

# Research and teaching in a community of inquiry

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## Abstract

The interweaving of two strands of inquiry forms the backbone of this thesis. In the first strand (the ‘what’ of the thesis) I explore the qualitatively different ways in which academic staff at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand experience the relation between research and teaching and investigate the pedagogical implications of this variation. In the second strand (the ‘how’ of the thesis) I focus on the process of coming to know and to talk within the field of higher education. Here I chart my journey as a learner through the writing of the thesis. The two strands are linked through their mutual focus on learning, inquiry and the social construction of knowledge in which both academics and students in higher education engage.

Theoretically I position myself variously within a hermeneutic and postmodern framework, using the tension between these perspectives to both advance and interrogate my work. I argue that this methodological tension mirrors the dilemma of the contemporary university, caught as it is between traditional unities and postmodern fragmentation. Ultimately I argue a case for a productive space at the intersection of the hermeneutic and the postmodern – a space where the university and educational research might flourish.

I locate my empirical study within a historical and contemporary, international and local higher education context. In doing so I highlight the contemporary tension between a traditional, scholarly, higher education culture and a market driven, performative culture. This tension is evident both in the paradoxical nature of recent research and in the results of my empirical study.

In terms of empirical work, previous quantitative research in the area of the research/teaching ‘nexus’ has focused primarily on the co-relation between research productivity and student evaluations of teaching and indicates little or no relation between

the two. In contrast qualitative studies, which have focused on academics' experiences of the relation, suggest a close connection between research and teaching with discipline and level of teaching being the principal determinants of variation. I argue that the complexity of research, teaching and the research/teaching relation has been ignored in institutional discourses and in the co-relational research and under-appreciated in qualitative studies. In order to reveal this complexity I explore the individual's experience as a coherent whole or multi-phenomenal field, which embraces knowledge, research, teaching and learning and their inter-relation. My analysis reveals significant variation in experience of the research/teaching relation at undergraduate level from a weak relation to a total integration of the two phenomena.

I open up the discourse of the relation at a detailed level through an exploration of the metaphors academics use to describe their experiences of research, teaching, learning and knowledge and of the research/teaching relation. Those academics experiencing a weak relation use orientational metaphors which emphasise its hierarchical nature (research is divorced from or at best informs teaching). Those experiencing an integrated relation use metaphors emphasising the shared (teacher and student) construction of knowledge. These outcomes raise important questions about structures of knowledge and the nature of disciplinary inquiry, about networks of power and about the nature of the pedagogical relationship which determines students' participation in a community of inquiry. There is a direct relation between academics' experiences of knowledge (which are embedded in a disciplinary context) and their approaches to research, teaching and learning. These experiences may also be instrumental in shaping pedagogical relations of power.

In conclusion I advocate a higher education community based on the notion of shared (academic/student) inquiry within disciplines and increasingly, at disciplinary intersections. My study suggests that, to survive in the twenty-first century, the university needs to harness its fragmentation productively by seeking not agreement but robust inter-disciplinary dialogue that might enable us to live beside and understand one other while benefiting from our heterogeneity. I argue that such dialogue must enable us to use the perspective of the other to reflect critically on our own positions and practices.

# Acknowledgements

In the writing of this thesis I have been mindful of Bakhtin's (1986) notion that we make meaning only with others. Equally I have been influenced by Reading's (1996) rephrasing of teaching and learning as sites of obligation – a radical form of dialogue and an openness to the other. Besides the scholars cited in my writing there are a number of friends and colleagues who have assisted me in various ways in the meaning making process and to whom I owe a debt of gratitude.

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In one way or another you have all enabled me to talk 'within' the higher education community of inquiry.

# Introduction

## Setting the Scene

*We shall not cease from exploration – and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we first started and to know the place for the first time (T. S. Eliot, 1963, p. 222).*

This thesis is about exploration and coming to know in a double sense. It is a ‘process of inquiry about a process of inquiry’ (A. Brew, personal communication, January 1997). It is about my learning (through the process of writing this thesis) and about the learning (teacher and student learning) upon which the very idea of the university is constructed. Because I am both a student and an academic, a researcher and a teacher – above all a learner – *I am* what this thesis is about. In coming to understand better the complex process of learning/inquiry in the university I come to understand myself better. The ‘end’ of my exploring is to have a stronger sense of my place as a participant in the higher education community; a place from which to continue exploring. The ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of the thesis are one and the same.

The inquiry has been shaped by my initial desire to understand better the ways in which academics experience the relation between their research and their teaching; and how this experienced relation influences pedagogical practices. While it is common at the University of Canterbury, and in research universities world-wide, to assert a ‘close relation’ between research and teaching, my interviews with twenty-five academics at Canterbury have revealed considerable variation in the nature of that relation. These interviews also indicate the impossibility of exploring the research/teaching relation as an isolated phenomenon. As a result, the inquiry has broadened to focus on research, teaching, learning and knowledge as constituting the ‘phenomenal field’ (Bond, 2000) of the research/teaching relation.

My analyses of participants' experiences of the research/teaching relation prompted further questions. I found myself asking; what does the discourse of academics tell us about the structure of knowledge and the nature of inquiry? What does it tell us about the ways in which students come to participate in a community of inquiry? What does it tell us about the relation between knowledge and power, about the operation of networks of power? These questions reflect the contextual nature of my inquiry. Individual experience is embedded in and derives its meaning from the disciplinary culture, the local university culture and ultimately from the long tradition of the university as a historical and global institution.

Thus the thesis in its broadest sense, both at the personal and empirical level, is concerned with processes of learning, the nature of inquiry and with the socially constructed and distributed nature of knowledge and its role in defining university communities. In it I explore the ways in which our world-views are constructed and expressed in language; the way in which discourse organises a way of thinking into a way of acting in the world.

In this introduction I want to 'set the scene' for the chapters to follow. I want only to touch lightly on or allude to themes that will recur throughout the thesis. In this respect my writing reflects the part/whole/part structure of the hermeneutic circle/spiral through which my understanding deepens as I constantly revisit earlier apprehensions and incomprehensions in the light of new conversations, reading and thinking. Firstly I write a little about my own professional background and interests – the route to this inquiry. I do this because I do not claim to be a disinterested observer. I bring to this study a history, a particular orientation to the world – a set of 'prejudices' (Gadamer, 1989) which shape my choice of inquiry, what I hear, what I fail to hear, how I interpret and transform. My dirty footprints are visible everywhere! Not to be explicit about this would be misleading. Secondly I outline what I have done in the making of this thesis and why. Here I touch on the philosophical framework underpinning the thesis and how that has informed my research practice. In doing this I also discuss the notion of researcher as learner and my commitment to the thesis as process rather than product. Finally I offer a brief guide to the individual chapters that constitute this piece of writing.

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It did not have to be this particular inquiry. But in a curious way that I failed to appreciate at the beginning, the topic goes to the heart of my own professional history and philosophy. When I completed a Bachelors Degree in history and English and a Masters Degree in English in the mid 70's there was a suggestion that I continue on to doctoral study. I had no idea what doctoral study entailed or where it would lead. Despite my advanced qualification I had little understanding of what academic life was all about. Of research I knew almost nothing. And so, via a circuitous route I fell into teaching, first in secondary schools and then as a lecturer at the Christchurch College of Education. While at the College I completed a part-time Masters in Education. This provided my introduction to empirical research – an introduction which rapidly developed into a passion. As a teacher I had always been a strong advocate of an inquiry approach (mine and my students') to learning. But until I began developing my own fields of inquiry I had no idea how addictive the process was or what impact it could have on my teaching and my living.

So I came late to research via teaching, a typical route for staff at the College of Education but unusual for university academics whose research apprenticeship generally precedes their teaching experience. I developed an interest in higher education and the institution in which I was teaching became the site for my research. While there I interviewed staff and students about their experiences of teaching and learning and tracked changes in students' experiences over the course of their teacher education programme. During this time the College was primarily a teaching institution recruiting successful practitioners to its lecturing team. A research ethos was just beginning to be actively fostered as I left. My move to the Educational Research and Advisory Unit (ERAU) at the University of Canterbury was largely prompted by my interest in higher education as a field of study in its own right and by the opportunity to work in a more research focused tertiary environment.

Shortly after my arrival, ERAU became embroiled in a heated exchange on the teaching/research link. An article by Hattie and Marsh (1996), *The Relationship Between Research and Teaching: A Meta-Analysis*, was reviewed in an ERAU

Newsletter. The review opened with the statement “a recent meta-analysis of 58 studies of the relationship between teaching and research demonstrates that the relationship is zero” and later asked, “why then, is the myth that they are positively related perpetuated?” (Educational Research and Advisory Unit, 1997). The responses from nine academic staff demonstrated a level of feeling that caught me by surprise. Why people felt so strongly (one way or another) about the connection between their teaching and their research, was something that intrigued me. It brought together two central aspects of my working life (and that of my research participants) the relationship between which I had only just begun to appreciate for myself. I was entirely unaware of the politically charged nature of my chosen area of research. I had no knowledge of the extensive debates on the nature of the research/teaching ‘nexus’ nor of the perceived threat to its existence. Had I known then what I later learned, I might have chosen a more private and less power-saturated and contentious area of inquiry!

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I am curious about why people speak and act as they do; what motivates them, what excites and angers them. I want to know how they live out their lives (in this case professionally) in a particular historical and cultural context. Above all I am fascinated by language. The role of language in constituting our experience of the world, in shaping and constraining our mutual meaning-making and our actions.

Bruner (1990) observes that “when we enter human life, it is as if we walk on a stage into a play whose enactment is already in progress...” (p. 34). Participation in (a) play is one of the metaphors which frames this thesis. As a researcher I come to an area of inquiry in which the actors (my research participants) are already engaged. I want to understand better the parts they play, the meaning of the enacted script. To do so I engage with the actors in (interview) dialogue and through this process I myself become a participant in the ongoing ‘play’. My role as researcher also involves me in representing the play for you, the reader. Just as theatre involves an interpretation of an interpretation – a double hermeneutic – so too this thesis involves my interpretation and (re)creation of the stories of my research participants and your (the reader’s)

interpretation of my interpretation. We are all essential to the creation of the thesis. We are linked by the invisible threads of the hermeneutic process, which binds us in a dialogic relation.

The notion of (a) play frames the thesis in yet another way. We can draw an analogy between participation in a community of inquiry (learning) and participation in a play or a game. As learners we can be positioned in the audience (stadium), in a walk-on part (reserves) or in a significant role (experienced on-field player). The extent of that participation both affects and reflects the nature and level of our engagement and understanding. The nature of our – student and teacher - engagement as ‘players’ is shaped by experience of the research/teaching relation.

By engaging people in conversation (inter-views) and working with the resulting ‘texts’, I hope, in the interpretive/hermeneutic tradition to come to an understanding of the experience of others through a dialogic relation, a fusion of horizons (Bakhtin, 1986; Gadamer, 1989; Morris, 1994). This approach reflects my commitment to a view of the world as socially constructed (Bruner, 1990; Gergern, 1999). We make meaning *through language with others*. “What we take to be knowledge of the world grows from relationship and is embedded not within individual minds but within interpretive or communal traditions” (Gergern, 1999, p. 122). This perspective determines the overall design of the thesis – a local empirical study conducted through interview and situated in a historical and contemporary context. It also dictates the evolutionary, rather than pre-determined, nature of the design of the empirical project.

Ultimately my view of knowledge as socially constructed, indeterminate, in a continuous state of *becoming*, shapes what I understand this research to be. For me it is a reflection of an ongoing conversation with colleagues, students, friends, scholarly texts and with myself. It represents the process, also experienced by my participants and their students, of becoming an active participant – of absorbing and being absorbed in a community of practice, of learning to talk within rather than about the practice of that community (Lave & Wenger, 1991). It is in this way that disciplinary communities are constituted and renewed through the intersection of research and teaching. Again the personal and the empirical intertwine.

Many voices constitute this thesis. They include the voices of my research participants, of Canterbury University academics from previous eras, of scholars from disciplines as diverse as philosophy, history, psychology, sociology, linguistics and education, of my supervisors, of colleagues and friends and, of course, my own voice which may in turn be descriptive, analytical and/or critical. Wherever possible I acknowledge these voices, although some have become so absorbed into my way of thinking that I may be unaware of their presence. The voices do not speak in isolation. Their utterance is always addressed to someone, such that meaning is constructed in the space between the interplay of voices (Wertsch, 1991). Making explicit who is speaking and for what purpose, while retaining the intersubjective flow and swirl of meaning-making has been difficult. I have tried to let the voices of my research participants be heard clearly. Ultimately however I must take responsibility for the shaping of the collective voices, for the “violence” (Ricoeur, 1984, p. 73) involved in putting my interpretive spin on the ‘play’.

Research as process, as a part of my process of learning (Brew, 1998) demands an honesty about how it happens. There is a temptation, and a lingering institutional expectation, to ‘write out’ the inconsistencies, straighten the twists and turns, present a seamless ‘end’ product (endgame!). I cannot contemplate this because it would contradict my most fundamental beliefs about learning/research and make a mockery of my reasons for engaging in doctoral study. I have a friend whose art work provides a visual metaphor for the writing of this thesis. In the catalogue *Shadow Work* the artist’s process is described thus:

Impressions of the past survive to haunt the future. Pentimenti, the phantoms of erased marks, resurface, disclosing alterations made to the composition as the artist worked ... the dark red of *Remnant* references the infra red rays of reflectography which delve deeper, exposing the changes made by the artist, areas of damage and repair, and even preparatory drawings (Rengault, 1996).

Rather than offering resolution Kristy’s paintings deconstruct, reveal process, acknowledge ambiguity, dis-comfort. There is a tension between surface and sub-surface, between what is revealed and what is hidden. By viewing the paintings from different positions, the play of light on the surface reveals hidden layers, unexpected

depths. I hope this thesis can begin to acknowledge construction in a similar way. That it reveals the preparatory drawings, the alterations, the skeletal lines of support. That it traces my process of coming to know through interaction with a community in which the knowing remains tentative, provisional.

This approach to research aligns with my view of teaching. As a teacher I have always strenuously resisted the label 'expert'. Positioning oneself as a learner in a socially constructed world seems to me to preclude the very fixed and determinate notion of expert. Yet, paradoxically, as a learner, I have needed and sought the 'expert' knowledge of my colleagues and supervisors. In the thesis I explore this relation of knowledge and power (Foucault, 1980, 1982) and the nature of authoritative discourse (Bakhtin, 1986) within the framework of legitimate peripheral participation in a community of learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Once again these issues are central not only to my object of study (the research/teaching relation) but also to me (since I am embedded in the object of study) as a doctoral student, an academic, one who may well in the future be positioned authoritatively (by others!).

The ability to frame questions which open up (rather than close down) a field of inquiry lies at the heart of my understanding of teaching and learning. I use the word 'inquiry' deliberately. In part it is a legacy of my secondary school teaching and the inquiry-based approach advocated in the social science curriculum. However it also reflects fundamentally the way I both teach and learn. For me the significant action is the posing and pursuing rather than the answering of questions. One could argue that there are no longer (and never were – though positivism has done a good job of obscuring this fact) answers to be 'found' – just further questions to ask. In the thesis I use inquiry as an umbrella term to describe the learning of teachers and students in higher education as they engage in research related activity. I argue that the university's contribution to the 'knowledge society' must be graduates who are excited by and practised in the skills and spirit of intellectual inquiry, who are equipped to tackle the unknown (Barnett, 2000). Not graduates who have been exposed only to codified knowledge and who remain oblivious to the existence of the unknown.

There is another sense in which inquiry is central to this thesis. Richardson (1994, 1997) considers *writing* a 'method of inquiry'. "Writing is not just a mopping up activity at the end of a research project. Writing is also a 'way of knowing' – a method of discovery and analysis" (Richardson, 1994, p. 516). It is only through writing – through constructing the narrative of my learning journey - that I have been able to come to know what I wanted to say in this thesis. My understanding has formed *with* my writing, not in advance of it. Thus the writing of the thesis does not mark a culmination of the research activity; it *is* the research activity, the process of inquiry.

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Within the broad framework of an interpretive/hermeneutic approach, the research design has been an emerging one. I began with a desire to find out more about academics' experiences of the relation between their research and their teaching. My first step was to undertake a 'pilot' study involving those academics who had articulated their views in the exchange with ERAU. I designed this as a phenomenographic interview study with a focus on the variation in experience of the research/teaching relation. While the analysis was interesting in that it revealed greater variation than had commonly been reported in other qualitative studies (for example, Neuman, 1992, 1993b; Rowland, 1996), I was dissatisfied with the phenomenographic approach which fragmented and decontextualised academics' experiences and reconstructed them in a hierarchical outcome space. The approach did not seem to accord with a constructionist emphasis on shared understandings within a dialogic community.

Following further interviews (in which I broadened the focus on the research/teaching relation to encompass learning and knowledge), I sought a different approach to analysing the interview transcripts - one that might preserve the complexity of the research/teaching/knowledge/learning relation at the individual level, while revealing similarity and difference amongst individuals and groups of individuals (Bond, 2000). This more holistic approach (referred to by Bond as 'phenomenal field analysis') better preserved the structural integrity of the individual's world-view while throwing into relief the disciplinary nature of differences between individuals and groups of individuals. It also pointed to the central role of metaphor in conveying the nature and

structure of experience. Ultimately an analysis of metaphor provided me with a key to the deep structures of academics' experiences and the embeddedness of those experiences in a cultural (disciplinary) community.

My analyses suggest that, despite the increasing fluidity of disciplinary boundaries (Brew, 2001), the structure of knowledge and the nature of inquiry (at this particular university) remain powerfully determined by disciplinary frameworks. Brew (2001) argues that "it is difficult to enter the contested space inhabited by the traditional disciplinary areas – science, social science, humanities – without taking sides" (p. 23). I have certainly found this to be so. With my heart and head firmly positioned in the humanities and social sciences I have struggled with perspectives on research, teaching, learning and knowledge which run counter to my own 'world-view'. I am very aware of seeming to reinforce disciplinary divisions and of making value judgements based on those divisions. I fear I fall into the dichotomising trap which I am at pains to critique!

In mitigation I can only point to the grounding of the disciplinary framework in the interview texts, and endeavour to make as explicit and transparent as possible my analytical processes and decisions. I must also acknowledge that driving my value judgements is a critical desire to transform pedagogies which I perceive to be unsatisfactory for teachers and potentially disenfranchising for students. Having said this, I acknowledge that the writing of the thesis is challenging my notions of similarity and difference and the desire to transform. Engagement with the views of others through the research process is causing me to evaluate critically my own assumptions and preconceptions.

There are tensions in the design of this study and in its writing that I have chosen not to resolve but rather to surface and 'play' with. They reveal changes in my thinking, emerging interests, the impact of new readings and conversations. For example, I have grounded the empirical research in an interpretive/hermeneutic/dialogic tradition, which seeks consensus and unity of meaning. This reflects my own instinctive preference for integration rather than compartmentalisation. I enjoy making connections. However I have not been able to resist the lure of aspects of postmodern thought with its emphasis on ambiguity, fragmentation, indeterminacy, particularity, discontinuity and relations of

power. This tension between unity and fragmentation, consensus and dissensus, resolution and contingency is not only embedded in my theoretical framework and methodological decisions. It is a tension which lies at the very heart of my object of study – the place and purpose of the university in the contemporary world. The ‘crisis’ confronting the university is, I argue, its desire and apparent inability to reconcile or choose between the cherished unifying traditions of the liberal university and the inexorable fragmenting demands of a postmodern world. Once again the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of the thesis reflect each other. However I do begin what I hope will be an ongoing process of forging a closer relationship between hermeneutics and postmodernism, and of suggesting how the university might harness dissension and fragmentation productively.

There is an extensive literature addressing the criteria for evaluating qualitative research. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) suggest replacing the positivist criteria of internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity with such terms as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. I find these terms unhelpful and am suspicious of the apparent need to substitute one set of criteria for another. More meaningful for me is the notion that our research processes and outcomes should be thorough, coherent, comprehensive and useful (Madison, 1988) or, in Crotty’s (1998) terms, plausible and helpful. That we should be concerned about the process we have engaged in and at pains to make that explicit for the reader. That we should be accountable *to* our research participants and readers and accountable *for* our research findings. It is my hope that I have been sufficiently transparent and honest in the writing of this thesis that its outcomes will convince.

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One of the challenges in writing this thesis has been to situate a local, empirical study within a broader philosophical, historical, geographical and scholarly framework. The first four chapters establish such a framework.

In chapter one *The Spiral Staircase* I develop a philosophical and theoretical frame for the methodological decisions of the thesis. I draw on aspects of three theoretical

perspectives – hermeneutics, postmodernism and (to a lesser extent) feminism – each of which emphasises the interdependence of human interaction and knowledge production. I discuss the apparent incommensurability of hermeneutics and postmodernism and draw on recent scholarship to argue a case for the possibility of a ‘critical hermeneutics’. I also consider the role of the research interview as a site for the construction of knowledge and as a concrete example of my interweaving of hermeneutics and postmodernism.

In chapter two (*The Idea of the University?*) I trace elements of continuity and change in the development of the western university. I survey briefly the university’s intellectual origins in Ancient Greece, its institutional establishment in Medieval Europe and its consolidation in nineteenth century Germany. I then focus in more detail on the twentieth century social, political, economic and intellectual challenges to the traditional ‘idea’ of the liberal/humanitarian university; an idea that embraced the unity of knowledge and the unity of those seeking knowledge. I suggest that the contemporary tension between the modern and postmodern in institutions of higher education parallels the tension in my own work between the hermeneutic and postmodern perspectives. The chapter ends with a consideration of possible ways forward for the university at a time when its founding idea appears no longer tenable.

Chapter three (*‘The Spirit of Doubt and Enquiry’: Research and Teaching at the University of Canterbury*) also focuses on context but in a more local sense. Here I locate the University of Canterbury within the idea of the university outlined in chapter two. In particular I consider Canterbury’s initial commitment to a liberal tradition favoured by the English colonists of the mid-nineteenth century and much later to the idea of the unity of teaching and research advanced by Humboldt at the University of Berlin. I suggest that, while the University of Canterbury has in many ways mirrored international trends, it also has its own unique, local tradition in respect of the research/teaching relation. In the final part of the chapter I consider recent challenges to the integration of research and teaching and Canterbury’s response to these. I also discuss the establishment of the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission (TEAC) and the future it is currently mapping out for higher education in New Zealand.

In chapter four (*Looking Again: Research Approaches*) I discuss the evolution of my research design. I begin by describing the ‘critical incident’ which triggered the study. I then review the recent literature contributing to the research/teaching nexus debate. In the second half of the chapter I trace the development of my research methodology from a phenomenographic pilot study to a phenomenal field analysis. I then build on this with a focus on academics’ use of metaphor. The chapter records my methodological uncertainties, my ‘working out’ of the research process.

Chapter five (*InterViews*) outlines the process of interviewing academic staff at the University of Canterbury about their experiences of the relation between their research and their teaching. I report the results of a pilot study carried out with seven academics who expressed strong views on the research/teaching relation. This is followed up with details of a further eighteen interviews with academics from across a range of disciplines. I use this chapter not only to describe the ‘doing’ of the research in the field but also to reflect on ethical issues, on the relationship between interviewer and interviewee including questions of power, and on the relationship between spoken dialogue, interview transcript, and re-presentation of interview text.

In chapters six and seven I re-create my interview conversations with academic staff. Chapter six (*Variation in Academics’ Experience of the Research/Teaching Relation*) consists of a descriptive categorisation of my participants’ experiences. In this analysis I look at the inter-relation of research, teaching, learning and knowledge for the individual, and I then group the experiences of individuals according to their similarities and differences. By focusing on the whole individual in context and on individuals across the full range of faculties, the strength of disciplinary allegiance becomes apparent. Here I draw extensively on the words of my research participants. Chapter seven (*Metaphors Academics Live By*) represents an attempt to look again – and more deeply – at the interview texts in order to determine more clearly the structural relations of the phenomenal field. In this chapter I explore my participants’ use of metaphor as a key to interpreting their world-views. I conclude chapter seven with three contrasting case studies of individuals drawn from a range of faculties.

In chapter eight (*Learning to Talk Within: Pedagogy, Participation and Relations of Power*) I use the analyses outlined in the previous two chapters to explore the pedagogical implications of the variation in academics' experiences of the research/teaching relation. In particular I look at the ways in which academics understand knowledge to be structured and how this impacts on their structuring of student learning experiences. I draw on Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of legitimate peripheral participation, Bakhtin's (1986) idea of authoritative and internally persuasive discourse, Foucault's (1980) theory of knowledge/power and Bernstein's (1971, 1996) typology of educational knowledge codes, in order to develop my own perspective on the relationship between researcher/teacher, learner and knowledge in higher education.

In *Drawing the Curtain* I reflect back on my engagement in the thesis writing process and look ahead to the opportunities its completion presents. I discuss the contribution of the thesis to its community of practice, attempt to evaluate it in terms of its coherency and plausibility and consider its impact on my thinking and actions.

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The T. S. Eliot quotation with which I open this introduction is a powerful expression for me of the hermeneutic process. It resonates on an emotional/spiritual as well as an intellectual level, suggesting that much of our learning involves a deepening understanding of that which has been intuited but not 'known'. As I near the end of the thesis writing process, I am startled to discover just to what extent I am knowing the place where I started for the first time.

# Chapter One

## The Spiral Staircase

*A spiral staircase can be surprising, because you can't see more than a step and a half in front (Hulme, 1983, p. 31).*

*"All men have stars" he answered, "but they are not the same things for different people. For some, who are travellers, the stars are guides. For others they are no more than little lights in the sky. For others, who are scholars, they are problems..." (Antoine de St-Exupery, 1992, p. 100).*

*My voice can mean but only with others (Holquist, 1981, p. 165).*

Several years ago when this thesis was still only the germ of an idea, I met with a couple of ex-colleagues and friends from the Christchurch College of Education. The three of us were just beginning our doctoral theses and we wanted to share some of our thoughts and ideas. I recall saying wistfully at some point in the discussion that I didn't think I *really* understood the meanings of such words as knowledge, understanding, meaning, learning – words we all used every day in our teaching and our research at the College of Education and at the University. Postmodernism was another elusive concept. I knew these words were going to be central to my research. In particular I remember being bothered by the term knowledge. As a student of English language and literature, the meanings of words and the connotations they evoke have always been of great importance to me. Knowledge was a noun. It was an entity. The word knowledge had a very complete and finished sound. It was also a word that had an almost mystical, religious quality – '*the knowledge*'. It opened doors, conferred honour and status. Knowledge was not something *I* had; it was something that *other* people possessed. It was 'out there'.

I was troubled by my understanding of this word, sensing that it was inadequate and probably inappropriate to the task ahead of me. Had anyone pressed me at that time I

might have admitted to a different apprehension of knowledge as something indeterminate, in the making rather than made. Not only could I not claim that I ‘had’ knowledge – I had no desire to make such a claim. I could not imagine a time when I ever ‘knew’ something with any sense of authority since, for me, learning was a never-ending process. However I would probably have then dismissed this tentative understanding as a product of my own perceived *lack* of knowledge coupled with my abysmal memory! I might have said that I was merely making excuses for my inability to know.

Some way into the life of this thesis I came across Eliot Eisner’s (1998) assertion that knowledge is a verb and found that simple notion immensely helpful. Likewise von Glaserfeld’s (1991) claim that knowledge is an activity or process reinforced my intuitive preference. What I have slowly come to realise is that my developing understanding of the nature of knowledge lies at the very core of this thesis and parallels the continuum revealed in my research participants’ experiences of knowledge (see chapter six). I did not have to ‘know’ (about knowledge) at the start and I still do not have to ‘know’ now. My thesis is about developing a knowing and a way of going on knowing. It is about decentering the “cult of expertise” (Lather, 1991, p.97). And it is about having the confidence to articulate publicly my early, ill-understood belief in the indeterminacy and contingency of knowledge.

My approach to the thesis was never in doubt. I did not want to survey, measure, correlate or experiment. I wanted to talk with people in depth.<sup>1</sup> I was interested in people’s experiences, in language they used to recount those experiences and in how I might interpret those experiences through language. My way of seeing and knowing the world was already intuitively formed but I lacked the framework and in-depth understanding to articulate it.

As part of the process of developing a theoretical framework I sought out authors whose writings resonated with me. My reading was initially eclectic. I read around and around certain areas with little understanding but knowing from past experience that, to

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<sup>2</sup> “The event of conversation lends itself to understanding. The act of reading and coding responses on a survey lends itself to an acquisition of information” (Herda, 1999, p. 137).

understand more deeply I would need to engage in a prolonged iterative process and to 'come at' the focus of my inquiry from many different angles. I found myself instinctively attracted to certain authors while others elicited little response. In my research proposal (Robertson, 1998) I located my intended research within a feminist/postmodern paradigm. Later I found that an interpretive approach fitted better with my emerging research design. However now, as I gather together the threads which position me theoretically, I find that I am drawing to a greater or lesser extent on all these areas. An interpretive approach provides the warp supporting my writing, with selected postmodern and feminist perspectives constituting the weft. This theoretical eclecticism mirrors my intellectual preference for integration rather than compartmentalisation. It is also suggestive of the extent to which, in my opinion, these theoretical perspectives intersect and overlap.

It has taken me a long time to untangle and come to terms with the 'labels' attached to the major research paradigms and perspectives. I have always been suspicious of labels. Initially I think my suspicion resulted from a lack of confidence in their definition and use. More recently I have come to regard labels as both useful and limiting. Useful in that they provide a framework from which one can articulate a 'position' (in the words of one of my research participants, a 'place to stand'); limiting in that they tend to emphasise boundaries rather than points of connection and to perpetuate our tendency to compartmentalise. It is only too easy to adopt a position, hoist a label and defend that position against all comers, regardless. Patti Lather (1991, p. 62) argues that "theory is too often used to protect us from the awesome complexity of the world". Equally, "labels and theories provide a way of seeing. But a way of seeing is also a way of not seeing ... what we see is frequently influenced by what we know" (Eisner, 1998, p. 67). In the words of architect Renzo Piano; "when you place your certainty in something, that thing does not become the root of your thinking, but the crutch that allows you not to think: it becomes a refuge from your fear" (Piano, 1997, p.12). I would like to think that my hard-won ability to 'position' myself theoretically offers a means of opening windows rather than closing shutters; the beginning of a journey rather than its end.

The most profound personal learning experience in the making of this thesis has been the process of coming to understand deeply the socially constructed nature of

knowledge. That we make meaning in relationships, through a language steeped in tradition, that knowledge grows out of dialogue embedded in a particular socio-historic culture, is a fundamental assumption underpinning my writing. Despite the philosophic tensions between them, both hermeneutics and postmodernism share a commitment to the dialogic foundations of knowledge. Postmodernism emphasises knowledge as conversation; knowledge as narrative; knowledge as language; knowledge as context and knowledge as interrelational (Kvale, 1996). I would argue that this is equally true of hermeneutics. To Kvale's list I would add a postmodern emphasis on knowledge as power, a feature absent in the hermeneutic tradition.

In this chapter I draw on the work of scholars whose writings have 'spoken' meaningfully to me in order to fashion a philosophical and theoretical frame for the methodological decisions of the thesis. To begin with I review aspects of three theoretical perspectives – hermeneutics, postmodernism and (to a lesser extent) feminism – which each emphasise the interdependence of human interaction and knowledge production, and I draw attention to their commonalities. I then tackle the contested area of the apparent incommensurability of hermeneutics and postmodernism and argue a case for a critical hermeneutics (Herda, 1999; Kögler, 1996) which draws productively on aspects of each. Finally I consider briefly the special nature of the research interview as it contributes to our knowledging of the world within the interpretive and postmodern paradigms.

### **Knocking at the Text: An Interpretivist (hermeneutic) Approach**

Post Enlightenment science has traditionally assumed a knowing subject, a known object and an unambiguous knowledge, an approach that Code (1996) labels as 'S knows that p'. Tradition is replaced by sense-experience gained through observation and experimentation as the source of knowledge. From within a positivist-empiricist epistemology, the researcher makes an ontological assumption that the world is orderly, lawful and predictable (Scott & Usher, 1996). Research, taking place as through a one way mirror, can reveal the 'true' state of affairs as long as measures are taken to eliminate bias and value judgement on the part of the researcher (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

However in the past quarter century such assumptions have been well and truly challenged and discredited (Feyerabend, 1975; Kuhn, 1996; Latour, 1987). No researcher, either in the sciences or the social sciences approaches the research task devoid of prejudice (pre-judgement) or pre-understanding. According to Kuhn there is a long ignored hermeneutic/interpretative dimension to science. Madison (1988) develops this idea by claiming that the natural sciences fall *within* the scope of hermeneutics because science is but one particular language game that humans engage in. Moreover in the social sciences the ‘object’ of research shares the same characteristics as the researcher. Both are interpreters or sense seekers. As Geertz (1973) puts it, “man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun” (p. 5). Researchers and research participants view the world through a network (or lens, or framework) of culturally conditioned beliefs and practices, assumptions and pre-suppositions (Eisner, 1998). Thus research involves a second or third order interpretation (Geertz, 1973); an interpretation of interpretations – a double hermeneutic (Usher, 1996).

Philosophical hermeneutics<sup>2</sup> offers ‘principles’ (not rules) for going about the interpretation of texts which align with my own learning processes as I understand them and with my way of viewing the world. Philosophical hermeneutics is not a methodology (a way of doing) or a technique so much as a way of *being* a researcher (Herda, 1999; Schwandt, 1994).<sup>3</sup> According to Madison (1988) it seeks to determine what is involved in the understanding process itself; “what it is that has actually happened whenever we claim to have arrived at an understanding of things, the world, ourselves” (p. 110). Such an approach transcends the dualism of subject and object and

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<sup>2</sup> Etymologically hermeneutics derives from the Greek word *hermeneuein* meaning to interpret or to understand. The word is linked to the god Hermes, the bearer of knowledge and understanding whose task is to explain to humans the decisions of the gods (Crotty, 1998). Originally this disciplined approach to interpretation was linked to the Greek study of literature and to biblical exegesis in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Today the focus of hermeneutics is the interpretation, meaning and illumination of ‘texts’ in the broadest sense of the word. For the purposes of this study I draw on the modern tradition of hermeneutic practice with particular reference to Gadamer’s philosophical/historical/ontological hermeneutics, Madison’s phenomenological hermeneutics, Ricoeur’s concept of mimesis and Herda and Kögler’s critical hermeneutics. Because Herda, Kögler and Madison each draw on Gadamer, I have chosen to use the term ‘philosophical’ hermeneutics.

<sup>3</sup> Denzin (1994) asserts that, rather than providing a formula or mechanism for going about research, interpretation is an art which can only be learned through doing. In this way hermeneutic inquiry differs from the widely used qualitative framework of grounded theory which provides a series of clearly defined and prescribed steps for the researcher to follow.

binds researcher and participant in an interpretive circle. Hermeneutics entails “an awareness of the critical difference between research that uses tools and techniques and research that lives in language” (Herda, 1999, p. 93). The interpretive decisions made by the researcher are not verifiable or testable as such. Rather we might use criteria such as thoroughness, coherence and comprehensiveness and ask whether the interpretation is useful and worthy of adoption (Madison, 1988).

Underpinning an interpretive approach is the fundamental principle of the hermeneutic circle in which the meaning of the parts can be discovered only from the context (the whole) so that understanding involves a continual oscillation between parts and whole in a constantly expanding circle (Gadamer, 1989). The circle is not an endless, repetitive loop. With each cycle one’s appreciation of the unity of the whole grows and matures (Taylor, 1993). Knowledge formation is conceived as circular, iterative and spiral – not linear and cumulative (Usher, 1996). For me the fundamental appeal of hermeneutics lies in this part/whole/part spiral in which my commitment to learning/inquiry is so deeply embedded. The constant iteration between parts and (an apprehended) whole lies at the centre of my data analysis and determines my approach to writing the thesis.

Also fundamental to philosophical hermeneutics is Gadamer’s (1989) argument that we are always situated within traditions and that “our historical consciousness is always filled with a variety of voices in which the echo of the past is heard” (p. 284).

According to Gadamer it is the recognition that all understanding inevitably involves prejudice that gives the hermeneutic problem its real thrust. The Enlightenment reviled prejudice and in so doing denied the power of tradition. Yet it is that immersion in tradition that both limits the possibility of vision and that provides a place from which a new vision can be forged. Just as we engage in conversational dialogue – questioning and responding, giving and taking, talking at cross-purposes and seeing each other’s point of view – so too do we, in the hermeneutic sense, engage in a dialogue with the ‘text’. The person who wants to understand must question what lies behind what is said. Understanding is always more than merely recreating someone else’s meaning. Questioning opens up possibilities of meaning and what is meaningful passes into one’s own thinking (Gadamer, 1989).

This legacy of tradition and experience from which we as researchers cannot escape and of which we are often scarcely aware, may be considered a limitation or a threshold (Warnke, 1987). We can attempt to ‘bracket’ or suspend our pre-understandings in order to focus unrestrictedly on the lifeworld of our research participants, to get inside their heads (Husserl, 1931) or we can use our pre-understandings as a springboard from which to move forward together. According to Gadamer (1989) it is in the interplay (a dialogic relationship) between one’s own interpretive framework and the elements of the actions one is trying to understand, that knowledge is developed. This “fusion of horizons” (p. 306) results from seeking knowledge while grounded in a perspective arising from one’s situatedness, a perspective which cannot be bracketed (Herda, 1999; Usher, 1996). When our horizons change our understanding changes; we cannot understand unless we move from one horizon to another at which point we will see and think differently (Gadamer 1989). Thus, interpretation is not a methodological act but rather a transformative act. Hermeneutic understanding is a *learning* experience involving dialogue between ourselves as researchers and that which we are trying to understand. Within this process there is always a context that serves to anchor the text in our actual living (Madison, 1988). Hermeneutics and learning are inseparable (Herda, 1999) and knowledge a socially constructed process.

Hermeneutic inquiry is distinguished not only by its focus on tradition and culture but also through its grounding in language (Taylor, 1993). Historicity (*Geschichtlichkeit*) and linguisticity (*Sprachlichkeit*) are constitutive of being human.

... we do not simply live out our lives in time and through language; rather we are our history. The fact that language and history are both the condition and limit of understanding is what makes the process of meaning construction hermeneutical (Schwandt, 1994, p. 120).

For Madison (1988) the proper object of hermeneutics is the various language games by means of which people come to some understanding of the world and of themselves.<sup>4</sup> It is through this play of understanding that we can “conceive of subjectivity anew in a postmodern, postepistemological fashion” (p. 117). As human beings we express our lived experience of the world through language (amongst other things). We are

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<sup>4</sup> Later in this chapter I discuss Madison’s view of the intersection between hermeneutics and postmodernism.

essentially languaged beings, our situations, events, practices and meanings shaped by language (Crotty, 1998). In language we also discover a world already meaningfully constituted (van Manen, 1990). Both Ricoeur and Thompson (1981) and Geertz (1973) argue that the meanings constituted in the lived world must be read or interpreted much as one would read or interpret a complicated text. According to Ricoeur and Thompson (1981) we arrive as interpreters in the middle of a conversation that has already begun and in which we are trying to orient ourselves in order to be able to contribute. It is not, as Husserl (1931) would have it, that we are trying to identify empathetically with our participants but rather that we are seeking out and analysing the symbolic forms in terms of which people represent themselves to themselves and to one another (Gadamer, 1989; Geertz, 1983). Moreover we, as researchers, come to know what we know in the process of writing, of representing our understandings in the symbolic form of written language. The writing of the text *is* the research (Richardson, 1997; van Manen, 1990).<sup>5</sup>

This transformative process referred to above is captured in Ricoeur's (1984) concept of mimesis. Originally understood as an imitation of nature, mimesis, in the context of interpretive research, is now understood to refer to the transformation of (experienced) worlds into symbolic worlds. In relation to literary texts, Ricoeur proposes three levels or stages in the mimetic process. The first (mimesis<sub>1</sub>) focuses on preconceptions or pre-understanding of human activity. As researchers and research participants we inhabit a world already informed by cultural artefacts, a world which is already *figured* (Herda, 1999). The emphasis at this stage is on human experience. Mimesis<sub>2</sub> involves the processing of experience into texts. This is a process of construction, a new *configuration*. Finally mimesis<sub>3</sub> marks the intersection of the world of text and the world of the hearer/reader. This is achieved through a process of interpretation, a *refigured* action (Herda, 1999).

Flick (1998) suggests that Ricoeur's mimetic processes as outlined above, can be located in social science understanding as the interplay of construction and

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<sup>5</sup> Only as I began to write a first draft of my thesis did I really understand the 'rightness' of this assertion. There is a tendency for the novice researcher to regard data collection and analysis as the main part of the research process. A close friend and fellow PhD student commented that, once the data was collected and analysed, she felt it would be 'all downhill' from there. I now understand the full import of what it is to construct a research text and to realise that, for me, understanding resides *in* the writing and does not *precede* it.

interpretation of experiences. “Mimesis includes the passage from pre-understanding across the text to interpretation” (Flick, 1998, p. 34). Thus mimesis avoids the minefield of representation and aligns with Nelson Goodman’s (1978) assertion that, rather than being found, worlds are always made from other worlds. To understand something is not to form a representation of it but creatively to transform it (Madison, 1988). Gadamer (1989) sees the true locus of hermeneutics as “this in-between” (p. 295). Drawing on Derrida (and, in the process, making yet another link between hermeneutics and postmodernism), Gebauer and Wulf (1995) liken mimesis to a hinge – it has a doubled or ‘between’ character. It provides a means of linking research participants, researcher and readers in a creative act of knowledge making and understanding.

In Ricoeur’s reading of mimesis, imitation is replaced by transformation. This transformative process involves several layers of construction and interpretation. Interview participants are already involved in a process of narrative construction and interpretation. They selectively shape an account for the researcher that is embedded in a specific cultural context. Likewise the researcher frames questions which reflect her own worldview in the context of a particular inquiry. Once the spoken is transformed into text, there is a separation of the event of saying and the intention of the speaker from the meaning of what is said as embodied in the text. The moment we fix our discourse in writing we distance ourselves from the event and open the text up to unlimited readings (Herda, 1999). One of those readings involves the intersection of the pre-understandings of the researcher with the discourse as text. In this, the text is further transformed through an interpretive process that seeks to make meaning out of the meaning already voiced by the research participants. Finally this interpretation of an interpretation is transformed once more as yet another interpretation occurs in the intersection of reader and researcher-constructed text.

In hermeneutics, as outlined above, I have found one way of conceptualising the research process, which works for me both on a philosophical, and on a practical level. A hermeneutic approach presupposes that experience is made meaningful in the narrative process. The role of the researcher is not to break the text apart through an elaborate system of coding (nor to empathise with or enter the mind of the ‘other’), but

to engage in a *dialogue* with the text, a process which involves repeated questioning and attentive listening (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000).<sup>6</sup> To know is not to reflect (nature) but to ‘give significance to’ by interpreting (Steedman, 1991). Accompanying this dialogue is a critical awareness of the historical-cultural tradition in which the text is embedded and a foregrounding of the interpreter’s pre-understandings. This heightened awareness of context and prejudice opens up the possibility of a fusion of horizons leading to new understandings and a creative act of interpretation.

As much as a hermeneutic perspective resonated with me, I also needed another lens through which to view the research process in general and my empirical study in particular. It became apparent that the absence of a concern with power relations in the hermeneutic approach (Bernstein, 1983; Flax, 1993) would significantly limit the scope of my inquiry. I needed to alter my angle of repose, give the kaleidoscope another twist. A postmodern perspective both complemented and troubled my hermeneutic approach. In the next section I explore the relevance of postmodernism in the context of this study and consider how it both relates to and differs from philosophical hermeneutics.

### **“A Shape of Life is Growing Old”<sup>7</sup>: The Postmodern Challenge**

This thesis is very much an investigation of different ways of knowing in the (knowledge) academy and of the development of my own ways of knowing. Given that postmodernism shatters the boundary definition and maintenance that is characteristic of disciplinary knowledge (Usher, 1996), the postmodern challenge operates both as an object of study and as an organising framework (one of a number) for the thesis.

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<sup>6</sup> The idea of ‘coding’, much emphasised in many qualitative research texts, has always surprised and alarmed me. It seems a particularly mechanistic form of data analysis and suggests an unwillingness to abandon a positivist methodology. From a postmodern perspective (which points to one of the many links between hermeneutics and postmodernism) Scheurich (1995) talks of “an elaborate and arcane focus on the mechanics of coding” which masks the “unstable ambiguities of linguistically communicated meaning” (p. 241).

<sup>7</sup> I was very taken by this quotation from Jane Flax (1990, p. 39) (paraphrasing Hegel) in which she alludes to the fundamental transformation of western culture in the era we term postmodern.

Postmodernism disrupts the formerly secure foundations of knowledge and knowing. It expresses a loss of certainty in what is known and ways of knowing (Usher, 1996) and an “incredulity towards metanarratives” (Lyotard, 1984, xxiv). It foregrounds ambiguity, relativity, fragmentation, particularity and discontinuity (Crotty, 1998). It positions knowledge as neither inside a person nor outside in the world, but in the relationship between person and world (Kvale, 1996). According to Lather (1991) we are shifting away from a view of knowledge as disinterested and towards “a conceptualisation of knowledge as constructed, contested, incessantly perspectival and polyphonic” (p. xx). With this has come a renewed interest in situated and embodied knowledge and the existence of multiple realities (Greene, 1994). Re-search requires us to ‘search’ for “other ways of knowing which do justice to the complexity, tenuity and indeterminacy of most human experience” (p. 51). Postmodern research also requires us to take a critical stance towards the way in which the world is inscribed in the research text. It demands reflexivity.

The links between hermeneutics and postmodernism are apparent in the writing of many scholars whose particular focus is the social construction of knowledge. According to these authors what we take to be objective knowledge and truth is in fact the result of perspective and of complicated discursive practices. There are multiple ways in which the world can be known (Eisner, 1998; Schwandt, 1994) and knowing begins in a perceived landscape (Merleau-Ponty, 1964). That perception is articulated through ‘voice’ – the speaking subject’s perspective, conceptual horizon, intention and world-view. Voices always exist in a social milieu (Wertsch, 1991). Without the interaction of ‘voices’, without dialogue, there is no meaning and no knowledging. “...What we take to be knowledge of the world grows from relationship and is embedded not within individual minds but within interpretive or communal traditions” (Gergem, 1999, p. 122). Bakhtin (Morris, 1994) talks of language lying on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone else’s. The word does not contain meaning nor does meaning reside with the speaker or the listener. “Meaning is the effect of interaction between speaker and listener...” (p. 35). We all create versions of the world based on “worlds already on hand” (Goodman, 1978, p. 6) and all our utterances echo and reverberate with the utterances of others who form a part of our

dialogic community (Bakhtin, 1986). Language therefore is not a mirror of life; it is the *doing* of life. Knowledge happens not so much ‘in’ as ‘between’ (Gergern, 1999). Knowledge is always in process.<sup>8</sup>

Clearly the boundaries between an interpretive/hermeneutic and a postmodern worldview are blurred. In *The Hermeneutics of Postmodernity* Madison (1988) argues that Gadamer’s hermeneutics is a “thoroughly postmodern form of thought” (p. 108). Many postmodern claims – for example, that subjects cannot be separated from their subjectivity, history and socio-cultural location – are fundamental to hermeneutic inquiry. Moreover both postmodern and hermeneutic philosophy emphasise the conversational, narrational, linguistic, contextual and interrelational features of knowledge (Kvale, 1996; Rorty, 1979). Both are concerned with the play of language – language games. Rorty speaks of “the power of language to make new and different things possible and important – an appreciation which becomes possible only when one’s aim becomes an expanding repertoire of alternative descriptions rather than One Right Description” (Rorty, in Greene, 1994, p. 440).

However there are differences. While both paradigms emphasise the centrality of language, postmodernism equates linguistic skills with specific circuits of power – power being “always already there” (Foucault, 1980, p. 141). The way we speak and write reflects the structures of power in our society (Lather, 1991). Knowledge produced within a discursive system legitimates power and experts (Flax, 1993; Gunew, 1990). “This emphasis on power distinguishes postmodernist from hermeneutic thinkers. The hermeneutic approach does not locate linguistic practices within discrete discursive formations in which knowledge and power are interdependent” (Flax, 1993, p. 49). Lather (1991) views language as a framing device, a strategic *limitation* of

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<sup>8</sup> Schwandt (1994) outlines a perceived tension between constructivism with its focus on the meaning making activity of the *individual* mind and social constructionism which emphasises the *social* constructions of meaning and knowledge. Rather than being held in tension, I see the two as complementary. As human beings we make meanings for ourselves through our interactions with others in a particular social and cultural context. Our ‘knowledging’ is both an individual and a social process, akin to the relation between the parts and the whole in the hermeneutic circle. Steedman (1991) reinforces this conclusion when he advocates “a stereoscopic account of the construction of meaning; one lens is on the individual context of interpretations, the other is on the social context which creates the individual. In any particular case we must address the subtle and changing mix of the two” (p. 55). This has particular implications for the qualitative researcher who must embed the meaning making of research participants (and researcher) in a social/historical context.

possible meanings. Foucault (1980) argues that relations of power exist between everyone who knows and everyone who does not. Given that this thesis is not only undertaken *within* the academy (a *knowledge* institution characterised by *disciplines*) but that its focus *is* the academy, a consideration of the knowledge/power nexus is vital.

The idea that the individual is constituted by language and culture in a shared community and that knowledge is constructed dialogically in the interplay of voices, has largely been obscured by the modern emphasis on individual control, autonomy, self-directedness and by the idea that we can only come to know on our own. In education and the workplace the legacy of the Enlightenment has demanded a focus on individualism, competition and progress. The individual has been abstracted from community. This is particularly apparent in our use of communication metaphors. The conduit metaphor (Reddy, 1979) – a one way transmission of information underpinned by monologic assumptions – is ubiquitous in the English language. We talk at or to, not with. The way we conceive of knowledge, its development and dispersal as revealed in metaphor, is addressed in detail in chapter seven.

Linked with communication metaphors is Bakhtin's notion of the authoritative word and the internally persuasive word (Morris, 1994). The authoritative word is located in a distanced zone.<sup>9</sup> It is a prior discourse which is felt to be hierarchically higher. Authoritative discourse is based on the assumption that utterances and their meanings are fixed, not modifiable as they come into contact with new voices (Wertsch, 1991). The authoritative word is transmitted to us with its authority attached and we are required to acknowledge it and make it our own regardless of whether we are persuaded by it or understand it. In contrast "the semantic structure of an internally persuasive discourse is not finite, it is open; in each of the new contexts that dialogize it, this discourse is able to reveal ever newer ways to mean..." (Morris, 1994, p. 79). These modes of discourse and the relations of power implicated in them are discussed in relation to my research findings in chapter eight.

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<sup>9</sup> Gunew (1990) describes institutional knowledge as "authorised learning to which only some have access" (p. 14).

Authoritative discourse disempowers. It closes the receiver out of the meaning making process, condemning her to remain on the periphery of a dialogic community – an observer rather than a participant. The notion of legitimate peripheral participation - of the ways in which we come to know in a community of practice through active engagement in that community, of being able to talk *within* rather than *about* (Lave & Wenger, 1991) - has profound implications for our pedagogy in higher education and provides a key to understanding variation in experience of the research/teaching relation. I also pick up this thread again in chapter eight.

Madison (1988) identifies Gadamer and Derrida as “two key figures of our postmodernity” (p. 106) and asserts that hermeneutics overlaps with deconstruction particularly in the notion of play. However he argues that while Gadamer outlines a general philosophical theory, Derrida “mainly presents us with a technique for reading” (Madison, 1988, p. 109). Deconstruction, he asserts, is a critique from nowhere, which leads nowhere and is basically nihilistic. For Derrida there is no exit from the labyrinth of a text, nothing outside the text. The play of linguistic experience is meaningless. In contrast, for Gadamer, understanding is inseparable from application – from the reading subject’s reaction to and appropriation of the text. The play of understanding (Gadamer’s fusion of horizons) leads to enhanced self-understanding through a transformation in the reader’s world-view.

Madison also contrasts the deconstructionist notion of undecidability (meaning is nothing but the interplay of signs which are without intrinsic meaning) with the hermeneutic notion of inexhaustibility (there is always the possibility of meaning but it is never possible to arrive at a final meaning). He concludes; “If ‘knowledge’, once deconstructed, is reconstructed in a nonfoundational way to mean ‘understanding’ in the hermeneutical sense ... then hermeneutics gives us what deconstruction cannot give us ... namely knowledge” (Madison, 1988, p. 115). This knowledge is in no way definitive but represents an openness to experience emerging from the dialectic of experience.

I suspect this is somewhat too dismal a reading of deconstruction. St. Pierre (2000) supports deconstruction as a powerful tool for critiquing any structure and claims that it

is, in fact, “a practice of freedom that can help us rewrite the world and ourselves again and again and again” (p. 483). She regards deconstruction not as a destructive or negative process but as an affirmative one. If we construct the world then we can also deconstruct and reconstruct it (differently). We can fight the tendency for our categories to congeal, engage in a corrective moment that offers up the possibility of alternatives to present practice (Lather, 1989). If one understands deconstruction as the opening up of a new space in the old in order to think differently about the old, then it is not so very different in its outcome from the hermeneutic ‘fusion of horizons’. Both processes foreground historical contingency and challenge the idea that language simply names and reflects what it encounters.

Certainly there is a deconstructive task, which I thread throughout this thesis, surrounding the binaries which construct the modern university. For example, despite the lip service paid to a research/teaching ‘nexus’ (see chapter three) it is clear that, in the last 50 years at least, research has been privileged over teaching (Barnett, 1992; Boyer Commission, 1999). Research, born of the Enlightenment emphasis on measurement, testability and the use of reason, involved the *discovery or generation* of new knowledge. It held pride of place in the great chain of being. Teaching, in the post World War Two institutions of higher education, generally involved the *transmission* of research findings and was therefore dependent on and subordinate to, research. Attempts to ‘even out’ this imbalance by emphasising the scholarship of teaching (Boyer, 1990) have met with limited success and have done little to deconstruct the dichotomy; if anything they have reinforced it. However the postmodern challenge to entrenched notions of what counts as knowledge and how it is generated, is beginning to cause, if not a displacement, then at least a degree of uncertainty regarding the apparently dichotomous relationship between research and teaching (Brew, 1999a).

Perhaps more damaging than Madison’s critique of Derrida is Alveson and Skoldberg’s (2000) assertion that “both hermeneutics and postmodernism are guilty of totalising their perspective – one in the form of universal harmonising, the other of universal fragmentation” (p.104). The authors go on to suggest that there is a need to break the deadlock of *either* harmony *or* difference. Herein may lie a radical challenge for this thesis. Is it possible (in the spirit of deconstruction) to move beyond the dichotomy of

dis/unity and to recognise that harmony may reside in difference and that difference may constitute a unity of sorts?

I hope my work will demonstrate a reflexivity with regard to power, position, method and outcome. Steier (1991) suggests that in order to reconcile the tension between research as both inventive and interventive, we need to view research as a 'co-constructive' process. We cannot escape from our insider's knowledge about the experiences we are trying to understand (Tolich & Davidson, 1999) nor can we escape from the politics of creating meaning (Lather, 1991a). Therefore "constructionist inquiry, as a human activity, must concern itself with a knowing process as embedded in a reflexive loop that includes the inquirer who is at once an active observer" (Steier, 1991). The researcher is decentered.

Usher (1996) identifies three different forms of reflexivity. Personal reflexivity illuminates the importance of the 'autobiography' of the researcher's lived experience and demonstrates how this influences the choice of research topic, how the research is carried out, how data are generated and analysed. Reflexivity also directs attention to the 'identity' of the research. "What is going on in this research? What kind of world or 'reality' and what kind of knowledge is being constructed by the questions I am asking and the methods I am using? (Usher, 1996, p. 37). Finally there is 'disciplinary' reflexivity which recognises that research is organised through, sanctioned and controlled by a community's disciplinary matrix. We need to interrogate our immersion within a particular disciplinary community, be aware of the 'always already' (Derrida, 1982). "Reflexivity foregrounds the implication of the personal within what is 'beyond' the personal; it is as much about the inscribed ('written') I as the inscribing I (the 'I' that writes) ... (Usher, 1996, p. 39).

This is a challenge. Personal reflexivity (autobiography) is one thing. Locating ourselves within a research tradition and paying attention to the written 'I' that we construct/inscribe in the research process is a far more complex and slippery undertaking. I am very aware of the power of the research text to claim an (unwarranted) authority. I want to hold up this thesis text to scrutiny, question it, subvert it and emphasise its constructed, situated nature. (In this regard I have a

particular concern with the process of categorisation - in which I engage - agreeing with Lather (1991) that it is an act of power which always marginalises). I am aware that, with a slight turn of the kaleidoscope the image constitutes itself differently. The 'images' that constitute this thesis represent only a small proportion of possible readings. "When enough threads are webbed together, a solid entity may appear to form. Yet the fluidity of the threads and the web itself remains. What felt solid and real may subsequently separate and reform" (Flax, 1993, p. 94).

Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000) define reflexivity as the ability to break away from a frame of reference and to look at what it is not capable of saying; to "break up and change a particular language game rather than expanding it" (p. 246). This is achieved through a process of 'reflexive interpretation' in which the research(er) glides between a number of levels – the handling of the empirical material, interpretation, critical interpretation and reflection upon language and authority. "It is at the interface of the various levels of interpretation that the inspiration to – and the possibility of – reflection are strongest" (p. 254). Rich qualitative research renders empirical material ambiguous in a thoughtful manner so as to open up a space for creative interpretations and a reconsideration of the taken for granted. This strikes me as a productive form of self-deconstruction (in contrast with Madison's reading of Derrida). I hope therefore that, in the interpretive interplay of empirical material, hermeneutics and postmodernism, I can take this study beyond the narrow constraints of data-fixated research and challenge some of the conventions traditionally associated with qualitative studies.

### **Seeing the World Through Different Eyes: A Feminist Perspective**

If "to do feminist research is to put the social construction of gender at the center of one's inquiry" (Lather, 1991b, p. 71) then this thesis cannot claim to be grounded in a feminist perspective. Nor would I regard myself as a feminist researcher; in this thesis I touch only lightly on feminist theory. Having said that, I am a woman researcher whose

perspective is shaped, in part, by gender (Reinharz, 1997). I 'see the world through different eyes'<sup>10</sup> and my research self is *seen* differently because I am a woman.

Moreover, feminist epistemologies and methodologies share much in common with the interpretive and postmodern paradigms outlined above, even if the relationship is, occasionally, an uneasy one (Fraser & Nicholson, 1990; Lather, 1989). Writing from a feminist perspective, Code (1996) points to the productivity of hermeneutic, interpretive, literary methods of analysis and explanation in the social sciences and suggests that the skills required for these approaches are similar to the interpretive skills required in human relationships. Flax (1990) regards feminist theory as a type of postmodern philosophy. St. Pierre (2000) claims that the relationship between feminism and poststructuralism is proving both invigorating and fruitful. In contrast, Bordo (1990) positions feminism beyond 'the view from nowhere' (positivism) and 'the dream of everywhere' (postmodern relativism). Griffiths (1995) suggests that educational researchers can take account of the arguments and insights derived from both feminism and postmodernism, whether or not they subscribe wholeheartedly to either perspective.

Here I want to acknowledge a number of perspectives, drawn from feminist theory, which have influenced my thinking. They include the relationship between knowledge and power, the significance of the reflexive process and the importance of the affective dimension. Power/knowledge and reflexivity I have already addressed, to a greater or lesser extent, in relation to the postmodern paradigm. I touch on them briefly again here. One perspective however – the significance of the affective dimension - seems to be a feature only of a feminist view of the world.

Griffiths (1995) speaks of the "deep and irreducible connections between knowledge and power". Lather (1991) wonders how we examine questions of narrative authority in our empirical work. It seems to me that reflexivity offers a way, not of eliminating but

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<sup>10</sup> Here I am reflecting Virginia Woolf's assertion in *Three Guineas* that "though we see the same world we see it through different eyes" (Woolf, 1938, p. 34). I agree, although I doubt that we see the same world, on account of the different eyes!

of surfacing these deep power/knowledge connections and subjecting them to critical scrutiny. At the very least this requires that careful attention be paid to the relationship between the researcher and the research participants, acknowledging that each is part of a collaborative and co-constructive process. “Claims to know a person are open to negotiation between knower and known, where the ‘subject’ and ‘object’ positions are always, in principle, interchangeable” (Code, 1996, p. 212). It also requires a respect on the part of the researcher such that participants’ voices are heard; that we eschew ventriloquism (Fine, 1992) by making explicit the ways in which we select, use and exploit voices; that we are alert to silences and the possibility of silencing. Reinhartz (1997) asserts that “if you want someone to tell it like it is, you have to hear it like it is (p. 15-16). I would add that, having ‘heard’ we then have a responsibility to create a multi-voiced text that opens up (rather than closes down) the possibilities of meaning.

Greene (1994) argues that incompleteness (arising from a willingness to embrace openness and indeterminacy) is a significant concern of ‘new’ epistemologies and in particular, of feminist authors. To relinquish the possibility of closure may be read as a ‘loss’ of power and a consequent diminution of ‘knowledge’; or (my preference) it may be interpreted as an opening up of other possibilities, a recognition of the potential for multiple interpretations. I cannot reconcile the possibility of knowledge ‘closure’ with a commitment to its social construction.

Quoting Britzman, Lather (1989) asks “What kinds of practices are possible once vulnerability, ambiguity and doubt are admitted? What kinds of power and authority are taken up and not admitted? (p. 29). In a lovely metaphor, Fine (1992, p. 218) points out that “reporting on oral or written narratives involves a delicate tailoring of texts. The problem is not that we tailor but that so few researchers reveal how we do this work”. *How* we do this work involves a consideration of *why* we do this work and why we do this work *in this way*. Harraway’s (1988) situated knowledges and Harding’s (1991) standpoint epistemology offer starting points for such reflexive action. The researcher’s subjectivity – her interest in the inquiry, her assumptions, emotional involvement, material, historical and cultural circumstances – all play a part in the construction of the research text (Code, 1996). Moreover, rather than being a fixed point

of departure, subjectivity is an ongoing construction resulting from one's interaction with the world (de Laurentis, in Gunew, 1990, p. 28).

This reflexive process recalls my introduction in which I talked about my friend Kristy's paintings, her process of stripping back and the presence of pentimenti – the phantoms of previous paintings disclosing alterations made to the composition, the artist's painterly history. I would like my thesis to reveal this process of tailoring, the marks beneath the surface of the canvas.

The emotional dimension in the conduct of inquiry seems to me to be a central (and much neglected) feature of social (people focused) research. Certainly it is not a notable feature of either interpretive or postmodern epistemologies. In the western philosophical tradition emotion has been viewed with suspicion and hostility, as being subversive of knowledge. The development of trustworthy knowledge required that the values and emotions of individual scientists be neutralised (Jaggar, 1996).

Deconstruction of the myth of dispassionate inquiry has opened up a space in which emotion may be recognised as helpful and even necessary to the construction of knowledge. Jaggar calls for an alternative epistemological model which shows how our emotional responses to the world change as we conceptualise it differently and how these changing emotional responses then stimulate us to new insights. I would argue that emotion in social inquiry is multi-faceted. There is the emotional engagement with and attachment to one's research participants. There is the emotion manifest in research participants' feeling for the object of inquiry. And there is the emotion invested in the creative process of engaging with new ideas and perspectives, of fashioning a research 'text'. As long as the role of emotion in the research process is reflexively recognised and acknowledged, its presence must enrich the learning process.

### **Exploring the Possibility of a 'Critical Hermeneutics'**

Interpretivism in general and philosophical hermeneutics in particular fails to engage in a critical exploration of cultural meaning (Crotty, 1998; Habermas, 1971). Gadamer, for example, is all but silent when it comes to issues concerning domination and power (Bernstein, 1983). To do justice to the complexities of my role as a researcher, and to

the focus of my inquiry, my hermeneutic approach requires a critical edge which recognises and brings into view the complex power relations embedded both in the research process and in the object of my research - the interplay of research and teaching in higher education.

While Habermas excludes the historical-hermeneutic sciences from any involvement in an “emancipatory cognitive interest” (Habermas, 1971, p. 308), both Herda (1996) and Kögler (1996) argue a case for the possibility and desirability of a ‘critical hermeneutics’.

For Herda, research is not only a linguistic phenomenon but a historical, social and political activity as well. “Critical hermeneutics places the locus of both social and personal change in language and tradition” (Herda, 1996, p. 7). A critical hermeneutics involves not only making an interpretation but also passing a judgement on the legitimacy of that interpretation. Even more centrally, Herda argues that we need to develop ways in which we live out meaningful lives in our institutions and that we need a process for critiquing existing social realities and creating new ones. The hermeneutic starting point lies in an understanding which is concerned not with grasping a fact but with apprehending a *possibility of being* (Ricoeur and Thompson, 1981). A possibility of being emerges when the significant meanings behind metaphors, symbols and codes are surfaced and made available for conscious consideration (Herda, 1996). As a result of this interpretive interaction with the text and consequent ‘apprehension’ we are in a position to redescribe and refigure our existing world – to begin to change ourselves and our conditions. Thus critical hermeneutic research is directed not just toward explication, but towards changes in practice based on the transformations in understanding generated through the dialogic relationship between researcher and research participants.

While Herda draws on the work of Heidegger, Gadamer, Habermas and Ricoeur to underpin her critical hermeneutics, Kögler, in his book *The Power of Dialogue: Critical Hermeneutics after Gadamer and Foucault*, attempts to bring together Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics and Foucault’s studies of power and discourse. Kögler draws on Gadamer’s concept of interpretation as dialogue with its strong focus on the

agent's self-understanding, and Foucault's focus on the structure of discourse and the practices of power. His aim is to develop a conception of interpretation which "stresses the structural constraints on dialogue as well as the critical capacity of dialogue to make us conscious of, and to free us from, such limitations, whether these obtain in our symbolic order ... [or] in unquestioningly established power relations..." (Kögler, 1996, p. 1).

Kögler (1996) critiques Gadamer's notion of the fusion of horizons in which individual views are assimilated into a new, true insight. According to Kögler, this approach does not allow for "the hermeneutically and dialogically possible recognition of a plurality of views, forms of life and cultural projections of meaning" (p. 184), but leads rather to "an assimilating, ethnocentric hermeneutics" (p. 160). In order to break out of this constraint and engage in a critical hermeneutics, Kögler recommends that we do not attempt to remove alterity through a fusion of horizons but that we use the 'other' as a point of departure for critical insight into the self. Through the views of the other we can perceive more clearly our own taken-for-granted background of symbolic assumptions and social practices and be better positioned to inquire into social networks of power. Thus the reflexive self is dialogically constituted – a being in relation to others – who becomes her own other. Through this accommodation of hermeneutics and discourse analysis, the critical interpreter is able to "unfold the internal structures that preshape the ontological understanding of statements within discourses" (p. 206).

Kögler's argument is dense and I remain uncertain about the extent to which his accommodation of the hermeneutic and postmodern traditions works in practice. The transformation implied in the 'fusion of horizons' is so fundamental to philosophical hermeneutics that I wonder whether accommodation is possible. Nevertheless in chapter eight I engage in a critical 'opening up' of my interview texts in order to surface the relations/plays of power inherent in the language but not necessarily made explicit in the interpretive process. In doing this I have been forced to confront my own assumptions and biases in a way that is both uncomfortable and, I suspect, unresolvable.

Perhaps rather than attempting to fuse the hermeneutic and postmodern traditions, we should acknowledge their similarities and differences as I have done and accept that

each provides us with a slightly different and therefore mutually enriching lens through which to view our social world.

### **Research Interviews: A Critical Hermeneutics in Action?**

According to Herda language is more than a tool or a structure. It is the medium of our lives through which we become connected to others in historical, current and future communities. In this context the research interview becomes a significant meaning making and knowledging activity. It is also an activity in which complex relations of power are played out. In chapter five I consider the practical details of engaging in qualitative interviews. Here I want to locate the interview theoretically within the interpretive and postmodern framework which I have outlined in this chapter.

The use of qualitative research interviews in this and other studies mirrors the wider shift in interest discussed earlier in this chapter from the individual mind to relations between people (Gergern, 1999). Kvale (1996) contrasts the metaphor of the research interviewer as a *miner* who seeks to unearth the treasure of knowledge, with the metaphor of the research interviewer as *traveller* whose explorations lead to a tale(s) to be told upon the return home. Paget (1983) refers to this as a “search procedure” (p. 78). The traveller may rely on a map and/or may venture into uncharted territory. In the process she converses with people “in the original Latin meaning of conversation as ‘wandering together with’” (Kvale 1996, p. 4). The stories heard/shared are interpreted by the researcher and remoulded into new narratives. Such a journey may lead to the creation of new knowledge and may lead the interviewer to new ways of self-understanding.<sup>11</sup> The storytellers may also arrive at new understandings and insights as they chart the territory of their experience through conversation. From a hermeneutic perspective the interview experience can therefore be seen as an exploratory partnership with transformative potential for all involved.

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<sup>11</sup> Kvale draws attention to in the German term *Bildungsreise* – a scholarly, formative journey – in which the transformative effects of travelling are expressed.

From a postmodern perspective, the qualitative research interview can be seen as a dynamic construction site of knowledge where meaning is interpreted and negotiated in the local context. Both interviewer and interviewee have multiple intentions and desires some of which are consciously known, others not (Scheurich, 1995). In interview conversations people tell stories and create a narrative knowledge that is embedded in community and practice. Knowledge exists in the relationship between person and world, between the constructors of knowledge and the knowledge constructed, in the webs of networks, in the 'inter' of interviews. The medium of the interview is language and the knowledge produced is linguistic. This language is not bounded or stable, however much we might feel we have 'captured' it in the text of a transcript; it is "persistently slippery, unstable and ambiguous from person to person, from situation to situation, from time to time" (Scheurich, 1995, p. 240).

The relationship between researcher and participant(s) is a political and social relationship (Limerick, Burgess-Limerick & Grace, 1996), characterised by asymmetries of power and patterns of dominance and resistance (Ribbens, 1989; Scheurich, 1995). The very practices of questioning advance, constrain and generally shape the evolving discourse (Paget, 1983). Attending to the politics of the interview "is fundamental to the quality of analysis, interpretation and presentation of the text that lies at the heart of interview-based research" (Limerick et al., 1996, p. 459). However the assumption that power always lies with the interviewer who may in turn strive to 'empower' the interviewee (Mishler, 1986) is a modernist assumption which implies that power can be given and received (Scheurich, 1995). Rather, drawing on Foucault's notion of fluid networks or relations of power, we might interpret power as moving between actors, ebbing and flowing in the dialogic tide. Certainly in my interview situation I have found the play of power to be much more complex than is generally admitted (for further elaboration see chapter five). If anything the greater 'power' may be exercised in the spaces beyond the interview event, as that event is interpreted, textualised and put out into the public arena for yet further interpretation.

Scheurich argues that the interview interaction is fundamentally indeterminate (there is no stable reality or meaning that can be represented) but that we, as interviewers, capture and categorise at the expense of ambiguity. I find myself much in sympathy

with this perspective yet have to acknowledge, sadly, that I too have attempted to tame the 'wild profusion'. While I have made every attempt to foreground the 'baggage' I bring to the research enterprise and to highlight the open indeterminacy of the interview interaction itself, my re-presentation of interview conversations shapes and constrains, imposes pattern and order. Here the tension between the hermeneutic and the postmodern, for my study, is perhaps most apparent. Most certainly I would ask that my interpretation is read as no more than that – one possible, situated reading amongst many already made and yet to be made.

However if the research interview is reconceptualised in line with Kögler's (1996) critical hermeneutics then the fusion of horizons of philosophical hermeneutics and the postmodern networks of dominance and resistance may cease to be separate and seemingly incompatible activities. Rather the interview becomes a site where incommensurate views and shifting relations of power provoke the researcher into a critical self-examination. The researcher metaphorically shifts to one side in order to reassess her own assumptions and practices in relation to those of her participants. A space is opened up for a more critical and insightful interpretation which, in acknowledging the constraints on discourse, challenges them. Ambiguity and difference may be foregrounded rather than ignored.

This remains an unresolved area in my research thinking and practice. While the frame for my empirical study is essentially hermeneutic, I continue to worry at its interpretive edges and seek a way of coming to understand that is less dependent on structure and categorisation. Herein lies one of my (many) post thesis challenges!

As well as conversing with colleagues through the medium of the research interview, I have also engaged in dialogue with documentary texts, both historical and contemporary. A critical interpretation of these texts illuminates the social, historical and cultural context which shapes current practice in the (post)modern research university. While my engagement with the documentary material does not involve 'interviews' as such, the hermeneutic process of 'knocking at the text', questioning it, opening up the structures supporting a way of life and world-view, is very similar.

Often there has been a strong and exhilarating sense of ‘conversing with’ those who have gone before.

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The opportunity to engage in dialogue with the texts of philosophers and thinkers from a range of disciplines and to begin to understand better the implications of interpretive, feminist and postmodern perspectives, has been one of the great pleasures of this thesis. At the beginning of this chapter I quoted from Keri Hulme’s *the bone people* in which the author draws attention to the fact that on a spiral staircase you can’t see more than a step and a half in front. However I recall the Guggenheim Museum in New York where one’s progress up the mushrooming spiral reveals ever more expansive views of where one has come from. Coming to understand and articulate my philosophical/theoretical perspective has involved just such an ascent through a developing relation between the parts and the whole.

A commitment to the idea of knowledge as socially constructed has multiple implications for the research in which I am engaged. It determines how I conduct my research (dialogically), how I interpret that dialogue (hermeneutically/critically) and how I orient myself to the ‘object’ of my research (relationally). In the case of this particular project, the social construction of knowledge not only determines my research approach, it is also a key focus of the inquiry itself. Nowhere has the social construction of knowledge been more thoroughly and powerfully practised and more rigorously denied than in the university – our (until recently?) principal ‘knowledging’ institution. Despite the dramatic changes of the latter twentieth century in what we understand knowledge to be and how it is constituted, the effects on research practice and pedagogy in the university have been marginal (Brew, 2001). In this thesis I will argue that an awareness of the socially constructed nature of knowledge and participation in the processes of meaning making, are essential components of a higher education and essential to the survival of the university. We all, teachers and students, need to be accountable for how and what we know (Bruner, 1990).

Pursuing this theme, in chapters two and three I turn the spotlight on the university as a site of knowledge 'production' and 'dissemination'. Just as I have positioned my own research philosophy and approach at the intersection of the hermeneutic and the postmodern, so too is the contemporary university poised between a shape of life that is growing old and a shape of life which we have yet to fully apprehend. It is in this context of change and uncertainty in higher education that my inquiry is located. Chapter two backgrounds the historical development of the western university and interrogates its current uncertain position, thereby providing a temporal and spatial frame for a local, empirical study. In chapter three I trace the development of a research/teaching relationship through the comparatively short history of the University of Canterbury. Hermeneutically these two chapters provide the historical, cultural, political and economic context within which my interview study is positioned.

## Chapter Two

### The Idea of the University?

*When the tongues of flame are in-folded  
Into the crowned knot of fire  
And the fire and the rose are one  
(T.S. Eliot, 1963, p. 223).*

*Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold  
(W.B. Yeats, 1962, p. 99).*

T. S. Eliot's poem *Little Gidding* is constructed around opposites – pole and tropic, frost and fire, fire and water, the living and the dead – but it ends in a moment of utter completeness and unity when the fire and the rose become one. In contrast Yeat's *The Second Coming* begins with a powerful image of disintegration, a denial of the possibility of coming together. For me these quotations capture the paradox of the university at the beginning of the twenty-first century – an institution founded on an idea of unity, struggling to find its place in an age of fragmentation. The quotations also reflect the theoretical tension already alluded to, and to which I return, between a hermeneutic and postmodern view of the world. Together they provide a touchstone, a conceptual framework both for this chapter and for the entire thesis.

Unity and fragmentation are not the only dichotomous concepts to surface in any reading of the contemporary university. Others include consensus and dissensus, knowledge and competence, elite and mass, local and global, research and teaching, process and product, teacher and student, sciences and humanities. If the modern university has been seen to privilege research over teaching, teaching over learning and the sciences over the humanities, the postmodern university is characterised by the experience of fragmentation as opposed to unification (Rowland, 2002) and dissensus as opposed to consensus (Readings, 1996). Scholarly writing about the university and practice within universities suggests that these polarising pairs play a powerful role in structuring our thinking about

the university at the dawn of the twenty-first century. In this thesis I suggest that such binary distinctions may be inhibiting our ability to think creatively about the future of the university.

In this chapter I want to position the empirical study which constitutes the core of this thesis, within the context of the university as an institution, as an 'idea', a series of ideas and latterly the absence of an idea. Barnett (1990) argues that our idea of higher education is largely buried in the past and that, by engaging in a process of 'conceptual archaeology' we can link current practice in higher education to a long and rich historical tradition. New Zealand universities claim a place in that tradition by virtue of the predominantly British colonisation of our country in the nineteenth century. English/Scottish universities provided a model for settlers intent on recreating the Old World in the new. Accordingly I want to explore where the (western) university has come from, how that heritage informs contemporary values and practices, in what ways the idea of the university is currently being challenged and what this might mean for the future of higher education. In doing this I want to draw attention to, and perhaps challenge, our tendency to think of the university dichotomously. The focus of this chapter is necessarily broad both spatially and temporally. In the following chapter I narrow that focus to the local level – New Zealand and, specifically the University of Canterbury.

In Australia, students talk about going to 'uni'. In New Zealand they go to 'varsity'. Through all my years of association with 'the university' it had never occurred to me to wonder what the word actually meant. 'Uni' from the Latin *unus* meaning 'one'. 'versity' from *versus*, the past participle of *vertere* meaning 'to turn'. To turn into one? People? Knowledge? The Latin word *universitas* referred to 'the whole' (world) and later to a college or guild. Here, in the origins of the word, we have a clue to the 'idea' of the university. That idea focuses on unity, on a community of like-minded people, a collectivity in which all its members were equal (Barnett, 2000). 'To turn into one' suggests a preference for a shared world-view, a common culture, a privileging of unity over diversity. Also an elitism since it would seem that a common cause can accommodate only so many before fragmentation ensues. As I read it, the story of the university is the story of a succession of unifying concepts which have defined the idea of the university,

followed by the relatively rapid disintegration of that unified ideal, with a concomitant growth in the specialisation, boundary and hierarchy with which we are so familiar today.

The contemporary university no longer has access to the unities of the past and its boundaries seem none too secure either. 'Excellence' has become the unifying principle of the contemporary university and, "as an integrating principle, excellence has the singular advantage of being entirely meaningless..." (Readings, 1996, p. 22). The 'crisis talk' (Peters & Roberts, 1999) evident in the titles of publications such as *The End of Knowledge in Higher Education* (Barnett & Griffin, 1997), *Decline of the Donnish Dominion* (Halsey, 1992), *The University in Ruins* (Readings, 1996) and *The Crisis of the University* (Scott, 1984) highlights the fact that the university can no longer take for granted a privileged and secure position as society's principal knowledge producing institution.

My writing is informed by the many scholars for whom the 'idea of the university' provides fertile, if contested, ground. It is also propelled by my own concern that higher education move beyond its current technocratic consumerism and measures of 'excellence' to rethink its place in and obligation to the global and local communities. In a world that could possibly conceive of the notion of a 'war on terrorism', in which bombs and relief supplies could be dropped simultaneously and in which the complexity of human interaction is reduced to the simplistic either/or ultimatums, we desperately need people who can rethink relations of power and ways in which we might celebrate identity within diversity. The university must have a role in enabling us to understand ourselves better, to evaluate critically our own actions as well as those of others.

### **Continuity and Change: A Brief Archaeology**

Cuban (1999) asserts that, since the mid-sixteenth century in the Western world, sixty-six institutions have survived in recognisable form; the Catholic and Lutheran Churches, the Parliaments of Iceland and the Isle of Man and sixty-two universities! He uses the terms 'suppleness' and 'malleability' to describe what he considers to be the remarkable resilience of the university as an idea and as an institution. Blackmore (2001) in her review of five recent texts on higher education questions whether universities are experiencing "a

moment of crisis, a signal of collapse or merely a transition?" (p. 353). It is not my intention to write a history of the university. Others have done that (for example, Patterson, 1997). However I do want to trace as lightly as possible the elements of continuity and change in the idea of the university, to map the genesis of those values and guiding principles which, though under attack, still inform much academic thinking about the university today. According to Gergern (1999) every tradition closes doors to the new while every bold creation undermines a tradition. It is in this rich tradition of the university and in resistance to it that the experiences of the academics interviewed in this study are grounded.

### *The Ancient World*

Although the origins of the university as an institution are generally traced back to twelfth century Europe, Patterson (1997) argues that the intellectual tradition of higher education and learning can be traced back to the fifth century BC in Ancient Greece. In Athens the Sophists offered courses, for fees, in a wide variety of disciplines without using the authority of any political or religious institution to support their credibility. Emerging out of the Sophist tradition, Socrates evolved a dialectical method of teaching, the intention of which was to lead people to clear thinking. In Plato's Academy students could, through lectures and seminar discussions, study mathematics, religion, metaphysics, ethics, educational theory, political theory, linguistic analysis, literary criticism and some speculative science. The emphasis was on a process of open, critical dialogue in which the student was required to critically examine the knowledge acquired (Barnett, 1990). Pupils learnt not through didactic instruction but by mastering for themselves the technique of asking and answering questions. This participation in a common inquiry can be seen as a powerful expression of community between teacher and pupil (Pelikan, 1992). The Lyceum, founded in 335BC by Aristotle, was both a teaching and a research institution closely paralleling the constitutional purpose of the contemporary university.

Thus the values emerging in the higher education of ancient Greece include: the challenging of conventional knowledge through open, critical dialogue; joint participation of teacher and pupil in a common quest for learning; an emphasis on critical inquiry and

self reflection; the forging of a community of learners and the notion of emancipation through education (Barnett, 1990; Pelikan, 1992). These elements, to a greater or lesser extent, constitute recurring themes across the past 2500 years and remain central in developing a modern idea of higher education.

### *The Medieval University*

Organisationally, the twentieth century university is the successor to the medieval universities of Paris and Bologna. The medieval universities offered a common curriculum in the seven liberal arts followed by specialisation in one of the professional disciplines. Patterson (1997) claims that the largely vocational training was directed at careers in law, medicine, teaching, government administration or the church with little scope for independent inquiry or the pursuit of study as an end in itself. However Barnett (1990) suggests that students and masters were regarded as joint participants in the enterprise and that what counted as knowledge required continual reassertion and demonstration through structured discussions or disputations. The relationship between teacher and student paralleled that of master/apprentice with the student becoming a pupil-teacher and eventually a master.

The highly cosmopolitan medieval universities were essentially teaching institutions in which the lecture provided a vehicle for the systematic dissemination of approved, established knowledge. That knowledge was generated within a clearly bounded universe which promoted a single, coherent, Christian world-view (Perkin, 1984). The *university*, like the monastery was not tied to a particular nation-state but to a *universal* order (Delanty, 2001). This was a time when knowledge was still capable of being 'mastered' and discourse truly shared; the medieval scholar could claim to have read everything written! Significantly, those who produced knowledge were also the chief consumers of that knowledge, thus reinforcing the closed circle of intellectual privilege.

Structurally, the modern university has inherited from its medieval ancestor the recognition of other universities as like institutions; the notion of a course of study leading to a first degree and then on to higher degrees; the division of major branches of learning into

faculties and the idea of governance through such offices as chancellor and rector. The intellectual inheritance includes a participative approach to learning and inquiry and the notion of a community of masters and scholars, which came to be reinforced by the residential character of university life. By the late fourteenth-century the term *universitas* could be applied to such a community.

### *The Enlightenment*

Although initially ignored by the universities, the Enlightenment project of eighteenth-century Western Europe was to have a profound impact on conceptions of knowledge in higher education. Following the political and religious turmoil of the previous two centuries, the Enlightenment sought to 'illuminate' the darkness of ignorance and superstition, to dismantle *tradition* as the source of knowledge and to emancipate people from the dogmatism of that tradition (Delanty, 2001; Griffin, 1997; Usher, 1996). This challenge to tradition opened up the question of how any given knowledge can be considered valid or, more fundamentally, how it is possible to 'know' anything. In response, the validity of knowledge was to be grounded in scientific method in the form of measurement, testability and the right use of *reason*. Tradition was to be replaced by sense-experience gained through observation and experimentation as the source of knowledge (Usher, 1996). Thus rationality and science were joined together and science came to be regarded as the privileged model of investigation. The use of reason, developed through education, offered an *emancipatory* prospect for humankind, based on the aim of truth, science, democracy and humanity (Mourad, 1997). It was also to create a discursive hegemony, the legacy of which continues to bedevil the university (Barnett & Griffin, 1997).

The Enlightenment story is a powerful and seductive one in which we, as researchers and teachers, are deeply implicated.<sup>1</sup> We believe that our research may, in some small way, help to make the world a better place; that our teaching will empower our students to lead

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<sup>1</sup> The Enlightenment legacy is apparent in the language used by my interview participants to describe research and knowledge. Metaphors of perception and illumination abound (see chapter seven).

more fulfilling lives. As the “dutiful child of the Enlightenment” (Usher & Edwards, 1994, p. 24) education is the vehicle by which the Enlightenment ideals of critical reason, individual freedom and benevolent progress are realised. It is not until we place these ideals under scrutiny that we realise just how much we take them for granted. The story of the contemporary university can be read as a struggle between those who cling to the Enlightenment ideals and those who can no longer work within that paradigm.

*Liberal Modernity: Humboldt and the University of Berlin*

Readings (1996) observes that there is a striking resemblance between most university projects of the twenty-first century and university projects of the nineteenth century. My research indicates a strong commitment on the part of the University of Canterbury academics to the ‘idea’ (if not the actuality) of the university advocated by Humboldt. Moreover Readings suggests that many contemporary solutions to the current ‘crisis’ of the university are no more than restatements of Humboldt or Newman, produced in ignorance of these founding texts. Certainly the ideas that I personally favoured with regard to the research/teaching relation, before I embarked on this study, turned out to be remarkably similar to the guiding principles put forward in the early nineteenth century by Humboldt, Fichte and Schleiermacher for the University of Berlin!

Wilhelm von Humboldt, founder in 1810 of the University of Berlin, conceived of a community of learners (teachers and students) working together in the disinterested pursuit of knowledge (*Wissenschaft*). The role of the teacher was to encourage the student’s independence of mind rather than to disseminate codified knowledge. For Fichte, the university rector, this process of development, of the cultivation of character (*Bildung*), emphasised knowledge acquisition as a *process* not as a *product*. Rather than the presentation of finished results the German idealists advocated student involvement in the construction of an idea (Habermas, 1989). The university is defined as the place in which teaching and research are inseparable (*Einheit von Forschung und Lehre*). Teaching is embedded *in* research, carried out *through* research.

Humboldt's idea of the university signalled a revolution in the approach to knowledge. Previously, universities had assumed a fixed body of knowledge to be defined by professors whose very authority legitimated that knowledge - Bakhtin's authoritative discourse (Bakhtin, 1986). The scientific revolution revealed that knowledge was an expanding and open system, defined by those who researched it and therefore contestable (Johnston, 1998). When we talk about the current 'crisis' confronting the university we would do well to consider what an immense shift in thinking such a revolution demanded of the nineteenth century learner. Paralleling this new understanding of the nature of knowledge was the development of the concept of *Lehrfreiheit*, the freedom of the professor to choose his subjects for teaching and research and to investigate and teach without government interference in his particular field of competence (Patterson, 1997).

However by the last quarter of the nineteenth century (and foreshadowing developments of the later twentieth century), the German professor was expected to produce research as a measure of his professional competence. This research obligation reduced the amount of contact time between teacher and students. The resulting specialisation also made communication within the professorial community more difficult. Paralleling this development was the selective adoption of the German university model by other nations whose understanding of the concept of *Wissenschaft* differed markedly from Humboldt's original intention. *Wissenschaft* as a process, an attitude of mind, a skill and a capacity to think, was overlooked in favour of *Wissenschaft* as 'science', embodied in the specialised research university. By the middle of the nineteenth century this positivistic conception of science was also dominating German universities (Aviram, 1992).

Humboldt conceived of his university as a place of learning for teachers and students. Underpinning this 'idea' of the university were three unifying ideals; the unity of knowledge, the unity of teaching and research and the unity of teacher and student. Today any hope for a unity of knowledge appears to have been abandoned. Likewise the unity of teacher and student has been all but overwhelmed by student numbers and the demands of a consumer oriented economic model. But the notion of the unity of teaching and research, however strongly contested, lives on as a "romantic preference" (Coaldrake & Stedman, 1999, p. 19) in the minds and hearts of academics world-wide (Clark, 1995). It was the strong expression of commitment to a Humboldtian unity of research and teaching by

academics at the University of Canterbury, which prompted the focus of this thesis. This powerful legacy<sup>2</sup>, is presently receiving a contemporary makeover (Barnett & Griffin, 1997; Bowden & Marton, 1998; Boyer Commission, 1999; Brew, 2001; Clark, 1997; Mourad, 1997; Rowland, 2000), as those concerned about teaching and learning in higher education attempt to counter the idea of a university based on delivery and consumption. I return to this theme at the end of the chapter.

### *Liberal Modernity: Newman and the University of Ireland*

We can compare and contrast Humboldt's idea of the university with that of Cardinal Newman, appointed rector of the new Catholic University of Ireland in 1851. Newman considered that a university education should be 'liberal'; that is that the acquisition of knowledge should be regarded as a valid end in itself. He explicitly positioned liberal education in opposition to practical knowledge and the principle of utility (Readings, 1996). He also advocated that a liberal education should develop a *connected* view or grasp of things. Without this commitment to an intellectual culture which exceeds the sum of its mechanically acquired parts there is (in an echo of the Eliot and Yeats's quotations) "no whole, and no centre" (Newman, in Readings, 1996, p. 75). In this Newman was resisting the increasing specialisation required by the emerging industrial society.

Higher education for Newman was "a higher form of understanding, gained through self-reflection on what is taken for knowledge" (Barnett, 1990, p. 20). The result of such a university education would be intellectual self-empowerment. Unlike Humboldt however, Newman claimed that "to discover and to teach are distinct functions; they are also distinct gifts, and are not commonly found united in the same person" (Newman, 1960, XL). The proper role of the university was to be the expansion of the mind and the formation of character, achieved not through a commitment to research but through a striving for intellectual excellence based on self-reflection. The core business of the university was teaching, not research. There is no mention of the research project "since divine truth occupies the place of the productive unit of revealed knowledge that is taken by

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<sup>2</sup> Clark (1995) claims that "the Humboldtian formulation of 1810 is without doubt the most influential academic ideology of the last two centuries" (p. 50).

Wissenschaft in the German model” (Readings, 1996, p. 75). In Britain the university was still directly linked to the church. In Germany the university of culture was increasingly identified with the nation-state. In both countries the notion of a community of learners and the unity of knowledge remained paramount.

Aviram (1992) distinguishes between this traditional *liberal* conception favoured by the English universities and the *humanist* German conception described in the previous section. The liberal tradition educated according to a definite personality model (the English gentleman) based on the teaching of classical culture. Within this framework the individual had an essentially passive role which involved the acquisition of the basic structure of that culture. By contrast, the goal of a humanist education was not predetermined but was arrived at by the individual student through a process of self-design/discovery. Today universities experience vestiges of both traditions struggling to survive in a world which regards the idea of knowledge as an end in itself, as an unnecessary luxury and in which market values have largely replaced the goal of self-discovery.

At this point, before embarking on a journey through the twentieth century, we might pause and reflect on elements of continuity and change in our archaeology of the idea of the university. Since its emergence in medieval Europe, the university has survived huge social, political, economic and intellectual upheaval. Its fortunes have waxed and waned. On occasions the university has been at the forefront of the creation and dissemination of knowledge. At other times, intellectual leadership has been seized by alternative institutions and the university has subsequently endured long periods of relative hibernation. The degree of state control of higher education has varied though with a tendency towards increased control over time. The student body has, at different times, represented a cross section of society or, more commonly, a privileged elite. An emphasis on vocational training has alternated or co-existed with a belief in the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake.<sup>3</sup> Despite these fluctuations, and occasional contradictions, the commitment of the university over time to such ideas as institutional autonomy, academic freedom, community, communicative transparency, international dialogue, the pursuit of truth, a coherent world view, the development of character and intellect, the preservation of

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<sup>3</sup> Recognising that the history of the university is more chequered than we tend to acknowledge provides a helpful antidote to some of the more recent overwrought crisis talk.

intellectual culture, the provision of a forum for debate and the development of critical faculties, remained remarkably firm and constant.

### **More Change than Continuity: Universities in the Twentieth Century**

Since returning to the university as a member of the academic staff, I have thought about my student experience of the university in the 1970s and again in the 1990s. In the seventies I majored in English and history. I did a lot of reading, attended many lectures and wrote a considerable number of essays. I enjoyed my university experience particularly in the later years. However I had no idea as to the purpose of a university education beyond developing an understanding of some aspects of selected histories and literatures (at that time I would have said history and literature). I had no understanding of the concept of critical thinking; if that was what I was doing I was utterly unaware of it. I had no knowledge of the university's research function, was oblivious to the fact that my lecturers engaged in such activity. In retrospect I think this is sad. I think I would have welcomed, and my learning would have benefited from, a meta-perspective on the role of the university. Even in the nineties, as a mature student and a teacher educator, I had little sense of what the university, through its disciplinary branches, was trying to accomplish. In all instances I seemed to be 'doing' without any real understanding as to *why* I was doing (beyond the pragmatics of course requirements, qualifications and my own love of learning).

I mention this because it is no doubt one of the many invisible threads motivating the writing of this thesis, but also because my experience may in some small way reflect the increasingly paradoxical position of the university in the twentieth century. That I was so unaware of the idea or 'mission' of my university suggests either a stunning naivety on my part (quite likely), or the absence of any unifying 'idea', or an inability on the part of the university to communicate its purpose, indicative of a breakdown in the traditional notion of 'community'. Possibly all three.

In this next section I want to explore in greater depth the complex changes occurring within and beyond the twentieth century, (post)modern university. It is in the twentieth century

and most particularly the latter half of the century, that the forces of change have most challenged the tradition of continuity. We are now straining credibility to talk about ‘the university’ in a generic sense (although I continue to do so in this text for ease of communication). Equally the notion of a uni-versity, a unified community sharing a common discourse, can only be considered wishful thinking. Globally we have many different types of universities and locally, many competing discourses. In an echo of Yeat’s poem, Readings (1996) claims that “the story of liberal education has lost its organising center” (p. 10). Yet the desire to construct some order out of this confusion, to counteract the centrifugal forces, remains strong. Later in the chapter I look at how scholars are rethinking the university in the twenty-first century and what this might mean for research, teaching and the relation between them.

### *Organised Modernity*

‘Organised modernity’ is Delanty’s label for the period spanning the twentieth century until the 1970s. This is the era of the modern university, the research university and the growth of mass higher education in which the legitimation of the university shifted from the humanities to the natural sciences. During this time the university took centre-stage in a ‘credential society’ (Delanty, 2001).

It is the period of the growth of Becher’s ‘academic tribes and territories’ (Becher, 1989, Becher & Trowler, 2001). Instead of the university constituting an integrated community, specialisation and disciplinary subdivision emphasised the demarcation of boundaries, a fragmentation of knowledge and an increasing breakdown in communication.

Communities were constructed at the disciplinary or even sub-disciplinary level. It was from within these groupings rather than from the university as a whole, that academics gained their sense of identity and their way of being in the world. Ironically the integration of research and teaching was one of the first casualties of this specialisation. Increasingly expertise was determined by research performance. Teaching on the other hand, had to respond to the demands of greater student numbers. Nurturing students in a Humboldtian environment of joint inquiry became much more difficult. Clark (1995) talks of “research drift and teaching drift” in which “the systematic separation of these mainline academic

activities can be everywhere noted” (p. 193). Habermas quotes from an article in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. “Allegiance to Humboldt is the life-lie of our universities. They have no idea” (Habermas, 1989, p. 102).

The disciplinary groupings did not enjoy equivalent status. The superiority of the sciences, a legacy of Enlightenment thinking, was enhanced by the involvement of the universities in national defence projects and associated scientific and technological developments during and after the Second World War. Scientific research attracted substantial funding which in turn raised the profile of research as an academic enterprise. C.P. Snow’s (1959) ‘two cultures’ became firmly entrenched with the sciences pursuing “technological rationality untroubled by the need to reflect on the social effects of the knowledges they produce or manipulate since such thinking is supposed to take place elsewhere” (Readings, 1996, p. 82). ‘Elsewhere’ was in the social sciences and the humanities. The disciplinary context for knowledge production thus became saturated with power considerations (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991).

While specialisation and the dominance of research is a developing feature of the period of organised modernity, universities were to experience their most dramatic changes, internally and externally, in the period after the Second World War. Through its long history the university was largely shielded from the vagaries of social, political and economic change. In return for providing the nation state with technically useful knowledge and for preserving and reproducing national, cultural traditions, the university was afforded a relative freedom and autonomy from the outside world. As an island of knowledge the university existed in a space outside the general flow of communication (Delanty, 2001). However in the second half of the twentieth century this protected space has been exposed to the full force of changes occurring in the wider world. It is to the nature of these changes and the university’s response that I now turn.

#### *An Island No More: Massification and Globalisation*

Traditionally universities educated the elite of society. Despite the rhetoric about knowledge being an end in itself, universities were training future leaders, professional

people and scholars in order to preserve and reproduce the national culture. It was an essentially conservative function, the preserve of a privileged few. Post-war, the zeitgeist militated against such elitism. The desire to create a more democratic world as a bulwark against totalitarianism encouraged an ethos of participation. Women, who had contributed so much to the war effort, sought to maintain and expand that contribution. The reconstruction of countries devastated by war required trained and educated populations. There was an increasing demand for a more highly skilled labour force. In response to this social and economic pressure, most developed countries reshaped their higher education systems (Scott, 1995). Existing universities were expanded, new ones were established and there was a greater emphasis on less traditional forms of higher education.<sup>4</sup> This has resulted in the transformation of higher education from an elite system (up to 15% of the age group enrolled), to a mass system (between 15% and 40% enrolled) and, in some places, to a universal system (more than 40% enrolled) (Trow, quoted in Scott, 1995, p. 2).

According to Scott (1995), mass higher education systems can be characterised as follows. They are inclusive rather than exclusive; their students present with diverse educational and social backgrounds and are increasingly seeking second chance, continuing education; they provide graduates not only for elite positions but increasingly for jobs in middle management and public bureaucracies; they cause the traditionally dominant position of the university within higher education to be questioned; they require greater 'managed' accountability and regulation of previously collegial and autonomous institutions; and, finally, the presence of a large, heterogeneous student body requires that the curriculum and its delivery be systematised, even industrialised. From our brief survey of the history of the university it is apparent that these developments cut directly across and present a further threat to the already rapidly fading idea of the unified community of scholars. Scott observes of British higher education that, while it has become a mass system in its public structures, it remains an elite one in its private instincts. I believe this tension is also evident in New Zealand universities where, particularly in the 1980s and 90s the economic advantages of mass higher education were pursued without a parallel commitment to

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<sup>4</sup> Two thirds of British universities were established after 1960.

supporting an increasingly diverse student body. It is a tension also apparent in the desire to cling to an ideal of the integration of research and teaching.

In its early incarnation the university was remarkably *international* in its orientation. The medieval university was cosmopolitan in composition, attracting students and teachers from all parts of the western world. The scholarly population was a mobile one until such time as an increase in the number of universities meant that more students could attend a university in their home region. However in the period between the Renaissance and the coming of the industrial revolution the university became much more *national* in its orientation, serving the professional needs and ideological requirements of the new nation states of Europe (Scott, 1998). Its public interests were national rather than international even though its science and scholarship transcended frontiers. Thus Scott argues that despite the universalising rhetoric universities are local institutions with a strong sense of place and space, supporting national agendas.

However *globalisation* disrupts this location, involving as it does the transnationalisation of the world's economy, a decline in the power of the state and an ascendancy of the market. Globalisation simply side-steps national agendas. Transnational corporations and processes dominate and the nation state is no longer the primary site of economic management. This is a network society. Increasingly place and space are being rendered obsolete. New machines and technologies which shrink time-space and to a growing extent, transcend societal control and regulation, are transforming global networks (Urry, 1998) in a process which can encourage both homogenisation (McDonalds) and heterogeneity.

Both research and teaching are implicated in the disrupting and (dis)locating (Edwards & Usher, 2000) effects of globalisation. A shift is already occurring in the production of knowledge (Gibbons et al., 1994). Power over the constitution of knowledge is moving in part across the boundaries of particular disciplines and beyond the university. If research is 'on the move', so too is education. Whereas a modernist pedagogy was characterised by 'spaces of enclosure' (book, classroom, curriculum), teaching and learning are increasingly distributed across space-time in a way that decentres pedagogical authority and foregrounds student networking and horizontal (peer) observation (Edwards & Usher, 2000).

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As yet the full implications of globalisation for the university are unclear. Will the university become yet another transnational corporation? Funded, governed and managed by whom? Will new knowledge institutions emerge, the composition of which we cannot yet envisage? Or will the local come to be revalued anew in a global world? How will globalisation advance or disrupt the relationship between research and teaching? And, above all, “how and by whom will the decisions be made about the value of knowledge, in a world where there are dramatically different notions of knowledge, truth and its place in society, and where particular value systems support different kinds of knowledge?” (McNair, 1997, p. 35). In my opinion this is a debate which universities should be encouraging and in which they should be centrally engaged.

### *The University of ‘Excellence’ and the Marketisation of Higher Education*

Traditionally universities have been the central knowledge institutions of the modern state with the production, dissemination and acquisition of that knowledge closely tied to scientific and material progress, cultural preservation and the nature of the market and democracy (Peters & Roberts, 1999). However the forces of industrialisation, democratisation, massification and globalisation (!), combined with diminishing resources, have undermined the relationship between higher education and the state. They have also transformed the intimate, collegial, scholarly ideal in which the unity of knowledge was sought through the integration of research and teaching and the partnership of teacher and student. Readings (1996) argues that, confronted by a transnational global economy, the university no longer serves the interests of national culture. Rather the ‘University of Excellence’ is nothing more than a corporation serving its own interests in a world of globally exchanged capital. It is the simulacrum of the idea of a university in which administration replaces the dialectic of teaching and research and “intellectual activity and the culture it revived are being replaced by the pursuit of excellence and performance indicators” (Readings, 1996, p. 55).

Of all the analyses of the performative culture of contemporary higher education, I find Reading’s the most elegant, convincing and depressing. I recall secondary school charters in the 1980s (when charters were a new concept in New Zealand) making extensive use of

the word 'excellence'. By 1991, according to its charter, the University of Canterbury was undertaking to "promote excellence in teaching, research and scholarship" (University of Canterbury, 1991, p.1). One of the main goals of the New Zealand Tertiary Education Advisory Commission is "the achievement of excellence in teaching, learning and research" (TEAC, 2001c, p. 115). Because of its very emptiness, excellence permits/requires intensive surveillance and exhaustive accounting. The business of accounting and being accountable, of responding to increasing surveillance (Blackmore, 2001), all but takes precedence over the business of research and teaching.

The marketization of higher education changes what counts and what is valued as knowledge. The traditional university emphasis on the production and transmission of knowledge as a social good is replaced by an emphasis on the production of knowledge as a market good (Buchbinder, 1993). According to Lyotard (1984) knowledge will increasingly be translated into quantities of information. In computerised societies knowledge is becoming 'exteriorised' from knowers and valued as a commodity, the goal of its production being exchange.

The language of the market signals this change. In the relationship between suppliers and consumers the pedagogical relationship becomes one of consumption. Suppliers do not have to be producers; they can obtain their knowledge goods from elsewhere thereby reducing opportunities for knowledge creation in the context of the pedagogical situation (Barnett, 1997). The commodity of knowledge is pre-packaged and subsequently purchased by the consumer who 'banks' credits as received. The relationship involves the movement of the commodity but precludes personal transformation on the part of the student. What is being transacted is information rather than knowledge with higher education positioned as a site for the extraction of value (Pritchard, 1998). The notion of understanding is replaced by concepts of competence and mastery of content. To survive, universities must respond to students with the discursive practices of the shopping mall, internet, television and fast-food restaurants (Ritzer, 1996, quoted in Pritchard, 1998). At the same time a consumer culture challenges the assumption that the academy has a monopoly on knowledge, thereby delegitimizing belief in professors as experts (Bloland, 1995).

## *The New Production of Knowledge*

It would be difficult not to be aware of the fact that we are currently living in a 'knowledge society'. The phrase is much used, especially by politicians, but perhaps less well understood.<sup>5</sup> Its full implications, particularly for the university are not yet clear (although I have outlined some of the less desirable implications above). What is evident is that new knowledge producers are emerging to challenge what has long been a university monopoly. Gibbons et al., (1994) argue that, with the massification of higher education and the post Second World War development of the university research function, knowledge producers are flowing out of higher education in increasing numbers with the potential to undermine the university monopoly in knowledge production. Paralleling this expansion in supply has been the expansion in demand for specialist knowledge. The conjunction of these two factors is creating the conditions for the emergence of a new mode of knowledge production.

According to Gibbons et al., alongside traditional (Mode 1) knowledge, which is generated within a disciplinary, primarily cognitive context, there is emerging a new form of knowledge (Mode 2) which is created in broader, transdisciplinary social and economic contexts. In Mode 1 problems are set and solved in a context governed by the largely academic interests of a specific community while Mode 2 knowledge is carried out in a context of application. Mode 1 is characterised by homogeneity and hierarchy while Mode 2 is characterised by heterogeneity, heterarchy and transience. Mode 2 tends to be more socially accountable and reflexive. This shift from contemplative to operational knowledge is accompanied by a shift in power. The academic monopoly on defining what is to count as worthwhile knowledge is now being challenged by industrial corporations, finance houses, consultancies and professional bodies. Short lived, interdisciplinary teams form to address particular issues and disband. Research groups are less firmly institutionalised, their networking being facilitated electronically. Increasingly knowledge is being produced and validated in the world beyond the universities. The production of

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<sup>5</sup> In a report on the Catching the Knowledge Wave Conference (Auckland, 2000), the Association of University Staff Academic Vice-President Jim McAloon deplored the small number of practising academics present concluding that "the participant list seemed overwhelmingly chosen from politicians, permanent heads of government departments and other senior civil servants, chief executives and senior personnel from finance companies, management and accountancy consultancies" (Association of University Staff, 2001, p. 4).

such knowledge is under continuous negotiation and is dominated by supply and demand factors. Knowledge is tailored to use.

There has been little analysis as to how the changing mode of knowledge production might impact on teaching in the university. Some students could be participants in interdisciplinary, inter-institutional research teams. However when disciplinary boundaries are dissolving in the face of new ways of developing knowledge, I wonder what the implications might be for teaching which in general remains locked into the traditional disciplinary structures. It seems likely that this will reinforce a research-teaching drift. For example Edwards and Usher (2000) note that research and pedagogy are beginning to follow different imperatives. I return to this theme in the last section of the chapter.

There is talk of the democratisation of knowledge (Delanty, 2001). Not only is higher education available to many more people than in the past, but knowledge is much more 'out there' in the public arena, subject to contestation by a better informed public. We are experiencing a turn to a 'learner-centred' pedagogy; we work in 'learning institutions' and are expected to engage (performatively) in 'life-long learning'. Our learning opportunities are increasingly 'flexible'. However I think we need to be wary. For example the deceptively positive connotations of the term 'flexible learning' mask the fact that flexibility is a double-edged sword, its 'affordances' almost invariably requiring other constraints (V. Chen, personal communication, June 2002). The discourse of the market is adept at appropriating the language of new age liberalism. "Learning" and "knowledge" change their spots according to the context and the nature of the discourse. There is a tendency to conflate knowledge and information and I wonder whether we might not currently be experiencing the growth of an 'information society' rather than a 'knowledge society'. Moreover, in an age of great political and media sophistication and collusion, the knowledge that is 'out there' is anything but disinterested. In the higher education of the future we may need to focus less on the generation of 'new' knowledge and more on enabling people to critically deconstruct the knowledge which constitutes the 'knowledge society'!

## *Knowledge or Competence?*

The neoliberal paradigm for economic restructuring has driven the policy and practice of most western countries over the past two decades (Peters & Roberts, 1999). In the new global economy, the economic importance of education has been seized upon by governments eager to increase productive capacity and generate economic growth. Knowledge and skills have become the key ingredient determining economic advantage. As a result, higher education has increasingly been reconfigured along market lines “with a heavy emphasis on ‘student choice’, competition between different ‘providers’, new ‘accountability mechanisms’, and a favouring of corporate models of governance and ownership” (Peters & Roberts, 1999, p.11).

Part of this reconfiguration has involved a blurring of the distinction between ‘education’ and ‘training’. The knowledge valued by the state is that which is economically useful. The ‘ideology of instrumentalism’ (Codd, 1997) favours knowledge as product, performance and commodity rather than knowledge as insight, appreciation and understanding. The liberal notion of education as personal development and intellectual transformation is replaced by an emphasis on the acquisition of skills and information. Newman’s idea of knowledge as an end in itself is rejected in favour of competence. What counts is not what a person understands but what she can do (Barnett & Griffin, 1997).

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) has driven this instrumentalist, market view of education through the development of the National Qualifications Framework. Unit standards have enabled the modularisation and packaging of qualifications and parts of qualifications so that educational ‘products’ can be moved, compared and traded with ease. “In this sense the NZQA reforms are highly compatible with a marketisation agenda, fostering just the sort of standardisation and portability necessary for efficient ‘trading’ in the educational marketplace” (Peters & Roberts, 1999, p.103).

The universities have argued that the application of unit standards to higher education would result in a fragmentation of knowledge and an emphasis on measurable behaviours at the expense of creative problem-solving and higher level cognitive capabilities (Codd, 1997). Nevertheless I would suggest that the semesterisation (modularisation?) of the

university curriculum is designed precisely to provide more palatable, bite sized chunks of knowledge for student consumption with the result that the amount of time for reflection and development of understanding (as opposed to the acquisition of information) is diminished. There is no doubt that while the direct impact of the NZQA reforms on higher education has been limited, the new language of learning has most certainly penetrated the academy in the form of learning outcomes, performance criteria, competencies, skills, standards, providers, consumers, audits, accountability, excellence... The more pervasive the language becomes, the more it determines the reality of our educational practices.<sup>6</sup>

Barnett and Griffin (1997) argue that the university is no longer free to determine the nature of the knowledge projects in which it is engaged. As the knowledge functions of the university have gained in economic importance, external forces have undermined its structural protections and traditional freedoms (Peters & Roberts 1999). The “state-sponsored celebration of competence” (p. 168) affects not only learning but also teaching and research, as knowledge projects are supported more for their economic effectiveness than for their contribution to human understanding. The emphasis in university research is moving away from free inquiry to problem solving; from curiosity driven projects to specific programmes funded by external agencies for specific purposes. The bureaucratic model embraced by a growing number of universities, supports a hierarchy of officials whose existence is predicated on a preference for predictable routine rather than on the pursuit of innovation and the unexpected (Perkin, 1984). Increasingly teaching and research may occur in different places and be funded from separate sources (Gibbons et al., 1994).

### *A Trojan Horse: The Postmodern Challenge*

Universities appear to have little control over the market forces described in the previous sections despite being fundamentally altered by them. So far higher education seems to have adopted a reactive rather than a proactive approach; changes have been required/imposed rather than desired/self-initiated. Universities seem resigned to a

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<sup>6</sup> Recently at the University of Canterbury I attended an informal meeting of people interested in ‘flexible learning’. More than one participant in the discussion talked of being able to ‘package’ and ‘deliver’ courses to distance students through the use of information and communication technologies.

narrowly instrumental, pre-set agenda (Smith & Webster, 1997). Academics have been compliant in accepting the economic model as a given (Brew, 2001). In fact at the University of Canterbury the inexorability of the market has driven even departments such as education to semesterize and modularise its curriculum. The only alternative proposed is a nostalgic return to the Humboldtian ideal. The lack of challenge to neoliberal economics (which has not been confined to the universities) may be in part due to the fact that the university is also confronting and struggling with a major challenge from within. The framework of knowledge on which the idea of the university is predicated is under attack.

The university is quintessentially a modern institution. Modernism proposes that there are universals that can be discovered through reason, that science and the scientific method are the favoured routes to truth and reality and that language describes that reality in a credible, reliable way (Bloland, 1995). The progress of science is towards true knowledge. The outcomes promised by modernist science are freedom, equality, justice, prosperity, stability, peace and “a graspable sense of the rational unfolding of history” (Bloland, 1995, p. 523). Read like this and out of context, we can easily grasp the appeal of modernist tenets to educators. But modernism, which once provided such a revolutionary challenge to medieval dogmatism, has, in many ways, been found wanting. Our disillusionment with the failure of modernism to deliver a better world is reflected in the postmodern interrogation and deconstruction of the modern system. Because the university is steeped in modernist ideals and practices, postmodern critique, which emerges from within the university, can be compared to a Trojan horse, assaulting the citadel of knowledge from within (Barnett & Griffin, 1997).

Kuhn (1996) challenged the idea of knowledge as a mirror of reality (Rorty, 1979) by questioning the existence of the detached, objective, individualistic scientist and argued instead for science as a socio-historic practice carried out in research communities and characterised by disruption and discontinuity. From within the social sciences, Gadamer (1989) pointed out that understanding is always ‘prejudiced’ in so far as it can only be approached through an initial projection of meaning made from a particular standpoint in history, society and culture. Increasingly words and their meanings are seen to exist only as social constructs and learning to talk about the world is learning to play language games (Lyotard, 1984). Each of us is born into an ongoing set of language games, an

understanding of which offers us entry into specific circuits of power. The grand narrative has lost its credibility and we are left with the “splintering, disintegrating and fragmenting effects of the partiality and plurality of contesting voices” (Lather, 1991, xvi). Dialogue becomes too difficult.

In challenging foundationalism, postmodernism challenges the disciplinary basis of knowledge and undermines the boundaries defined and maintained by the traditional disciplines (Mourad, 1997; Scott & Usher, 1996). Previously “subjugated knowledges” (Foucault, 1980, p. 81) located on the margins or low in the disciplinary hierarchy, are asserting their identity and challenging the dominant forms of knowledge/power. This contested forcing open of knowledge spaces celebrates difference and diversity but also points in the direction of separatist enterprises. It reveals the increasingly incoherent structures of the disciplines (Mourad, 1997). Knowledge has become “diffuse, opaque, incoherent, centrifugal (Gibbons et al., 1994, p. 83); it has become ‘unruly’ (Edwards & Usher, 2000). The long treasured interconnectivity of all knowledge is lost. Scott optimistically refers to this as an “epistemological wobble” (Scott, 1997, p. 17). Readings (1996), as we have already seen, believes that “the story of liberal education has lost its organising center ...” (Readings, 1996, p. 10).

The combination of a larger and more diverse student body, the rapid development of information and communication technologies, globalisation, neo-liberal market policy (including chronic underfunding) and the postmodern assault on foundational knowledge structures, has left the university bruised and battered, but not entirely without the resources to regroup and reconceive a higher education for the twenty-first century. In New Zealand, and at the University of Canterbury, we are only just beginning to come to terms with a performative agenda and it could be argued that, in our desire to enact a neo-liberal discourse, we may be missing an opportunity to position ourselves at the forefront of a new way of thinking about learning.

## Dwelling in the Ruins

The quotation from Readings - “the story of liberal education has lost its organising center” (Readings, 1996, p. 10) - brings us back full circle to Yeats and Eliot with their contrasting notions of dis/unity. Despite a persistent emotional attachment to the idea of community, the unity of knowledge and the integration of research and teaching, the reality is that these ideals now appear to be anachronistic. The university may be understood to be a ruined institution (Readings, 1996) and the task facing scholars/practitioners of higher education is not to languish in nostalgia for a golden past nor surrender to the demands of performativity, but to rethink actively, even aggressively, the role of the university in the twenty-first century. In the following section I assess some of the recent proposals as to how we might dwell in the ruins.

### *The University of Learning*

A number of scholars consider the nature of the research/teaching relation for the new century.

Mourad (1997) proposes post-disciplinary research programmes, which would be places of instruction as well as research. Teaching at all levels would occur through and in the course of research and the distinction between the two would be blurred. Curricula, instead of being based on codified knowledge, would be determined largely by the direction of the inquiry.<sup>7</sup> Thus research, teaching and learning would form a dynamic, flexible and integrated whole. Similarly, Clark (1996, 1997) advocates an inquiry model of education. He argues:

We need to move conceptually beyond the dichotomy of research and teaching. Drawing a fault line between these two principal faculty activities, the incompatibility thesis portrays teaching and research as distinctively different operations that are basically opposed to each other. But if a line must be drawn, it should be drawn between research-based teaching and learning (where much blending of these three activities occurs) and teaching and teaching and learning centred on codified material and lacking an inquiring attitude (Clark, 1997, p.252).

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<sup>7</sup> Mourad (1997) absolutely captures the key to learning for me when he observes that “one is an inquirer before one is a knower” (p. 34).

Paradoxically Mourad's proposal marks the most radical departure from the current drive towards the commodification of knowledge while at the same time taking us straight back to almost undiluted Humboldt! However attractive the vision one has to question its viability in practical terms. Short of a massive injection of funding to support smaller inquiry focused groups and more intensive, personalised teaching, as well as a redesign of university campuses to accommodate more small group interaction, it is very difficult to see this vision becoming a reality. Information technology may hold a key to shared knowledge making and inquiry based learning but not while the driving force behind its use is economic rather than educational. Putting researchers *in front of* large numbers of students (either physically or on-line) is no substitute for putting them *alongside* small numbers of students in a joint learning situation.

Given the reality of massification, one could argue that Mourad (1997) and Clark's (1997) proposals point to a greater separation of undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, along the lines of the North American model. However Mourad explicitly includes undergraduate education as part of his proposal. Specifically in relation to *undergraduate* education in research universities in the United States, the Boyer Commission has argued that:

The ecology of the university depends on a deep and abiding understanding that inquiry, investigation and discovery are the heart of the enterprise, whether in funded research projects or in undergraduate classrooms or graduate apprenticeships. Everyone at a university should be a discoverer, a learner. That shared mission binds together all that happens on a campus. The teaching responsibility of the university is to make all its students participants in the mission (Boyer Commission, 1999, p. 9).

According to the Commission, many research universities are failing their undergraduate students in terms of the above criteria. The authors call for radical reconstruction (rather than cosmetic surgery) which includes turning the prevailing undergraduate culture of receivers into a culture of inquirers.<sup>8</sup> The exploration of knowledge, which is the university's *raison d'être*, requires that exploration drive the teaching as well as the research function. Curricula and academic rewards should be structured accordingly.

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<sup>8</sup> Ironically the final report from the New Zealand Tertiary Education Advisory Commission (2001c), discussed in chapter three, proposes exactly the opposite.

Working 'alongside' in an atmosphere of inquiry is reflected in the idea of the university as an institution of *learning* (Bowden & Marton, 1998; Brew, 2001) – as opposed to an institution that focuses on teaching and research. Learning is the activity in which both researchers and students engage. Researchers learn through their research inquiries. In turn they facilitate student learning (through teaching) and learn from and about their students. Learning in this sense is about seeing something in the world in a different way (Bowden & Marton, 1998) and that process unites teachers and students. There is a need to prepare students for a complex and uncertain world, not by presenting them with pre-packaged, commodified material, but by placing them in situations in which they are required to handle conflicting ideas and perspectives and uncertain situations (Barnett, 2000; Bowden & Marton, 1998; Brew, 2001). Students need encouragement to be audacious, daring and creative (Barnett, 2000). Instead of associating itself with the known, the university needs to embrace the unknown<sup>9</sup>; it needs to focus on knowledge processes (inquiry, learning, questioning) rather than knowledge (Barnett, 2000).

Despite their obvious similarities, I believe there are subtle differences in the Barnett, Bowden and Marton, Brew and Mourad proposals. Pedagogically it is quite possible for students to engage with conflicting ideas and perspectives and uncertain situations independently of their lecturers' research programmes. Problem based learning, for example, allows students to participate in joint inquiries which may or may not amount to original research. It is possible to involve students in the spirit of inquiry without necessarily making a direct link with academic research and without that inquiry being initiated/facilitated by practising researchers. Thoughtful and innovative primary and secondary school teachers have been doing this for decades. Only with Mourad's proposal is it clear that research and teaching dissolve into one shared enterprise, which must be located in the research university. What Readings (1996) calls thinking beside each other.

### *Consensus or Dissensus?*

While there seems to be a measure of agreement about the driving force of inquiry in the university and its role in bringing together research and teaching, there is less agreement

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<sup>9</sup> I would argue that we need to be careful in talking of the 'unknown' and the 'known'. In a very real sense the 'known' is the greatest 'unknown', demanding a critical and deconstructive gaze.

about the possibility or desirability of dialogue across disciplines within the university. How can we “speak to each other, and learn from each other, across the divides between the disciplines and roles which we take on?” (Rowland, 2001, p. 162). Here another of the ‘binary distinctions’ alluded to at the beginning of the chapter is brought into relief.

Both Gadamer (1989) and Habermas (1989) support the idea of the university as a place of interpretation and critical transformation. Underpinning this function is the need for the university to be a site of intense communication through which the *essential interconnectivity* of all forms of knowledge can be realised. Though with less emphasis on interconnectivity, Delanty (2001) also argues a role for the university in opening up avenues of communication between different kinds of knowledge. However according to Boland (1995) “we are precariously poised between a modern/postmodern incommensurable hostility and the conditions for tough authentic dialogue” (p. 554). He suggests that we need to increase and sustain the process of authentic listening to others even though we may not (and perhaps should not) resolve the tension. Listening is not a word much used in higher education. We presuppose listening when we talk of dialogue and communication but, as with the many other dichotomies that frame the discourse(s) of the university, it seems to me that talking is mostly privileged over listening.

In contrast Barnett (2000) asserts that the idea of the *universitas* whose members could all understand one another and share in a common cause, is dead. In the postmodern university nothing remains that connects its parts or its inhabitants. Instead of unity-through-dialogue, there are “proliferating forms of local languages” (Barnett, 2000, p. 93) which are incommensurable.<sup>10</sup> Barnett appears to accept this breakdown in communication as inevitable. He argues that, instead of focusing on its internal relations, the university needs to reconsider its relations with the wider world.

Gergern (1999) on the other hand suggests that the existence of multiplicity and difference may be our best hope for sustaining the human project. While agreeing that we should abandon recourse to notions of unity, consensus and communication, Readings (1996)

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<sup>10</sup> I think Brew (2001) and Becher (1984, 2001) would challenge Barnett with regard to the impossibility of dialogue across disciplinary boundaries. Both authors claim that there are many more bridges across disciplinary chasms than we are inclined to acknowledge.

proposes that we should instead institutionalise *dissensus*. He claims (very astutely and persuasively in my view) that “thought can only do justice to heterogeneity if it does not aim at consensus” (p. 187). What we need are institutions which aspire not to unity of thought but to thoughtful dialogue involving a careful listening to and respect for, if not agreement with, the perspectives of others. The university should be a site of constructive, interdisciplinary debate. Dialogue (consensual or dissensual) across disciplinary boundaries may make possible a more fluid and shifting disciplinary structure “that holds open the question of whether and how thoughts fit together” (Readings, 1996, p. 191).

This is not interdisciplinarity (which preserves the absoluteness of the disciplines). Rather it is a desire to move inquiry “off the disciplinary plane” (Mourad, 1997, p. 86) away from unnecessarily constraining foundational structures and to open up “a relationship between a space outside the boundaries and the space with in them” (p. 88).

Rather than attempting simply to repair fragmentation, as if the disorder of the university is a congeries of abnormalities to be fixed, mediated or ignored, these inquiries would work with the myriad of fragments, reconceived as local contexts, to defamiliarize and reshape them in ways that produce new, intellectually compelling alterations of reality (Mourad, 1997, p. 101).

In Mourad’s proposal for a post-disciplinary research programme, and Reading’s advocacy of dissensus, I can glimpse a way forward for the university. We need to shake off the conventionality of our disciplinary thinking, transgress the boundaries, open up spaces within the existing rather than charging onwards in the name of progress. We need to ask why knowledges have been grouped in certain ways and how this has shaped our perception of the world and we need to involve students in this process. The rhythm of disciplinary attachment and detachment (Readings, 1996) already apparent in some research groupings (Gibbons et al., 1994) may help to dissolve some of the more intransigent boundaries. In this way “the history of ideas would be seen not as constituting a continuum but rather a multidimensional collage” (Mourad, 1997, p. 102). What we need is an education for a postmodern world. I hesitate to suggest (returning to Yeats and Eliot) that fragmentation and nomadism could in themselves be regarded as a new form of unity (!), but perhaps we can try to think beyond the apparent oppositions of modern/postmodern, unity/fragmentation, consensus/dissensus, science/humanities and, of course, research and teaching, into a more fluid and interrogative space.

## *The University in the World*

Barnett (2000) argues that the university needs to reconsider its relations with the wider world. I suspect that, if the university can establish an identifiable role for itself in a postmodern world, that the nature of the relationship with the world, or at least the local community, will become much clearer. There is no doubt that many of the barriers between university and community are being breached. At the University of Canterbury there are many examples of relationships being forged with business, industry, the arts, other secondary and tertiary educational institutions. A simple but significant example is the column *Ask a Scientist* in the local paper in which academics respond unpatronisingly to questions posed by school children.

But what is the university's place in the world? What would be lost to the local and global communities (beyond a professional training/credentialling and preservation function) should the university cease to exist? Bauman (1992) believes that academics must abandon their Enlightenment role as *legislators*, bearers of the right, true knowledge, which had the power to determine the destination of 'mankind'. Rather academics must respond to an irrevocably plural world by becoming *interpreters* of that world. Interpretation of systems of knowledge opens up the possibility for communication across such knowledge systems. Thus a key internal function and link to 'the world' is that the university work interpretively within, between and above apparently hostile communication networks, in order not to bring together as one, but to demonstrate to the world how to 'do justice to heterogeneity'. Instead of determining culture the university becomes an interpreter and mediator of cultures. In this way hermeneutics and postmodernism might be brought together in a productive partnership. There is no centre and no destination. There is just the formidable task of trying to understand ourselves and each other better in order to get on in the world. The university offers a site in which teachers and students may engage together in this process.

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I have tried in this chapter to trace the development of the university from the small, intimate, collegial *universitas* of the Middle Ages in which scholars shared a single world-

view, through the Humboldtian emphasis on the unity of knowledge, research and teaching, teacher and student to the twentieth century university in which knowledges begin to fragment, research is privileged over teaching and science is privileged over the humanities. In all this time, the ability of the university to adapt, chameleon-like, to changing circumstances, while clinging to its foundational 'idea' has ensured not only its survival but its position of prestige and authority in the development of national culture.

Today the position of the university as the pre-eminent knowledge institution is challenged. Increasingly knowledge is sought and developed on a need-to-know basis in nomadic and temporary sites beyond the jurisdiction of the university. Knowledge is a transactable commodity, representing economic advantage and available for purchase by governments and students alike. Universities that resist this modularisation and commodification of knowledge, risk being sidelined. There is no unity of knowledge, of knowers, of ways of knowing. Nothing that unites the inhabitants of the campus-based or virtual university other than their diversity of understanding and purpose. The intellectual centre has been replaced by the administrative imperative of excellence.

If this profile of the late twentieth century university seems overly dramatic and pessimistic it may only be because universities (and the University of Canterbury is one of them) continue to fight rear-guard actions. When asked about their understanding of the role or purpose of the university, my research participants responded in ways which Humboldt and Newman would have applauded. The desire to maintain the liberal and humanitarian traditions remains deeply embedded in both the thinking and the structures of the university. It represents an intellectually familiar way of being in the world and in the university. However it is no longer possible, even for a university as conservative as Canterbury, to ignore or avoid the tension generated at the intersection of the modern and the postmodern. In the next chapter I trace the growth of the University of Canterbury from colonial college to aspiring world class research university and interrogate the idea(s) which has underpinned this development.

## Chapter Three

### ‘The Spirit of Doubt and Enquiry’:<sup>1</sup> Research and Teaching at the University of Canterbury

*We regard research and teaching not as separate functions of a university teacher but as complementary parts of a single activity (A group of teachers in the University of New Zealand, 1945).*

*The work of the Department both in teaching and research, has been seriously interfered with by the uncertainties connected with the infestation of dry-rot in the East Block (Department of Geology Annual report, 1957).*

The University of Canterbury (Christchurch, New Zealand) emerged from and is a participant in the long and complex tradition of higher education outlined in chapter two. It shares, in various measures, the attitudes, values and practices of the British, European and American universities. It also owes much to the legacy of Humboldt and the German research university. At the same time, it has developed in relative isolation and in response to the particular demands of the local situation. In order to understand better the experiences of my research participants, I need to position them in a local as well as an international historical and contemporary context. Accordingly, this chapter aims to explore the University of Canterbury’s institutional perspective on the idea of the university and in particular on the relationship between research and teaching as it has developed over the past 130 years.

Ironically accessing the university archives turned out to be a surprisingly frustrating experience. Frustrating because I assumed that a university of all places would have its institutional and cultural artefacts well housed, documented and publicly accessible. In fact I discovered that the university archives are scattered across the campus and that there is much uncertainty as to what is housed where and under whose jurisdiction. For a while I

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<sup>1</sup> In this thesis I use the spelling ‘inquiry’. However where the alternative spelling ‘enquiry’ is used by others, I adopt their notation.

despaired of finding primary material that would offer insights into Canterbury's approach to the research/teaching relationship. Eventually I was able to access some key archival documents in addition to the more publicly available material in the university's libraries.<sup>2</sup> The state of the archives is currently being addressed at a policy level.

As with chapter two, I have taken a chronological approach to describing the local context. It seems clear to me from the material at my disposal that the history of the University of Canterbury with regard to the research/teaching relationship is marked by two distinct phases. The first, from the university's establishment in 1873 until the end of the Second World War, focuses on *teaching* as the main mission of the university. During this time there is evidence of growing academic dissatisfaction with conditions which militated against the development of a research culture. The second, post World War Two, phase is dominated by the rapid expansion of *research*, paralleled by a significant increase in student numbers. The post-1945 emphasis on research reflects international trends particularly in the United States where the world war and cold war galvanised research activity. However the local situation has its own unique momentum including a very distinct 'Canterbury' watershed in 1945/6 to which I devote considerable attention.

Today with the pendulum having swung from teaching to research and back a little, it is possible that Canterbury is in the process of constructing a better balance between and integration of the two. Ironically this is happening at a time when the notion of a research/teaching 'nexus'<sup>3</sup> is being subjected to much critical scrutiny and to political and market pressure both in New Zealand and internationally. In the final section of this chapter I explore recent developments in the research/teaching relation at the University of Canterbury particularly with reference to the 2000 National Academic Audit. I also consider the recent reports of the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission (TEAC) as it charts a future course for higher education in New Zealand.

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<sup>2</sup> I am grateful for the help of Jeff Palmer (Macmillan Brown Library) and Jan Kotlowski (University Registry) in this regard.

<sup>3</sup> The word 'nexus' is used in the literature (for example Neuman, 1992). It is a word I try to avoid, preferring the term 'relation'. However I use 'nexus' or 'link' when I want to convey institutional or scholarly thinking about the research/teaching relation.

## **The First Phase: A Teaching University**

As all Christchurch school children learn, the aim of the Canterbury Association was to establish a Church of England colony in New Zealand.<sup>4</sup> Of the 53 members of the Canterbury Association, 30 were graduates of Oxford University and 17 of Cambridge University (Gardner, Beardsley, Carter & Phillips, 1973) a fact which offers real insight into the nature of Canterbury as a settlement and Canterbury College as the region's first institution of higher education. Given that the original intention of the Association was to recreate a little slice of England in the south seas, it is not surprising that the establishment of a university college was regarded as a priority. In the event (and in the familiar spirit of New Zealand regional rivalry) the province of Otago was the first to establish a university in 1869 followed by Canterbury in 1873. In between times there was a call for the establishment of a university for the whole of New Zealand, a body which would appoint examiners, conduct examinations and confer degrees. In 1870 the University of New Zealand was established and the following year it invited institutions of higher education to apply for affiliation. The Canterbury Collegiate Union (a union of the Museum and Christ's College) sought affiliation and, in 1873 was transformed into Canterbury College with the aim of providing "a liberal and regular course of Education" (Gardner et al., p. 40). As we shall see later the co-existence of the University of New Zealand alongside the regional colleges is significant in the history of the research/teaching relationship in New Zealand.

The focus of the education at Canterbury College in the last decades of the nineteenth century was the Bachelor of Arts degree. This was a general qualification with an emphasis on breadth rather than depth (Parton, 1979). Since the Education Act of 1877 provided for universal elementary education, the demand for teachers who could turn a hand to almost any subject, had burgeoned, and many intending and practising teachers enrolled in the College's evening classes (Atkinson, 1969; Gardner et al., 1973). Students were compelled to keep a foot in both the arts and sciences camps by having to take both Latin and

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<sup>4</sup> The Canterbury Association was formed in England in 1848 by Edward Gibbon Wakefield and John Robert Godley as part of a larger scheme for the systematic colonisation of New Zealand. The Association was to oversee the selection of colonists and the purchase of land for the Canterbury Settlement. Christchurch was to become the main settlement for the province of Canterbury.

mathematics. To illustrate the benefits of this liberal education with its emphasis on the unity of knowledge, Gardner et al. point to the breadth and humanity of scientist Ernest Rutherford's letters. "In them 'the two cultures' flourish happily together. It is not fanciful to suggest that his years at Canterbury College equipped him in non-scientific ways that helped to make him a better scientist" (Gardner et al., 1973, p. 169).

Clearly Canterbury College was, of necessity, adopting Newman's idea of the university as a place of teaching rather than Humboldt's idea of the university as a place where teachers and students were jointly engaged in the construction of new knowledge. According to John Macmillan Brown, first Professor of classics and English at Canterbury College:

The aim of the university lecturer ... is to stir into active life the higher faculties, the imagination, the reasoning, the powers of comparison, and most of all the power that grasps a subject in its entirety, systematises and transfers it into a living part of the mind (quoted in Gardner et al., 1973, p. 103).

There was very little research expected or undertaken. In general the professors had neither the time nor the facilities to conduct cutting edge research and in terms of teaching they were circumscribed by the examination syllabus set down by the University of New Zealand.

Towards the close of the parliamentary session of 1910, a petition was presented to Parliament by 13 members of the Victoria College of Wellington teaching staff requesting an inquiry into the condition of university administration and education in New Zealand. The New Zealand University Reform Association presented the petitioners' arguments in a pamphlet published in 1911. Reflecting the belief (discussed in chapter two) in the centrality of the modern university to national culture and identity, the authors claimed:

Probably no single institution is capable of so far reaching effects on national life as a University. According to modern notions, the duty of a University is not merely to provide a culture which is a luxury for the few, but through the professions and the teachers to mark its impress on the whole mass of the community and to infuse into every department of national life an ever-increasing sense of the value of scientific ideals and scientific method and training, in their application to every form of human activity (New Zealand University Reform Association, 1911, p. 5-6).

This excerpt is interesting for its emphasis on the need for the university to reach out to the community at large (prefiguring the post World War Two development of mass higher education) and for its valorisation of scientific ideals, methods and training.

The authors went on to argue that the degree system did not encourage original work. There were few scholarships available, the libraries were of poor quality and laboratory facilities were insufficient or non-existent. In all the authors considered it “a university atmosphere quite unsympathetic to investigation” (New Zealand University Reform Association, 1911, p. 107) and held up as a laudable alternative the research/teaching synthesis of Humboldt’s University of Berlin. Given that the universities were now well established as teaching institutions it seems that the academic staff were seeking an engagement in research that would complement the teaching function. Thus the desire for a shift from Newman’s liberal university to Humboldt’s research university is clearly signalled.

#### **1945/6: A Watershed**

However it was to be another 35 years before the concerns of the Reform Association were addressed. Two world wars and the Great Depression intervened and it was not until 1945 that the state and status of research in the university was taken up again, this time on a number of fronts. A group of teachers in the University of New Zealand published a provocative statement titled *Research and the University* (Allan et al., 1945). At much the same time the Chancellor of the University of New Zealand issued a questionnaire to all colleges regarding the extent of research in each institution. Lastly, the Canterbury University Students’ Association published a report entitled *University Reform* (Canterbury University College Students’ Association, 1946).

The pamphlet (it is less than four pages in length) *Research and the University* was essentially a manifesto setting out the requirements of the University if it were to become a research institution. Of its six authors, four were from Canterbury College, one from the University of Otago and one from Auckland University College. Driving the initiative was the Viennese philosopher Karl Popper whose nine year lectureship at Canterbury College

created “an impact on the academic life of the College ... greater than that of any other person before or since” (Gardner et al., 1973, p. 262). Of particular significance was Popper’s role in modelling and promoting the research function of the University.

*Research and the University* opens with a quotation from Flexner’s (1931) *Universities American English German* in which the author claims that research and teaching should be “conceived as hovering on the borders of the unknown, conducted, even in the realm of the already ascertained, in the spirit of doubt and enquiry” (p. 242). Popper’s group goes on to assert. “We regard research and teaching not as separate functions of a University teacher but as complementary parts of a single entity” (Allan et al., 1945). The commonly held view that the University is primarily a teaching institution should be abandoned. Rather the University should be looked upon as an institution in which “the spirit of free enquiry is preserved and cultivated” (p. 2).<sup>5</sup>

In order to remedy the situation as it exists in New Zealand a complete change of attitude is required. It must be recognised that a specialist might achieve much greater educational result by teaching his speciality than by spreading his teaching over what is traditionally considered the balanced content of his subject. The view that it is the task of the University to hand to the students a definite body of examinable knowledge must be discarded (Allan et al., 1945, p. 3).

This amounted to nothing less than a direct attack on the examination system as administered by the University of New Zealand. This system, conducted by examiners in Britain, stifled teaching freedom and encouraged coaching and cramming at the expense of understanding and scholarship. The authors of *Research and the University* concluded that “the educational task of the University must be taken much more seriously than its role in grading students” (Allan et al., 1945, p. 4).

In one brief statement a small group of academics had exposed the shortcomings of the New Zealand university system and opened up the prospect of a higher education premised on the fusion of research and teaching. In advocating specialisation they had also challenged the traditional idea of the unity of knowledge for both researcher/teachers and

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<sup>5</sup> Particularly intriguing for me was the fact that, shortly after I had accessed this document and drafted this chapter, a photocopy of *Research and the University* was circulated to academic staff in the science faculty – a response, as I understood it – to TEAC’s proposal (discussed later in this chapter) to repeal the legislation coupling research and teaching in tertiary institutions. Once again, this action illustrates the ongoing, dogged commitment to the complementarity of research and teaching.

students. Interestingly *Research and the University* was only elaborating on the position already expressed 35 years earlier in the publication from the New Zealand University Reform Association (1911). However it seemed that something more than academic dissatisfaction would be required to shift the thinking of the university administration.

The vexed question of research was picked up in June 1945 when the Chancellor of the University of New Zealand issued a questionnaire to the heads of departments of all the Colleges inquiring about the extent of staff research since 1933. Respondents were asked to comment on departmental and local community research in the period 1933 – 1945. They were also asked about the availability of funding for research, the time available to undertake research activity, the quality of research facilities in comparison with overseas universities and other perceived barriers to engaging in research. Finally they were asked to indicate ways in which research might be increased or improved in the department.<sup>6</sup>

The responses from heads of departments and other staff members in accountancy, biology, botany, chemistry, economics, education, English, geology, history and political science, mathematics, mechanical engineering, modern languages, philosophy and physics at Canterbury College paint a dismal picture. The head of the Department of Chemistry reports that practically no research work was carried out by academic staff in the period 1933 – 1945. This theme is repeated again and again throughout the responses.<sup>7</sup> Factors constraining research activity are remarkably similar across departments, the major barrier being static staffing levels at a time of rapidly increasing student numbers. For example, “Botany student numbers increased from 51 in 1939 to 156 in 1945. Accommodation, equipment and staff remained practically the same” (Department of Botany). Heavy teaching, examining and administration loads left little time for research. “There is little doubt that, as at present staffed, the Science Departments in the New Zealand University Colleges, have such a heavy burden of teaching, examining and general administration, that no excuse need be made if they did those duties alone” (Department of Physics). In what I suspect was a particularly unusual case, a professor from mechanical engineering reports that “my own teaching hours amount to 26 hours per week”. This is reinforced by a

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<sup>6</sup> This material is currently held in the Macmillan Brown Library, available on request.

<sup>7</sup> Interestingly little reference is made to any impact there might have been on the functioning of the college from the depression or the war. One departmental report mentions that in 1939, the college was still suffering from the dismissal of junior lecturers and attendants and the reduction of grants necessitated by the onset of the depression.

comment from a professor in the Department of Economics who perceives “a strong tendency in the past to regard the New Zealand Colleges as purely teaching institutions whose main function was to see students through their examinations”.

The absence of funding for research projects is another constraint. “Funds have been unobtainable in the past for research projects in this Department within the College” (Department of History and Political Science). Library facilities at Canterbury College are described as “pathetically inadequate” (Department of Economics). Complaints regarding lack of space are not surprising when one considers that the entire university was still housed at its original central city site. “The present laboratories are overcrowded and there is no further space either for private rooms for additional staff, or for more than the pre-war number of research students. As soon as men return from the services, wishing to do M.Sc. work, the position will be desperately acute” (Department of Chemistry).

Concern is expressed at

the hampering effect of the unrealistic bounds of a set syllabus and a uniform national examination system. This is a prime barrier to the development of a research tradition, and indeed of real university education. It makes for an artificial division between teaching and research. It engenders cram school habits and attitudes instead of a living interest in problems, a training in tackling them and a sense of responsibility in making pronouncements about them (Department of Economics).

In a similar vein, a senior lecturer in English, complains that the current syllabus turns the university teacher into “a re-hasher, an animated text-book”, while an acting professor of physics asserts that “we are committed to a tradition of spoon feeding in this country and students expect to be coached for examinations”.

Another perceived constraint on research activity is isolation both from colleagues in universities overseas and within New Zealand itself. A professor in the Department of Chemistry points out that “the stimulus of contact with other research workers in similar fields is most fruitful and often essential, but owing to our isolation is usually missing”. Travelling by sea from New Zealand was long and often uncomfortable at the best of times and opportunities would have been severely curtailed in wartime. Even within New Zealand it seems that inter-institutional contact was limited and that academics experienced a similar sense of isolation from kiwi colleagues.

To remedy this situation, there are repeated calls for additional staffing (academic, technical and clerical), improved accommodation, increased funding for equipment and travel, contact with other researchers in New Zealand and overseas, the establishment of a University Press to aid publication, scholarships to enable postgraduate research and a change to the examination system to allow greater control of the syllabus. As well as these material requirements, there is a recognition of the need for a different mindset, a research tradition or culture to be fostered in New Zealand. “Compared to many other countries, the University in New Zealand is the Cinderella of the education system and research is inclined to be regarded as a luxury or an extra, especially if it involves much expense” (Department of Physics). There is a call for research to be “considered as an integral part of department work, enabling better teaching, stimulation of students, freshening of the mind, preservation of self-respect and contact with overseas workers” (Department of Biology).

Reinforcing the message coming from the questionnaire responses was a report published by a Committee of Canterbury College Students’ Association in 1946. Entitled *University Reform*, it supported the essential complementarity of research and teaching, considered that far too little research was being done in the university and recommended the development of research schools attached to the university. Included in the report were essays on *Teaching in the University* by Professor Packer and Mr Troup and on *Research in the University* by Dr Parton and Dr Allan.<sup>8</sup> Professor Packer and Drs Allan and Parton had all been co-compilers of the Popper inspired pamphlet on *Research and the University* described above. In his essay Parton is critical of the prevailing view that “a good teacher has to be like a Victorian husband ‘a good provider’” (Canterbury University College Students’ Association, 1946, p. 22) and advocates the appointment of men of the ‘right type’ with experience in research as well as teaching.

The culmination of this flurry of activity with regard to research appears in the Canterbury College Council Minutes for July 1946 in which the College Committee recommends that:

The University should affirm and pursue the principle ... that for the developing of research, staffing must be sufficiently liberal, in all departments, to allow teachers the necessary freedom to engage in it. Research itself must be liberally defined, so that it can be seen as the instrument of all departments of knowledge and teaching.

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<sup>8</sup> Despite the rhetoric about the inseparability of research and teaching, they are treated here, as so often in the future, as discrete entities.

In building up Departmental staffs, it will be necessary not only to give due consideration to the research experience and capacity of all appointees, but to make some appointments with a particular view to the framing and carrying out of research policy in all aspects. New kinds of appointment may be necessary e.g. readerships, research fellowships etc. (Council Minutes, 1945 – 1949).

The question of the definition of research had already been raised by a professor from the Department of Economics in his response to the research questionnaire when he wrote. “My first difficulty is in the definition of research. Some people regard it as exploration beyond the frontier of existing knowledge, others as the application of existing knowledge and methods to new fields or in new ways, still others as new approaches to or presentation of existing knowledge”. In calling for a liberal definition of research, the College Committee was likely to be agreeing with Professor I. A. Gordon whose column from the *New Zealand Listener*,<sup>9</sup> May 15, 1946 defined research as “the application of critical intelligence and independent judgement to any problem that is capable of systematic study ... In the humanities, research often produces not so much new facts as a new synthesis, a new interpretation and an original point of view”.<sup>10</sup>

In tracing the research/teaching relationship (or rather its absence) through the first 50 years of Canterbury College, I think it is important to remember that the establishment of Canterbury College and its parent body, the University of New Zealand, was influenced significantly by graduates from Oxford and Cambridge Universities. The ‘idea’ of the university in New Zealand was thus linked to Newman’s liberal university with its emphasis on teaching and its explicit rejection of research as an academic pursuit. Moreover teaching was severely circumscribed by the administration of examinations from Britain. Thus it could be argued that New Zealand’s colonial status shaped university education until well into the twentieth century. The desire to break away from these constraints, to establish an academic identity/autonomy and to develop a research culture, surfaces throughout this period. It seems however that academic frustration was insufficient in itself to initiate change. Rather the experience of a world war and its technological demands provided the necessary catalyst.

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<sup>9</sup> The *Listener* is a weekly publication that comments on current events.

<sup>10</sup> This inclusive definition of research advocated by Professor Gordon and adopted by the College Council is significant given the tendency in the university to differentiate between ‘research’ which is carried out at the frontiers (generally in the sciences) and ‘research’ undertaken in the humanities which is often regarded not as true research but rather as ‘scholarship’.

So the scene was set for a new phase in the interaction of research and teaching in the university.

### **The Second Phase: A Research University**

In November 1946 the Research Committee of the University of New Zealand was established. Its role was to administer 10,000 pounds of which Canterbury's share was just over a quarter (Gardner et al., 1973). At much the same time, the first discussions about the possibility of a new university site were taking place. If Canterbury was to become a 'research' university, as the lobbying of 1945/6 proposed, then increased funding and improved and expanded accommodation needed to go hand in hand. In the event, the School of Engineering was the first to take up residence at the new Ilam site in 1961 followed by the Faculty of Science in 1966 and the Arts Faculty in the early 1970s. Gardner et al. attribute the "really explosive development of research activity" (p. 398) starting around 1965, to the changed size and atmosphere of the institution.

The Departmental Annual Reports from 1956 until their demise in the 1970s bear out this revitalisation.<sup>11</sup> Departments were required to report on the disposition of work between members of staff in the department, any staff changes and their effects, scholarships or other awards obtained by students, future plans for the department and general comments plus a summary of research and scholarship undertaken during the year. They were *not* required to report explicitly on the inter-relation of research and teaching.<sup>12</sup> Although some of the concerns voiced in 1946 remain (the dry rot experienced in the Department of Geology appears in its 1957 Annual Report and again the following year!) especially in relation to lack of space before the move to Ilam, on the whole the tenor of the reports is positive and forward looking.

New staff appointments were making it possible for lecturers to specialise to a greater extent than previously and thus to link their teaching more closely to their research. In

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<sup>11</sup> At the time of writing these reports were held in a university warehouse. Departmental Annual Reports were reinstated in 1998.

<sup>12</sup> Reporting on the inter-relation of research and teaching is now required in Faculty profiling and in applications for promotion.

1956 the Head of the Department of Education reported. "As a long term policy I intend to increase the degree of specialisation in teaching ... the literature of the subject is now so considerable that acceptance of increased specialisation is necessary in order to maintain and raise standards of teaching". Similarly in 1961, the Department of Classics reported that, with the addition of a new staff member, there would be "a more pronounced move towards specialisation in teaching".

Research activity gained momentum. While still working in the cramped conditions of the central site, the Department of Botany (1959) reported that "the setting up of research laboratories for microbiology and physiology (with staff rooms) in an engineering hut is expected early in 1960 and similar accommodation for morphology and ecology at the beginning of 1961. These should allow staff and graduate students to work on joint projects". In the same year the History Department reported that it was engaged in a systematic study of general election campaigns in Canterbury during the post-provincial period. The three students working in the field had been brought together for a number of seminars "in which research methods were discussed, comparisons made and generalisations subjected to critical analysis". The department considered there to be a clear value in such seminars. Similarly the Department of Zoology anticipated the completion of its field station at Kaikoura which would provide accommodation and laboratory space for 24 staff and students. Again, in 1961, the History Department reported that it "had never been more active in research" and in 1967 the Department of English, following a temporary pre-Ilam move, concluded that "the improvement in physical surroundings has had a marked effect on the life of the department ... the immediate growth in research activity in 1967 was ... one of the most heartening results of the move".

The growing numbers of research students is another theme running through these years. In 1961 the Department of Chemistry commented on the increasing number of senior students requiring staff supervision time and particularly the growth in the number of Ph.D. students. In 1956 the Department of Mathematics was complaining that by "having to devote such an undue proportion of their time to the preparation and delivery of lectures and the marking of homework, the reading and research of the staff unquestionably suffered". By 1963 however, the department could report that first degree courses were now very satisfactory for their purpose and it was time to direct effort into postgraduate

work especially with an increased number of staff qualified to supervise such work. In the same year the Department of Physics commented almost joyfully (for an Annual Report). “It must be said that the research students present a most rewarding and stimulating aspect to a Department and contribute greatly to its vigour”. As late as 1971 the Department of Education was reflecting on the need to give students more experience of research projects and techniques while the Department of Political Science reported on the establishment of regular postgraduate research seminars attended by senior students and staff. “As a result, research activity is now once again beginning to play a major part in the activities of the department”.

As well as these developments the annual reports indicate a much increased incidence of ‘refresher leave’, often at institutions overseas, and a greatly expanded list of publications.

In an interesting comment from the 1959 Annual Report, the Head of the Department of Chemistry observes. “I believe that the tutors [for stage one tutorials] should be members of the staff of the Chemistry department or research fellows working in the Department rather than teachers drawn from schools”. Although no justification is given for this conclusion, it suggests a desire to expose even first year students to the atmosphere of inquiry that had been strongly fostered in the department since the influence of Karl Popper. Whether first year students should or should not be taught by those engaged in research continues to be an issue (see chapter six). In 1974 the Department of Chemistry reflected on the impact of teaching on research. “Naturally these two activities interact and a recent example is seen in the way that the development of our courses in analytical chemistry has led to field studies on water and soils”.

Despite the burgeoning research activity, comments such as those from the Department of Chemistry are rare in that the nature of the research/teaching relationship remains implicit rather than explicit. The examples I have given from departmental reports are selectively drawn from a large body of material most of which, encouraged by the reporting system, addresses research and teaching independently. A relationship appears to be assumed, particularly with the growth in research and teaching specialisation, but it is seldom discussed in terms that would have satisfied Popper and his colleagues.

A publication from The Association of University Teachers of New Zealand (AUT) in 1959 titled *The Crisis in the Universities: Some Facts and Figures*<sup>13</sup>, affirms that the two principle aims of a university are the education of young men and women and the conduct of research. “These two cannot be separated. A university teacher cannot be a mere mouthpiece for passing on lecture room material or pre-digested opinions: he is a man, in most cases, active in the extension of knowledge” (The Association of University Teachers, 1959, p. 4). The authors go on to claim that the ‘man’ who keeps in touch with the latest developments in his subject is bound to be a better teacher. There is a paradox here, one which recurs throughout this investigation. On the one hand, research and teaching are held to be inseparable. On the other hand they are invariably discussed as separate entities and then brought together in a kind of forced linguistic marriage. The fact that the University of Canterbury was, for its first 80 or 90 years essentially a teaching institution and that later, the teaching function was subsumed under a research umbrella suggests that their inseparability is more a case of wishful thinking than of reality.

This vulnerability of the research/teaching relation is illustrated in a curious piece from the University of Canterbury *Chronicle*<sup>14</sup> for 1 April 1965. Entitled *German Universities: Teaching and Research*, it appears to be part of a regular *Chronicle* report on international developments in higher education. The article quotes Professor Ernst Schütte, Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs for the German state of Hesse. According to Professor Schütte the unity of research and teaching is a will-of-the-wisp, an anachronism, with the university no longer functioning as a *Universitas* but as a series of professional schools. The Professor suggests that universities should be essentially instructional institutions in which research should be supported “only insofar as it has an immediate relationship with the task of instruction” (University of Canterbury, 1965, p. 6). The author of the article (unacknowledged) concurs that the main requirement for contemporary universities is to secure teachers of science. Modern research on the other hand, requires “a working organisation similar to that prevailing in industry”. The potential incompatibility of the teaching and research functions as represented in the individual academic is discussed (the Janus-head) and the conclusion seems to be that research and teaching in the university will

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<sup>13</sup> A title which supports my contention that the notion of crisis in the university is in no way exclusive to the last quarter of the twentieth century!

<sup>14</sup> The *Chronicle* succeeded the University of Canterbury *Newsletter* as a forum for disseminating institutional news and views.

gradually draw apart although “the content of teaching is naturally always the facts which have been discovered and the way in which their truth can be proved, that is, the method” (University of Canterbury, 1965, p. 7). It would be intriguing to know whether this piece of reporting prompted any response (of the sort which triggered this thesis) from an academic staff who were clearly only just beginning to enjoy a greater symbiosis in research and teaching.

In an odd paradox, the institutional preference for conceptualising research and teaching separately went hand in hand with an example of research designed to inform teaching and institutional decision making. In 1969 the proposal to establish an Educational Research and Advisory Unit (ERAU) was reported in the *University Chronicle* (1969). The aims of the unit would be to support teaching and to promote greater institutional self-knowledge through research. The recognition, for the first time in nearly 100 years, that effective university teaching might require an understanding of the processes of teaching and learning, was part of an international trend towards the professionalisation of teaching.

However according to the Unit’s Advisory Officer, “pure research is better left to the Education Department ... we should remain purely a service group to lecturers” (*Canta*, 1973, p. 20). In this respect the teaching and research activities of academics were further differentiated, a trend reinforced by the later establishment of the Research Office and by the comparatively distant relationship between the Research Committee and the recently established Teaching and Learning Committee. On the other hand by establishing an institutional research position the university was acknowledging the need for a better understanding of its own academic activities through internal investigation and analysis.

In 1974 the Association of University Teachers was calling for increased research funding.

All universities in New Zealand operate under Acts which include reference to their duty to advance, maintain and disseminate knowledge through teaching and research. University teachers, through their research, are able to contribute to national development, to keep their teaching function fresh, and to extend the boundaries of human knowledge (University of Canterbury, 1974, pp. 4-5).

Four years later the University Chancellor was appealing for continued investment in university research.

Why you may ask, why universities? Why not special research institutes, leaving the university to get on with teaching? But what sort of teaching would it be without the refreshment, excitement, stimulation and inspiration that come from working at the frontiers of knowledge and, from time to time, crossing them ... without that study and research university teaching would become dull and sterile (University of Canterbury, 1978, p. 3).

In this discourse, the relation of research to teaching appears to flow unidirectionally, from research to teaching to learning. Students are presumably the recipients of refreshed, exciting, stimulating and inspirational teaching. There is no suggestion that they might experience these emotions directly through participation in such inquiry or that the relationship can be construed variously. One also wonders whether the Chancellor thought through the implications of his comment for pre-tertiary and non-research tertiary institutions.

### **The Last Decade**

The greater the threat to the integration of research and teaching (brought about largely by increasing enrolments and greater specialisation – the very factors which, ironically, enabled Canterbury academics to develop a research culture), the more it seems the University of Canterbury has voiced its institutional commitment to the relationship. According to the 1989 New Zealand Education Act one of the characteristics of universities is that their research and teaching are closely interdependent and most of their teaching is done by people who are active in advancing knowledge. This legal requirement is reflected in the University of Canterbury's Charter (1991, p. 1) where the university repeats the wording of the Education Act and undertakes to “observe in recruiting academic staff the principle that teaching is inseparable from research”. The commitment to a close relation between research and teaching (though with a distinct privileging of research) is reaffirmed in the outgoing Vice Chancellor's Report<sup>15</sup> (University of Canterbury) 1997, in which he states:

You will see from some of the entries provided in this report ... why we regard the research function as the primary distinguishing characteristic of a modern university. Research is a strong feature of the teaching of university undergraduates as well as postgraduates. It is central to our Charter and

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<sup>15</sup> This was the last report from Professor Brownlee who had held the position of Vice Chancellor for the previous 20 years.

confirms the national and international regard in which this university is held (University of Canterbury Annual Report, 1997, p. 7).

The following year, the newly appointed Vice Chancellor reinforced the commitment to research-informed teaching.

This is what makes the University of Canterbury the extremely successful institution that it is – the combination of high-level research and advanced teaching – so that those who teach are strongly informed in that teaching by the results of their research and those who research can pass on that enthusiasm for that research to their students (University of Canterbury, 1998a, p. 3).

In 1996 the first national academic audit of New Zealand universities was undertaken by the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit (AAU). The AAU report on the University of Canterbury (1997) highlights the market driven environment to which the university was struggling to adapt. “As external research funds become increasingly targeted, Canterbury University will need to be aware of market indicators and alert to possible markets for its research ... the emphasis is still on self-selected research but Canterbury University is now recognising that research is a corporate and not merely an individual exercise (New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit, 1997, p. 23)”.<sup>16</sup> On the relationship between research and teaching:

The panel formed a very positive view of the way in which research informs teaching at Canterbury University. Examples include lecture content changing annually in terms of the lecturer’s research; undergraduates reading review articles; and teaching in research areas quickly moving new ideas down through the undergraduate levels (p. 25).

In my opinion this AAU comment on the relationship between research and teaching at Canterbury reveals much about the way in which the relation was conceptualised both by the AAU and by the university. It suggests that the link is primarily one of teaching *content* informed by research *findings*. There appears to be no recognition of the fact that there might be other – and possibly more productive – ways in which the relation might be enacted. Ironically on the basis of this report, the University of Canterbury was invited to

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<sup>16</sup> The AAU’s definition of research (an abbreviated version of the New Zealand Vice Chancellors’ Committee’s definition) is as follows: “Research is an intellectually controlled investigation which leads to advances in knowledge through discovery and codification of new information or the development of further understanding about existing information and practice” (Spronken-Smith et al., 2000, p. 2).

contribute a piece on the research/teaching nexus to an AAU publication on good practice. I argued at the time that Canterbury would be wrong to claim such practice as exemplary. The contribution was withdrawn.

It is interesting that, while in 1945 Karl Popper and his team were calling for research and teaching to be carried out in the 'spirit of doubt and enquiry', in the 1990s this had apparently calcified into an act of transmission. This experience parallels that occurring in universities internationally as early as the second half of the nineteenth century<sup>17</sup> (well before the massification of recent decades) when Humboldt's vision of a community of inquiry embracing staff and students was increasingly abandoned in favour of research as the preserve of the academic.

Despite receiving what was perceived to be such positive feedback the university feared for the future of the research/teaching link. Concern was expressed that research monies coming into the university might be separated from teaching monies. If research were to become 'output tagged' it could seriously affect funding for humanities research. From the mid nineties onwards departments are increasingly exhorted to make more visible the links between research and teaching. "The complex inter-relatedness of teaching and research in universities is obviously important in this debate – we must ensure that at every turn the research input to ALL teaching is highlighted and documented" (Cameron, 1998). A similar concern is expressed in a review of the History Department. "It is currently more important than it has ever been that university staff are seen to not only be involved in research but regularly to publish the results. Research underpins university teaching and governments must be persuaded of the essential nexus between the two" (University of Canterbury, 1998b, p. 15).

The timeliness of this warning was born out by the publication of the Government's White Paper on Tertiary Education (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1998) which signalled the apparent beginning of a separating out of research and teaching funding with a proportion of research funding to be allocated through a contestable pool. This was followed in 1999 by a proposal from the Tertiary Education Minister that there should be just two or three well-funded research universities (instead of the then seven). These elite

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<sup>17</sup> See chapter two.

institutions would focus primarily on research work leaving the others to focus on teaching. All the universities protested vociferously with Canterbury's vice-chancellor claiming that the government "does not know what it is doing with tertiary education" ("Government research plan," 1999). Chairman of the University Vice-Chancellors' Committee, Graham Fogelberg, pointed out that "any institution calling itself a university must have teaching informed by research" otherwise New Zealand "would be a laughing stock in the rest of the world" ("If our journey," 1999). Despite this outcry, in February 2000 it was reported that lecturers at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT) - the country's eighth and newest university - may be required to choose between teaching and research positions with differential salary scales and conditions for each ("AUT staff choices," 2000). This has now been implemented at AUT.

In 2000 the Academic Audit Unit (AAU) embarked on a second national auditing cycle. As part of this cycle the AAU identified as one of its themes, the 'Teaching/Research Nexus'. It pointed out that, while there was scholarly disagreement as to the nature or even the existence of such a link (see chapter four for a critique of this literature), its existence was enshrined in legislation in New Zealand and as such required auditing by the AAU. "Institutions must therefore specify the expected effect of the link between teaching and research and the AAU audits the institution's processes for achieving this link and the effectiveness of these processes" (New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit, 1999, p. 14).

Such an explicit focus on the relationship between research and teaching provoked a flurry of activity in all the New Zealand universities. A joint working party was formed at Canterbury consisting of representatives from the university's Research Committee and the newly formed Teaching and Learning Committee. This group was charged with preparing a report on the nature of the research/teaching link at Canterbury.<sup>18</sup> Key findings from the report would be fed into Canterbury's *Audit 2000 Portfolio. The Research – Teaching Link* report (Spronken-Smith et al., 2000) outlined the university's obligations and commitments to the integration of research and teaching, discussed mechanisms for monitoring policy,

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<sup>18</sup> I was a part of this working party. The experience of engaging in my own thesis work, while also participating in an institutionally driven investigation of the research/teaching nexus, was a strange and not altogether comfortable one. The report we produced, while thorough and detailed and fit for its purpose, still seemed to me to skate along the surface of what was happening in the university. I felt I was occupying two parallel worlds, operating on two levels that seldom intersected.

considered current practice as well as factors constraining a close relationship and suggested ways in which the link might be strengthened. As part of a consideration of current practice, staff were asked to outline the ways in which they made explicit the research ethos of their discipline in undergraduate classes, their use of student research material in teaching and the extent of their engagement in pedagogical research. Detailed case studies of four departments were also undertaken.

While the responses to these inquiries were not used as data for the thesis, one observation from a member of staff whom I had earlier interviewed, caught my attention. I reproduce it here (and in a later chapter) because it goes to the heart of the paradoxical way in which the research/teaching relation is conceived of in the university.

The exercise reflected in these questions [on the 'research/teaching link' for the academic audit] seems to me to follow a very typical pattern of establishing a spurious dichotomy (teaching/research) and then tautologically attempting to resolve the question of their relationship – i.e. because they're separated this poses the immediate problem of how they are "related". If they are not considered to be so distinct, the question of their "link" becomes less intelligible (Carol, e-mail communication).<sup>19</sup>

In the university's *Audit 2000 Portfolio* it was pointed out that "for Canterbury a strong relationship between teaching and research has *always* been a primary element of its culture" (University of Canterbury, 2000, p. 1). However it was acknowledged that "perhaps because this link is so fundamental in academia, it is often implicit rather than explicit, thus obtaining evidence of the link is difficult" (p. 49). In fact the university had a 50-year history of talking about and monitoring research and teaching as essentially independent activities. Prior to the flurry of activity connected with the 2000 audit, there was little in the way of policy designed to encourage a research/teaching relationship and no processes in place for monitoring such a relationship. For example it was acknowledged in the *Audit Portfolio* that reviews of academic departments consider research on the one hand and programmes and courses on the other. "Until now there has been no requirement to talk directly about research-informed teaching or the research-teaching nexus – presumably because such links have been a 'given' – but from 2000 onwards changes in departmental review procedures will require such an examination" (University of Canterbury, 2000, pp. 50 – 51).

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<sup>19</sup> To preserve anonymity pseudonyms have been used for research participants.

While the process of compiling material on the research/teaching link forced the university to confront its comparative laxity in legislating for and monitoring the effects of the link, it did nothing to undermine the deeply rooted assumption that research and teaching were and always had been closely linked across all disciplines. Nor did it trigger much discussion on the political, social and economic environment which was increasingly militating against such a symbiosis. Having embraced the unity of research and teaching relatively late in the day, Canterbury was clinging to it as the single feature which distinguished universities from other tertiary institutions and made them truly places of 'higher' education.

Prior to 1990 the tertiary education system in New Zealand consisted of seven universities, 25 polytechnics and six teachers' colleges, each sector providing different types of education and training for different needs and requirements (Patterson, 1996). The polytechnics and teachers' colleges were not considered to be research institutions. However the privileged position of the universities as the only sites where research and teaching informed each other was increasingly challenged through the 1990s as polytechnics and colleges of education sought and achieved degree-granting status. As competition in the tertiary 'market place' increased and the lines of demarcation between institutions blurred, universities were forced to confront an erosion of their unique status and a potential weakening of the research/teaching connection. In their submission to the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission on issues set out in the Commission's terms of reference, the Association of University Staff (AUS)<sup>20</sup> pointed out that "the interaction of scholarship, research and teaching form the 'signature' by which university-appropriate activities may be differentiated from other tertiary activities" (The Association of University Staff of New Zealand, 2000, p. 1).

### **Looking to the Future**

The Tertiary Education Advisory Commission (TEAC) was established by the New Zealand Government in April 2000 to devise a long-term strategic direction for the tertiary education system. The four TEAC reports which I consider below are important in the

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<sup>20</sup> The Association of University Teachers (AUT) was renamed the Association of University Staff (AUS) in 1991 (Tarling, 2000).

context of this study, not only because they map out a future direction for higher education in New Zealand, but also because they reflect the current political/economic climate, both nationally and internationally, within which the research/teaching nexus is being debated and within which my empirical study is located.

In its initial report, *Shaping a shared vision* (TEAC, 2000), the Commission identifies a key objective of this strategic direction as being the enabling of life-long learning for a knowledge society. According to the report such a society emphasises the knowledge content of goods and services, the centrality of research and learning, the importance of critical reflection and debate about knowledge and its use, and recognition of the role of intellect and research as drivers of economic growth.

TEAC's second report, *Shaping the system* (TEAC, 2001a) identifies three major trends in tertiary education in New Zealand since the mid-1980s. A wider range of people is participating in tertiary education; more of these are mature students; and the average length of study has increased. Despite this "the New Zealand tertiary education system has experienced a progressive reduction in the real level of public resources per student (on an EFTS<sup>21</sup> basis) for more than 15 years" (TEAC, 2001a, p. 12). Between 1980 and 1999, real funding for universities fell by 36%. There was also a substantial deterioration in the ratio of academic staff to students over the same two decades. "These trends raise serious questions about the capacity of New Zealand's tertiary system to protect the desired level of quality in relation to teaching and research" (p. 12).

The second report acknowledges the need to support research-led teaching as a pre-requisite for degree and postgraduate teaching programmes. It also recognises that some institutions are moving to separate research and teaching career pathways and states that "the commission has some reservations about such moves, primarily because of the greater risks of academic staff not keeping pace with rapid changes in their respective fields of knowledge" (TEAC, 2001a, p. 21). However the report is less than clear as to how a productive integration of research and teaching might be maintained in the context of changing technology, globalisation and the radical democratisation of knowledge production and use. For example, in its discussion of e-learning the report talks about

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<sup>21</sup> Equivalent full time student.

unbundling the 'black box' of teaching and learning "so that its component parts can be separated out and managed independently of each other. In this way, the content of a teaching package can be independent of the tutoring and learning support, the pastoral care, the assessment, the awarding of credit and so on" (TEAC, 2001a, p.15). This compartmentalisation and commodification suggests a production line approach to teaching and learning and raises serious questions about the nature of the relation between the researcher/teacher and the 'inquiring' student. Such 'unbundling' has the potential to weaken the relationship between academics and students thus putting in jeopardy the bi-directional relationship between research and teaching. At risk is not only the possibility of joint teacher/student inquiry, or of teacher modelling of an inquiry approach to learning, but even that most explicit manifestation of the link – the transmission of research findings.

There is an emphasis in the TEAC reports on encouraging co-operation and collaboration in the tertiary sector in place of the competitive ethos that flourished over the previous 15 years. However the economic imperative underpinning the Commission's strategic direction is very apparent in the third report, *Shaping the Strategy* (TEAC, 2001b). The tertiary education system represents a "major investment" in the development of the knowledge society. Tertiary education is "a precondition for greater economic performance" with economic success being "highly dependent on increasing productivity and the speed with which new information can be turned to economic advantage". Research plays a major part in "wealth creation" (p.15). In this context "the tertiary education system needs to be more explicitly aligned with wider government goals for economic and social development" (p. 1).

Alongside this emphasis on neo-liberal economic rationalism, instrumentalism and performativity, there are instances of genuine educational vision (though the educational vision tends to be swamped by the economic imperative). For example, recent scholarly thinking on the future of higher education (Brew, 2001; Mourad, 1997) as outlined in chapter two, is reflected in the call for "multi-disciplinary and transdisciplinary thinking, learning and research that looks beyond the traditional classifications and boundaries of knowledge for the intersections that can produce new areas of knowledge..." (TEAC, 2001b, p. 26). I find myself wondering about the rationale underpinning what appears to be an exciting future direction. In chapter two I argued that the discourse of the market is

adept at appropriating the language of new age liberalism and that learning and knowledge change their spots according to the context and nature of the discourse. Whereas the scholars in higher education on whom I have drawn in chapter two (for example Bowden & Marton, 1998; Brew, 2001; Mourad, 1997), are focusing on the university as a community of learners, a place of joint (teacher/student) inquiry, I wonder whether TEAC's vision of 'intersections that can produce new areas of knowledge' may not be driven by an economic rather than an educational imperative. The need for New Zealand to compete in the international knowledge economy/society is clearly high in TEAC's agenda.

There is a further implication in TEAC's challenge to traditional disciplinary structures which remains unaddressed. Already we are seeing the growth of multi-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary research teams as a response to government initiatives and research funding imperatives. How this development might impact on teaching is unclear. To a large extent teaching remains embedded within traditional disciplinary structures. Unless teaching can be aligned with the new multi-disciplinary/trans-disciplinary approaches to research, then the potential for research and teaching to drift further apart is very real.

The fourth TEAC report *Funding the framework* (TEAC, 2001c) directly addresses the relationship between research and teaching and the provision of postgraduate education. The report cites Boyer's (1990) four scholarships – of discovery, integration, application and teaching – and suggests that staff involved mainly in the scholarship of teaching “are still engaged in a necessary and valuable academic activity” (p. 107) – a phrase that, to me, contains more than a hint of condescension. Having used Boyer to justify the possible separating out of these academic activities the report goes on to build an argument in favour of loosening the ties between research and teaching at undergraduate level while reinforcing the link at postgraduate level.

In support of this recommendation the Commission cites Hattie and Marsh (1996) whose “analysis of the teaching/research nexus has failed to produce any conclusive evidence that linking the two functions has any tangible benefit for either” (TEAC, 2001c, p. 108). The Commission goes on to argue that the expansion in demand for tertiary education is causing tensions between the activities of teaching and research, while anecdotal evidence suggests that academic staff in new degree granting institutions are finding the research requirement

“both burdensome and stressful” (p. 108). Moreover the Commission has “heard repeated arguments” that a significant number of undergraduate degree programmes are in fact being taught mainly by non research-active staff. As well, according to the AAU, several universities employ significant numbers of teaching-only academic staff. The fact that many degree granting institutions in the United States and degree-granting further education colleges in Britain do not require staff to be engaged in research is cited as evidence that a research/teaching nexus is “less vital at lower levels of the tertiary education system” (pp. 108 – 9). Finally the report quotes the former director of the AAU, David Woodhouse, who suggests that requiring every academic to engage in teaching and research is not the best use of teaching and research expertise.

On the basis of these arguments the Commission concludes that while:

the provision of postgraduate education requires a significant level of research intensity and that most of those involved in teaching such programmes should be active researchers ... the requirement for research (particularly the ‘scholarship of discovery’) and teaching to be linked at the undergraduate level is less compelling. While postgraduate study involves in-depth investigation and specialisation, undergraduate education is concerned primarily with transmitting the basic knowledge and general skills that form the foundation of a particular discipline... hence, the primary requirement of those responsible for teaching at this level is a comprehensive and current knowledge of the relevant discipline and the skills to communicate this knowledge in an effective manner (TEAC, 2001c, p. 109).

The Commission recommends that the current legislative requirement, that degrees be taught mainly by people engaged in research, should be amended. Instead the Education Act 1989 should require that undergraduate degrees be taught by people with a comprehensive and current knowledge of their discipline and the skills to communicate this knowledge.

I believe TEAC’s objections to the current legislation and policy framework are based on questionable evidence. For instance, while Hattie and Marsh (1996) conclude that the belief in a research/teaching link is nothing more than a ‘myth’ (based on correlations of research productivity and teaching evaluations), they in fact recommend that ways be sought to *strengthen* the relation between the two. The report makes no mention of this. There is a lack of rigour in the Commission’s appeal to ‘anecdotal evidence’; nor does it seem logical to argue that because some universities already employ teaching-only academic staff at undergraduate level, the practice should therefore be extended and legislated for. Moreover while TEAC draws on Boyer’s four scholarships to justify its decision, it completely

overlooks the Carnegie Commission's subsequent report and recommendations on undergraduate education (Strum Kenny, 1999) quoted in chapter two, which chart a completely opposite direction.

In this thesis I challenge the assumption that undergraduate education should be concerned primarily with transmitting the basic knowledge and general skills that form the foundation of a particular discipline and that it can therefore be assigned to non-researching teaching staff. Rather I argue that students should be engaged in the processes of critical inquiry from the very beginning of their university education. Universities and other degree granting institutions cannot hope to graduate students equipped to deal with the challenges of the 'knowledge society' unless those students have been exposed to and actively engaged in 'the spirit of doubt and enquiry'. TEAC's assurances that strong incentives will remain for universities to continue offering undergraduate courses that are primarily taught by active researchers, does little to soften the basic message being conveyed about the nature of undergraduate education.

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When I began the research for this chapter my knowledge of the current situation at the University of Canterbury led me to believe that I would find plenty of reference to *research* and *teaching* in the university archives but little explicit reference to the *relation* between them. By and large this has proved to be the case. What I had not anticipated was the very evident movement from the 'teaching' university of the first 70 to 80 years to the 'research' university of the past 50 or so years. Finding the documentary material around 1945/6, which I have interpreted as marking a transition point between these two stages of development, was very exciting. I now know, when reference is made to the fact that Canterbury has 'always' has a strong relation between research and teaching, that this is based on living memory and experience, not on a knowledge of the university's development over time. In fact a 'close relation' between research and teaching is a comparatively new phenomenon for Canterbury.

It seems to me, from this brief archaeology and from my experience as a member of the academic staff, that the relationship between research and teaching at the University of Canterbury is characterised by paradox and ambiguity. Institutional discourse strongly privileges a close connection between research and teaching. I encountered expressions of surprise and disdain with regard to those expressing a contrary view. Yet the nature of this relation over the past 50 years has, until very recently, been taken for granted. As a result the university has failed to turn its critical gaze upon itself and ask whether it was taking full advantage of the potential of the research/teaching link - or even what the nature of this link might be and whether it was experienced in the same way by all staff.

This finding may well help to account for a parallel ambiguity in the literature on the research/teaching nexus.<sup>22</sup> Multiple studies have sought to correlate research productivity and teaching effectiveness. Almost invariably the outcomes have demonstrated a zero relationship thereby fuelling the arguments of those who deny the existence of a research/teaching link. Yet academics worldwide argue in favour of a close relation between the two. Under the circumstances and in the current political climate, it is hardly surprising that the value and even the existence of a research/teaching nexus are being questioned by governments around the world.

We must reconsider what it is we want/need to know about the research/teaching relation and the sorts of questions we might ask about it. Efforts to establish the existence of a relation have proved inconclusive (for example, Feldman, 1987; Hattie & Marsh, 1996). Thus it is the *nature* rather than the *existence* of the research/teaching relation that is the focus of this thesis. That nature has been assumed but seldom closely investigated. Already in this chapter, I am suggesting that the relationship envisaged by the 'group of teachers in the University of New Zealand' in 1945, was not necessarily the sort of relationship that developed in the later years of the twentieth century. Just as in Germany the essential idea of Humboldt's university was quickly diluted and compromised, so too the vision of Popper and his Canterbury colleagues metamorphosed according to changing circumstances. To speak of 'a close relation' between research and teaching is to paint with too broad a brush. The nature of the relation, which lies at the heart of the university's mission, invites close scrutiny. In chapters six and seven I attempt to unpack the

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<sup>22</sup> For an analysis of this literature see chapter five.

complexities of the research/teaching relation as experienced at the close of the twentieth century by academics at the University of Canterbury. In the following chapter I discuss the evolution of my research design against the backdrop of the critical incident which provided the catalyst for my empirical study.

## Chapter Four

### ‘Looking Again’: Research Approaches

*What we see depends on our angle of repose (Richardson, 1997, p. 92).*

In chapter one I discussed the importance of reflexivity, of interrogating or deconstructing one’s own research practice. Part of my commitment to reflexivity in this study has involved a conscious effort to alter my “angle of repose” (Richardson, 1997, p. 92). Brew adopts Husserl’s advice - “when you think you know you should look again” (Brew, 2001, p. 58) - and proposes it as one of several guidelines for a new kind of research methodology. Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000) define reflexivity as the ability to break away from a frame of reference and look at what it is *not* capable of saying. Richardson (1997) advises postmodern writers to ‘crystallize’. Crystals are intricately structured but how that structure is perceived depends on where we are positioned as viewers. Crystallization “deconstructs the traditional idea of ‘validity’ ... and provides us with a deepened, complex, thoroughly partial understanding of the topic” (Richardson, 1997, p. 92).

This study has involved a number of attempts to ‘look again’ using different lenses or angles of repose. For example, in chapter one I discussed my use of hermeneutic and feminist/postmodern perspectives and I argued that by drawing on two paradigms often conceived of as incommensurable, the lens through which we view our social world might be enriched. Consistent with the desire to make explicit my inquiry process, my intention in this chapter is to provide a more detailed context and rationale for my methodological decisions, for the changes in my ways of looking.

I begin by describing the local event that precipitated this research. I then explore the complex and contradictory literature surrounding the research/teaching nexus and draw on recent research and commentary to frame a direction for my own study. Initially that direction involved a phenomenographic pilot study focusing on variation in experience of

the research/teaching relation. I discuss my reasons for adopting phenomenography as a research approach. Then, drawing on recent critiques of phenomenography and my own concerns regarding its limitations, I outline a methodological shift from phenomenography to phenomenal field analysis (Bond, 2000). Finally I describe my use of metaphor as a way of surfacing the structural relations of the phenomenal field. I suggest that phenomenography and phenomenal field analysis, whilst not dissimilar in many respects, constitute different ways of viewing experience and result in subtly but significantly different outcomes.

### **In the Beginning ... A Critical Incident**

In July 1997 the Educational Research and Advisory Unit (ERAU) at the University of Canterbury circulated one of its occasional newsletters (ERAU, 1997). The front page contained a short review of a recently published article by Hattie and Marsh (1996) entitled, *The Relationship Between Research and Teaching: A Meta-Analysis*. The review read as follows.

A recent meta-analysis of 58 studies of the relationship between teaching and research demonstrates that the relationship is zero.

The authors, as well as conducting their meta-analysis, consider the various arguments concerning the teaching-research relationship. For example, for a negative relationship between teaching and research they advance three major arguments: the scarcity model (given the scarcity of time and energy, the relationship between teaching and research would be negative or at best zero), the differential personality model (contrary personal orientations are required for teaching and research), and the divergent rewards system (teaching and research are motivated by different reward systems).

Whatever the arguments in favour of a positive, negative or zero relationship between teaching and research, the meta-analysis found a zero relationship. That is, at best teaching and research are only 'loosely coupled'. Why then, is the myth that they are positively related perpetuated? Perhaps, because, as one of their researchers said: "It may be that we continue to believe that research enhances teaching in the face of enormous evidence that it does not, so that we can continue to justify the time we spend doing it to people who would rather see us use the time teaching"<sup>11</sup> (ERAU 1997).

Clearly the final paragraph was (and was intended to be?) provocative! It was also misleading in that it did not mention Hattie and Marsh's (1996) concluding comments,

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<sup>11</sup> The review attributes this quotation to Hattie and Marsh. In fact the authors were quoting from Webster (1985).

which advocated investigating ways to *increase* the relationship between research and teaching. In all ERAU received nine responses from academic staff via note, e-mail or letter. These responses ranged from the strongly critical (of the review, of ERAU for publishing the review and of the article's findings as summarised in the review) through to the very supportive (of ERAU and the findings). Criticisms of ERAU included "I think this article badly demeans ERAU as a useful component of this university"; "a column such as yours in the ERAU Newsletter is quite inappropriate in the face of the facts (not myths) of university work"; "I have been asked to express the collective disappointment of the department...". The findings of the Hattie and Marsh article as reported in the review were variously referred to as "total twaddle and rubbish"; "misleading" and "dangerous"; "negative and pathetically ridiculous" and belonging to someone living "on another planet to the one I live on". Responses supporting the research findings as reported indicated that "it's nice to see someone finally admitting the obvious in print"; and "I am gratified that the Hattie-Marsh meta-analysis has found no relation between teaching and research, a position I have advocated for years".

Several respondents outlined their reasons for commenting as they did. For example:

I feel better about my teaching because I am involved in research (this includes teaching at all levels). This does not necessarily mean that I am a better teacher but at least I know that I enjoy my teaching more and would hope that this is reflected in my efforts ... (Bob, e-mail).

I have just returned 20 minutes ago from a \_\_\_\_\_ 202 lecture where my 35mm slides were all borrowed from my current FRST programme results, and my lecture was based around the new and exciting stuff that we had only discovered in the last 6 months (Harry, e-mail).

There is a certain amount of 'missionary' zeal ... we want to discover something new and then let everyone know about it. Thus teaching and research go hand in hand (Ian, e-mail).

I concluded years ago that research interferes with undergraduate teaching, and have long advocated the hiring of pure teachers for routine undergraduate and service courses (Chris, e-mail).

I have quoted from these communications at some length in order to illustrate the depth of feeling as well as the *variation* in the responses from academic staff. It was apparent that the review had touched a raw nerve. I was keen to discover more about the nature of this relationship and its political context. As a starting point I undertook a review of the research/teaching nexus literature and resolved to interview those academics who had responded to the ERAU review.

## **The Research/Teaching ‘Nexus’: A Contested Concept**

I discovered quickly that the literature dealing with the relationship between research and teaching in higher education is both complex and contradictory. In an effort to make sense of this complexity, I divided relevant readings into four categories: quantitative studies focusing on correlations of teaching effectiveness and research productivity; qualitative studies focusing on academic staff perceptions of the relationship; qualitative studies involving student perceptions of the relationship and personal views and critiques (not based on empirical evidence).

### *A Zero Relationship*

There have been numerous attempts to ‘account for’ the research/teaching relation by correlating teaching effectiveness as measured by student evaluations of teaching and research productivity as measured by publication counts. For example Feldman (1987) reviewed and undertook a meta-analysis of such studies. He concluded that research productivity is only slightly associated with teaching proficiency, that the likelihood that research productivity actually benefits teaching is extremely small and that for all practical purposes the two are essentially unrelated. Similarly Hattie and Marsh (1996) in their meta-analysis of 58 studies, demonstrated that the relationship is zero and concluded that “... the common belief that research and teaching are inextricably entwined is an enduring myth. At best research and teaching are very loosely coupled” (p. 529).

Ramsden and Moses (1992) investigated the connection between undergraduate teaching and research at the levels of the individual, the department, across disciplines and in universities and former colleges in Australia. They concluded that there is little or no foundation for a belief in the existence of a positive causal relationship between effective undergraduate teaching and high levels of research activity and that their results undermined the established view that teaching and research are mutually beneficial activities. In the same year Fox published the findings of a national survey of academic work in the US, focusing on the question of ‘mutuality’ versus ‘competition’ of research and teaching in academia. She found that a strain exists between research and teaching,

that those with high publication productivity have strong investment in research but not in teaching and that research and teaching do not represent aspects of a single dimension of academic investments but are different, conflicting dimensions.

Volkwein and Carbone (1994) concluded that research variables are not significantly correlated with teaching variables, individually or collectively, but that student classroom experiences, faculty relations and faculty contact are greatest in those departments characterised as strongly oriented toward research *and* toward teaching. Noser, Manakyan and Tanner (1996) conducted a nation-wide survey of economics faculty to examine the relationship between research productivity and classroom performance using self reported measures of research output and teacher evaluation scores, and to solicit participants' opinions on the issue. While faculty opinion revealed a belief that research efforts improve teaching effectiveness, this was not supported by the empirical evidence which indicated a statistically significant but marginal positive relationship for those teaching primarily at undergraduate level and mixed or conflicting results for those who teach primarily at graduate level. Most recently Patrick and Stanley (1998) examined the relationship between research quality and teaching quality ratings and found no consistent connection between high quality in research and high quality in teaching.

One study which falls into this category but reveals slightly different findings is that of Michalak and Friedrich (1981) who examined the relationship between research performance and teaching performance, averaged over a five year period, for 86 members of a small, United States liberal arts college. They concluded that research and teaching have something to do with each other but not very much; that in general better researchers tend to be better teachers and poorer researchers, poorer teachers; and that while the results are mildly consistent with the hypothesis that research improves teaching, the nature of the effect varies substantially depending on rank, discipline and a variety of other mediating factors.

This extensive literature which seeks to correlate teaching effectiveness and research productivity is open to challenge on a number of fronts. It is based on narrow, pre-determined definitions of the meaning of research and teaching and on simplistic assumptions as to the nature of teaching effectiveness and research productivity. It assumes

that the research and teaching capabilities of an academic can be rated quantitatively (Elton, 1986). Such studies reflect the recent obsession in education for accountability through measurement despite the fact that research and teaching are notoriously difficult to measure (Brew & Boud, 1995). In doing so these studies ignore the complexity of teaching and research as discrete activities and hence the subtle and complex nature of the research/teaching relation. Elton refers to such investigations as naïve.

Moreover the meta-analyses (for example Feldman, 1987; Hattie & Marsh, 1996) conflate studies of variable quality representing disparate and scattered sets of data. Although it was such a study that triggered the doing of this thesis, my interest was never in trying to measure and correlate research and teaching (despite the fact that at least two of my research participants suggested I do just that!). Rather I argue that there is more to be gained from an exploration of the *nature* of the relation as it is *experienced* in all its complexity, than from pursuing studies which adopt a very instrumental view of research and teaching.

### *A Close Relationship*

In chapter one I referred to the Humboldtian idea of the unity of research and teaching as a ‘powerful legacy’. The idea is deeply embedded both in the thinking of the university in general and in the values and beliefs of academics. This “passionate allegiance” (Ramsden & Moses, 1992, p. 273) is apparent in qualitative studies designed to probe academics’ perceptions of the relationship. While quantitative studies have consistently indicated a zero connection between teaching and research, qualitative studies have most often indicated a strong belief in the existence of, and need for, a symbiotic relationship in which involvement in research enhances teaching and, to a lesser extent, involvement in teaching stimulates research.

For instance, in interviews with 33 senior academic administrators from the humanities, sciences, social sciences and professional areas, Neumann (1992, 1993) identified a three-level ‘nexus’ between teaching and research. These levels include a tangible connection relating to the transmission of advanced knowledge; an intangible connection which relates

to the development in students of an approach and attitude towards knowledge while providing a stimulating environment for academics; and a global connection which encompasses the interaction between teaching and research at the departmental level. “Without exception all interview participants were in no doubt about the existence of a nexus between the teaching and research activities of academics” (Neumann, 1992 p. 161).

Similarly, interviews with twelve heads of departments in a large, ‘old’ northern English university revealed that academics wished to be identified with a liberal tradition in which teaching and research were closely related aspects of their work (Rowland, 1996). When the terms teaching and research were discussed in detail, they became closely intertwined to the extent that some respondents were reluctant to differentiate between them. Rowland himself queries the usefulness of the categories ‘teaching’ and ‘research’.

Morris and Jelks (1997), in a preliminary survey of 35 academic staff at Auckland University, identified a dynamic set of linkages involving staff and students, teaching and learning, with research informing teaching and teaching leading to research. In a series of multidisciplinary focus groups, staff at Victoria University, Wellington, expressed a wide range of strongly held beliefs about the way in which research may or may not inform teaching (Willis & Harper, 1999). According to the researchers the nature of the research/teaching link seemed to depend on whether staff defined research as a process or a product.

In interviews with 49 permanently appointed staff from Danish universities, Jensen (1988) concluded that an important interplay exists between research and teaching and that almost no-one would prefer to work in a pure research institution. Significant influences on the intensity of the relationship included level of teaching and the discipline concerned. Jensen notes a ‘schism’ between the natural sciences and the humanities. Natural science teachers perceive no connection between research and teaching at undergraduate level. In contrast their experience at postgraduate level is of a very close relationship. Teachers in the humanities experience a connection between research and teaching which begins at the commencement of the undergraduate experience and is much more evenly spread over the course of study. However it seldom reaches the level of intensity experienced in the sciences at postgraduate level.

Similarly, Smeby's (1998) survey and interview research with academics in Norwegian universities revealed faculty beliefs in a positive, bi-directional relationship between research and teaching. Like Jensen, Smeby concluded that the interaction varies according to teaching level and discipline. "Saying that the interaction between research and teaching is indirect and complex need not mean that the interaction is weak. On the contrary, there are indications that the interfaces are important and manifold" (Smeby, 1998, p. 18).

In an attempt to discover *how* faculty integrate teaching and research and how contextual conditions enhance or constrain integration, Colbeck (1998) conducted structured observations of and interviews with faculty members from physics and English in two contrasting universities. She concluded that "the integration of classroom oriented teaching and research appeared to be facilitated by low levels of discipline paradigm consensus, horizontal and expansive knowledge structures, a broad definition of university research and faculty participation in decisions about course assignments" (p. 666). 'Low levels of discipline paradigm consensus' is a feature particularly of the humanities. Thus Colbeck's inquiries support the findings of Jensen (1988) and Smeby (1998).

Two studies of academic perceptions suggest a different picture. Shore, Pinker and Bates (1990) interviewed 49 active researchers in 29 university departments about their teaching and research and later replicated this study with 22 English and 18 chemistry professors. They focused on whether the methodological character of research was reflected in teaching and whether teaching impacted on research. Findings revealed little evidence that the processes of research in their disciplines directly informed the methods by which professors chose to teach their undergraduates; and only rarely was teaching acknowledged to be the source of inspiration for research. The authors suggest that the goals of research and teaching in higher education might be reassessed to bring them into greater alignment. Tang and Chamberlain (1997) surveyed 209 administrators and 384 full-time faculty members of six Tennessee Boards of Regents. They discovered that, while the administrators tend to believe that research and teaching are mutually supportive, faculty members are less inclined to agree that teaching and research are essential parts of their jobs, believing that they should be required to do one or the other but not both.

In comparison with the extensive correlational literature (as evidenced by the meta-analyses), the number of qualitative studies is small. There is a temptation (revealed in my opening paragraph of this section) to dichotomise the quantitative and qualitative literature by arguing that the former demonstrates no relation between research and teaching while the latter reveals a uniformly strong and close relation. However this brief survey of a number of qualitative studies suggests that academic experience of the relation may vary according to the nature of the institution (old/new university), the status of those interviewed (administrators/faculty members), the level of teaching (undergraduate/postgraduate) and the discipline involved, and, above all, the meanings attached to the activities of research and teaching. In other words complexity is evident, not only in the apparent contradictions between quantitative and qualitative accounts, but also *within* the qualitative arena of academic experience. My empirical research supports this conclusion. Its findings are most closely aligned with those of Colbeck (1998), Jensen (1988) and Smeby (1998).

#### *Student Perceptions of the Research/Teaching Relation*

Jenkins, Blackman, Lindsay & Paton-Saltzberg (1998) argue that research on the “vital but vexed relationship between teaching and research” (p. 127) has placed too great an emphasis on correlational studies and has largely neglected student perspectives on staff research. They acknowledge Neumann’s study (1994), undertaken in a large Australian research-oriented institution, in which 28 students from a range of disciplines were interviewed in depth. Neumann concluded that the majority of students had experienced a relationship between the teaching and research roles of academics; that each of the three levels of connection (tangible, intangible and global) could be identified and that a number of factors accounted for variation in the way the connection was experienced. These included: the nature and level of development of the discipline; the type and purpose of a course; the ability and motivation of the student and the opportunity for teacher-student interaction. Although there were tangible benefits to students from staff research, students were critical of subjects in which a teacher’s individual research and research interests were seen to dominate particularly at the expense of the aims of the course.

Jenkins et al. (1998) conducted focus group discussions with undergraduate students in eight subject groups, four - six students per focus group. The students perceived clear benefits from staff research including level of enthusiasm and the credibility of staff and their institution. Negative perceptions related to staff availability and the fact that students did not see themselves as stakeholders in staff research because they were largely unaware of what staff were doing. The article concludes that, from the student perspective, the teaching/research nexus is largely positive and that the main adverse impacts can be resolved through effective management.

In contrast, when postgraduate students at Victoria University, Wellington were asked about their views on the integration of research and teaching, they were either at a loss to understand the term 'research' in the context of the course for which they were enrolled, or they understood research to be publication.

If staff publications were included in reading lists then their lecturer's 'research' was seen to be incorporated in the teaching. There was almost no evidence that students had any awareness of research as a process of finding new knowledge or that those who taught them possessed such skills that could be passed on (Willis & Harper, 1999, p. 5).

While this thesis does not extend to an empirical consideration of student experiences of the research/teaching relation, the findings of these studies are significant in the context of my later discussion (chapter eight) about the pedagogical implications embedded in academics experiences of the research/teaching relation. Students' experiences of the relation should be of particular interest to universities which claim a strong link between the two activities.

### *Personal views and critiques*

Commentaries based on personal experience and/or critical analysis of the academic role also demonstrate distinctly different views of the research/teaching relationship. Barnett (1992) argues that knowledge in the context of discovery and knowledge in the context of transmission are entirely different enterprises calling for different sets of accomplishments. While teachers need to be knowledgeable about current thinking and work in their intellectual field, they do not actually have to be engaged in moving the frontiers. Other commentators (e.g. Crimmel, 1984; Prosser, 1989; Sample, 1972) point to an inherent

conflict in the two activities stemming from an institutional reward system which favours research over teaching (Neumann, 1996). Webster asks why the complementarity myth persists and responds; “it may be that we continue to believe that research enhances teaching in the face of enormous evidence that it does *not*, so that we can continue to justify the time we spend doing it to people who would rather see us use the time teaching” (p. 62). (In other words there is a ‘self-serving’ element to academics’ advocacy of a close relationship between research and teaching. This issue was raised by several of my research participants for whom the relation at undergraduate level was *not* close). Romainville (1996) suggests that the existence of a teaching/research nexus is increasingly being called into question. He regards the persistent belief in complementarity as somewhat ‘masochistic’.

Writing in his capacity as the then Director of the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit, Woodhouse (1998) speaks of a ‘dogmatic’ acceptance that the defining characteristic of a university is the inter-linking of teaching and research. Like Webster he suggests that academics have a vested interest in arguing for the beneficial effect of research on teaching. Woodhouse suggests that the emphasis on the link might be moved from the individual to the department, faculty or institutional level.

A number of commentators (Boyer, 1990; Elton, 1986, 1992; Gebhardt, 1995) argue that there is a need for teaching and research to be mediated by scholarship. Boyer contends that the time has come to move beyond the “tired old ‘teaching versus research’ debate” (p.16) to a definition of scholarship that will bring legitimacy to the full scope of academic work. He proposes four separate but overlapping functions; the scholarship of discovery; the scholarship of integration; the scholarship of application and the scholarship of teaching; all of which contribute to the creation of knowledge.<sup>2</sup> Gebhardt laments the mismatch for some academics between personal motives and professional rewards. He suggests the need to expand the criteria for evaluating scholarship; for example, by seeking evidence that a lecturer’s scholarship is influencing how s/he teaches, or evidence of a carryover from teaching to scholarship.

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<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately Boyer’s typology has been used to support arguments in favour of a separation of research and teaching (see, for example, TEAC, 2001c). Given subsequent Carnegie Commission reports, in particular Strum Kenny (1999) I doubt this was ever Boyer’s intention.

Lee (1992) and Bakker (1995) advocate a proactive approach to fostering the teaching/research connection. Lee believes that the symbiosis must be nurtured so that higher education of the future may be diverse, flexible and adaptive. Bakker recommends that every research proposal contain a description of the impact that the research is likely to have on teaching. Hughes and Tight (1995) suggest that it could be a professional responsibility of individual academics and their departments to make deliberate and creative links between their research and teaching whenever possible. In New Zealand, as described in chapter three, the focus of the 2000 academic audit on the research-teaching link resulted in a flurry of papers and publications outlining institutional practice and ways of enhancing the research/teaching relationship (for example Spronken-Smith et al., 2000).

### *A Change in Direction*

The research/teaching nexus debate seems destined to generate more heat than light. Vested interests draw on the debate selectively.<sup>3</sup> However, as Neumann (1996) puts it, “the nexus is complex, and its subtle, arcane aspects appear to outweigh the more concrete, explicit ones” (p. 14).

Recent comment highlights the need for a change in direction. Phrases such as “the tired old teaching versus research debate” (Boyer, 1990, xii) and “the increasingly sterile debate about the links between teaching and research” (Brew & Boud, 1995, p. 261) as well as “the need to move conceptually beyond the dichotomy of research and teaching” (Clark, 1997, p. 252), signal the need for a different line of inquiry. In a generally ignored conclusion, Hattie and Marsh (1996) state; “it should cease to be surprising that the relationship between teaching and research is zero and it would be more useful to investigate ways to increase the relationship” (p. 553). Neumann (1996) calls for more explicit and comprehensive definitions of teaching and research. Rowland (1996) suggests that ‘teaching’ and ‘research’ may indeed be inadequate concepts for distinguishing between different aspects of the academic role. Brew and Boud (1995) take issue with the instrumental view of research and teaching embedded in the terms ‘research productivity’

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<sup>3</sup> Evidence from correlational studies tends to be used for political purposes. For example, in the Tertiary Education Advisory Commission report *Shaping the funding framework* (TEAC, 2001c) the Commission quotes Hattie and Marsh (1996) regarding the very weak evidence of a mutually beneficial relationship.

and 'good teaching' which, they argue, tend to be used uncritically; they suggest that the critical link between teaching and research is the act of learning. Morris and Jelks (1997) advocate further study on how the process of research informed teaching influences student learning. Rowland (1996) believes that the relationship between teaching and research depends upon how knowledge is conceived and Brew (1999a) argues that the debates about the relationship need to be examined in the context of developments in ideas about the changing nature of knowledge. Clark (1997) rejects what he terms the 'incompatibility thesis' and advocates an inquiry model of education where engagement in research (inquiry) is the means of teaching and the pathway offered for student learning.

I hope that my thesis will contribute to the momentum generated by these scholars.

In chapters two and three I have suggested that a close relationship (the nature of which is seldom clarified in detail) between research and teaching is an integral part of the culture and mystique of research universities. It is a part of the fabric of the institution, a way of thinking and being. However it is clear from the responses of Canterbury academics reported at the beginning of this chapter and from some of the qualitative studies referred to above, that there is variation in the way this relation is experienced at the level of the individual academic. This variation in experience forms the core of my study.

### **Developing an Inquiry Focus**

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) contrast the rigorous design principles required of researchers working in a positivist qualitative paradigm, with the less well structured, more ambiguous and emergent processes associated with postpositivist and nonpositivist qualitative inquiries. Eisner (1998) suggests that flexibility, adjustment and iterativity are three hallmarks of qualitative 'method'. In contrast to the construction of a building where the builder follows specifications, Eisner likens qualitative inquiry to the creation of a collage in which the artist controls the qualities and is cued by them. "A finished collage depends upon in-process decisions made because of the look of the configuration as it unfolds" (p. 172).

In the beginning I had an ‘apprehension’ of what it was I wanted to explore but I had great difficulty formulating a research question or focus. In the various drafts of my research proposal (Robertson, 1998), that focus changed from:

- A consideration of the nature of the relationship between teaching and research in two institutions of higher education [the idea of conducting the research in two institutions was later dropped] and how this relationship might be further developed to the benefit of staff and students ... to
- This study, which is primarily pedagogic in focus, asks whether in fact there needs to be a link between teaching and research in institutions of higher education and, if so, what the nature of that link should be and how it should operate ... to
- This study will investigate reasons for the persistent belief in complementarity [of research and teaching]. It will suggest that the relationship between teaching and research can be transformed by reconceptualising the nature of the two in terms of feminist and postmodern thinking and will investigate the pedagogical implications of this reconceptualised relationship.

Although the last version appeared in the final research proposal I continued to be troubled by my inability to identify exactly what it was I was trying to do. It was not until 10 months after the research proposal was submitted, that I was finally able to clarify my research focus.

The aim of this research project is to identify the qualitatively different ways in which academic staff at the University of Canterbury experience the relation between teaching and research and to investigate the pedagogical implications of this variation.

There were to be further, significant changes in methodology (changes which I outline in this chapter). In addition, the focus of the thesis, while still centred on variation in the research/teaching relation, broadened to encompass the nature of inquiry (academics’, students’ and mine) in higher education.

### **A Phenomenographic Starting Point**

Given my interest in exploring *variation* in academics’ experiences of the research/teaching relation, a phenomenographic approach to the pilot study seemed most appropriate. None of the qualitative studies focusing on individual experience of the relation had used such an approach and I was unaware of any phenomenographic studies exploring the research/teaching relation. I did, however, have some reservations about the use of phenomenography as a research approach. In this chapter and particularly in this section, I

discuss my understandings of phenomenography and my reasons for seeking to move beyond what I perceive to be its limitations.

### *Some Initial Concerns*

I was first introduced to phenomenography as a research approach in the mid-1990s in connection with the literature on teaching and learning in higher education. Once I (thought I) had grasped the idea of phenomenography, I found it exerted a rather seductive appeal. It offered a way of analysing qualitative data which differed from the intensive (and to my mind rather positivist) 'coding' associated with much qualitative analysis. Clearly I was not the only one to have been attracted by this research approach. Web based discussion (University of Queensland phenomenography listserv) indicated that there were many new and experienced researchers particularly in Australia and Scandinavia who were using phenomenography across a wide range of education related projects. Ashworth and Lucas (2000) describe phenomenography as "an internationally valued educational research method" (p. 1). Entwistle (1997) argues that the enthusiasm with which phenomenography has been embraced is a reflection of its direct relevance to teaching and learning.

However, while I was attracted by the appeal of an accessible methodology, I was also uneasy about aspects of phenomenography as a research approach. In the very early stages of my thesis and prior to my first set of interviews, I wrote in my research journal:

On the surface phenomenography offers a very attractive option. It is a well-established but relatively new qualitative research approach which has particular application for teaching and learning... work has already been carried out on lecturers' conceptions of teaching and is currently being done on lecturers' conceptions of research [here I was focusing on studies which had a particular bearing on my intended research topic]. And I am relatively familiar with the literature surrounding the research approach. However writing this reflection has helped me to firm up my own concerns. The extreme abstraction of the data, the hierarchical ordering of categories, the emphasis on a preferred (right) way of understanding, the failure to make explicit the theoretical bias of the researcher, all undermine my confidence in the phenomenographic approach. Unless phenomenography can show itself sufficiently flexible to respond to some of the criticisms levelled at it, then I think it may prove too restrictive for my purposes.<sup>4</sup>

At the conclusion of the reflection I posed the following questions.

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<sup>4</sup> It is interesting that these comments, written before I had become familiar with interpretive and feminist/postmodern theory, signal an intuitive position which has subsequently been reinforced through my reading.

What happens if I apply this approach to the relationship between teaching and research as it is conceived by lecturers? Could the outcome be a set of categories describing the relationship in qualitatively different ways and could this be usefully applied to achieve a better understanding of the possibilities for change?? Could I (that is, would I be capable of) both using and critiquing phenomenography as my research approach? Could I integrate (or critique) phenomenography with (from) feminist/postmodern perspectives? And is this all getting too complex!??

It was very complex and became more so. But in order to unpack this complexity, and before I provide a further outline of my research design, I need to elaborate on my starting point – a phenomenographic approach.

### *Phenomenography: The Architecture of Variation and the Anatomy of Awareness*

In order to trace the growth and development of my research and to clarify the reasons for my ambivalence with regard to phenomenography, I need to outline briefly the domain, the purpose, the theoretical assumptions and the methodological processes associated with the approach.

As a research approach phenomenography<sup>5</sup> grew out of attempts in the early 70s to understand academic learning (Marton & Säljö, 1976; Svensson, 1997). Given that some students appeared to be better at learning than others, the intention was to investigate learning from the *learner's* perspective (Marton, 2000). The hierarchical organisation of the categories of conceptions or experiences of learning that emerged from this early research gave rise to the deep/surface approach to learning construct, the quantitative categories equating to a surface approach and the qualitative categories to a deep approach. The deep/surface construct (dichotomy) which Entwistle (1997) describes as a “powerful and simple idea” (p. 214) has had a profound (and profoundly Eurocentric) impact on notions of ‘good’ teaching and learning in higher education.

While this focus on the more general aspects of learning continued, other studies focused on student learning within particular content domains such as physics (Bowden et al., 1992)

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<sup>5</sup> Etymologically phenomenography is derived from the Greek words “phainemenon” and “graphein” which mean appearance and description. Thus phenomenography is about the description of things as they appear to us (Marton, 1999a). It is a *descriptive* rather than a prescriptive form of research (Prosser, 2000).

or computer science (Booth, 1997). A third line of phenomenographic research focused on how people conceive of various aspects of their reality outside the realm of formal learning situations (for example Theman, 1983). The phenomenographic interest in student learning has been extended to explorations of teachers' conceptions/experiences of teaching (Dall'Alba, 1991; Martin & Balla, 1991; Pratt, 1992; Prosser, Trigwell & Taylor, 1994; Trigwell, Prosser & Taylor, 1994; Trigwell & Prosser, 1996), of research (Brew, 1998, 2001; Brew & Phillis, 1997), scholarship (Brew, 1999b) and of the relation between research and teaching (Robertson & Bond, 2001).

Marton suggests that "the main strength and promise of phenomenography lies in a rigorous empirical exploration of the qualitatively different ways in which people experience and conceptualise various phenomena in, and aspects of, the world around us" (Marton, 2000, p.103). To make sense of how people handle problems, situations, the world, we need to understand the ways in which people experience these entities. (From a non-dualistic, ontological perspective, experience is understood as a relation between subject and object). Thus the unit of phenomenographic research is *a way of experiencing something* and the object of the research is the *variation* in ways of experiencing phenomena (Marton & Booth, 1997). The phenomenographic intention is to understand variation and to explore the meaning of that variation (rather than applying a predefined model of description) from the perspective of the experiencing subject (Marton, 2000). Thus a second order perspective - an experiential viewpoint - is adopted.

Whereas *phenomenology* aims to capture the singular essence of experience, *phenomenography* focuses on *variation* and the *architecture* of that variation. It asks 'what are the different ways of experiencing the phenomenon?' and 'how are these related to each other?' (Marton, 1999a). A phenomenon can thus be seen as a complex of the different ways in which it can be experienced. These different ways are logically related to each other – they are experiences of the same object. "The logically structured complex of the different ways of experiencing an object is known as the 'outcome space' of the object. Outcome space is therefore a synonym for 'phenomenon'" (Marton, 2000, p. 105).

Phenomenographic analysis involves identifying a number of qualitatively distinct descriptive categories of the ways in which the subjects experience the phenomenon in

question (Booth, 1997). These categories of description are derived from the experiences of the research participants but since the experiences are analysed at the collective level, the individual voices are lost. The outcome is “a stripped description in which the structure and essential meaning of the differing ways of experiencing the phenomenon are retained, while the specific flavours, the scents and the colours of the worlds of the individuals have been abandoned” (Marton & Booth, 1997, p. 114). For example the categories of description identified by Marton, Dall’Alba and Beaty (1993) in which students talked about their understanding of learning and by Pratt (1992) from transcripts in which teachers of adults described their conceptions of teaching read as follows.

Learning is:-

- A. increasing one’s knowledge
- B. memorising and reproducing
- C. applying
- D. understanding
- E. seeing something in a different way
- F. changing as a person

Teaching is:-

- A. delivering content
- B. modelling ways of being
- C. cultivating the intellect
- D. facilitating personal agency
- E. seeking a better society

While Marton et al. (1993) and Pratt (1992), in contrast to some other phenomenographic studies, do provide a fuller description of each category, the category descriptors listed above are often used by others in isolation from their accompanying descriptions thus contributing to decontextualisation.

The categories are derived from the collective experience and while it may be possible to equate an individual with a particular category it is more likely that the experience of an individual is reflected in two or more categories. Bond (2000) argues that “what tends to dominate is *the* phenomenon at the expense of the individual in their life world” (p. 101). Thus individual experience is fragmented and separated from “the emotional, moral and aesthetic characteristics and values in which it is embedded” (p. 106).

Recently there has been a shift in emphasis from methodological to more theoretical concerns focusing on the questions ‘what is a way of experiencing something?’ and ‘what is the actual difference between two ways of experiencing the same thing?’ (Marton,

1999a). Marton argues that our awareness has a structure to it, it is layered. Things come to the fore and constitute the core of our awareness (they are thematised) while other things recede into the background (they are unthematized). We can be focally aware of a few entities simultaneously. Marton (2000) draws on Gurwitsch (1964) who “makes a distinction between the object of focal awareness, the theme, and those aspects of the experienced world which are related to the object and in which it is embedded, the thematic field” (Marton, 2000, p. 110). Co-existing with the theme but unrelated in terms of context or meaning, is the margin. Structure therefore “refers to the way in which the whole is discerned, how its parts are discerned and are related to one another and to the whole; it refers to the perspective it is viewed from, what is held in focus and what is not” (Marton & Booth, 1997, p. 100). Discernment is thus at the core of ways of experiencing the world and discernment is dependent upon variation. Without variation there is no discernment and no learning (Marton, 1999b).

While I argue below that phenomenography has lacked a theoretical framework, I have not found this focus on the structure of awareness to be particularly helpful in relation to my own research. Of more value is Bond’s (2000) suggestion (in relation to student learning) that learners’ experiences may be thought of in terms of “an interrelated, multidimensional phenomenal field” (p. 137) in which the various dimensions are internally related, demonstrating a logical coherence in terms of meaning and structure.

### *Challenges to Phenomenography*

The very popularity of phenomenography as a research specialisation has created problems and challenges (Entwistle, 1997). Recently phenomenography has attracted critical interest both from its exponents and from those with differing educational research perspectives. In outlining some of these critiques here, I also draw attention to my own concerns about the limitations of the approach.

Säljö criticises phenomenography for its lack of a theory of language and communication and for “its almost dogmatic disregard for paying attention to why people talk the way they do” (Säljö, 1996, p. 24). He argues that, rather than focusing on what people *experience*,

phenomenography is, in fact, focusing on what people *say* about their experience; the emphasis is on a way of talking rather than a way of experiencing. Thus phenomenography is based on particular discursive practices and the phenomenographer is, in fact, studying an *account* of an experience. Säljö suggests that we would learn more about actors' definitions of the world if we viewed these accounts as attempts at communicating in situated practices. He also claims that, by forming categories of description which correspond to the 'collective anatomy of awareness' and thereby "disconnecting the utterance from its communicative function in context ... phenomenography becomes a study of something very abstract" (Säljö, 1997, p.187).

Webb (1997) challenges the practice of phenomenography on a number of counts. He perceives a tension between the attempt to achieve 'empathetic understanding' while engaging in 'rigorous' scientific research. He argues that "phenomenographic explanation is prone to reproduction of the discourses it studies" (p. 201); that it valorises certain approaches (to learning) and assumes a 'right' (authorised) category within the outcome space<sup>6</sup>; that it (mistakenly) assumes a researcher capable of making neutral observations, building objective categories and giving neutral interpretations; that the binary distinction of deep/surface privileges a particular (Western) approach to teaching and learning and serves the interests of certain members of the higher education development community; and that, by focusing on the categorisation of concepts, phenomenography fails to acknowledge gender, social, historical, cultural or human understanding of the people involved.

Hazel, Conrad and Martin (1997) offer a feminist critique of phenomenography. They see women as largely absent from phenomenographic studies both as participants and as researchers. Like Webb, they argue that "the dominant values of the discipline cannot be accepted unproblematically in establishing a hierarchical outcome space" (p. 218) and support an exploration of the 'invisible conceptions' embedded in the discipline. Finally they suggest that the affective (largely absent from phenomenographic research) is inseparable from the cognitive dimension of knowledge and needs to be recognised.

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<sup>6</sup> Marton and Booth (1997) state that "educationally, it is a reasonable assumption that there is a norm, a particular way of experiencing a phenomenon that is to be preferred over others, and that is what the educational effort is designed to foster ... thus we seek an identifiably hierarchical structure of increasing complexity, inclusivity or specificity in the categories..." (p. 126).

Bond (2000) supports the critiques of decontextualisation, arguing that by fragmenting an individual's experience in the first phase of analysis, the meaning of that experience - its internal structure – as well as its more emotional and aesthetic aspects, is abandoned. “What appears to be required as a basic unit of analysis is a shift from a focus on fragments of individuals' experiences to that which is inclusive of an individual's whole experience within the socio-temporal-spatial frame of the interview” (Bond, 2000, p. 136). She advocates a hermeneutic approach. Bond also suggests that the adoption of a second order perspective (as in phenomenography) is limited to providing ontological *description* of experience. She argues that, in order to interrogate the meaning of the individual's experience, there is a need to ask *why* particular phenomena are related in the way that they are for that individual – to seek the logical structure of the experience or ontological explanation. Bowden (2000) likewise uses the whole interview transcript as his unit of analysis, arguing that Marton's formation of a 'pool of meanings' based on selected quotes from transcripts, leads to decontextualisation which is at odds with the underlying relational nature of phenomenography.

Like Bond, Uljens (1996) also suggests that phenomenography might develop towards a hermeneutic mode of reasoning in which the meaning of experience could emerge as a relation between its content and its context. He recommends the ideas of Paul Ricoeur in this respect. Webb (1997) too suggests that the hermeneutic tradition, with its self-reflective emphasis on the role of the researcher within the research situation, offers a more fruitful way forward.

### *My Concerns*

Svensson (1997) states that “phenomenography is not a system of philosophical assumptions and theses, and it is not derived or deduced from such a system. It is an empirical research tradition” (p. 164). At the same time he argues that the advent of phenomenography represented a radical shift from the quantitative methodological tradition and that it was inspired by hermeneutic, ethnographic and phenomenological methodological traditions. However within the phenomenographic literature there is little discussion of the position of phenomenography within the wider qualitative research

paradigm. With the exception of Svensson's comment and the recent critiques outlined above, there is little reference in the phenomenographic literature to other interpretative research traditions. Interestingly, phenomenography is notable for its absence from major qualitative research texts (for example, Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Eisner, 1998). Phenomenography not only ignores the wider qualitative world but is itself ignored. This insularity and cult like status is both surprising and concerning. In a previous chapter I expressed my preference for theoretical integration rather than compartmentalisation. At the very least I would argue that phenomenography needs to modify its isolationist stance and engage in dialogue with other interpretivist traditions.

I share the concerns of Bond (2000), Bowden (2000), Hazel et al. (1997), Säljö (1996, 1997) and Webb (1997). From a postmodern perspective the lack of reflexivity, the disregard for the mediating role played by language, the emphasis on hierarchy (in particular the privileging of a certain discourse or aspect of a discourse) and the failure to address power/knowledge relations within that discourse should be of concern. From a hermeneutic perspective, the decontextualisation inherent in the phenomenographic process strips participants of gender, class, historical, cultural and social identity (see, for example, the conceptions of teaching and learning identified by Marton et al. (1993) and Pratt (1992) earlier in this chapter). Moreover there is little acknowledgement of the role played by the researcher in the production of the phenomenographic categories of description. As one of the few to address this issue, Bowden believes that phenomenographic research produces descriptions which not only reflect the relation between individuals and the phenomenon, but which also reflect the nature of the conversation between the researcher and each individual. Quite how this is evidenced in the outcomes of phenomenographic research is unclear.

The question of the role of the researcher in the production of categories is addressed by Walsh (2000) but in a curious way. She asks; "is the researcher consciously interpreting the data, and thereby constructing the relationship [between the interviewee and the phenomena]. Or is the researcher looking into the transcripts to discover the particular ways in which people understand the phenomenon?" (p. 20). I am surprised that such a question is asked at all. From a hermeneutic perspective I would have expected that the researcher engaged in a dialogue with the interview transcripts and that the resulting

categories represented the researcher's interpretation of the participants' experiences. Suggesting that the categories are 'found' denies the fundamental role of the researcher in the transformation of text through the mimetic process (Ricoeur, 1984). It is surely not a case of either construction or discovery but of both and neither. As Denzin and Lincoln (1994) point out, meaning, interpretation and representation are deeply intertwined in one another. Walsh assumes that the idea of constructing categories presupposes the need for the categories to fit a predetermined framework. I do not believe this to be the case at all and I consider the construction/discovery dichotomy to be singularly unproductive.

I have described phenomenography in some detail because, in the beginning it significantly influenced my thinking about this thesis. At the same time, I have expressed dissatisfaction with what I perceive to be its limitations. In the next section I outline the evolution of my research which sees me both using and moving beyond a phenomenographic methodology.

#### *A Phenomenographic Approach to a Pilot Study*

Towards the end of 1998 I interviewed seven of the nine academics who had expressed strongly held opinions on the research/teaching relationship. This pilot was designed, in its interview approach and its transcript analysis, as a phenomenographic study. The process of conducting the interviews and the results of the analysis are described in detail in chapter five. In this chapter I am interested in accounting for the *changes* in my research approach growing out of the pilot study.

In brief, the pilot study revealed the following variation in experience of the research/teaching relation.

- A. Research and teaching are mutually incompatible activities;
- B. Little or no connection exists between research and teaching at undergraduate level;
- C. Teaching is a means of transmitting new research knowledge;
- D. Teachers model and encourage a research/critical inquiry approach to learning;
- E. Teaching and research share a symbiotic relationship in a learning community.

While these results were interesting in terms of the extent of the variation experienced, they generated more questions than answers and raised some concerns.

Firstly there was a question surrounding the ‘object’ of the research – the ‘phenomenon’ that I was exploring. I found myself torn between a desire to focus on experiences of the *relation* (where the relation was defined by the academics themselves), and a desire to focus on experiences of research and teaching as *independent phenomena* (though still defined by my research participants). The latter would then allow me, as researcher, to identify the inter-relations between the phenomena. In the pilot study I focused primarily on academics’ experiences of the *relation* but this remained an unresolved, albeit intriguing, tension.

Secondly and relatedly, it was apparent that any exploration of the research/teaching relation would need to extend beyond merely a consideration of ‘research’ and ‘teaching’. The literature was already signalling this (for example Brew & Boud, 1995) and it was clear from the conversations with my research participants that the way in which they conceptualised knowledge was fundamental to their experience of the research/teaching relation. I had already included a question about experiences of learning in the pilot interviews. In the new research design, the concepts of *research, teaching, learning* and *knowledge* were taken to constitute a ‘phenomenal field’.<sup>7</sup>

Thirdly, I was concerned at the way individual experience became fragmented across the phenomenographic categories of description. It was impossible to derive from this categorisation any sense of the context within which these academics were working. Not only were their experiences atomised and decontextualised, they were also stripped of their emotional and aesthetic qualities. What was needed, if the complexity of the relationship was to be unpacked, was that the individual’s experience be explored as a coherent whole or multi-phenomenal field which embraced knowledge, research, teaching and learning and their *inter-relation* (Robertson & Bond, 2001).

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<sup>7</sup> In view of the analytical complexity already evident I chose not to include ‘scholarship’ in the phenomenal field. Its inclusion may well inform future studies.

I also wondered about the experiences of women academics and whether these would differ from the experiences of the seven men involved in the pilot. There was no evidence in the other qualitative studies that gender had been taken into account. Rowland's (1996) 12 heads of departments were all male. Neumann (1992) did not indicate how many of her 33 senior academic administrators were women but one might suppose that the proportion was small. Both Jensen (1988) and Smeby (1998) indicated the disciplinary affiliations of their participants but not their gender. Clearly there was a need in future interviews for me to establish a more representative sample than that provided by the opportunistic pilot study.

### **A Methodological Shift from Phenomenography to Phenomenal Field Analysis**

For the reasons outlined above, I decided, in my main research study, to adopt a more hermeneutic (and consequently more holistic) approach to the analysis of the interview transcripts. The details of this main study, which involved interviews with a further 18 academic staff, are outlined in chapter five. Here I focus on this methodological shift as an example of my desire to look again, to alter my angle of repose.

I retained a phenomenographic approach to the new set of interviews, though with a refocusing of the interview questions (see chapter five). However I then worked intensively with each of the 18 new transcripts in order to establish the *individual's* experiences of research, teaching, knowledge and learning and of the research/teaching relation as expressed by that participant. Each transcript was treated as a whole so that experiences of various phenomena remained linked to one another in context. By representing the experiences of each individual diagrammatically and constantly iterating between the parts and the whole, I was able to begin a process of surfacing the relations amongst them.

Having completed this individual analysis for each of the new interviews, I reanalysed the pilot transcripts using the same approach. I had not asked the pilot participants specifically about their experience of 'knowledge'. However they often talked about knowledge in their responses to questions about the other three phenomena, thus reinforcing the notion of

the inter-relatedness of the phenomenal field. An example of this is provided in chapter five.

I then worked with the full complement of 25 transcripts in order to group together those sharing similar experiences of the research/teaching relation. Initially these groupings were tentative and for a long time, through many re-readings of all the transcripts, movement between them continued. Eventually I settled on five 'piles' of transcripts which, to my mind, represented five groups of academics whose experiences of the research/teaching relation were similar. At this point I constructed a 'profile' of each group. The profile consisted of: a group representation of experiences of research, teaching, learning, knowledge plus key words associated with each; a group representation of the experienced relation between research and teaching and a verbal and diagrammatic representation of the relationship amongst all the phenomena

What I had not anticipated from the outcomes of the pilot study or even from my reading of the research literature, was the extent to which similar and different experiences would be constituted along broadly disciplinary lines. Brew (2001) has argued that "it is no longer appropriate to base explanations about differences in the experience of research primarily on disciplinary distinctions" (p. 23). She suggests that if, like Becher, one assumes separate disciplines, then this provides a rationale for differences in activities and focus. In undertaking a phenomenal field analysis I was not necessarily anticipating that discipline would constitute a major differentiating factor. If anything I expected gender and career stage to be important determinants of variation across groups. However by focusing on the whole individual in context rather than a phenomenographic 'way of experiencing something', and on individuals across the full range of faculties, the strength of the disciplinary influence became apparent. This disciplinary distinction may also reflect the University of Canterbury's comparatively conservative approach to the constitution and categorisation of knowledge.

Thus far the analysis resulted in a continuum representing variation in experience of the research/teaching relation and with a descriptive outline to support that variation. These results are reported in detail in chapter six. However I continued to seek a way of surfacing

the deeper structural relations amongst the phenomena, of questioning what lay behind the 'said'; an *explanatory* rather than a merely *descriptive* ontology (Bond, 2000).

### *An Expansion of the Phenomenal Field Analysis: The Use of Metaphor*

During this initial analysis I had, on occasions, been struck by the metaphors used by my research participants as they attempted to describe and account for their experiences of research, teaching, learning, knowledge and the research/teaching relation. I was not actively looking for metaphors at this stage, but the most powerful ones kept presenting themselves to me in a way that I could not ignore. More out of curiosity than with any intention of extending my analysis, I worked my way again through all the transcripts, this time deliberately seeking metaphorical expressions. The result was extraordinary. The metaphors emerged from the same sections of text that I had already highlighted in the initial analysis. In other words I wasn't finding new material in the interview texts. However what an exploration of metaphor enabled me to do was look *differently* at the passages I had been working with. It was like putting on another pair of glasses or, in terms of Kristy's paintings, moving to another vantage point from where other layers of the painting were revealed.

Working with the categories already established in the initial analysis and reported in chapter six, I created a metaphorical 'map' for each research participant in which the metaphors scattered throughout an individual interview were grouped and named. Following this I mapped the full range of metaphors for each category of experience. In this exercise I did not distinguish between metaphors relating to different phenomena, seeking instead a simple overview of the metaphorical landscape represented in each category. Finally I summarised the main metaphorical expressions used in relation to each component of the phenomenal field and matched these with examples taken from the transcripts. The results of this analysis are detailed in chapter seven.

Why did metaphor offer me greater insight into the structural relations constituting the world-views of individuals and groups? Gibbs (1992) suggests that metaphor is a primary mechanism for *understanding* our experience. We use metaphor to structure and make

sense of our world (it is an interpretive tool) but we often do it unconsciously. The metaphors we use are mostly drawn from the linguistic communities in which we live and work, they are a part of our socio-cultural heritage. It follows that, in our use of metaphor, we reveal not only our own attempts at understanding but also the embeddedness of that interpretation in a community of practice and in relations of power. It is in the hermeneutic act that one's research participants reveal their world-view and their community allegiances. By exploring academics' use of metaphor I may also have gone some way towards countering Säljö's (1996) concerns about phenomenography's lack of a theory of language and communication. If metaphor represents a way of structuring reality, then metaphorical expressions are a direct communication of experience in situated practices.

The journey from phenomenography to the use of metaphor in a phenomenal field analysis has seemed a long one and yet the two are closely related.

Marton and Booth (1997) talk of the "architecture of variation" (p. 117) in relation to phenomenography. I take this to refer to the (often hierarchical) relationship amongst the categories of description in a phenomenographic outcome space. However if we temporarily abandon the notion of variation across the experiences of a group and focus on the idea of *architecture* in relation to the individual, then we can begin to explore the relationships emerging within a phenomenal field. I think of architecture in terms of the relationships between/amongst spaces or components that constitute an overall design. Each part contributes to and takes its meaning from the whole.<sup>8</sup> In the same way an academic's experiences of research, teaching, learning and knowledge stand on their own but derive greater meaning from their relationship to one another. To use an Enlightenment metaphor, each part illuminates the others with the whole constituting a coherent world-view. It is this world-view which determines the way in which the research/teaching relation is experienced; and it was through an exploration of metaphor that this world-view became most evident to me.

Rather than standing in opposition to each other, phenomenography and phenomenal field analysis seem to me to be usefully complementary. Neither on its own necessarily provides

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<sup>8</sup> Hermeneutically this is so. From a postmodern perspective there may be a deliberate attempt to disrupt or deny any such unity.

the full picture. Traditional phenomenography fragments and decontextualises the individual experience, but it does allow the individual to be recognised or located in more than one category. For example, David (a participant in the pilot interviews) experienced the research/teaching relation in terms of the transmission of research information, but he also talked of a symbiotic relationship between research and teaching where working at the research 'frontier' and teaching undergraduates mutually inform and enrich each other. Phenomenographically David's experiences fragment into categories C (teaching is a means of transmitting new research knowledge) and E (teaching and research share a symbiotic relationship in a learning community). However when one analyses David's transcript as a whole, rather than breaking it up, it becomes apparent that the symbiotic relationship retains a strongly hierarchical structure which positions it firmly in a disciplinary context. David's 'symbiosis' differs from that experienced by academics in, for example, the humanities. Once again, metaphor offers a powerful way of both *describing* and *explaining* these subtle but significant differences.

Neither phenomenography nor phenomenal field analysis avoids the pitfalls of categorisation and I find myself consistently ill at ease in this regard. It concerns me that individuals (or experiences) are consigned to a box, labelled in the interests of imposing order. I want to resist such stereotyping and yet in order to make meaning of my interview transcripts for myself and for readers, I need to create some structure. Herda (1999) points out; "we create a group and assign an individual to it. However, the individual has integrity that exists apart from the group or category we have created for our own convenience and sense of order" (p. 37). My participants spill out of their boxes, they transgress the boundaries that I have tried to place around them. I am happy to acknowledge that this is the case and in chapters six and seven, while elaborating on my processes of categorisation, I try to retain a sense of the integrity of the individual and a sense of the continuity across categories.

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This research design has been truly emergent. My starting point was a research approach with which I was already familiar (phenomenography) and which was used extensively in

research into teaching and learning in higher education. For me, there was a sense at the beginning of wanting to cling to a well-defined way of going about my research – a safe haven. However the pilot study confirmed my early, tentative misgivings about the limitations of phenomenography for the study I was undertaking. The emerging critiques of phenomenography outlined in this chapter reinforced my decision to seek another way of exploring experiences of the research/teaching relation. Phenomenal field analysis enabled me to work with the individual transcript as the unit of analysis and to consider a complex network of phenomena which appeared to constitute the object of my research. This in turn made it possible to retain the experiences of individuals in context and to address the complexity of a relation which has tended in the past to be treated too simplistically. These analytical approaches distinguish this study from the other qualitative inquiries outlined earlier in this chapter.

In the next three chapters I describe the processes involved in and the results emerging from, the phenomenographic and phenomenal field analyses. Because the process of ‘looking again’ inevitably disrupts the apparent (though I would argue deceptive) linearity of the thesis narrative, this chapter and those following involve a degree of ‘revisiting’ consistent with the notion of the hermeneutic spiral. Chapter five focuses on my use of interview as a research method and presents the results of the pilot study. Chapter six details the first stage of the phenomenal field analysis and chapter seven extends that analysis with an investigation of metaphor. In each of these chapters I alter slightly my angle of repose in order to look again at the way in which I might make meaning from my conversations with academics.

# Chapter Five

## InterViews

*We tell stories because in the last analysis human lives need and merit being narrated  
(Ricoeur, 1984, p. 75).*

*The indeterminate totality of the interview always exceeds and transgresses our attempts to  
capture and categorise (Scheurich, 1995, p. 249).*

In forcing us to look again at a very familiar word (InterView) Kvale (1996) opens up the constructive nature of the interview conversation – an exchange of views, an interaction between two (or more) persons. The interview is not a site where the researcher gathers information unidirectionally. Rather knowledge is constituted in the dialogic relation between interviewer and interviewee. As language animals we construct our knowing through dialogue. Our being in the world is shaped by our conversational activity.

We each bring to the interview conversation a history and a prior orientation to the focus of discussion. The conversation becomes a negotiation of meaning, a learning experience (*Bildungsreise*) in which there is the potential for each participant to be transformed. It is as a means of transformative learning that I find interviews appealing. For me the interview process provides access to the beliefs and attitudes, the experiences and understandings of people in a local context. It offers a connection with people, a shared learning experience which many other social research methods fail to capture.

Prior to the doing of this thesis I regarded the interview relationship and the knowledge created through that relationship as relatively unproblematic. However in the past four or so years my readings in interpretive, feminist and postmodern literature have radically challenged that simplistic attitude. In particular I have become more aware of the complexities of the mimetic transformations that occur in the movement from conversation, to transcript, to research text, to reader interpretation; and also more aware of the power relations inherent in the interview relationship and in the mimetic process.

In this chapter I endeavour to make my research procedures transparent by describing the ‘craft’ work involved in the interviews. I also scrutinise those procedures, asking questions of my own practice, opening up spaces of doubt and uncertainty in what is a quintessentially human – and therefore fallible – activity.

### **The Exploratory Study**

I have made passing reference in previous chapters to the critical incident, which provided the impetus for my empirical research, and to the consequent pilot study. Here for the first time I describe the process and detail the findings of this exploratory study.

Kezar (2000) regards ‘pilot studies’ as an under-utilised technique and suggests that they “can help develop an experiential understanding that reshapes the final study in profound and important ways” (p. 385). She draws on hermeneutic theory to illustrate how her engagement in practical activity (a pilot study) generated significant shifts in her understanding of how to study leadership. Likewise Janesick (1994) considers that the time invested in a pilot study can enrich later phases of the research. In my case, as I outlined in the previous chapter, the doing of the pilot study provided a framework for further investigation and determined a change in my research approach. I also hoped that the pilot would signal to the participants that their responses were being heard and taken seriously by ERAU.

### *The Pilot Process*

In September 1998 I wrote to the nine academic staff members who had communicated with ERAU about the Hattie and Marsh article explaining that I was interested in talking to them further about their views on the relation between research and teaching. I followed up the letters with phone calls to arrange a time and place for interviews. Once agreement had been reached (with seven of the nine correspondents, two being unavailable), I sent each participant a copy of the ERAU review of the Hattie and Marsh article, the article itself

(which most had neither read nor seen), a copy of their response to the article as received by ERAU and a copy of the interview questions I was intending to ask.

The interview questions reflected the difficulty I was having at that time in establishing a focus for the study. A tension between the phenomenal (what questions) and the causal (why questions) was evident and my tendency to conflate what and how questions (how would you describe what you are doing when you engage in research? i.e. what do you think research is?) must have been confusing for the interview participants. In an attempt to cover all bases I also added in questions about students' perceptions of the link, the potential for strengthening the relationship and the (un)desirability of further separating the two. Although interesting, the responses to these latter questions were in fact tangential to what was to emerge as the essential focus of the study – how my research participants experienced the relation between their research and their teaching.

The taped interviews ranged from 30 to 80 minutes in length and according to the lecturers' preferences took place in their offices or in my study at ERAU. As someone who is always curious about other people's working environments I preferred interviewing in their offices. It gave me a physical context within which to position the interview (Eisner, 1998). All the participants in the pilot interviews were male and were drawn from civil engineering, linguistics, mathematics, plant and microbial sciences, economics (x 2) and physics. Thus there was a strong 'science' orientation to the sample. To my surprise most of the participants had gone to some trouble to prepare for the interview. Some had made notes alongside the interview questions, two had found articles for me which they felt supported their views and one came with several pages outlining his understanding of the teaching/research relation. In response to my final question, four of the seven had attempted to sketch a diagram illustrating their concept of the relationship between research, learning and teaching.

Following each interview I made brief notes relating to atmosphere, attitude and in particular, to comments made after the interview was officially over and the tape turned off. I also listened to each tape as soon as possible after the interview, jotting down key points and words that seemed to encapsulate the participants' perspectives. This gave me a global 'sense', a 'feeling for' each interview. The tapes were then transcribed by a mature student

who had just completed an arts degree. Once the transcripts were returned I read each one through twice, highlighting passages of particular relevance and making brief margin notes. Key words and phrases which seemed to represent a particular experience of the research/teaching relation were clustered together, using a star diagram as an organising structure. These 'nodes' gradually attracted a cluster of similar descriptions of experience. Then, as I revisited the transcripts, the star-like structure expanded into a network of patterns of similarity and difference. At this point I organised the nodes into a continuum or hierarchy of 'categories of description'. In this way the relations between the categories as reflected in the outcome space became more apparent (Marton, 1986).

### *Power and Position: The Interview Relationship*

Before I expand on the pilot categories I want to discuss my relationship (as I perceived it) with my interview participants. Alcoff (1995) argues that representations of others' lives are always complicated by the effects of discourse, power and position. This dynamic interplay of power and position and its relationship to the credibility of qualitative research was a theme taken up by three of us from Canterbury University in a paper presented as part of a symposium at the inaugural Qualitative Research Conference, Melbourne (Bradford, Ditcher & Robertson, 1999). In the paper each of the three authors told a research 'story' related to the theme of the paper. In this section I draw on excerpts from my (Jane's) story which illustrate my thoughts and feelings as I engaged in the pilot interviews.

At the time of the initial furore over ERAU's review of the Hattie and Marsh article I had only just begun working at ERAU. By the time I carried out the pilot interviews I had been employed by the university for 18 months. Although I was operating as a researcher from *within* the institution, there were a number of factors which I felt were serving to marginalise me. To begin with I was a new staff member and unfamiliar with the university culture. I came from a very different culture of secondary teacher education and my socialisation into the complexities of the university environment was slow. At the same time I was employed as a general rather than an academic staff member, a position which

distinguished me from my interview participants.<sup>1</sup> My background and my position in the staff development unit meant that I was associated with teaching (placing me on the 'other' side of the research/teaching dichotomy) and, for some of the participants, with research findings (as reported in the ERAU Newsletter) which ran counter to their most deeply held beliefs regarding the academic enterprise. I was also a woman in a predominantly male environment (with all male interview participants) and a doctoral student conducting qualitative research in an institution where quantitative approaches dominated.

Limerick, Burgess-Limerick and Grace (1996) point to a commonly held assumption that power in the research relationship is "dichotomous and asymmetrical and always favours the interviewer" (p. 449). However from my perspective, the characteristics outlined above positioned me as a novice engaging with experts, an 'outsider' in a potentially volatile series of conversations. I was concerned that my public role in staff development and my apparent association with 'undesirable' views of the relationship between teaching and research, might cause my participants to position me unfavourably. Refusal to participate in the research or a defensive/antagonistic approach to the interview, were possible responses. At the same time I was aware that I enjoyed a privileged perspective from my "unique position on the margins" (Beoku-Betts, 1994, p. 419). My insider-ness opened up unexpected access to a significant academic debate, enabling me to seize an exciting research opportunity, while my positions of difference enabled me to distance myself somewhat and to listen and observe from the periphery as opposed to being immersed at the centre.

The complexity of the relationship between researcher and participant is particularly apparent in the following instance. At the time of the pilot interviews a review of ERAU was in the planning stages and one of the issues to be addressed was a redesignation in status from 'general' to 'academic' for those of us working in academic staff development. Upon this decision would depend, amongst other things, our ability to access research funding. One of the respondents to the ERAU Newsletter was a very senior academic who was understood to be resisting this change in status. Essentially I would be interviewing

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<sup>1</sup> At the beginning of 2000 ERAU professional positions were redesignated 'academic', a factor which significantly affected my perception of (and my perception of others' perceptions of) the researcher/research participant relationship.

someone who had a vested interest in opposing most of what defined my working self! I was both apprehensive and curious.

We met in his office. In the brief notes I made after the interview, I recorded:

Let me know straight away he had another appointment at 9.30 [this was 9.00am and I had scheduled an hour for the interview]. Asked how things were going at ERAU. I mentioned the review. He talked about the question of academic status for ERAU and commented that there was quite a division of opinion on the matter. Implied that he and other influential people did NOT think ERAU should have academic status (Interview notes, December 1998).

This was not a propitious opening. I felt that I was being challenged both in my academic staff development role and as a researcher. However a curious thing happened in the course of the 30 minutes. My notes go on to say; "tone changed as interview proceeded. By end, an open invitation to come back and talk to him again next year – anytime!! Certainly felt much warmer at the end!!" (Interview notes, December 1998). In our Power and Position paper (Bradford et al., 1999) I reflected on this event.

How was I to interpret his apparent re/positioning of me? I believe that the negativity I experienced at the beginning of the interview was a result of this person's passionate commitment to a view of the relationship between teaching and research, which he perceived to be under threat. Rightly or wrongly, I was associated in his mind with that threat and positioned accordingly. As it became clear, through our dialogue, that I was genuinely interested in exploring the relationship between teaching and research, it is possible that my participant ... may have come to see me as a convenient ally rather than as a perceived threat.

Either way, the power that flows through this encounter has proved difficult to deal with and continues to trouble the writing of this story. I feel guilty about singling out and 'using' one participant in particular (am I exerting a retaliatory power?) I find myself grappling with what to say and what to omit, always wondering if I have overstepped the mark. Would I be less worried if this were a less powerful person? (Bradford et al., 1999).

Writing at a greater temporal and emotional distance from the event, I can still recall the anxiety I felt in relating this story at the conference. I was concerned on two counts. One, that despite my very best efforts to preserve my participant's anonymity, he would be 'recognised' and two, that in using the story I was somehow manipulating the situation and abusing my position as researcher. I have redescribed the encounter here because it provides a vivid example of the potential complexities of insider research and because it challenges the assumption that power always favours the interviewer.

Another interesting challenge came from several of the pilot participants who questioned the credibility of my qualitative research approach. For example, Edmund asked me at the end of the interview; "... oh yeah, your topic at the top there, my immediate reaction to that was well does reality enter into the discussion or are you just interested in people's conceptions?" (Edmund, 17). In the same interview he commented:

When I was talking to these two head of departments ... I actually suggested to one of them that you might be interested in talking to him and he felt that it was, that it would be a waste of time, that you've got all the information already on record, that all you need to do is look at course evaluations. The paper concerned [Hattie & Marsh, 1996] was talking about two numerical outputs basically and was talking about numbers of papers published, you can look that up in the calendar and student evaluations, and you've got them stashed away in the office there, and you could do an anonymous correlation of those sorts of things for this university and see for yourself whether it's true or not (Edmund, 15).

Frank criticised the nature of the studies comprising the Hattie and Marsh meta-analysis but went on to say; "I must admit I have to take interviews with a grain of salt as well. Again, because it's like a survey, it's someone's opinion rather than what they may actually do" (Frank, 11). George recalled positive comments in the first university audit about the strength of the relationship between research and teaching (discussed in chapter three) and asked; "how can you measure it? I mean that's probably something for you to measure" (George, 5). This privileging of the positivist over the interpretive paradigm tended to undermine my confidence, making me feel as though I was a child 'playing' at research.

At the end of Jane's story I wrote:

In undertaking the pilot interviews I have had to go through a process of making the unfamiliar familiar. Now, as I am about to embark on a more substantial round of interviews, my socialisation into the university and academic culture means that my task will, increasingly, be to make the familiar, unfamiliar (Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Garner & Steinmetz, 1991). No longer a newcomer, I must also face the fact that I will increasingly be interviewing research participants who are interacting with me in my staff development role. Potential conflicts of interest and ethical dilemmas have further implications for the credibility of my research, my credibility as a researcher and also for my credibility as a staff developer. I have to 'live on' in my research setting. Furthermore the immediate academic community is likely to be one of the 'audiences' for this research. I cannot walk away from the field when the project is completed (Stevenson & Greer, 1981) and, in this sense, it will never be completed (Bradford et al., 1999).

As I look back on what I wrote over three years ago I am aware of some of the changes that have since occurred for me as a researcher. At the time of the pilot interviews I was new to the institution, naïve in terms of its culture and lacking a theoretical framework within

which to position myself as a researcher. For example I found it difficult to justify my choice of a qualitative/phenomenographic research approach to my sometimes sceptical research participants.<sup>2</sup> While I had no need to justify my research approach to myself, I did not have the language or theoretical understanding to argue a case with others for whom my approach had little value. However I can now see that my engagement in this research project, as well as providing me with the tools and understandings to work qualitatively within an interpretive paradigm, has been pivotal in facilitating my socialisation into the university. It has provided me with a unique insight into the experiences of academic staff – from their own perspective – and this, in a mutually enriching hermeneutic spiral, has in turn informed my staff development work which has further informed my research.... . Increasingly I am talking *within* the university community (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

But I am jumping ahead of myself. For now I return to the categories of description identified from the phenomenographic analysis of the pilot interview transcripts as described above. Here I draw on a published account of the findings of the study (Robertson & Bond, 2001).

#### *Pilot Findings: Categories of Description*

I identified five qualitatively different experiences of the relation between research and teaching.

1. Research and teaching are mutually incompatible activities;
2. Little or no connection exists between research and teaching at undergraduate level;
3. Teaching is a means of transmitting new research knowledge;
4. Teachers model and encourage a research/critical inquiry approach to learning;
5. Teaching and research share a symbiotic relationship in a learning community.

These categories are described below.

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<sup>2</sup> I realise now that no amount of 'justification' on my part would have convinced academics whose world-view was so very different to my own.

## 1. Research and teaching are mutually incompatible activities

In this category teaching and research are not only not related but also incompatible. For example, time devoted to research reduces the attention that can be given to the other and vice versa. Moreover, engagement in cutting-edge research can detract from the ability of a teacher to communicate ideas at the basic level.

... but the things that you need to be able to do to produce lots of papers are almost antagonistic to being a good teacher because you've got to concentrate so much on what you're interested in that you don't care about the students... (Edmund, 4-5).

At stage 1, stage 2 they have to learn a body of facts, a body of established modes of reason and the problem solving. The students do best with skilful teachers ... for a teacher at stage 1, stage 2 to have an immense grasp of a subject to its cutting edge, it's at best irrelevant and at worst, it threatens to get the lecturers bogged down (Chris, 4).

I concluded years ago that research interferes with undergraduate teaching and have long advocated the hiring of pure teachers for routine undergraduate and service courses (Chris, e-mail communication).

## 2. Little or no connection exists between research and teaching at undergraduate level

In disciplines with a very hierarchical structure the relationship between teaching and research can only be activated effectively at postgraduate level. At undergraduate level students lack the disciplinary framework to engage in inquiry. The perpetuation of the idea of symbiotic relationship between research and teaching is regarded with some cynicism.

It's very much a hierarchical subject. You learn the bottom level, then the next level and so on ... it's quite difficult to get students up to the level where they can do research without them having done a full four year degree first ... because there's a lot of intellectual baggage that you've got to acquire ... (Edmund, 6).

... all the publicity from this university and from several others that I've been familiar with, reckons that there's this ... awfully strong link between teaching and research to the extent that you can't possible separate them ... that just conflicts so much with my own experience of universities right from when I was first a student, but the evidence around me says that there isn't any relationship (Edmund, 4).

In practice, all stage 1, most stage 2 and some stage 3 classes could be taught by teachers from whom no research is expected (Chris, e-mail communication).

The eternal cynic inside of me argues that much of the insistence on a linkage between research and undergrad teaching is special pleading by staff wanting to keep teaching loads low (Chris, e-mail communication).

### 3. Teaching is a means of transmitting new research knowledge

Staff involved in research are more in touch with current research/literature/other researchers, more aware of current questions/hypotheses and therefore better able to feed back this new information to students. Moreover, researchers enthusiastically want to tell students about their discoveries, share as yet uncodified knowledge.

Only an adventurer can really tell of adventures (David, 5).

Doing active research helps to maintain the knowledge that I keep in my head, tacit knowledge, and a lot of the stuff that I know and I teach is actually not down in books, it's in my head (Frank, 10).

Those people who are keen on their research, conduct good research, also make the best teachers. They're fresh, enthusiastic, informed, they feed it into their students, you know, it just livens up their whole form in front of the class ... we feed into those students a lot of the, not only research findings, but the enthusiasm that comes from research ... (George, 1-2).

I have just returned from a \_\_\_\_\_ lecture where my 35mm slides were all borrowed from my FRST programme results, and my lecture was based around the new and exciting stuff that we had only discovered in the last 6 months. I am sure it was a much more interesting lecture than had I summarised the text book chapter for the day (e-mail respondent Harry, not interviewed).

There is a certain amount of 'missionary' zeal ... we want to discover something new and than let everyone know about it (e-mail respondent Ian, not interviewed).

### 4. Teachers model and encourage a research/critical inquiry approach to learning

In this category academic staff believe that they should model a questioning/research approach to learning which 'rubs off' on the students. As part of this process, students are exposed to conflicting points of view and encouraged to think critically for themselves. Postgraduate research students undertake a research 'apprenticeship'.

... I hope through being involved in research it's made me a more questioning person ... I would hope that just in a very vague way some of it would rub off on my students through my approach to my teaching, through certain things I say during teaching and it's sort of part of my culture, you can talk about personal culture, so without um, trying to project that way of thinking in a formal way, I would hope it would just naturally rub off (Bob, 3).

I say there is this view and there is that view and you know, the evidence which seems to favour them are respectively this and this. But you know, they don't quite meet, this one has those failings and you know, you make it what do you think, kind of thing. They are invited to, I don't mean I give them any clear-cut conclusions but I do give them what are the uh, pretty much, um, current serious issues in research in this area. I set them out for them (Stuart, 6).

## 5. Teaching and research share a symbiotic relationship in a learning community.

In this category, research informs teaching and teaching impacts on research. The individual tuition of research students combines teaching and research. The discipline of going through the fundamentals and the frontiers of a subject are seen to be highly connected. Teaching links researchers to a community of learners, provides the stimulation of contact and the seeding of new ideas.

... it's hard to know whether you call the individual tuition of research students, teaching or research, it's both. They are very much combined in that way (David, 1).

It is the process of going over the fundamentals of a subject from the perspective of somebody who can also see the frontiers of a subject ... the discipline of going through those fundamentals and the discipline of going through the frontiers are highly connected. What's at stake here is one's understanding of the foundations of the well-laid framework you are looking at a house that's built, the foundations of a house that's built and you ask yourself how did the builder tie that together, but up here you want to put a roof on the stables or something and you realise hey, you could use that technique up there or the technique you see him use can be used back again and it really is a symbiotic relationship. There is a strong link between the two (David, 7).

The sort of (research) stuff you do is very much single person type task and maybe you like that way, so the teaching gets me out into the broader community and gives me links to other people in a very stimulating way, maybe negatively or it might be positively stimulating, but whatever it stimulates me (Bob, 6).

... I find it a strong link. [When students have very little background knowledge] you're forced to take a body of knowledge which may be complex and try and simplify it and explain it to them so that they can actually understand it. In the process of doing that you learn an awful lot... Sometimes you get lost in the forest and you can't see the wood for the trees, it helps you to see very clearly what the wood is (Frank, 5).

### *Discussion of the Pilot Findings*

This discussion formed part of a paper presented at the annual conference of the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia, in Melbourne, July 1999 (Robertson, 1999). Here I have chosen to quote selectively from the paper rather than reformulating my views with the benefit of hindsight because the paper is indicative of my thinking about the pilot *at that time*.

The sample represented in this study is small, self-selected, male, science oriented and clearly politicised with regard to the teaching-research nexus debate. It could hardly be described as representative. Nevertheless the variation in experiences of the teaching-research nexus is considerable.

Category three – ‘Teaching is a means of transmitting new research knowledge’ – was experienced by all participants and tended to mark a watershed between the first two and last two categories of conceptions. Lecturers who regard teaching and research as incompatible or largely unconnected activities also experience the ‘transmission’ link but are less likely to express conceptions encompassed by categories four and five. Those who tend to favour the latter two categories also recognise a transmission connection but are unlikely to express conceptions compatible with categories one and two (except as an expression of frustration with regard to conflicting demands on time). While the sample is not big enough to allow for informed comment on disciplinary differences, it is clear, that in disciplines where there is a large body of technical knowledge organised hierarchically and being taught in huge lecture theatres to students from a range of disciplines (referred to as ‘service courses’), the nexus becomes very difficult to sustain or nurture. In fact it is seen by some as a hindrance to student learning.

Because this project arose out of a controversial situation and at a time when the government was signalling, through its green and white papers, a potential threat to the coupling of teaching and research (several interviewees alluded to the fragility of the link in the current political climate), it is possible that the invitation to participate in these interviews was seen as an opportunity to articulate particular points of view. In fact some participants suggested that the research might offer a vehicle for ‘self-serving’ views; i.e. academics who did not want to see their ‘comfortable’ career lifestyle threatened by a change in the status quo. However ... for some academics, a threat to the status quo challenges not merely comfort levels but, more significantly, their most deeply held convictions about academic identity and job satisfaction. At the opposite end of the continuum, there were suggestions that teaching and research should form distinct and separate career paths with the bulk of teaching at undergraduate level being done by trained teachers with high contact hours and no contractual obligation to engage in research.

Fox (1992) argues that there is a strain between teaching and research with academics being forced to trade off one against another. This dilemma was mentioned by a number of the lecturers interviewed. However at least two argued passionately in favour of the centrality of the teaching-research nexus to their academic careers *despite* acknowledging the difficulties involved in apportioning adequate time to both. For them, the satisfaction gained in the experience of a symbiotic relationship between research and teaching outweighed the frustrations inherent in time constraints and an unequal reward system.

I have already discussed the methodological questions arising from the pilot in chapter four. I concluded the conference paper with the following paragraph.

Finally, but of considerable importance for higher education, is the question of the pedagogical significance of these results. What are the pedagogical implications of identifying the qualitatively different ways in which academic staff experience the relation between teaching and research? How does their perception of the relationship affect how students learn? What might this mean for academic staff development? (Robertson, 1999).

Looking back on this phenomenographic analysis with the benefit of hindsight, I believe that, while it represents what my research participants were saying about their experiences, it does not necessarily convey the complex variations in the meaning of that experience. For example, as I pointed out in a previous chapter, the meaning of ‘symbiotic relationship’ was subsequently seen to vary according to the knowledge context in which it was embedded.

Beyond the outcomes of the analysis and the further questions generated, I learned much from the pilot on a number of different levels.

I was reminded yet again that interviewing is a craft. How one frames the interview, engages participants, balances one's own research interests with the narrative preoccupations of one's interview partner, listens and responds to cues, rephrases questions, deals with misunderstandings, allows for productive silences and knows when and how to bring about closure – are all skills to be learned through practice.<sup>3</sup> Because of my desire to converse rather than interrogate, I found myself often conducting interviews rather hesitantly, posing questions in a rather formative sort of way, asking the same question in two or three different ways to allow respondents space for thinking time. After the pilot I wondered whether this was helpful or whether it perhaps resulted in confusion rather than clarity. It was also apparent during the pilot interviews that I had too many questions and that some of them were poorly formulated.

I rediscovered the fact that sometimes the most valuable dialogue occurs after the tape recorder has been turned off at that moment of relaxation and 'confession' where 'the interview' ends and true conversation begins! I would make notes of these exchanges after the event and once I sought agreement to restart the recorder. I failed to solve the problem of the variable quality of recordings. Because I was trying to keep the technology as inconspicuous as possible, I used a dictaphone which produced an adequate recording as long as the interview participant spoke clearly, at a reasonable volume and there was little background noise. Sometimes early on in the interview I knew that the tape quality was going to be poor (speakers who sway toward and away from the recorder, whose voices drop away at the end of sentences, who have strong accents...) but I was not assertive enough to intervene during the interview.

I learnt the importance of having someone who was reasonably familiar with the university environment and discourse to do the interview transcription. Transcribing from tape is an

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<sup>3</sup> I am struck, as I re-read this passage, by the similarities between interviewing as I have described it, and teaching.

interpretive process requiring skill, patience and an awareness of the importance of confidentiality. I would have preferred to do my own transcription but a full time job precluded this. Later I came to think of my relationship with the person transcribing my interviews as a partnership. I always considered it my responsibility to listen to the tape before it was transcribed and later to go through the transcript listening to the tape and making alterations, filling in gaps and checking areas of uncertainty.

The transformational movement from shared conversational experience (interview), to text (interview transcript), to interpretation and analysis (researcher's account), positions the reader (who makes the final interpretation) at a considerable distance temporally and spatially from the original 'experience'. Ricoeur talks of the "violence" (Ricoeur, 1984, p. 73) of interpretation and Gebauer and Wulf (1995) argue that "in all areas of mimetic operation there are to be found fluid boundaries among representation, illustration, rendering and reproduction, but also among deception, illusion and appearance" (p. 320). I constantly find myself alarmed at the power of the researcher to construct a reality and the ease with which data may be ignored, manipulated, misrepresented.

My apprehension with regard to credible and faithful interpretation was highlighted for me at the 1999 Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia Conference where I talked about the pilot study. One of my research participants was present at the conference (he had been sponsored by the university to attend) and I found myself concerned about my representation of his experiences. Was my account credible? Would this participant recognise my positioning of him? Had I been fair, trustworthy? I have to be honest and admit that I asked him not to attend the presentation (I was nervous enough as it was!). However I did send a copy of the conference paper to all the pilot participants, inviting dialogue. Two responded with questions and/or comments although nothing that affected the findings.

My worry about the interpretive process was, in this case, particularly linked to the categorisation inherent in phenomenographic analysis. The act of categorising permeates our social world, providing ways in which we make meaning of 'reality' through reduction, simplification, delimitation. In the act of categorisation we focus on certain properties at the expense of others which are downplayed or hidden (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In my

experience and from a postmodern perspective, categories tend to come in boxes, hermetically sealed, impermeable. I recognise Ricoeur's act of violence in the process of categorisation. In traditional phenomenographic analysis there seems to me to be a double act of violence. Rather than being associated with the individual, experiences are pooled and the categories of description are generated from the collective experience. The end result – and the object of the phenomenographic programme – is a depiction of a phenomenon rather than a depiction of experience. The individual experience is segmented, distributed across a range of categories. The context of the experience is ignored.

I became conscious in the analysis that there were dimensions or threads running across the categories of description. The emotional investment in the research/teaching relation expressed by some of the participants was the most apparent of these. There was also a 'community' thread which kept surfacing in the transcripts. For some time I wondered whether 'sense of community' constituted a category in its own right but I eventually decided that, like affect, it was a feature of certain categories rather than a category on its own. I wanted a way of communicating this richness that did not seem possible in the stripped down phenomenographic categories.

## **Moving on From the Pilot: Further Interviews**

### *Identifying Interview Participants*

During the first six months of 1999, in parallel with the pilot interview analysis, I was thinking about how I might approach my next interviews. Whereas the pilot participants were, to all intents and purposes, self-selected, there were no 'obvious' candidates for future interviews. I was going to have to consider carefully who I wanted to interview and why. I found very little reference to sampling in the phenomenographic literature. Overviews of phenomenography (for example Bowden & Walsh, 1994; Dall'Alba & Hasselgren, 1996) emphasised developing theory, the intent of the research, the interview process and the formation of categories of description but had little to say about the process of selecting participants. This may be because such studies often focus on small, relatively

homogenous groupings – for example, physics students or teachers of chemistry. In relation to this issue, an interesting exchange occurred on the phenomenography listserv. In response to a question about ‘sampling’, one respondent who had recently completed a phenomenographic Ph.D. study, replied; “To me ‘sampling’ is a non-issue. That is a principle that applies to quantitative work but has no place in qualitative study. Sampling is a positivist prescription that does not transgress to the qualitative world” (Herschell, personal communication, May 24, 1998).

While I understood the reasons for this rejection of (random?) sampling, the relative silence around the choice of participants for a phenomenographic study was not helpful for my purposes! I turned to the literature on sampling in qualitative research. A *purposeful* sampling approach offered the opportunity of selecting information-rich cases which would illuminate the questions under study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Merriam, 1998; Morse, 1994; Patton, 1990). Amongst the range of strategies for purposefully selecting information rich cases, *maximum variation sampling* (Flick, 1998; Morse, 1994; Patton, 1994) seemed most appropriate for my study. Maximum variation sampling as originally identified by Glaser and Strauss (1967) was intended to reveal common patterns emerging from samples of great diversity. It also seemed an appropriate sampling process to follow in a study where variation was being sought.

I had to decide whether I wanted to limit my investigation to one or perhaps two contrasting departments, or whether I wanted to extend it across a wider range of disciplines. Maximum variation sampling suggested that I treat ‘the university’ as my unit of study and seek variation in experience of the research/teaching relation across the breadth of the institution.<sup>4</sup> That being the case I had to decide how to (and to what extent to) take into account such variables as faculty/department, gender, country of origin, educational/career experience and career stage which could well contribute to different understandings of the research/teaching relation. A colleague suggested surveying all academic staff via an e-mail which would request demographic information and then asking respondents to identify where they lay on a research/teaching continuum and whether they would be willing to be interviewed. Despite its advantages, I had some reservations about this approach. I was

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<sup>4</sup> I think this decision was influenced by my (modernist) tendency to regard ‘the university’ as an entity. I do not believe, at this stage of the thesis, that I was aware of the extent of disciplinary hegemony.

reluctant to be so ‘public’ about my research at this early stage. I also wondered whether this approach would not repeat the self-selection process of the pilot by attracting academics who held strong views at one extreme or the other.

Instead I drew up a ‘guiding’ grid (see Figure 5.1) which enabled me to take account of variations in faculty, gender and experience. I began to fill in the grid with names of staff with whom I was familiar. Taking advantage of the fact that I was conducting ‘insider’ research, I then talked with an ERAU colleague who had extensive knowledge of the academic staff and who made some suggestions regarding possible interview participants.<sup>5</sup> The grid was not intended to be a rigid framework, particularly as I anticipated a snowball process in which some participants recommended other colleagues. In fact I learnt that the selection of interview participants depends on many variables. Some of my initial choices were away on study leave. Others did not respond to the invitation to participate. One agreed to participate but we could never find a time that suited both of us to talk and eventually he took up a position in another university. There was a need for flexibility, lateral thinking and an element of pragmatism on the part of the researcher!

	Science	Social Science	Humanities
<i>Male experienced</i>			
<i>Male mid career</i>			
<i>Male starting</i>			
<i>Female experienced</i>			
<i>Female mid career</i>			
<i>Female starting</i>			

*Figure 5.1* Trial sampling grid

In September 1999 I sent out letters of invitation to participate in an interview to 20 academic staff. With the letters I included an information sheet and consent form. Of the twenty, fourteen agreed to be interviewed, while six did not respond to the letter. I did not

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<sup>5</sup> This initial selection process may have weighted the sample in favour of academics who had a greater than average interest in teaching.

pursue the non-respondents, assuming that they had good reasons for their silence and acknowledging this silence as data in its own right (Poland & Pederson, 1998).<sup>6</sup> In October and November I wrote to a further seven academics, six of whom responded in the affirmative. Of the twenty who eventually agreed to be interviewed, two proved impossibly elusive in terms of an interview time, leaving a total of eighteen interviews completed. In general those who signed the consent form to be interviewed did so without query. However two academics sought more information about the study before agreeing to participate. One e-mailed me:

Dear Jane

Have just received your letter in the internal post.  
I have some questions!

1. Please, how was I selected?
2. Please, what does your PhD research have to do with ERAU? You mention the ERAU newsletter and use the ERAU letterhead...
3. Please, do you have an opinion as to whether teaching and research are related? I ask, of course, because thanks to Max Bradford<sup>7</sup> et al it is a very political issue! (Nicola, e-mail).

I remember my apprehension on receipt of this e-mail. It reminded me of the latent tension between my job in academic staff development and my Ph.D. study. It also highlighted yet again, the political nature of the inquiry. However the questions made me all the more keen and curious to interview this person. I replied as honestly and as openly as possible (sadly I failed to keep a copy of my reply) and was delighted to receive a positive response.

My final interview cohort is represented in Figure 5.2. I have used italics to distinguish participants in the pilot study. The names (which I use extensively in chapters six and seven) are pseudonyms.

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<sup>6</sup> Poland and Pederson (1998) argue that as qualitative researchers we tend to interpret what is said rather than what is not said or the gaps in-between what is said. The emphasis on speech and on silence as a problem (in conversation, discussion, interviews...) reflects Western ways and Western ways of knowing which tend to value talk and action over listening and reflection. We need to acknowledge silence as data and to more fully recognise the right to silence, including non-response and non-participation.

<sup>7</sup> Max Bradford was the minister responsible for tertiary education in the then National Government.

	<b>Science</b>	<b>Social Science</b>	<b>Humanities</b>
<b>Male experienced</b>	<i>Physics &amp; Astron. (David)</i> <i>Engineering (George)</i>	Geography (Peter)	Art History (Roger)
<b>Male mid career</b>	Chemistry (Grahame) <i>Maths &amp; Stats (Edmund)</i> <i>PAMS (Bob)</i>	Geography (Simon) <i>Linguistics (Stuart)</i> <i>Economics (Chris)</i>	English (Steve)
<b>Male starting</b>	Zoology (Bruce)	<i>Economics (Frank)</i>	Philosophy (Richard) Maori (Andrew)
<b>Fem. experienced</b>	Zoology (Helen)	Linguistics (Janet)	French (Robyn)
<b>Fem. mid career</b>	Chemistry (Elaine)	Geography (Isobel)	Feminist Studies (Carol)
<b>Fem. starting</b>	Maths & Stats (Julia)	History (Nicola)	Classics (Anne) Maori (Diane)

*Italics indicate participants in pilot interviews.*

Figure 5.2 Interview sample

### *Developing Semi Structured Interview Questions*

My interview questions also underwent a number of metamorphoses. At first, because of my experience with the pilot interviews, I anticipated the need for a different set of interview questions depending upon whether a participant experienced ‘some’ relation or ‘no’ relation between their research and their teaching. This resulted in a dual interview schedule. Eventually I abandoned this dichotomous approach and developed a more embracing set of questions.<sup>8</sup> This change was prompted by my need to probe *participants’* experiences and not impose my own preconceived framework. The questions were designed to be broad in order to enable the respondents to select the dimensions of the questions that they wished to respond to (Marton, 1986). I reproduce the questions here (rather than as an appendix) because they illustrate very clearly the direction the inquiry was taking.

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<sup>8</sup> Initially I asked participants to fill in a form giving some career background details. However these written responses tended to be rather impersonal and rushed. After the first two or three interviews I returned to my pilot interview practice of including an interview question which addressed these personal details even although this sometimes took up rather more of the interview than I had intended.

What do you think is the purpose or role of a university?

How do you see your job as an academic?

You talked about knowledge. Can you tell me what you mean by knowledge?

What does research mean for you? How do you see/understand that process?

What does teaching mean for you? Can you give me an example of something you have taught recently?  
How did you go about teaching it?

You talked about learning – tell me what you understand by that term? How do you see it?

The relationship between teaching and research is a subject of much debate. How do you experience this relationship? Tell me how research and teaching relate to each other for you.

Probes (relate to each question)

Give me an example of this relationship at work in your daily practice

Give me another example

Can you tell me more...?

What do you mean by...?

You talked about learning; can you expand on...

Anything else you want to add?

(Interview questions, August, 1999).

The opening questions about the role of the university and the job of an academic were designed as a lead in to the research/teaching issue. They proved to be useful starters in that respondents often talked in general about research, teaching, learning and knowledge, thus opening up a space for further exploration of these phenomena. What was said at this early stage of the interview often provided a frame to which I could return and relate later questions. As much as possible the questions were designed to ‘grow out of’ and respond to the interview context.

### *The Interview Process*

The 18 interviews (what I termed the ‘main body’ of interviews) were undertaken almost exactly a year after the seven pilot interviews. In that time I had come to understand the university somewhat better. There was a significant difference in the nature of the interviews too. In the exploratory study I was interviewing academic staff who had taken a

political and public stand on their experience of the research/teaching relation. I already knew, prior to engaging in the interview, what views they held. With the main body of interviews I had no way of anticipating what the participants would have to say.

In the early part of 2000 I wrote in my research journal about my approach to interviewing:

I want to hear what my participants have to say in an open and relatively unstructured conversation. I favour an interviewing design that is flexible and iterative (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). ... for me, as the research 'tool', this means developing the ability not only to listen intently but also to process what I hear quickly in order to build on cues that arise in the interview. I am a good listener but not a speedy processor of information and I have discovered that the density and intensity of interviews with academic staff can make on-the-spot analysis and decision making a very challenging process!

Prior to the pilot interviews I had sent participants a copy of my interview questions.

Because the questions for the second round of interviews were designed to grow out of the interview context to a greater extent, I was reluctant to send participants a 'list' of questions although they were all aware of the focus of the study. Several participants contacted me by phone to ask about the nature of the questions and this gave me an opportunity to talk them through the main themes of the interview. I tried to achieve a balance between addressing the questions I wanted to ask and letting the interview take its own shape. Some participants cut to the chase and began talking about the research/teaching relationship straight away; I was happy to take my lead from them. Occasionally the momentum of the interview meant that I missed some of the key questions I had intended to ask. However I often found that the experience I thought I had 'missed' (because it was not explicitly articulated) was in fact embedded in the fabric of the interview conversation. For example, (and this example is drawn from a pilot interview) I did not ask David what 'knowledge' was for him. But in responding to a question about research he said:

... to me it's a new view of the world that's involved which might mean a new theory, it might mean constructing therefore the consequences of an old theory into a new direction. It might be looking for new experimental evidence but not just data, that's not research, it means the interpretation of the data and the welding of that into a wider pole that is the whole body of knowledge. I certainly differentiate knowledge from information, for example. Knowledge is, um, digested information. It's the process by which all the individual loose pieces of data are welded together into a coherent view which view itself is then up for grabs and may need modification, changes, radical or otherwise, but on the whole I just mean development (David, 2-3).

Most of the interviews took place in the participants' studies. This invariably added to the richness of the conversation. For example, interruptions (including a fire evacuation) often gave me a sense of the person's interactions with others (one phone conversation between

my participant and a third party focused on the ethics of using already extant interview data for a purpose other than that for which it was collected!). Sometimes respondents drew my attention to personal artefacts in order to illustrate a point. One academic insisted that I come to her study because the books on her shelves and the pictures on her walls embodied her research and teaching self and she wanted to share these as part of the interview.

Kvale (1996) regards the interview as a stage upon which knowledge is constructed through the interaction of interviewer and interviewee. Traditionally dialogue on stage is scripted, the exchanges between the actors are predetermined and the endpoint of the 'play' is known to the actors if not to the audience. In an interview there is no script (though each partner is constrained by the discourses within which she is situated), merely a more or less substantial framework of questions which provides a springboard for dialogue. In this space of inter-views, interviewer and participant act out the 'play' together. For example, the following brief exchange between Anne and myself illustrates two people feeling their way towards a new and richer shared understanding.

Participant: ... the dissemination, I think, is as much a part of research as your own data collection, because it's there that people get a chance to interact with you about your ideas and—

Interviewer: OK.

Participant: —help you with your thinking—

Interviewer: Right.

Participant: —perhaps change it.

Interviewer: So it's being part of a - a community, if you like.

Participant: Definitely.

Interviewer: Part of a research community. Yeah.

Participant: Definitely. And that too I think feeds back into the teaching, that - that notion of being a community - a wider - wider whole.

Interviewer: Right. Can you - can you - can you expand a little bit more on that—on its - on its connection with teaching? How it feeds back into teaching? (Anne's transcript, p. 3).

A critical lesson I learnt from the pilot interviews was to insist on hearing *my participants'* experiences and not *their perception of the experience of others*. For example, here is an exchange in which, as interviewer, I articulate quite explicitly the intention of my research and am rewarded with a rich, personal response. The exchange also illustrates how the

general question about the role or purpose of the university prompts responses which begin to reveal experiences of the research/teaching relation.

Interviewer: OK. I want to know what you think the role of a university is ... there are two questions that are related: what you think the role of a university is ... and, secondly, what you see your role as an academic being.

Participant: Right. OK. For the purpose of a university, I mean, it would be easy to just, you know, reel off a list of standard things...

Interviewer: No. I want ... I don't want the standard stuff. I want how you see it in - in your head.

Participant: OK. I see it as a place of learning and that's learning for students and learning for staff, I guess, and that's what—research to me comes under the broad heading of learning. We are learn—the reason we do research is because we want to learn about this problem here. So, I guess that's what I see it as. The students come here to learn from the staff in a way and the staff are learning from their own activities. So that's a place of learning, if you can just leave it at that, but ... (Isobel, 4).

Occasionally participants asked for my views on the research/teaching relation.

Interviewer: OK well look, I've – I've asked everything I wanted to ask. Um, you know, unless there's anything you want to add.

Participant: No, probably not. Um – except, well – except maybe to ask, you know, where – where you're at at the moment in terms of your – your view of this question of the link between teaching and research (Peter, 16).

I was happy to respond to these queries although in general, I tried not to articulate explicitly my own views while the interview was in progress. Despite this caution I suspect that my preferences were often evident in the responses I made.

### *From Speech to Text*

As with the pilot interviews I listened to each tape as soon as possible after the interview, jotting down key points, brief quotations, critical themes. The tapes were then handed on to Anne<sup>9</sup>, a Ph.D. student in the university, to be transcribed.

An interesting distancing process occurs as the living conversation of the interview is captured on tape and then transcribed as written text. At each stage certain information is abandoned. As I listen to an interview tape, I no longer have access to the physical

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<sup>9</sup> 'Anne' is a pseudonym.

environment, the body language, the 'atmosphere' pertaining to that interview. As I read the typed transcript I have lost the voices of the actors, the tone, pace, volume, emotion... (Scheurich, 1995). Kvale describes a transcript as a *transgression*; to *transcribe* means to *transform* from one narrative mode (oral discourse) to another (written discourse). "The transcriptions are frozen in time and abstracted from their base in a social interaction" (Kvale, 1996, p. 166). In the early stages of analysis, this abstraction of the interview conversation concerned me.

I am realising more and more how different the recording is from the transcript. In fact I am beginning to question the value of transcripts, wondering if there is more value in the rough note-taking. Does the detail of the transcript detract from the essence...? (Journal entry, September 1999).

But as I write now, I think it is possible to be over-concerned about the transformation from speech to writing. I find that every transcript carries with it a surprisingly vivid memory of the interview itself. I also believe that there is a necessary and productive relationship between tape and transcript which can be maintained as long as the tape exists.

... I believe that tape and transcript form an important partnership and that the interviewer needs to work iteratively between them in the process of making meaning (Journal entry, September 1999).

The importance of this partnership and of the interpretive nature of transcription was brought home to me in one of the pilot interviews. David was reading me an extract from an essay by a German mathematician. The transcription read; "The last sentence, '*only an adventurer can read to other adventurers*' - now that to me is a very, very telling sentence and I'd say yes, that is my experience too" (David, 5). This in itself did not make a great deal of sense. On listening to the tape again, what I heard David saying was; "The last sentence, '*only an adventurer can really tell of adventures*' - now that to me is a very, very telling sentence and I'd say yes, that is my experience too" (David, 5). I understood this to mean that only someone engaged in research could talk about research in a teaching context. This tiny difference in transcription made a large and analytically significant difference to my understanding of David's experience of the research/teaching relation.

The need for confidentiality in this study has been of great concern to me – perhaps more to me than to my participants! Given the political nature of the research/teaching relationship and my privileged position as an academic working with other academics, I was very aware of the need not to abuse my position. For the main round of interviews I sought approval from the Human Ethics Committee at the University of Canterbury despite the fact that this was not strictly necessary for interviews with Canterbury academic staff.<sup>10</sup> Informed consent was obtained from participants and their right to confidentiality was stressed. This meant that I did not discuss my interview sample with anybody including my ERAU colleagues, except in the initial instance when I sought some suggestions for interview participants. Names were removed from interview transcripts and, where participant quotations were used in conference presentations or publications, pseudonyms were used. Transcripts were returned to participants with an invitation to amend/delete passages and/or engage in further discussion.

The question of confidentiality extended to the research assistants who transcribed the interviews for me. As I pointed out earlier, whoever transcribed the interviews required a working knowledge of the university and its discourse. The main body of interviews was transcribed by Anne whose integrity I valued highly. As a doctoral student and an aspiring academic, Anne was interested in the participants' experiences of the research/teaching relation. We developed a pattern of meeting occasionally to discuss our study progress and our perceptions of the transcripts. What I did not realise until almost too late, was that two of my participants were also Anne's supervisors and that the relationship with one supervisor was considerably strained. Fortunately the situation was clarified before the tapes in question had been listened to or transcribed. I felt it was important to withdraw the tapes not only to safeguard participant confidentiality but in order not to compromise Anne. This was certainly a lesson to me to check such details in advance.

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<sup>10</sup> University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee (HEC) guidelines exempt from HEC approval research conducted by ERAU staff and research projects involving interviews with professional persons in the areas of their duties or competence (University of Canterbury, 2001). The committee indicated that I did not require its approval. Nevertheless I sought this approval for my own and my participants' protection.

It is easy to regard ethics in a relatively mechanical light. Have I 'got' ethical approval? Have all participants returned consent forms? Are the interview tapes secure? However just as Herda (1999) describes hermeneutics as *a way of being* a researcher (rather than just a technique or a methodology) I believe that one should 'think ethically' about all aspects of the inquiry, in particular during analysis and writing. Like Limerick et al. (1996) I think of an interview as a *gift* of time, text and understanding from the interviewee to the interviewer.<sup>11</sup> It is a gift to be treasured and handled with care. One needs to 'care' about the meaning of what is said (Paget, 1983).

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I would like to finish this chapter as I began with a reflection on InterViews. Kvale's (1996) restructuring (InterView, inter view, inter-view) of a word we take so much for granted encourages us to reconsider its meaning. We can focus on the interview as an exchange of views between two persons. Alternately we can focus on the knowledge that is constructed *inter* the *views* of the interviewer and interviewee. Ideally we need to alternate between the constructors of knowledge and the knowledge constructed. To detach one from the other is to create knowledge in a vacuum, divorced from its social, cultural and historical context.

As researcher/interpreter with a particular 'perspective' I enter a conversation already begun (Ricoeur and Thompson, 1981), which carries with it the weight of personal, disciplinary and institutional value and tradition. It is my responsibility to orient myself to that conversation in order that I might contribute to it, not only in the moment of the interview, but in my role as researcher/writer, the constructor (perhaps) of a new way of viewing the object of the conversation. I have come to believe that the interview process is not restricted to those moments of face-to-face exchanges of views. For example I have had on-going e-mail conversations with some of my research participants. Moreover as I work with the interview transcripts I continue to dialogue with the text, to be aware of the presence of the participants. I am also conversing with

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<sup>11</sup> In speaking of a 'gift' I don't mean to imply that the interview is a 'handing over', a transmissive event, but rather that its happening relies on the goodwill of busy people who are under no obligation to participate.

researchers who have gone before me, interrogating their work in the light of my developing understandings. Gadamer (1989) claims that the art of questioning is that of being able to go on questioning and that there is a close relationship between asking a question and understanding.<sup>12</sup> As researcher I have the privilege (and responsibility) of being able to iterate between the parts and the whole, of each individual interview, of the body of interviews, of the context in which those interviews are embedded and of the literature which helps to inform my understanding.

I am inescapably *there* in the research. My presence is everywhere (in every sense of ‘interviews’) and I have tried, in this chapter, to avoid wiping the surface clean and presenting you with only the finished product. In the next two chapters I outline the ‘results’ of two separate but closely linked analyses. The analyses represent two stages in my ‘re-presentation’ (transformation) of the interview stories. They also represent my groping towards a deeper understanding of the complexities of individuals’ experiences and of the role of language in constituting that experience.

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<sup>12</sup> In this way, philosophical hermeneutics links with my understanding of learning as *inquiry*.

## Chapter Six

### Variation in Academics' Experience of the Research/Teaching Relation

*I view the teachers and researchers as being on separate job tracks (Chris).*

*I don't see it [research and teaching] as two separate processes (Robyn).*

In the introduction to this thesis I discussed my commitment to the notion of thesis writing as a process of coming to know, of learning to talk within rather than about a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). I also talked of the need for honesty and transparency with regard to the research process and my desire to acknowledge construction, reveal the preparatory drawings, the alterations, the skeletal lines of support. Consistent with this view of my research/learning I present this chapter as the first step in a process of coming to grips with a different research approach. Thus the chapter serves a dual purpose. It represents a stage in the development of my understanding of phenomenal field analysis. It also allows me to present a *descriptive* categorisation of the contextual variation in academics' experiences of the research/teaching relation.

In constructing the chapter I draw extensively on the voices of my interview participants in the hope that readers will be able to participate in and evaluate my analytical decisions. Having said this I acknowledge that these voices have already undergone a transformation through the interpretive, mimetic process (Herda, 1999; Ricoeur, 1984). My pre-understandings have intersected with the discourse of my research participants (Gadamer, 1989). Their voices have already been subjected to a process of selection, grouping and shaping and what I offer you here is a stage in my process of understanding. That understanding is not merely a representation but the first step in a creative transformation.

It is important that the findings in this and the following chapter are read against the backdrop of chapters two – *The Idea of the University?* and three – *The Spirit of Doubt and Enquiry: Research and Teaching at the University of Canterbury*. The narratives of my research participants are deeply embedded in both the historical and contemporary, international and local contexts outlined in those chapters.

### Experiences of the Research/Teaching Relation

As a result of the iterative analytical process described in chapter four, five kinds of shared experiences of the research/teaching relation were identified in the data. This variation in experience is represented in Figure 6.1.<sup>1</sup>

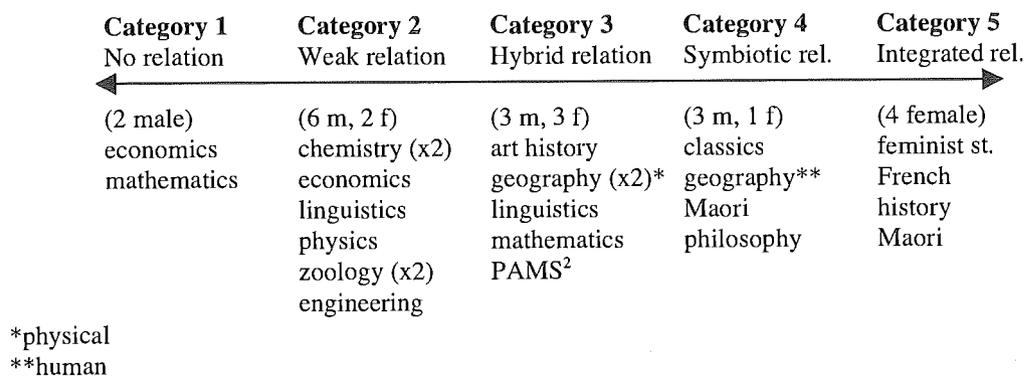


Figure 6.1 Variation in experience of the research/teaching relation at undergraduate level.<sup>3</sup>

In category one (no relation) research and teaching are essentially unrelated at the undergraduate level. Teaching is focused on the foundational disciplinary knowledge that

<sup>1</sup> My participants talked about both undergraduate and postgraduate teaching although I did not make this differentiation in my interview questions. For some the level of teaching was fundamental to their experience of the research/teaching relation. For others it was much less significant. In general the data presented in this chapter relate to undergraduate teaching (or to unspecified levels of teaching) with occasional explicit reference to the relation at postgraduate level.

<sup>2</sup> PAMS is an acronym for Plant and Microbial Sciences

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that the category descriptors (no relation, weak relation etc.) represent my view of the categories *in relation to one another* and from an essentially pedagogical perspective.

students must acquire while research occurs on a quite different – and unrelated plane. Engagement in research may actually diminish the ability to teach undergraduates effectively. The gap between research and teaching is wide.

In category two (weak relation) the experience of the research/teaching relation is characterised most strongly by the transmission of research information to students. Research still occurs at the ‘frontiers’ of the discipline, well removed from teaching. However engagement in research and teaching can be mutually beneficial. Having to explain complex ideas in simple terms helps to secure one’s grasp of the whole disciplinary framework while engagement in research provides teachers with an enhanced perspective of the area under study.

In category three (hybrid relation) there is evidence of a strengthening in the relation between research and teaching. While there is still an emphasis on the need for students to acquire the ‘basic framework’ of the discipline through transmission, the notion that students might participate in research/inquiry at undergraduate level is made explicit for the first time. The modelling of a research approach to learning (and life), by teachers, is emphasised.

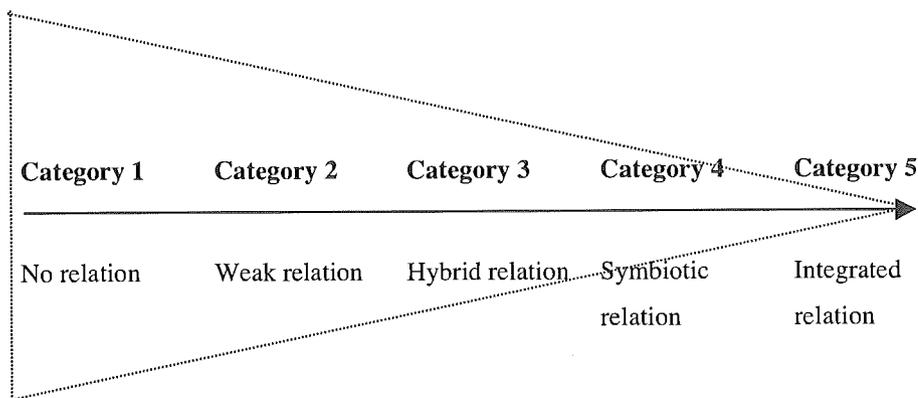
In category four (symbiotic relation) teaching is understood as a process which links student learning with the learning of academics (research). It is the role of the academic to bring students into the research process of how knowledge is acquired and used and to engage with students in the processes of interpretation and inquiry. Research and teaching are identified as independent but very closely related phenomena.

In category five (integrated relation) research and teaching cease to be experienced as independent but related phenomena. Rather they are understood to be inseparable. The process of one is the process of the other, the experience a holistic one.

One transcript eluded categorisation. It is conceivable that this transcript offers evidence of a sixth category – teaching informs research – but there is insufficient data in this study to make such a claim with any assurance. Instead I have treated the interview as an outlier and refrained from including it in the analysis.

With few exceptions my participants were convinced of the existence of a strong link between their research and their teaching. However my analysis suggests that the nature of the research/teaching relation – the way in which it manifests itself in the narratives of my research participants – varies significantly across the categories. From a pedagogical perspective, in particular from the inquiry perspective which underpins my thinking about research, teaching and learning, the ‘distance’ between research and teaching diminishes and the relationship becomes more intimate as one moves from left to right along the continuum. This change in the nature of the experienced relation is represented in Figure 6.2.

**Research**



**Teaching**

*Figure 6.2* The distance between research and teaching as experienced in the research/teaching relation at undergraduate level.

In general, when questioned about their experiences of the relation between research and teaching, interview participants in categories one to three interpreted that relation as being the effect of research on teaching, although in one or two instances interviewees spontaneously elected to talk about the impact of teaching on research. When I probed further, those who had not made an automatic link from teaching to research generally

acknowledged that there was a connection which supported and enhanced their research endeavours. As with the impact of research on teaching, the nature of the flow from teaching to research varies across the groups although the variation is not as distinctive as that relating to the impact of research on teaching.

For example, academics in categories one and two (and some in category three) identify background reading for lectures as impacting on their research. This preparatory reading is, of necessity, broader than that associated with very specialised research and enables the lecturer to appreciate the 'bigger picture' – to see their specialised research area in the broader context. Similarly the process of having to explain complex concepts to undergraduate students can help clarify research dilemmas. Teaching can provide a forum for 'trying out' research ideas, for making sense through talking (the old 'confessional' idea as one participant put it). Probing questions and unexpected perspectives from students also stimulate new research ideas and directions. By reflecting the views of the broader community, students can help to shape research which is designed to inform that community. In addition teaching (well) is regarded as an investment in research as it secures good postgraduate research students who provide 'cheap labour'. Ultimately teaching and research merge almost seamlessly at postgraduate level.

Academics in categories four and five indicate a somewhat different experience of the ways in which teaching influences research. Often research is played out *in the process* of teaching. So, for example, the preparation of lectures is not just informed by research, it *is* the research. The classroom is the site at which research ideas are generated and developed. Research is teaching and teaching is research. The processes reflect each other and are played out together. For academics in categories one and two, teaching and research are separate entities (until postgraduate level) with each *informing* the other. For those in groups four and five there are fewer degrees of separation and therefore less explicit discussion about the flow *from* teaching *to* research.

In the following sections I draw on the words of my research participants in order to illustrate in greater depth both the nature of the research/teaching relation as it is experienced, and the meaning of research, teaching, learning and knowledge as individual phenomena constituting the 'phenomenal field' of the relation. In chapter seven I look

more closely at the inter-relation of these phenomena in constituting a particular experience of the research/teaching relation.

*Category One: No Relation*

*Experiences of the research/teaching relation*

Chris and Edmund were both participants in the pilot interviews. Each is sceptical about the existence and/or value of a research/teaching link at undergraduate level (though Chris acknowledges its existence in the third undergraduate year).

... all the publicity from this university and from several others that I've been familiar with reckons that there's this awfully strong link between teaching and research to the extent that you can't possible separate them. That just conflicts so much with my own experience of universities right from when I was first a student, but the evidence around me says that there isn't any relationship between them ... (Edmund, 5).

I view the teachers and researchers as being on separate job tracks, on distinct career ladders ... where most teaching at stage 1 and stage 2 would be done by people without PhDs who'd have a fairly large number of contact hours expected of them and whose training would be something like the M Com plus one year at a college of education (Chris, 11 & 12).

While Edmund is keen to get students to think for themselves and think like mathematicians, he sees no useful relation between research and teaching until at least the fourth year of study.

... in algebra it's quite difficult to get students up to the level where they can do research without them having done a full four year degree first ... because there's a lot of intellectual baggage that you've got to acquire first before you can start thinking about making your own contribution to it ... it's very much a hierarchical subject, you learn the bottom level, then the next level and so on, if you're trying to learn level 10 say, it's not going to make much sense to you unless you've got a fairly good grasp of levels 1 to 9 (Edmund, 9).

This is because the commonly accepted definition of research as the 'generation of new knowledge' does not serve to enhance the research/teaching relation in a discipline where, as Edmund puts it, there is a hierarchy of knowledge. For Edmund teaching at undergraduate level is influenced more by scholarship than by research. The cumulative nature of knowledge in disciplines such as mathematics is seen to discourage students from

participating in disciplinary inquiry until they have a very good grasp of the existing framework.

Given this gulf between the basics and the cutting edge of the discipline, Chris believes that requiring researchers to teach the early undergraduate years may be positively counterproductive.

... my context is a technical discipline. At stage 1, stage 2 they [students] have to learn a body of facts, a body of established modes of reasoning and the problem solving. The students do best with skilful teachers, skilful ... in traditional ways. For a teacher at stage 1, stage 2 to have an immense grasp of a subject to its cutting edge, is at best irrelevant and at worst, it threatens to get the lecturers bogged down ... (Chris, 6).

In Chris's experience therefore engagement in research should *disqualify* one from teaching at stages one and two. Students need to acquire codified knowledge and this is best achieved through the use of trained (secondary) teachers.

The gulf then is not only between the 'basics' and the 'cutting edge' of knowledge in the discipline, it is also between the student as learner and the researcher as learner. The different positions occupied by students and researchers on the knowledge ladder make dialogue difficult.

### *The phenomenal field*

For Chris (1), **research** is "contributing to the professional literature in a narrowly chosen area". There is an indication that Edmund sees research somewhat differently from his disciplinary colleagues.

... research as it's measured in this university is basically the generation of new knowledge that no-one has ever known before, um, but research in a lot of other activities in life is basically anything that amounts to discovering knowledge that may have been something that some other people knew before but this might have been the first time it was synthesised in this particular form (Edmund, 2).

**Teaching** mostly involves "transmitting a fairly conventional body of knowledge" (Chris, 4).

... the thing I think is important about university teaching is I like to try to let the students think for themselves, but it's quite difficult ... you know, there's this frowned on picture of teaching that the student's got an empty head and got this canister that you're pouring stuff in. Some of that is true, you are trying to pour things into their heads in the hope that they will be able to use them in other situations so it goes from that through to you're trying to change, introduce them to new concepts and methods ... trying to get them to think like a mathematician ... (Edmund, 3).

### In terms of **learning**:

... at university what we want is for them to discover really new ways to think and ... to see things [but] at stage one, stage two, they have to learn a body of facts, a body of established modes of reasoning and problem solving ... there's a body of facts and I am keen to see them absorb as much of that as possible (Chris, 10).

... learning for the students is um, it's learning to do new things. So it's like acquiring new skills, it's learning about new ideas that you might not have met before or concepts, um, yeah, it's basically acquiring all those things that I as a teacher am trying to pass on, but some of them are, are not just things that you pour into their heads, some of them are things that they're presumably going to acquire by doing them (Edmund, 4).

Regarding the structure of **knowledge** in mathematics, Edmund says "it's been building on its developments since say, 2000BC or something like that ... there's a lot of intellectual baggage that you've got to acquire first before you can start thinking about making your own contribution to it" (Edmund, 9).

Embedded in Chris and Edmund's experiences is a tension between the perceived aim of higher education (getting students to think like a mathematician, discovering really new ways to think and see things) and the experienced reality of undergraduate teaching and learning which is understood to focus on the acquisition of codified knowledge.

### *Category Two: Weak Relation*

#### *Experiences of the research/teaching relation*

Although the relation between research and teaching continues to be inhibited at undergraduate level by the hierarchical nature of the disciplines (see Edmund, 9 on previous pages), the views expressed by academics in category two emphasise a number of aspects of the relation not mentioned by participants in the first category. For example

there is a strong focus on the transmission of research information. Research is understood to *inform* teaching. For Grahame this occurs particularly through the use of illustrative examples.

... at fourth year, it's very much so [close relation between research and teaching], because I'm lecturing on the topic which is part of my research, so I'm using examples, ah, which are hot off the press, if you like ... then at the first year, well, there's a lot more constraints there about, you know, you're developing the language of chemistry at that level, but, you know, I make a point of illustrating that with examples that I've been associated with myself, not necessarily recently, but at some point that I'm familiar with ... (Grahame, 8).

Thus the *passing on* of research knowledge and skills is seen to be a fundamental part of the teaching process. For example, Helen aims to communicate a research way of thinking to students and bring them to a point where they can themselves engage in the process of generating new knowledge. There are suggestions here of the 'modelling' process which is more clearly a feature of the experience of participants in category three.

... I direct my teaching towards the areas that I know most about and so I use it [research] even at first year ... it's a whole way of understanding why an animal is where it is and that's ... what my research base is and my research thinking and training has been based all the way along that line and that's the line I take in my teaching at all levels (Helen, 7).

However this process is significantly delayed while students 'learn the language' of the discipline in their undergraduate years. Understanding can only occur once students have mastered the basic facts. Application and participation in inquiry must await the development of this disciplinary framework.

First year is very much infotainment—get a large number of bums on seats, trying to keep them entertained and hopefully inspire and teach quite a lot of them with the basic information they can then use for second year ... second year is bread and butter research - um, bread and butter type, ah, knowledge I should say—it's, ah, when the main guts of a topic's taught ... here you have to teach them the main bulk of the material they need to know for them to actually start to appreciate how to use the knowledge in the third year (Bruce, 7).

While at undergraduate level the relation between research and teaching is primarily one of transmission of research findings and skills, at graduate level students and lecturers work closely together in a partnership which fuses the research and teaching processes.

... it's hard to know whether you call the individual tuition of research students, teaching or research, it's both. They are very much combined in that way (David, 1).

Well for many of our students, it is a joint discovery - at post-graduate level. I mean, that's where we work as a team, ah, to make - to make discoveries, create new knowledge. So, they're still students, but we're all students in that sense (Grahame, 2).

Engagement in research ensures that content is more current and that academics remain fresh and enthusiastic in their teaching.

I would say that if you are a good researcher, even if you are not teaching about your own research, being a good researcher requires that you are reasonably up to date in your field in areas that you are not yourself personally researching but which impinge on it, that you are reasonably up to date on what other people are doing (Stuart, 8).

Certainly, in my experience with this department ... those people who are keen on their research, conduct good research, also make the best teachers. They're fresh, enthusiastic, informed, they feed it into their students, you know, it just livens up their whole form in front of the class (George, 2).<sup>4</sup>

In direct contradiction to the experiences articulated by category one participants, there is a close relation between working at the frontiers of a discipline and teaching the fundamentals – a relation which benefits both activities. However the benefit is seen to accrue to the teacher/researcher rather than to the students.

Personally, I find it a strong link and it works in a couple of ways. One is, when you're talking to the students ... the students have very little background knowledge, very little knowledge of the discipline or the sorts of approaches, and you're forced to take a body of knowledge which may be complex and try and simplify it and explain it to them so they can actually understand it. In the process of doing that, you learn an awful lot ... (Frank, 6 and 7).

It is the process of going over the fundamentals of a subject from the perspective of somebody who can also see the frontiers of a subject and what isn't, isn't known out there is a process which is tremendously productive, somehow or other the discipline of going through those fundamentals and the discipline of going through the frontiers are highly connected ... somebody who can get down to a fundamental of anything and explain it clearly and logically and really boil it down, is somebody who's got a better grasp of the whole discipline, the whole framework (David,15).

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<sup>4</sup>This notion of freshness and enthusiasm recalls the 1978 comment (reproduced in chapter three) by the then chancellor of the University of Canterbury where research-informed teaching is described in terms of refreshment, excitement, stimulation and inspiration; teaching without research is dull and sterile. This view of the research/teaching relation is essentially teacher-focused.

## *The phenomenal field*

**Research** for academics in this category involves discovering/generating/creating new knowledge, relating discrete segments of information to one another in order to create a 'bigger picture' and communicating these findings through publication in scholarly journals and the more popular media.

It's [research] a discovery process ... finding new knowledge is - not really an end itself because I think knowledge isn't any use unless it's communicated (Grahame 1 & 3).

Discovering new knowledge, discovering um, new ideas, discovering how they relate to the world, discovering new facts, the process of discovery (Frank, 2).

Well I think research is ah, trying to find out more about the world and trying understand the world better, i.e. relate better to each other the bits of information that we may find out about it in whatever field ... (Stuart, 2).

... research is simply, um, a process where you're generating new information, um, and communicating—and I - I personally believe that also means communicating it with others. Um, if you haven't - ah, haven't presented it in some form to other people, you haven't actually completed the job—you've only started it (Bruce, 9).

But to me it's [research] a new view of the world that's involved which might mean a new theory, it might mean constructing therefore the consequences of an old theory into a new direction. It might be looking for new experimental evidence but not just data, that's not research, it means the interpretation of the data and the welding of that into a wider pole that is the whole body of knowledge (David, 2).

**Teaching** involves imparting knowledge and enthusiasm, distilling the essentials and presenting information as clearly as possible, conveying how ideas are developed and helping students to develop the confidence to think and act like scientists.

... we want to provide quite detailed information for going on to second year—we don't want to lose that—and yet if you present too many facts and the students haven't got anything to hang them on it's really quite difficult. So, within the lecture course you might have certain parts that are a challenge to - to present the material in a way that students are going to remember ... (Helen, 3-4).

I'm helping the students - I guess it's like - it's like growing up. It's like just helping the students to become scientists (Helen, 18).

I enjoy the contact with the students. I enjoy, um, you know, just sort of imparting of knowledge and enthusiasm and, um, you know, seeing students become really interested in - in the - in the work ... (Elaine, 7).

Well I suppose I'm trying to engage the student's interest in the subject matter, I'm trying to impart a certain amount of information about the subject matter, although lectures are not for spoon-feeding information, they can get that from books probably better. But I suppose the main thing is to try and get them to see what if possible, or ideally what are the interesting questions arising from the subject matter, what is intriguing, or puzzling or curious about the subject matter (Stuart, 6).

**Learning** encompasses memorising basic information, acquiring skills and linking new information to current knowledge thereby deepening understanding. The ability to place new knowledge in the context of the ‘bigger picture’ is emphasised.

... learning I suppose is the - you know, is just the - the memorisation of information, ah, in order to give you the language—especially in our subject, the language by which you can perceive with, ah, a higher degree of understanding, so there’s a lot of - a tremendous amount of factual information which needs to be absorbed before the process of tying it together and seeing the connections can occur (Grahame, 6).

Well ... I think learning involves both getting the facts on board ... and understanding what they mean. So what’s basically acquiring knowledge, I suppose, in the sense that I’ve just talked about is really learning—it’s the whole thing, so it’s learning the standard facts that - it’s having the understanding ... getting the skills enables one to put together a big picture to go beyond what has just been encountered before and go further (Elaine, 4).

... education of itself is, I think, is a very important thing, regardless of what you get taught, the process of learning how to take in information, process it, work it and regurgitate it in a form suitable for whoever you’re presenting the information to is a vital skill (Bruce, 2).

**Knowledge**, which is an understanding the world we live in, is gained through a process of ‘finding out’ or discovering new information and seeing how the pieces ‘fit together’ in the context of what is already known.

What do you think knowledge is? Understanding. Um, understanding of, ah, of our existence in - in the very broadest sense - that can be, you know, bullet-pointed to whole series of, ah, things like the world we live in, the way we behave, ah, um, how we interact with each other, what we do for each other, as well the - the physical surroundings that we have and how we can understand them ... (Grahame, 1).

I think knowledge is both, um - it’s both understanding and also having a certain amount of actual knowing the facts as they might be called ... it’s sort of having a certain base of, um, knowing the essential pieces of information, it’s understanding them and - and then having the skills to - to understand beyond that or to take new facts on board and to put them in context and to understand - keep expanding, so that it’s - it’s the thing about having a base of facts and understanding that enables one to have a, you know, expand beyond that and have a broad, um, understanding and - and knowledge ... (Elaine, 3).

... knowledge is one of those funny things, it’s kind of like everyone thinks its sort of a fixed pool out there and you just have to try and learn it but I don’t think it’s like that at all. I don’t, I think that’s why you have universities. Because there’s stuff out there we don’t know, we can’t possibly think of beforehand that you should know and there’s a sort of discovery process. That is what a university is for ... (Frank, 7).

Thus for these participants research is a process of discovery in which new knowledge is generated and selectively conveyed to students until such time as the students can grasp the ‘big picture’ sufficiently to engage in joint inquiry.

### *Category Three: Hybrid Relation*

Category three academics share experiences of the research/teaching relation with their colleagues in both categories two and four. However my attempts to 'assign' them to one or the other of these adjacent categories were unsuccessful. Category three participants continue to assert themselves as an entity in their own right. As such they can be seen to occupy a mid-point on the continuum.

#### *Experiences of the research/teaching relation*

As with their colleagues in categories one and two, category three participants indicate that initially students must learn the basic framework of their discipline before they can begin to engage fully in it and this has a profound impact on the relation between research and teaching.

... I had to put all my own extra [research] knowledge away in order to teach Stage I. If I was teaching an Honours class we would be dealing with all of those exceptions and you know that, that made it interesting, but if I were to put in all the exceptions at Stage 1 - I would have killed it - people don't want all of that there - they want to know the basics - you know the framework - and I could do that, but it - it became a little bit tricky (Janet, 7-8).

In Janet's comment there is an echo of Chris's assertion (see category one) that researchers are likely to over-complicate stage one and stage two teaching. However the length of delay before student participation in inquiry is affirmed is considerably shorter than that indicated by participants in categories one and two.

... obviously people have to learn, um, the grammar and the syntax, as it were, of the discipline before they can start to participate in it. But, nevertheless, it's quite possible to give people tastes of that, um, as we have done and other field subjects do through, ah, fieldwork, ah, as they do in geography 103 through role-play exercises involving planning problems (Peter, 3).

The *modelling* of a research approach to learning and to life is a highly significant aspect of the research/teaching relation for this group.

... if you're doing research you keep your lectures up-to-date, you're bringing in new material and I can say to them [the students] - "look I used to tell people this, you know, even five years ago and I now know I was wrong" - and I think that is very good for them to see that - you know that they can see you working with the material and it's not that I am the fount of all knowledge, I've got it all here, I've got it buttoned up, you learn what I tell you, but I am a - a fallible human being, that

knowledge comes through all sorts of ways and we're trying to develop it, um, in a way what you're demonstrating to the class is how the material arrived (Janet, 10).

... the role of a university is to support the asking of questions ... the endless asking of questions and the looking for answers and - and I think there are a number of prongs to this, that it happens, um, of course, obviously in the area of research—of - of blue skies research—um, so that, you know, normal—not normal, but the phenomenon of human intellectual curiosity can flourish, that there should be a climate in which this could - ah, should happen and that the people who are engaged in that kind of research should model, um, that kind of adventure, or for their students and through their teaching ... (Roger, 3-4).

... I can read a paper and I can say but oh, you know, this is OK. And I couldn't - I wouldn't be in a position to make such a - a good critical evaluation if I wasn't a researcher in that area, I think. So I sort of say to them oh, this paper's - this bit's really good and that's not so good ... so I voice that a lot—you know, this paper's - you know it's mostly OK and oh, I don't agree with that bit in that paper and hopefully— I mean, somebody came up to me at the end of the lecture today and said I didn't agree with the point that you made today about the stress at the bed of the glacier and one of the other students sort of who was standing by the desk went <intake of breath> sort of, like, you know, you don't say that! But it was - I mean, that's great ... (Isobel, 17-18).

It is in this category that the role of the researcher in the construction of knowledge is made explicit to the students for the first time. Participants articulating this experience of the research/teaching relation want to introduce students to the ways in which new knowledge is developed and foster attitudes of critical inquiry and independent thinking. Students are encouraged to engage in increasingly less teacher structured research projects from their early undergraduate years.

... the connection between teaching and research seems to me to go much wider than that [incorporating the results of research in lectures], and particularly in subjects like mine where we have students involved in, um, inquiry mode and - and research experiences right from stage one ... we also structure those experiences and the contrast between them, ah, as they go through from year one, year two, year three, and so on, um, quite deliberately, so that the research experiences they have early on are highly structured by us, and as they go on the experiences are structured more and more by them (Peter, 1-2).

... one thing I've done here is put fieldwork into all my courses— well, apart from Stat 111, which would be a little bit impossible. Um, but in the biostatistics class [2<sup>nd</sup> year] we have this Saturday field trip where we go out and we collected data in the forest. We measure trees, then we come back and pool the data together, and then each student has to analyse the data and write a report and the analysis is really simple, but the report has to be eight pages about how they collected the data, what does it mean, the interpretation, things like that, um, and that ... (Julia, 3-4).

What distinguishes this experience of the research/teaching relation from the experience of category four participants is the fact that this process involves more 'telling' and 'modelling' and less joint collaboration, at least at the early stages.

## *The phenomenal field*

Participants in category three experience **research** as a process of framing questions, seeking answers and creating new knowledge.<sup>5</sup>

... it's [research] the posing and answering of questions in a way that is relevant to some community out there. It's not me saying - it's not something that nobody else cares about—that's not really research—or that somebody else already knows about, in a way. It's the solving of questions that are as yet unsolved at some level (Isobel, 10).

Well, research is - is - ah where I have a burning curiosity about something. I really want to know - you know - what happened, and in my cases where did our NZ accent come from and this is - is something that - that really is of enormous interest to me how did it develop, and we've got the data, so we're going to find out - so, I mean that's why that's really exciting - I mean we are really finding things out that nobody knew (Janet, 6).

... research to me is the ... label for a whole bunch of processes which are ... used to refer to the creation of new knowledge (Peter, 5).

... the role of a university is to support the asking of questions ... the endless asking of questions and the looking for answers and - and I think there are a number of prongs to this, that it happens, um, of course, obviously in the area of research—of - of blue skies research—um, so that, you know ... the phenomenon of human intellectual curiosity can flourish ... (Roger, 3).

**Teaching** is a process of passing on research knowledge and skills, of encouraging students to become independent thinkers and of inducting them into the process of knowledge creation.

... I like the thought that I'm passing on to them new stuff. You know, this is good stuff, this is good teaching you're getting here because you're really getting what the up-to-date stuff ... (Isobel, 15).

... I use the results of research to set assignments and, you know, stuff that's not necessarily published and I tell them that and, um, you know, I tell them there's no right answers to this because this is new data ... (Isobel, 15).

I spoke yesterday, um, on Wednesday to my stage three students about the Asia-Pacific triennial with slides and a video and so forth and so on and it had an immediacy about it—it was hot off the press—that the students would never have got from a pedestrian course taught from a text book that had been in print thirty years (Roger, 10).

And I like to present them [students] with two points of view ... they're two quite different approaches, so you know, I don't know which is going to solve the problem, if either of them or a combination of the two, but I like to leave things open-ended like that and that's at first year level ... (Bob, 5).

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<sup>5</sup> The emphasis on the posing and answering of questions is an interesting one. In no other category is research framed in quite this way.

**Learning** likewise involves asking and answering questions. The process of learning embraces knowing more, understanding, interpreting, seeing something in a different way and (in one case) changing as a person. Students are encouraged to develop their own inquiries often at undergraduate level and to ‘take ownership’ of the knowledge generated.

Well, learning is - I mean it includes a lot of things - it includes, um, you know adding to my knowledge about things, um, so I know things, you know, that I didn't know before ... it also involves, I think, taking things that I've done before and allowing, allowing myself to re-look at them, um, and I think that you have to do that all the time. I mean it's like when I did literature I thought I understood King Lear but I might not have, and I could keep coming back and have another go at it ... learning involves also, um, understanding how things work not just increasing the knowledge, but again it's this business of the processes, knowing - knowing how - how to do it, um, yeah (Janet, 13-14).

... the idea is to develop some degree of intellectual independence ... it's ownership of a body of knowledge that they've generated. It's theirs ... (Roger, 14).

And they loved it. Yeah. well, I don't think they loved it, but the fact it was theirs. They owned it (Julia, 15).

If you're getting new knowledge it just seems self-evident to me that you're learning something new, I'd call that learning. That'd be my definition of learning, so whether it's new knowledge just at the personal level like a student perhaps, yeah, or new knowledge for your community of researchers ... (Bob, 8).

Experiences of **knowledge** range from ‘a set of intellectual processes that can be applied to a range of things in life’ to ‘a shared system of concepts and beliefs about how nature works’. Students require both knowledge ‘about’ and knowledge of ‘how to’. Notions of knowledge as something ‘out there’, waiting to be discovered, are beginning to wane.

... in a sort of narrow sense - narrow scientific sense, logical positivist sense, you know, knowledge is - is - is <pause> information which is, um, empirically verified. That is, it's stuff about the environment out there which we're pretty sure from - from measurement and experiment and critical analysis, um, is - is pretty good description of the phenomena that are - that are occurring. Um, but it's wider than that as well. It's - it's also a shared system of concepts and beliefs about how nature works ... so it's - it's, um, <pause> it's a bunch of things that are held in common that, as I say, we - we believe about nature and, you know, you could try to pass those on to your students as being what we think we know thus far (Peter, 11).

I work on the assumption that, um, there are no absolute truths and no absolute facts, um, so that if somebody says well, um, you know, I don't agree with that ... that's your understanding limited, really, by the parameters that you're able to - to - to place round or the context that you're able to place - place it in, but if - if people have different parameters or different understandings, then whatever it is you've asserted is - is not going to appear to them, um, in quite the same way (Roger, 8).

... it [knowledge] probably has two aspects and one is it's a sort of content thing, you know about things, you know that I know about things, but there's another form of knowledge which is about how to do things, so its not just - you know - I know a lot of content and I know that this happened in this year and I can tell you about the history of the language and all that, but there is a knowledge

that is, um, if you asked me something I would know how to find out about it, or I would know how to gain information ... (Janet, 7).

Yes what is knowledge? Oh god what a stupid thing to say! Um, it's something to be knocked down and improved ... there's got to be a culture of questioning I think (Bob, 4).

This is the first category in which the indeterminacy of knowledge is articulated. How knowledge is constructed (by researchers) is modelled by teachers. Teaching continues to be 'informed by research' but undergraduate students are more explicitly brought within the research loop.

#### *Category Four: Symbiotic Relation*

##### *Experiences of the research/teaching relation*

For participants in this category experiences of the research/teaching relation focus on teaching as a process which links student learning with staff learning (research). The role of the academic is to bring students into the research process of how knowledge is acquired and used and to engage *with* students in the processes of interpretation and inquiry.

Well the nuts and bolts of it [research in philosophy] involves reading articles and, um, thinking about how to respond to what you agree with and what not agree with - what reasons, um, and so that involves a lot of close reading of text and, um, very, very close reading of text often, um, and understanding the text in its context of the wider theories, um, for the wider work that is taking place, um, and that is the sort of work that I ask students to do as well, even from the beginning (Richard, 10).

... you're trying to bring students into the process of how we acquire knowledge and what we do with it when we have it. So, I guess for me, um, it is kind of making them part of that little scholarly community for the time that they're here and the wider goal is that - so they'll leave here with a - an inquiring mind ... (Anne, 11).

... what was going on in that research project is my effort to establish a voice of my own that I'm comfortable with and that involved having a bit of a journey through different schools of thought as to what claims they would make to knowledge and how those claims would sit well with - with different claims or not and how one can relate to those differences ... so I saw my [teaching] role, or at least tried to achieve a role if you like, of recognising that things weren't black and white - to have a - to develop a degree of humility amongst themselves in recognising that they don't know everything and that - that someone else could quite give a different interpretation - and that they shouldn't necessarily privilege their interpretation as any better than theirs or mine ... (Andrew, 5 & 8).

Active engagement in research results in an ‘attitude of mind’, ‘a way of thinking, being and living’ which informs all teaching whether it be directly connected to the academic’s particular research area or not. Research and teaching are still identified as independent activities but their relation is a symbiotic one, based on ‘mutual need’.

... so the primary purpose, I would say, is for teaching. Teaching cannot happen successfully without research, so research comes in—I would say research is also a primary goal—maybe I would rate those equally, um, because I do not think you can have one without the other. So, research needs teaching and teaching also needs research ... it’s not that everything that you’re churning out in your research comes right back into the classroom—it’s a - it’s a way of thinking and being and living, but it’s also a little crossover (Anne, 1 & 2).

... a researcher is somebody who is - has got, um, an active reason to keep up with the state of play broadly across the whole field and specifically in respect of particular things, so it’s an attitude of mind, in respect of - of, um, developing ideas and innovation and freshness and all of that sort of thing. I think that’s - that - that to me is probably the most important aspect of the link rather than the much more mechanical thing of: well, I’ve been doing research in area A, therefore my, um, 200-level class on this topic will be informed by all the latest stuff ... I wouldn’t like to draw for myself the link between teaching and research in, um, as a too tight and mechanical way because many of the things which I am most interested in as a researcher don’t particularly overlap with the areas in which I teach, um, which has never particularly bothered me (Simon, 9-10).

Simon’s comment above is interesting in that it challenges the ‘transmission’ relation between research and teaching that was a particular feature of the category two (and to a lesser extent) the category three experience.

### *The phenomenal field*

**Research** for participants in this category represents a structured way of learning, a process of creating new knowledge and/or constructing alternative interpretations often through dialogue with other learners in the scholarly community.

I feel that you must constantly ... acquaint yourself with things in your field and, um, even also work at expanding and one very well-structured way of doing that is by performing research. You - you read on the topic, you have thoughts about it, you might take them to a conference, you might write that up, um, and while that process often is very specific, the fact that you’re continuing to be a student in that sense, um, really keeps you quite in touch with your own students (Anne, 1-2).

... the dissemination, I think, is as much a part of research as your own data collection, because it’s there that people get a chance to interact with you about your ideas and—

*OK.*

... help you with your thinking ...

*Right.*

... perhaps change it ...and that too I think feeds back into the teaching, that - that notion of being a community - a wider - wider whole (Anne, 3).

... what was going on in that research project is my effort to establish a voice of my own that I'm comfortable with and that involved having a bit of a journey through different schools of thought as to what claims they would make to knowledge and how those claims would sit well with each - with different claims or not and how one can relate to those differences ... (Andrew, 8).

Well, the research of philosophy is all about arguments ... about, um, considering positions, arguments that can be given for positions, assessing those positions ... (Richard, 8).

**Teaching** involves working alongside students within a disciplinary framework with the intention of developing critical thinking and lifelong learning skills.

... you're trying to bring students into the process of how we acquire knowledge and what we do with it when we have it. So, I guess for me, um, it is kind of making them part of that little scholarly community for the time that they're here and the wider goal is that - so they'll leave here with a - an inquiring mind ... (Anne, 11).

Ah, the whole purpose of this course ... was to start off in one of the university's absolutely unbearable, ah, lecture theatres and have a discussion about what the geography of this lecture theatre and social relations—the expert's down there at the front of everybody else - writing things down. What does that tell us about the, um, the, ah, the nature of the educational experience...? (Simon, 7).

... the lectures, um, are not offered as here's a set of information for you to learn ... they're offered as well here's a problem or a position, um, here are the reasons that might be offered for this position, the arguments <unclear> let's look at these arguments and see in which respects they seem convincing and which respects they aren't convincing then ask, well, still got the original problem or the original position where do we go from here? (Richard, 11).

**Learning** involves students engaging in these same processes. Research/learning invariably involve engagement/communication/debate with others which may result in a change of thinking or a different way of seeing/interpreting.

... what you really need is a good discussion partner, ideally just two of you ... and you need to read what's going on there and ask whatever questions you want to ask about, or put forward your understanding of it and why you think its reasonable and get the other person to, um to discuss it with you ... (Richard, 17).

... but at a certain level learning isn't really finished unless you - you really, ah, think about it yourself and decide what you think about it and it's not - that's not hard and fixed. You can be in a state where you're prepared to have your mind changed by chatting with people... at a certain level some kind of dialogue probably is necessary ... (Anne, 15).

**Knowledge** is constructed by the individual through dialogue with the current research/learning community and those who have gone before.

So I think we all have an active role in the creation of knowledge and some of the most useful work that students can do is in creating knowledge of their own and trying to contextualise it within the banks of knowledge about particular areas which already exist ... it's not knowledge to an individual until that person has, ah, selected from it, interpreted, using it, has become actively engaged with it, so I mean, I would see the creation of knowledge as a sort of interactive process between an individual and all that is going on about them and has gone on before... (Simon, 12 & 13).

... it's [knowledge] an – an understanding of the language, of what words mean, and the fact that how the language is itself is constructed collectively and, or that whatever one – whatever particular university, or person or school of thought claims its knowledge is or its truth is, is some form of cultural collective wisdom if you like ... (Andrew, 8).

... but we cannot ever know. Um, and the part - it's part of the way we per - um, perpetuate ourselves. You know, opinions change ... (Anne, 9).

For participants in category four there is a qualitative shift in experience of the research/teaching relation. Students are brought much more into the frame in terms of how disciplinary knowledge is created. Students participate in a similar inquiry process to that of their teachers.

#### *Category five: Integrated Relation*

Up until quite late in my analysis I continued to identify the experiences of the participants whose data contributed to categories four and five as constituting a single experiential 'group'. Certainly they share much in common, particularly the emphasis on learning (thinking) as the key to the research/teaching relationship. However I believe there is a sufficiently significant difference to warrant separate identification. I would describe the nature of the category four experience as 'symbiotic', a term which is generally used to describe a mutual, beneficial interdependence. However category five participants go beyond the concept of interdependence to assert that, for them, research and teaching are *inseparable*. In other words research and teaching cease to be regarded as two different activities, however closely related. Rather the process of one *is* the process of the other. In this understanding of the research/teaching relation, the concept of a 'link' ceases to be meaningful; in fact it undermines the holistic nature of the relation by suggesting that research and teaching can indeed be separated. Instead research and teaching are subsumed in the role of academic or scholar.

## *Experiences of the research/teaching relation*

The exercise reflected in these questions [on the 'research/teaching link' for the academic audit] seems to me to follow a very typical pattern of establishing a spurious dichotomy (teaching/research) and then tautologically attempting to resolve the question of their relationship – i.e. because they're separated this poses the immediate problem of how they are "related". If they are not considered to be so distinct, the question of their "link" becomes less intelligible (Carol, e-mail communication).

... I don't see it [research and teaching] as two separate processes ... well, for me, I can't separate them out <pause> because when I am teaching, I'm actively thinking about a certain kind of problem that's in the text. I can read the same passage out five years running and I'll guarantee I do not say the same thing about it each year. It'll be different. I'll suddenly see something else [which may become the basis for a paper] (Robyn, 10)

... we'd like to think that we're doing something that's kind of more holistic anyway ... and those kind of - this is teaching, this is research and where those things delineate, you know, isn't - that's not kind of how we see it. So, it's much more interrelated and interconnected (Diane, 24).

It's sort of an umbrella term [academic] and it's – and it sums up that whole idea that what you are doing is unquantifiable – it is – it is a - it's – it's something that is you more than the actual particular tasks that you go about the – the whole is greater than the sum of the parts ... (Nicola, 10).

... then I've gone off and researched cause you have to research for lectures so what's the difference – it's all this - we see research as publication when lectures are research ... a lot of the job is getting on with it – my lectures - the preparation of my lectures is also is simultaneously my research and it's secondary research ... all of that book reading that I do to prepare my lectures is simultaneously my research that I am now turning into a book, so I - yeah, I work it all in multiple levels so that - that is research – it – it happens here in this office (Nicola, 12-13).

Research and teaching are integrated at all levels; there is no apparent differentiation between the undergraduate and the postgraduate experience.

### *The phenomenal field*

For participants in this category academics and students are co-learners. **Research** is learning, thinking, making connections, a journey, a process of understanding how the world is constructed, of constructing new forms of understanding and forging new interpretations.

... what I do in doing research which produces, shall we say, knowledge from within a critical epistemology approach is that one has a question or problem or some kind of impetus—a line of inquiry, something one is studying and that one analyses those discourses that contribute to constructing that as a known phenomenon - as a knowable phenomenon - as a - as a - as a thing in the world - a problem in the world, as a - as a process, as a - as an event, or whatever it might be ... what comes out of that is a process of knowing about how that is being constructed. (Carol, 12).

... the preparation of my lectures is also is simultaneously my research and it's secondary research, but then all those boundaries have collapsed anyway ... so that – all of that book reading that I do to

prepare my lectures is simultaneously my research that I am now turning into a book, so I - yeah, I work it all in multiple levels so that - that is research – it – it happens here in this office (Nicola, 13).

... when I committed myself to doing this Ph.D. research, one of the - probably *the* main thing - that - that helped shape my research question, how I was undertaking to do my research, was that I wanted to be a different person at the end of it ... I suppose part of it was comparing it with other sorts of research that had been done in the past in this department, which involved just sitting around with a whole lot of books and working in archives and not interacting with people. I deliberately chose a research topic which in a way is quite personally challenging, which involves me interacting with the \_\_\_\_\_ community ... because I didn't want to just be talking to myself ... (Diane, 17).

For primary sources, research for me is to find and read the manuscripts I'm interested in. Um, that's my primary research. My secondary research is then to look at what other people have spoken of or what other people have said of these - of these manuscripts or of editions and either agree or disagree with them. Usually I - I go to the manuscripts because I have a specific idea which I don't think has been explored ... I mostly have published on things, on texts that I have been teaching, because I know them very well. I have to know them very well to lecture on them—and then I'll do the secondary reading and then I'll think hey, they haven't thought of this (Robyn, 5).

**Teaching** involves engaging (and engaging with) students in the research processes of interpretation, de/constructive critique and inquiry. The aim is to challenge students' thinking and the way they see the world/the object of interpretation.

I don't think of myself as a teacher ... I don't perceive my role here as a teacher. I would never describe myself as a teacher. I don't do teaching ... I see my role as kind of mentoring and facilitating a process whereby these co-learners—who are learners as I am a learner—are participating in a process and I'm just a bit more experienced one and so I'm helping to do some of this stuff. So, they - their contract with me is that they will take the responsibility for their own learning (Carol, 10-11).

So, to engage with students—it's got nothing to do with me transferring something to them. It's a process of challenge and engagement, prompting to assist the - facilitate, assist a process of them learning to engage in this kind of work (Carol, 13).

... they have moments where they [students] get ideas and you can see therefore that they are learning and thinking differently because that's what I'm here to do in a lecture – to make people get knowledge and have ideas and think in a way that they have not thought before – that's thinking critically opening their mind and being able to think in new ways and to do it for themselves and form their own opinions (Nicola, 15).

I'm very wary of the word teaching, because I am not a teacher ... it is not school where you are taught it's university and you teach yourself at university I – I'm here to give you the aids and the guidance and the lecture is guidance into self teaching ... (Nicola, 16).

I teach students to think and I teach students to express the result of their thoughts logically and very clearly. I would like to think that I teach students to have, um, many opinions on the same topic—opinions that they then have to evaluate. Um, it's an uncomfortable process. That's my teaching role (Robyn, 4).

Research and teaching are linked by the process of **learning**, which involves understanding, engaging with the world, thinking differently and changing as a person. Learning is essentially a transformative event. For the first time the notion of resistance is voiced.

So students who come through [and go into employment] ... know how to - how to critically engage with the various discourses that are constructing that problem as a problem and can basically unravel them and - and through that process understand how the world is being constructed and then progress that issue or that whatever it is - whatever their project is, to be able to find a project and progress that project and issue from a very conscious and aware understanding that they're - the knowledge they are creating is situated, it's constructive and it occurs, yeah, within - within this context of critique (Carol, 9).

... a lot of what I'm doing involves them so much thinking in new ways that they haven't thought of before, because if they weren't what would be the point of me being here if I was ... I should be providing an alternative - a critical view and views multiple on what they are doing, so yeah there's a lot of resistance, but that's what learning is about to me ... once they break through that, suddenly you'll have people going - oh yes, I hadn't thought of that before and that's what being at university is about ... we should all be thinking things that we haven't been thinking of before and that's what learning is - learning new things and view points (Nicola, 20).

I remember thinking that I regard kind of every day as a kind of a learning thing. It's a holistic thing. And you learn something every day, if you're open to it ... and it can be in that kind of formal academic way, but it can be in lots of other ways as well (Diane, 17).

Underpinning this academic enterprise is an understanding of **knowledge** as power, as a community construction and as a process of 'engendering' where the two or more come together and are transformed into something new.

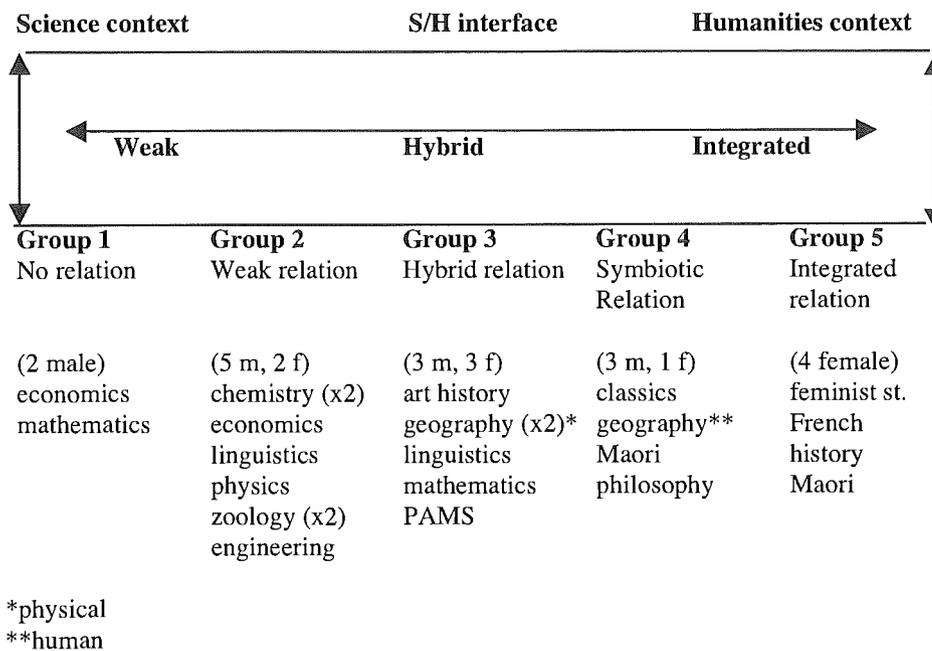
... that it's not a matter of building up knowledge to get some kind of positive edifice that results and we sort of get bigger libraries because we've got more knowledge ... I see knowledge completely differently. So, it's an act of engagement, it's a positive ... engagement with the world, not in the - positive in the sense of constructing something that becomes ontologically present and transferable ... I guess I see it rather more as clearing away removing stuff, rather than adding stuff, clearing away all this clutter of concepts and words and so on, so that one can then be - open a space for action. So, this process of critique, of critical deconstruction of these discourses that construct the reality that is the problem, or the event or whatever. Um, sort of clears - clears away to open a space for new forms of action in relation to that problem. Not - not - not necessarily based on knowledge - building blocks (Carol, 13-14).

Knowledge is, um, thinking really it - it doesn't - you can't - sometimes you can quantify it and say OK those - those books over there are tons of different peoples' knowledge and I've chosen to put them there and draw upon them - it's sort of siphoning them into like my head, and then it comes out of my head and it goes into publications and that's kind of like more evidence ... but you can't always quantify philosophy - I mean the whole degree you get Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of thinking. That's what a university is about ... it's something that you can't tie down - it's - it's the unquantifiable and the unknowable, and they are continually searching for different ways in perspectives of seeing things - the more you know - the more I know the more I know I don't know - the more you realise it's bigger, it's unknowable and infinite ... and knowledge is power - that's really important too (Nicola, 8-9).

The experience of the research/teaching relation for category five participants can perhaps best be described as hermeneutic where the 'whole' of the experience is greater than the sum of the parts and in which the parts cease to be meaningful in isolation. This experience recalls that of some of Rowland's (1996) participants who were reluctant to differentiate between research and teaching.

## A Brief Reflection on these Results

By taking individual experience as the unit of analysis and by engaging with academics from across a range of disciplines, a pattern emerges of similarity and difference according to faculty groupings (see Figure 6.3).



*Figure 6.3* Variation in experience of the research/teaching relation at undergraduate level: a disciplinary perspective.

‘Science’ related disciplines (chemistry, economics, engineering, linguistics, mathematics, physics, zoology) are represented at the ‘weak relation’ end of the continuum, ‘humanities’ related disciplines (classics, feminist studies, French, geography, history, Maori, philosophy) at the ‘integrated relation’ end. The disciplines represented in category three occupy a mid-point on the science-humanities continuum. Some of these are newer disciplines (for example geography and linguistics) which explicitly draw on the traditions of both the sciences and the humanities.

Despite the fact that I was not anticipating the extent to which the categorisation would be determined by faculty/discipline, I believe the voices of my participants in this chapter (albeit subjected to a process of selection) do reveal a clear movement away from one view

of knowledge (cumulative, hierarchical) and towards another view of knowledge (interpretive, socially constructed). In fact it is primarily the experience/understanding of knowledge which appears to determine experience of the research/teaching relation. If one compares, for example, the ways in which research, teaching, learning and knowledge are experienced by category two and category five participants, it is clear that understanding of the world is constituted very differently in each case.

During the process of analysis I found myself sketching small diagrams, initially to represent the experiences of individuals, but later to illustrate the shared experiences within a particular category. For example, Figure 6.4 was my attempt to capture the inter-relation of research, teaching, learning and knowledge for participants in categories one and two. It illustrates the hierarchical nature of the research/teaching relation at undergraduate level where research informs teaching and teaching brings about learning. Academic research is concerned with the discovery of new knowledge while student learning is expected to focus on developing an understanding of existing knowledge. Only at postgraduate level do research, teaching, learning and knowledge come together in a shared process of discovery. The movement in the research/teaching relation reflects the movement across the whole spectrum of experiences as previously illustrated in Figure 6.2.

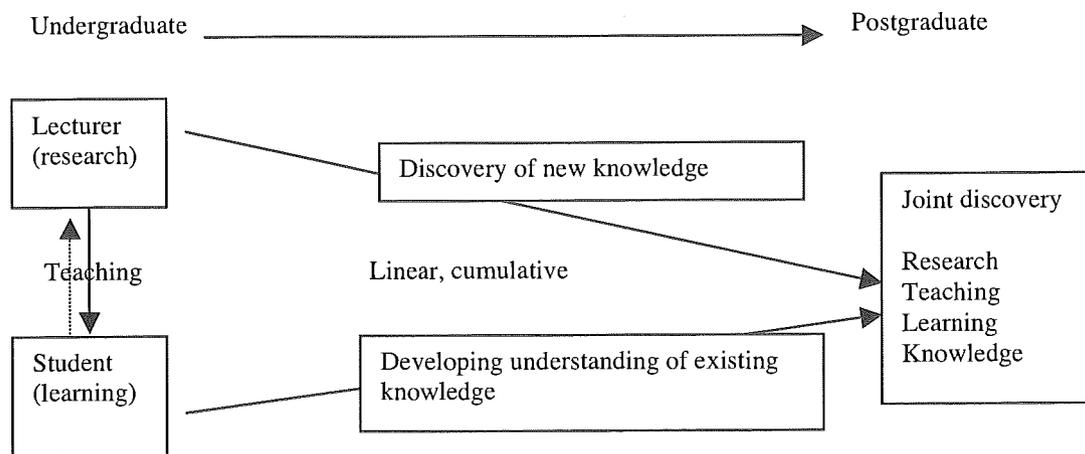
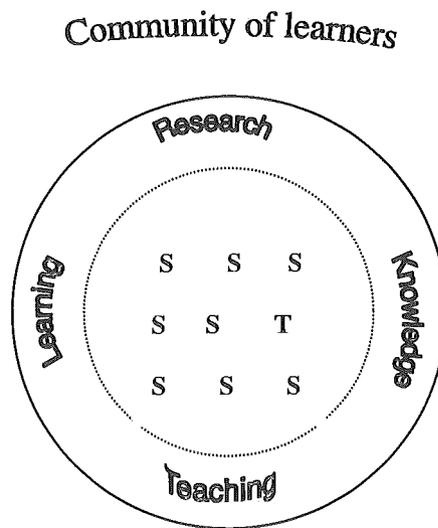


Figure 6.4 The inter-relation of research, teaching, learning and knowledge for participants in categories one and two.

In contrast, Figure 6.5 represents my interpretation of the inter-relation of research, teaching, learning and knowledge for participants in categories four and five. The experience is a much more holistic one in which levels of teaching (undergraduate/postgraduate) seem largely irrelevant. Research, teaching and learning are brought into close relation through the joint construction of knowledge within the context of a disciplinary community of learners.

As suggested earlier in the chapter, category three academics do not align completely with either of these graphic representations, but exhibit characteristics of both.



*Figure 6.5* The inter-relation of research, teaching, learning and knowledge for participants in categories four and five.<sup>6</sup>

Previous qualitative research in this field has drawn a line of distinction between the sciences and the humanities (Colbeck, 1998; Jensen, 1988; Smeby, 1998). Similarly, recent research into academics' beliefs about teaching and learning (Samuelowicz & Bain, 2001) has affirmed a teacher-centred/student-centred dichotomy. To a considerable extent my study supports this distinction. However the data in this study also suggest that the 'two

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<sup>6</sup> S = student; T = teacher

cultures' approach, whether it be in relation to academics' beliefs or experiences of the research/teaching relation, is overly simplistic and masks a much more complex and fluid situation. The five 'categories' of experience of the research/teaching relation outlined in this chapter provide evidence of that complexity. Equally, while experiences of the relation can be clustered in a way that acknowledges similarity and difference, each cluster contains 'echoes' of the experiences of individuals in other clusters, an effect most visible in the hybrid experience of category three participants.

Almost every academic, at some point in his or her interview, said something that might have positioned him/her in a different group. In a phenomenographic analysis these different conceptions or experiences would be fragmented into independent categories. However I always returned to the transcript as a *whole*, seeking to capture the *core* of the individual's experience. Sometimes there were discrepancies between how an interviewee described her practice and what her choice of language was actually communicating; a tension between the explicit and the implicit. This caused me some ethical concerns as I anticipated individuals challenging their positioning on the continuum. Ultimately however I had to justify the groupings to myself in order to maintain the integrity of the inquiry process. By drawing extensively on quotations from the interviews in this chapter I hope that readers will to some extent be able to assess the trustworthiness and integrity of my research processes.

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In this chapter I have begun to explore the complex nature of variation in academics' experience of the research/teaching relation. Drawing on evidence in my data I have suggested that underpinning this variation in experience are the epistemological and ontological beliefs of my interview participants. I have also suggested that a further exploration of the phenomenal field constituting this relation may hold a key to understanding better academics' intellectual world-views. In the following chapter I undertake such an exploration with a focus on how an analysis of metaphor might better reveal the inter-relation of research, teaching, learning and knowledge and hence the nature

of the research/teaching relation. In chapter eight I consider the implications of academics' experiences of the research/teaching relation for student learning.

## Chapter Seven

### Metaphors Academics Live By

*Like the spine, [metaphor] bears weight, permits movement, is buried beneath the surface and links parts together into a functional, coherent whole (Richardson, 1994, p. 519).*

The decision to explore my participants' use of metaphor was a serendipitous one. It was not part of my initial research design nor was it a part of my thinking as I interviewed participants and began to analyse the interview data.<sup>1</sup> The decision was in fact triggered by the vivid and sustained nature of a metaphor used by one of my pilot participants (David) to describe his experience of the research/teaching relation. This metaphor literally leapt off the transcript page and I reproduce it here simply to illustrate both its strength and its coherence.

What's at stake here is one's understanding of the foundations of the well-laid framework you are looking at a house that's built, the foundations of a house that's built and you ask yourself how did the builder tie that together, but up here you want to put a roof on the stables or something and you realise hey, you could use that technique up there or the technique you see him use can be used back again and it really is a symbiotic relationship. There is a strong link between the two (David, 15).

Later I interviewed Carol who explicitly *rejected* the building metaphor in relation to the construction of knowledge.

... it's not a matter of building up knowledge to get some kind of positive edifice that results and we sort of get bigger libraries because we've got more knowledge ... you know, I mean, it's building, building, building more, more, more. Um, I see knowledge completely differently. So, it's an act of engagement, it's a ... positive engagement with the world, not in the - positive in the sense of constructing something that becomes ontologically present and transferable (Carol, 13).

I was intrigued by this metaphorical clash of epistemologies and was eager to explore further the metaphorical patterns that might emerge across and within categories. The

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<sup>1</sup> Fine and Deegan (1996) suggest that the element of chance is central to the collection and interpretation of data and that "by recognising the centrality of serendipitous findings and events in qualitative research, we come closer to understanding how research products are created and appreciated in practice" (p. 445).

advantages of so doing are reinforced by Miller and Fredericks (1988) who suggest that “the analysis of metaphors can serve as an alternative triangulating strategy in qualitative research” (p.263).<sup>2</sup> These authors urge qualitative researchers to engage in a serious study of metaphor, arguing that not to do so is to ignore a rich source of data. Ultimately I perceived metaphor as the key to my understanding and explaining the interconnection of research, teaching, learning and knowledge and how these interconnections contribute to a particular way of experiencing the research/teaching relation. A close analysis of metaphor reveals a coherence amongst the parts that constitute the whole of the individual’s experience. Thus an exploration of metaphor has enabled me to question what lay behind what was said - Bond’s ‘explanatory ontology’ (Bond, 2000) - to understand as opposed to merely recreating someone else’s meaning (Gadamer, 1989).

In this chapter, which builds on the analysis undertaken in chapter six, I consider some of the reasons why metaphor might offer a key to understanding – and transforming - experience. I provide a metaphorical analysis of the interview texts by category and then personalise this in three case studies which draw on the interviews with David, Isobel and Carol. The framework for this chapter owes much to the groundbreaking work articulated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in their book *Metaphors we live by*.

## **Constructing a Metaphorical Map**

### *A Brief History of Metaphor*

From Greek and Roman times, metaphor (Greek ‘*metapherein*’, to carry over or to carry across) has largely been positioned on the periphery by Western philosophy and linguistics (Kemp, 1999). The use of metaphor was regarded with suspicion. It was linked with poetry, theatre and the tradition of persuasive public oratory (rhetoric) – with *illusion* rather than with *truth*. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980) this fear of metaphor and rhetoric in the empiricist tradition is a fear of subjectivism, of emotion and imagination which point away from truth. By the nineteenth century science and literature were positioned in

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<sup>2</sup> I must stress that I was not seeking a ‘triangulating strategy’ as such. I agree with Richardson (1997) who rejects the triangle as a “rigid, fixed, two-dimensional object” (p. 92). Rather I was seeking a way of ‘looking again’ and looking more deeply at the interview texts.

opposite camps. Science held its use of language to be objective, precise, unambiguous, non-contextual and non-metaphoric while literature was hegemonically relegated to the realm of metaphor and ambiguity (Richardson, 1994). Thus metaphor was dismissed as an ornament of language or a stylistic decoration, no more than an aberrant variety of linguistic expression (Miller & Fredericks, 1988), so much literary fluff (Gergern, 1999). It offered no new information and was designed merely to please.

It is only comparatively recently that linguists and philosophers (for example, Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Madison, 1988; Ricoeur & Thompson, 1981) have begun to reconsider the role of metaphor in language. In their book *Metaphors we live by*, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) have radically repositioned metaphor by claiming that our conceptual system, which plays a central role in defining our everyday realities, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature. The essence of metaphor lies in understanding and experiencing one kind of thing or reality in terms of another. In particular “we tend to structure the less concrete and inherently vaguer concepts ... in terms of more concrete concepts, which are more clearly delineated in our experience” (Lakoff & Johnson p. 112). Essentially metaphor is the name of the process by which meaning is shifted around, threatening orderly language and allowing for a proliferation of meanings (Sarup, 1993). For example, the metaphor ‘time is money’ which illustrates an assimilation of two quite remote ideas, permeates our Western culture. In fact we cannot think of time without speaking metaphorically. Thus metaphor becomes an important means of structuring, extending and giving voice to experience. It is a primary mechanism for *understanding* our experience (Gibbs, 1992; Leary, 1995).

Given that metaphor is now understood as a fundamental characteristic of how people categorise and make sense of their experience, it is no longer regarded as just a linguistic device but as a central organising factor in language and cognition. Conceptual metaphors determine and reflect our world-view with every metaphor representing “the tip of a submerged model” (Black, 1979, p. 31). Paying careful attention to how people *describe* the world may well offer clues as to how they *construct* it (Munby & Russell, 1990) and hence how they *act* in it. Through a careful analysis of metaphor we can begin to discern the patterns that give coherence to our participants’ articulated experiences (Bullough, 1991). However, in general, conceptual metaphors do not ‘belong’ to us alone; rather they belong to a community of which we are a part where every experience is embedded in a

multitude of cultural presuppositions. We 'inherit' such (often fossilised) metaphors and use them, frequently oblivious to the meaning we are constructing and communicating through their use. As Richardson puts it; "implicit metaphors orient and prefigure knowledge" (Richardson, 1997, p. 44). Thus deconstructive criticism needs to pay careful attention to the metaphoric structure and 'traces' of a text (Sarup, 1993). Alerting people to their use of metaphorical constructs may "offer a window onto understanding and provide tools which can be used in a reflective process" (Clegg & Gall, 1998, p. 324).

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue that it is by no means an easy matter to change the metaphors we live by. More often than not people in power get to impose their metaphors (President Bush's personification of terrorism is a case in point). However the power of new metaphors to create a new reality is a developing theme in the literature. Maxine Greene (1994) suggests that we may understand the nature of imaginative thinking better by viewing it in terms of metaphor. The exercise of imagination through the use of metaphor frees us to challenge the taken-for-granted, to envisage the world differently and to use alternative modes of inquiry. As we engage in metaphorical discourse by bringing together disparate semantic fields, we reveal unexpected connections, draw attention to other ways of being and thinking, act as agents of transformation. Madison (1988) supports this view when he argues that metaphor is "a superbly effective way of doing things with words, of altering ways of being-in-the-world" (p. 150).

However the implications of the metaphors we employ and through which we make and defend a world-view need to be made explicit (Sarup, 1993). Schön (1979), discussing the ways in which people think metaphorically about social policy problems, suggests that certain pervasive, tacit metaphors can sometimes dangerously constrain and control the way in which we construct the world in which we live. He urges us to become more critically aware of these metaphors and to use this inquiry process to generate new ways of viewing problems. Gergern (1999) quotes George Eliot: "We all of us, grave or light, get our thoughts entangled in metaphors and act fatally on the strength of them" (Gergern, p. 65).

The pervasive influence of metaphor in education, in particular the way in which teachers in the secondary sector conceptualise their professional practice and how this might be challenged, has received attention (Miller & Fredericks, 1998; Munby & Russell, 1990; Tobin, 1990). As a result of asking newly appointed polytechnic teachers what they mean by 'teaching', Fox (1983) identified four 'theories' of teaching; the transfer theory, shaping theory, travelling theory and growing theory. Although Fox does not use the term metaphor or draw on any of its literature, his article is, in fact, grounded in teachers' metaphorical concepts. Recently, Clegg and Gall (1998) have explored the metaphors used by tertiary supervisors to describe their role in the research award process. They argue that "becoming aware of the underlying conceptualisation of their practice may, therefore, allow supervisors to restructure the frame and discover new perspectives on, and an increased understanding of, how they operate" (Clegg & Gall, p. 331). Bartlett and Mercer (2000) also analyse metaphors used to represent relationships between supervisors and candidates. In proposing a series of metaphors designed to encourage a reconceptualisation of the supervisor/student relationship, they "seek to draw attention to the often implicit and unacknowledged metaphoricity of much pedagogical theory" (p. 200).

However, I have been surprised at how little an analysis of metaphor has featured in studies of teaching and learning in higher education. Metaphor is often mentioned but seldom forms the basis of a systematic analysis. I wonder about the reasons for this. Is an exploration of metaphor considered to be too obvious, too simplistic and therefore insufficiently rigorous? Is metaphor considered to be so deeply embedded in our collective consciousness as to be largely meaningless when it comes to an analysis of individual experience? Or alternatively, is the use of metaphor considered too idiosyncratic and fanciful to contribute meaningfully in data analysis? Does the chequered history of metaphor linger on? The metaphorical expressions so evident in much of the recent empirical research on experiences of teaching, learning and research, as well as that on academics' conceptions of their role, have remained largely unexplored. I would like to 'take the plunge' by using metaphor as yet another 'way in' to an understanding of how research, teaching, learning and knowledge are experienced by participants and how these phenomena are structurally inter-related.

*Surfacing Metaphors*

As described in chapter five (*InterViews*) I began by re-reading all transcripts and highlighting the metaphors used. This process in itself required multiple re-readings of each transcript in order to surface the more hidden metaphors. I discovered that metaphor spotting is akin to narrowing your eyes in order to view an apparently meaningless graphic in a coherent way. Just as the picture emerges as one engages with it differently, so the metaphors took shape as I (literally) squinted at the transcript pages. I then created a metaphorical ‘map’ for each participant in which the metaphors scattered throughout an individual interview were grouped and named. For example, Roger’s (category three) metaphorical map is outlined in Figure 7.1.

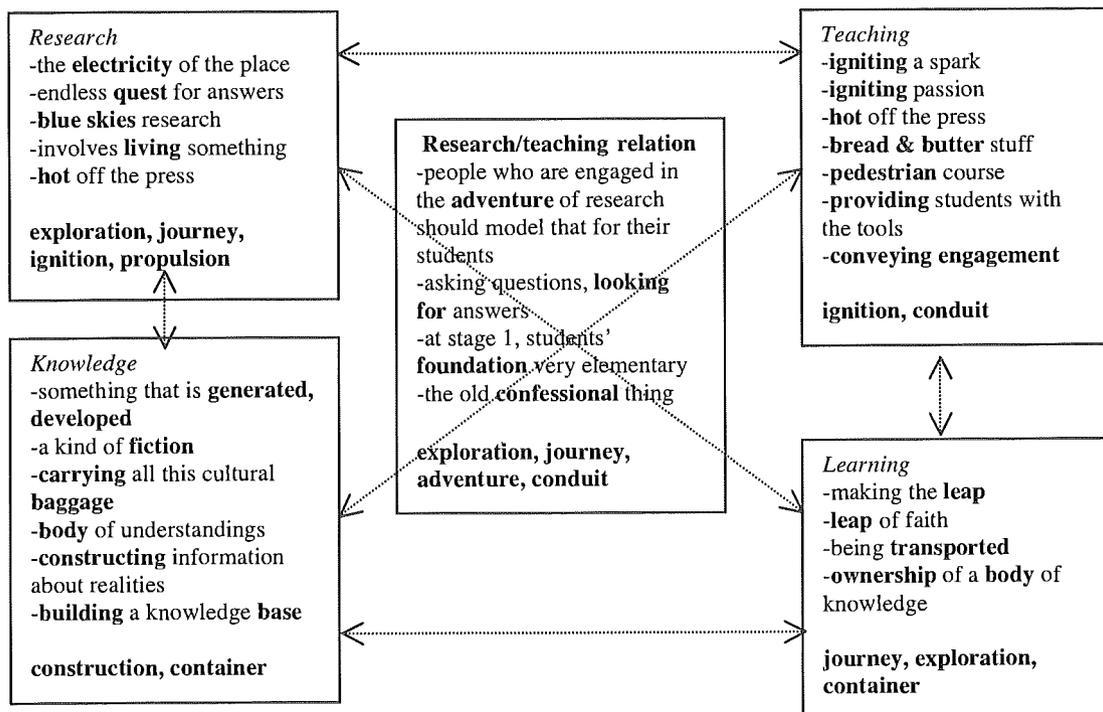


Figure 7.1 Roger’s (category three) metaphorical map.

Following this I mapped the full range of metaphors for each category of experience. For example, Figure 7.2 represents the metaphorical map for category two participants.

<b>Journey</b> <b>Exploration</b> Guiding Finding something Going beyond Going further Making discoveries Taking people along New view of world First step, next step New direction An adventurer Queer twists & turns Frontiers Lead them through	<b>Puzzle</b> <b>Jigsaw</b> Put it all together Seeing how the whole fits together Putting together a big Picture Tying together Making connections Putting the pieces together A puzzle Mystery Looking for fit between Things	<b>Oriental</b> Broader knowledge Bigger picture Expanding environment Open mind Go back, begin again Go through Going sideways Pushed to the side Understanding at a deeper level Breadth & depth Simplifying down Need an overview	<b>Nutrition</b> Provide Digested information Putting flesh on Boiling it down Imbibing information Absorbing Feed it into Serve them up Distilled Filtered Spice
<b>Container</b> Depository Put too much in Take on board Taking things in Holders of a quantity of information Body of knowledge	<b>Illumination</b> <b>Ignition, Perception</b> Livens up Brighten up Sharpen up Spark Seeing Perceiving Need a perspective Hot off the press Propelled up	<b>Conduit</b> Feed into Getting through Getting it across Put out there Giving Conveying Telling Passing on imparting Lead them through	<b>Construction</b> Welding Constructing Foundations of a well built house Put it all together & make something of it
<b>Warfare</b> Strategic reserve Warship A good hitting A good killing Fighting ignorance Bombing them with problems Trigger you off	<b>Commodity</b> <b>Transaction</b> Enriches Poorer Be of value Buy into research area Knowledge depreciates	<b>Mining</b> <b>Excavation</b> Deeper level Layers of knowledge Wells of knowledge In depth knowledge	

Figure 7.2 Metaphorical map for category two: Transmission relation

Finally I summarised the main metaphorical expressions used in relation to each component of the phenomenal field and matched these with examples taken from the transcripts. This was done for each of the five categories identified in chapter six. The outcomes of this analysis are displayed in tables one to five below with each table being followed by a brief summary. The reason for constructing these tables and including them in the body of the thesis text, is to illustrate as graphically as possible (and enable readers to recognise) the metaphorical patterns within and across groups. These patterns form a dense, woven cloth, the individual, repeated threads of the warp and weft supporting each other to form an

integrated structure. Thus the tables represent my attempt not to present data in a tabulated, positivist manner, but to form a ‘word picture’ of these complex inter-relations.

*Table 7.1* Category one: No relation

<b>Phenomenal field</b>	<b>Metaphorical expression</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Research</b>	Exploration & discovery (orientation outwards/upwards)	advance reaches, frontier of knowledge, wide territory, moving boundaries, discovering knowledge, historical baggage, breaking new frontiers
<b>Teaching</b>	Transferring (conduit) and depositing (orientation across and down)  Gate-keeping  A burden (orientation down)	passing on, pouring into, transmitting a body of knowledge, disseminating, getting through to  gate-keeping/sorting  teaching loads, low level, bogged down
<b>Learning</b>	Acquisition (conduit) by a container  Perception	absorbing a body of facts, acquiring, assimilating and giving back  new ways of thinking and seeing
<b>Knowledge</b>	A commodity  A discovery  A staircase/mountain peak/elevator	body of knowledge  discovering knowledge, frontier of knowledge  bottom level, next level
<b>Research/teaching Relation</b>	A staircase/mountain peak/elevator (Orientation up/down)	great chain of being , difficult to get students up to the level where they can do research, even 3 <sup>rd</sup> year courses are at a low level in comparison to research, don't have to turn brain on to teach undergraduates

For participants in category one<sup>3</sup> *knowledge* is a bounded commodity that is continually being ‘added to’ through research. Knowledge is constructed hierarchically. *Research* is a process of exploration and discovery which occurs at the frontiers of knowledge or at the ‘top’ of the great chain of being, while undergraduate teaching and learning deals in ‘low-level’ knowledge. *Learning* involves acquiring a body of knowledge at one level before advancing to the next level. *Teaching* involves transmitting that body of knowledge (conduit) and ensuring that students have absorbed it before they move on to the next level.

<sup>3</sup> When I refer to participants ‘in’ category one, two and so on, I am in fact referring to the *experiences* of those individuals.

Research at the advanced reaches of the discipline and teaching/learning at undergraduate level are at opposite ends of the ladder or staircase and are essentially unrelated activities. Orientational metaphors emphasise the up/down, hierarchical nature of the *relation*.

Table 7.2 Category two: Weak relation

Field	Metaphorical expression	Examples
<b>Research</b>	Journey, exploration, discovery (orientation outwards & upwards)	new direction, frontiers, twists and turns, an adventurer, new view of the world, going beyond, going further, making discoveries, finding something, moving along over time, up top
	Puzzle/Jigsaw	puzzle, mystery, seeing how the whole fits together, putting together a big picture, putting the pieces together, making connections, looking for the fit between things
	Building	constructing, loose pieces of data welded together into a coherent whole, projects which students can fit into, tying together, put it all together & making something
	Perception	seeing/perceiving, awareness, need a perspective, need a good overview, new view of the world
	Ignition	trigger you off, hot off the press,
<b>Teaching</b>	Transferring (conduit) and depositing	getting through, getting it across, put out there, giving, conveying, imparting, telling, presenting, put too much in, passing on, simplifying down
	Nurturing (nutrition, parenting) (oriented up/down and across)	digested information, putting flesh on, boiling it down, feed it into, serve them up, distilled, filtered, coax, helping students, like growing up, nurturing
	Guiding (oriented up/down, forward/back)	lift students to a certain level, take off, don't want to have to go back, propelled up, taking people along, guiding, leading through step by step
	Helping someone to see	putting together a big picture, illustrating with examples, looking at the bigger picture
<b>Learning</b>	A journey (across and up/down)	going beyond, going further, steps in the chain, understanding at a deeper level
	Acquiring a commodity	getting, acquiring, picking up terms, taking on board, taking things in, imbibing information, being a sponge, absorbing and discarding
	Seeing/completing a puzzle/jigsaw	seeing, perceiving, seeing how the various pieces fit, putting together a big picture
<b>Knowledge</b>	Exploration, excavation, Discovery (orientation out and down)	expanding environment, open mind, go through, broader knowledge, deeper level, in depth knowledge, layers of knowledge, wells of knowledge already out there, found
	A commodity	depreciates quickly, body of knowledge
	A building	a house (foundations/roof)
	A puzzle	grasping the big picture, bigger picture
<b>Relation</b>	Life-enhancing, wealth-creating (orientation up)	liven up, avoids dullness, brightens up, sharpens up, provides a spark, enriches
	A construction	foundations and roof

For participants in category two (as for those in category one) *knowledge* is a bounded commodity, constructed hierarchically. However the process of discovering new knowledge (research) takes on an added dimension. *Research* involves not only exploration and discovery but also the construction of pieces into a whole (building) and, in a closely related metaphor, the solving of a puzzle or completion of a jigsaw by ‘fitting together’ the pieces. *Learning* still requires the acquisition of knowledge from an exterior source, but, in addition, it requires active involvement in solving the puzzle. To this end, *teaching* involves not only transferring (and even force-feeding) information/knowledge, but also propelling students up the staircase to a point where they have acquired a sufficient number of pieces of the puzzle and can begin to fit these together with the aid of the teacher. The *relation* between engaging in research and teaching undergraduates is positive in that research involvement in the advanced reaches of knowledge, and teaching involvement at the basic levels of knowledge, mutually inform and enrich each other. Teaching is also seen to be enlivened/enriched by research. The relation is still hierarchical but closer than that described by category one participants.

Table 7.3 Category three: Hybrid relation

Field	Metaphorical expression	Examples
<b>Research</b>	Exploration/journey	adventure of research, looking for answers, quest, blue skies research, finding out, being transported, goldmine
	A puzzle	solving questions, finding things out
	A building	foundation, building up
	Perception	seeing something someone hasn't seen clearly before, a question of perception, how you see people living in the landscape
	(Erotic) love	passion, joy, turned on by, stimulated, engagement
	Ignition	fired up, hot bed, electricity, burning curiosity, hot off the press, generated, igniting a spark
	Propulsion	injection, thought into action, impetus
<b>Teaching</b>	Competition/battle	all black match, competition, slammed back, hurdle race, putting out a theory and inviting attack
	Transferring (conduit) and depositing (container); storytelling	providing the tools, getting across, passing on, storytelling, inter-generational transfer, confessional, giving the basics, perpetrating, adding to, filling up, open mind
	Guiding on a journey	leading into, finding out
	Ignition	igniting a spark, igniting passion

<b>Learning</b>	A commodity	adding to
	A journey (into the unknown)	being transported, making the leap, leap of faith
<b>Knowledge</b>	A possession	ownership of a body of knowledge, put extra knowledge away
	Perception	a vision one can share, something illuminated from a different direction
	A building	something to be knocked down and improved
<b>Relation</b>	An inheritance	inter-generational transfer, modelling a research approach, want people who can follow
	Life enhancing, wealth creating	research brings teaching alive, research enriches teaching, positive feedbacks between research and teaching, stimulates, energy levels go up

Participants in category three conceptualise *research* in terms of a significant number of different but related metaphors. In addition to metaphors of exploration, construction, puzzle solving and perception, an explicitly affective dimension is introduced. Research has the capacity to ignite, propel and generate strong passion. This passion is carried over into *teaching* that, while still involving the transfer of information, also involves engaging students in the excitement of ‘finding out’. For the first time students are invited to share in aspects of the research process and this *learning* involves a degree of risk-taking (making a ‘leap of faith’). *Knowledge* is still something which is ‘possessed’ but, through this ownership it can be shared and illuminated from different perspectives. Knowledge is less stable than previously. It can be knocked down and improved. The up/down orientation of teaching and learning, the hierarchical nature of knowledge ceases to be a focus. Instead an important aspect of the *relation* involves inducting students into the research community. Research and teaching are mutually enriching.

Table 7.4 Category four: Symbiotic relation

Field	Metaphorical expression	Examples
<b>Research</b>	Exploration/a journey/boundary breaking (orientation outwards)	a journey through different schools of thought, pushing the boundaries back, adventures, new avenues/frontier areas, curiosity, moving the debate on, finding out, keeping up with the field and expanding, expanding out, thinking outside the square, not being restricted by boundaries
	Construction/making connections	building bridges, connecting up, one argument builds on another and goes further
	Perception	a new viewpoint
	Wealth	enriching, gems
<b>Teaching</b>	Transferring (conduit) CONTESTED	imparting, more than shoving information at them
	Nutrition (CONTESTED)	distilling research for learning consumption, fighting against the process of spoon-feeding (though it 'has its place')
	Hosting (constructing relationships)	building bridges for students; students can walk the bridge and join two different sets of ideas, getting a conversation going, connecting everyone up, interacting, bringing students into, guiding, advising, assisting
	Building	using building blocks to construct a curriculum, the construction of teaching, pulling together information & locating it within a larger framework, breaking it down, carving out a position
	Being an artist/conductor	painting the big picture, a skilled artist, carving out a position
<b>Learning</b>	Exploration	pushing the boundaries back further, making a jump, being curious, finding out, moving the debate on and revisiting debates
	A shared construction	a collective enterprise, building bridges, finding a voice, conversation, seeing how it all fits together, engagement, engagement not just regurgitation
<b>Knowledge</b>	A border area	opening up, exploring links, mustn't have a fence around it, must be permeable to interdisciplinary adventures
	A shared construction	not something that falls out of the sky, establishing a relationship, sustaining the culture, knowledge creation results from active engagement/interaction
<b>Relation</b>	Constructing relationships	helping students to connect out/build a community, maintaining conversations and discussions, partnership (supervision)

The way in which *knowledge* is conceptualised undergoes a significant shift for participants in category four. The idea of knowledge as bounded, embodied and possessed disappears and is replaced with something less clearly defined, more permeable, resulting from interaction and engagement with others. Rather than being constructed as a building, knowledge is constructed in a relationship with others. There is greater emphasis on the explorative process (journey) involved in research and less on the discovery (destination). *Research* involves making connections but without the previous emphasis on linking all the pieces together to see the bigger picture. The metaphors constructing *teaching* and *learning* undergo similar changes. The notions of transferring information and spoon-feeding students are contested. Teaching involves construction in the sense of providing a platform

(bridge) for students to engage in shared learning. The notion of teacher as host (artist/conductor), someone who brings people and ideas together, who facilitates conversations, introduces strangers, and ensures appropriate conditions for social intercourse, is a new one. Given this environment, the learner is able to engage in an explorative process in the company of the teacher and other learners. The research/teaching *relation* is defined by the desire to involve students in the research community.

Table 7.5 Category five: Integrated relation

Field	Metaphorical expression	Examples
<b>Research</b>	A journey/exploration	a path
	Investigation	finding gaps, holes, anomalies, delving around, picking apart, depth of curiosity
	Propulsion	being propelled by a sense of inquiry, driven by wanting to understand, a kind of impetus, breakthroughs
<b>Teaching</b>	Transferring (conduit)	putting across ideas
	Hosting	facilitating, assisting, challenging, engaging, enabling students to think
	Guiding on a journey	guidance into self-teaching, as we go further it becomes clearer to them, guided through it
	Nutrition (REJECTED)	not here to push things down people's throats
<b>Learning</b>	A journey/seeing	a great trail of complication, new viewpoints
	A relationship	an active process of engagement, new connection, engagement, a love affair, engaging with knowledges, you are hooked when you disagree
	Perception	moments of clarity, new viewpoints, having a click, transformative process, opening one's mind, being struck by a bright idea
<b>Knowledge</b>	A journey, exploration	unquantifiable and unknowable, searching for different ways of seeing things, something you return to, never an end point, exploring an idea
	A commodity	like stuffing clothes into a drawer, clearing away, removing stuff, siphoning the contents of books into my head then it comes out of my head and goes into publications
	Birth, creation	to engender – when two or more come together and are transformed and something new emerges, opening a space for action, an act of engagement, about interconnections, knowledge is embodied in the individual, power in surviving
	Constructing a building (REJECTED)	not building blocks, universities try to tie down knowledge (problematic)
<b>Relation</b>	A way of being	the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, my stage 3 course is my research – it is me
	Life-enhancing	feel more alive (otherwise arid)
	Connection	it sort of goes around ... it does go and connect, interrelated, interconnected, holistic; working at multiple levels, interacting with people

Although the notion of *knowledge* as a possession lingers in category five, it is balanced by two powerful metaphors of knowledge as a journey (without a destination) and knowledge as birth/creation. Knowledge is ultimately 'unquantifiable and unknowable'. Engagement with knowledge(s) opens a space for new knowledge to emerge but not as the start of a new material construction. In *research* the emphasis is on searching rather than finding. *Teaching* involves engaging students with knowledge(s) and preparing them to become independent learners. *Learning* is a transformative process with moments of illumination following complication and resistance. The relation between research and teaching sustains the academic role and defines the individual academic. Teachers and students are all learners together.

## Reading the Map

### *Types of Metaphor*

In order to appreciate the complex inter-relation of academics' experiences of research, teaching, learning and knowledge as revealed in their use of metaphor, it may be useful to explore first some of the different kinds of metaphor.

*Oriental metaphors* are concerned with spatial orientation (up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off, deep-shallow, central-peripheral). These metaphors are not arbitrary; rather they have a basis in our physical and cultural experience. According to Lakoff & Johnson (1980) most of our fundamental concepts are organised in terms of one or more spatialization metaphors, each of which carries an internal 'systematicity'. Moreover there is an overall external systematicity among the various spacialization metaphors which defines coherence among them. For example, the orientation 'up-down' gives rise to happy is up (my spirits rose), sad is down (I'm depressed); conscious is up (wake up), unconscious is down (she fell asleep); health is up (he's in top shape), sickness is down (he dropped dead); more is up (my income rose last year) less is down (turn the heat down) and so on. Clearly 'up' is the favoured orientation!

The *conduit metaphor* (Reddy, 1979), which also has an orientational aspect to it, is framed as follows. 1) language functions like a conduit, transferring thoughts bodily from one

person to another; 2) in writing and speaking people insert their thoughts or feelings in the words; 3) words accomplish the transfer by containing the thoughts or feelings and conveying them to others; and 4) in listening or reading, people extract the thoughts and feelings once again from the words (Reddy, p. 290). Hence, ideas (or meanings) are objects; linguistic expressions are containers and communication is sending (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). I would add that, within the framework of the conduit metaphor, the recipient is also a container into which the transferred object is 'deposited' and within which meaning is 'extracted'.

The implications of the conduit metaphor (the use of which is ubiquitous in education in general and in my interview data) are significant for this study. That linguistic expressions are containers for meanings entails that words and sentences have meanings in themselves independent of any context or speaker. That meanings are objects entails that meanings have an existence independent of people and contexts (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). In this way the conduit metaphor denies any possibility that meaning might be constructed differently, individually or collectively, in relation to a particular context.

*Structural metaphors* allow us to do more than just orient concepts. They enable us to use one highly structured and clearly delineated concept to structure another. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) illustrate this with the *argument is war* metaphor. A conversation becomes an argument when the participants, feeling embattled, begin to attack and defend personal positions. The structure of the conversation takes on aspects of the structure of a war and one activity (talking) is understood in terms of another (physical fighting). The structure is partial because only selected elements of the concept of war are used. When a concept is structured by more than one metaphor, the different metaphorical structurings usually fit together in a coherent fashion. For example, an argument may also be conceptualised in terms of a journey, a container and a building as well as in terms of warfare. "What may at first appear to be random, isolated metaphorical expressions ... are part of whole metaphorical systems that together serve the complex purpose of characterising the concept of an argument" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980 p.105). Such complex coherences across metaphors are a recurrent feature of my interview data.

### *The Use of Orientational and Conduit Metaphors in Categories One – Three*

Orientational and conduit metaphors feature prominently in the discourse of participants in categories one and two and to a lesser extent in category three. With the exception of research they are largely absent from the narratives of participants in categories four and five. This finding is consistent with the changing ‘distance’ between research and teaching as illustrated in Figure 6.2 in the previous chapter.

Knowledge for participants in categories one and two is constructed in levels or layers that suggest a step-like orientation (outwards and up/down). Elaine describes the difficulty of lecturing in an unfamiliar area; “... the fact of not having the *next layer* and the next layer and the next layer of the big picture ... I mean *downwards* is a problem and also *outwards*” (Elaine, 9). This impacts fundamentally on the orientational relation between metaphors for research and metaphors for teaching. In categories one and two research is clearly positioned *above* teaching. “Research earns double prizes so it’s *at the top* of the *great chain of being* and it informs teaching and then teaching enables learning ... (Chris, 14). “The fact that you’re doing research *out there* gives perspective on the grounds *down there* ... just a little bit of *injection* of interest and relevance from *up top* can make a world of difference to teaching” (David, 25). Helen wants to “*lift* them (students) to a certain *level*” so that they can “*take off* in the second year” (Helen 4-5) while for Edmund “it’s quite difficult to get students *up to the level* where they can do research without them having done a full 4 year degree first ... it’s very much a hierarchical subject, you learn the *bottom level*, then the *next level* and so on ... ” (Edmund, 9).

In describing teaching, participants in categories one to three make consistent and constant use of conduit metaphors. “... it’s not just a matter of *conveying* facts and figures, but trying to *convey* ... the sort of thinking skills and the study skills...” (Elaine, 2). “I do like the thought that I’m *passing on* to them new stuff” (Isobel, 15). “... at stage 1 you’ve got to teach something in a very clear way and you’ve got to *give* them the basics ...” (Janet, 8). “... to *get it across* at the level we expect from third year science students...” (Bruce, 6). Similarly learning involves being on the receiving end of transmitted information. “... learning for me is a continuous process of reading, talking to people, just *absorbing*

concepts, *absorbing* facts, *discarding* things which are no longer useful...” (George, 4). Learning is “basically *acquiring* all those things that I, as a teacher, am trying to *pass on...*” (Edmund, 4). There is “a tremendous amount of factual information that needs to be *absorbed* before the process of tying it together and seeing the connections can occur” (Grahame, 6).

This exploration of orientation and conduit metaphors opens up the framework underpinning the structural relations of the phenomena. In categories one and two *research* involves discovering new *knowledge*. Knowledge is hierarchical and so *learning* involves absorbing information at one level before moving on to the next. Much information has to be passed on/absorbed before the various pieces can be linked and understanding can occur. *Teaching* involves transmitting information and creating conditions that will help students ascend to the next level. Eventually students will reach a point, most likely at postgraduate level, where they can expect to be involved in original inquiry.

Oriental/conduit metaphors are still apparent but much less dominant in the texts of category three participants and all but absent from the texts of participants in categories four and five. Once again the determining factor in the transformation appears to be the way in which knowledge is experienced. For participants in categories four and five knowledge has lost its tangible, embodied quality. Rather than being something that is ‘found’ and transmitted, it is understood to be something that emerges from an engagement with others and with existing knowledges. Knowledge is no longer incremental; it is not ‘constructed’ in building blocks. This view of knowledge determines the nature of the relation between research, teaching and learning. The top down orientation of research and teaching is replaced with a shared engagement in which the relation between researcher/teacher and learner is closer to that of a partnership. Herein lies an explanation for the differences between Figure 6.4 (The inter-relation between research, teaching, learning and knowledge for participants in categories one and two) and Figure 6.5 (The inter-relation between research, teaching, learning and knowledge for participants in categories four and five) in the previous chapter.

## *The Use of Structural Metaphors*

Within each category of experience, the various phenomena (research, teaching, learning, and knowledge) are linked to one another through repeated or related metaphors. For example, in category one, research is discovering new knowledge, teaching is transferring and depositing knowledge and learning is acquiring knowledge. This structural coherence across phenomena is premised on an understanding of knowledge as a *commodity*.

Similarly if, within category two, we take the metaphor of research as perception, then we find the notion of 'seeing' also used as a metaphor for teaching (helping students to see the bigger picture), for learning (seeing how the various pieces fit) and for knowledge (grasping the bigger picture).

Often there are several metaphors that partially structure a single concept. For example, in category two, research is conceptualised variously as a journey of exploration, the solving of a puzzle, the construction of a building and a process of seeing. Although these are separate metaphorical expressions, each complements rather than conflicts with the other. Each metaphor illuminates a different but related aspect of 'research'. Research is a *journey* in which one travels to and beyond the frontier with the intention of 'finding' something. Out there, beyond the frontier, one gathers pieces of the *puzzle*. These pieces have to be welded together to form a whole (*building*) at which point one will have a new view (*seeing*) of the world.

Some metaphors persist *across* categories of experience but in a diminished form. For example, by the time we get to category five there is only the faintest echo of the conduit metaphor. Some metaphors persist across categories but undergo a subtle alteration in meaning. For example, the notion of research as a journey of exploration and discovery links all five categories. However the initial (categories one and two) emphasis on exploration and discovery (the found) transforms into a later (categories four and five) emphasis on the journey (the finding). Other metaphors fade, disappear and are replaced. For example, the dominant early metaphor of teaching as transmission (conduit) is largely replaced by the notion of teaching as constructing knowledge-making relationships. Learning as the acquisition of a commodity (categories one and two) is replaced with the

idea of learning as a process of exploration, a shared construction, a moment of illumination (categories four and five).

In making an argument for metaphorical coherence within and across categories of experience, I would not want to suggest that the fit is in any way perfect. As I have argued earlier, categorisation is a blunt instrument and within each group there is evidence of metaphors which do not appear to sit easily with the general pattern of their fellows. Rather than seeing this as an aberration I would argue that, in the same way that a small number of metaphorical constructs in categories one and two prefigure experiences in categories four and five, so too is there evidence of early category constructs lingering in the later categories. In saying this I am not suggesting that the variation in experience of the research/teaching relation indicates the existence of a developmental framework. Rather I am making a statement about the limitations of categorisation, whether that categorisation is the product of a phenomenographic analysis or a phenomenal field analysis. It is important to remember that the neat and accessible framework of categories masks the complex beliefs of 25 individual academics.

One final caveat. The focus on metaphor does not foreground all aspects of experience relating to the phenomenal field. Nor does it necessarily do justice to all participants, some of whom were exceptionally sparing in their use of metaphor. It is important, therefore, that this chapter is read in conjunction with the descriptive analysis outlined in chapter six.

### **Personalising Metaphor: Three Case Studies**

One of the best ways of seeing how metaphor constructs/reflects coherence (or dissonance) in experience is by looking at the discourse of individuals. I began this chapter by quoting from David and Carol's transcripts. Their use of metaphor reveals consistent but radically different conceptions of knowledge. Isobel occupies a mid way position, her language revealing kinship with both the 'hard' and the 'soft' disciplines. In this section I highlight metaphors and their inter-relation within the phenomenal field through the use of italics.

*David (category 2)*

David is a senior academic in the Faculty of Science, one of the group that initially communicated with ERAU regarding the review of the Hattie and Marsh (1996) article. In his e-mail David stated:

I know that I haven't read Hattie and Marsh, but anyone who suggests there is zero link between research and teaching obviously lives on another planet to the one I live on. I think this article badly demeans ERAU as a useful component of this university (David, e-mail, 21/7/97).

In his interview David spoke at length and passionately about research, teaching, learning, knowledge and their interrelation. His conversation was also metaphorically very rich and it was this interview which prompted me, somewhat further down the track, to pursue a metaphorical analysis.

For David research is

... a *new view* of the world ... which might mean a new theory, it might mean *constructing* therefore the consequences of an old theory into a *new direction*. It might be looking for new experimental evidence but not just data, that's not research, it means the interpretation of the data and the *welding* of that into a *wider pole* that is the *whole body* of knowledge (David, 2).

Here research is conceptualised as a process of *exploration* involving a *journey* into the unknown ("new view", "new direction", "looking for", "pole"). However the process of journeying alone is insufficient. The explorer/researcher must engage in a *building* process ("constructing", "welding of that into a wider pole"). Knowledge (the product of research) is therefore not merely 'found' but is also 'constructed' resulting in yet another metaphor of research as *perception* ("new view"). The use of several metaphors to partially structure a single concept is referred to by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) as a 'complex coherence'. The research as exploration/ construction/perception metaphors overlap but also convey different aspects of the research process. They also link research with knowledge.

Knowledge is

... the process by which all the individual *loose pieces of data are welded together* into a *coherent view* which view itself is *then up for grabs* and may need modification, changes, radical or otherwise, but on the whole I just mean development (David 3).

The “whole body of knowledge” (knowledge is a container) consists of “loose pieces of data welded together into a coherent view”. While this is clearly a construction metaphor, it contains echoes of the jigsaw/puzzle metaphor used by other category two participants. The construction and conduit metaphors are dominant but the apparent solidity of the ‘welded’ construction/the container of knowledge is challenged by the continuation of the exploration/perception metaphors. The ‘new view’ may be temporarily coherent but it is not the end of the journey, just a point along the development way. Thus we see that while these metaphors relate to each other coherently, each also adds an extra dimension to the overall phenomena (research and knowledge) that they describe and connect. One metaphor alone is insufficient to convey the complexity of what are highly abstract and elaborate concepts.

Research/building involves a bringing together of, and a building on, the work of others, the research community implicitly referred to in the term “up for grabs”. The *research as exploration* metaphor is further illustrated elsewhere in the interview in the use of such phrases as “launch forth” and “successfully surmounted”. Exploration, construction and perception are integrated in the advice to students that “what you need when starting research is a perspective, a place to stand from which you can move the earth, as Archimedes said”. Elsewhere in the interview David refers to research in terms of a *battle*. Engaging in research involves “getting a few corners knocked off” but, by making unexpected linkages, “you stand to make a good hitting, a good killing”. As researchers “we’re all of us fighting our ignorance” and anyone who can withstand the rigours of the peer review and publishing process has “proved their mettle”.

In contrast David’s representations of teaching draw heavily on orientational (across and up/down) and conduit metaphors. For example the teacher must “put it across”, “get it through to”, “give them some illustrations”, “get it across to the level of the people involved” and this may involve the teacher “taking a little bit out” or “narrowing down” the material. Teaching is:

... *distilling* the essentials ... the *foundations* of a discipline, what it’s all about ... what the basic ideas are, but of course that’s um almost taught by *osmosis*, by *filtering* into a system ‘cos you know the old proverb, the art of teaching is efficacious only where it’s superfluous (David, 6).

References to biology and nutrition support the conduit conception. Teaching is “distilling the essentials”, “boil(ing) it down”, “putting flesh upon” and then relying on a process of “osmosis”, a “filtering into the system”. An up/down orientation is reinforced with another battle metaphor. “There is a sense in which we can only get at the students’ minds by bombing them with routine problems”. The ‘knowledge as a building’ metaphor reappears in the reference to the ‘foundations’ of a discipline.

Midway through the interview David quotes from an essay by Alfred Adler (1993) in which Adler discusses the teaching of mathematics. David reads; “... what matters is the communication of spirit ... only an adventurer can tell of adventures” and then comments “now that to me is a very, very telling sentence and I’d say yes, that is my experience too”. Here again is the conduit metaphor wrapped up as storytelling in the context of exploration. Key to the telling of this story, however, is the fact that the story is one’s own. Research based teaching, in David’s experience, can only be carried out effectively by someone who is actively engaged in research; a *participant* as opposed to an observer.

Linking research and teaching in terms of student learning is difficult at undergraduate level.

Probably the most efficient way of doing it is not to *give* them research right off, but to give them the *next step in the chain* because after all there’s so many *steps in the chain* they have to *go through* before they can really appreciate *in depth* what the research is about and might be just to *tell them* at stage 1 level a little bit of what’s done at stage 2, or at stage 2 level a little bit of what’s done at stage 3 (David, 18).

The extant ‘body’ of disciplinary knowledge is only accessible to students through “steps in the chain”. Learning is a process of ascending this ladder/staircase/mountain ... . Interestingly, in orientational terms, students must *ascend* in order ‘appreciate in *depth*’. Research takes place at the ‘top’ of this chain (or mountain or building) and is distant from though related to undergraduate teaching/learning. The hierarchical ‘relation’ between research and teaching is once again expressed metaphorically in terms of exploration and of construction.

It is the process of *going over the fundamentals* of a subject from the *perspective* of somebody who can also *see the frontiers* of a subject. And what isn’t, isn’t known out there is a process which is tremendously productive, somehow or other the discipline of going through those fundamentals and the discipline of going through the frontiers are highly connected. What’s at stake here is one’s understanding of the *foundations* of the *well-laid framework*. You are looking at a *house that’s built*,

*the foundations of a house that's built and you ask yourself how did the builder tie that together? But up here you want to put a roof on the stables or something and you realise hey, you could use that technique up there or the technique you see him use can be used back again and it really is a symbiotic relationship. There is a strong link between the two (David, 15).*

Orientation is underscored here. The contrast is between the fundamentals (at the bottom) and the frontiers (out there/up there/distant). The 'knowledge house' consists of 'foundations' which support a 'well-laid framework'. This in turn makes possible the addition of a roof. The builder (teacher) needs the solid foundation in order to add to the construction (research). Equally, working on the roof gives one a new perspective on the entire construction below. Students benefit from being taught by someone who has a grasp of the 'whole framework' and who is actively contributing to the development of that framework at the roof/research level. Researchers benefit from having to revisit, through their teaching, the 'fundamentals' of the discipline in a way that can illuminate the 'frontiers'.

Thus we can trace the complex interrelation of research, teaching, learning and knowledge in the coherent overlap of their associated and shared metaphors. The active metaphors (exploration, construction, perception) are associated with the researcher/teacher. The passive metaphors (being on the receiving end, being fed, being lead) are associated with student learning. There is little sense of partnership or active engagement/inquiry on the part of students. The conduit at undergraduate level is unidirectional.

### *Isobel (category three)*

Isobel is a mid-career academic in the social sciences who positions herself at the "hard-core end" of her discipline. Of all the category three participants her experience probably best illustrates the tensions generated when the world-views of the sciences and the humanities intersect although her use of metaphor is less complex and sustained than David's or Carol's.

For Isobel universities should be the "*think-tanks* of society" and "*hot beds* of thought" where members are "*pressing* for change" ... "*developing* and *embracing* new ideas" and "*pushing* the conscience of society" (5). Later she talks about the desirability of radicals

“*bubbling up*” and effecting change in the ways we think. This excitement about the role of universities is mirrored in Isobel’s experiences of research (the “*solving* of questions that are as yet *unsolved* at some level”) which is discussed in terms of (almost erotic) love. For Isobel her research field is a “*passion*” and she looks to recruit students who are “*turned on*” by it (although she doesn’t expect all students to be “*fired up*”). The intersection of research and teaching results in “*engagement* for the students”.

At the same time the prevailing research ethos in the discipline is described in negative terms. Successful colleagues regard publication as a “*competition*” that has nothing to do with “*sharing knowledge*”. “Am I really interested in essentially *fighting a battle*” she asks “where I see it as about knowledge and learning and other people see it in terms of – an *All Black’s match*” (11). Conceptualising the dissemination of research by publication as a game or a battlefield is a feature of the discourse of participants in categories one to three. It is noticeably absent from the conversations of participants in categories four and five.

Knowledge for Isobel is “wisdom – a set of intellectual processes – well developed – that you can apply to a range of things in your life” (10). This suggests a much less structured view of knowledge than that expressed by the category one and two participants. However when Isobel compares teaching in her research area to previous teaching in a less familiar area, she thinks that “maybe the intellectual processes were completely transferable but I felt stymied in *illustrating* them because I didn’t have *the knowledge at my fingertips*” (13).

I sometimes despair at the extent to which the students seem to be - want to *filled up* with - be filled up with facts and, um - and what I’d rather do is *fill them up* with attitudes and - and— not attitudes—I don’t want them to have my attitude—but - but if I can teach them to—this is how you find out the answer to a question. If I can *convey* that answering and - asking and answering a question is really exciting and it’s good fun, if I can *convey* to them that, um, learning is a good thing, um, in general, not just in academic parts of your life, but in every part of your life, if I can *convey* to them that there are more than - there’s more than one way to skin a cat and that many of those ways might be OK, that there’s not just - often not just one way to see things, but lots of different ways to see things, um, if I can *convey* to them the excitement of learning ... (Isobel, 8).

Here we see the tension between the pedagogical objective (to produce flexible, creative, passionate researchers) and the use of container/conduit metaphors (fill up, convey) used to describe the means of achieving that objective. Later Isobel says:

There's the ... excitement of *standing up there* for an hour, *talking* about something I know a lot about and being quite confident that I'm doing a good job. You know, I know that what I'm saying is good and it's - it's, you know, up there on the forefront of research thinking, whereas in \_\_\_\_\_ I was going: 'I wonder if that's right?' I wonder, you know—I was *half a step ahead* of the students, but - and I probably did a relatively OK job in - in the, sort of, developing their thought processes, but as far as backing it up with a *real deep knowledge* of what was going on, I wasn't there. Um, so it's a *security* - I mean - I feel good about what I'm teaching because I know - I *know the stuff*, I know the people, I *know the community* ... I *engage* them - we're *engaged* ... because I'm excited and I *know what I'm talking about* and they - they can ask me questions and I know the answer or if I don't I feel quite happy that it's OK for me not to know the answer. It's not just a function of because somebody else should be teaching this who knows more than I do. Um - also it's exciting. I - I do - I like the thought that I'm *passing on* to them new stuff. You know, this is good stuff, *this is good teaching you're getting here because you're really getting the up-to-date stuff* ... (Isobel, 14).

The excitement involved in talking with confidence about an area with which one is very familiar is particularly apparent here. It is a feeling voiced by other women (and men) academics in categories one to three but absent from the discourse of participants in categories four and five. It reflects David's comment about an adventurer telling of adventures. This view of knowledge as a 'masterable' entity, of something one 'owns' and of good teaching as the passing on of "up-to-date stuff" (transmission) seems to me slightly at odds with Isobel's hope that she can

send the students out with the idea that there are often several valid ways to do things and that what you need to be able to do is to evaluate whether it is valid or not—to pose a question and to say what do I need to know to answer that question and then to look at the various ways that you can obtain the information ... there rarely is ever only one way to solve a problem and, you know, I could say in your personal life or in your academic life but, um, it's about life really—wisdom—*an open mind*—I think an open mind is fundamental to being a good researcher (Isobel, 9 & 21).

Like several of her category three colleagues, Isobel also emphasises the importance of modelling an 'attitude' towards learning (research) for her students.

I guess that I would see myself as a *facilitator* of learning, *providing* information and *perpetrating* attitudes that *lead to* real effective learning for the students. And then, in terms of what I'm learning—in terms of my research—to - to essentially set research questions and answer them in some context and then essentially for that to become a part of that attitude, setting and information that then the students *benefit* from (Isobel, 7).

While Isobel stresses learning as the *raison d'être* of the university, she focuses primarily on the transmission of research knowledge, skills and attitudes *to* students rather than student participation *in* those activities. Involving graduate and undergraduate students in field research projects is discussed briefly and "I use the results of research to set

assignments ... stuff that's not necessarily published ... and I tell them there's no right answers to this because this is new data..." (15). Students are 'engaged' (a category four and five metaphor) but in terms of the focus of the interview they are engaged more as a result of listening to Isobel's (research) 'stories' rather than as *active* members of the disciplinary community.

*Carol (category five)*

Carol is a mid-career academic in the Faculty of Arts. Our interview marked the one occasion in this research project where my tape recorder let me down. I secured thirty minutes of interview on the first side of the tape but was subsequently dismayed to discover that the second side had not taped at all! Nevertheless Carol's part-interview makes an interesting contrast with David's in terms of its metaphorical constructions.

Carol describes the process of doing her doctoral thesis (engaging in research, being a learner).

... it was then that I got into sort of *deeper* levels of inquiry and so I was really *propelled* by my own sense of inquiry, my own sense of wondering about research and what it is, and the whole interest—enthusiasm, I guess—that I developed for research and the - the whole *critique of constructs of knowledge*, which is so powerful in our social environment, our social world really ... my Ph.D. research was *utterly driven* by my own sense of I wanted to understand something (Carol, 2).

The dominant metaphor here is of research/learning as propulsion ("propelled by my own sense of inquiry", "utterly driven"). Rather than taking place at the frontiers or outer reaches of the discipline, the orientation is towards the "deeper levels of inquiry" – towards understanding.

... what I do in doing research which produces, shall we say, knowledge from within a critical epistemology approach is that one has a question or problem or some kind of *impetus*—a line of inquiry, something one is studying and that one analyses those discourses that contribute to *constructing* that as a known phenomenon - as a knowable phenomenon - as a - as a - as a thing in the world - a problem in the world, as a - as a process, as a - as an event, or whatever it might be. So in going through a process of critically *deconstructing* those discourses one learns about. So there is a result. What comes out of that is a ... process of knowing about how that is being *constructed* (Carol, 12).

Instead of conceptualising research/knowledge as a process of construction (as David does) the term is used in relation to current constructs of knowledge and the aim of Carol's research is to *deconstruct* the discourses which frame those constructs. Rather than engaging in research with the intention of adding to a body of knowledge, Carol is opening up knowledge to reveal its framework. Something '*comes out of*' the framework rather than being *added on* to it. This is expanded upon.

... knowledge—has the Indo-European word - root g-n—gn—and this is the same root that is - is associated with the concept of *engendering* and so to engender is when the, you know, *the two or the more comes together* and in the process are *transformed* and *something new emerges* ... So - so it has something to do with that - that it's not a matter of building up knowledge to get some kind of *positive edifice* that results and we sort of get bigger libraries because we've got more knowledge. I sort of wonder where the hell it's all going to go, you know. We're going to run out of space at the rate that books are produced. You know, I mean, it's *building*, *building*, *building* more, more, more. Um, I see knowledge completely differently. So, it's an *act of engagement*, it's a ... positive engagement with the world, not in the - positive in the sense of constructing something that becomes ontologically present and transferable (Carol, 13).

Here we have an explicit rejection of David's construction metaphor. Knowledge is not a building, a "positive edifice" to which one continues to add. Nor is it transferable – a rejection of the conduit metaphor. Rather knowledge is created (emerges/is engendered) through the coming together and subsequent transformation of existing ideas. One might argue that there are similarities in the metaphors of knowledge as construction and *knowledge as creation*. After all a building is a creation. However the comparison is short lived. To begin with the orientation is very different. The construction metaphor carries with it an outwards and upwards orientation. Research occurs at roof level. Moreover the building, despite being subject to renovation, is a tangible edifice, a container for knowledge. It can be extended as ever more pieces of data are welded on. The creation metaphor looks inwards rather than outwards and upwards ("it's not a matter of building up knowledge"). It prises an opening from which new understandings can emerge.

I - I guess I see it rather more as *clearing away*, *removing* stuff, rather than adding stuff, clearing away all this clutter of concepts and words and so on, so ... one can then *open a space for action*. Knowledge is absolutely integral to action, social action in my view. That's how - that's how I see it. So, this process of critique, of *critical deconstruction* of these discourses that *construct* the reality that is the problem, or the event or whatever. Um, sort of clears - clears away to open a space for new forms of action in relation to that problem. Not - not - not necessarily based on knowledge - *building blocks* (Carol, 14).

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This analysis of David's, Isobel's and Carol's uses of metaphor suggests, as did my earlier consideration of orientational and conduit metaphors, that the way in which knowledge is experienced fundamentally influences the nature of the relation between research and teaching. All three claim to experience a close relation between research and teaching. David talks of a "symbiotic relationship", Isobel regards learning as the common activity linking researcher/teacher and student and Carol challenges the "spurious dichotomy" which seeks to separate out two inseparable phenomena. However, because each conceptualises knowledge very differently, their experiences of research, teaching and learning are also very different.

Isobel's experience is perhaps closer to David's than to Carol's. At the forefront of her thinking about the research/teaching relation is the transmission of research information. However knowledge for Isobel is not so tightly circumscribed. Her aims for the students go far beyond the acquisition of information and the development of a 'big picture'. Her discourse of engagement and inquiry hints at experiences commonly expressed by participants in groups four and five. Of all my interview participants Isobel best exemplifies the place at which the world-views of the 'sciences' and the 'humanities' intersect and tangle. Isobel's use of metaphor reveals an unresolved tension in the interrelation of research, teaching, learning and knowledge of which she may well be unaware.

This work on metaphor has been exciting. It has enabled me to surface the complex structural framework (the phenomenal field) which supports academics' experiences of the research/teaching relation. It has enabled me to see more clearly how our 'selves' are constructed *by* language, and how we construct our realities *through* language. It has alerted me to my own, and others', use of metaphor in our daily living.

A common concern with regard to interview research, usually expressed by those working outside the paradigm, is that it focuses on what people *say* rather than on what they *do*, the implication being that the two may not necessarily cohere. But somehow metaphor dissolves the boundaries between thought, as articulated in speech, and action. The logic of

“Removing”, “clearing away”, “opening a space” - knowledge as deconstruction of the taken-for-granted reality. Construction obscures meaning and stifles action.

Given this view of research and knowledge, Carol’s experiences of teaching and learning also differ from David’s. “We can almost package it up and put it in a book ... and then other students can ‘learn’ that knowledge, or someone can ‘teach’ that knowledge to the students. I don’t see knowledge like that at all” (Carol, 12). Rather:

... to *engage* with students—it’s *got nothing to do with me transferring something to them*. It’s a process of *challenge* and *engagement*, prompting to assist the - *facilitate, assist* a process of them learning to engage in this kind of work (Carol, 14).

Learning involves students in knowing

... how to *critically engage* with the various discourses that are constructing that problem as a problem and can basically *unravel* them and - and through that *process understand how the world is being constructed* and then progress that issue or that whatever it is - whatever their project is, to be able to find a project and progress that project and issue from a very conscious and aware understanding that they’re - the knowledge they are *creating* is situated, it’s *constructive* and it occurs, yeah, within - within this context of critique (Carol, 9).

The emphasis in teaching and learning is to do with engagement. If we take the word engagement in its broad sense, then we can say that, for Carol, teaching and learning are, metaphorically, about establishing relationships – between student and teacher, student and student and between students and the discourse under scrutiny. Teaching (and learning) as relationship links to the metaphor of knowledge as creation (birth being one possible outcome of a relationship). Students (“who are learners as I am a learner”) are invited to engage in the same research process as their teacher. The sense of research taking place ‘on high’ and at a distance from student learning is no longer viable. Instead of transferring knowledge via a conduit, teacher and students engage in a joint process of knowledge deconstruction.

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the articulated experience makes certain actions/practices inevitable. As Lakoff and Johnson (1980) point out, “in most cases what is at issue is not the truth or falsity of a metaphor but the perceptions and inferences that follow from it and the actions that are sanctioned by it” (p. 158). The different epistemological and ontological beliefs revealed in metaphor both sanction and preclude particular research/teaching practices. In the next chapter I look more closely at the actions that appear to be sanctioned by the metaphors academics use. In particular I consider the idea that the different ways in which academics experience the inter-relation of research, teaching, learning and knowledge are likely to result in very different learning experiences for their students.

## Chapter Eight

# Learning to Talk Within: Pedagogy, Participation and Relations of Power

*There is a difference between talking about a practice from outside and talking within it (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 107).*

*Basically power ... is a question of government ... to govern is to structure the possible field of action of others (Foucault, 1982, p. 221).*

*Communication as "community" invites participation, association, locale, temporality, entrustment and, most important, empathy. It privileges human agency (Richardson, 1997, p. 79).*

I have a vivid memory of an English Masters seminar at the University of Canterbury in 1976 in which a group of maybe ten of us were discussing Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*. The play was not a particular favourite of mine and I have long forgotten its details, but what I do remember so very clearly is the pleasure, excitement and (dare I say it?) sense of power generated through engagement in discussion. At that point I felt, in Lave and Wenger's (1991) terms that I was talking *within* a practice rather than *about* it. I was part of a learning community sharing meaning making and I was loving it. This was my fourth consecutive year of university study. There may have been other similar experiences of such intense participation and engagement somewhere in those four years but I do not recall them.

In this chapter I want to explore further these notions of 'powerful' participation and engagement on the part of learners (teachers and students). At one stage it might have been possible to draw this thesis to a close with the exploration of metaphor. However the interrogation of metaphor and the surfacing of the structural relations of the phenomenal field, militated against such closure. Instead the analysis opened up a space for further inquiry and invited the application of a more critical, postmodern perspective. As my interview participants talked to me about their experiences of the relation between research and teaching (and of their experiences of research, teaching, learning and knowledge), they

revealed much about the structures of knowledge in their disciplines and about the consequent ways in which they structured their students' learning experiences. The Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA) 2001 Conference theme of 'learning partnerships' encouraged me further in this line of thought. As I looked at my interview texts through the lens of the conference theme, it was clear that the nature of the learning *partnership* (students and teachers) varied across disciplines in concert with the variation in the research/teaching relation experience and that there were different relations of power implicated in the various views of the relation. It was also clear that there was a political dimension to the research/teaching relation that played out along disciplinary lines and that this also had the potential to impact on the 'learning partnership'.

As the implications of my analyses became clearer to me, I found myself experiencing moments of intense, iterative 'recognition' as I engaged with certain texts/authors. These texts were articulating theoretical perspectives which aligned with and further stimulated my thinking about my research. It is important for me to stress that these theoretical frames did not *precede* my inquiry. Rather they became meaningful *as a result of* that inquiry. Their value as perspectives has been not to shape the empirical process which was grounded in a hermeneutic philosophy, but to focus my subsequent thinking and move it beyond the interpretive; to enable me to 'look (yet) again' with a more critical and postmodern gaze.

In this chapter I draw on the work of authors whose connections may, on the surface, appear tenuous. Yet they all 'speak to' and have the potential to enrich my inquiry. The challenge for me is to communicate not only how each individual author(s) frames and advances my thinking, but to bring these various perspectives together in a meaningful – if not whole, then at least coalition!

Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of legitimate peripheral participation in a community of practice has helped to focus my attention on the ways in which academics talk about their students' relation to their disciplinary community. Foucault's (1980, 1982) theory of knowledge/power and Bakhtin's (1986) perspective on authoritative discourse and internally persuasive discourse have enabled me to probe the implicit power relations in these communities of practice. Bernstein (1971, 1996), through his typology of educational

knowledge codes, links disciplinary knowledge structures with questions of access and agency, thereby explicitly connecting communities of practice and relations of power. It is my intention to draw on the work of these scholars in order to probe my/our understanding of the relationship between researcher/teacher, learner and knowledge in higher education, grounding this exploration in my own empirical inquiry. In this way I can pursue my thesis aim which is *to identify the qualitatively different ways in which academic staff at the University of Canterbury experience the relation between teaching and research and to investigate the pedagogical implications of this variation.*

## Looking Yet Again

### *Communities of Practice*

Lave and Wenger (1991), introduce the idea of learning as a *situated activity* which has as its central defining characteristic a process they call '*legitimate peripheral participation*'. Rather than being seen as an individual act of internalisation, learning involves participation – absorbing and being absorbed in a culture of practice. That participation is at first legitimately peripheral, increasing gradually in engagement and complexity. Because participation is based on situated negotiation and re-negotiation of meaning in the world, understanding and experience are in constant interaction. Learning is about changing locations and perspectives, developing an identity and moving towards full participation in the community. The authors warn against setting up the dichotomies of legitimate/illegitimate, peripheral/central, participation/non participation. There is no peripheral boundary just as there is no centre. Instead “there are multiple, varied, more-or-less-engaged and inclusive ways of being located in the fields of participation defined by a community” (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 36).<sup>1</sup>

The authors distinguish between *talking about* and *talking within* a practice. In a didactic pedagogy, learners ‘learn’ *from* the talk of their teachers and learn to talk *about* the object of learning. In a community of practice, learners learn to talk the language of the practice

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<sup>1</sup> There are echoes of Nietzsche here. “According to Nietzsche to become educated is to be initiated into the life of a group ... the meaning of education must always be understood performatively as enactment rooted in the concrete context of community life” (Allen & Axiotis, 1998, p. 119).

from *within*, drawing on their situated experience. As a way of understanding learning and a learning community, legitimate peripheral participation encompasses not only new and in/experienced learners but also 'old timers'. The learning community is dynamic, reproducing and transforming itself as once peripheral members engage in full participation and become mentors for new novices. Because all members of the community are learners, all are transformed through their shared interactions. The teacher-student relationship is *decentered* with the focus moving from the expert as pedagogue to the intricate structuring of the community's learning resources.

According to Lave and Wenger (1991) peripherality can be seen as an empowering or a disempowering position that either propels one toward or restricts one from more intensive participation. While acknowledging that legitimate peripherality is implicated in social structures involving relations of power, the authors indicate that this aspect of their analysis is underdeveloped, hence my interest in drawing on Bakhtin, Bernstein and Foucault to explore further the networks of power circulating in a dynamic community of practice. At its most empowering, legitimate peripheral participation offers an opening, "a way of gaining access to sources for understanding through growing involvement" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p.37).

The idea of legitimate peripheral participation was initially developed in relation to work on apprenticeship but I believe it invites a broad application. Our very living and growing in the world requires our constant involvement as (peripheral) participants in multiple communities of practice. Lave and Wenger state that they deliberately decided to set aside issues of schooling in the initial stages of their work. However "we are persuaded that rethinking schooling from the perspective afforded by legitimate peripheral participation will turn out to be a fruitful exercise (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 41). In a later work Wenger (1998) explores the duality of participation and reification in communities of practice. Through the process of reification our understanding is given form – it attains the status of an object. Reifying knowledge offers newcomers something tangible to grasp hold of. However Wenger argues that this is also a danger. Just as "the politician's slogan can become a substitute for a deep understanding of and commitment to what it stands for" so too can "knowledge of a formula lead to the illusion that one fully understands the processes it describes" (Wenger, 1998, p. 61). Reifying or codifying knowledge may

become a substitute for participation with a consequent focus on the mechanics of learning rather than the experience of meaning. Thus a crucial aspect of teaching involves balancing the production and use of 'reificative' material with the design of forms of participation.

I read *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*, shortly after I had completed the initial analysis of my interview transcripts. The potential for its application to higher education seemed enormous. If the disciplines represented communities of practice within which knowledge was 'created' and 'transmitted' then the concept of legitimate peripheral participation provided a way of understanding how students were initiated into the knowledge structures of different disciplinary communities and how those communities were in turn reproduced and transformed. What was needed was in depth consideration, based on textual evidence from my interview transcripts, of how and why this process of engagement varied across disciplines and to what extent this variation could be attributed to, or be the cause of, differential networks of power.

### *Relations of Power*

Despite acknowledging the university as one of the great apparatuses involved in producing and sustaining western society's regimes of truth, Foucault (1980) did not include education to any extent in his analyses of *pouvoir-savoir* – power/knowledge. Arguing a case for regarding Foucault as a 'crypto-educationalist', Hoskin (1990) explores that word so central in Foucault's lexicon and to the higher education enterprise – discipline. According to Hoskin, discipline is derived from the Latin *disciplina*, a collapsed form of *discipulina* which was concerned with getting learning (*disci*) into the child (*puer/puella*). Even in its Latin form, the word embodied the two sides of a power/knowledge equation; the discipline that is presenting a certain knowledge to the learner and the discipline of keeping the learner present before the knowledge. As one of society's principal knowledge producing institutions, founded on the notion of 'disciplines', the university surely invites investigations of its myriad networks of (pedagogical) power relations.

According to Foucault, power is not so much a sovereign entity possessed by some and denied others; rather, power is "always already there" (Foucault, 1980, p. 141), it circulates

in a system of interconnected networks, defining the 'self', inviting resistances. Power designates relationships between partners; "it incites, it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult" (Foucault, 1982, p. 220). Power and knowledge are two sides of a single process (as are teaching and learning). Relations of power exist between everyone who 'knows' and everyone who does not. Knowledge confers the power to define others, to "structure the possible field of action of others" (p. 221).<sup>2</sup>

*Pastoral* power enables and precludes certain actions, exerting a normative influence over the lives of individuals. In a complicated interplay of coercion and freedom, it sets up conditions which require individuals to make choices that lead to their improvement (Howley & Hartnett, 1992) and, ultimately, in the case of the university, to their accreditation. The recent focus on learning (Bowden & Marton, 1998) and learner centred pedagogies in the university suggests, in Foucauldian terms, a move away from external disciplining towards self-regulation and surveillance – a greater emphasis on technologies of the self. Students are required to be responsible for their own learning, to reflect, evaluate, self and peer assess. The responsibility for regulation is shifted in part from the teacher to the student and her peers.

How do we trace specific networks/relations of power? Gunew (1990), in discussing Foucault and his theory of discourse, points out that how something is spoken reveals much about the operation of power relations.<sup>3</sup> Discourse is about what can be said and thought, about who can speak, when and with what authority. Discourse constrains the possibilities of thought (Ball, 1990). It organises a way of thinking into a way of acting in the world (St Pierre, 2000). Drawing on Foucault, Jennifer Gore (1993) argues that disciplinary relations of knowledge/power are fundamental to pedagogy. She suggests that if pedagogy is defined as the process of knowledge production then disciplinary power can be seen as, in part, pedagogical. "The pedagogical process embodies *power relations* between and among teacher and learners ... concerning issues of *knowledge*; 'What is valid knowledge?' 'What knowledge is produced?' 'Whose knowledge?' and so on" (Gore, 1993, p. 60).

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<sup>2</sup> Gunew (1990) observes that "knowledge can easily be imagined in terms of an institutional ordering, but the emphasis does not usually fall on who is doing the ordering or on what is excluded in this process" (p. 15).

<sup>3</sup> Gunew also suggests that "it may well be quite misleading to think of power as consisting of a centre and a periphery and may be more productive to think of power as a network which operates everywhere in contradictory ways and can therefore be strategically resisted anywhere" (Gunew, 1990, p. 23). The language in this sentence is interesting when related to Lave and Wenger's peripheral participation.

Using a methodological framework outlined by Foucault (1982) Gore deconstructs the desire of feminist educators to exercise *authority-with* rather than *authority-over* in order to *empower* their students.

The framework that Gore employs is taken from Foucault's essay entitled *The Subject and Power* (Foucault, 1982, p. 223). According to Foucault the analysis of power relations demands a consideration of the following:

1. *The system of differentiations* which permits one to act upon the actions of others;
2. *The types of objectives* pursued by those who act upon the actions of others;
3. *The means of bringing power relations into being*; the specific techniques and practices that actualise the relations of power;
4. *Forms of institutionalisation*; the nature of the institution in which power relations are manifest;
5. *The degrees of rationalisation*; the ways in which the exercise of power is adjusted/suited to the needs of the institution.

Thus Foucault offers us a broad framework within which we might trace pedagogical (and other) networks of power. Traditionally in educational institutions the 'system of differentiations' is embodied in the pedagogical relationship, where the teacher exercises the 'authority' of the expert, the one who 'knows' in relation to the novice, the one who must be oriented to the discipline. In institutions of higher education this pedagogical relation acquires an extra dimension by virtue of the fact that the 'teacher' is also the 'generator' or 'creator' of knowledge. More often than not, academics are not telling other people's stories but their own. They have a very particular and unique pedagogical authority. The ways in which that authority is exercised (the specific techniques and practices that actualise the relations of power) and to what ends (the pedagogical objectives pursued by academics) are the aspects of Foucault's framework upon which I especially want to focus in this chapter.

The exercise of authority, as it is manifest in the play of language, is taken up by Bakhtin (1986) who explores notions of authoritative discourse and internally persuasive discourse. The authoritative word is located in a distanced zone and is felt to be hierarchically higher. Authoritative discourse demands allegiance; it is univocal. In authoritative discourse there

can be only one answer to the question ‘who owns the meaning?’ Meaning is owned by the ‘author’ and is transmitted in its entirety to the recipient. Authoritative discourse is marked by its use of conduit metaphors. It rejects participation, denies any possibility that meaning might be negotiated, that understanding might be developed in the space between two voices. There is no room for dialogue, for questioning, for modification.

In contrast, “the internally persuasive word is half-ours and half-someone else’s” (Bakhtin & Holquist, 1981, p. 345). The structure of an internally persuasive discourse is open. It encourages the development of new and independent words and reveals ever new ways to mean. Implicit in Bakhtin’s dialogism is the notion of obligation, a concept which Reading (1996) uses to ground his understanding of pedagogical relations. If one accepts – as I do – Bakhtin’s dialogism and Reading’s notion of obligation as fundamental principles underpinning pedagogy, then the dichotomy of teacher-centred and learner-centred so prevalent in current higher education discourse, becomes meaningless. We need to focus not on the either/or but on the *relation*.

It is beyond the scope and intention of this thesis to explore empirically the relations of power *amongst* the disciplines. While postmodern thought has challenged the hegemony of scientific discourse, institutional practice continues to privilege certain forms of knowledge over others. Ironically, it is these hegemonic discourses whose constructions of knowledge may be least adapted to the complexities of a postmodern world. Basil Bernstein addresses this issue from a pedagogical perspective in the context of schools and schooling.

Bernstein (1971, 1996) argues that “how a society selects, classifies, distributes, transmits and evaluates the educational knowledge it considers to be public, reflects both the distribution of power and the principles of social control” (Bernstein, 1971, p. 47). Because educational knowledge is seen to be a major regulator of the structure of experience he suggests that differences within the organisation, transmission and evaluation of educational knowledge should be a key area of sociological interest.

Bernstein outlines a typology of educational knowledge codes within which he identifies ‘collection’ codes and ‘integrated’ codes. Collection codes have clearly bounded contents and involve a hierarchical organisation of knowledge in time “such that the ultimate mystery of the subject is revealed very late in the educational life” (Bernstein, 1971, p. 57).

The assessment carried out within a collection code emphasises states of knowledge rather than ways of knowing. Many learners in the code therefore experience only the given and the known – as opposed to the provisional and the permeable. The underlying theory of teaching/learning is likely to be didactic; the discourse is authoritative. On the other hand, integrated codes emphasise content openness rather than closure. They are less concerned with the need to acquire states of knowledge and more concerned to emphasise how knowledge is created. The underlying theory of learning is likely to be more group or self-regulated. The codes differ in their concept of what counts as knowledge and how knowledge is to be acquired. Bernstein also introduces the notion of ‘frame’ which refers to the degree of control possessed by teacher and student over the selection, organisation and pacing of knowledge in the pedagogical relationship. *More* of the teacher and learner is likely to enter the pedagogical frame in an integrated code.

As with the other authors, I read Bernstein well after the analysis of my interview texts. I was intrigued at the close correspondence between my findings and Bernstein’s ‘typology’. Together, Lave and Wenger’s ‘analytical perspective’ of legitimate peripheral participation, Foucault’s analyses of power/knowledge, Bakhtin’s authoritative and internally persuasive discourse and Bernstein’s classification and framing of educational codes, offer different but potentially complementary ways of viewing pedagogical relationships generated through the intersection of research, teaching, learning and knowledge in higher education. Bernstein’s framework highlights dichotomies – collection/integrated codes, strong/weak framing, teacher/student. Similarly Bakhtin presents us with an either/or situation. Lave and Wenger’s notion of legitimate peripheral participation, on the other hand, positions all those engaged in a particular educational enterprise (teachers and students) as learners participating to a greater or lesser extent in the construction of knowledge. The complexity of Foucault’s power/knowledge relation offers the possibility of mediating Bernstein’s rather rigid categories and of mapping the more fluid power relations inherent in the processes of legitimate peripheral participation.

### *What is Participation?*

The use of the word ‘participation’ has vexed me for many years.

In the 1990s I returned to university study for the first time since the 1970s, as a part time, M.Ed. student. I continued to work full time in teacher education. In one M.Ed. course the class was told that we (students) were to be assessed on our 'participation'. We were not told what this meant. This produced a lot of anxiety in the class. If participation meant active engagement in class discussion (it was not clear what else it might mean), might not the assessed component result in a deluge of contributions? How was it possible to 'weigh up' the nature and extent of one person's contribution in relation to another? Quality versus quantity? And could one participate silently??

Shortly after my arrival at ERAU I attended a seminar on the meanings of participation and how it might be assessed. Unusually for me at that time, I challenged some of the seminar assumptions. More recently I have been involved in a collaborative teaching enterprise between Otago and Canterbury Universities - the Postgraduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching. One of the difficulties faced by the teaching team in this web-based course has been to encourage participation in on-line discussion. As the facilitators of the course we are very clear about the purpose of such discussion. It is a space where course members can share ideas, ask questions, construct meanings in an enriching and supportive environment. It is a learning community in action and as such needs the support and contribution of all its members. However I (we?) have struggled to come to terms with the lack of participation (not assessed) and in some cases the non-participation of some members whose view of the learning community is clearly different from ours.

Aided by Lave and Wenger's idea of learning as a movement from peripheral to full participation in a community of practice, I am beginning to conceptualise differently the meaning of 'participation' in higher education. As members of higher education disciplinary communities, students are (or should be) immersed in an environment where knowledges are constructed and contested. Movement from peripheral to full participation therefore implies increasing involvement in the processes of knowledging. As I indicated in my introduction my own understanding of learning is built around the idea of inquiry. All our lives we learn when we want/need to know by asking questions – of people, of documents and artefacts, of ourselves. When we question we are engaged, participating. If, for Lave and Wenger's 'community of practice' we substitute 'community of inquiry'

(inquiry being the ‘practice’ of the university), then the university can be understood as a place/space where all the members (teachers and students) of disciplinary communities are participating to a greater or lesser extent in a process of critical inquiry. Seen in this light, participation is much more than a presence at tutorials or contribution to group discussions. Participation is a process of coming to know the ways of thinking and acting in a disciplinary and ultimately in a university community. It is to be/come a member of that community.<sup>4</sup> And then, perhaps, to be in a position to challenge that community from within.

How is this process of disciplinary engagement facilitated? How is the disciplinary ‘field of action’ structured (that is, how is power exercised?) such that learners have increasing access to community membership? At this point I want to return to the interview texts in order to trace in the discourse what I perceive to be critical differences in the ways students come to be members of disciplinary communities.

### **Three Cultures**

The fine-grained textual analysis outlined in chapter six resulted in the identification of five ‘categories’ of experience of the research/teaching relation. For the purposes of the discussion in this chapter, I want to collapse the five categories into three – categories one and two, category three and categories four and five. In doing this I run the risk of being accused of reinforcing a science/humanities divide (with something indeterminate in the middle), of engaging in modernist dichotomising! Can I (should I) defend myself? I have worked hard to resist the congealing tendencies of a positivist interpretation. I have indicated that the boundaries between the categories are permeable and that in the voice of any one individual there are echoes of voices from other categories. However I have not been able to avoid the overwhelmingly disciplinary nature of the variation revealed in academics’ narratives.

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<sup>4</sup> It seems to me that at the present time there is a significant divide between those who envisage this process beginning and gathering considerable momentum in the undergraduate years (e.g., Boyer Commission, 1999) and those who would locate it primarily at the postgraduate level (e.g. TEAC, 2001c).

What I am hearing, I believe, reflects the recent history of the university as a knowledge institution. The disciplines represented in categories one and two (chemistry, economics, engineering, linguistics, mathematics, physics, zoology) exemplify a modernist/positivist view of knowledge creation and transmission. In these high paradigm consensus or 'hard' disciplines, knowledge is generally understood to be cumulative, hierarchical, and concerned with universals, quantification and discovery (Becher, 1989; Biglan, 1973; Colbeck, 1998; Prosser & Martin, 2000). The disciplines represented in categories four and five (classics, feminist studies, French, geography, history Maori, philosophy) represent variously a postpositivist, interpretive, (social) constructivist, postmodern take on the role of the university in relation to knowledge. In these low paradigm consensus or 'soft' disciplines scholars use new lenses to explore territory mapped by others and knowledge is concerned with particulars, qualities and understanding. The disciplines represented in category three (geography, linguistics, art history, mathematics, plant and microbial sciences) fall neither into one 'camp' nor the other but share aspects of each. They occupy a transitional position between C. P. Snow's 'two cultures' (Snow 1959), mediating between and drawing on perspectives from the 'sciences' and the 'humanities'.<sup>5</sup> In the discourse of postmodernism, their position is a liminal one.

In the following sections I look at each of these groups – or cultures – in turn and ask. What does the discourse of academics tell us about the structure of knowledge and the nature of inquiry in these disciplines? What does it tell us about the ways in which students come to participate in a community of inquiry? What does it tell us about the relation between knowledge and power, about networks of power?

### *The Great Chain of Being: The Culture of the Sciences*

For participants in categories one and two (the culture of the 'sciences') the metaphors linking research, teaching, learning and knowledge are almost exclusively hierarchical. We have a 'great chain of being' (research – teaching – learning), the 'foundations' (basic knowledge) and 'roof' (research frontier) of a house, 'layers' of knowledge through which

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<sup>5</sup> Linguistics and mathematics are represented in groups two and three. Geography is represented in groups three and four. This points to the hybrid nature of these disciplines and to the transitional nature of the disciplines represented by category three academics.

students must be 'lifted' or 'propelled'. Research (inquiry/academic learning) occurs at the 'frontier', 'up top', 'out there' and is 'passed on' to students. Knowledge accrues incrementally; loose pieces of data are 'welded together', there is a need to see how the pieces 'fit' as in a jigsaw. There is a gulf between the acquisition of information, understanding and genuine participation in the discipline. Teaching at undergraduate level focuses on transmitting and helping students acquire both the teacher's knowledge and the concepts of the syllabus (Prosser & Trigwell, 1999). "I'm helping the students – I guess it's like growing up" (Helen, 7). Learning is a cumulative process of increasing one's knowledge, memorising and reproducing, applying and understanding (Marton, Dall'Alba & Beaty, 1993).

Two quotations illustrate well the in-built *delay* in participation for students.

... in algebra it's quite difficult to get students up to the level where they can do research without them having done a full four year degree first ... because there's a lot of intellectual baggage that you've got to acquire first before you can start thinking about making your own contribution to it ... it's very much a hierarchical subject, you learn the bottom level, then the next level and so on, if you're trying to learn level 10 say, it's not going to make much sense to you unless you've got a fairly good grasp of levels 1 to 9 (Edmund, 9).

... learning I suppose is the - you know, is just the - the memorisation of information, ah, in order to give you the language—especially in our subject, the language by which you can perceive with, ah, a higher degree of understanding, so there's a lot of - a tremendous amount of factual information which needs to be absorbed before the process of tying it together and seeing the connections can occur (Grahame, 6).

If we look at these quotations through the lens of Lave and Wenger's legitimate peripheral participation, then we can see that academics *anticipate* a lengthy period of peripherality for students. In the first year, potential resistance is deflected. "First year is very much infotainment" (Bruce, 7). "Certain subjects that students don't like – you have to coax them along these more difficult areas" (Helen, 4). Students are unable to 'talk within' the discipline or engage in genuine inquiry until they have acquired/absorbed the language, the cultural baggage. In Wenger's (1998) terms, the emphasis is on the acquisition of reified knowledge rather than on participation. Understanding is delayed until such time as a sufficient number of 'pieces' have been acquired to put it all together and see 'the bigger picture'. Thus there is a temporal dimension to the act of learning not only as it is experienced by students (Bond, 2000, Thomas, 1990) but as it is conceived of by

academics. Once this long apprenticeship is complete students are welcomed as full participants in the community of inquiry.

Well for many of our students, it is a joint discovery - at post-graduate level. I mean, that's where we work as a team, ah, to make - to make discoveries, create new knowledge. So, they're still students, but we're all students in that sense (Grahame, 2).

It would require further research to find out how students respond to this lengthy induction into the discipline. Implicit in this view of knowledge is the idea that students should acquire the information 'on trust' in anticipation of its making sense at some future time. "You didn't realise really until you got to your research here in your fourth year that you actually had learnt something along the way" (Bruce, 17). As I understand it, this inevitably deprives students of the opportunity of taking a deep approach (Ramsden, 1992) to their learning in the early stages of their university careers. It is difficult to iterate between the parts and the whole when there is little or no apprehension of the whole. Bernstein (1971) points out that pedagogy in the collection code "tends to proceed from the surface structure of the knowledge to the deep structure ... only the elite have access to the deep structure and therefore access to the realising of new realities or to the experiential knowledge that new realities are possible" (p. 60). What most students (those who do not proceed to postgraduate level) never come to realise is that the ultimate mystery of the subject is incoherence, disorder and the unknown, that knowledge is permeable and provisional (Bernstein, 1971).

What then does this mean in terms of relations of power? In the narratives of the participants from categories one and two, the teacher controls the selection, organisation, pacing and timing of knowledge 'acquisition'. The discourse is authoritative (Bakhtin, 1986). Students are delivered appropriate information at the appropriate time. Learning is tightly structured as students 'master' a codified 'body' of knowledge – Latour's "ready-made science" (Latour, 1987, p. 4). This distribution of the learning experience over an extended period of time suggests that students' agency in relation to learning is strictly limited in the early years. Knowledge is external to the students; they play little or no part in its construction.<sup>6</sup> Only at the upper reaches of study are students permitted/encouraged to engage in collaborative disciplinary inquiry. This suggests an extended period in which

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<sup>6</sup> This assumption is supported by Thomas (1990) who found that physics students lacked independence and control in their learning and accepted delayed understanding as an inevitable part of doing science.

power resides perhaps not even so much with the teacher as within the disciplinary knowledge hierarchy. There is a hegemony of knowledge in which teachers appear to collude but which constrains both students and teachers.

This “regime of truth” (Foucault, 1980, p. 131) must ensure that most of the population (those who have experienced secondary science and/or tertiary science at undergraduate level) regard science as objective, foundational, emancipatory and beyond doubt. A docile society.<sup>7</sup> As Thomas (1990) points out “although this may be useful as a way of training competent scientists, it does not seem to be an ideal method of producing critical, thinking adults” (p. 29). Yet it is critical, thinking adults that academics in categories one and two aim to produce and for this we require a pedagogy characterised by uncertainty, unpredictability, contestability and challengeability (Barnett, 2000).

Within the culture of the sciences participants’ understandings of the role of the university (what I would take to be their overarching, long-term teaching objectives) include the following. Getting students to “think for themselves ... like a mathematician” (Edmund, 3); enabling students to “make democratic decisions about their lives and their futures” (Bruce, 20); allowing students to “think and investigate things in a critical manner” (Helen, 2); and enabling learners to “extend themselves and be of value to themselves and the community” (Graham, 1). There seems to be a discrepancy between these objectives and the specific techniques and practices described in this thesis that, (in Foucault’s terms), actualise the relations of power.

The superior status of research as reflected in the ‘great chain of being’ metaphor, determines yet another set of power relations within the community of practice, this time amongst academic colleagues. Research confers status and determines promotion (Becher, 1989). “The teachers were seen as ... they were seen as second class engineers. But as soon as they started doing research they picked their mana<sup>8</sup> up in the profession, became leaders...” (George, 8-9). “What really counts is publications” (Bruce, 11). The pleasure of engaging in research is diminished by its competitive demands. “Here we’re so driven to publications, ’cause that’s what the promotion

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<sup>7</sup> ‘Docile’ derives from the Latin *docilis* meaning teachable!

<sup>8</sup> Mana is the Maori word meaning ‘standing’ or ‘prestige’.

criteria are about” (Julia, 11). There is a constant striving to “claw one’s way up the promotion ladder” (Elaine, 8) and, according to Isobel, successful academics regard publication as a “damn competition” rather than as a means of communication (Isobel, 11).

This imperative to publish, driven by both the scientific community and the university, places in jeopardy the otherwise ‘close’ relation between research and teaching. “I’m afraid there are times when I’ve had to neglect my students especially as the pressures - promotion etc. - have gone up with the reduction in staff numbers” (David, 16). For Elaine “it’s that constant feeling, well if I put more time into my teaching realistically it - it harms my - my research, which is where the whole thing comes from” (Elaine, 8). She goes on to point out that “we don’t get any international standing from being a good teacher in the local sense ... and the international standing’s ... an important thing” (Elaine, 8). Julia agrees.

I find it really difficult to balance out the need to publish and the need to do a lot of work for the students and particularly when, as a university person in greater science community, you are sort of evaluated on your publications. The fact that you spend half the year teaching doesn’t get taken into account, consideration - you’re seen as a sort of lesser scientist if you haven’t published (Julia, 11).

It seems to me that the complexity of this power play has interesting implications both for individual academics and for the whole community of practice. Maintaining and advancing one’s position within the knowledge community requires an element of self-centredness which can be seen to be at odds with the more altruistic demands of pedagogy. “If I had less time with students I would have many more publications” (Helen, 30). If the tension generated by the competing time demands of research and teaching becomes too great, then the individual may choose to focus on *either* teaching *or* research or may abandon an academic career altogether. Whatever the choice the community of practice is diminished when ‘researchers’ neglect students for personal advancement or ‘teachers’ cease to participate in inquiry. Currently, one choice is rewarded by advancement in the disciplinary hierarchy (a central player) while the other is punished by relegation to the periphery of the community. In my opinion neither is in the best interests of the students or of the disciplinary community. In fact the means of community reproduction and renewal (pedagogy) is threatened by the very process of

inquiry (research and publication) which constitutes that community. Paradoxically therefore, the economic and political forces encouraging a competitive research environment may be jeopardising the long-term sustainability of disciplinary communities.

The status conferred by research, the imperative to publish, the element of competition and the consequent tension generated in terms of the time available for research and teaching, are issues raised only by academics in categories one to three. These themes are entirely absent from the narratives of academics in categories four and five.

### *Constructing Community in the Humanities*

The overarching pedagogical objectives for academics in categories four and five (their responses to the question ‘what is the role/purpose of the university?’) are similar to those expressed by academics in categories one and two. These include: “trying to prepare people to be good citizens” (Richard, 25); getting “students to think for themselves” and as part of a “collective enterprise” (Andrew, 2); enabling students to “engage with” and “critique” knowledges (Carol, 8); helping people to “think and be creative” (Diane, 5); and providing an opportunity for people to “educate themselves” (Simon, 6). However academic discourse as analysed in this thesis suggests that the means of achieving these objectives - the techniques and practices that actualise the relations of power (Foucault, 1982) - are quite different.

Whereas students in the ‘sciences’ are expected to defer understanding (and therefore participation in disciplinary inquiry) until such time as they have ‘taken on board’ the components of an atomistic, sequential, hierarchical knowledge framework, academic discourse suggests that students in the ‘humanities’ are expected to engage *with* teachers in the joint production of knowledge from a very early stage in their university careers. Teaching is an activity aimed at facilitating understanding and changing students’ conceptions of the world (Samuelowicz & Bain, 1992). Learning primarily involves understanding, seeing something in a different way and changing as a person (Marton et al., 1993). The teaching objective is to encourage students to actively participate in the inquiry

processes of the discipline. The emphasis is *on ways of knowing* rather than on *states of knowledge* (Bernstein, 1971), on an internally persuasive discourse (Bakhtin, 1986).

Well the nuts and bolts of it [research in philosophy] involves reading articles and, um, thinking about how to respond to what you agree with and what not agree with ... and so that involves a lot of close reading of text and ... understanding the text in its context of the wider theories ... and that is the sort of work that I ask students to do as well, even from the beginning (Richard, 10).

... you're trying to bring students into the process of how we acquire knowledge and what we do with it when we have it. So, I guess for me, um, it is kind of making them part of that little scholarly community for the time that they're here and the wider goal is that - so they'll leave here with a - an inquiring mind ... (Anne, 11).

So, to engage with students—it's got nothing to do with me transferring something to them. It's a process of challenge and engagement, prompting to assist the - facilitate, assist a process of them learning to engage in this kind of work (Carol, 13).

Knowledge does not exist 'out there' waiting to be discovered. Knowledge is not an end-point, a completed construction, a finished jigsaw. Rather, "we cannot ever know" (Anne, 9). "It's the unquantifiable and the unknowable" (Nicola, 9). For these academics knowledge is socially de/constructed in a dialogic relationship with a scholarly community to which students belong. Students occupy a less peripheral, more participative role in the disciplinary community right from the beginning. They are positioned as actors rather than as audience. There is little or no emphasis on the *structure* of knowledge, much on the *engagement* of students in disciplinary conversations. The 'structuring of the field of action' (Foucault, 1980) is much less apparent than in the science disciplines, as is the notion of movement from the periphery towards more 'central' participation. This suggests that knowledge and expertise are less 'centred', more distributed, than is the case in the 'science' disciplines and that such structure as exists grows out of dialogue rather than being imposed in advance.

With the emphasis on interpretation and perspective rather than on bodies of knowledge, power *appears to be* more equitably distributed amongst teachers and students – authority *with* rather than authority *over* (Gore, 1993). The students' knowledge is valued and validated. "I say if you can find textual evidence to back your claim for a theory that you have, you have as much right to advance that theory as I have" (Robyn, 9). Not only are students expected to engage in the processes of

disciplinary inquiry; they are also expected to demonstrate a much greater level of self-direction and personal agency. “It is not school where you are taught, it’s university and you teach yourself at university – I’m here to give you the aids and the guidance” (Nicola, 16). According to Bernstein (1971) ‘relaxed’ frames impact on authority relationships by increasing the rights of students and by blurring the boundary between what may/may not be taught so that both teacher and student have a greater presence in the pedagogical frame. The discourse of the interview texts suggests that students graduating in the ‘humanities’ will have experienced multiple opportunities to *talk within* the discipline.

It would in fact be easy to overlook the more subtle manifestations of power in this teacher/student relationship. Being a practising member of a disciplinary community, being responsible for one’s learning, being expected to participate in ‘knowledging’ with more knowledgeable and experienced learners, places heavy demands on students. “I would like to think that I teach students to have, um, many opinions on the same topic—opinions that they then have to evaluate. Um, it’s an uncomfortable process” (Robyn, 4). “A lot of what I’m doing involves them so much thinking in new ways that they haven’t thought of before ... so yeah there’s a lot of resistance, but that’s what learning is about to me” (Nicola, 20).

According to Esland (1971) pedagogy “contains a manipulative dimension in that it suggests strategies for minimising the resistance between the teacher’s world-view and that of the pupil” (p. 84). Certainly there are indications in the science disciplines that teachers seek to forestall resistance. However in Nicola’s case, instead of being deflected, resistance is embraced as a sign of engagement and the beginning of a possibly transformative learning experience - and is employed productively. A more complex and sophisticated approach to learning is required of undergraduate students. Because knowledge is jointly constructed through interpretation or deconstruction, power may be more distributed amongst the members of the learning community. In a zero sum understanding of power relations this would assume a diminished power for teachers. Alternatively one could argue that the empowering of students further empowers teachers whose research (learning) is enriched through participation in an

extended learning community. In this instance learning difficulties may arise not as a result of delayed participation but as a result of too much participation, too soon.

The extent to which students are expected to engage in self-directed learning (“you teach yourself at university”) raises interesting questions relating to the teacher/learner partnership. Readings (1996) argues that the pedagogic orientation towards autonomy - “to have knowledge is to gain a self-sufficient, monologic voice” (p. 156-157) - denies the possibility and desirability of pedagogy as a relation, a network of obligation. Certainly it seems paradoxical and self-defeating that one should participate in a learning community only to become an autonomous learner. Thus at the one pedagogical extreme we have the authoritative transfer of reconstituted and unquestionable knowledge – Bakhtin’s authoritative discourse. At the other the championing of an independence which, according to Readings, involves the abandonment of a network of ethical obligations. Neither is in the best interests of teacher or student. Neither is conducive to good knowledge making.

### *A Third Culture?*

Category three academics are distinguished by the fact that their discourse reveals allegiances with both the first two and the last two categories. Theirs are hybrid texts. The broad teaching objectives share much in common with those expressed by participants in the other categories. These include: developing “informed and critical faculties in individuals ... empowering people ... to do their own learning in a life-long way” (Peter, 3); to “get the students thinking ... critically thinking and critically appraising” (Julia, 6); to “develop critical thinking ability, questioning ability” (Bob, 3).

There is still a recognised ‘body’ of knowledge with which students must become familiar. Students have to learn the “grammar and syntax ... of the discipline before they can start to participate in it” (Peter, 3). For this reason “I had to put all my own extra [research] knowledge away in order to teach stage 1” (Janet, 7). However teachers do not anticipate such a long delay before students may begin to participate in inquiry. Even at stage one students may have ‘tastes’ of inquiry through fieldwork and simulation exercises. Early

student research experiences are highly structured by teachers. Later on students are expected to structure their own inquiry experiences to a much greater extent. Initiation into the culture of inquiry therefore occurs gradually through the undergraduate years and is not exclusively a postgraduate experience.

While there are still echoes of the positivist paradigm (metaphors of research as competition, research/knowledge as a building, knowledge as a possession, teaching as transmission and deposition), reference to the accumulation of discrete ‘pieces’ of information and the building of a ‘bigger picture’ has almost completely disappeared. The orientational metaphors are less hierarchical and the relation between research and teaching generates many positive, life-enhancing metaphors.

The *modelling* of an inquiry approach to learning is a particular feature of the category three discourse. Roger (3 – 4) believes that “people who are engaged in that kind of research should model that kind of adventure, for their students and through their teaching”. For Bob, being involved in research has “made me a more questioning person ... I would hope that some of it would rub off on my students through my approach to my teaching, through certain things I say during teaching” (Bob, 5). Janet is very specific about the modelling process.

... I can say to them [the students] - “look I used to tell people this, you know, even five years ago and I now know I was wrong” - and I think that is very good for them to see that - you know that they can see you working with the material and it’s not that I am the fount of all knowledge, I’ve got it all here, I’ve got it buttoned up, you learn what I tell you, but I am a - a fallible human being, that knowledge comes through all sorts of ways and we’re trying to develop it, um, in a way what you’re demonstrating to the class is how the material arrived (Janet, 10).

I am not suggesting academics in the other groups do not engage in modelling practices. I am sure they do. However it is only by the academics in category three that modelling is discussed explicitly, and at some length, as a significant element in the relation between research and teaching. Modelling, it seems, may play a ‘transitional’ role between ‘telling about’ and having students ‘participate in’. It offers students a glimpse of the research culture of the community prior to their own engagement in disciplinary inquiry. In terms of legitimate peripheral participation, it provides students with an “observational lookout post” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 95).

The discourse of category three academics reveals a complex – and contradictory – network of power relations. For example, Isobel wants students to learn that “asking and answering a question is really exciting” (Isobel, 8) as well as to recognise that there are different ways of viewing a problem and a number of valid ways in which that problem can be tackled. This suggests active student participation in the inquiry process. At the same time, she talks about “the excitement of standing up there for an hour, talking about something I know a lot about and being quite confident I’m doing a good job” (Isobel, 14). Isobel despairs at the extent to which students seem to want to be *filled up* with *facts* when “what I’d rather do is *fill them up* with *attitudes*” (Isobel, 8) (my italics). There is a real tension here between the desire to exercise personal authority by ‘telling one’s own stories’ and the desire to let students make their own discoveries through participation in inquiry.

The other notable feature of the narratives of participants in this category is the explicit emphasis on the reproduction and transformation of the research community. Lave and Wenger (1991) assert that “in any given concrete community of practice the process of community reproduction – a historically constructed, ongoing, conflicting, synergistic structuring of activity and relations among practitioners – must be deciphered in order to understand specific forms of legitimate peripheral participation through time” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 56). It could be argued that much of the discourse embodied in the interview transcripts concerns ‘the process of community reproduction’. In group three however we gain a very specific insight into the attitudes of academics to this process.

... the whole exercise is a sort of inter-generational transfer really, isn't it? ... it's the business of one generation passing onto another what it is that they're - that generation thinks it knows. Um, and in particular, what - what you pass on, I - I think, are - if you're successful - are the - this positively critical thing that I mentioned before plus the - plus the know-how ... I use the - the word inter-generational, I think it - it is the business of, um, in my case, one generation of geographers saying to whoever will be the next generation of geographers this is what we think we understand, um, these are the questions that we're interested in at the moment, here is how you answer questions, um, you may have a whole bunch of different questions than us and that's fine, you know. It'd be a shame if we were just interested in the same ones (Peter, 9 & 12).

... and I now know that I'm teaching a generation of students - some of whom will be writing the art history ... after I'm dead and that - those of us here of my generation who are teaching are providing those students with tools - certain kinds of tools, um, ah, so that when they become independent thinkers, um, they will either think: goodness, that - you know, that stuff that that chap told us in 1999 doesn't stack up - it's just nonsense, you know, the hypothesis is faulty or - or there'll be some new theoretical basis and there is a certain logic, um, in - in our 105 course, for example, that I know there's a logic there, but because I'm carrying all this cultural baggage now of knowledge, you know, absorbed different times and the different value systems and so

on—I can't follow the logic through, um, but a very bright nineteen-year-old can look at this approach and grasp the logic and make the leap ... (Roger, 6-7).

Well, my job as an academic has two sides and one of them is prime, well, prime responsibility again is to my students and to teach them – um, and to enable them really to take over when I leave ... I see my place here as temporary. In the end I am going to go and I want people who can follow (Janet, 5).

Peter, Roger and Janet are all academics of long standing. There is a suggestion in Roger's "... and *now* I know..." that this explicit awareness of community reproduction and transformation only develops later in one's career. Thus, reflecting on continuity may well be a product of career stage rather than a phenomenon particular to the disciplines in category three. Nevertheless a commitment to 'passing on the baton' is one of the defining characteristics of several category three participants.

Interestingly the tension perceived by Lave and Wenger (1991) in the 'replacement' of 'old-timers' by new comers is not apparent here. Rather there is a complete lack of resentment about 'being replaced' and the very positive acceptance that new practitioners will bring with them new perspectives, different questions. There is a celebration of continuity but the main emphasis is on renewal rather than reproduction.

#### *An Aside*

According to Foucault, relations of power exist between everyone who 'knows' and everyone who does not. In the case of the teacher/student relationship, it seems reasonable to assume that greater power resides with the 'knower'. However in a very real sense there is an (unacknowledged) power invested in the student body through the operation of the research/teaching nexus. Few, if any of my participants expressed a desire not to teach, though some complained bitterly of aspects of the teaching enterprise (for example, marking). Despite the tension generated by conflicting time demands, teaching sits in a productive relationship to research. The notion of the 'confessional', the student body as a captive audience for trying out and working out new ideas, suggests that research takes advantage of teaching to hone its performance. Having to explain complex concepts in a simple, straightforward way helps to clarify and may inform 'cutting edge' research. For some in the humanities, the teaching space becomes the research space and the act of

engaging with students in itself generates and advances research. In this way it could be argued that an absence of knowledge (in students), the very existence of peripherality, invests students with an unrecognised – and largely unacknowledged – power. In the same way that audience response is a powerful determinant of the success of the on-stage performance, one could argue that student response (whether it be more or less ‘engaged’) has the potential to influence positively the teacher’s research.

### **Pulling it Together/Apart**

In this chapter I have drawn attention to the fact that, despite the expressed variation in experience of the research/teaching relation, academics across all categories were surprisingly consistent in their belief that the role of the university is to produce independent, critical thinkers who will contribute to the wellbeing of society. This apparent inconsistency puzzled me. How could academics in categories one and two, for example, imagine that they were developing independent, critical thinkers, given the authority invested in a codified, hierarchical curriculum? I have come to realise that I may in fact be hearing two quite different discourses. One which describes and subscribes to the vision of the liberal university – an institutional discourse – and one which signals the reality of belief and practice at the local – disciplinary – level. It is in the disciplinary discourse that an epistemological hegemony manifests itself, revealing a dissonance between espoused objectives and pedagogical approach.

However, if we engage in a postmodern critique of the emancipatory role of the liberal university, we might also ask what we mean by ‘independent thinkers’ and the ‘wellbeing of society’. If we challenge this vision of the university as being inappropriate and anachronistic in a postmodern world, then we are forced to ask again what is the purpose of higher education in the twenty-first century and how can the university community foster and maintain networks of obligation rather than discourses of authority or autonomy? (Readings, 1996).

In the writing of this thesis I have found myself positioned uncomfortably at the intersection of two world-views. This is a personal position but also, as I have argued in

this thesis, the location of the contemporary university. I am torn between my academic staff development desire to help 'transform' understandings of research, teaching, learning and knowledge in accordance with the liberal university vision, and my growing commitment to a postmodern perspective which might acknowledge and celebrate the diversity of knowledges and pedagogical practices while rejecting disciplinary hegemony and encouraging cross-disciplinary dialogue. In this final part of the chapter I try to write my way through this tension, if not to resolve it, then at least to try and understand it better.

My own academic inclinations and preferences and my work and reading in teacher education and academic staff development all lead me to question the efficacy of a view of knowledge that requires students to 'take on board' a large body of information through transmission. As I have worked on the thesis I have felt resistant to and angry at the possibility that students might graduate from our institutions of higher education with little more than a head full of codified knowledge. As a one-time secondary school teacher I know that students have already experienced years of exposure to codified knowledge. I also know that, within the past two decades at least, they will have had multiple opportunities within the New Zealand secondary school curriculum to engage in significant personal and collaborative inquiries of a sophisticated nature. It concerns me that students who are already experienced 'inquirers', may be entering a tertiary education system which asks them not to build on the knowledge and skills they already possess but to delay participation in inquiry until such time as they have 'mastered' a basic 'framework' of knowledge. Nothing it seems to me could be more guaranteed to extinguish any flame of passion for higher learning.

I am aware of laying myself open to criticism for exaggerating the hierarchical structure of knowledge in the sciences and the length of delay before students can begin to participate in their discipline. My 'evidence' is drawn from the language academics use in talking about their practice, not from observation of that practice itself, nor from talking with students. Nevertheless I have argued that the logic of articulated experience makes certain actions/practices inevitable. In chapter seven I suggested that the different epistemological and ontological beliefs revealed in metaphor both sanction and preclude particular research/teaching practices. In this chapter I have tried to explore the relationship between these beliefs, the structure of disciplinary knowledge, pedagogical practices and relations of

power. The evidence from my empirical findings suggests that there is a strong disciplinary basis to the way knowledge is conceived and that this understanding or experience of the nature of knowledge largely determines research and teaching practices and associated relations of power.

If this is the case, then it throws doubt on some of the basic assumptions underpinning our academic staff development practices. Recent literature has emphasised the need to bring about a change in academics' conceptions of teaching and learning as a necessary first step in transforming practice (for example, Biggs, 1999; Ramsden, 1992; Samuelowicz & Bain, 2001). However if conceptions of teaching and learning are largely determined by the nature of disciplinary knowledge, then we may in fact be overlooking a key element influencing academic beliefs and associated practice.

As I pointed out in chapter three, while the University of Canterbury privileges a research/teaching nexus, much of its discourse and many of its structures and practices appear to undermine such a relation. In academic staff development I believe we contribute to and are complicit in the dichotomising of research and teaching through our very role which tends to focus, in my institution at least, on the improvement of teaching and (student) learning in the university. Where does the research/learning of academics sit in this equation? How often do we take the *practice* of academic disciplinary research as a starting point and a model for a pedagogy that may be uniquely suited to the university – a pedagogy which involves teachers and students engaged as learners together in a process of critical inquiry? Instead of the currently favoured 'teacher-centred/learner-centred' discourse<sup>9</sup> which masks the complexity of pedagogical relations in a simplistic and judgmental dichotomy, why are we not placing (and encouraging the academics with whom we work to place) inquiry at the centre of the pedagogical relationship?

Such an approach might require us to reconceptualise academic staff development. If higher education pedagogy is understood to be grounded in communities of inquiry then the

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<sup>9</sup> I am suspicious of this 'model'. I believe the discourse of teaching and learning in higher education has been colonised by a neoliberal agenda which regards student-centred learning as a cost cutting exercise. Semantically the phrase 'student-centred' undermines a commitment to obligation and partnership on which this thesis is premised.

structures of knowledge which determine the nature of those inquiries need to be worked with, explored and *challenged*. We need to encourage academic colleagues to analyse critically what they understand knowledge to be and to engage students in such an analysis. This can only be achieved through an extended process of intra-disciplinary reflection and dialogue, and ongoing, vigorous interdisciplinary debate perhaps based on Kögler's (1996) idea of using the 'other' as a point of departure for critical insight into the self.

Throughout the doing of this thesis I have struggled with the fact that I am clearly privileging a certain epistemology. Lately, I have begun to think – cautiously and through the process of writing - that I should accept the variation in experiences of knowledge, research, teaching and learning as an inevitable part of the rich tapestry of learning in higher education. In the spirit of postmodernism I do not want to suggest that we homogenise higher education teaching, however much I suspect that some of our academic staff development practices point in that direction. However the wider context in which I have embedded this thesis points strongly to the fact that our understandings of the nature of knowledge – what it is, how it is constructed, by whom, to whom it belongs – are changing irrevocably but that this is not being recognised/acknowledged widely in universities (Brew, 2001). We owe it to our students to make them aware that the foundations of disciplinary knowledge are built on shifting sands; that we can no longer lay claim to 'know', but only participate in processes of knowledging.

Attempting to 'transform' the beliefs of academics might reasonably be regarded as presumptuous. Establishing conditions under which academics might critically examine the assumptions underpinning their beliefs about knowledge and associated practices seems to me a more organic approach. There is a significant role for academic staff development that involves acknowledging the importance of working with and within disciplinary knowledge structures *and* at the same time providing a site where the reality of difference is acknowledged and employed productively in dialogues across border zones (Tierney, 1993). There is also a role in supporting academics to explore the ways in which their research and their teaching might be brought into a more productive relationship in order to enhance the architecture of academic lives (Tierney) and to enhance student learning (Rowland, 2000).

According to Mourad (1997) the progress of knowledge usually proceeds along paths that have been determined in the past. It is the foundational disciplinary structure which constrains the possibilities of thinking differently. As a way of countering such constraint, Mourad proposes that the university engage in “postdisciplinary inquiry” (Mourad, 1997, p. 100) with the aim of exploring rather than explaining reality.

In postdisciplinary inquiry the distinction between teaching and research would become blurred within postdisciplinary research programmes. Knowledge, research and teaching would be considered practically inseparable aspects of activity. Postdisciplinary research programmes would be places of instruction as well as research. Teaching would become integral to research rather than essentially the after-the-fact transmission of its results. Teaching would not be something one does in addition to or instead of research but something one does through and in the course of research. Research would become a means of teaching rather than an end in itself. Thus portions of both graduate and undergraduate curricula would emerge from postdisciplinary research. Since research programmes would be dynamic and flexible rather than accumulative and progressive, curricula could change nearly as often as new inquiries (Mourad, 1997, p. 105).

As I pointed out in chapter two the advocates for a dialogic research/inquiry approach to learning in higher education and for an altered understanding of how knowledge is constituted, are growing in number (for example, Barnett & Griffin, 1997; Bowden & Marton, 1998; Brew, 2001; Clark, 1997; Rowland, 1993; Strum Kenny, 1999). This is not a new vision for the university. It seems to me close to the Humboldtian idea which aimed to synthesise research and teaching, teaching knowledge acquisition as a process rather than the acquisition of knowledge as a product (Readings, 1996). Although basing itself on the German model, the modern university (of which the University of Canterbury is an example), particularly in its post World War Two development, has largely abandoned this synthesis of research and teaching while clinging to its rhetoric. To describe the ‘telling of research stories’ as evidence of the close relation between research and teaching or to assert that the presence of researchers as teachers is evidence of the integration of research and teaching, is a distortion of the Humboldtian idea. The transmission of research findings and the modelling of an inquiry approach to learning are but a part of the equation. Most importantly, in Humboldt’s idea of the university and in Mourad’s notion of postdisciplinary inquiry, students are actively engaged alongside teachers in the research process. They are participants, players, contributors to and inter-acting in a process of knowledging. Students engage in this pedagogical relationship not only at postgraduate level but also upon their first arrival in the university. They are embraced as an active part

of the community of inquiry, not treated as receptacles for the accumulation of information. They learn, from the outset, that knowledge is fluid, contingent, perspectival.

This is not a vision of the university of which students currently appear to have much, if any, comprehension. In Jenkins et al.'s (1998) study on undergraduate *student* perspectives of *staff* research (my italics), an overwhelming conclusion was that students did not perceive themselves to be stakeholders in staff research. More often than not they had little knowledge of who was doing what and why. Students had no sense of any ownership/involvement in these activities; "It was virtually as if staff research was some mysterious substance that, in 'X Files' fashion, spirited staff away. Then staff mysteriously came back, seemingly unchanged, and that was it" (Jenkins et al., 1998, p. 135). Similarly "there was almost no evidence that [postgraduate] students had any awareness of research as a process of finding new knowledge or that those who taught them possessed such skills that could be passed on" (Willis & Harper, 1999, p. 5). This suggests that students were held outside the research loop. They were not regarded as legitimate participants in inquiry. They were not even afforded an insight into what that inquiry involved. Yet again and again in my study I heard academics talking about the excitement of framing questions, seeking answers, constructing knowledge. This is a mode of learning that generates passion. But somehow, in some discipline areas at least, academic discourse indicates an overwhelming emphasis on reification at the expense of participation (Wenger, 1998). The experience of passion is reserved for academics and for the student elite.

In chapter one I talked about the importance of affect in the research (learning) process. Yet the emotional dimension of (teacher and student) learning in higher education is largely ignored. I would like to suggest that the process of engaging in knowledge creation is as much an emotional as an intellectual activity. If we want to 'engage' students deeply, then we must create conditions for learning which encourage passionate and powerful participation. We need not only to demonstrate our *own* passion, but to make it possible for *students* to experience the excitement and frustration of constructing their 'own stories' through shared participation in a community of inquiry.

# Conclusion(s)

## Drawing the Curtain

*When enough threads are webbed together, a solid entity may appear to form. Yet the fluidity of the threads and the web itself remains. What felt solid and real may subsequently separate and reform (Flax, 1993, p. 94).*

I prefaced chapter two with quotations from T. S. Eliot (“When the tongues of flame are infolded, Into the crowned knot of fire, And the fire and the rose are one”) and W.B. Yeats (“Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold”). In doing so I suggested that the quotations provided a conceptual framework, a structuring device for this thesis, representing as they do images of the hermeneutic and the postmodern, of the traditional and the contemporary university. The extract from Jane Flax (above) integrates Eliot and Yeats by suggesting that the unified and fragmentary are simultaneously one and the same thing. It seems to me that this is true, both of the context within which my research is located – the university – and of the thesis itself as a piece of research and a communicative endeavour. Consequently I have sought/am seeking a middle language – a “vocabulary of both/and rather than either/or” (Stronach & MacLure, 1997, p. 83).

I have argued, along with many other scholars, that the founding idea of the *uni*-versity is in ruins; that the unities of knowledge, of faculty, of teacher and student and of research and teaching (as it was originally conceived) are shattered. This fragmentation is not just a recent development, but one that has gathered momentum in the second half of the twentieth century to the point where the university feels itself to be in ‘crisis’ without a centre, without a unifying ideal. Yet nowhere else are so many institutionalised knowledges and knowledge makers positioned in such close proximity. Rather than encourage a postmodern diaspora by ‘buying into’ incommensurability, we need to reposition the university as the site for a network of communications amongst different kinds of knowledge.

In order to find a way of dwelling in this 'ruined' institution I suggest with others (for example Kögler, 1996; Readings, 1996) that we need to find ways, not of restoring unity or of imposing *a* truth nor of accepting the inevitability of incomensurability, but of creating a community which celebrates difference, institutionalises dissensus, and engages in thoughtful, robust dialogue not necessarily with the aim of reaching agreement but with the intention of endeavouring to understand and, most importantly, of using the perspective of the other to reflect critically on one's own positionings. We need to understand better our own world-views, our own disciplinary knowledge structures, our own experiences of research, teaching and learning through dialogue with others. We need to take risks at disciplinary borders in order to seek out ways of 're-forming' knowledges. We need to turn the critical gaze upon ourselves as much as upon others and learn to think and live *beside* each other, respecting and benefiting from our heterogeneity. Before we can lay claim to a role as critic and conscience of society, our criticality, particularly after two decades of submission to a new right market agenda (to the demands of performativity), needs to be turned inwards. Only in this way can we model a credible practice prior to and in conjunction with our engagement in the wider world.

I have also used Eliot, Yeats and Flax to position myself methodologically between the what was and the yet to be. I have discussed the methodological tension between the interpretive and postmodern traditions which troubles my writing but which, I have come to believe, also enriches it. My inquiry was born in my liberal and hermeneutic preference for unity rather than compartmentalisation. My research dilemma was/is the dilemma of the university as an institution. Although the focus of my inquiry was variation, it was driven in the first instance I believe, by a desire to diminish variation, to reconceptualise the relation between research and teaching into (my) 'one right way'. I have not yet abandoned this desire but I have become less strident in and less certain about my insistence that one way might be right for all! I am listening more carefully and interrogating my own assumptions more rigorously than ever before.

## **The contribution of the Thesis to its Community of Inquiry**

This writing has been crafted, pieced together. It is both a solid entity and a collection of fragments. Its constructed coherency invites deconstruction by others. Situated in time and space it becomes a local player in and a transitory contributor to the game or act of knowledging in higher education.

I challenge the (traditional) notion that its contribution is one of new, ‘original’ knowledge. Theoretically I have worked hard to position myself as part of a multi-faceted dialogue, a collaborative knowledging enterprise. As Holquist says, paraphrasing Bakhtin, “my voice can mean but only with others” (Holquist, 1981, p. 165). What I hope I might have achieved in this writing is the introduction of a different and deeper perspective on an old theme – the relationship between research and teaching – and a contextualising of that theme temporally, locally and globally. The 25 interviews that lie at the heart of this inquiry are unashamedly local. They reflect the experiences of a small number of academics at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand at the close of the twentieth century. Arising from this perspective and grounded in the empirical work of the thesis it becomes evident that:

- The literature of the past two decades (see chapter four) and the institutional discourse surrounding the research/teaching ‘nexus’ at Canterbury and elsewhere (see chapters two and three) has failed to acknowledge or even recognise the complexity of the relation as evidenced in the variation in experience reported in chapters six and seven;
- this variation in experience of the research/teaching relation is a result of variation in the ‘architecture’ of individuals’ intellectual world-views;
- in the context of this study such an architecture (the phenomenal field) comprises the interrelationship of the individual’s experiences of knowledge, research, teaching and learning;

- an academic's experience of knowledge is strongly influenced by the way knowledge is conceived of and structured within a discipline, and this plays a fundamental role in shaping experiences of research, teaching and learning and of constructing the way in which the relation between research and teaching is experienced;
- phenomenal field analysis through its exploration of the interrelation of a number of phenomena, enables a surfacing of the *complexity* underpinning experience of the research/teaching relation;
- a comprehensive analysis of metaphor within the phenomenal field enables a way of discerning the patterns that give coherence to articulated experiences and of demonstrating the embeddedness of those experiences in a wider cultural/disciplinary framework;
- whereas phenomenography enables us to discern variation in the way a phenomenon is experienced, phenomenal field analysis enables us to discern coherence within individual experience and variation amongst individuals;
- variation in experience of the research/teaching relation is constituted broadly along a science-humanities continuum. Within that continuum:
  - the relationship between research and teaching in the sciences at undergraduate level is fairly tenuous; at postgraduate level it is very close;
  - the relationship between research and teaching in the humanities is generally close at all levels; for some academics research and teaching are indistinguishable;
  - there exists a group of academics whose articulated experiences of the research/teaching relation reflect a hybridity which positions them neither in the sciences nor the humanities but in both;
  - academics experiencing this hybrid relation emphasise the 'modelling' of a research approach to learning;
  - this emphasis on modelling could be interpreted as a pedagogical transitional point between 'telling about' and 'participating in' a community of inquiry;

- the act of teaching informs research across all faculties and, variously, at all levels; at undergraduate level research is most advantaged through engagement in teaching in the humanities;
- the relationship between research and teaching (at undergraduate level) appears to be closest for those who subscribe to a critical, postmodern view of the world;
- in higher education, the nature and progress of 'participation' is determined by relations of power which reflect the (disciplinary) ontological and epistemological beliefs of university teachers. Such power may act to delay or precipitate participation in a community of inquiry;
- in the sciences relations of power act to delay participation; at the undergraduate level students' experience is largely one of codified knowledge. In the humanities participation is encouraged from the onset of the higher education experience;
- academics are consistent in their belief that the role of the university is to produce independent, critical thinkers who will contribute to the wellbeing of society. However the espoused objectives of this institutional discourse may not always be supported by the pedagogical approach revealed in discourse at the disciplinary level.

### **The impact of the Thesis on my Thinking and Actions**

Much, for me, that at the onset of the inquiry was instinctive or vaguely apprehended, has been brought into focus. I can now articulate the theoretical rationale framing my approach to research. I know why I do what I do and I am in a position to consider how I might do things differently in the future.

The thesis has enabled me to engage with (and in some cases critique) a number of research approaches. It has helped me to articulate my concerns regarding phenomenography but has also unsettled me with regard to the processes of qualitative

categorisation in general. That unsettling is reflected in my analyses which are informed both by an interpretive, hermeneutic tradition and by a more power-oriented process of postmodern discourse analysis.

I have struggled to come to grips with the idea of criticality. While 'inquiry' is a wholly natural process for me, I have had to work hard at thinking critically and being critical. Within the university I have sometimes seen criticality brandished as a weapon or used in a game of one-up-man-ship. Doing the thesis has confirmed for me that in order to work in a constructively critical manner the critical gaze must first be turned inward. I am suggesting that a heightened awareness of the world-views of others can and should facilitate that process of self-interrogation.

My ideas and position with regard to the research/teaching relation are, if anything, less clear and certain now than they were at the outset of the study. I have come, however, to perceive that relationship as being even more central to the higher education enterprise than I would have considered previously. My empirical study is focused at the individual level, and despite increasing political and economic pressure to situate the research/teaching 'nexus' at the level of the department or even the institution, I am convinced that, for higher education to retain its position as a site of critical inquiry, a strong relation needs to be fostered at every level. While I have come to accept that there is strength in the diversity revealed in my empirical findings, I will continue to argue passionately that the university is abdicating its responsibility if it is prepared to graduate students whose higher education experience has been one only of reification. I believe the partners (teachers and students) in the higher education pedagogical relationship should all be active members of an inquiring community; that the processes of knowledge de/construction should be made explicit to students early on in their university careers and that these processes should be discussed, modelled (by teachers) and enacted (by all) in ever deepening circles of inquiry.

I continue to be surprised at – and to resist – the extent to which, institutionally, the concepts and practices of research and teaching occupy separate 'spaces' and are marked by apparently incommensurable, even oppositional, discourses. I find myself challenging such compartmentalisation and actively seeking ways in which, at the

individual, departmental and institutional level, research and teaching can be brought into a more mutually productive relationship. I believe that this is a dialogue in which students must also be involved.

My instinctive resistance to the current emphasis on performativity (“the best possible input/output equation”) (Lyotard, 1984, p. 46) now has a sound theoretical basis. I am more confident in questioning the ascendancy of an outcomes based (research and teaching) model for higher education. The very notion of predetermined outcomes in research or teaching seems to me at odds with the tentative, exploratory nature of critical inquiry which, I argue, should underpin the social construction of knowledge in higher education. I will continue to resist the commodification and vocationalisation of higher education.

I am still pondering the implications of my research findings with regard to current developments in the use of information technology. In information technology circles there is an evolving and enthusiastic discourse focusing on ‘learning objects’. Such objects are discrete items of electronic learning material which are deposited centrally so that they may be used across a range of courses. The emphasis is on standardisation, efficiency and reusability (Garrett, 2002). As I understand it this parallels the notion of ‘unbundling’ which compartmentalises the teaching process in such a way that responsibility for component parts (course design, delivery, assessment) can be allocated to a range of individuals or groups.

Underpinning the notions of learning objects and unbundling is an atomistic and production line view of teaching and learning. My concern is that such compartmentalisation threatens what may be the most productive aspects of the research/teaching relation, by distancing teacher and student and making the possibilities of the modelling of an inquiry approach to learning and of joint inquiry, increasingly unlikely. My research suggests that, regardless of the nature of the research/teaching relation, there is a coherency in the interrelation of experiences of research, teaching, learning and knowledge which informs experience of that relation and shapes pedagogy. Any move to compartmentalise teaching threatens that coherency

and undermines the relation between research and teaching which (we claim) defines higher education.

I am more critical of my/our practice in academic staff development. I understand better my concerns of five years ago when I was confronted with staff development practices that seemed disjointed and dispirited. This I recognise was a contextual response to a local environment deeply antagonistic to the notion of academic staff development with regard to teaching. I have tried to channel my energies into sustained programmes of staff development in which academics are challenged to explore over time the beliefs, values and assumptions underpinning their teaching practice. Such programmes enable me to integrate better my research and teaching and encourage participants to interrogate their understandings of research, teaching, learning and knowledge in order to become more aware of their interrelation.

It is in such programmes that thoughtful, robust dialogue *across* disciplines is made possible. Some months ago I listened to an intense discussion in which participants in the University of Otago Postgraduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching compared and contrasted their understandings of the nature of knowledge in their disciplines. While they remained passionate advocates for their own world-views, these teachers were willing to acknowledge and to try and understand the nature of coming to know in a very different knowledge area. There was no consensus; but there was a respect for difference and a genuine curiosity about the 'other' which sparked reflection on one's own way of viewing the world. More recently the same students reflected spontaneously on the growth of a common language that is enabling them to communicate across differences.

In chapter two – The idea of the university? – I drew attention to Barnett's assertion that in the postmodern university nothing remains that connects its parts or its inhabitants (Barnett, 2000). My cross-faculty interviews suggest that, while there may be "proliferating forms of [incommensurable] local languages" (p. 93), there is a meta-level of discourse at which academics consistently and collectively emphasise critical and creative thinking, life-long learning and preparation for citizenship as being the significant outcomes of a higher education. One could interpret this cynically as mere

rhetoric. I do not believe this to be the case. I believe this wider pedagogical vision links otherwise disparate world-views and reflects a deeply held commitment to a vision of higher education which transcends disciplinary boundaries. However my research suggests that the vision may not always necessarily be enacted in practice. What is needed is a critical examination of how disciplinary pedagogical practices contribute (or not) to these overarching objectives. This is surely where academic staff development can play a useful role.

The writing of this thesis has impacted fundamentally on my own understanding of 'knowledge' and of the nature of knowledge in the postmodern world we inhabit. I can now position my early, instinctive but tentative apprehension of the indeterminacy and fluidity of knowledge (see chapter one) within a theoretical frame, and work from that position in my teaching and my research with confidence and excitement. The thesis writing has affected my interactions with the people around me, not only in a professional context but in my living generally. I am more aware of our mutual involvement in the construction of new understandings and I have a greater sense of responsibility regarding my part in that process. I am both more aware and more critical – of myself most particularly.

### **Evaluation of the Thesis**

In my introduction I rejected positivist criteria for evaluating qualitative research. I also questioned the recent emphasis on 'substitute' criteria such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). I suggested that we might consider Madison's (1998) notion that our research processes and outcomes be thorough, coherent, comprehensive and useful, or, more succinctly, plausible and helpful (Crotty, 1998). My findings and my reflections on those findings are products of a multi-layered interpretive process, described in chapters one and four in which my own experiences and assumptions are deeply embedded. At the risk of seeming indulgent, I have made a point throughout the thesis of drawing on those experiences and interrogating those assumptions in order to reveal the politics of my meaning making. Thus I have worked hard to make my research processes as transparent as

possible (Brew, 2001). I have chosen to position myself explicitly as a learner and the narrative of the thesis charts my processes of coming to know, of learning to talk within a community of practice/inquiry. Because the 'personal' nature of this approach has been challenged, I want to take the opportunity here to argue a case for my 'presence' and in so doing, to address issues of coherency in the thesis.

I have asserted that knowledge is constructed in community, that our every utterance is a response to the words of another. This thesis itself is about understandings of knowledge, of how knowledge is de/constructed and how the 'players' in the higher education community contribute variously to that process. Epistemologically and pedagogically it has been important for me to reflect in the writing of the thesis its 'object'. I have wanted to foreground the intimate relation between the 'what' and the 'how'. For me this lends the thesis a coherency and a plausibility which would have been lacking had I chosen to write in a more objective and impersonal manner. My voice joins other voices, my process reflects the processes I am writing about. (I smile as I write this because in it I can see so clearly my still profound hermeneutic desire to 'bring together').

Because the thesis is about making meaning together through conversation with a multitude of players in the higher education community, its 'knowledge' is grounded in language and the interrelational nature of language, in narrative and context, and in the relations of power that are embedded in all our dialogic encounters. For my thesis to be credible/plausible, it is essential that there is an alignment amongst its conceptual frame, its empirical processes and its articulation. I hope I have achieved such an alignment.

Have I done justice to the 'voices' of my research participants? An honest response would be to say that this project has not been as collaborative as I might have wished. In part that is to do with my perception of relations of power (described in chapter five) and in part it is a pragmatic response to the difficulties of undertaking a thesis on a part time basis. I have not invited participants to respond directly to my interpretations although I intend to use my research findings as the basis for aspects of my staff development work – in which case they will no doubt be vigorously challenged and debated! At another level I believe that, as a critical interpreter, I have listened *care-*

fully to the voices represented in the interview transcripts and endeavoured to give those voices space and weight in the thesis text. I regard the interpretation as a deep rather than a superficial one in so far as it both addresses experience at the conceptual level through an analysis of metaphor and uses the structure emerging from this analysis to explore the relations of power implicit in such structures. Ultimately however I return, as I have throughout the thesis, to Ricoeur's notion of the violence of interpretation – and acknowledge that for all my 'care', the interpretive process could be understood to constitute a very personal invasion.

### **Where to From Here?**

As I put the finishing touches on my thesis I find myself in an interesting position in relation to my work. Early in the thesis I talked about the importance of writing in the process of coming to know. I find now that having completed the writing, constructed an entity, I am still struggling to grasp my own construction in its entirety. Ironically, having learnt to talk within, it seems I now need to step back a little and view my writing from the periphery, in order to grasp fully its meaning, in particular the relationship of the parts to the whole. I am seeing this as a process that could but should not be ignored because out of it will come a deeper understanding of what I have done and, I suspect, an intellectual satisfaction with the achievement that I have yet to experience.

Although I have a strong sense of the many voices that have contributed to this thesis, it has, of necessity, been a solitary endeavour. I am looking forward eagerly to further research and teaching collaborations which will give substance to the notion of shared meaning making in a community of inquiry. One of the challenges now will be to use my newly formulated understanding and theoretical positioning not as an enclosure but as a springboard for dialogue with others whose perspectives may differ from my own.

For me the completion of the thesis marks a beginning rather than an end. I am keen to pursue an inquiry into students' experiences of the research/teaching relation. Apart

from Neumann (1994) and Jenkins et al. (1998) and the exploratory study at Victoria University (Willis & Harper, 1999), there has been little inquiry in this area. In particular I would like to build on the work of this thesis by exploring what students understand the university and their university education to be, how they experience the process of coming to participate in a community of inquiry (whether in fact that is what they experience) and what the impact of delayed – and possibly precipitate – participation might be.

At present I have questions around how students in the sciences make (are helped to make) the transition from recipients of knowledge to creators of knowledge. What is the process by which their ‘peripherality’ is diminished and their ‘legitimacy’ acknowledged? Is the transition gradual or abrupt? Similarly I am interested in how students experience participation in the humanities. How well equipped are they to cope with the levels of engagement required early on in the humanities? How is that engagement scaffolded and deepened over time? In all instances I am interested in the extent to which students have a meta-awareness – or not – of the learning processes in which they are engaged. Are we linking learning to the purpose of the university and the role of the university in society? Are we engaging students in critiquing that role? Are we challenging the current emphasis on technically useful, efficient, marketable, sellable knowledge (Bloland, 1995) by making explicit the centrality of unfettered critical inquiry and if not, how can we do this?

I hope these questions will inform further research. They also have important implications for academic staff development and the direction in which I believe it might move.

I would like to see an approach to academic staff development which positions research as learning, learning as inquiry and teaching as a process of scaffolding students’ engagement in a community of inquiry. Ideally I would see a pedagogical apprenticeship accompanying a research apprenticeship so that thinking and learning about teaching in higher education developed alongside and was meshed with thinking and learning about research (Harland, 2001). That each is currently addressed in isolation (or in the case of teaching sometimes not at all) seems to me to directly

undermine the potential for a productive partnership. What we need is a comprehensive 'pre-service' apprenticeship followed by ongoing 'in-service' development in which students not only learn their research and teaching craft within their discipline, but in which a vigorous interdisciplinary dialogue contributes to an awareness of the situated nature of disciplinary knowledge, research and teaching. In this way we might encourage new generations of academics whose beliefs about research and teaching explicitly inform each other and who are better positioned to work at – or across – disciplinary borders.

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For learning to be meaningful it must in some way touch the core of our being – transform us and our relations with the world and each other. It is my belief that such learning can only grow out of our own desire to know (to frame questions, be curious, ask why) not the desire of someone else that we should know. In the introduction to this thesis I talked of its being a process of inquiry about a process of inquiry. For me it is the notion of inquiry which binds academics, students and the knowledges which they de/construct in a community. If there is a common enterprise in higher education, one shared by all disciplines, then I would hope that it might centre on this process of inquiry.

Such a way of coming to know cannot reasonably be restricted to academics and postgraduate students only. The spirit of inquiry, so apparent in young children, needs to be nurtured throughout the education system and most particularly at tertiary level. Research and teaching intersect most fundamentally not at the point where a lecturer conveys research findings to her students or even when she models a research approach for students. Rather the point of intersection, where the two become one, is when students are enabled to engage in authentic inquiry within their learning community. If inquiry is to be an exclusively postgraduate experience, we run the risk of graduating many students who possess temporary banks of codified knowledge but who lack the ability to navigate their way in a complex world by interrogating and challenging that world.

In chapter two I suggested that academics might respond to an irrevocably plural world by becoming interpreters of that world (Baumann, 1992) and by using plurality as a means of turning the critical gaze inwards (Kögler, 1996). In so doing the university might demonstrate to the world how to do justice to heterogeneity and to critical thought. Were this webbing of hermeneutics and postmodernism possible, many of the binaries, which currently frame our being in the university, might be dissolved. The task would be to understand ourselves and each other better in order to get on in the world, acknowledging that the diversity of the parts constitutes a multi-faceted, fluid whole. In this way my question in chapter one – “Is it possible to move beyond the dichotomy of dis/unity and to recognise that harmony may reside in difference and that difference may constitute a unity of sorts?” - may have found a response. Close up, the solid entity is but a webbing of threads, but threads which are nevertheless interdependent. It is in such a spirit that I hope this thesis, through its critical exploration of the research/teaching relation, may add a voice to the growing demands for a re-examination of the role of the university in our contemporary, postmodern world.

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