pleasure. Although she raised the concern that "it is really hard to interpret something that you did just for the

pleasure of doing it" (Transcript, 25/1/94), she continued to search for a "methodology" of reading that combined her two reading programs more effectively. Ada continued to question and adjust her version of reader's workshop.

Ada continued the search for harmony between the two programs. In another mini lesson, I observed Ada explore how readers can be efficient and effective at reading for pleasure:

- A: When would you abandon a book? What would make a book boring?
- St: If it's too long. If everything went on and on... details.
- St: When nothing is really happening.
- St: When they talk about the character again and again.
- A: What are the signals when you don't understand the book? Sometimes you read the words and you don't understand. How many of you do a quick read test? A lot of you are struggling to finish a book. You know you can abandon a book if you are struggling -- within reason. (Field Notes, 1/11/93)

Ada's intention was for her students "to understand the book" first, through technical proficient reading. Technical proficient reading, in Ada's version of reader's workshop, was viewed as a foundation necessary for reading well. Once the foundation was in place, the opportunity for the children to read for enjoyment was available. So, Ada encouraged her students to search for books that were not "boring," books that were not hard to understand in hope that her students would experience what reading for pleasure can bring. Ada's methodology became an interconnected blur of strategic approaches to understand the experience of pleasure.

In actuality what I believed happened is the methods that Ada used to teach her students to read for pleasure are the same linear approaches she used to teach her

students to read technically. While each type of reading -- technical reading or pleasure reading -- might present itself as different in kind, nevertheless, there was something at the heart of it all that was one and the same.

The workshop concept that Ada seemed to purport and the observations and conversations I documented from her were disquieting. They were disruptive. On the one hand, with all of her best intentions of what she was advocating was not happening in the workshop. There was a problem here. There was a tension present. Ada had a commitment to reading. And, she had a commitment to having the children enjoy reading. Then, why did it seem as if Ada and the children were moving away from their commitment? It seemed to me, perhaps Ada was experiencing what "could be called the crisis of intentionality in literacy, that is, the crisis of literacy's purposes, the question of to what, *in the world*, a commitment to reading . . . refers" (Smith, 1992, p. 250). Ada was concerned that the children could be "missing out" on the mighty power of literacy. She had an "exaggerated investment in the power of literacy to the detriment of attention to how life is lived" (Smith, 1992, p. 250). Thus, her workshop didn't pay attention to the details of the supportiveness that the children required in order to read for pleasure. Instead, her workshop focused on strategies to assist her students in becoming more efficient, more strategic, more effective pleasure seeking readers.

At the larger level, at the modernist level, Ada's intentions were appropriate. Ada, as a professional teacher was grounding herself in theory. She wanted what was best for her students. She wanted her students to engage in a kind of understanding of

literature in which she engaged. She read literature for pleasure. She consumed literature for pleasure and knew how to work out misunderstandings when she read. As a researcher I asked myself -- Is that not my desire in terms of literature? Do I not consume literature for pleasure? Those questions led me to an opening. In the opening, in the clearing I caught in Ada a glimpse of myself as a consumer of literature. And then, what I caught in Ada was a glimpse of myself as researcher as consumer.

I, as researcher, was a consumer as well. I, as researcher, was appropriating the space of Ada's classroom in order to get something, in order to do my research. I was reminded how at the onset of my research I shopped around Ada's two classes deciding on which class, grade 7 or grade 5, in which to do my research. I, as researcher, was trapped by the metaphor of the consummate consumer. As I reflected upon and wrote the thesis, I realized that both Ada and I, perhaps all researchers and teachers are trapped by the metaphor of the consummate consumer. This glimpse of the consummate consumer presented me with a different interpretation of Ada's version of reader's workshop.

There simply may not be a significant difference in the way Ada teaches children to consume books for pleasure and the way she teaches children to consume books for technical reading. The teaching of reading for pleasure may just be a romanticized and sentimental version of teaching to read for technical proficiency. The methods used in teaching reading for pleasure and reading for technical proficiencies both seem to come from the same modernistic theoretical frame.

The point is, in Ada's version of reader's workshop there was no focus on the end product, on the book itself when students were reading for pleasure or reading for technical proficiency. The focus was on the teaching strategies used to teach reading for pleasure or technical proficiency. In both cases, Ada didn't really vary from the template she established. In both cases I got the sense that the reading strategies Ada taught were based upon the behavior of the children, of observable tendencies, of the children getting everything in order, of making sure that the text is a product ready to be consumed. Hence, the children were taught techniques to consume books whether it was for pleasure or for technical proficiency.

In retrospect, the concept of Reader's Workshop as it evolved here became a metaphor of the modernistic consumer. It was as if the workshop had become a "shopper's club." Ada's "shopper's club" was really a fashionable version of a modernistic reflection of classroom life which teaches children to consume a product -- in this case, to consume books for pleasure.

So, now, I ask, what is important here -- reading or pleasure, or reading *for* pleasure? I fear, that after a while, the *for* gets forgotten and reading *for* pleasure becomes reading pleasure, and the book at hand becomes just one more expression of the modernist desire for self-indulgent pleasure. Moreover, the book itself becomes irrelevant and what becomes privileged is just a question of what the self gets out of the book. And the modern self as self-indulgent, self-centered, and self-serving is nurtured by the consumption of pleasure.

What Ada presented in her classroom as reading for pleasure and as reading for

technical proficiencies, is recognized, applauded and rewarded by school administration, teaching colleagues, community parents and classroom students. And Ada, as teacher is professionally doing an excellent job. Ada is teaching the children to read and she is teaching the children to read well. What I am questioning is what is at stake in learning to read well as thus defined?

It can be said in reflection that Ada took her role as being a part of the business of education seriously. She consumed the latest, most popular, specialized abstract ideas offered to her through university courses and professional readings. Then, in turn, she offered these theoretical products to her students as practices for consumption. But, something happened in Ada's consumption of theory. In the latest, most fashionable, specialized theoretical approach to reading, Reader's Workshop, she experienced the disruptive tension of the modern/postmodern theory/practice, self/other condition. She started to question, in a hermeneutic fashion, the value of what she had been teaching.

I've been questioning . . . I've been questioning when I'm imposing these restrictions on them [students]. I've had that on my mind.
(Transcript, 10/11/93)

Ada's questioning started to act upon her. She felt a discomfort with the two types of reading programs, she felt a discomfort with her version of reader's workshop. The tension that acted upon her made her stop teaching reading for the two weeks previously discussed in the section entitled, *Playing With Listening and Playfully Listening*. Ada was unable to teach reading to her students. She left them to read and just read herself. The reason that she stopped the teaching of reading is

simply because at the heart of it all -- teaching for pleasure and teaching reading for technical proficiency were one and the same things. They both derived from the modernistic framework which was the consumption of pieces of text in particular kinds of ways.

Teachers are pressured to "keep up to date" in their professional thinking. As good consumers, teachers desire to select new theories, alternative theories, which are promoted in a sincere caring, "what's best for children," approach. However, whatever theories or methods teachers employ to teach, actually, becomes a moot point, if the business of education is consumption. The methods teachers use to teach reading for pleasure are the same linear, dualistic kinds of methods that are used to teach reading for technical proficiency. So, teachers end up teaching children, similar to how they have been taught, to consume the products of education. Children are consciously taught techniques, reading strategies, in a devoted and earnest way, to become better and better readers. Children are taught techniques to consume books. Whether the techniques are for pleasure or whether the techniques are for technical proficiencies, children are taught that a text is a product to be consumed. Thus, the text becomes forgotten, the text becomes irrelevant, and modernity's appetite to consume becomes the desire of self-actualization. The question, then, becomes -- What do *I* get out of the text? What is in it for *me*? Can I get pleasure out of reading literature if I use these particular strategies? Can I mimic a text for a particular moment, for a particular time in order to pass an exam or gain a certification? Reading in this fashion, reading texts in such a manner, that the consumption of the text is most

important, means that a reader never has to actually learn from text. The text has lost its importance and has become just another way of pursuing self-willed pleasure for the moment or pursuing self-willed techniques for a modernistic goal.

The humanness of teachers and children becomes lost in an education based on the economics of consumption. Instead, teachers and children, are viewed as consumers, as consumers of theories. Theories then have become products ready to be consumed by "up-to-date" teachers in schools. Each theory believes, sincerely, to be profitable, to be valuable, to be adding truth to the grand narrative of the univocal character of the world. Each theory individually packaged, promotes itself to be pursuing this noble, ultimate truth, as bias free and uncontaminated as possible, and thus, unconsciously markets itself in hope of beating out the competition in order to have the highest consumption. A critical interest in the product itself, in the theory itself, however, becomes lost within the desire to have this particular product consumed. Thus, the popularity of individual theoretical narratives rises and falls, depending on the skillfulness of the marketing strategies. The products to be selected by the educational consumer, the teacher, then, are often chosen by plebiscite, a well worn mechanism of democracy. Most administrations and parents applaud "up-to-date" teachers who choose this modernistic version of democracy.

Modernity has "elevated economics to the position of ultimate justifier and explainer of all the affairs of our daily life" (Berry, 1990, p. 129). Modernity's desire to view education as a business, viewing teachers as developers of "human capital," and viewing children as an "investment in the future," is a desire based on economics.

A desire based on economics, based on Cartesian math, does not serve the common good of human beings living-together-in-the-world, rather, a desire based on economics serves up products to be consumed. In the business of education, then, teachers and children, desperately trying to live life together as a community could be considered a heart-rending illusion.

So, the complexity of multiple theories is, simply, a variation of the same Cartesian theme. No matter how eloquent, no matter how elegant, no matter how popular, the use of theory is bound to theoretical assumptions and prejudices, the use of theory is simply bound to its maker, is simply bound to modernity.

The themes of what it means to be minded and mindful about metacognition and the tensions between self-will and goodwill, listening and listening playfully, and complexity and simplicity are the residue of the writings that came to me when I read my data about the teaching in Ada's classroom. These layers of a teacher's practice are only alive in that they correspond directly to the lived sense of the world of the children in the classroom. What is interesting to explore, is not only what has been described about the teacher's practice, but to explore and describe those who she is in concert with, the children.

CHAPTER 6

THE LAYERED VOICES OF THREE CHILDREN

*I hearken . . . Slowly I listen . . . and let it
die away into its farthest echo. Rilke, R.
(1982).*

In the original plan to explore metacognition, the children were going to be a source of data to clarify and provide an understanding of the role metacognition plays in the reading of literature. The turn in my research question provided me with the lived sense of the world of the children in Ada's classroom. The conversations with the children provided me with data that explored and described further the themes presented in Chapter 5. This chapter is dedicated to how specifically the themes are confirmed in the layered voices of the children. What came back to me from the conversations I had with Ada were evident in what the children echoed in their conversations.

I had set out to select, to observe and interview two children who enjoyed reading fiction and who also had an interest in talking about their reading experiences. Although my original intent was to work with two children, I ended up observing and interviewing three children.

All three children had a love for reading. They were avid readers of fiction and wanted to talk about their readings (Interview, 3/11/93). All three children read in school and at home after school and on weekends (Artifact, 4/10/93). They were "hooked on reading" before they came to Ada's grade 5 class (Interview, 21/10/93) and thoroughly enjoyed the reading opportunities Ada provided for them in her

Language Learning program (Field Notes, 14/10/93).

Three Voices: Sam, Cloe, and Charlotte

Ada and I selected two of the study children, Sam and Cloe. Ada considered both students to be good readers. They were avid readers of fiction as well (Field Notes, 7/10/93). After a week of classroom observations and informal discussions with Sam and Cloe (Field Notes, 14/10/93) I concurred with Ada's assessment of the children. Both children were interested in participating with "someone from the university" who would "use [their] ideas to do research" (Field Notes, 14/10/93). An informal meeting was held at the school with Sam and his mother (Field Notes, 18/10/93) to discuss the research project and acquire written consent for Sam's involvement. A similar discussion took place over the telephone with Cloe's mother (Field Notes, 21/10/93). Written consent for Cloe's participation was given as well.

Sam, a quiet 10 year-old, was described by both his mother and Ada as "not like most other children" (Field Notes, 14/10/93). Both women saw Sam as "somewhat of a loner, a very intelligent child who wants to do well in school but will do little in class if he isn't interested" (Field Notes, 18/10/93). My classroom observations of Sam would confirm such a description as I witnessed a child who went about "doing his own thing". At times, he refused to work with a group, working instead alone, along the side of his group members. He frequently chose a solitary activity. He would often be found reading in a well hidden isolated spot by himself whereas most of the other children would sit with their friends. During class

discussions, he would opt, when space permitted, to sit apart from the large group.

Sam looked at me, through his round horn-rimmed glasses, and told me he "doesn't have any **real** friends in this class" (Interview, 3/11/93).

Where Sam demonstrated a quiet independence from his peers, Ada described him as being "quite engaging" with adults. His sense of humor and playfulness with language seemed to come alive when he conversed with adults. Sam's sense of humor showed itself when I initially talked with him. I let Sam know that there was no long-term commitment to our talks. He could stop participating whenever he felt like it. He replied with a wide grin: "Good. Men have a hard time making a commitment" (Field Notes, 26/10/93). Despite numerous funny conversations with Ada or myself, Sam seldom shared his sense of humor with the other students in the class while I was in attendance.

Sam engaged in "selective attention", ignoring classroom instruction given by Ada but fully attentive when Ada gave directions for assignments. Sam spent most of his independent work time doodling and quietly observing other students. Each time one of Ada's deadlines for an assignment approached, Sam started to work. When I commented on his sudden decision to work he told me "[he] needs to meet the deadline" (Field Notes, 4/11/93) and turned back to his assignment. He very effectively blocked out nearby classroom noises (eg. conversations, laughter) and stayed fully attentive to the work at hand until the assignment was completed, meeting Ada's deadline. Ada described Sam's approach to work as changing:

"I think back to him in September, very cocky and confident, but didn't put out at all, not working. He's taken a good look around the

classroom and there are some workers in here. He is aware of that. He's become aware of my evaluation and my standards. I talk about expectations all the time. He now just soaks in every little thing that I say like that. He comes to me more now to check to see if this is what I'm asking for. (Transcript, 10/11/93)

Sam wants his evaluations to improve.

The other student, 10 year-old Cloe, told me in a smiling confident voice that "[she] **really** likes school, [she] **really** likes to learn and be with her friends"

(Transcript, 2/11/93). My classroom observations would confirm Cloe's statement.

Cloe was an attentive participant in class. Her head of long chestnut hair tied back by a ribbon matching her clothes, was often cocked to the side as she listened attentively to Ada's words. Her eyes sparkled with interest, as she listened intensely to Ada during instruction. Ada described her as "always trying hard; always attending, responding, thinking about what you [the teacher is] saying" (Transcript, 18/11/93).

Assignments completed in and out of class were meticulously done. Cloe's work was visually pleasing. Her title pages, drawings, and written work were fastidious, precise and well-organized. Cloe wanted to do well in school, liked to learn and Ada wanted to "see her grow [as a learner] as well" (Transcripts, 11/1/94). According to Ada, Cloe did not look for a change in her learning, Cloe looked for an improvement in her marks as a guide in her growth as a learner (Transcript, 11/1/94).

Cloe also looked for the companionship of her friends. Both Ada and Cloe's mother describe her as a "happy, very social and outgoing child" (Field Notes, 21/10/93). The morning break was a time for Cloe to discuss upcoming plans and activities for the evening or the weekend with her friends. During my stay in Ada's

classroom I often found Cloe choosing to work on assignments with a group of her friends rather than working independently. Even during independent reading time I would find Cloe sitting within her group of friends, often leaning against a friend on the floor as she was absorbed in the reading of her book.

Charlotte, the third student, selected herself for the study. Charlotte was paradoxical. Charlotte was perplexing. Ada described Charlotte as a student "driven by the need to get everything right" (Transcript, 18/10/93). During my observations I often saw Charlotte, her slender body set rigidly, following Ada with determined steps around the classroom. This 11 year-old girl, demanded Ada's attention, unable to wait her turn, trying to ask her questions that had already been answered or seek confirmation and approval on the work she had started. She wanted "to get work right" (Field Notes, 4/1/94). Charlotte preferred printing over handwriting "because she was better at it" (Field Notes, 6/12/93). Her written work was orderly and methodically organized showing "thought and detail" (Transcript, 16/10/93). Charlotte was eager to do well and wanted reassurance to do things the "right way."

Where Charlotte tended to be tentative and insecure in most learning situations demanding assistance to guarantee success (Transcript, 21/10/93), she was poised and self-assured in Ada's reader's workshop. She forgot about doing things the "right way" when she read and talked about her reading. Ada wrote in Charlotte's report card:

Do you love to read, or what? Your interest and excitement have become valuable ingredients in our reader's workshop. When you discuss books you forget everything else. Your peers listen, often wondering if they too might find a book as good or as exciting.

(Artifact, 2/12/93)

Charlotte read with passion and talked from the heart. When Charlotte read and talked about a book, she needed no reassurance about reading the "right way."

As stated earlier, Charlotte invited herself into the study. Charlotte, unaware of my set parameters, only aware of a happening in the classroom that was of interest to her, brought down the parameters I had created for this study. She questioned me early in the study, wondering: "You chose two students. What will you do with them?" (Field Notes, 21/10/93). She hovered physically on the edge of Cloe's group of friends. Whenever I was having a conversation in the classroom with Cloe about her reading, about what she was doing, Charlotte was there. Charlotte did not allow her voice to be excluded. Charlotte would be there, eager to respond, to share her thoughts or ask questions, disrupting and influencing the polite responses I was getting from Cloe. In the beginning, I thought Charlotte was contaminating my study. Initially, Charlotte was a voice of frustration for me.

Charlotte was frustrating to Ada as well. Ada described Charlotte as:

. . . an interesting child but [who] can be very frustrating to teach. She is demanding and not independent. [She's] impulsive . . . very frustrating. And yet she gets frustrated with me because I can't give her all of my time as soon as she needs it. Her need to talk is so urgent. We're working through this. (Transcript, 21/10/93)

"Working through this" meant acknowledging Charlotte's talk, listening to Charlotte's talk. "Working through this" meant listening to a girl who wanted to be heard, who wanted to talk about what she read. Charlotte's voice became another alien-in-my-midst. Charlotte's voice was an other form of otherness, an embodiment

of otherness that came to greet me on this research journey.

Most of the time, during my four months stay in Ada's classroom, there was a natural ebb and flow of mutual openness in my conversations with the children. All three children welcomed the dialogue, all three children were open to conversations about themselves and about their reading (Interviews, 2-3/11/93). The children's parents told me their children "felt special about being singled out" (Interview, 21/10/93). The children were delighted to share with me what they were doing and how they felt about it.

In what follows, the voices of Sam, Cl  e and Charlotte are heard in conversation. The conversations were explored and themed into four topics. The themes that emerged from the conversations echo some of the themes that emerged in Chapter 5: the echo in self-will; the echo in mindedness; the echo in consumption; and the echo in listening. Three sections, the echo in self-will, consumption, and listening will resonate in support of the interpretations in Chapter 5. The section, the echo in mindedness, has been expanded to include an additional interpretation of what it means for three children to read.

Hearing the Echo in Self-Will

In this section, the conversations echo the nurturing of the self-will discussed in the previous chapter in the segment entitled "Self-Will and Goodwill". Sam nurtured the building of self through his responses to the texts he read. What follows is a brief description of how Sam's reading of literature in the classroom could be considered a

self-engaging activity that services the self-will.

During my stay in the classroom, I never observed Sam demonstrating, by way of questioning or asking for assistance, any confusion with any text he was reading. In the classroom, according to Sam, "reading is just being able to understand a language" (Field Notes, 3/11/93). Sam claimed understanding the language of reading was an easy thing to do. In Sam's words:

You just understand from reading on in the book. Once you read on and on and on in the book, then you go 'Oh, he was the king and his son was the one who knew.' Then it explains it and **you** can explain it. (Transcript, 6/1/94)

And, in the classroom, this is what Sam did. At one point Sam gave a summary of *The Hobbit* (Tolkien, 1937) to the class (Field Notes, 28/11/93). His explanation was sure footed. There was no hesitation, no stumbling over words. There was no confusion. He gave an eloquent account of his understanding. His understanding was logical and precise. He never missed a step in his coherent explanation of the book.

In fact, Sam claimed during one of Ada's strategy lessons regarding text confusion, where the emphasis was on asking questions, that he doesn't need to ask himself or other people questions. Sam claimed that he was "a good reader" who "doesn't get confused" (Field Notes, 10/1/94) when he reads.

Publicly, in the classroom, in front of others, Sam gave reading performances. Often during large group discussions Sam would perform, show-casing his understanding of what the class as a group read. On one such occasion Sam commented:

I understand this stuff. I know about medieval times. He's from

Greece because of Hades. If he's from Greece he would criticize the church because they believed in many gods, like Zeus. Who can name other Greek gods? (There were no replies from the other children.) (Field Notes, 1/2/94)

Sam's public reading has the echo of the self-willed truth discussed in Chapter

5. Publicly, according to Sam, "good readers" are not confused by what they read.

Confusion in reading was not considered by Sam as a positive possibility. Confusion was considered more of a problem that other readers, poorer readers might have when they read. "Good readers" show a sense of competence over their reading. "Good readers" are eloquent in their meaning of text. "Good readers" can knowingly, can eloquently, explain meaning of text to others. Sam's ability to express himself eloquently ultimately determined his self-willed meaning over the other children. There was no space for the beliefs of the other children that may be different from Sam. His eloquent self-willed truth dominated the conversations to the extent that it objectified everyone else's voice. During my stay in the classroom, I never saw Ada or other children challenge Sam's interpretation of text.

Sam's conversations re-emphasize that a relationship with literature solely based on nurturing the meaning of text in relationship to the reader is a misreading. This type of reading nurtures a subjectivity that is exclusive and dominating over others. Reading, then, becomes a matter of extending the power of the self over text and others. This type of reading allows no space for dialogue within the relationship between reader, text, and others.

Hearing the Echo in Mindedness

The interpretations in this section, which extend the interpretations in Chapter 5 under the heading, *A Call to Mind and Being Mindful*, are based on conversations with two of the study children, Sam and Cloe. The first part of this section is based on conversations with Sam, conversations that centered around Sam's private voice. Sam's private voice explored further what it means to deepen his understanding about reading.

What I discovered over time, through our conversations, is that beside his public voice, Sam had another voice as well. In class, publicly, Sam presented himself as a confident knowledgeable little boy who could show-case his understanding and enjoyment of what he was reading (Field Notes, 28/11/93). In our private conversations, Sam had another voice that he shared with me. Privately, I asked Sam:

- C: What happens when you don't understand what you read? How does it make you feel when you don't understand something?
- S: It makes me feel sort of bad when I don't understand. I think, dumb. Because this is a children's book and I don't know. And it is for children and I might think "I am **sooo dumb** I can't even understand a Bernstein Bear book. Something like that. (Transcript, 3/11/93)

Privately, Sam believed smart people are not confused by the text. Smart people understand the text. They don't require any help. Only "dumb" people misunderstand what they read. Only "dumb" people require metacognitive strategies to fix-up their reading. Sam, identified by the educational system as an "extremely bright child who qualified to participate in a pull-out enrichment program for gifted

children" (Field Notes, 14/10/93), considered himself "dumb" if he did not understand what he read. And when misunderstanding of reading happened to Sam in the classroom, he dealt with it privately because people might reconsider, people might review his label of being "extremely bright." He hid his misunderstanding from others, out of the sight of Ada and the other students.

- C: So, how do you figure things out when you don't understand?
 S: I learn from reading on in the book. I read on and on and on. And if I don't know a certain thing or character, I just read on and then it probably explains the thing or the character. Even if it takes a 1000 pages.
 C: You don't give up?
 S: No. It's like climbing Mount Everest.
 C: So what do you do when you're stuck . . . when something just doesn't make sense?
 S: Well . . .
 C: What do you do Sam?
 S: Well, I thought Saruman the traitor was a dark lord for half of the book.
 C: What happened then? What did you do then?
 S: I started to adjust to it.
 C: How did you come to know that?
 S: I adjusted.
 C: How did you adjust?
 S: I got help. I went over to my friend's house [who is in grade 7]. He already read *The Fellowship of the Rings*. So he knew that Soromen was the dark one and he told me. So I adjusted. It changed the whole meaning. Man, we talk about the book a lot. (Transcript, 6/1/94)

This was not the voice of a performer show-casing his knowledge. This was the voice of a reader presented with confusion when reading. When Sam was presented with confusion in reading he responded by turning toward an other in dialogue *outside* of school. The voice of the performer was used *inside*, in classroom discussions, but the voice of the reader in dialogue was used outside of school. Sam

viewed the confusion in reading to understand as a hidden activity, a closet activity, an activity done in private, outside the glare of public scrutiny. Sam's view of reading confusion resonates with Garner's (1992) statement that "metacognition is the willingness to take risks for understanding" (p. 27).

Taken together, the conversations with Sam widen the interpretations in Chapter 5. The conversations with Sam emphasized a deficit approach to reading. Confusion in reading is viewed as a short-coming, something that is lacking in the reader. The reader is poverty stricken, in need of assistance. Thus, confusion in reading can be viewed as a reader having a problem in need of being solved. Some children, like Sam, believe only poor readers get confused when reading and require the help of reading strategies. Only confused readers require the appropriate reading strategies to fix the problem necessary for understanding. In some children's eyes, "good readers" have no need for reading strategies. It is poor readers who need an abundance of strategies in hope of overcoming the difficulties in their understanding.

This view of reading reflects a technical understanding of reading where reading is reduced to a problem in need of being solved. A problem-solving approach to reading leaves no room for confusion, leaves no room for a reader to question in dialogue with others. The reading then becomes a problems to be solved, a solution to be found.

The second part of this interpretive section, the conversations with Cloe take a different turn, a different interpretation of what it means to read. Cloe, unlike Sam, saw metacognitive reading strategies as a way to assist her in her reading. She was

looking for help in her confusion. At one point in one of our conversations, she raised the concern, "I don't know what comprehension means" (Field Notes, 8/11/93).

Cloe was echoing Ada's concern, "they still don't understand what comprehension means even though I've used synonyms and examples" (Transcript, 10/11/93). Like most teachers, Ada's intentions were to help students become more efficient readers, more independent readers. As shown in Chapter 5, Ada modelled the use of reading strategies as a means of teaching her students how to effectively comprehend. According to Ada, using reading strategies to comprehend is an important component of reading. Like most teachers, Ada evaluated her students' use of reading strategies by evaluating their comprehension. In the response journal evaluation Ada had a component "Responses show Comprehension" where she made suggestions to Cloe: "Try to give me more details, details about the story" (Artifact, 2/11/93). Ada discussed with her students her statements on the response journal evaluations: "My responses are often clues . . . questions. You don't have to answer my questions. They are clues to help you focus on your upcoming responses" (Field Notes, 4/11/93). Ada provided clues, questions to assist in comprehension.

Cloe became concerned about her comprehension when she received C's in the first two evaluations of her responses to the books she was reading. Prior to the evaluations, Cloe believed that she was "pretty good at reading . . . it [felt] like . . . it's easy for [her] to do" (Transcript, 2/11/93). Now, Cloe wanted to know how to comprehend, what it meant to comprehend.

A further comment by Cloe led me to believe that not knowing what

comprehension meant would more typically be not knowing what *Ada meant* by comprehension: "I think I know what I need to do . . . to show Ms. R. I understand I need to put in more detail [in my responses]." (Field Notes, 8/11/93) Providing an appropriate understanding of her reading for Ada became the focus for Cloe rather than utilizing an appropriate strategy to assist her understanding of her reading. A confirming comment by Cloe also revealed that successful reading comprehension implied that she understood how to use reading strategies for a specific meaning: "[Ms. R. used Question-Answer-Relationship], it's, so we listen to the book more. If you understand the question and the answer then you understand what you read" (Field Notes, 7/2/94). The quest for Cloe became -- To listen to the book more through reading strategies in hope of understanding what Ada considered successful comprehension.

Cloe continued to be receptive to reading strategies in order to comprehend. After Ada taught the K-W-L [Know, Want to Know, and Learned] strategy as a way to comprehend I talked with Cloe:

- C: What about the strategies Ms. R. used last week and this week. Do you use any of those strategies?
- Cl: Some of them. Umm . . . I don't know . . . I can't remember but I know I remember that I've done some of the things.
- C: It was familiar?
- Cl: Yea.
- C: The story of the Selkie Girl . . .
- Cl: Yea. You could like guess. You want to read it more so you can find out if you were right or wrong. It can help you . . . We have to straighten out the information so you know the information in that way. (Transcript, 13/1/94)

Cloe used reading strategies to "straighten out the information so she knew the

information in that way." Cloe used reading strategies to show Ada meaning "in that way." Cloe wanted "to straighten out" the meaning. She knew that Ada had a way to help her "straighten out" and determine the right meaning. Ada was able to teach her reading strategies. Cloe knew she could confirm the right meaning by Ada's evaluation. Cloe knew that her meaning was clear and precise if she received a better mark on her evaluation. Sam confirmed Cloe's understanding: "This way Ms. R. knows if we understand the book. [It is] there for her to evaluate us." (Field Notes, 13/12/93)

The above description of Cloe's metacognitive strategic reading reopens and broadens the interpretations in the previous chapter titled "A Call to Mind and Being Mindful". Cloe had a commitment to strategic reading. She wanted to learn all the strategies Ada offered her in order to be free to select appropriate strategies when reading. Cloe hoped to have the freedom to control her reading with clarity, to control her reading in an appropriate manner. It was Cloe's belief, if she read in a specific manner, through the use of reading strategies, it would mean, once and for all, that she had the right understanding. An improvement in Ada's evaluation of her reading would indicate to Cloe that she had, indeed, used reading strategies effectively to determine, with clarity, the right understanding.

Students are able to show teachers they understand the use of reading strategies through their reading. Students learn that the use of appropriate reading strategies will guide them toward appropriate understanding. Students know whether they are strategic readers if their understanding is supported through positive teacher

evaluations of their responses. Many teachers evaluate students' responses according to a very specific approach to sense making. The closer the students comply to a specific approach to reading, the better the evaluations will be for student responses. Thus, students' approach to reading is controlled by teachers' particular approach to sense making.

The talk about freely selecting reading strategies to determine the right understanding could be viewed as a loss of freedom. Cloe's freedom to select appropriate reading strategies in order to determine the meaning of what she read reveals an actual loss of freedom when reading. By using reading strategies as an exclusive approach to understanding her reading, Cloe was not free to explore other possible approaches to reading books. Exclusivity privileges a particular viewpoint, it privileges a particular voice over other voices. In this case, what is privileged is a strategic approach to reading.

In sum, Cloe's pursuit of learning to read the right interpretation constrained her to a fixed perspective on reading, to one method of reading. Privileging one method of reading reduces reading to a task of controlling the student and the text. Teachers assign the task and students comply with the activity in a like-minded fashion in hope of a good evaluation.

Complying in a like-minded fashion implies that language is spoken in a like-minded fashion as well. Language, in a like-minded fashion also has the potential to restrict responses and guide the reader in a certain direction. Language, in like-minded fashion becomes a "univocal language which expresses an interest in control,

manipulation and prediction . . . and demands objectivity and univocity" (Jardine, 1988, p. 27). Thus, meaning becomes controllable and predictable for teachers and students. Meaning, however, cannot be determined through univocity, through one particular approach to reading. "When everything is perfectly clear, speech grinds to a halt, or reduces to chatter because there is nothing more to be said" (Smith, 1988, p. 277). Learning to read the right interpretation excludes the contribution of the other. "Just like any other form of learning, learning to read is a relational activity -- it depends upon a relationship" (Smith, 1992, p. 256) with others.

Hearing the Echo in Consumption

In this section, Sam and Cloe's conversations reflect the consumption of books which was originally discussed in Chapter 5.

"I wanted Ms. R. to know that I'm a good reader" (Field Notes, 14/10/93). Being a "good reader" was important for both Sam and Cloe. For Cloe, being a good reader meant "reading a lot of books that are easy for [her]" (Transcript, 13/1/94). She read an "easy to read book in about 2 or 3 days. [Cloe] read a lot" (Field Notes, 14/10/93). She devoured books. Her reading goal for the beginning of reader's workshop in early October was to read "15 books by Christmas" (Artifact, 6/10/93). Cloe had already read 8 books 3 weeks into Reader's Workshop. For Cloe, being a "good reader" meant being a consumer of "easy books."

For Sam, being a "good reader" meant reading a "big book of 290 pages in 10 days" (Field Notes, 28/10/93). Sam burned through books. "Last year, [he] read

Matilda (Dahl, 1989) in 4 days. Now [he] was reading it again and [he knew he would] finish it in 2 days (Field Notes, 28/10/93). Consuming harder books at a faster rate was Sam's way of defining a "good reader."

The consumption of books reads with pleasure. According to Sam consuming a book is "like going to a movie. The people are hoping to see a good movie that will excite them" (Field Notes, 25/1/94). Sam selected books for excitement, for "the adventure in them" (Field Notes, 25/1/94). Sam was pleasure-bound when he engaged in reading. He wanted to be amused and entertained when reading. He wanted to indulge in the pleasure that reading a book could provide.

Cloe, like Sam, was a pleasure-seeker as well. During my stay in Ada's classroom, when Cloe had control over the selection of novels to be read, she chose to read only one genre. Cloe "like[d] to read adventure and mystery stories" (Field Notes, 28/11/93). "Adventure and mystery stories" guaranteed Cloe the pleasurable thrill of reading books "that leave [her] hanging. [Being left hanging made] her want to read more" (Field Notes, 7/12/93). Cloe wanted to hang on to the pleasure that adventure and mystery books provided her.

Cloe and Sam's definition that "good readers" are consumers of books is a confirmation of what has been themed in Chapter 5. In summary, in talking about reading as a form of pleasure to be consumed, Sam and Cloe revealed the modernist desire for self-indulgent pleasure. That is to say, the book, itself, becomes irrelevant. What is privileged in this desire for self-indulgent pleasure is what the self gets out of a book. The more books consumed, the more pleasure experienced. Thus, what

becomes important is the consumption itself.

Hearing the Echo in Listening

This section reflects the section in Chapter 5 called, *Playing With Listening and Playfully Listening*. In this section, the conversations resonate with Charlotte's voice, the third child in the study. As indicated at the beginning of the chapter, Charlotte's reading voice had a different tone to it. Her voice played in a different key.

Charlotte's voice was problematic in my study. Charlotte's voice, unlike Sam and Cloe's voice, created a hermeneutic tension in my work. Sam and Cloe's voices were consistent, whether I spoke with them in the classroom, during our individual interviews, or observed them in conversations with Ada or other students. My triangulation as a method for reliability was consistent, reinforcing and supporting all the different types of dialogue I had recorded. In Charlotte's conversations, however, there was a discord, there was something out of tune. With Charlotte, there was a type of tension at play. That is to say, there was a paradox between Charlotte's conversations with Ada, other students and myself within the context of Reader's Workshop and, Charlotte and my audio-taped conversations about her reading.

As stated earlier, Charlotte invited herself, sought interaction with me during my time in Ada's classroom. She delighted in sharing with me what she was doing and how she felt about it, *until* I wanted to prod and poke and penetrate her with specific questions to see what made her tick, to get inside her head. Charlotte was delighted to share with me her thoughts and ideas within the happenings of the

classroom, *until* I interviewed her. At first, she did not understand what I was asking with my questions, and tried, eagerly, to respond, to seek my approval. Over a short time she complied and answered hesitantly, conscious of the possibility of wrong answers.

What follows is a transcript of an audio-taped conversation of Charlotte and myself. Living within a conversation and reading a transcript of that conversation is not the same thing. van Manen (1990) makes the point that "experiential accounts or lived-experience descriptions . . . are never identical to lived experience itself . . . [it] is already transformed at the moment it is captured" (p. 54). The interpretation of a conversation is anchored to feelings and emotional overtones to which words are attached. A transcript, typed and punctuated is only the skeleton of a conversation, only relaying black words on white paper. In this particular conversation Charlotte's voice echoed with change as the informal interview progressed. Her changing voice was evident in her laugh, the pauses of silence, and in her repetition of the phrase, "I don't know." Charlotte's laugh became shriller, more nervous, more tense as I continued to question her. The pauses within her responses became longer, heavier in their silence as we continued to talk. Each "I don't know" became more tense, more concerning as I continued to question. My own response of "I don't know," at the end of the excerpt was as tense, as concerning, as unsure as Charlotte's response. Within this context, listen to our conversation:

- C: Do you ever think about thinking?
- Ch: I've never thought about that! (**Laughs**)
- C: Well, think about it now. What do you think happens when you're thinking? How does your own thinking work?

- Ch: My brain is thinking. (Laughs) I can't . . . (Pauses) **I don't know . . .**
- C: What about when you're reading?
- Ch: Do I think about what I'm thinking when I'm reading?
- C: Yea.
- Ch: Sometimes . . . (Pauses) **I don't know** how to put it. Like if I'm reading and umm . . . If I get to a part, I read it and I think of something that I'm reading. And, then I think, "No that's not how it is, it's this way." That's.. (Pauses) I've never really thought about it.
- C: That would be an example about thinking about your thinking?
- Ch: Yea.
- C: And it's the first time you've ever thought about it?
- Ch: (Pauses) Yea. (Laughs)
- C: Can you think of any other times when you think about your thinking?
- Ch: (Pauses) . . . not really.
- C: Can you become a better reader?
- Ch: Yes.
- C: How?
- Ch: By understanding the words better.
- C: How could you do that? How could you get better?
- Ch: **I don't know!** Looking them up in the dictionary for the meaning. (Pauses) **I don't know!**
- C: How else could you become a better reader?
- Ch: Understanding the book more.
- C: How would you do that?
- Ch: **I don't know!** (Pauses) By using predictions, and questions, and reading over. You can become a better reader.
- C: How does that work? How does it make you become a better reader?
- Ch: **I don't know!!**
- C: Do you ever think about how you read?
- Ch: Not really. I mean . . . well I think about how I predict . . . and the questions that I make . . . and if the book is easy or hard . . . or if there's a word I don't understand. **I don't know!** Do any of those fall in that category or not?
- C: Hmm. So . . . you consider that how you read? Those would be the things how you read?
- Ch: **I don't know!!**
- C: You've never thought about questions like this before.
- Ch: No! (Laughs) Are they going to get harder and harder as we go?
- C: **I don't know!** (Transcript, 8/2/94)

Each time that I tried to prod, poke and penetrate for information, for answers to my questions, Charlotte lost some humanness, some spontaneity in her responses. Her responses became minded, more calculated, and more rigid. At those times, our conversations were no longer the spontaneous partnership in dialogue we experienced in the classroom, but rather, our conversations became a minded game of interrogation, no matter how warmly I smiled, no matter how kindly I phrased the questions, no matter how reassuring I was that there was no right answer, that I was only interested in what she thought.

During the formation of the thesis, I realized that in the informal interviews I was asking Charlotte minded questions about reading. What I realized was that each time I asked Charlotte a minded question, I ended up trying to draw a line through her, a razor sharp line between her mind and her embodied being, the rest of who she was. Charlotte's way of reading was an embodied reading. Charlotte's embodied reading allowed her to read freely to hear the interplay between subject and object. This interplay allows for a reading that "finds itself inseparably *intertwined* with its object . . . in which the function of representation has become subordinate to the interplay [itself]" (Levin, 1989, p. 234). The conversations that reflected Charlotte's playful reading were only found in the lived-experience of the classroom, within natural conversation among the children, Ada and myself.

So, from Charlotte's individual informal interviews I have no conversations that demonstrated her playful reading, her interplay with books. From the informal interviews I have no conversations that demonstrate her way of reading, her

spontaneous playful dialogue that I experienced in the classroom. Charlotte's way of reading, her interplay with books could not be pinned down. Her playful way of reading could not be controlled, manipulated or predicted. Her playful way of reading was something elusive, something intangible.

Ada recognized Charlotte's playful reading early on in the study. Back in the classroom, after Ada and I had one of our audio-taped conversations that focused on what it meant to be a reader (Transcript, 18/11/93), Ada turned to me as she waited for the children to join her on the carpet to start one of her mini lessons. She laughingly pointed to Charlotte already sitting on the floor in front of her. Charlotte, unaware of Ada, was reading, was deeply buried in a book while the rest of the children came to join her on the carpet for Ada's lesson. Ada chuckled, and made the point:

Christa, this is a good definition. Here's a living example of what a reader is. (Field Notes, 18/11/93)

My reflections in my Field Notes later on that day concurred with Ada:

Charlotte, as a living example of what it means to be a reader . . . It was so timely! Ada is right when she says that Charlotte exemplifies a reader. We both saw it first, a few weeks ago, in how Charlotte shared her favorite books with the class. What is it ? (18/11/93)

Charlotte's interplay with books, her playful reading can be understood, as Jardine (1988) put it, as "the exploration of possible worlds of meaning . . ., it is a free exploration of possibilities" (p. 34). That is, reading playfully opens up reading in a way that gives the reader opportunities to read freely, to read with possibilities. Reading freely does not mean a reading "free-for-all." Rather the reverse is true.

Reading freely provides the reader the opportunity to play with possibilities.

Charlotte, when she read, played with possibilities. Charlotte went as far as to say that "there are many ways to realize what you read. If I feel that I need to do something, I will do it for the read" (Field Notes, 7/2/94). Charlotte, when she read, welcomed possibilities. Charlotte, when she read, did not "play it safe."

Charlotte's reading echoes of the section called *Playing With Listening and Playfully Listening* in Chapter 5. Charlotte's reading suspended what Levin (1989) described as "a silencing of the ego, a silencing of the everyday hearing to the ego-logically constituted structure of subject and object" (p. 233). Charlotte read in a way that gave her the opportunity to read freely and hear the interplay between subject and object. Charlotte suspended her everyday hearing "to the ego-logically constituted structure of self-will, of mindedness and, of consumption that can be found in reading. Charlotte, in her playful reading, suspended judgments and attractions. She suspended the domination of an eloquent self-willed interpretation. She suspended the search for a definitive interpretation of text. She suspended the familiar ground of pleasure reading. Charlotte was willing to risk, "for [the sake of] the read."

Charlotte's risking was a willingness to "venture into the alien" (Gadamer in Jardine, 1992, p. 224). Charlotte, as a playful reader, was willing to keep herself open to change. In fact, Charlotte, as a playful reader was willing to give herself over to change. Thus, when Charlotte stated, "the words in books don't change, but I change" (Field Notes, 23/10/93), this must be taken in a hermeneutic sense. Not only was Charlotte willing to "run the risk that who [she understood herself] to be might be

irrevocably changed" (Jardine, 1988, p. 33), but in giving herself over to change, she was open to "still undecided possibilities" (Gadamer in Jardine, 1992, p. 101). Such possibilities allows for spaces between reader, text and others. Such possibilities allows for a reading that causes "a shifting or a fluidity to occur between the notions of belief and make-belief, between the real and the imaginary, between the actual and the possible, between the metaphorical and the literal" (Jardine, 1988, p. 33).

An attempt was made in this chapter, through the voices of the three children, to confirm and broaden the interpretations of what has been themed about the act of teaching reading in Chapter 5. In the final chapter of this research, Chapter 7 will come full circle to return to the original difficulty of inquiry into the teaching of reading literature and offer an understanding of what it means to inquire into the topic.

CHAPTER 7

THE FACES OF THEORY, PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

Siddhartha stood still; he bent over the water in order to hear better. . . . The many voiced song of the river echoed softly. . . . Siddhartha looked further into the river and saw many pictures in the flowing water. Hesse, H. (1951).

As I sit, I plunge into the river, deep down, "between the earth and my soul" (Smith, 1995, n. p.) where my memories and reflections are cradled. I bend further into the memories and reflections of my research journey. I see pictures of Ada's classroom. I see faces. I see Ada, Charlotte, Cloe, Sam, and myself as researcher. I see who we were, who we are, and possibilities for who we might become. My memories and reflections are this final chapter.

As I spread Chapters 4, 5 and 6 before me I see the themes in print once again. Chapter 4 returns me to Ada and my awakening of sense-making in the world. An awakening that made me see things differently. It was a chthonic sense of seeing. This chthonic sense allowed me to engage in that which is actually lived. This chthonic sense allowed me to see themes within the layers of classroom life.

The themes -- reading as a self-will interpretation of text, reading as a definitive interpretation of text, and reading as the consumption of text -- were explored in Chapters 5 and 6 in the microcosm of Ada's classroom. Chapter 5 returns me to Ada's experience of the post modern condition as she explored her understanding of reading literature and the teaching of reading literature. Ada's exploration of her practice made her attentive to the tensions between human meaning

and representational meaning and, between subjectification of self and objectification of others. Chapter 6, in turn, echoes with the children's voices as they correspond directly with the themes of Ada's practice. The themes generated in Chapter 5 and confirmed by the children in Chapter 6 generalize the layers alive in the macrocosm of most classrooms.

I lay out the themes of Chapters 5 and 6 and re-read the specific layers interpreted at *that* particular moment in time when they were written. Now, as I am reading in *this* moment in time I discover that "it all lacks totality, completeness, unity" (Hesse, 1951, p. 143). Other ambiguous layers of meaning are coming to the forefront. The themes in print before me, in *this* moment in time, are leading me to speculate and question for other meanings. Now, in *this* moment in time, there are more interpretive possibilities surfacing before me. For one, competition as a theme embedded in the Western concept of education is a possibility. This interpretive theme speaks of an educational community that is divided into winners and losers. Another possible theme is the modernistic tendency to distinguish between amateurism and professionalism. Furthermore, the possibility to explore the tension between authoritarian teaching and the authority of authenticity presents itself in the data before me. Thus, I find myself "within the maze of meanings, within the conflict of words" (Hesse, 1951, p. 147). Different possibilities in the meaning of words, in *this* moment, are speaking to me. These new interpretive possibilities require new words full of ambiguities.

My re-searching journey could have taken a multitude of different paths. All

kinds of studies could have evolved. All kinds of re-searching possibilities are presenting themselves to me. "What if" I had read deeper in hermeneutics. It would have been interesting to have read Gadamer and used him as a primary source for my study. My understanding of language, of hermeneutics, would have been affected and consequently my interpretations and my interpretive writing would have been influenced by his work. And that, would have made it a different study.

"What if" I had held all my conversations with Ada and each child, individually, in isolation from the life-world of the classroom. My insights on the teaching and learning of reading literature would have been influenced by the separation of teacher and children from each other and their dwelling place. And that would have made it a different study.

"What if" I had followed the lives of Ada and the three children in a longitudinal type of study. The emerging themes would be vibrantly alive to the changing lives of Ada and the children over time. Thus, my understanding of Ada and each of the three children would have had different possibilities over time. And that would have made it a different study.

So many re-searching journeys could be taken. Old assumptions can be made strange by the arrival of a question. A question becomes a possibility. A question becomes interpretable. Interpretations provide an opening for more, continuous dialogue. From this re-searching journey alone, I believe all kinds of studies have the opportunity to be explored.

For one, a topic that needs to be explored is how theory and practice inform

each other. There seems to be a great distance between the theoretical understanding of reading and the living of reading in classrooms by teachers and students. The assumed reading relationship between theory and practice needs to be revisited. There is a need for understanding this relationship differently. More understanding needs to develop in what actually happens in classrooms, in practice, when teachers teach reading and children are reading. A focus on the gap between theory and practice will allow for a better understanding of the relationship between the two which, in turn, will help children and teachers read in a way that is more meaningful to their lives.

An issue that was raised but not pursued in this study is the influence of silence in classrooms. Silence in classrooms is often viewed as being negative. Silence can be considered to be a form of resistance and, at times, a form of punishment. In school, children do not have a voice when it comes to being silent. Most often, teachers either demand silence from students or demand students to speak. Legitimate silence has a place in the world. Legitimate silence is a significant way of being in the world. To understand what it means to be silent in a classroom would help to open up an understanding of the customs and traditions that fill the gap between silence and talk.

Despite the fact that I think important work needs to be done in the aforementioned areas, I have chosen to conclude differently. This chapter seeks to conclude, to be purposeful with respect to my research questions' original difficulty. I will return to the research questions' original difficulty that led me into the themes and speculations. I will return to what it means to deepen an understanding about the

teaching of reading literature.

Teaching and learning, two words often used symbiotically, in one breath. At the final stop in this research journey I "[see] one of the river's secrets, one that grips [my] soul. [I see] that the water continually flow[s] and flow[s] and yet it [is] always there; it [is] always the same and yet every moment it [is] new" (Hesse, 1951, p. 102).

Teaching and learning continues, "always there, always the same and yet every moment it is new." I have in this moment, where the past, present and future come together, come to understand, for the moment, teaching and learning differently.

Learners seek knowledge, and I as a learner had a desire to gain knowledge about reading literature. Looking back, I know I initially wanted to learn about metacognition and its relationship to reading literature. Looking back, my initial desire to learn reflects the Old English denotative meaning of learning. The word "learn" can be traced back eight hundred years to the meaning of "a last footprint; a furrow; a track" (Webster, 1983, p. 681). I had the desire to leave a small imprint in the furrow of what is known about metacognition and its relationship to reading literature. I wanted to learn, I wanted to seek knowledge as I entered Ada's classroom to do the research.

The remainder of this chapter, however, is not in the service of learning. The remainder of this chapter is dedicated to Ada and the children and their instruction of me as a researcher. It is not what I *learned* in Ada's classroom that is the subject of my conclusion. It is what I was *taught* in Ada's classroom that formulates my conclusion.

Ada and the children *taught* me "not in speech or thought but in [their] deeds and life" (Hesse, 1951, p. 148). Ada and the children *taught* me through their actions in the life-world of the classroom to experience what it means to deepen my understanding about the teaching of reading literature. I turn to the dictionary to trace the word "teach". "Teach" can be traced historically to the seven hundred year old Middle English word *techen* meaning "to show" (Webster, 1983, p. 1209). Therein lies the tension between learning and teaching. Learning is a way to gain knowledge, to know through the intellect, and teaching is a way to show through your actions, your deeds what something means. I return to the dictionary. The word "teach" can be traced further back, some nine hundred years, to an Old English word *tacn* meaning an "outward sign or expression" (Webster, 1983, p. 1209). I saw the signs in Ada's classroom. Ada and the children showed me through their expressive living-in-the-world of the classroom what it meant to teach and learn. In their showing me what it meant to teach and learn I can return to an understanding of the original difficulty that I encountered in my research journey. "I have known [the original difficulty] for a long time, but I have only just experienced it. Now I know it not only with my intellect, but with my eyes, with my heart, with my stomach" (Hesse, 1951, p. 98).

So, what did Ada and the children *teach* me? For one thing, Ada and the children *taught* me about my second research question -- what it means to undergo a transformation of self-understanding. Ada and the children *taught* me about the relationship between self-understanding, understanding of others and, understanding of the topic at hand.

Facing Self-Understanding

In my journey I experienced, as a researcher and as a person, what it means to undergo a transformation of my own self-understanding. As stated earlier in the thesis, my transformation of my own self-understanding runs parallel to Ada's evolution of her self-understanding. A small part of the thesis is my narrative of this coming to be. In retrospect, I realize that in describing my activities I ran the risk of having an understanding about the teaching of reading literature remain uninterpreted and invisible. "Interpretation aimed at understanding the [researcher] as a person surrenders what is important about understanding [the topic]: that [the topic] is more important than what *we* (my emphasis) can say about it" (Sheridan, 1993, p. 171). I now understand, after being in Ada's classroom and writing about it, that the topic, in this case, reading literature is all-encompassing and more intricate than whatever I was taught about it or whatever I learned from it. I only understand this since the transformation of my own self-understanding.

Differently put, a transformation of self-understanding allows for a living-in-the-world that understands understanding differently. It understands with a different sense of self. Rather than an individual subjective self striving towards a more definitive understanding of self, striving towards a mastery of self, the self living-in-the-world is "always about to become not quite foreseeably different" (Crusius, 1991, p. 24). The self living-in-the-world begins to break from the deep-rooted beliefs of understanding, self-understanding, and mutual understanding found in modernity. The self living-in-the-world puts into question the doing in the world. Putting into

question the doing in the world of research raised in me a recognition of something familiar that I did not fully understand.

Fortunately, with the help of assigned readings, and in conversations with colleagues and professors, the transformation of my own self-understanding evolved during my stay in Ada's classroom and after, when I was writing the thesis. So, in my case, understanding began with a questioning of self-understanding. Although I realized at the time of doing the research that understanding begins with self-understanding, I also understood that self-understanding must move beyond self to make connections with the understanding of others.

I believed, during the research, that I was making connections with the understanding of others when I was observing Ada in her classroom. I developed a narrative in Chapter 4 describing Ada's evolvment of a sense of self in relation to "others". In retrospect, Ada as subject, was the focus of the narrative. Ada the person/teacher was at the heart of the interpretation. Now I understand that highlighting Ada the teacher/person in the first narrative actually marginalized the topic of reading literature in our conversations. Featuring the evolution of Ada's voice as a teacher continued to restrain the interpretation and understanding of what it means to teach the reading of literature.

While featuring Ada at the heart of the interpretation in Chapter 4 repressed the interpretation of what it means to teach the reading of literature a little longer, it liberated Ada as a human being. My conversations with Ada, my writing of Ada's evolving self, and her reading of my writing evoked a different self-understanding in

Ada. In a manner of speaking, this experience in Ada evoked a different way of understanding herself and the life she was living in the classroom.

I saw something wonderful happen to Ada during the four months we spent together in her classroom. What I saw over that time was a teacher who was evolving and growing, I believe, into a different kind of teacher. What I saw at the beginning of this research journey was a teacher eager to learn, to seek knowledge, eager to learn in order to improve her practice of teaching. At the beginning of this research journey, Ada readily objectified herself as teacher and objectified what she was doing in her teaching in order to do the right things for her students. Over time, in our conversations and in her actions in the classroom, I saw Ada become a different kind of teacher. Over time I saw Ada living differently in the life-world of the classroom. I saw Ada in terms of growth, evolving from an objectified relationship *to* self to a relationship *as* self to others who happen to be children who have selves of their own.

In retrospect, as a researcher in practice of interpretive understanding, I recognize that self-understanding "means nothing without a set of relations" (Smith, 1991, p. 203), for self-understanding is about the "conversation that we are" (Crusius, 1991, p. 8) in relation to others. As a researcher, in practice of interpretive understanding I now understand that research has a "profoundly ethical aspect . . . in a life-world sense" (Smith, 1991, p. 198). The issue of living meaningfully in relation with others is at the heart of Chapter 4. As a re-searching human being, I am glad I was attentive to Ada's evolving self.

My transformation of self-understanding took a pedagogic turn when I

acknowledged to Ada that I did not know what I was doing in the research. My acknowledgment was a genuine pedagogic move to link with the understanding of an other. My acknowledgement opened the way for Ada to collaborate with me and become a participant in the research journey instead of being the subject of the research. Becoming a participant allowed both Ada and myself to "foster a particular attitude toward 'the other,' and nothing is more 'other' than the intrusive negativity of experience" (Crusius, 1991, p. 42 - 43). Ada and my experience of 'the other' was an intrusion that would not, could not be ignored. Instead of repressing or ignoring what did not conform to our understanding of living-in-the-world, we allowed the negativity of experience to alter our understanding of living-in-the-world. The negativity of the experience was not lost. Ada and I entered into genuine dialogue where experience was readily shared about what it means to teach the reading of literature in a movement towards intersubjective understanding. Intersubjective understanding through dialogue, discussion, negotiation and conversation helps the person form and reform herself. Thus, self-understanding is constantly renewed when the self is lost in the subject at hand, in this case, participating in conversation about the topic of the teaching of reading literature. This renewal of self-understanding continually opens up new possibilities of who I am, what I understand myself to be, and who I might become.

My research journey in Ada's classroom led me to discover and retrieve a sense of self that is different from the one with which I began this journey. My transformation of self-understanding led me to the uncovering of the themes presented

before you which, in turn, lead me full circle to what I now understand about the original difficulty of research, metacognition, and reading. What is to follow is a return to my first research question, to further explore what I was *taught* in Ada's classroom about the state of research, the state of metacognition in schools, and the state of reading in schools.

Facing Interpretation as a Form of Research

In hindsight, I realize that my initial naivete about research was also my greatest strength. Not knowing what I was doing in my research, which research path to walk down, automatically took me down a path. Once I entered Ada's classroom the specific research task of learning about metacognition and its relationship to reading literature became clouded by the complexities of the life-world of the classroom. Being attentive to the complexities of the classroom, I started to question the *doing* in Ada's classroom. What was Ada *doing* with the children? Once I started to question what Ada was *doing*, I was compelled to question what I, as a researcher, was *doing* with Ada in this research task. These questions took control. I was unable to maintain control over the specific research task in a minded manner.

Unbeknown to me at the time, in my desire to discover what was going on in Ada's classroom I brought intentionality to my first research question. What I discovered was that there were more intentions layered into my research question than I originally realized. So, the question, intentionally, led me. In spite of my inattentiveness initially the question led me to an interpretive path of inquiry. The

question led me "to see the world for the first time [where] meaning and reality were not hidden somewhere behind things, they were in them, in all of them" (Hesse, 1951, p. 40). So, what did I see on the interpretive path of inquiry?

Going down an interpretive path of inquiry taught me that research is an interpretive act that requires a standing *in* the world. I came to understand that a standing *in* the world has to do with freedom. Freedom is such a "sticky" (Beck, 1989, p. 190) word to use. I do not mean freedom in a dualistic sense where individuals have the freedom to be left alone to go and do whatever they want to do. Freedom in this dualistic fashion implies that something out there will give people freedom. It suggests that people have the opportunity to turn away from situations that make them uncomfortable. It implies that something out there will free people from personal responsibility, free people from the world as it exists. I discovered a different type of freedom, a freedom within living-in-the-world that requires a standing *in* the world. To paraphrase Beck (1989), the freedom I discovered is a freedom that has the willingness to risk being vulnerable to life. It is the willingness to being vulnerable to pain, suffering, joy, whatever arises in each moment. This kind of freedom needs a total *commitment* to researching in the midst of things, in the mess of things, in the researching practice of living-in-the-world.

Commitment is another sticky word to write about. There is a danger here to view commitment as being committed to a specific way of researching, or being committed to a methodological framework. There is a risk in *thinking* that a commitment is a thing, an object to define and possess. When I think I am committed

to interpretive inquiry, then I must be a certain way in the commitment. What is this certain way? How is it defined? Here in lies the risk. The object of commitment becomes an investment, a way to act and behave in order to "do" interpretive research. This is a possessive form of commitment. Commitment, however, cannot be forced by studying, analyzing or evaluating it in its objective form. While commitment could be seen in those terms, I see commitment as having more of an affinity to freedom, living side by side in the same researching breath where interpretive inquiry resides. Tracing the word "commit" helps to understand its relationship to freedom. The word "commit" comes from Latin, *committere* which means to connect, to join, to entrust (Webster's Dictionary, 1983, p. 265). So, commitment means to be connected and joined within "the wholeness and integrity of the world" (Smith, 1991, p. 197), within the context of life as lived. A commitment to freedom within interpretive inquiry, then, is not a method but an ethical practice of living-in-the-world.

An ethical practice of living-in-the-world means having discomfort with the familiar and the comfortable in the world. The effect of such a practice is not simply that the familiar is visibly more uncomfortable and that the razor sharp boundaries drawn around the familiar, around the given, are clearly visible to the ethical practice of living-in-the-world. Rather, ethical practice begins to provide a freeing up to venture in the real difficulty of attempting to step through the razor sharp boundaries into the wilderness of the familiar. Ethical living invites interpretation to happen within the wilderness of the familiar. This type of living is bound to make a person bleed, to make a person vulnerable, to make a person sensitive and open to an ethical

practice of living-in-the-world. Thus, interpretive inquiry is not just another interpretation of a life lived in a classroom. Rather interpretive inquiry is a commitment to human freedom, a commitment to life, a deep commitment to live more responsibly with others.

There is something more, there is one more understanding, a humbling understanding that I was taught about interpretive research. Interpretive writing reads back the ethical practice of living-in-the-world. My writing reads me back to me in a manner that I did not know before. As the author of this interpretive writing I stand naked, exposed with all the vulnerability that ethical writing demands. I could not have written interpretively about the themes I explored with Ada and the children if I had not lived them. Ada and the children are not just topics. I, too, am a teacher like Ada who teaches children and my life is a reflection in my writing about the topic of teaching. Interpretive research demands a standing in the middle of life with a deep commitment to bear the living-in-the-world with open compassion and sensitivity.

I now turn to explore what it means to live with the main topics of this thesis, metacognition and reading literature.

The Amorphous Face of Metacognition

I turn to a statement that I often use in my teaching career. We teach children to learn how to read and then we teach them to use reading to learn. I only made this comment a few weeks ago to a parent of one of my students. This comment helps to bring home, to bring to rest, for the moment, what I was taught in this research

journey about metacognition. It might appear paradoxical, even hypocritical, to start the end of my interpretive inquiry with such a "logical" statement. My intent, here, is to emphasize my commitment to live in paradox, to live in the coming and going of life where metacognition as an efferent reading endeavor has a place in the wide open space of classrooms.

I continue to believe in the *logic* of metacognition. I continue to believe that the use of metacognitive strategies will make a difference in children's ability to read in an efferent manner. As a reader, I use metacognitive strategies and have found them to make a difference in my understanding of how to read efferently. As a teacher I have taught metacognitive strategies and experienced the difference it can make in children's understanding of efferent reading. As a researcher in Ada's classroom, I was a witness to good teaching that promoted a metacognitive understanding of efferent reading. As a human being, however, I can no longer accept, in *faith* a polarized version of metacognition alone.

I return to Garner's definition and question, what does it mean when I ask children to be metacognitive, to be "willing to take risks for understanding . . . to be receptive to opportunities?" I consider, for a moment, the meaning of risk, "to be exposed to hazard or danger" (Webster's Dictionary, 1983, p. 1018). I linger . . . metacognition could be a risky business. I expect children to expose themselves, to expose their "tactics that avoid strategic reading [such as] giving up . . . blaming reading failure on external factors to anything except their own effort or ability . . . choosing simple texts to read . . . or by cheating" (Paris, Wasik, Turner, 1991, p. 624 -

625). And I, as teacher, in turn, will expose them to their "delusions of correctness" (Pressley, Ghatala, Woloshyn, & Pirie, 1990, cited in Garner, 1992, p. 24). Lightning has struck. I catch my breath . . . metacognition could be a very risky business.

Metacognition, within the messiness of classroom life, is paradoxical in nature. To live in paradox is to be in the midst of life with all its ambiguity and differences. Metacognitive strategies in efferent reading can be an efficient and effective way of helping readers feel a sense of "positive self-control" (Mc Combs, 1988, p. 150). In this regard, a sense of personal control and competency provides feelings of motivation to search actively for strategies to solve a difficulty posed by an efferent reading task (Mc Combs, 1988). Nevertheless, metacognition also requires a detachment, a hardening up, an attempt at objectifying the self in order to evaluate what you are lacking as a learner. Not only should teachers call to mind the use of metacognitive approaches but, moreover, teachers should call from the heart, a sense of responsibility to be mindful of what that calling to mind is asking children to do.

I am reminded of Pinar's description of an evaluation process that includes self-evaluation as a tool. He states:

. . . in the presence of another -- especially, when the other characterizes himself as 'critic' -- one tends to give less free-associative and more defended account. (cited in Corman, 1991, p. 33)

Metacognition, in a manner of speaking, can be understood as a form of self-evaluation; to evaluate your own understanding/misunderstanding in front of another, the teacher. Students and teachers are not in an equal partnership in the learning/teaching relationship. Teachers need to be mindful of the vulnerable position

in which metacognition can place children. The teaching of metacognition carries a grave responsibility. Teachers need to be mindful, from deep within their heart, of what is being asked of children.

As a human being, I have started to recognize the paradoxical nature of metacognition. Trying to live in paradox, in midst of ambiguity, has created a silent thunder in my heart. This silent thunder is an attempt to, once again, shake me loose of my need for clarity and simplicity in a text.

And finally, I end this chapter exploring what I was taught about the state of aesthetic reading in classrooms.

The Ample Face of Aesthetic Reading

I pause to reflect. Linger on the reflection of what it means to read aesthetically, I confess, leaves me breathless. Aesthetic reading is a heavy term to pick up, full of meaning. My research experience brought me a renewed understanding, a different understanding of the theory and practice of aesthetic reading. This understanding transcends the mental exercise of "thinking as theorizing and doing as practicing" (Aoki, 1991, p. 17). Living in the classroom, together with Ada and the children, helped me to understand differently the act of theorizing about aesthetic reading and practicing aesthetic reading. Living in the classroom helped me to understand aesthetic reading differently.

There is a porousness, an openness to the meaning of aesthetic reading that can not be reduced, foreclosed to theoretical foundations and the practicing of theories.

The relationship between theory and practice is not as black and white, as dichotomous as Ada and I originally assumed. There is an assumption that thinking and action have a linearized form. This linearized form of "from theory into practice" or "from practice to theory" is a deep rooted cause and effect understanding. I have come to see a gap in that relationship. I have come to understand that the relationship between theory and practice is not a "think, blink and do" or a "do, blink and think" kind of relationship. The relationship between the two is much more symbiotic, much grayer than that. I now understand that aesthetic reading is much more holistic than the sum of its theoretical parts. And, I now understand that the teaching of reading literature is more of a negotiated activity than a prescribed event.

While developing an understanding *about* the theory and practice of aesthetic reading is important and useful to educators, I have come to understand something wonderful, something previously unnoticed by me hidden beneath familiar common curriculum thinking *from* the theory and practice of aesthetic reading as well. I have come to understand that aesthetic reading is not about the differences of theories or the differences in practice, or the order of practice and theory. I have come to understand aesthetic reading not as a heavy sequential term full of theoretical overpinnings or underpinnings to good practice, but rather I have come to understand aesthetic reading to be *graced* with an ampleness of meaning that embraces a self-understanding that has an openness to the understanding of other readers' experiences.

Aesthetic reading that embraces a self-understanding open to others is a way of reading that is porous and open to dialogue. Reading graced with an ampleness of

meaning through dialogue is a net, but not a two-dimensional net that traps and holds meaning rigid and unyielding. Rather, aesthetic reading graced with an ampleness of meaning is a multitude of nets interwoven in all directions in a multidimensional dialogical space where meaning lives in each criss-cross of the net, ready to move, change and mold to the existing culture and traditions. This type of reading follows a threat within the countless interwoven threads of interwoven nets within meaning. This type of reading "offers a decisive insight that recognizes all interpretations as valuable but no interpretation as final" (Longxi, 1992, p. 128).

Aesthetic reading that embraces a self-understanding open to others is demanding. It requires you to hold your breath and take a chance with the unknown and, at times, with the forbidden. There is risk involved. Meaning never stands still for the reader, it is always moving, changing in relationship to others. Readers are bound to lose the threat of meaning. At times, they do find it again, but never in exactly the same way. Meaning is nebulous, porous, and open-ended. This eruption of meaning is always coming, is always changing allowing the reader "to be free to choose whatever is available to him or her [to understand], but more radically [it allows] the reader [to] be free *not* to choose but to declare his enjoyment without thorough understanding" (Longxi, 1992, p. 197). The point is, not to abandon responsibility when reading but to remain mindful of the porousness of meaning in order to accept and "celebrate the divergence of meaning as a matter of course" (Longxi, 1992, p. 197). This type of reading leaves me breathless for I'm not accustomed to such changes.

I end up, here, with one of the most significant understandings in my research journey; one that I'm not ambivalent about at all. This understanding has to do with what it means to teach reading. My experience in Ada's classroom has led me to understand that teaching reading in the life-world is not located *in* theories, *in* books, or *in* teachers, but rather, teaching reading resides in the relationship *between* the children, the teacher, the text at hand, and the topic at hand. The question of how relationships between can go on lies in the conversations *between* different readers. Such conversations require a listening that is attuned to other voices in a way that speaks of a sincerity that attends to the silences. This type of listening, as painful as it could be, clearly cuts through well defined boundaries of understanding and moves into a pedagogic understanding of living-in-the-world with others that *includes* children. I consider this type of understanding, pedagogic wisdom.

Pedagogic wisdom is a slow growing of your soul. It is a capacity that deepens and matures with thoughtful listening to the voices of children. This thoughtful listening leads a teacher to "responsible responding to students" (Aoki, 1993, p. 266). This leading is grounded in ethical action for "wisdom is not communicable" (Hesse, 1951, p. 142) but grounded in ethical living-in-the-world each day in the classroom as the children keep coming, keep renewing the generativity of life. And this ethical living-in-the-world is at the heart and soul of the relationship between teachers, students, text and topic.

And now, having come full circle in my journey I understand, for the moment, differently again, what it means to deepen an understanding about the teaching of

reading literature.

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B14 Nov. 29, 93 (Mon.)

"The third book in the series is out."

"I'm reading another one while I'm waiting." Inca Gold Gets it from his desk.

"Is it good?"

"No. It doesn't interest me. Nothing's happening."

9:50 [redacted] is standing up & reading. He is looking around more than reading. He sits down in his own desk and reads. He is flipping through the pages of the book. [redacted] is involved in her novel. As I watch her I see her subvocalizing at times.

9:55 [redacted] has closed his book and is looking at its cover. He places the book back into his desk and returns to the library. [redacted] comes back, picks up the book Inca Gold and returns to the library.

10:00 [redacted] is also struggling with her book. She just can't get "into it". She is fidgeting and moving about, distracting [redacted] beside her. [redacted] reminds her to read. [redacted] continues to read her book. [redacted] has moved by [redacted]. They have a short conversation.

Talked to [redacted] (f) about evaluations (reported)
10:10 Locker Break 999

APPENDIX B

1342 Tuesday, January 11, 1994

1343 C: How would you define for yourself what reading is?

1344 [P]: OK... What is reading... I don't think reading has a clear cut definition.
 1345 It's a bunch of things at different times. I think of reading in the
 1346 classroom and how we set our program up... Reading can be for pleasure.
 1347 It can be for instruction, if I'm teaching strategies or skills or something
 1348 like that. And it could be for information because they read to learn.
 1349 And it is such an integral part of everything they do. And it can also be
 1350 taught in isolation.

1351 C: You were saying reading is for pleasure, teaching reading strategies, and
 1352 reading for information.

1353 [P]: Yes.

1354 C: So how would you as a teacher look at teaching reading for pleasure?

1355 [P]: I don't know if you can teach reading for pleasure but you can share
 1356 the experience of reading for pleasure. So I think of reader's workshop
 1357 component where we share books or share responses. And some of the
 1358 lead ins are - my favorite part, I really liked - those kinds of sentence
 1359 starters. That lends itself to the pleasure part of reading. I think of
 1360 certain readers where they read for pleasure. And all the things, the
 1361 reading strategies and the learning that takes place is an integral part of
 1362 the pleasure that they get from reading. Where as other readers, the
 1363 pleasure component often times doesn't even exist. I can think of one
 1364 student in grade 7 and one in grade 5 where reading is a very technical
 1365 process they go through because the teacher imposes goals and conditions
 1366 for that.

1367 C: If you now look at teaching reading strategies. What could you say about
 1368 that.

1369 [P]: Why I teach them or how I choose them?

1370 C: Yes.

1371 [P]: Umm.... Reading strategies... When I decide what reading strategies to
 1372 teach I don't plan in my long range plans. I arrive at them when I get to
 1373 them. If I know it's time to give a reading strategy lesson I may use

- 1374 something from the classroom experience as a teaching lesson. Or if
 1375 nothing has lend itself to that, then I as a teacher might decide it's time
 1376 to make them more aware of something that I haven't focused on.
- 1377 C: How do you know when it's time?
- 1378 ■: Sometimes it has to do with the type of unit that I'm teaching.
 1379 Sometimes it has to do with something that I have observed or read in the
 1380 students' work. And sometimes I know I have a handful of strategies that
 1381 I think are important. And those might be based on the DRP or based on
 1382 other things. It is just time to teach those things. And then over the
 1383 course of the year I like them to have exposure to different strategies.
- 1384 C: What kind of strategies would you teach?
- 1385 ■: Well, what we have been focusing on in the language component is the
 1386 things you do before and while you are reading... making some
 1387 predictions based on background knowledge is one that comes up a lot. I
 1388 remind them of that frequently. And the second one is asking questions
 1389 while your reading and confirming predictions. When we get into the
 1390 Social Studies I'll teach skimming for information, reorganizing
 1391 information from something that they read.
- 1392 C: When you were over during the Christmas holidays I asked you about
 1393 reading strategies. And you had this look on your face... like...
- 1394 ■: It hasn't happened.
- 1395 C: What were you thinking?
- 1396 ■: It reminds me of the struggle that I have with reader's workshop. And as
 1397 we were talking something came to mind and that... It is really difficult to
 1398 teach a mini lesson in reader's workshop. Although it lends itself to that,
 1399 the kids want to read. And I feel often that I'm invading their pleasure,
 1400 their space, their activity. And so I struggle with how mini lessons fit into
 1401 reader's workshop. And I always get a sense from the students that when
 1402 I give a mini lesson in reader's workshop, when can we read... when can
 1403 we read. That's why we don't do reader's workshop all year long. And I
 1404 indicated also that I'm still feeling my way with where mini lessons fit
 1405 with reader's, how long they should be, when they should... I know
 1406 technically how it should run. It's just that I haven't got the feeling of
 1407 knowing how it should run by experience. And this is my 4th year of
 1408 doing it. And to me it is still very new. And teaching technically like I'm
 1409 doing now in the fantasy unit. That lends itself to teacher directions at

APPENDIX C

Nov. 3, 93

Possible questions for children...

* head - but let conversations carry the direction.

What are some of your favorite books? ✓ O.K.

What do you like about them? ✓ O.K.

What is reading? → expand. (Nov. 7)

What makes a good reader? ✓

What do good readers do? → expand. (Nov. 7)

How do you feel when something doesn't make sense when you're reading? → expand (Nov. 7)

Do you ever think about thinking? (Nov. 10)

What goes on in your head? (Nov. 10).

APPENDIX D

RB
B14

Nov. 29, 93 (Mon.)

The children have a learning log book.

* Ask [redacted] about its purpose & how it is used.

[redacted] was disappointed in not finding the third book in The Lord Of the Rings in the library. I asked him how The Two Towers ended. He told me the conclusion in a most descriptive & enthusiastic manner. His face just lit up. When I asked [redacted] what predictions he could make for The Return of the King he went into a lengthy explanation of one possibility. He seemed so sure. [redacted] reply was "It's the things that makes sense." I will take [redacted]'s copy of The Lord of the Rings tomorrow for him. He can borrow it.

[redacted]'s attempt at reading Inca Gold demonstrates the importance of making a connection with the right book. Although he tried to read it, he was unable to engage in a conversation with the book. He gave up after a few attempts. In life, is this not what independent adults do when reading? Very few adults continue to read something if they do not experience a sense of pleasure with the book. [redacted] discussed this in one of the transcripts. She talked of children reading to make their own selections. It is a very personal

RB14 Nov. 29, 93 (Mon.)

experience/decision. [redacted] giving up on the book had no bearing on compr. strategies. It was based on interest.

* I must ask him what he didn't like about Jack Gald.

[redacted] subvocalizes quite a bit when reading. More than I initially thought. This must be a way for her to monitor her comprehension or a way for her to concentrate. Concentration should not be a problem in this classroom for most children. The classroom is very quiet for reading. It lends itself for getting lost in a book.

* I must ask [redacted] about her sub vocalization.

[redacted] talked to me about her evaluations on the students. The children took their report cards home on Friday. She said most of them were disappointed with their marks. This is the first time they have been evaluated according to an external criterion. This is the first time that they have received letter grades. Most of the children thought they were doing better than their marks indicated. The students' concept of a "C" is quite negative. They don't perceive a "C" as average where

②
Eval

RB14 Nov. 29, 93 (Mon.)

most students would be. They consider "a poor mark." ~~According to [redacted], [redacted]~~ was quite disappointed in his report card. He had expected much higher marks. ~~[redacted]~~ stated that ~~[redacted]~~ was allowed to pick, choose, determine his curriculum last year. They had felt that he should have control over most of his learning. This year ~~[redacted]~~ is experiencing a different set of rules. He is just one of the kids with no special status. No wonder he is looking for some special acknowledgments. ~~[redacted]~~ believes that ~~[redacted]~~ will make more of an effort since the report card. This is "good for him." ~~I had to agree with her.~~

* We did not have time to discuss ~~[redacted]~~'s report card.

~~[redacted]~~'s encouragement to extend my visits to her classroom till Christmas surprised me. She does find my presence and our dialogue helpful. I will come during the week leading to Christmas holidays.

APPENDIX E

Response. Transcripts #2 - Oct. 28

7/10/1/43

#2A

1. Notes As Read

- seeing student observations in text has a lot of weight → confirming the value of my anecdotal notes
- oral reading, planned this & began today → the value of those 5 minutes valuable time with students
- realize the importance of my full-time position; better able to read students needs and personality

2. Journal

#2B

Your point on calmness has remained in my thoughts. It's one of those things that has become an integral part of my day. So much so, I don't see it as anything unusual... until you discussed it with me.

Since that time, I've had a parent remind me of this. I taught all three of her boys and I've become friends with her. She was telling me of a conversation she had with [REDACTED] both discussed my calmness and asked how I did it. From a parent's perspective this was appreciated. I'm not sure how to respond to this type of complement

APPENDIX F

The Final Response

Dec 7

Who is Frances Rain
pg. 192

"Who is Frances Rain?" is an excellent book. This book was a good book, because when I started it I couldn't put it down. I didn't want to put it down because it was always exciting and there was always something happening. I recommend this book to others because it is Adventurous, Suspenseful, Realistic and Fantasy. If you decide to read this book make sure you have lots of time because you can almost read it in one sitting. The only bad point is that it has a lot of family bickering. Other wise it was GREAT!

This book is about a girl who finds a pair of child's spectacles. When she puts them on, she can see into her family past. She finds out many things about her family. If you want to know more read this book!