

**SELF, GENRE, COMMUNITY:
NEGOTIATING THE LANDSCAPE OF
A TEACHER/RESEARCHER COLLABORATION**

by

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Self, Genre, Community: Negotiating the Landscape of a Teacher/Researcher Collaboration

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Abstract

My study examines the first year in the life of a teacher/researcher group, composed of professionals from the disparate sites of university and elementary school, who met weekly to collaborate on the design, implementation, and public (re)presentation of classroom-based research projects, and to share stories about teaching/learning in ethnically diverse, multilingual classrooms. This instance of collaboration was set within the strand of teacher research aligned with critical and feminist challenges to traditional hierarchies of knowledge and committed to reciprocity in research relations. My study offers a friendly critique of the normative frameworks of equity, inclusion and praxis that formed the larger discursive field for this local effort. I analyze the material and discursive conditions that shaped our conversations, using new rhetorical genre theory to understand how practices are organized in socially recognizable ways and noting how recognition shaped parameters for participation. My study shows how we negotiated direction within our rhizomatic conversations. I trace activities of identification, recognition and reception that enabled the presentation of some stories, some selves—and not others—within this space. I suggest that a more complex understanding of community within teacher/researcher collaborations is needed, one that can take into account struggles for self/identification amidst contradiction and difference.

Dedication

I dedicate this work

To my partner, Trisha Joel, in recognition of her
understanding, love, humour, and daily care

To my sons, David and Jonathan Sullivan,
who continue to delight and teach me

To Lillian Adella Williams,
whose late re-appearance into my life
gave me intangible encouragement

To the many friends throughout my life
who have 'heard me into speech'

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Chapter 1: Theoretical frameworks

My inquiry investigates the practices of a group of teachers and researchers who met weekly to reflect on their teaching/learning in ethnically diverse, multilingual classrooms, to discuss recent research in sociocultural theory, and to work together on designing, implementing, and writing up research projects in teachers' individual classrooms. I analyze the material and discursive conditions within this particular community of practice during its first year and how these conditions enabled the production and presentation of selves, stories and expertise. As a particular, local instance of cooperation between classroom-based teachers interested in doing research and university-based researchers interested in classroom practices, this group was set within a larger educational discourse on teacher research collaborations. This group was intended to foster productive, respectful collaboration between differently situated participants—professionals in the disparate sites of university and elementary school.

Teacher/ researcher collaborations

Within educational discourse on teacher/researcher collaborations (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999a, 1999b; Zeichner & Noffke, 2001; Ritchie & Wilson, 2000), certain assumptions underlie the notion of 'collaboration.' Seen as building bridges between university and school sites, collaborations hold a potential to provide fuller, more balanced views of classroom events, and thus more relevant and useful research. Ideals of inclusion, in particular including those 'on the frontlines'—teachers and students within actual classrooms—animate such claims for collaborative teacher research. This collaborative research can be seen to generally embody the best of what education as a discipline can offer: a profession allied with research.

Some applaud the potential for teacher/researcher collaborations to answer Dewey's (1916/1966) call to eliminate the dualism between doing and knowing, which he saw as antithetical to education in democracy. However, others are less enthusiastic. Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Susan Lytle (1999b), reviewing the past decade of the teacher research movement, outline some critical positions educational researchers take in relation to teacher research. Some argue that teacher research studies are not rigorous and produce practical but not theoretical knowledge.

The knowledge critique is based on the premise that there is a formal, theoretical, or scientific form of knowledge for and about teaching distinguishable from some other kinds of knowledge variously referred to as practical knowledge, craft knowledge, lore, received wisdom, the wisdom of practice, accrued wisdom, or knowledge that is experiential, personal-practical, situated, relational, embodied, popular, and/or tacit (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999b, p.20).

Others focus more on a "methods critique," claiming that distortions and bias occur when someone tries to research their own practices (Ibid.). Some question "whether teacher research is research at all," when judged against the more reliable, codified criteria of academic research (Ibid.). However, Cochran-Smith and Lytle point to many (including themselves) that support alternative practices of knowledge making and the promise of collaborations to provide spaces that encourage them.

Contested views of epistemology thus converge at the site of teacher-research, and those who advocate for alternative epistemologies recruit teacher/researcher collaborations for their positions. Dewey's critique of the dualism between knowing and doing is renewed in various arguments that attempt to displace a binary opposition between theory and practice. One basis for undermining this binary is the view that knowledge is situated and socially constructed; it is partial and partisan; and, theory represents a set of discursive and material practices. Jerome Bruner (1986) tackles the difference between stories and theories, between narrative and paradigmatic knowledge, showing that these are different forms of knowledge. Others show how theoretical knowledge is narrative, albeit differently constructed (e.g. Geertz, 1988). Drawing on psychoanalytic theories, some expose the operation of desire and the unconscious within all knowledge making, undermining any claim that theory can rise above the limits and emotions of autobiography or story (e.g., Kelly, 1997; Felman & Laub, 1992). Some of these arguments seem to accept theory as the privileged referent, and try to show that it partakes of the same qualities as its lesser side, practice. Others suggest that there is a type of tacit knowledge within practices, which when reflected upon, becomes something more: reflection is a kind of alchemy, transforming unconscious, inarticulate, embodied knowledge into its more socially useful, public persona (e.g., Giddens, 1984). The theory/practice binary is echoed in mind/matter, spirit/flesh, culture/nature and other oppositions that have far reaching effects on how we live and what future we might create in our world. We may have theorized beyond these contested binaries but they still cling, not only in common sense understandings, but also in structural and institutional formations. The kinds of knowledge that we value, and those that we disallow, have not changed as much as we might think, even within settings intended to acknowledge diverse ways of knowing.

Those who seek to challenge traditional ways of conducting research hold out hopes for teacher-researcher collaborations (Zeichner & Noffke, 2001; Fishman & McCarthy, 2000; Grimmett, 1993, 1996). These hopes articulate with critical, postcolonial and feminist work across disciplines, with other "concrete efforts to both produce different knowledge and to produce knowledge differently" (Lather, 1998, p.19). Collaborative teacher research can be a site for 'praxis.' Patti Lather (1991) defines praxis as "the dialectical tension, the interactive, reciprocal shaping of theory and practice ... at the center of an emancipatory social science" (p.172). Praxis ties theory to action, demanding accountability for the effects of social science in the world. A

reflexivity between theory and practice suggests that practitioner knowledge (the understandings that tacitly guide actions), when reflected upon, can produce relevant, useful theoretical understandings. Praxis "involves a dialectical relationship between critical theorizing and action" (Britzman, 1991, p.65).

Advocates aligned with a critical and political strand of the teacher-research movement welcome its potential to disrupt 'business as usual' in knowledge-making and school practices; they are critical of teacher researcher collaborations that merely include teachers in existing structural hierarchies of knowledge and institutional priorities (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999a, 1999b; J. Miller, 1990, 1992a, 1992b, 1996). More than just including teachers' 'voices,' Hargreaves (1996) argues, collaborations can and should be sites for increased reciprocity in research relations, and thus for producing more ethical and more relevant research. Collaborative research can and should challenge traditional research by valuing alternative sources of knowledge (Fishman & McCarthy, 2000). These sources might be the craft knowledge of teaching (Grimmett & MacKinnon, 1992), narrative knowing (Bruner, 1986; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), and autobiographical/experiential bases of knowledge (Goodson, 1998; J. Miller, 1998a, 1998b, 2000). The expectation is that collaboration between practitioners and researchers can promote alternative epistemologies and result in more equitable research. These aspirations are echoed in the larger field of qualitative social science research, as it responds to poststructural, critical, and feminist challenges to traditional and positivist research paradigms (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

My study of a teacher/researcher collaboration

A friendly critique

My study is aligned with the particular critical and political strand of teacher research that is based on an alternative normative framework. I consider my analysis of a setting founded on values I support—a social justice agenda and the transformation of knowledge-making practices—a friendly critique. I interrogate the pleasure of this more equitable research, as Ellsworth (1992) and others (e.g., Gore, 1993) have probed the complications of critical pedagogy. Like Gayatri Spivak (1989), I believe it is crucial to deconstruct that which we cannot live without—those suppositions that ground our way of being in the world: "the most serious critique in deconstruction is the critique of something that is extremely useful" (p.129). My critical examination displays the practices that enabled and constrained the realization of the alternative norms that shaped the collaboration I studied. Understanding, as Janet Miller (1992b) said, "collaboration between university and K-12 teachers is fraught with unarticulated and ... unexamined assumptions" (p.246), I analyze some of these assumptions in this study. In particular, I interrogate the normative frameworks of equity, inclusion and praxis that formed the larger discursive field for this local effort.

Critiquing normative frameworks of equity, inclusion, and praxis

Presuppositions of equity and of democratizing the social relations of research underlie many teacher/researcher collaborations. Although these collaborations have high ideals and do create important alternate spaces, they are problematic in many ways and for many reasons, not the least of which are traditional power/knowledge relations between teachers and university researchers (Evans, 1998; Moje, 1998). Evans (1998), for example, questions whether equity is possible or even desirable in teacher/researcher collaborations. Even in situations where participants are committed to equity, microanalyses of relationships reveal how power is produced and how it articulates with and sometimes reinforces institutional and structural hierarchies (Ilieva & Waterstone, 2001; Moje, 1998).

The assumptions of collaboration and community that underlie teacher research groups are part of the discursive norms that regulate the practices of such groups. My study asks questions about the inclusion of diverse 'voices' and the valuing of diverse sources of knowledge within such groups. One norm at work in this kind of collaboration is that there will be an attempt to 'hear all voices' at the table. This more equitable sharing is an attempt to democratize the social relations of research and flatten hierarchies as much as possible within a shared dialogue about all aspects of the research process. In such praxis-oriented approaches, diverse sources of knowledge are valued: personal as well as professional experience, research literature as well as stories of classroom events. By analyzing the material and discursive practices of a teacher/researcher group, tracing its journey through its first year, I was able to examine these norms at work.

Questions that informed my study

My exploration of "how embodied relations shape and are shaped in research relations" (Moje, 1998, p. 4) is informed by Foucault's (1977) understanding of the capillary effects of power, power that is distributed at its point of application. The teacher/researcher group I studied was a local instance where larger discourses of knowledge/power were enacted. Foucault (1972) analyzes discourse as a practice, asking what are the conditions that have made some statements possible in the present, and some not—how did this, and not that, come to be articulated? In this study, I analyze how the discourse within a particular collaborative teacher research community 'works' and what conditions make these particular discourse practices possible (and others impossible).

I am interested in knowledge, power and desire: what kinds of relations/what kinds of knowledge were made possible/impossible within our conversations? Within the group, what presentations of self were enabled? What kinds of stories and what kinds of research questions/interests were encouraged? What did the group produce for public presentation? What representations of our activities were deemed 'presentable'? What products/forms of reporting or

sharing our work were supported? I analyze the particular presentations of self, the stories and research interests that gained the authority to impose reception in this particular setting (Bourdieu, 1991). I noticed the ways that some discursive events were followed up, taken up: what secured response, and in what ways, and to what ends? This inquiry led me to questions about the politics of representation and about the constitutive 'outside' of these (more) equitable conversations. I looked for points of discontinuity and rupture, for what seemed to be a failure of uptake, in order to map the "distribution of gaps, voids, absences" within this discourse community (Foucault, 1972, p.119).

In analyzing the first year of weekly conversations of this particular community I wanted to better understand the possibilities and the resources that shaped these conversations. I was interested in how the teacher/researcher community I studied offered a particular discursive space for identification and membership. My questions are grounded in the theoretical work of Bakhtin (1981, 1986), Foucault (1972, 1977, 1978, 1980, 1988), Butler (1990, 1993, 1997), de Certeau (1984), and Lave & Wenger (1991), among others. In analyzing our participation in this community, I also use new rhetorical genre theory (e.g., Burke, 1989; Freedman & Medway, 1994; Giltrow, 2002a, 2002b, 2003; Coe, Lingard & Teslenko, 2002). In the next section, I continue my deconstruction of the normative frameworks of teacher/researcher collaborations with a critical examination of the notion of 'community.'

Questioning the norms of community

Community: A more complex understanding

Teacher/researcher groups are often conceptualized as communities, and sometimes explicitly named as inquiry communities or communities of inquirers (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999a). Some of the 'warm, fuzzy' connotations of 'community' cling to many celebratory descriptions of teacher/researcher collaborations. These communities of inquirers are considered to be sites where diverse 'voices' have the potential to be represented. The overuse of the term 'community' is problematic, particularly if left vaguely defined and as a placeholder for more vaguely defined notions such as 'sharing' or 'inclusion.' Activities of desire and (dis)identification are bound up in community and these need to be explicated: membership in community may or may not imply a sense of belonging (Hodges, 1998). Reconceptualizing community requires a more complex understanding of the activities of desire and (dis) identification that attend membership, and of the ways that specific kinds of identifications are made possible, and others impossible.

A community of practice: Membership and identification

I viewed the team of co-researchers I studied as a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), and traced our participation in this community during its first year. Membership in

communities is an ongoing process, an interaction between “persons, activity and world” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 98). A community of practice model sees all learning as participation in social interaction. As members learn to participate in a community, they learn who they can be within that community.

Communities of practice, as an integrated model of historical relations and social activity, are perhaps most significant as an articulation of how participation describes ontological transformations (Hodges, 1998, p. 289).

As participants engage in common activities, they learn how to participate in a community. As Diane Hodges (1998) makes clear, participation involves identification: “a community of practice is organized in such a way as to make participation contingent on identifying, or dis-identifying, within ideological constructs” (p. 289). In the group I studied, as we participated in our weekly meeting and talking together, we were developing membership in this local community and learning what kinds of identifications this community fostered.

Identification and division

Forming community is a complex process of identification and division (Bakhtin, 1981; Burke, 1989). In this section, I draw on Kenneth Burke's (1989) concept of identification/division and Mikhail Bakhtin's (1981, 1986) concept of centripetal/centripetal forces within heteroglossia to think about the ongoing and incomplete processes of identification within this community of practice.

Identifications and struggles: Burke and Bakhtin

Kenneth Burke (1989) sees identification and division as inseparable, as a linked pair of forces, which arise because of the simultaneous existence of possibilities for miscommunication (or strife) and the human need for mutuality, for social interaction and cooperation (p.189). Analyzing the activities of identification, Burke uses a neologism ‘consubstantiality’ to represent how consensus and commonality are achieved. Consubstantiality is an amalgam Burke develops by breaking down the term ‘substance’ to its root, ‘stance,’ which refers to an act —‘to stand;’ he then defines substance as “something that stands beneath or supports the person or thing” (p. 235-236). A sense of commonality comes with this activity of ‘identifying with’—of standing together with others.

A doctrine of *consubstantiality*, either explicit or implicit, may be necessary to any way of life. For substance, in the old philosophies, was an *act*; and a way of life is an *acting-together*, and in acting together, men [sic] have common sensations, concepts, images, ideas, attitudes that make them *consubstantial* (p.181).

In the group I studied, common stances—shared ways of acting together—developed over time. These community values were guidelines to walk along, guidelines that defined what we were (and what we were not) as ‘a group.’ For example, our critical stance towards schooling arrangements marked certain places we stood together, and places we stood against.

Identification, Burke (1989) is quick to caution, must always “confront the implications of division” (p.181). What ‘fits’ within a community, what is shared, also defines what is outside its bounds. This constitutive outside circumscribes what will be considered intelligible or unintelligible, what practices or performances of self will be enabled or foreclosed (Butler, 1993). Within a community of practice,

[T]here are multiple possibilities for identification. These possibilities are emergent, concomitant with the conflictual nature of legitimate peripheral participation, and are inextricable from the historicized body (Hodges, 1998, p.289).

Struggle and conflict attend trajectories of identification as one participates in community. Like Burke, Bakhtin (1981) also defines a struggle within social interactions, governed by a complex dialectical interplay of forces.

Every concrete utterance of a speaking subject serves as a point where centrifugal as well as centripetal forces are brought to bear. The processes of centralization and decentralization, of unification and disunification, intersect in the utterance (p.272).

Bakhtin’s centripetal and centrifugal forces, like Burke’s linked forces of identification and division, describe activities that pull towards the centre, contributing to community solidarity, and simultaneous activities that tend to disrupt and disperse rather than unify. The fragility noted in our very first meetings, when it was uncertain whether we would ‘jell’ or ‘fly apart’ as a group suggests one way these two simultaneous forces operate in building community and consensus. Some centripetal forces kept us together, some ways of ‘acting-together’ as a group worked to build community.

In the next section, I investigate further normative frameworks of collaboration and community through an analysis of inclusion.

Inclusion: A place where all voices will be heard

As mentioned earlier, some teacher/researcher collaborations (such as the one I studied) are committed to a social justice agenda and to democratizing research relations. This study deconstructs the normative framework of inclusion, by interrogating more closely notions of collaboration and community. I analyze the metaphor of ‘voice’ to demonstrate complexities not available in representations of teacher/researcher collaborations as sites where the traditionally marginalized ‘voices’ of teachers gain authority. My analysis reads Andy Hargreaves’ (1996) call “to deconstruct the teachers’ voice” (p.17) in teacher/researcher collaborations alongside conceptualizations of ‘voice’ in other disciplines and discourses. The construct of voice has had a varied and sometimes high profile career in a wide range of fields, and has become loaded with highly charged and often unexamined assumptions. ‘Voice’ is the hero in stories that champion research subjects to speak for themselves, empower students to find their voices, and encourage

the expression of one's 'authentic voice' in writing. As Deborah Britzman (1997) says, "At the close of this century, many North American researchers seem to be building an edifice to the voice" (p.31). Issues of power, agency and views of 'self' assumed in uses of 'voice' have been analyzed by feminist and poststructural theorists (Britzman, 1989, 1997; Grumet, 1990; Ellsworth, 1992; Orner, 1992; Finke, 1993; Otte, 1995; Kramer-Dahl, 1996; J. Miller, 1998a, 1998b, 2000; Lensmire, 1998). Often conflated with the personal or with the self, 'voice' seems to stand in for an authenticity of experience; in this view, finding and expressing one's 'own voice' become important tasks.

This notion of 'voice' imagines a pre-existing, stable, unitary and autonomous self that can be expressed by language, not one that is formed through language. A poststructural view, on the other hand, "proposes a subjectivity which is precarious, contradictory, and in process, constantly being reconstituted in discourse each time we think or speak" (Weedon, 1997, p.32). The process, then, is not one of 'finding' an 'authentic voice' already there, but of 'fashioning' a voice from available discursive resources (Kramer-Dahl, 1996). The notion of 'authentic voice' begs the question: who decides what counts as 'real' or 'authentic'?

Desires for particular kinds of voices are embedded in relations of knowledge/power, which legitimize and authorize certain voices and not others. Hargreaves (1996) argues that researchers selectively appropriate teachers' voices and then represent them as the (idealized) teacher's voice. Dissonant and different voices may not be heard: "we are perhaps too ready to hear only those voices that broadly echo our own" (Ibid. p.13). Collaborative research projects, which rely on cooperation between teachers and researchers, tend to exacerbate this selective appropriation (Hargreaves, 1996). Often researchers end up "studying kindred spirits, to reveal reflected and refracted images of themselves" (Ibid. p.13). Questions of listening and intelligibility, of difference and desire, are opened up here. Our complicity in these relations and our pleasure in consuming certain voices need to be acknowledged.

The power to select and authorize certain voices can also be read in the paternalistic concern, in both research and critical pedagogy, to give "voice to the voiceless" (Visweswaran, 1994, p.9). This concern tends to reify and reinscribe colonial relations, which already trouble much research (Visweswaran, 1994; Minh-ha, 1989). In educational research, "the discourse of the teacher's voice has tended to construct it in a particularly 'positive' way against a background of silence in which it had been previously trapped by policy and research" (Hargreaves, 1996, p.13). This not only romanticizes and essentializes teachers' 'voice', but also reinforces an unproblematic speech/silence binary, where speech is (necessarily) beneficial, and silence a sign of repression. Speech is positively loaded with assumptions of agency, and silence negatively loaded with passivity. This view of the practices of speech and silence also elides the conditions of reception and production that make speaking and hearing (im)possible. There is a difference between being able to produce an utterance, and being able to produce an utterance that is

"likely to be *listened to*, likely to be recognized as acceptable" (Bourdieu, 1991, p.55, emphasis in original). As Spivak (1994) asserts, the subaltern can speak—but can she be heard? Who will listen? In addition, there may be times when silence is necessary and strategic—when subaltern speech, distorted to 'fit' dominant frameworks, may only serve to reinforce the intelligibility and hegemony of normative discourse (Khayatt, 1997).

This viewpoint of 'voice' as constructed and embedded in discursive and material conditions informed my analysis of the conversations of the teacher research community I studied. The normative framework captured in 'hearing all voices'—the assumption of inclusion—was one I questioned from a variety of standpoints. Janet Miller (1998b) cautions against "a pose of inclusiveness" often found in educational uses of autobiography: "as if, through autobiography, all voices heretofore silenced or marginalized can now be heard" (p. 370). 'Voices' telling stories of their 'experience' assume, as stated earlier, a knowable, coherent self, and ignore that which will not fit into neat and tidy stories. Miller suggests that by 'queering' practices in education, one might "make theory, practice, *and* the self *unfamiliar*" (Ibid.). This could "denaturalize conceptions" of a "unified life-subject" and

challenge educational research that normalizes the drive to sum up one's self, one's learning, and the other as directly, developmentally, and inclusively knowable and identifiable (Ibid., p.370-71).

Inclusion, as it is often used, tends to elide this more complicated view of selves that cannot be managed into a cozy circle of the knowable and known. To enter into a different conception is to confront the "unruly movements of bodies, voices, and narratives . . . [that work] against the stability of meanings, identities, and experiences" (Britzman, 1997, p.32). It is to confront how we are caught, as Britzman (1997) argues, in "tangles of implication":

In educational research it seems as though the more voices, the merrier the field becomes. And while stories of difference proliferate, along with the pluralistic desire to count them all, making room for diversity and making diversity a room is not the same as exploring the tangles of implication. For to explore the tangles of implication requires something more than the desire to know the other's rules and then act accordingly. One is also implicated in one's own response. Implication is not as easily acknowledged because the otherness that implicates the self is beyond rationality and consciousness (p.32).

Inclusiveness, seen as 'making room for diversity and making diversity a room,' does not confront how "only certain stories can be told in certain ways and for certain reasons, even in the name of inclusiveness" (J. Miller, 1998b, p.370). As I analyzed the discursive practices of a particular group of teacher/researchers, I was interested in which stories, selves and representations of knowledge were welcomed and included in this space, and which did not gain such reception and recognition. I found Bakhtin's theory of dialogism a useful tool for further investigating the complexities of discursive conditions and resources that shaped what was possible to say/hear.

Conversations understood through Bakhtinian lens

For Bakhtin (1981, 1986), all voices are internally dialogic. His theory of dialogism displaces notions of a fixed, unitary, 'authentic' voice and suggests that 'voice' is a site of struggle over meanings. Using the terms 'speech' or 'the utterance' to indicate that he is analyzing concrete instances of language in use, Bakhtin (1986) talks of the utterance as "furrowed from within by the speech of others" and filled with "traces and echoes" of other utterances (p.99). Every utterance is "a link in the chain of speech communion" (Ibid. p.84). Addressivity describes the "active influence" that both preceding utterances and anticipated responses exert on the utterance (Ibid. p.95). In each concrete instance of speech, echoes of preceding speech, the speaker's plan as she anticipates response, and the particular conditions of production all intersect. Looking through the lens of addressivity directs attention to how speakers style their statements, depending on whom they are addressing, to which statements are taken up and which are not, and to how past statements are echoed in current productions.

When one produces an utterance, one must use language that has been serving other people's intentions and adapt it to one's own intentions:

The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he [sic] appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention (Bakhtin, 1981, p.293-4).

This process of appropriating words from "other people's mouths" and "other peoples' contexts" is a struggle. Language, Bakhtin (1981) says,

is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker's intentions; it is populated—overpopulated—with the intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process (p.294).

The struggle to make others' words our own is a complicated and continuing process. Language tastes of other uses, which may conflict with one's own intentions. Even within oneself, there is a struggle for epistemic privilege, for the claim that a particular knowledge is 'better' (e.g., more authentic, more complete, more useful) than another. Bakhtin's (1981, 1986) theory of dialogism suggests that we speak/listen from always partial, shifting, contradictory locations within complex discursive environments.

Recognition and the conditions of reception and production

Bakhtin makes it clear that language is not neutral, and that social relations are inscribed in all language use. Pierre Bourdieu (1991) argues that hierarchies of power circumscribe *who* can say *what* to *whom*, in what ways, and with what response. Legitimate, authorized speakers—those with high social status—have the "power to impose reception," while others do not (Ibid., p.55). This symbolic power gains its efficacy through recognition (Ibid.). Engaging with

questions of agency and power one might inquire further into the activities of recognition: how is a shared social understanding constructed? What becomes 'intelligible' within a given situation?

Spivak's (1993) explication of Foucault's (1972, 1977, 1980) concept of knowledge/power as a relation might help here. Spivak argues that relations of *pouvoir/savoir* suggest that this nexus can be seen as the capacity to do what one knows or understands to do. What one is *able* to do is constrained/enabled by what one *knows* how to do, or understands as possible. Knowing something (i.e., understanding pertinent rules of intelligibility) confers agentive possibilities. This conceptualization of power/knowledge

raises critical concerns about what it is that structures meanings, practices, and bodies, and why certain practices become intelligible, valorized, or deemed as traditions while other practices become discounted, impossible, or unimaginable (Britzman, 1995, p.231).

Why are some statements—some practices—recognizable, and recognized as intelligible (and not others)? What are the discursive and material conditions of this intelligibility?

Parameters for participation

Practices of recognition are central to 'making sense,' to constructing intelligible 'worlds' of meaning. Recognition thus shapes possibilities for participation. By organizing practices in socially recognizable ways, genres structure our participation in human activity. Genres, in new rhetorical genre theory, are re-conceptualized as "ways of acting together" (Burke, 1989). Observing how participants within a discourse community appropriate and accent available genres can index how they are making sense of their world and the possibilities for social interaction within it.

New rhetorical genre theory

Traditional theories used genre to categorize types of discourse, but recent theories understand that form *and* situation constitute a genre; this view takes into account the sensitivity of language to its context (C. Miller, 1984, 1994; Freedman & Medway, 1994; Giltrow, 2002a, 2003; Coe, Lingard & Teslenko, 2002). Drawing on rhetorical theory, which is concerned with "the *persuasive* aspects of language, the function of language as *addressed*" (Burke, 1989, p.189, italics in original), new rhetorical genre theory defines genres as social actions (C. Miller, 1984, 1994).

This definition makes use of the concept of rhetorical action as a fusion of substance, form and situation, and focuses on "the action [a genre] is used to accomplish" (C. Miller, 1984, p.150). Carolyn Miller (1984) suggests that while form instructs the reader or listener in how the substance of the rhetorical action is to be perceived or interpreted, the action itself can only be understood in its social context or situation. A demand-response model comes into play: recurrent situations demand similar responses. As a rhetorical situation recurs, it becomes

recognizable as a type of situation. This recognition of types involves understanding the exigence inherent in situations, which Miller reconceptualizes as social and intersubjective, as the recognition of social need at the centre of any rhetorical action. We rely on our cultural vocabulary to discern the particular situation as a type that requires a particular response. When people participate in genres (e.g., routine speech genres of greeting), they enact a typified response to a recognized social need (C. Miller, 1994, 1984; Freedman & Medway, 1994). Regular responses to recurrent situations become institutionalized as genre.

As recognizable "ways of acting together," genres administer and organize participation (C. Miller, 1994, p.67).

What we learn when we learn a genre is not just a pattern of forms or even a method of achieving our own ends. We learn, more importantly, what ends we may have . . . genres serve as keys to understanding how to participate in the actions of a community (C. Miller, 1984, p.165).

Genres are cultural resources, "artefacts [that] literally *incorporate* knowledge" (C. Miller, 1994, p.69, italics in original). We utilize our repertoire of genres to respond to situations. As I analyzed the conversations of the group I studied, I noticed how we developed our own socially recognizable 'ways of acting together' that structured our participation.

Genre study offers insights into the construction of knowledge, into the possibilities for social interactions and into the cultural/historical contexts in which genres are used.

The new conceptualizations of genre gave researchers a way of talking about these [observed] similarities not as rules but as signs of common ground amongst communities of readers and writers: shared attitudes, practices, positions in the world, habits of being (Giltrow, 2002a, p.25).

Using new rhetorical genre theory, I analyzed the discursive practices within this teacher/researcher group, and in particular the genres we used, as situated actions responding to exigencies of this local discourse community. The concept of meta-genre, "talk about genres" often invoked in learning and teaching new genres, was useful in analyzing our process of learning to do research together (Ibid., p.187). This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Gathering these more complex ideas about community, inclusion, identification, membership and participation, I now bring further theories to my investigation into what practices were made possible within the material and discursive conditions of the local site I studied.

Space constraints, using spaces

Certain discursive spaces encourage certain articulations of the self: voices and practices are created within the conventions and knowledges contexts allow and offer (Talburt, 2000a, p.17).

Like Susan Talburt, I wondered what articulations of self, what 'voices and practices,' were encouraged among the participants I studied. As discussed earlier, the conditions of production and reception shape what can be said and heard. However, despite constraints on

activity, there is space for agency. I turn now to theories that extend determinist views and offer ways to understand discursive agency.

"Taking up the tools where they lie": Performativity

Discourse, Foucault (1972) states, is "a field of regularity for various positions of subjectivity" (p. 55), a field of "strategic possibilities" (p. 37). Judith Butler (1990) suggests that the emergence of the self is enabled by available cultural resources:

There is no self that is prior ... to its entrance into [a] conflicted cultural field. There is only a taking up of the tools where they lie, where the very 'taking up' is enabled by the tool lying there (p. 145).

However, the uses—the 'strategic possibilities'—of a given tool are diverse. Seeing "identity as a practice, and as a signifying practice," Butler analyzes how subjects 'take up' given signifiers (Ibid.). She uses the signifier 'woman,' but her theory of the performativity of gender can be extended to other identities or sites for the self. Butler (1993, 1997) analyzes how gender norms are reiterated by our constant performance of them, as we regulate our own bodies, our own practices. Every time a norm is cited, it is reproduced, and it is through "the repetitive labor of that norm" (e.g., 'girls cry easily') that its regulatory power is reinforced (Butler, 1993, p.10). For Butler (1990, 1993, 1997), performativity is citationality: one cites prior usages, repeating and reinforcing previous meanings. However, it is possible to disrupt these citational effects; Butler uses queer performances as an example to emphasize using what is given in ways that destabilize prior usages. Butler (1993) suggests that one can take up a signifier—which is also "to be taken into a chain of prior usages"—and disrupt the chain, "through a repetition that fails to repeat loyally" (p. 219-20). This analysis of performativity echoes Bakhtin's (1986, 1981) concept of addressivity, where the speaking subject dialogically enters into a chain of prior usages. In Bakhtin's view, the subject takes words from others' mouths and inflects them with her own meaning. Like Butler, Bakhtin (1981) emphasizes the possibilities for "ever newer *ways to mean*," for re-signifying received cultural meanings (p. 346, italics in original). Agentive possibilities are thus asserted.

Performativity, as Butler and others have more recently conceptualized it, has an appeal and utility demonstrated by its development across a wide range of disciplines (literary theory, sociology, linguistics, anthropology, queer theory and the cross-disciplinary field of cultural studies) (Parker & Sedgwick, 1995). These new developments invest in a concept of performativity no longer equivalent to that of speech act theory: Austin's (1965) performatives were a particular and rather rare type of usage, whereas now some theorists consider 'performative' applicable to all language use (Parker & Sedgwick, 1995). For some, "performativity has enabled a powerful appreciation of the ways that identities are constructed iteratively through complex citational processes" (Ibid. p.2). A different understanding of agency

is opened up by conceptualizing identity as a practice, as a 'doing' rather than a 'being' (Talbur, 2000a).

Theories of the performative can be linked to Michel de Certeau's (1984) theory of everyday practices, which emphasizes "the active (not passive) practices of 'consumers'—readers of a text or pedestrians in a city" (Talbur, 2000a, p.13). De Certeau attends to the contingencies and instabilities in 'taking up' culturally available tools and spaces. In everyday practices—"ways of operating' or doing things"—people "make do" with what they are given, finding novel ways to read cultural texts and taking detours and shortcuts through established paths (de Certeau, 1984, p.xi, 29). De Certeau's theory of practice aligns with a view of language use as performative, as an opportunity to re-signify (Butler) or to accent (Bakhtin) previous usages and established cultural texts.

De Certeau (1984) demonstrates the possibilities for invention even within constraints of material and discursive contexts, looking to the possibilities for unexpected uses. "Everyday life invents itself by *poaching* in countless ways on the property of others" (Ibid. p. xii). Moving through the everyday, using and transforming cultural forms of all kinds through unusual uses, a subject articulates with discourse in inventive ways. Dorothy Holland and Jean Lave (2001) call this process improvisation, and see the self as "an orchestration of the practices of others" (p.15).

In 'Walking through the City' de Certeau (1984) describes how pedestrians make use of the streets and walkways that are provided for movement through space. He is interested in how pedestrians are creative within these grids, taking short cuts, detours, and finding ingenious ways to get around.

[If] . . . a spatial order organizes an ensemble of possibilities and interdictions, then the walker actualizes some of the possibilities . . . he makes them exist as well as emerge . . . the crossing, drifting away, or improvisation of walking privilege, transform or abandon spatial elements. Thus Charlie Chaplin multiplies the possibilities of his cane: he does other things with the same thing and he goes beyond the limits that the determinants of the object set on its utilization. In the same way, the walker transforms each spatial signifier into something else (p.98).

De Certeau's example of Charlie Chaplin and the cane, or of a pedestrian inventing a shortcut through the grid of a city, shows a kind of agency within discursive and material constraints. De Certeau describes how the spatial order is de-stabilized by the "modalities of pedestrian enunciation [. . .] Walking affirms, suspects, tries out, transgresses, respects, etc., the trajectories it 'speaks'" (p.99). Further, footsteps have their own style, a "rhetoric of walking" (Ibid.). This rhetorical phrasing of space is a way of operating that manipulates, distorts, fragments, exaggerates, even "carries away and displaces the analytical, coherent proper meanings" of urban order (p.102). While the roads, paths, and buildings of the city do not allow passage everywhere, pedestrians can be very creative. Reading the example of Charlie

Chaplin's cane against the metaphor of 'taking up of the tools where they lie' we can see that there are many articulations and manipulations of given cultural resources.

Conversations travelling over a year

I studied a year in the life of a particular teacher/researcher group, through an analysis of our conversations. I found that as we walked the landscape of collaboration, we used it in our own ways, being creative within its limits (de Certeau, 1984). We took detours, or went the long way around. We sometimes went around in circles, or returned to the same point from a different direction, or emerged unexpectedly in a different place. When someone presented their research ideas or told a story from their daily classroom life or personal life, they could expect a variety of responses, and our conversations opened diverse paths.

The rhizome and jazz

Two metaphors seemed to capture the movement and heterogeneity of our conversations: the rhizome and improvisational jazz. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987) developed the rhizome as a metaphor for proliferating, unpredictable movement. Unlike a tree root and branch system, with its organized beginning and end, rhizomes are root systems that connect a chaotically distributed, living network; they grow laterally at any point, popping up everywhere, filling in gaps. "Rhizomes themselves are organic forms that proliferate, like crabgrass or kudzu, beyond our control to determine and shape them" (Burnett & Dresang, 1999, p.424). Like the rhizome, improvisational jazz has a thematic core or root system, with unplanned, spontaneous variation and multiple interactions. Wynton Marsalis, in an interview with Tony Scherman (1996), called jazz "a music of conversation" that embodies a spirit of play in several ways (p.35). In improvisational jazz, you are playing with a theme or idea: 'messing' with the set parameters (Ibid. p.30). And jazz is about playing *with* other people. Jazz involves "collective improvisation" and "constantly trying to coordinate with something that's shifting and changing" (Ibid. p.31). Marsalis feels that jazz can be a model of democratic dialogue, a way to learn "to make room" for others (p.30), "to be willing to hear another person's point of view and respond to it" using a great deal of "on-your-feet information" (p.35). This suggests an organic growth, like the rhizome, which builds in unexpected ways but not completely without direction. In the middle of an improvisation, as in the middle of the underground root system, an observer/listener uneducated in botany or music may be lost, but those more literate might predict a set of possibilities within the structural schemata. These metaphors of improvisational jazz and the rhizome seemed to capture the engagement, reciprocity and responsiveness of conversations in the group I studied. My study overall maps our first year's journey of collaboration.

Dissonant harmonies

Earlier, in discussing some of the assumptions of inclusion in teacher/researcher collaborations, I drew on Hargreaves' (1996) convincing argument that a more careful scrutiny of the actual practices of collaboration between researchers and teachers is needed. Hargreaves takes a critical view of researchers' selective appropriation of teachers' voices—claiming that researchers tend to choose those voices that harmonize with their own and to reject dissonant voices. This suggests that harmony and dissonance are not compatible. However, looking more closely at these musical metaphors, it becomes clear that harmony includes dissonance. I found, in studying the conversations of a teacher/researcher collaboration over a year, that our collaboration could be better represented by more complex understandings (such as the metaphors of the rhizome or jazz) that make room for discursive heterogeneity, for dissonance within harmony and vice versa.

Our conversations were sites of identification and division (Burke, 1989) and struggles to appropriate language and inflect others' words with our own intentions/accents (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986). They were sites where some articulations were encouraged, some paths recognized and followed, and where others were passed by. Like de Certeau's (1984) pedestrians in a city, we might take the "metaphorai" (buses/trains—"vehicles of mass transportation" in Athens) that were available, conforming to their schedules and routes (p.115). Or we might travel more organically or inventively, choosing less usual routes. What would motivate a detour or a shortcut? What would prompt us to 'take up the tools where they lie' (Butler, 1990) and improvise less expected meanings (or not)?

Performativity, like jazz, suggests a certain freedom within structure, and sometimes seems to emphasize the playful without attending to the conflict between different meanings, the uncomfortable dissonances. Bakhtin (1981), writing perhaps from a place more attuned to the price one might pay for 'messing' with the parameters, emphasizes conflict and struggle. Facing a crossroads, one may face a struggle within one's consciousness, as different discourses urge conflicting decisions as to which way to travel. We can see these discourses as 'tools to take up' and trace the self in how she engages with them.

Bakhtin (1981) describes ideological becoming in terms of different types of discourse talking back to each other within one's own consciousness. There are authoritative discourses enforced from outside and internally persuasive discourses that we take up as 'our own.'

The struggle and dialogic interrelationship of . . . categories of ideological discourse are what usually determine the history of an individual ideological consciousness (p.342).

At first, "consciousness awakens to independent ideological life ...in a world of alien discourses surrounding it, and from which it cannot initially separate itself" (Ibid. p.345). Eventually a separation occurs "between internally persuasive discourse and authoritarian enforced discourse,

along with a rejection of those congeries of discourses that do not matter, to us, that do not touch us" (Ibid.). However, "[w]hen someone else's ideological discourse is internally persuasive for us and acknowledged by us, entirely different possibilities open up" (Ibid.). A struggle characterized by "intense interactions" between internally persuasive discourses within one's own consciousness takes place (Ibid.). Bakhtin locates the self within this interanimation of voices:

Our ideological development is just such an intense struggle within us for hegemony among various available verbal and ideological points of view, approaches, directions and values (p.346).

Within the community that I studied, multiple discourses that were internally persuasive struggled for hegemony. In our journey through out first year, diverse 'approaches, directions and values' jostled together, interanimating each other.

As the following chapters will show, our struggle to become collaborative teacher/researchers was complex and multi-dimensional. This thesis analyzes the discursive heterogeneity of our conversations, as they unfolded over this year of our collaboration. In the next chapter, I will provide an overview of this thesis, situate myself as researcher, and describe the group and my methodology.

Chapter 2: Methodological frameworks

In this chapter, I situate myself in relation to this inquiry, give further background to my study, and describe my data collection and analysis. I also address methodological issues that have shaped this thesis—that inform this particular representation of the first year's journey of a teacher/researcher community.

Situating myself in relation to my inquiry

It is no longer possible to produce qualitative research without acknowledging one's own position. The account produced for this thesis responds to the particular discursive conditions of writing qualitative research at the beginning of this millennium. My desire, in situating myself in the research, is to expose my own investments. I recognize this desire as bound up in Foucault's (1978) concept of confession, "one of the main rituals we rely on for the production of truth" (p. 58). I am incited to discourse, required to situate myself in the research, to produce an account of 'self.' However, there are limits to my reflexivity; despite the best intentions, it is impossible to know or contain all possible effects of one's research (Lather, 1998, 2001). I agree that it is important, as a researcher, to pay attention to which stories I tell and to acknowledge my interpretations and the possible consequences of my selective story making. I want to 'come clean'—to expose my desire to be a *good* social scientist, cognizant of critical, feminist and postcolonial critiques of social science as a colonizing discourse. However, I recognize that I cannot completely know my investments, desires or the consequences of my study. Later, I will discuss further some of the research issues that attended my study. At this point, I only want to suggest that locating myself in relation to this text I have produced is not as straightforward as it might seem. Further, my attempt to state my position is necessarily situated in this moment and I don't seem to stand still for the process. As I compose my thoughts on 'how my life informs this thesis inquiry,' my knowing is changing over time, shifting even as I write.

Questions of silence and what becomes intelligible

In analyzing issues arising in the first year of this collaboration between teachers and researchers, I was interested in the following question: What ways of acting together were enabled/constrained within this community? I was curious about how we related across our differences, in a setting intended to foster equitable relationships. In this group, we shared a common interest in improving conditions for those traditionally marginalized, in particular classroom practices that fostered the inclusion and participation of everyone. I wondered how we as a group demonstrated in our own practices the kinds of inclusion and participation we valued.

This was not the first time I had been curious about how groups create respectful, meaningful relationships, particularly groups working towards social justice. I came to this research after years of working in feminist organizations, in many groups that were trying to create social change. Within the counter-discourse of feminist activism, ideals of consensus decision-making emphasize the importance of hearing from all present and the responsibility of each to contribute. However, I found that often in practice a feminist collective might end up replicating the dynamics of “mainstream” power relations (those who were articulate in white, middle class, Western ways of speaking would gain and keep the floor). I became disillusioned about the voices that still remained silenced, despite attention to creating cross-cultural awareness and inclusive spaces. Adrienne Rich (1979) asks: how do we learn to “[hear] each other into speech? How do we listen? How do we make it possible for another to break her silence?” (p.185). In the many groups in which I had been involved, we were trying hard to ‘hear into speech’ those voices not usually heard. But I noticed that despite our best efforts most of the time the same people spoke, the same people were silent. When I returned to university from grass-roots feminism, I came with questions. I wanted to inquire further into the practices within groups that value the need to hear from all present, groups that are trying to do things differently.

Listening for silences

I listen for silences; I have become attuned to them because of my experiences. My interest in what is not said and what is not heard cannot be separated from my experiences of speaking or keeping silent. I have reflected on these past experiences often during my doctoral study, as I prepared to step into a place where speaking is expected and encouraged, at least in some ways and on some topics. These experiences of being (un)heard, silent, or speaking out are diverse: an adoptee unsure of her heritage raised white and middle class in 1950s and 1960s California; girl child, woman, lesbian; a welfare and working-poor mother of two sons; surviving violence and poverty; all the while reading, reading, reading books; writing journals, writing poetry to stay alive, to survive. My path to the issues that inform this dissertation had been shaped by pivotal experiences of being unseen and unheard—or seen and heard in ways that rendered other parts of my experience invisible. One way I experience daily silences is living my life as a lesbian. I am constantly aware of how gender is read off bodies and how these readings are constrained by simple categories.

Reading/writing (il)legible bodies

Legible: clear enough to read, readable [from Latin, *legere*, to read] (Allen, 1990, p. 676).

Intelligible: able to be understood, comprehensible [from Latin, *intelligibilis*, INTER + *legere*, to gather, pick out, read] (Ibid., p.616)

'Like a pen trying to write on an oily surface'

There are ready-made discourses for talking about abuse or for coming out as a lesbian: these topics are part of even mass media parlance in Canada in 2003. I could pick one of these discourses up and use it to explain why I am interested in silences. However, these stories might not capture the complexity of the influences that have led me to these kinds of questions: whose story is told and whose story is heard and whose story counts in which circles of influence. I have found that 'indeterminate heritage' is often more difficult to talk about in comparison with other silenced sites, such as my experiences of violence or of homophobia. And this uncertainty of heritage has been with me from birth.

My indeterminate heritage opened questions for me about reading social markers. Throughout my life other people have read my body and named my ethnic or racial background, writing me into different socially available categories. Usually I passed for white but in some situations, depending on who was reading me, I have fit right in as belonging to another heritage. My own lived experience showed me how 'race' is read off bodies, constructed by our reading and writing practices. I experienced the theoretical understanding that race is performative (Bhabha, 1994; McCarthy & Crichlow, 1993).

I found that when I told people I was adopted, more questions arose, and always the offerings: 'you must be....' People would assert that I was definitely at least part Aboriginal, Jewish, Mexican American, and so on. I wondered how people came to some readings and not others, and I noticed that these readings were often influenced by where they identified (Jewish people thought I was Jewish, Aboriginal people thought I was Aboriginal). I resisted attempts to name me, keeping my indeterminate heritage an open question, as one way I could maintain a sense of integrity, of not being written by others. At the same time, I have longed desperately to belong somewhere, to have that connection so often referred to (a resemblance to a grandmother, a tracing of family history). I would become silent when conversations turned to heritage and family resemblance. Sometimes I have tried to make my identification as a lesbian a place of stability. Could I, by writing myself into that category, finally settle down, make my home, define self and other, drawing boundaries? But my 'writing' might not be so powerful: I knew that I could be illegible/unintelligible as a lesbian, not only as someone who is adopted.

The questions my experiences animated for me were about how certain bodies become socially intelligible in certain ways. What seemed legible about my body? What remained illegible? Why were some readings illuminated and others not? I wondered about the embodiment I performed or perceived others performing in the group of women I studied: what became legible?

Implications for my study

One of the first ways I noticed how my life experiences were influencing my writing was when I began to present the work in progress of my dissertation at conferences. I had trouble describing us (the eight other women in the group and myself) using the socially available markers. I found myself again facing questions that I had carried with me all my life. I was pulled back in time and I began to think about all the ways I have been read, what was legible in different situations, to different people. Because I have been misread, I was sensitive to reading socially intelligible markers off people's bodies and then writing them into simple categories. I knew it would not be enough for me to list more attributes or include more nuances in describing each woman in the group. As Butler (1990) says, I could not merely

assume in advance that there is a category of women that simply needs to be filled with various components of race, class, ethnicity and sexuality in order to become complete (p. 15).

These social categories are powerful but they are not precise; they often occlude and obscure. My resistance to the closure of naming—in particular of categorizing people into socially available categories—led me to further questions about writing membership in stable social identities of race, class, gender, age, ability and other markers.

I began to wonder about the practices by which we construct legibility or consider something unintelligible. In order to understand our world, we have to leave some things outside as unintelligible (Foucault, 1972; Butler, 1990, 1993, 1997). I began to wonder about what we were leaving outside and unsaid and about statements that seemed unable to be taken further, that did not get picked up. In my data, I listened for silences. What were this group's practices of reading/writing, our performances of identities for the occasion? Which performances and which stories received a hearty welcome? Which stories were told, but were followed by no useful uptake? These were questions that I took to my data analysis and interpretation, questions that had deep roots in my experiences. My reluctance to provide the usual social scientific indices signals my position as a researcher and also sensitized me to particular issues in my data.

In the next section, I give further background to my study, describing my particular site of investigation and its parameters.

Methodology

My study is part of a larger ethnographic project initiated under the auspices of a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Grant awarded to Kelleen Toohey, Professor of Education at Simon Fraser University. That three-year research project, entitled *Appropriating Voices: Learning English in School*, began in September, 1999, when Kelleen invited six teachers and three graduate students to join a group concerned with "investigating what practices in classrooms might make a difference to the learning of minority language background children"

(Toohey, 1999). My study draws on data from the first year of this group, which became known as the Teacher Action Research Group (TARG).

Members of TARG

From September through December 1999, TARG had ten members, six elementary school and four university-based teacher/researchers (including myself). Three of the university-based members were doctoral students, with Kelleen as their supervisor. Of these original ten members, five elementary school and three university-based teacher/researchers continued in January and through to August 2000. A video ethnographer joined the group in February and continued from then on, making four university-affiliated and five elementary school-affiliated members in TARG for most of this first year.

In my thesis, pseudonyms which members chose themselves are used at all times, except for Kelleen Toohey and myself. The classroom elementary school teachers were Donna, Kari, Marcy and Sharon. Katerina was a resource teacher, working in the field of English as a Second Language in elementary schools. All taught in schools with multiethnic, multilingual populations in large urban and suburban settings. Most of the teachers had a great deal of experience in their field—over 20 years for some—except for Sharon, who was in her fourth year of teaching. Sharon was also the youngest of the group, at 28 years. The ages of others ranged up to the early fifties (median age mid-forties). Rossi and I were doctoral student members. Marianne, a Masters student (who was also a substitute teacher in adult basic education at a local college) joined the group for several months as well (April 5 through August 3). We three graduate student members had Kelleen as our supervisor. Kate, the video ethnographer on staff at the university, joined TARG in February.

Rossi had emigrated from Bulgaria, beginning her graduate work in Canada. Sharon and Kari were both of Punjabi Sikh background, born in Canada. Marcy and I were both born in California, and immigrated to Canada decades earlier; Marcy actually lived just across the border in the United States, and commuted to work in Canada. Donna, Kelleen, Marianne, Kate and Katerina were born in Canada. In terms of reading race/ethnicity, most members were visibly of European heritage, with Sharon and Kari the two South Asian members of our group. Reading gender and age, we were all women and almost all of a certain age—in mid-life.¹ As indicated earlier, such readings obscure the heterogeneity and complexity of these socially marked categories.

Of those who were invited to join in September, Kelleen knew three of the teachers previously from a course she had taught, and the others were nominated by colleagues she contacted to ask for names of experienced, interested teachers who had learners of English in their classrooms. Three of the original six teachers continued doing directed reading courses

¹ Kate emphasized how "gender and age specific" this group was in her interview (p.8).

with Kelleen (through the activities of the group) for the first year of meetings. As well, for this first year, both Rossi and myself were paid research assistants under the SSHRC grant. Other benefits of membership included the subsidizing of substitutes for the teachers when we had half-day meetings later in the year. This was made possible through the research grant.

Meetings of TARG

TARG met weekly after school, for between one and a half to two hours, in a meeting room at the university (our meeting time was approximately 4 to 5:30 or 6 p.m.). Our first meeting was in the former faculty club of the university, which had prestigious (and expensive) meeting rooms. A magnificent view of the mountains, white tablecloth, catered hot and cold drinks marked this inaugural meeting. Subsequently, we met in a smaller meeting room in a conference centre close to a complex of classrooms and faculty offices. In January we moved to a meeting room within the Faculty of Education, close to the resource centre for the Faculty. In addition to our weekly meetings, we held half day meetings monthly beginning in March (March 8, April 5, May 3, June 7). Over the summer we met less frequently as a group, but worked in groups of two (graduate student and teacher) to write up the research projects into 'publishable' journal articles. We held two full day meetings in August (August 3 and 17).

In September 2000, we began with new classrooms and new research plans, building on the previous year's research. TARG continued to meet weekly to develop and discuss individual research projects and to give presentations as a group through its second and third years. Kelleen secured further funding to support it in its fourth year as a research team, and the group continues to meet every other week. Although this study focuses only on the first year of TARG's existence, I have remained a member of the group.

Data collection

Beginning in September 1999, I audio taped our weekly discussions, which lasted between one and a half to two hours. I roughly transcribed these tapes each week, and, using these transcriptions and my handwritten field notes from each week's session, prepared weekly Notes of what I viewed as 'highlights' of our discussions. The rough transcripts were between 15 to 40 pages long, while the Notes were a page or two at the most. These Notes of the previous week's discussion were photocopied and distributed to members at the beginning of each meeting. Sometimes we read these over to remind us of what we had discussed before starting our session; an agenda for the session might be included, but we did not necessarily follow or complete it. Thus, I was weekly building up three major sources: field notes, tapes and their transcripts, and distilled Notes for TARG's use.

My data sources also included audiotapes of one-on-one interviews, of small group meetings, and the videotape of our group's presentation at a nearby university on May 13, 2000. My field notes came from several sources: as mentioned above, my rough field notes of each

meeting; field notes documenting unrecorded one-on-one or small group conversations; field notes documenting my impressions of each teacher's class that I visited; and field notes completed during, but mostly after the one-on-one interviews with each participant, which were conducted in the late summer and fall of 2000. I also kept copies of emails exchanged between other members of the group and myself. Email was not used much by TARG as a whole, so these were limited for this first year (I saved only 3 from September through December, 1999 and 62 from January through August, 2000). The majority of these were emails between Rossi, Kelleen and myself. We set up a TARG group email list in the fall of 2000 to send messages to the group as a whole.

My data also included the scripts for our May 13 presentation—both the rough drafts we worked on and the final drafts we presented. In addition, I collected copies of the teachers' writing about their research projects that they brought on various occasions to the weekly meetings. I also had the videotape Kate had made of the presentation.

Because I transcribed each discussion weekly, my data included my own transcriber annotations at the time of transcribing. These annotations recorded my memory and impressions of voice tones or gestures; they were aided by the field notes I took during the sessions, which included a map of how we were seated around the table. I also occasionally typed in notes of my thoughts about the data while transcribing.

The weekly page of Notes I prepared for the meetings were based on a combination of my rough handwritten field notes and on my selection of 'highlights' from the transcripts. This selection involved a rough coding of the transcripts, looking for themes and links in the discussions. The Notes always recorded who was present. I made an effort to tie the Notes to the agenda we set out for the session and to include contributions from as many participants as possible. They could provide someone who had been absent with a sense of the major topics of discussion.

My data also included my own presentation on my dissertation as a work-in-progress at the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Annual Conference in March 2000. In preparation for this presentation TARG engaged in a focused discussion, reflecting on the group itself, which informed my presentation. After that conference, I reported on how the presentation went, and presented to TARG what I had said, which generated another discussion focused on the group itself. As we prepared for the May 13 presentation of TARG's work at the Investigating our Practices Conference, we also reflected on the group itself. I gathered the written drafts and final drafts of presentation scripts. I recorded and transcribed small group meetings held in preparation for this conference. Throughout the year, I recorded, transcribed and took field notes from small group meetings between Rossi, Kelleen, and myself, and between Kelleen and myself, to discuss TARG and what kinds of support were needed.

I was able to create a multi-faceted portrait of the group's activities through these various sources:

- field notes
- audio tapes and transcriptions of meetings (weekly and small group)
- my notations while transcribing
- the writing teacher/researchers brought to the meetings
- our presentation on videotape (including drafts of each person's script)
- one-on-one interviews with each participant
- e-mails

My field notes, transcriber notations and data analysis notes were produced for my own use. The weekly meeting Notes, writing brought to the group, and presentations were for the group and/or a larger public. The interviews and small group meetings and emails represented more private discussions. Most of these sources (field notes, tapes/transcripts, texts generated at the site) represented traditional ethnographic methods of field study.

Being a participant observer in this group enriched my data collection. As I transcribed, and as I listened to the tapes again during data analysis phase, I could picture the person speaking and remember being there at the time. As mentioned earlier, a preliminary 'coding' took place as I prepared the weekly Notes. My role as note taker attuned my attention to who said what, to content and connections between one week's discussion and the next.

Data analysis

Although my data analysis can be said to have begun while I transcribed and prepared Notes weekly for each session, I waited until after I had finished transcribing and coding the one-on-one interviews in the fall of 2000 to go through the entire data base of transcribed weekly sessions again. I read through all the transcripts of weekly discussions from September 1999 through August 2000. This represented 34 sessions, or approximately 80 hours of talk. Since the transcripts were rough, I listened again to parts of each session. I made corrections to some sections. I also read the Notes I had prepared at the time for each weekly session.

As I read and listened to each session, I made a set of Analysis Notes. These included a chronological overview of the session (e.g., "We watch Donna's video" ATAnalysisApr/00, p.1). I also listed some 'events' in the interactions that might be interesting (e.g. "Sharon apologizes to Katerina for taking the floor" AT Analysis Jan-Mar00, p.15). I noted who was missing that day and/or the timing and identity of late arrivals or early departures, as well as some contextual details (e.g. "before starting formally, talk about pop-up books Katerina has brought" AT Analysis Jan-Mar00, p.25). I excerpted short exchanges of some interactions. I wrote an overview of my impression of the session as a whole at the time of analysis. I made notes when my impression on listening again to the audiotape confirmed or contradicted my original impression when

transcribing, especially if I had included a transcriber notation of my response at time of transcribing. I compared the transcripts to the weekly Notes, noting what had been included or omitted from the page of 'highlights.' This preliminary stage of analysis took four months.

Reading through, listening and thinking about the transcripts in order gave me a sense of how discussions developed over time. I divided my analysis into sections, to make the units more manageable: September through December; January through March; April to May 18; May 29 through June; and August (we didn't meet as a group in July). April to May 18 included the preparation for our May 13 presentation; from April through June we had four half-day sessions; both the August sessions were longer half-day sessions. Since our talk over time began to refer to previous discussions and assume background knowledge within the group, following the chronology of the transcripts helped me to reconstruct 'what happened' in this first year.

Representing the meetings

Several conditions impinged on my eventual representation of TARG's weekly meetings. Our discussions were very free flowing and difficult to synthesize, and thus difficult to represent. I had tried to synthesize them in the page or two of weekly Notes I had carefully constructed and condensed, but they could not cover all that had occurred. In producing the Notes, I was concerned to develop group cohesion. This was partly shown in my efforts to include contributions from most of the participants each time. I wanted to record the group's 'work' and to remind participants of the major issues or points raised each week. I saw the group's work as discussing research literature, and then as designing, implementing, analyzing, and presenting the research projects. These concerns and desires were present in my selection and wording of what I saw as 'highlights' from each session. When I did the data analysis, I often found that the Notes did not reflect conflict and difficult interactions very well (if at all), but rather emphasized the research-related aspect of discussions. Reading through the transcripts, listening to the tapes, and referring to my field notes, I was able to note our more difficult interactions. I also used emails and interview data to fill out my analysis of the interpersonal and affective interactions between members of the group.

Interview data

In addition to data from meetings, I was also able to connect group discussions to individuals' comments in interviews. My interview questions (see Appendix A) had asked about the social relations in the group, and I was able to compare individuals' impressions of their own affiliations (as reported in the interviews) with the kinds of interactions that took place in the discussions. Members reflected on their experience of TARG and about their sense of their own participation within the group and I compared this with the discussion transcript data. Members

also described how they viewed the group and its discussions. I compared these individual reflections about the group to the focused group discussions we had in our meetings on the group itself. I also compared different participants' answers to the interview questions, and noted differences and similarities between each member's answers. Some members emphasized a particular aspect of the group, while others concentrated on another. I developed 'themes' or major issues of concern to each participant that came forward in the individual interviews. These 'themes' I then compared to the kinds of issues that had seemed to be repeatedly mentioned by individuals in the group sessions. By comparing the interviews with the group discussions, I was able to develop a richer picture of the interactions and the practices within the group over this first year. The interviews took place at the end of the first year, and each person spoke about their experience of the first year as a whole. However, fresh in their memories were the immediate past activities of writing papers on the first year's projects. In most cases, there was also a looking forward to the second year's work as well.

My presentations and papers

My interests and thus my selection of data cannot be separated from the research questions that guided my inquiry, and from the theoretical concerns I outlined in Chapter 1. The presentations and papers I produced during this year (2000) informed my data analysis. I presented my work-in-progress in March (at the TESOL conference mentioned earlier), in May at the Canadian Association for the Study of Language and Learning Annual Conference (Inkshed), and in June at the Canadian Society for Studies in Education Annual Conference. I also wrote my comprehensive examinations in March. Thus, I was continuing to develop my theoretical framework for my inquiry into this site, while still gathering data from this first year. Later presentations and preparation of publications as well as my continuing participation in TARG also informed my on-going analysis. Starting in the summer of 2001, I participated in TARG less intensely. I stopped taking weekly Notes for the group. I needed to draw back and to concentrate on analyzing my data.

Focusing in on specifics

One arbitrary, analytical boundary that defines this study was that my data was collected only from the first year of TARG's existence. This had been agreed in discussion with my supervisor, Kelleen, as one way to limit the scope of this study. Having a year of data, and further dividing it into smaller chronological chunks for analysis, led me to reflecting on the shape of the first year. As I considered how participation in this community of practice developed over time, I noted a pivotal point in this journey, when we changed from reading about research to doing research—which began in January 2000. I also noticed another threshold, when we presented our work to a larger audience at the conference in May. Throughout my participant

observation, transcribing, and data analysis I noticed the recurrence and the resilience of narratives about the classroom experience in our conversations, throughout the various activities of TARG (reading, researching, writing, etc.). These themes of participation in community, ongoing narratives, and presentation of our work emerged from my on-going data analysis, which in turn was enriched by my continuing theoretical engagement with issues of identification, performativity, and representation.

Researching researchers: Representing our collaboration

The overarching questions in this study are epistemological and ethical: how do we know (a discursive analysis of the production of knowledge) and what are the effects of our representations (how we represent what we know) in the world. Based in a social justice framework, collaborations like TARG hold a promise: to democratize research relations, challenge traditional hierarchies of knowledge, and open up creative spaces for exciting and useful inquiry. This dissertation analyzes the activities of this collaboration in relation to these powerful hopes.

I interpreted the data I had gathered within this critical and political framework. Thus, my methodological concerns in producing this particular representation of TARG resonate with an alternative normative framework of democratization and transformation of knowledge-making practices. A tension arises, however, because my representation must satisfy the requirements for a dissertation. Produced for academic readers who are gatekeepers of their profession, this thesis operates within very particular constraints. The successful completion of a dissertation confers a certain degree of privilege and power. Thus, although I align with marginalized and alternative epistemologies, the very production of this document confers increased authority, and has very real material effects upon my life and my relations in the world. These effects will not be equally distributed across the group of women that I did the research with. As I suggested in Chapter 1, however much we have theorized beyond the binaries of theory/practice, the privileged referent secures its place in the material conditions of knowledge production and in structural and institutional formations. As a member of the community of differently situated researchers that is TARG, my particular differential position cannot be separated from my increasing affiliation with the university, and the "cultural capital"—the symbolic authority and material benefits this accrues (Bourdieu, 1991). I am the one who has studied 'us'— and that scholarly activity confers both authority and responsibility.²

My position as a doctoral student contained further complexities and contradictions due to the sponsored nature of this research collaboration (Kelleen's SSHRC grant funded TARG's activities). My obligations to this collaborative project were intertwined with my commitment to my

² I was the only one of the graduate students in TARG whose focus of research was the group itself.

doctoral work and to my relationship with Kelleen, as my graduate supervisor. I had an investment in the group continuing in some form, at least for a year, so that I could collect the data to write my thesis. However, my position as a participant observer, not as the 'leader' or 'initiator' of the group, distanced me from a sense of responsibility for the overall three-year project and a final report to the funding body. From an observer stance, the group could 'fail' to produce 'results,' and that would only make a different story. However, responding to affiliations beyond that of 'observer,' I continued to participate in and support TARG past the year that demarcated the data I had permission to use. For another year, I produced the weekly Notes, which I saw as one way to foster group cohesion and a sense of accomplishment. Over time, TARG's members have become friends as well as colleagues.

My presence in the group as a researcher and my participant observation had an impact on the group. Some of the ways I am aware of that impact arise directly from the attention I was giving to our activities. The tape recorder held the centre of our table: it was a constant reminder that our words were objects of study. This may have increased speakers' self-consciousness and also may have contributed to a sense that our talk was worth studying. I was immersed in transcribing in between each session and was often able to relate one week's conversation to a previous week's. Sometimes I would volunteer reports of our history, acting as an unofficial 'memory' for the group. Sometimes I backed up my statements with references, e.g. "you've talked before about [such and such]." This role of 'historian,' added to the weekly Notes, was another reminder that I was recording, listening, and noticing (some of) what members said.

In producing this document about TARG, I am also aware that its members are another audience for this study. They will read sections before it is finalized, and the final document will also be available to them. They have expressed interest in reading it. Knowing that the people whose conversations I have analyzed will read my interpretation has increased my reflexivity—I have questioned beyond my first impressions, in an attempt to understand fully and articulate my own stance as I write, and to take responsibility for my interpretations. While some might argue that this introduces a distortion or bias into my work, my experience is that this awareness of the need for respectful engagement has kept me more honest and scrupulous with my handling of the 'data.' I have had an immediate sense of my social responsibility as a researcher, of my accountability to those I researched (Fine, et. al. 2000).

I began this chapter by suggesting that the obligation to situate myself in my study arises from the particular discursive conditions of writing qualitative research at this historical time. The self-consciousness of social responsibility is another of those conditions, along with the deep questioning of ethnographic authority, characterized as a crisis of representation. As I conclude this chapter, I discuss some of these methodological issues further.

Ethnographic representation: Constructed tales

This study is situated in a time when qualitative research paradigms, responding to critiques from many sides, are in flux (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The poststructuralist rejection of an assumed link between experience and text undermines ethnographers' claims to "being there" (in the field), documenting the experience, and bringing it "here" (to the academy) (Geertz, 1988). Ethnography cannot claim to capture "the real already out there" (Britzman, 1995, p.237). Rather than telling the 'real' story, revealing the "construction scars" (Pinar & Pautz, 1998) of any "tale of the field" becomes the task (Van Maanen, 1988). In constructing tales, one uses (and improvises with) culturally available tools, which reflect a particular politics (de Certeau, 1984; Holland & Lave, 2001). As the telling of stories within particular contexts, the practices of ethnography cannot be separated from "the politics of recounting and being accountable" (Britzman 1995, p. 231). The social relations of the research act itself become part of the object of study. Acknowledging ethnography is "always a construction of self as well as of the other" (Stacey, 1991, p. 115) shifts the focus to the relations of our seeing (Fine, 1994) and raises issues of power, knowledge, and the negotiation of meanings within local contexts.

Postcolonial theorists point not only to the failures of ethnography to represent the 'real' but also to its violence. They name ethnography a tool of colonization, a form of domination that inscribes colonial and paternalistic relations, and produces an 'other' to serve the interests of a Western hegemony (e.g., Spivak, 1996; Trinh Minh-ha, 1989; Pratt, 1992). Responding to feminist and postcolonial critiques, new forms attempt to disrupt "reading practices that consume the object and position the researcher as authoritative knower" (Lather, 1998, p.7). This reconceptualized social science attempts to "occupy the very space opened up by the ruin of the concept of ethnographic representation," to 'work the ruins'—to practice qualitative research while questioning its foundations (Lather, 1997, p.301).

Challenged by these critical and political stances, ethnography is no longer seen as reporting on culture, but as producing the culture it reports. "The narrative turn in the social sciences has been taken, we have told our tales from the field, and we understand today that we write culture" (Denzin, 2000, p.898). Traditionally, ethnographies purported to study a field and report findings that increased our knowledge of the world. Narratives, on the other hand, can be seen as spinning a good tale and persuading readers of the verisimilitude of their constructed world; they may also contribute insights and increase our understandings of *human* worlds in particular. Joining these two together into the term 'ethnographic narratives' points to the destabilization of claims to knowledge and the rhetorical nature of any writing.

Deborah Britzman (1995) offers further ways to understand ethnographic narratives, drawing on Foucault's (1972) concept that discourses are "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (p.49). She states, "I now think of ethnography as a regulating fiction" (Britzman, 1995, p.236). In calling ethnography a fiction Britzman asserts, like others, that

ethnography is "a particular narrative practice" (Ibid.). Britzman also claims that this practice has a regulatory power; it "produces textual identities and regimes of truth" (Ibid.). The participants described in ethnographies are 'textual identities' produced for the narrative. Ethnographic narratives, Britzman claims, can be further described by applying Foucault's (1980) concept of a regime of truth—a "system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements" (p.133). Regimes of truth function through

the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (Foucault, 1980, p.131).

These discursive means administer the production of 'truth,' e.g. how to distinguish more or less 'true' stories in ethnography. Applying Foucault's concept of the regulatory power of discursive practices, Britzman (1995) claims,

admits a significant problem ignored by traditional ethnographic narratives, namely the inevitable tensions of knowledge as partial, as interested, and as performative of relations of power. This returns us to the clashing investments in how stories are told and of the impossibility of telling everything (p.236).

Acknowledging this politics of representation and language restricts the claims possible within qualitative research. Despite these limits, Britzman argues that it is still necessary to practice ethnography:

The reason we might do ethnography, then, is . . . to trouble confidence in being able to 'observe' behavior, 'apply the correct technique,' and 'correct' what is taken as a mistake. Ethnographic narratives should trace how power circulates and surprises, theorize how subjects spring from the discourses that incite, and question the belief in representation even as one must practice representation as a way to intervene critically in the constitutive constraints of discourses (Ibid.).

We have a responsibility to 'intervene critically in the constitutive constraints of discourses,' while understanding our representations as partial, partisan, and participating in the production of knowledge/power. Ethnography is a practice that *matters*, that has material as well as discursive effects.

At this point in time, Denzin (2000) argues, "it is necessary to reengage the promise of qualitative research and interpretive ethnography as forms of radical democratic practice" (p.898). Understanding that writing "is not an innocent practice," we can attempt to engage in representation to imagine a better world, to "use language in a way that brings people together" (Ibid. p.898, 899). I am committed to a "politics of hope" that not only criticizes how things are but also imagines how they could be different and better (Denzin, 2000, p.916). I have a concern to "give back" to this group that has not only given me the 'data' for my thesis, but also much more: their interest, support and friendship over the years (Campbell, et. al., 1992).

In writing this dissertation, I am not attempting to remain innocent: I acknowledge my complicity, even as I try to practice representation as ethically as possible. I am aware that my study of TARG has effects on my own life and the life of the group, effects that can be known and acknowledged, others that remain unconscious and others that are yet to be known. My concern is that I remember my responsibility to and my care for the lives of those I study. My ideal is to keep a critical edge while also creating a text that "addresses and demonstrates the benevolence and kindness that people should feel toward one another" (Joyce, 1987, p.344, quoted in Denzin, p.899). I acknowledge this as a utopian ideal: it describes the direction that pulls me more than the messy terrain that is the work of representation.

I see my thesis as one story among many; there are many other stories to tell about TARG. This thesis can be read like a 'page turner:' organized chronologically, it tells a story of a year in the life of a teacher/researcher collaboration. A certain 'what happens next?' tension is built into my telling. My data collection and analysis contributed to this narrative similitude of a year's journey. However, as I have suggested, there are reasons why I tell this tale and not others, why I selected certain themes. My attention to language use within a collaborative group's conversations, within a setting founded on values of inclusion and equity, raises questions about the actual practices of inclusion. This is my story, and it comes from my life's attentiveness to practices of speaking/writing, listening/reading and what remains outside the bounds of intelligibility.

The first year in the life of this community: Overview of chapters

This thesis is organized as an analyzed narrative of the first year in the life of this community. I analyze the material and discursive contexts of our conversations, looking at the activities of this collaborative teacher research community and how they unfolded within a particular time and space.

Material and discursive conditions of community

Chapter 3 describes the formation of this community, the calendar of activities in this first year, and explores how space/time and place formed and informed our research community. Reconstructing a 'typical meeting,' I use this reconstruction to analyze the ways we used space, how we 'made do' within material and discursive conditions, and came to understand how to participate in this community. I use interview data of members' reflections about participation and social relations in TARG to show some kinds of identifications that were made possible/impossible in TARG.

Learning to do collaborative research: Meta-genre

Continuing with my discursive analysis, in Chapter 4 I turn to questions about 'doing research': what counted as a good research question in TARG? This particular research team,

situated in the critical, political strand of teacher research discussed in Chapter 1, had its local standards, which became apparent as we collaboratively designed our first classroom-based projects. I use the concept of meta-genre ("talk about genres") to analyze how we came to understand 'how to do research' in TARG (Giltrow, 2002b, p.187)

Teacher narratives: A story telling group

In Chapter 5, I examine the use of teacher narratives in TARG. My background in new rhetorical genre theory led me to think about what these stories were 'doing'—to see them as a situated action responding to exigencies of this local discourse community. I investigate some of the stories of TARG's first year together as such social actions, or genres (C. Miller, 1984, 1994). Some stories thrived in the discursive space of TARG, and some were less fortunate. Chapter 5 analyzes stories told (and untold) and the reception stories received in our conversations.

Presenting our work

As we prepared for our first presentation at a teacher/research conference, we began to reflect more on 'what we were doing' and how to communicate this. In Chapter 6, I discuss how we represented our selves and our work for a public performance. The discursive frameworks that encouraged certain practices of self-identification, narrative and research design within this particular setting were set in larger institutional, social and cultural discourses about teaching and research. When the occasion arose to present our work to a larger audience, we used available discursive resources, choosing certain stories to represent our community.

Producing publishable articles

At the end of our first year, we 'wrote up' the research projects, working collaboratively to produce articles for publication. This last activity of this year led us down a narrowed path which seemed to exacerbate a divide between those who had a particular kind of knowledge and those who did not. In Chapter 7, I examine the struggles within TARG as larger discourses of expertise and authority articulated with the expectations and investments of this community.

Chapter 3: Forming 'community'

This chapter begins with a vignette that describes my impression of the 'setting' for TARG's weekly sessions. To write this sketch I used pseudonyms for myself (Sandy) and for Kelleen (Elizabeth). In this carefully reconstructed 'typical meeting,' many signifiers demonstrate both how time and space shape the group and how the group's interactions are shaped by these conditions.

Afternoons around an oval table in a blue room on a hill

With a stack of folders and papers crooked in her left arm, and a heavy plastic bag swinging and crackling in her right hand, Sandy hurried down the grey hallway and into the open, carpeted resource room where brightly coloured computer monitors gathered around hexagonal tables. She walked quickly to the back of the room, down a short hallway, and into the Blue Room. The 'blue' was for filming and video; this room always housed some extra equipment overflowing from the video and audio editing rooms also along the hallway. Blue walls and long dark blue curtains along the wall opposite the door completed the enclosure – a wall of dark curtain (a backdrop for filming) covered a tiny, high narrow strip of windows, the only windows to the outside. Sandy felt a bit claustrophobic, and quickly pushed the heavy curtain aside at one end to let in some of the late afternoon light.

No one was here yet, and Sandy was relieved to find the large oval wooden table empty: still time to set up the tape recorder before anyone arrived. To get organized, to appear calm and welcoming, to set the stage. Soon, after a day's work, women would settle into the upholstered blue chairs, and transform this bland, monochromatic room with animated talk and laughter. Everyone who wasn't already at the university for work already would travel from the west and the south across the city, through the beginning of rush hour traffic, up the hill to campus. To the ivory tower up the hill, a conglomeration of large, mostly concrete boxes surrounded by hillsides of forest, removed from the colourful, chaotic bustle of a neighbourhood. What did it feel like to drive up here, find parking always at a premium, and then hurry down the hallways to this blue room, this big table, and these plush blue chairs? Care-taking again, Sandy thought. I care that everyone feels comfortable and wants to come, even though I always feel awkward trying to do the gracious, welcoming thing. Everyone does seem to want to come . . .

Sandy placed the black plastic bag down carefully, and began to unpack it. Just then Rossi came in the room, "I was looking for you in the office, but you'd already gone. Do you need any help?"

"No, I've got everything, thanks." Sandy set the microphone in the centre of the table on a pad of white lined paper to absorb sound, and parceled out copies of the Notes from last week's session, one in front of each chair.

"I just saw Marcy and Donna in the hall; they've gone to get coffee" Rossi said, settling into a chair. Katerina came through the door saying, "Hi." Then Elizabeth, plunking her papers on the end of the table and saying, "Hi, everyone, I'm just going to run and get some tea."

"Marcy and Donna are getting coffee, you might see them there" Rossi said.

"Good, they're here. I'll hurry back." Elizabeth exited the door and Kate entered, carrying her white spiral notebook, daybook and a coffee cup, saying hello. Sandy was handing out copies of the Notes from last week to Katerina and Rossi, and putting one in front of each place. She carefully labeled a new 90-minute tape with the date and "Teacher Research Group," put it in the recorder and tested that the mike and the machine were working. People came in with coffee and tea, greeting each other and talking together.

Elizabeth sat at one end of the large oval table, with her back to the door. She faced the eight of us clustered and a bit crowded around the table, with our papers, notebooks, and cups of coffee or bottles of water. Sandy took up a lot of space—microphone, tape recorder, headphones to check that everything was working, an extra blank tape within reach, a pad of paper to take Notes, and copies of handouts or readings.

By a little after 4 p.m. almost everyone was here: Elizabeth, Sharon, Sandy, Donna, Marcy, Kate, Rossi, and Katerina. Everyone was talking in groups of two or three and/ or reading the Notes. Kari arrived, saying, "Hi, sorry, I'm late. Oh, the traffic!" A chorus of "hi" and "hello" greeted her as she walked over and sat in the chair next to Kate. "We weren't even started yet" reassured Elizabeth, "we were just looking at the Notes from last week. So, shall we start now? Where shall we start?"

In the momentary pause, a set of micro interactions took place: Katerina looked up smiling, Marcy scanned the table, Kate sat quietly, Rossi glanced across at Sandy, who was moving her papers to make more room for Sharon. Sharon was still reading the Notes; Kari looked up in that moment from her reading, and Donna gave Sandy a sideways glance and small smile. We were all here, poised for one second, ready.

Marcy said, "Well, I've been thinking about something that I just can't figure out what to do about this week. There is this little boy in my class..." And the story began. A little boy who never spoke in class, and the other kids always answered for him. "Robbie doesn't talk," they'd say. Marcy wasn't sure what to do. Kari had a similar story to tell, and so did Donna. The talk swirled on. Katerina asked if the boy's hearing had been tested. Rossi asked questions about how this little boy is perceived in the class. Donna related the situation to her work with special needs kids. Elizabeth exclaimed, "How interesting this is," and talked about how it reminded her of some other research. Kate wondered when she could come in and videotape. Sandy

commented on how this situation seems similar to the one Marcy brought up a few weeks ago, about another child who was silent.

And so the session began. If the session was music, it would be jazz improvisation, everyone taking a turn at the solo, everyone backing each other up with sounds that harmonized or clashed, with fast rhythms of talking, and slow moments of thinking it out, long running-together phrases, finished by others. And there would be choruses of laughter, different kinds of laughter. Some explosions, with everyone full throated, full throttle, the sound of bodies moving back and forth on chairs. Other softer choruses of laughter, arpeggios of giggles, chortles. There would be exclamations: "Yes, yes!" or "oh, no!" or "oh!" Sounds of enthusiasm, or dismay, or distress as the talk wove its own tones and rhythms. There would be repeated riffs, recognizable after weekly sessions. There would be the statement of theme at the beginning, mostly not spoken in words, but cued by the shape of the table, the quiet room at the end of the hall, the time of day, after work, end of the day, the gathering in comfy chairs in a circle, facing each other each week.

An hour and a half later, Elizabeth jumped into a pause left open in a moment between talking to say, "Well, it's already time to wind up; the time really flies by, doesn't it?" And, thus, a 'typical meeting' might come to a close.

Spoken in space, spoken in time

TARG's weekly meetings developed a shape to them that was cued by space and time. Each meeting began, not only with words (e.g., "Let's start"), but also with a wordless theme, **spoken in space**: the oval table, facing each other in comfy chairs, the quiet room at the end of the hall. And **spoken in time**, by repetition, by weekly spending time together at the end of the work day, between work and home—time set aside to talk together.

In analyzing the space/time of TARG, recent feminist work about gender, geography, and place provides new ways to think about 'space' inseparable from time, space as dynamic and changing, rather than fixed and static (Boler, 2001; Massey, 1994; MacDowell, 1999). Bakhtin's (1981) concept of the chronotope (literally time/space), also emphasizes the "intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships" (p.84), and links "place, time and human values" and actions (Schryer, 2002, p.75).

New ways of thinking about space/time in relation to social interactions are opened up by a definition of 'place' "in part as 'localities' which are shared social spaces" (Boler, 2001, p.1). Our afternoons around an oval table in a blue room on a hill can be understood as "articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings" (Massey, 1994, p.154). The time of the day lent itself to de-briefing a day's work, particularly as many group members arrived after their full days in elementary school classrooms. Afternoons between school/work and home were times of transition, where one could make connections between events and put them in perspective. The oval table was a powerful shaping force, signaling both the kinds of talk (face-

to-face, interactive) and the ethics of the group—maximizing horizontal connections, flattening hierarchies. The table was such a sign for the group's conversations that when we did a presentation in another room at the university, we took the table with us.

Meeting "on the hill" also figured in structuring the group. Teachers traveled across town through traffic, while university workers usually arrived at the university earlier in the day and walked from their offices at 4 p.m. While this privileged those already on campus, the location was not arbitrarily determined. At our first meeting (September 21, 1999), we negotiated where to meet. Elementary schools represented by the teachers present were far flung across a wide metropolitan area. Schools did not have rooms set up for after school meetings unrelated to the schools' functioning. Although the university was not a 'central' location, it did offer several meeting room possibilities. Our first meeting was in a restaurant on campus with lovely views, but very large conference rooms, expensive and not always available. Through the fall of 1999, we met in a smaller room separate from classroom/office buildings, which often felt deserted. We smuggled in food (there was a sign posted about no food except for that catered by campus services) throughout the fall. Bringing food, we claimed space for the vital presence of pleasure and connection, bringing a 'kitchen table' ethic to institutional surfaces. Food was subversive: noisy, smelly, its liquid stickiness dangerous to precise electrical and mechanical workings of the microphone and tape recorder. Research technology and communal food shared the centre of the table uneasily.

In January 2000, we settled in the Blue Room and remained there for our usual weekly meetings. Although surrounded by relentless blue, we animated this room and made it 'home' over time. It was both near and far from university activity, down a hallway at the back of a resource room. We used its secluded quality to protect and nurture our free-floating discussions, but it was still close enough to grab a coffee or make a quick photocopy, and the TV/VCR was always available. The plush upholstered chairs we sat in were part of the prestige and privilege of being at the university. Like the heavy wooden oval table, they were designed for 'important meetings.' Group members would sometimes sigh and sink with pleasure and exhaustion into these chairs as they arrived.

'The blue room on a hill' was thus "constructed out of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus" (Massey, 1994, p.154). Social relations of the university, "a site for the reproduction of power and privilege" (Bannerji, et. al., 1991, p. 5), intersected with social relations of women after work gathering around a table to talk. An oval 'important meeting' table encountered a relaxed and relaxing 'kitchen table'. These different social relations and processes interacted with each other. Our meeting room was constructed "out of the intersections and interactions of concrete social relationships and social processes in a situation of co-presence" (Massey, 1994, p.138). As Massey (1994) argues, places "will contain (indeed in part will be *constituted by*) difference and conflict" (p.139).

Produced as a destination through corridor and cross-city journeys, our meeting place linked different workplaces. As a destination 'off to the side' of institutional activities, the Blue Room suited our subversive proclivities; as a destination inscribing drives through rush hour traffic, it re-installed the university as centre. The place where we met contained contradictions: it was both reproducing privileged academic sites and also performing strategic interventions that challenged that reproduction. The institutional setting conferred authority on our 'kitchen table' talk, while our informal meetings unsettled some of the traditional practices that mark 'important gatherings.'

The chronotope

Bakhtin's (1981) concept of the chronotope also provides a useful way to analyze how time and space shaped our weekly meetings. Bakhtin claims that "motif of meeting is one of the most universal motifs," appearing not only in literature, but in other areas of culture, everyday life, religion, science (as the concept of contact), and also in the life of social and governmental organizations (p.97). In the chronotope of meeting, temporal and spatial markers are fused and the personal is joined to the historical. Encounters between people intersecting at a specific place/time carry a high degree of "emotional and evaluative intensity" (Ibid. p.243). Often these encounters take place 'on the road' or as part of a journey (real or metaphorical).

The meetings of TARG participated in this chronotope of encounter or meeting, both in their intensity of interaction and also as part of the (metaphorical) journey of the group over the year. Phrases such as "well, it's already time to wind up; the time really flies by, doesn't it?" often signaled the ending of our intense dialogue. The sense of each meeting as part of a larger chain of events might be signaled by farewells, 'see you next week,' or by references during the discussion to previous meetings. The Notes prepared from each meeting, and read at the beginning of the next meeting provided textual trail markers along the road.

TARG meetings also participated in other chronotopes or time/space motifs Bakhtin (1981) identified in literature. The idyllic chronotope found in the little world of the family novel was used to contrast between "warm little corners of human feeling and kindness" and a "great, cold, alien world" of depersonalized relationships (p.233). Our attempts to foster such a "warm little corner" amidst the grey, institutional (but important) setting of the university can be seen as such a strategy. Bakhtin uses his concept of the chronotope to analyze Rabelaisian novels, which he argues, use the power of laughter to forge a new human collective. Laughter cleanses and releases, sweeping away constraints—"limitations are . . . laughed out of existence" (p.240). Laughter creates time/space open "to a free unfolding of [human] possibilities" (p.240). As a repeated marker of TARG discussions, laughter shaped how we animated our afternoons around an oval table in a blue room on a hill. Laughter transformed the institutional setting, warmed the cold blue room, and brought 'the hill' as a symbol of 'higher learning' closer to earth and to the warmth of human encounter.

This analysis of an instance of meeting was set in our overall journey through a year of weekly meetings. As we traveled through this year, we were developing membership in this community of practice, learning who we could be and what we could do within this local setting.

Journey over a year in the life of the group

And he sailed off through night and day/ and in and out of weeks/ and almost over a year/... (Sendak, 1963).

As mentioned in Chapter 2, TARG was introduced in September 1999 as a three-year project: members were invited to join with the hope that they would voluntarily continue to participate. The arbitrary 'stop' created for the purpose of studying this first year is only an analytical tool. As such, it may tend to give an artificial unity to this representation. Focusing on a year as a journey also may also overly emphasize a trajectory of development. I will argue that in some ways the building of community did develop over time. However, this was a recursive process, and not one without struggle. The analytic 'stop' did not impact the community and consensus building, which continued on after this first year, and some aspects of the first year were built upon while some were not. This 'building' was not masonry, but more like cooking a meal without reading a recipe—sometimes it worked well and there were frequent surprises.

The first year of TARG's journey as a collaborative research community provided a particular space/time that influenced not only what we did but also who we became. I have described some ways that the time and place of a 'typical meeting' influenced our conversations. We met after school, after work, and so were ready to 'de-brief' our days; we met at an institution of research, to talk about research; we sat around a table, face-to-face, an open invitation for each to talk and listen to others. We also used the institutional space in some unexpected ways. We actively 'made do' with what was given—"poaching ... on the property of others" in a sense (de Certeau, 1984, p.xii). We created a modified kitchen table atmosphere in a meeting room on the margins of the Faculty's centre of activity. While space/time influenced our meetings, we also were inventive within these givens.

Like the instance of one meeting, the year as a whole can also be seen as a historicized space. Bakhtin's chronotope of meeting includes the sense of journey, of an encounter "on the road". De Certeau (1984) understands space as a set of places to walk through. Our first year as a group together was a journey moving through and also creating particular discursive spaces. I use de Certeau's view of walking as an "enunciation" (based on a model of speech acts) in my analysis of the year's conversations because it allows for invention even within constraints of material and discursive contexts (p.33). There are the places and paths that have already been laid, and then there is the walking through them, the myriad uses that are made of what is given. Walking through the city the pedestrian creates a poem—"the long poem of walking manipulates

spatial organizations” (p.101). As a person moves through space/time, through the everyday, her articulated movement joins situation with activity.

In the first year of TARG, two of the given walkways were the institutional space/times of school and university. As well, the plan for the group, as outlined within the parameters of the research project, provided a well-laid path. Our purpose as a group—to do research—also formed a certain grid to follow.

Calendars

As might be expected in a collaboration between people working in a university and in the K-12 system, institutional calendars influenced our meetings and our conversations. The elementary school year is a well-maintained road, with new students filling classrooms in September, holiday break in December, parent-teacher conferences and reporting times in fall and spring, May/June special events and saying good-byes. Holidays were marked in this year as well, partly because we needed to plan our meeting times around the days off, but mostly because these were celebrated in elementary classrooms and became part of conversations. The elementary school calendar also affected data gathering and participants’ visits to each other’s classrooms. As well as the elementary school year, the university’s academic year played out in TARG during the first year in particular, because some of the members were getting university credit through the Faculty of Education’s Field Programs Department for their participation in TARG. Of the five teachers involved throughout this first year, four were getting credit. There were forms to fill out in September, January and May, as the university had a trimester system, with year-round semesters beginning every 4 months. These were ungraded courses (pass/fail), with Kelleen as the supervisor/professor. This academic year might also be echoed in the way participants ‘did their reading’ (or, more rarely, commented if they hadn’t); in carrying out a research project and then writing about it. Although we continued to meet during semester breaks, and seemed to be ‘camping out’ or ‘poaching’ in de Certeau’s words, on university property regardless of the academic calendar, the regular round of semesters had some impact on TARG.

The research plan

Kelleen’s original research proposal for the grant that was supporting TARG’s work also contained a plan, another set path to follow. This research plan roughly corresponded to a standard ‘grid’ for producing qualitative ethnography: read the literature, gather and analyze the data, present and/or write up the research. In this first year of TARG, these three stages can be discerned, roughly dividing the year into sections. As members of TARG walked through this ‘research grid,’ we created our own ‘poem’ of footsteps, to borrow de Certeau’s (1984) metaphor; we manipulated and made use of this given space.

From the beginning in September until December, we read and discussed literature. This stage will be discussed further later in this chapter. The next stage, documenting and analyzing classroom practices, began in January 2000. The services of an experienced video ethnographer were made available and video data was collected from each classroom until the end of the school year in June. Videos and transcriptions of classroom interactions were brought to the group and discussed; research problems and dilemmas were talked through, and research questions refined. In the third stage, roughly May to August, we 'went public' with our research. In May we gave our first presentation as a group at a conference for teacher/researchers, teacher educators, and graduate students at a nearby university. Over the summer our joint activity was to write up the first year's research projects for publication. The second and third stages overlap, because we began preparing to present while data collection and analysis continued. The months of April, May and June were a mixture of preparing and discussing our presentation, while also winding up the school year, and data gathering from classrooms. After school ended in June, the summer months were spent in 'writing up' each research project.

Within these three stages the elementary school year (September to June), the academic trimester calendar (September to December/January to April/May to August), and the research plan (literature review/data collection and analysis/presentation and publication) overlapped, as the following table indicates.

Academic Calendar	September - December Fall 1999	January - April Spring 2000	May - August Summer 2000
Elementary School Year	September to end of June		
Research Plan	Literature Review Sept - Dec	Research design; data collection to June; *May presentation; On-going data analysis	July- Aug Writing

Table 1. Overlapping Calendars

Becoming 'TARG' within material and discursive spaces

I see our journey through the first year as a material and discursive space that encouraged certain kinds of identification and membership. Throughout our journey we were occupied in ongoing 'identity work'—the "historical production, transformation and change of persons"—that formed trajectories of becoming within TARG (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p.51). The

itinerary of our research (literature review, research design, data collection/analysis, presentation and 'writing up' each project for publication) motivated the production and transformation of certain identity destinations, as we participated in learning to do research together. This itinerary describes a ready-made road; the institutional calendars of school and university can be seen as seasonal changes along our route. In the next section, I discuss the material and discursive space of 'reading and discussing' (literature review), the first activity we engaged in together as we were becoming TARG members.

Stage 1: Reading and discussing literature

The activity of reading structured this first place or stage on TARG's journey. Through this 'literature review' we were building a common foundation of knowledge that would provide the basis for our later collaborative research activity. These first meetings were also a time of 'getting to know each other' as unfamiliar faces became familiar faces around the table. As in most beginnings, fragility marked this first stage. We could still 'fly apart;' whether or not we would 'jell' as a group was still an open question. Transcripts from this time show our hesitancies; later transcripts, in comparison, seem raucous with overlapping talk and laughter.

Through our readings and discussion we were building a consensus about what kinds of research and what kinds of practice were valued in this group. We were describing the pathways we would walk; familiarizing each other with children that peopled the teachers' daily classroom life, and abiding concerns that rented space in academic heads. The kinds of reading we would do were a significant factor in the assumptions we built up about research and teaching.

We started by reading Vivian Paley's (1992) *You Can't Say You Can't Play*. Paley has written many books reflecting on her teaching practice; this one focuses on her attempts to deal with hurtful, excluding behaviours in her primary classroom. Her work resonated with the kinds of practices we were discussing weekly. Her guideline for creating an inclusive classroom community, captured in the title, was often referred to as the group discussed issues of inclusion and exclusion. This simple rubric of inclusion was questioned and critiqued as well (AT Analysis, Jan-Mar, p.30). However, it remained an easy slogan, carried with us, ready to invoke.

A rubric of inclusion

One example of how we applied this slogan to our own community of TARG occurred in March, six months after reading Paley. This was our first meeting after spring break (our previous meeting had been a half-day on March 8). We spent a lot of the opening time sharing news.

Excerpt from March 30, 2000

Kelleen: Well, before we get started on whatever we're going to do today, what I wondered, oh yeah, there is one more thing ... there's a graduate student here ... interested in teacher research and teacher education and

ESL and a lot of the things that you're interested in, sociocultural theory, and so on, and she wondered if she could come, could she join our group, could she come to the club.

Several voices: YES! YES!

Voice: [Okay with everyone

Donna: [You can't say you can't play

Kelleen: Okay? You can't say you can't play? ((*Several people chuckle in background*)) Okay, then I think she'll come next time, I told her I'd ask this time

Katerina: Tell her she can bring the goodies

Kelleen: Oh, that's a good idea, I will

Another voice: (That can be her) initiation

Kari: Initiation?

Kelleen: I'll tell her we always eat like this ((*General background laughter throughout this section*)) Her name is Marianne.

Marcy: Is she a teacher?

Kelleen: She is of adults, adult education. And we're going to meet next week on Wednesday afternoon, for the afternoon.

We continued talking about how we would arrange substitute teachers for next week's afternoon session. This excerpt shows how we invoked Paley's rubric to include a new TARG member.

Ethnographic research from a sociocultural perspective

Beginning in October 1999 and continuing through December, we read work published for a more academic audience. We read Donna Varga's (1998) "The dynamics of children's alienated play," published in the *Canadian Journal of Research in Early Childhood Education*, which argues that behaviours that facilitate (or block) play interactions between young children need to be understood in a sociocultural context, not as individual failures. Another early childhood education article, Mona Mathews' (1996), "Addressing issues of peer rejection in child-centered classrooms," examined the effect of social status on interactions within a K-2 classroom and also emphasized social factors. We next read Kelleen's (1996) "Learning English as a second language in kindergarten: A community of practice perspective," a case study of two children in kindergarten, which uses sociocultural theory to analyze access to opportunities for learning English and differences in home and school identities. We next read Kelleen's forthcoming book, *Learning English at school: Identity, social relations and classroom practices* (2000). This work described ethnographic research on young children's interactions and language use, not teacher research, but research by university-based researchers. Kelleen's

book provided the bulk of our reading. We left the first, theory-laden chapter until after we had read the 'data' chapters 2, 3, and 4, which follow the focal children through kindergarten, grade one and two. Its descriptions of classroom practices generated many discussions on daily life in the teachers' classrooms, as well as reminiscences of our own schooling experiences, or those of our children.

These studies on language research, which employ a sociocultural perspective and use ethnographic data collected in classrooms, introduced the group to a particular field of educational research. Seeing classrooms as "communities of practice" (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998), these authors examine complex interrelationships between learners, their activities and their classroom contexts. This research approach was intended to inform TARG's activities. Although this had been briefly mentioned at the very first meeting, it was further clarified at our seventh meeting, on November 4, 1999.

The transcript from which the following excerpt is taken demonstrated the hesitations in our first meetings in the fall of 1999. In my analysis, I was struck by the pauses between speakers, rather than our later talk's overlapping speech and choruses of laughter, indicating ease and a sense of belonging in the group. In this transcript for November 4, 1999, I noted for the first time "agreement sounds in background": this was my notation for the chorus of 'yeah/umhum/yeah/' by several people at once while someone else had the floor and continued speaking.

Excerpt from November 4, 1999

The session opened with Kelleen talking about how in the new year those who want to continue on would begin doing "teacher inquiry in people's classrooms" (ATNov4/99, p.1). Kelleen explained that the publisher of her book had asked for more about 'best' classroom practices. She didn't feel she could speak to these, and the grant to initiate and fund TARG for three years proposed to investigate practices *with* teachers. Here's an excerpt in which Kelleen responds to Marcy's request for more information about the overall plan for the group:

Marcy: One of the things I'm wondering, I still don't feel clear what your purpose was in starting the group and that would be helpful for me to know because I can respond in a variety of ways and with a variety of focuses, so I would be interested in [knowing] that ... I've found ... just the regular meetings extremely interesting. And I never mind coming. It's given me a lot of new ways of looking at my work, and so I would like to continue in any way that would be helpful for everybody. I find that just the dealing with the issues, just the talking is helpful to me.

Kelleen: Hum. Should I talk about what I have in mind? Once you get to the end of the book it will be obvious. I did [the long research study that her book is

based on] in classrooms of teachers who weren't part of the research ... throughout that process I kept thinking if this work could have been done ... with people that I was walking along with ... I wanted to work with a group of teachers who were encountering the same issues in their classrooms that I was writing, reading, teaching about. (*As Kelleen continues, she changes her voice tone here, and mocks reading a list from her research proposal*) ... Till Christmas, we would have a reading group, and then after Christmas we would start to do research in each other's classrooms, and we'd video and we'd da ta da

Further supporting her disloyal rendering of the proposal's schedule, Kelleen ended by saying that "reality happens" and that flexibility is important. She went into this project "feeling fairly flexible about doing what was right for the group and trying to honour the group's ideas about what would be appropriate things to happen next" (Ibid.). The discussion continued, with Kari suggesting other activities, such as visiting each other's classrooms, which would also be helpful to the group.³ Donna raised the concern that in her class she is not noticing language issues as much as inclusion/exclusion issues (which corresponded more with Paley).

"Flexible"

In this excerpt, Marcy expresses concern about Kelleen's expectations, as the initiator of the group, and whether or not these were being met. Kelleen refers to her research plan as a "flexible" path that need not be rigidly followed, even mocking the list of activities as constrained within the grant proposal genre. This was one of several occasions over the year when TARG's parameters and purpose were (somewhat) clarified. More often, the fluidity and lack of definition of the group was remarked and joked upon. For example, one suggestion for what to call it for a semester course credit was "a fun time on Thursday nights" (Donna, AT Nov25/99, p.1). TARG discussions were animated, with lots of overlapping talk, general laughter, and over time, shared jokes and references. Sometimes we had a written Agenda included with the Notes of the previous week. However, these Notes were not always referred to, this Agenda could be changed, and it was still very loose. The loose structure of the meetings was purposeful, and like a seminar, intended to share responsibility for maintaining discussion and generate open-ended inquiry. As Kelleen says in this excerpt, she honours the group's ideas, sharing ownership for the direction we take. However, while it might seem like these conversations were free flowing, the movement of this 'flow' was directed in subtle ways. Some of this direction was stated, as when

³ In this first year, many of the members did visit each other's classrooms. Two classes, Donna's grade1/2 and Kari's grade 3, became pen pals.

Kelleen would ask the next person to speak around the table. Much of it was embedded in what became community values and assumptions.

“Like in the book”: Forming identifications

What were the common/shared materials from which TARG members constructed our various degrees of identification? In this excerpt, Kelleen states her assumption that TARG will do a specific kind of research, like that ‘in the book.’ She sets up, and we seem to recognize her book as common ground. A summary of this book can help to show the particular approach that Kelleen intended us to develop, an approach that challenged individualizing practices common in school and emphasized, like our other readings, the contextual conditions for appropriating language and identities.

In *Learning English at school: Identity, social relations and classroom practice*, Kelleen draws on a constellation of theories, from Vygotsky (1978, 1986) (the sociality of learning and development), Bakhtin (1981) (the dialogicality of language), and Lave & Wenger (1991) (learning as participation in communities of practice) as well as Foucault’s (1977) critique of schooling. She argues that when we learn a language, we are learning how to participate in conversations, how to construct a ‘voice’ that works in school. Access to classroom conversations is necessary for appropriating ‘voice.’ She follows six focal minority language background children over three years. Her study investigates 3 different kinds of practices. First, identity practices (how children position themselves and are positioned by others within social interactions); second, the distribution of physical, material and intellectual resources in a classroom, analyzing how individualism is practiced through the Grade 1 guidelines to use your own things, sit at your own desk and do your own work; and third, oral discourse practices in the Grade 2 classroom (teacher-directed discussions, teacher-mandated peer conversations and peer-managed conversations). These practices affect the access of children to classroom conversations, and thus their opportunities to learn English.

Doing research ‘like in the book’ meant using similar conceptual frameworks and seeing learning as belonging to communities of practice. However, Kelleen’s book is territory that participants in TARG recognize from various perspectives. Within the group there were varying degrees of identification and recognition of its theoretical figures and frames for understanding classroom practices. The university-based members of the group were familiar with the conceptual vocabularies; some of the other members of the group had read Kelleen’s work in education courses. Attempting to understand the book as a guideline, Donna worried that her issues might not be the same as Kelleen intended, because she wanted to study special needs children, not minority language background children; she was reassured that her interests would fit within the parameters of TARG. Participants recognized that doing research ‘like in the book’ reinforced values about ‘access’ or more generally, educational equity and the need to provide

education for all children. We recognized a link between Kelleen's and Vivian Paley's ideas—these texts entered into dialogue in our discussions (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986). Paley's synecdochic guideline for inclusion, *You Can't Say You Can't Play*, summarized some of our ideological commitments to access and equity.

Doing research 'like in the book' also meant using similar methodology, as we will see in Chapter 4. Kelleen's study uses field notes, video and audio tape transcripts, and interviews to provide a rich and detailed picture of classroom life over three years. The other studies we read also relied upon ethnographic data collected in classrooms. These studies were written by academics, not teachers, but presented us with a notion of research as collecting actual conversations and interactions, through audio and video tape. These 'slices of life' in a classroom were mined for their insights into how this life unfolded.

Contradictions in Stage 1

This first stage of our collaborative process was intended to develop a set of common/shared materials for identification and recognition. TARG research was to be "teacher inquiry" but also "like in the book": similar to Kelleen's, but different. This rather contradictory guideline contributed to problems later, as I will discuss in Chapters 4 and 7. What we read, and what we did not read, led us down certain paths together (and not others): the writers we read were mostly located in the university (aside from the reflective narrative by Paley). They were university researchers studying other teachers' classrooms, not practitioners researching their own classrooms. In this initial phase, we did not read systematic practitioner research or publications of other teacher/researcher collaborative groups.

This choice of literature raises questions about the "unarticulated and ... unexamined assumptions" in collaborations between university and public school teachers: "issues of leadership, of research methodologies and intentions, and of theory-practice relationships and enactments" (J. Miller, 1992b, p.246). Although leadership was considered "flexible" and loose, subtle direction was exerted; co-ownership of the research agenda continued to be a site of conflict and struggle throughout the year. The kinds of research literature we used to develop our common ground point to some of these contradictions. Except for Paley (1992), we read work by university-based researchers; and yet we were to do 'teacher inquiry.'

In our literature review, the main territory was staked out by Kelleen's book. Perhaps this is to be expected in sponsored teacher research: Kelleen's grant proposal for TARG stated that this research would address the lack of teachers' perspectives in her book. However, this emphasis on her own work still points to a dilemma for facilitators of teacher/researcher groups (Elliott, 1990). Enacting, even while critiquing, hierarchical "theory-practice relationships" (J. Miller, 1992b, p.246), academic researchers may "highjack" teachers' classroom lives for their own research purposes (Elliott, 1990, p.8). John Elliott (1990), reflecting on 20 years experience

in collaborations that had good intentions to flatten traditional, hierarchical research relationships, admitted that he had "colluded in acts of academic imperialism" (p.8). In completing my doctorate, I find myself confronting the issue that my thesis depends upon TARG data. However, some educational research ignores teachers' perspectives altogether, and the sense of being invited to share their views contributed to teachers' feelings of belonging and having something worthwhile to contribute in TARG (as I will discuss further later). Also, the readings formed only a part of our talking together each week over the fall; much of our discussion centred on everyday life in elementary schools.

"It's given me a lot of new ways of looking at my work"

Teachers in TARG seemed to find the discussions useful to them. In prefacing her question to Kelleen on November 4, 1999 about her overall plans for the research group, Marcy said:

I've found ... just the regular meetings extremely interesting. And I never mind coming. It's given me a lot of new ways of looking at my work, and so I would like to continue in any way that would be helpful for everybody. I find that just the dealing with the issues; just the talking is helpful to me (p.1).

TARG gave Marcy "a lot of new ways of looking at [her] work"—after over 20 years of teaching experience. As suggested in the creative non-fiction instance of a meeting that opened this chapter, often teachers would bring concerns about their work to TARG. While we would sometimes relate these to the readings, we were more likely to branch off into stories about our everyday lives in our diverse workplaces or stories about our own histories and family lives. As we co-constructed our weekly itinerary, we found ourselves doing much more than following the well-laid path of the research plan. Detours seemed to become more the norm, in the loose structure of our meetings. Within our conversations, multiple activities and relationships were cited, as we wandered through a wide range of topics around teaching, researching, living and working with children or adults. These citations also shaped the discursive space for identification and membership in TARG and became shared materials, 'common ground.'

Critical and 'controversial': A place to stand together

As mentioned in Chapter 1, TARG situated itself within that strand of teacher research that critiques the status quo in schooling and advocates for social justice and more democratic education. One aspect of doing research 'like in the book' that generated identification within TARG was the critical and political view apparent in Kelleen's writing. One member commented in an interview about this critical stance towards current schooling arrangements. She felt that those who chose to accept Kelleen's invitation to join the group would have a certain ideological stance:

Because when you read Kelleen's work it's so, it's controversial, too, in a sense, and . . . you have to agree with her. And if you agree with her, then you've got controversiality lurking in you too (Sharon, Interview, p.10).

This 'controversiality lurking' in us was one of the ways we might identify together. As Kelleen said, she wanted to 'walk along with' teachers who were "encountering the same issues." We did agree on many educational issues. Critique of the public school system was common in our discussions, as was critique of institutionalized racism and other forms of oppression.

The fall of 1999 laid the groundwork for this first year as a community. As the excerpts from the November 4 transcript suggest above, the activities of belonging, identification, and desire were actively at work: "I never mind coming," Marcy stated. A sense of commitment to the group is developing. The pleasure of the meetings contributed to members wanting to come and to make TARG a weekly priority, even though, for some, this involved making the long drive up the hill after a day's work. We shared jokes, laughter and food; one member called it "a fun time on Thursday nights" (Donna, AT Nov25/99, p.1). I have already discussed some of the material and discursive spaces that shaped our participation. Some parameters for how to participate in TARG were cued by the space/time conditions of our meetings: each person sharing face-to-face around the table, de-briefing (and perhaps relaxing together) at the end of a work day, in a place set aside for reading, thinking and talking. Other parameters for how to participate in TARG emerged and were reinforced in our weekly conversations. This shared sense of TARG and what we do there that began with these first discussions was called into use and further developed throughout the year, as we moved on to do research and then to present and represent our work.

Recognizable, shared resources for community identification

Shared 'ideological constructs'

Communities of practice are "organized in such a way as to make participation contingent on identifying, or dis-identifying, within ideological constructs" (Hodges, 1998, p.289). As we journeyed through this year, engaging in common activities, we learned the parameters for participating in this particular community of practice and learned to identify (or not) with shared 'ideological constructs.' This first stage of TARG's journey cannot be contained within the activities of gaining background knowledge for our research by reading and discussing literature. Importantly, we were gaining background knowledge of a different kind: shared presuppositions about each other and ourselves. We were busy 'reading' each other as well. As I suggested in Chapter 2, some of these readings were more legible, others remained illegible and/or unintelligible. These 'ideological constructs' guided our journey.

These activities of community formation can be understood through Bakhtin's (1981) concept of centripetal and centrifugal forces and Burke's (1989) linked forces of identification and division. These dialectical forces describe activities that pull towards the centre, contributing to

community solidarity, and simultaneous activities that tend to disrupt and disperse rather than unify. A certain fragility marked our very first meetings: it was uncertain whether we would 'jell' or 'fly apart' as a group. Through the fall, as we continued to read and write each other into the group, these two simultaneous forces were operating to build consensus and (dis)identification. Some centripetal forces kept us together, some ways of 'acting-together' as a group worked to build community. As we learned to participate in this community in particular ways, we became a particular kind of community, with our own tacit guidelines that shaped our practices. As we traveled together, we carried with us an ever growing "shared resource" of background knowledge; becoming more "practiced" as TARG members, we developed some "ways of leaving things unsaid, these unsaid things marking a condition of mutual understanding" (Giltrow, 1994, p.155). In the next section I discuss some of the guidelines we developed as we consolidated what kinds of practices were intelligible within this particular discursive space.

Members reflect on TARG

In the interviews, several questions asked members about their participation in TARG, and their view of TARG as a group (see Appendix A). The questions were used as a guideline only for conversations that were mostly unstructured. Responses to one question might cue a fuller answer to a previous question. Because the interviews took place in the fall of 2000, members were reflecting back on their participation in the group over the first year. The following excerpts from the interviews show some ways that we articulated 'what we were doing' and who we were as a group.

Being Invited

One question asked members to reflect back to why they joined the group in the first place, and many talked about being asked to join (six out of nine). Being invited was an important aspect of membership. One member spoke of how she felt "honoured" to be asked to join the group (Kari, Interview). Another commented on how TARG membership "was by invitation, which was really nice"; she saw this as part of what made this a more positive experience than other teacher research groups she had been in (Katerina, Interview, p.1).

Another stated:

I think the first reason I joined the group is that I was asked, and I think that's a really important part of the group, I've heard other people talk about it. It's such an incredibly different experience to be asked to be part of something. It suggests that you actually have something to offer, and that you might know something, as well as that you might be able to benefit from a situation like that or an experience like that. And it was nice to be asked (Marcy, Interview, p.1).

Being invited to join gave TARG members a sense that they had something of value to contribute. Kelleen's stated research value to walk alongside teachers encouraged this sense of feeling that

teachers' contributions were valued. Not surprisingly, then, one of the repeated themes that came forward in the interviews was the expectation to contribute.

Expectations: "The rules are not there, but there are some rules"

TARG's meetings were flexible and our conversations were free flowing, but this flow was directed by subtle expectations. One of these was implicit in the encouragement to contribute: active participation was expected in this group. Equity and 'hearing all voices' was cued spatially by our sitting around the table, and structuring talk by going around and allowing everyone an opportunity to speak. Such a structure has a certain coercion built into it: one not only can but will speak. In the interviews, some members referred to the expectation to share in TARG.

It's so funny, the rules are not there, but there are some rules in this thing. And I think they're all around you shall be excited, you shall be supportive. You shall be cooperative. You will do things and share things. Somehow that's there. (Katerina, Interview, p.4).

Another member, commenting on how the group worked together, emphasized the centrality of 'sharing;' [there's] "a willingness to share, to share expertise, to share resources, share shoulders, share, share" (Kate, Interview, p. 7). Participation in TARG, Kate felt, could be described by this 'willingness to share' however one could.

People have different levels that they can do that [share] at, and I think there's different levels within the group . . . but I think there's a real strong willingness to get in there and do or say what they can" (Interview, p.7).

Sharing and the willingness to contribute was a marker of membership in TARG. There was the opportunity (and the unstated expectation) to participate in multiple ways. As Katerina commented:

You have a chance to do lots and lots of different things, and I think there's an expectation that you will do that, too. I don't know where, it's not posted on the wall or anything [but] it's there (Interview, p.7).

A condition of membership in TARG was active participation. These tacit rules—to be excited, supportive, cooperative, to do things and share things—set parameters against which members could monitor their participation (and thus their membership) within TARG.

Not any kind of sharing will do, however. When asked if she had experienced any constraints in the group, Katerina said:

You have to be thoughtful, thinking, you know . . . Everybody's in there and they're giving one hundred percent and it better be good. I don't know whether that's a constraint or just a good learning situation (Interview, p.6).

Whether or not contributions would be considered 'good' was shaped by the core values that developed in TARG: what we would stand by, or with. We were defining active, thoughtful participation as a marker of membership. Another reading of *you can't say you can't play* is that you must play. A subtle coercion underpins this rubric of inclusion, suggesting what it excludes.

Your contribution is required

Since contributing was an important value, members in TARG monitored their own participation against this guideline. A member who chose not to continue in TARG described one of the reasons why she left:

I felt a little bit like an observer. Although I did participate in discussions, I didn't really feel like somehow it was a really good fit, quite honestly. Because you know, everybody was really nice and I was very interested in the research everybody was doing, but it didn't really feel like . . . it was a good fit in the way that I didn't really have anything to do [. . .] everybody else was contributing to this project and I didn't really have a way to do that (Marianne, Interview, p.1, p.6).

We had welcomed Marianne as a new addition to our group: she is the graduate student member mentioned earlier, whom we agreed 'could play.' Invited to join in April, Marianne did not share the same history as most other members in TARG this first year. Kate also joined late (in February) but, as the group's video ethnographer, she had a well-defined way to contribute to our research activity. Marianne, however, was not engaged in classroom research, like the teachers, nor was she given a research assistantship (like Rossi and me) to contribute by assisting Kelleen in supporting and maintaining the group. Not 'having a way' to contribute was one reason that Marianne did not feel she fit in TARG. Although we cited Paley's (1992) rubric of inclusion when asked to consider Marianne as a new member, *you can't say you can't play* did not guarantee inclusion. You can join, and then you have to be able to keep playing—by the tacit guidelines of group membership. Marianne chose not to continue in TARG after August 3, 2000.

An occasion to identify oneself

Our journey of becoming TARG members produced certain identity destinations along the way, as we engaged in ongoing identity work: identifying or dis-identifying with this community of practice. Like Marianne, Rossi was also a graduate student and not involved in classroom research; unlike Marianne, she and I were both brought into the project by Kelleen from the beginning as research assistants. Rossi also talked about her ambivalence about what she could contribute to TARG. The following is a section from her draft presentation, read to TARG at our May 3/00 meeting.

I was wondering initially how I could contribute to the teachers-researchers conversations and thought that perhaps the only way I could do that was by sharing my experiences as an adult immigrant to Canada which teachers can then relate to the situations some of their elementary students are in. I have found that my immigrant identity is not a particularly important aspect of my presence in the group. Although, overall, I feel that I am not very actively contributing to the conversations, through my engagement with the group I am struck to realize that I have developed already some expertise as a researcher during my graduate studies and, in fact, have something to contribute in that respect by assisting teachers with shaping their research questions and ways to go to address them.

Rossi, like Marianne, was engaged in monitoring of her ability to contribute, in response to the tacit guideline that one must do so. However, Rossi found that she could contribute, but not in the ways she had originally thought. TARG became an occasion for her to discover and define herself as a 'researcher,' to acknowledge this identity destination along her journey through graduate studies. Being paid as a research assistant may have given Rossi incentive to continue through her uncertainty about belonging in TARG; it was a material acknowledgment of her contribution.

Our journey of becoming: Identifications and divisions

Certain discursive spaces encourage certain articulations of the self: voices and practices are created within the conventions and knowledges contexts allow and offer (Talbert, 2000a, p.17)

The articulations of self that became salient within TARG were constrained and enabled "within the conventions and knowledges" of the material and discursive spaces (the "contexts") that I have mapped of this first year. As we traveled through this first year of TARG's collaborative activity we were learning certain "ways of acting together" (Burke, 1989), including ways of articulating the self within this 'discursive space.' Our "participation [was] contingent on identifying, or dis-identifying, within ideological constructs" (Hodges, 1998, p. 289). As already stated (in Chapter 1), TARG operated within an alternative normative framework of equity, inclusion, and democratization of research relations. As well, TARG aligned with that strand of teacher research that incorporates a social justice agenda, with a critical and political view of schooling arrangements. In our community of practice, we developed what can be called 'ideological constructs' particular to this community (Hodges, 1998, p.289). We came to develop a sense of ourselves as a group, of who we were and what kinds of practices we would/could engage in together, over time. We developed well-marked paths and walked along these trajectories of participation in our process of becoming TARG members.

These material and discursive spaces of TARG's first year allowed and encouraged certain kinds of articulations of self, and not others. One of these articulations was a 'TARG self' that stood in opposition to status quo schooling arrangements and aligned with certain critical and political values. This 'TARG self' was active, cooperative, contributing. In developing a group knowledge for how to participate in this community, we set parameters of inclusion/exclusion. While many forces operated to include and consolidate identifications with the group, there were activities of division and exclusion operating as well. One of these was the subtle coercion within the tacit rule that required a display of supportive, thoughtful engagement and that allowed little room for withdrawal or lack of active participation (*you can't say you can't play*).

This process of becoming TARG members was ongoing, incomplete, and often a struggle. Bakhtin (1981) calls this process of articulating oneself amidst others "ideological

becoming" —an agonistic process of "selectively assimilating the words of others" (p.341).

Language, Bakhtin says,

is populated—overpopulated—with the intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process (p. 294).

We struggle to make others' words 'our own' and inflect them with our own intents. Amidst this "high-traffic area . . . an emergent self" can be discerned (Giltrow, 2003, p. 368). We traveled 'our own' trajectories of becoming in this community, while also at the same time, as a community we were in a 'difficult and complicated' process of 'becoming TARG,' a journey also characterized by struggles.

The processes of ideological becoming in this particular teacher research collaboration can be seen as a journey along certain paths over a year. Familiar markers of identification came to indicate the paths we tended to travel, as we developed shared materials/resources for identifying with the group. As we traveled, as we talked together, our journey was shaped by the space/time of our meetings, by what we read together and by the activities we engaged in. As we participated in our weekly conversations, we began to develop a sense of ourselves as a community: what our beliefs were about learning, teaching, research. These beliefs articulated with larger discourses across the diverse sites of school and university that our collaboration attempted to bridge. Placards of identification might read: "Learning needs to be understood as social;" "Teaching needs to increase access for all to social interactions where learning can take place." However, we held varying degrees of identification to these ideological constructs. Research, our central, organizing activity, was not as easily reduced to a shorthand placard. What was this research we would do? Some of the parameters were set by our recognition of Kelleen's book as common ground, but this recognition was complicated, contradictory, incomplete and unevenly distributed within the group. It is interesting that we came up with our name in these early days: TARG, Teacher Action Research Group. While we might have had difficulty explaining what it meant or relating it to established fields of action research and practitioner inquiry, we seemed to like it, and it stuck. We seemed to be able to gather around its focus on Teacher first and Action second, Research third, and Group to tie it all together.

This chapter has focused on the first activity we engaged in together, reading and discussing, as our journey began. The next chapter will discuss how we negotiated the meaning of 'research' in this collaborative research community, moving to our second stage of activity. As we continued in the new year, we began to 'do research' as a group. This was a pivotal point, a move for some members of TARG from being teachers to becoming teacher-researchers. It was also a turning point for all of us from discussing research to collaboratively designing research.

Chapter 4: Doing research

In this chapter, we follow TARG on its journey into the next stage, which began in January 2000. This was a turning point from reading and discussing other studies to collaborating together on studies to be done in each teacher's classroom. In Chapter 3, I noted how we negotiated membership in this community, and over time developed background knowledge and ways of acting together that marked belonging to TARG. In this next stage of our journey, we built upon the consensus about research that we had been developing. We had talked about Kelleen's study as a guideline, and that TARG would do a specific kind of research, like that 'in the book.' The difference was that this would be "teacher inquiry," and teachers would be "walking alongside" researchers throughout the research process. We had yet to unpack what this meant in terms of research design.

Walking alongside teachers required that we both be headed in (at least somewhat) the same direction. We needed to come to mutual understandings about doing research: to learn what counted as 'good' research in TARG—what kinds of research belonged in TARG. As I asked in Chapter 1, why are some statements—some practices—recognizable, and recognized as intelligible, while others are not (Foucault, 1972)? What are the discursive and material conditions of this intelligibility? In TARG, certain statements became recognizable as—intelligible as—research. I suggested that Spivak's (1993) interpretation of Foucault's (1972, 1977, 1980) concept of *pouvoir/savoir* as a relation helps us understand further how we construct intelligibility: this nexus can be seen as the capacity to do what one knows or understands to do. Using an understanding of genres as responding to socially recognized needs within specific situations, I pointed to how these recognizable 'ways of acting together' "serve as keys to understanding how to participate in the actions of a community" (C. Miller, 1984, p.165). This chapter investigates how we came to understand how to participate in the activities of research—to identify and identify with a genre of research.

Uptake

By examining how statements are received, what uptakes they secure, we can further explore the development of situated understanding. The term 'uptake' in speech act theory points to how "kinds of speech acts (requests, commands, invitations . . .) determine a, or a set of, appropriate uptake(s)" (Freadman, 1994, p.46). However, Anne Freadman (1994) extends this notion of 'uptake' by using the metaphor of a game of tennis: "players are not exchanging balls, they're exchanging shots" (p.43). 'Playing a shot' requires strategy and tactics, and a more encompassing understanding of the situation, the whole ceremony around the game (Ibid.). Some 'shots' are more successful than others, and all of them 'set up'—but don't necessarily

determine—a response. In TARG, tentative research ideas would be brought to the group and would enter into the 'play' of our weekly conversations. In this multi-dimensional conversational space, proposals would receive diverse feedback from the different participants. Equivocal or enthusiastic responses demonstrated whether an idea would 'work' or not within TARG's parameters. The uptake that some articulations received indicated that they still needed 'more work,' while other statements were more readily recognized and acknowledged.

Our conversations became a curriculum for learning the genre of research in this community. This learning through interaction was similar to the process Carole Cain (1991) describes as the way newcomers in Alcoholics Anonymous learn to tell AA stories. A typical AA meeting is a storytelling event: after introductory readings of the Twelve Steps and other AA literature, members one by one tell a story of their experiences—what brought them to AA, and how they are using AA to stay sober now.

Telling an AA story is not something one learns through explicit teaching. Newcomers are not *told* how to tell their stories, yet most people who remain in AA learn to do this (p.228).

Cain describes how the stories of old timers in AA model a particular structure. When a newcomer tells a story, old timers will pick up on the appropriate elements within the story, and build on them; they will ignore (i.e., not 'take up') the elements that deviate from the model. Newcomers are inculcated into appropriate interpretations of their histories and experiences as well.

In addition to the structure of the AA story, the newcomer must also learn the cultural model of alcoholism encoded in them, including AA propositions, appropriate episodes to serve as evidence, and appropriate interpretations of the events (Ibid.).

If a newcomer inappropriately interprets an episode, others at the AA meeting may in their sharing describe similar episodes with an AA-appropriate interpretation. They may also bring forward elements in their own stories that contradict inappropriate aspects of the newcomer's story. Through discursive modeling and members' uptake of appropriate AA story elements, the newcomer learns over time to tell her own AA story.

Like learning to tell an AA story, much of the learning in TARG took place through talk. Unlike AA, where members do not interrupt each other, our conversations moved in what often seemed a random, erratic manner. In Chapter 1, I used the metaphor of the rhizome (from Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) to describe this conversational flow. Mary Leach and Megan Boler (1998) claim this rhizomatic movement, growing "underground, sideways; functioning as a relay, connecting, circulating, moving on," better expresses the multiple dimensionality of women's talk (p.157). Learning through the curriculum of our conversations took time, as we honed each proposed research idea through this diverse feedback.

Meta-genre: Analyzing our conversational curriculum

In analyzing our conversational curriculum, I draw on Janet Giltrow's (2002b) *meta-genre*:

Provisionally, we could say that meta-genres are atmospheres of wordings and activities, demonstrated precedents or sequestered expectations—atmospheres surrounding genres (p.195).

Meta-genre, Giltrow argues, is useful for "making more deliberate and sensitive estimates of situations in which writers learn to compose in a particular genre" (p.196). In TARG, the articulation of a research design was 'surrounded' by lots of talk. Our conversations demonstrated on multiple occasions efforts to communicate expectations, to offer alternative wordings, and to extend each other's thinking in conceptualizing an inquiry. Refining research foci through such a conversational curriculum differed from other ways we might have learned—such as reading and discussing written guidelines for how to design qualitative research questions. Thus, TARG's meta-genre tended more toward "sequestered expectations" than "demonstrated precedents." There were practical consequences of this muddling around—we spent many sessions defining each research focus. But our more flexible way resonated with collaborative research values about joint ownership of the research process. It also resonated with an understanding that learning from experience, and having students experience expectations rather than just telling them the 'rules,' is good pedagogical practice. Meta-generic attempts to represent a genre are often obscure: "[such] representation is not always direct; often it is oblique, a mediated symbolics of practice" (Giltrow, 2002b, p. 203). Our protracted grappling with research design was mediated by and represented our values/beliefs about learning and about collaborative research.

This time was pivotal in TARG's first year partly because it was one of the times when the differences in our knowledge base were set against our aspiration to maintain as equitable a collaboration as possible. In the worst case scenario, the researchers, who knew best, would 'take over' and the teachers would become the handmaidens collecting data for what would remain an academic research project. As discussed in Chapter 3, collaborations between academic and K-12 teacher/researchers face this danger (Elliott, 1990; J. Miller, 1992a, 1992b, 1996). The issue of co-ownership of TARG's research agenda haunted our collaboration throughout our activities, as we struggled to collaborate across our different sites of expertise. In this chapter, I focus on how we negotiated ownership of each project (a sense of *it's mine*) while also guiding the formulation of research questions that 'fit' within the parameters of TARG. We had learned through the fall that Kelleen's book would serve as one marker: our research would be 'like in the book.' That this 'common ground' was viewed from different positions became even more apparent when we began to design research together.

As we learned the particular genre of research valued in TARG, we were also learning how to offer useful guidelines for refining research. This was a trial and error process, as we

cultivated and formulated TARG's research projects. Throughout this process we were producing commentary on the genre of research appropriate in this setting. This meta-generic commentary can be seen as

a site where language users give accounts of themselves, and try to come to a situated understanding of their activities, their positions vis-à-vis one another (Giltrow, 2002b, p.203).

In TARG, those of us with research design experience and those of us with experience of conditions in classrooms, tried to 'come to a situated understanding of our activities' as we worked to collaboratively design each project. These activities of collaborative research design were situated in larger institutional and professional landscapes and discourses of expertise that organize and rationalize relations within those spaces. Our learning in this community of practice also entailed "ontological transformations," processes of identification in becoming collaborative researchers and teacher/ researchers (Hodges, 1998).

Differential, discursive and tacit research expertise

The excerpts in this chapter offer glimpses of how Kelleen, Rossi, and I tried to help in formulating research questions. In making suggestions, we drew on our own familiar research approaches. Bakhtin's (1981) ideas, ethnographic methods, and sociocultural concepts of learning as interaction represented some of the discursive resources available and 'internally persuasive' to us: Bakhtin provided both the concept of 'internally persuasive' discourse and also was 'internally persuasive' to us. Teacher/ researchers, as they struggled to understand how to do research in TARG, were making these discourses their 'own' (or not). Kelleen, Rossi and I used our own differential experience in research and we sometimes shared our struggles with articulating research questions, empathizing with the difficulty of this task.

In the designing of the research projects, Kelleen's expertise carried weight in determining whether a research focus was refined enough or still needed more work. In offering suggestions for each project, Kelleen tried not "to take it over because it's yours" (AT Jan27/00). However, "research design was not something that happens in your daily life" Kelleen acknowledged (Ibid.).

Those of us engaged in research on a more daily basis had a knowledge that was both practical and discursive. As Anthony Giddens (1984) explains, practical consciousness is embodied and tacit, and guides routine, day-to-day actions; discursive consciousness is an awareness that can be articulated in words, an ability to account for and explain one's actions (p. 281). Some of the difficulty teachers had in understanding the meta-generic commentary that we offered could be traced to how Kelleen, Rossi and I were not always able to explain what we knew about research easily. As more experienced researchers, aspects of the research process

had become embodied and tacit, rather than available for access at a level of discursive awareness.

Stage 2: 'Doing research'

In this chapter, I look more closely at this new place on our year's journey, which started in January 2000, as the group made a shift from a more professional development or course model of reading and discussing literature, to a research model of designing and carrying out research. Five teachers continued on with TARG. We continued to meet weekly after school hours, and we moved into the Blue Room, a site closer to resources needed for research, closer to the hub of activity in the Faculty of Education, which seemed appropriate for beginning this work.⁴ Over this period, our meetings were loosely structured: in each session, we went around the table, time permitting, and each teacher/researcher would talk about their projects. We also continued with our storytelling, and members visited each other's classrooms. These visits, plus many stories of classroom moments, provided background knowledge as we helped each other refine a focus for each classroom-based inquiry.

In the next sections, I analyze some of our conversations that show 'TARG at work' on the collaborative task of designing research. I have selected and organized these excerpts around the activity of shaping a research question, in three stages: 1) 'getting it' (what kind of research this is); 2) 'getting it right' (formulating a 'good' research question and refining our research focus); and 3) 'getting down to practicalities' (a video camera in the classroom).

'Getting it': What kind of research is this?

Kelleen describes the genre

At the first meeting of the new year (January 13/00), Kelleen outlined what she hoped the group would do for the rest of the school year: investigate issues/practices of interest in their own classrooms and gather data on that via field notes, audio tapes, and video tapes. In preparation for collecting data, Kelleen encouraged the teachers in the group to begin to do some writing about their research questions. These questions are to be about something that is "interesting to you" (AT Jan13/00, p.3). Kate will come in and video in each classroom, Kelleen explained, so it's "really important to know what you want to watch" (Ibid.). Since the questions are about what happens in the classroom, Kelleen continued, and teachers know the classroom better, they will be better able to identify what to research (Ibid.). This first, basic meta-generic commentary begins with the broad invitation to inquire into 'something of interest to you.' However, it must be something to video and watch, something we can document with data.

⁴ We also began (in early March) to have monthly half-day meetings to accommodate our work.

Collecting cues from reading about teacher research

We had already accumulated images of research through our September to December reading, images that inspired various degrees of identification from TARG members. These sociocultural studies were classroom-based, but they had been designed, carried out and written by university-based researchers, rather than by teacher-researchers or collaborative teacher research groups. On January 13, I handed out three readings as an introduction to practitioner inquiry. One was a chapter by Cynthia Ballenger (1999) entitled "What is Teacher Research?" which explains how the collaborative teacher/research group she worked with undertook their research. They also used classroom data; in designing research, teacher/researchers in the group wrote "memos on the place of our research question in our own lives" (Ballenger, 1999, p.83). We also read two short pieces from a special issue of *Language Arts* on Teacher Research (1999). In "What counts as teacher research: A poem in response to a question," Karen Gallas (1999) paints a word picture of a child, vivid details from her teaching experience (p.47). The poem suggests that one's experience with a child can become a research focus. In the third piece we read, "Becoming teacher researchers one moment at a time," two professors (Power & Hubbard, 1999) who work with teacher researchers described the process of teachers noticing, recording, reflecting on, and learning from 'moments' within everyday classroom life. These 'moments' were seen as starting points for research. These three readings gave some examples of what teachers had researched and a general sketch of possibilities for research. Ballenger describes teachers collecting audio tape data as a way "to stop the relentless pace of the school day" so that it can be examined as a transcript text, shared in the group, and returned to again and again (p.84). We planned to share the raw video and audiotape data in the same way in our weekly meetings. We would view segments of the video data together (or listen to and read transcripts of audiotape data), and collaboratively analyze them. Our discussion of these readings on January 20 indicated that they seemed to help TARG members understand more about the type of research we were planning to do, as the excerpt below will show.

'Getting an idea what this was all about': 'A particular kind of research'

Our January 20 session started with reading the Notes from last week, and Kelleen outlining what we have on the agenda: discuss readings, talk about research questions you've been coming up with and talk about visiting each other's classrooms. We digress to talking briefly about getting permission to do the research in schools, and then the following conversation begins.

Excerpt from January 20, 2000

Kelleen: So, what do you want to do first? Do you want to talk about your own questions first or do you want to talk about this article first or what's your pleasure?

Marcy: Well, I liked the articles and they were really helpful =

Donna: = [It was

Marcy: [in terms of sort of getting
an idea what this was all about ((*her tone indicates 'finally'*)).
(*Background chuckles become general laughter*)

Donna: What we're doing. I said to a friend of mine, oh, after all these
months I think I get it. ((*General laughter covers up some words*))
Slow learner, but

Marcy: So this is a particular kind of ethnographic research=

Kelleen: = [Yeah

Marcy: [that uses
transcripts, that uses sort of raw material from the classroom in
terms of videotape or audio tape

Donna (*jokes*): See, we're good ((*again, there is general laughter*)).

Kelleen: Well, yeah. And I guess my sense of it was is that it would be similar
in some ways to the data gathering that I did for my book=

Donna: = Right

Marcy: = [Right

Kelleen: [except it would involve the teachers

Donna: And, it does all fall into place when you read this ((*chuckling while speaking*))

Marcy: Yeah, it was great

Kelleen: That's good! Thank you, Bonnie ((*Kelleen laughs, general chuckles in background*)) You found the key.

In this excerpt, Marcy and Donna joked about how the readings clarified what kind of research TARG would be doing. The group as a whole joined in laughing, which could indicate that Marcy and Donna were articulating an uncertainty others had felt as well. Marcy indicated that the type of data and the method of collecting data helped her understand that the idea was to inquire into some kind of interaction in their classrooms that could be captured on video or audio tape; this data would be 'raw'—a 'slice' of everyday classroom life.

In citing her book as a guideline for our research methodology, Kelleen offered a map more easily read by those of us with research backgrounds. We had more resources to interpret it—familiarity with deciphering tidy descriptions of research design and data analysis and, as discussed in Chapter 3, more understanding of how doing research 'like in the book' would tacitly imply sociocultural concepts of learning. The fledgling teacher/researchers had had less exposure to these ideas, and other discourses (e.g., individualizing learning and learners) were

more reinforced in their daily lives in public schools. Kelleen's description of this research as "similar in some ways to the data gathering that I did for my book . . . except it would involve the teachers" echoes her research grant proposal. This suggests parameters set by Kelleen's research interests, as one might expect in sponsored research collaborations. It points to further questions about the uses for and interests served by TARG's work, and, as mentioned earlier, about the problems and dilemmas associated with negotiating co-ownership of the research agenda.

'Getting it right': Working to 'get it' by writing tentative ideas

Our reading provided only broad guidelines for coming up with research questions. As we honed each person's ideas in our rhizomatic, recursive conversations, we struggled to articulate tentative ideas and refine the five classroom projects with help of the group. We worked to 'get it right'—to ask 'good' research questions. Throughout January and February, Kelleen encouraged those of us who were elementary classroom-based teachers to do some "writing around the research question" (AT Jan13/00). At our weekly meetings, Kelleen explained more about the purposes of this writing. The writing would clarify "why you're interested" in this topic (Kelleen, AT, Jan27/00, p.4), explain "what in your biography" leads you to ask these questions (Kelleen, Jan20/00) in order to show how this research "moves from the inside out" (Kelleen, Feb.17/00, p.5). These meta-generic suggestions echo Ballenger's (1999) description of memos as writing about "the place of our research question in our own lives" (p.83). However, the writing would also focus the research possibilities and indicate what kind of evidence you would need to answer this question. As Rossi helped explain at one point: "I guess what Kelly wants to say is more into 'How do I go about answering this question?' [...] What are you going to look into [...] because you gave us so many ideas here" (AT Jan27/00, p.8). Throughout the rest of the school year, teachers brought writing and revised writing to share with the group.

Still not really getting it

Despite the meta-genre developed around the task of formulating a research question, it was still not entirely clear what kind of writing was expected. At one point, Marcy stated this directly to Kelleen: "I don't know what you mean really when you say 'do more writing about things'" (AT Feb17/00, p.5). Communicating the expectations for this task was not easy: "Much of genre know-how is tacit, and its discursive representation can be difficult and even distorting" (Giltrow, 2002b, p.200). Some of what we suggested to assist in developing research foci was contradictory and confusing. Broad invitations to explore one's interest, parameters indicated by requirements of data collection, a tacit expectation of sociocultural framework and incitements to select 'moments' from the classroom without much criteria for selection did not offer an smooth path to follow. However, as Kathryn Alexander (2001) explains, meta-genre can accrue over time:

At times these [guidelines] are explicit ... or they are tacit and become more evident as the participant engages with the genre in its situated context, gradually acquiring the appropriate intentions of the genre and its use in the community of practice (p.110).

Through our readings on teacher research and the conversations on each person's writing and/or ideas for their research, there was a growing sense of 'getting it' about what kind of research TARG would do. But, like the uncertainty about the kind of writing Kelleen expected, there was also an uncertainty about what constituted a 'good' research question.

Getting it right: What's a good research question?

In this next section, I examine the process of appropriating an understanding of what would count as research in TARG, by showing parts of Donna's and Katerina's processes of 'getting it right'—articulating a 'good' research question. Both Donna and Katerina first fielded some general ideas on January 13, and continued to develop them throughout January, February and March. In the following excerpts from two weekly sessions (January 20 and 27), the rhizomatic flow of our conversations shows linked themes, as we discussed the two research projects simultaneously and also at successive sessions, in our collaborative attempt to formulate and refine 'good' research questions.

Formulating and refining 'good' research questions

Donna was the first teacher/researcher to bring writing to share with the group to explain her beginning research ideas. In Chapter 3, I cited the excerpt from November 25, 1999 when Donna worried that her concerns were not "like in the book" because she was not interested in focusing on second language learners. On January 20, she was again reassured that the issue of inclusion she wanted to investigate fit within TARG. In a sense, Donna's research had begun in September, when we first read Paley's (1992) *You can't say you can't play*. Donna talked in TARG about this classroom guideline and how to implement it with her grade 2/3 students; she had also discussed it with her students. She often brought stories of children and their interactions with each other to our TARG discussions. Her research incorporated issues that we returned to again and again in TARG, and issues that had been paramount in our readings: increasing the access of all children to classroom conversations.

Excerpt 2 from January 20, 2000

On January 20, Donna had brought three pages of writing about her 'interest': how to create an inclusive community and what effect her attempts might have. Her questions included how do I encourage a community of learners in my classroom "that encompasses those who have been positioned or position themselves on the margins?" She also wondered, "As a teacher, am I getting my message across? Do the children believe in my vision of community?" In the following excerpt, Katerina, Donna, Marcy and Kelleen spoke; Rossi, Sharon and I listened.

Katerina had just asked Donna to explain more about how she will find out whether the children share her vision of community: "Like are you going to have some discussions around it?"

Donna: Yeah, I think we've done a lot of talking. I think we've done a lot of different discussions. . . . this is sort of the rough draft. I guess I want to somehow see whether they get it, like it makes sense to them, if it's something that they want as part of their life, if it's something that works for them or if they're just sort of going along with, [with the ride

Katerina: [What you're saying =

Donna : = And not that it's good or bad, I mean everybody has a choice to their own, um, belief system. But whether the discussions that we've had, the things that we've done in the classroom, has had any impact on the way they look at [the blind student in her class]. The way they look at other kids in the class. Or whether it's just something you do in the classroom and you sort of let go of it when Mrs. C's not looking. I dunno.

Marcy: So you're looking at the degree to which the discussions that you have with the kids are reflected in their behavior ((*pause*)) or in what they say

Donna: Yeah

Marcy: [In what they say to each other when you're not listening

Donna: [In what they say ((*slowly spoken, covers same time as longer sentence above, then Donna continues*)) Yeah, and how they treat, in their discussions with each other.

Kelleen: And to make it sort of technical or la-di-da: have they appropriated this language, like Bakhtin talked about. So that it's not just a ventriloquation of your words, but that it really is part of their perspective =

Donna: = Yeah, yeah, umhum ((*pause, begins to say "it might" but Kelleen already talking*))

Kelleen: Yeah, Bakhtin makes it so abstract and you're asking for, you know, can this perspective that I'm trying to develop, can it be appropriated, and what does that mean, what does that look like? =

Marcy: = What does it involve?

Donna: And if it is, my step further would be, okay what is it that's happening that's making it work? And is that a transferable thing to other groups? ... ((*she continues here*))

In Donna's words, her research inquiry hoped to find out if she is "getting her message across," by observing videotapes of what the students say to each other, and how they treat each other in discussions, when she is not listening. We see Marcy rephrasing Donna's explanation in a way that Donna takes up. In fact, the two teachers speak a phrase in unison. Donna keeps talking about her research interest, and doesn't seem to stop to object to or ponder the theoretical definition Kelleen offers. Nevertheless, she is interested in theorizing from her data: "What is it that's happening that's making it work? And is that a transferable thing to other groups?" As the transcript from next week's talk will show, Donna's response to Kelleen's re-phrasing, her "yeah, yeah" in the background while Kelleen speaks, and her "umhum" do not unambiguously represent acceptance of the rephrase.

Excerpt from January 27, 2000

A week later, on January 27, 2000, TARG was again discussing ideas for the members' research projects. We spent about half an hour discussing Kari's research, including how she could narrow and focus her research possibilities and then moved to talking about Katerina's ideas.

- Kelleen:** Okay um shall we go to you *((she looks at Katerina))*. I was thinking, reviewing my notes, that usually questions are too broad, but your question seemed too narrow to me a bit ...
- Katerina:** Does it?
- Kelleen:** You were looking at how children might *((pause))* you explain it, because Kari wasn't here
- Katerina:** I was thinking it was maybe too broad what I did last week, so, I haven't done a lot of writing yet, but my question really is, do the kids that we have in these [ESL programs] ... do these kids see their classroom as a series of learning centres or areas? ...

Katerina continued to explain her research focus: she will videotape students in her ESL/Special Needs class, hoping they will be able to articulate what they're doing ... to be able to get up and say, 'this is my room; this is what I like to do; look at all the different things you can do' ... I also want to look at their language and their language comprehension ... [do they have] the power of language? I don't know.

- Donna:** Do you want to find out whether the language they use belongs to them, like if it's
- Rossi:** [Appropriated *((softly finishes Donna's sentence))*]
- Katerina:** [Well, yeah but

Donna: [I had an interesting, just driving home last week when we were talking about my question and I don't tend to talk in really academic type language. It was interesting because Kelleen very helpfully reworded what I had said her way. ((*General LAUGHTER erupts in background*)) Those aren't my words. And yes, it sounded great and wonderful but I won't be using those words now. I might, maybe next year, but right now they are not my words, and it doesn't have=

Sharon: =You're not connected?

Donna: It doesn't come from my heart. Um, I'm wondering, I think that's the feeling I got with what you're [Katerina] wanting. [for the kids to explain] Is this my room? Can I explain it from me?

Katerina: Yes, I want that

Donna: What it is, not just =

Katerina: = [Yes

Donna: [parrot what the adults are saying

Katerina then talks for several minutes, further explaining her ideas, emphasizing that she doesn't want the students to merely parrot back.

Many interactions took place in this small excerpt. Katerina explained her research, and then Donna asked Katerina a question. In Donna's brief pause, two quickly but softly spoken interjections attempted to finish her sentence. Donna continued talking over both Rossi's and Katerina's more softly spoken words, telling a story that referred to last week's discussion (on January 20). As she told the story of "when I was driving home" her voice was firm and she talked over others to explain how she had not felt ownership of the academic language used in Kelleen's 'translation.' Sharon offered a question to indicate understanding and agreement. Donna seemed to appreciate this scaffolding from Sharon, and was able to state simply "it doesn't come from the heart." Donna connected her own experience of not appropriating Kelleen's words with Katerina's research question about her students and whether they are 'parroting' (or ventriloquating) adults' more authoritative voices. Donna's remarks show how learning a genre is not just about learning a form, but also about identity and identification. Taking on others' words is a process that indicates 'self': some are taken to heart, others held at a distance (Giltrow, 2003). Donna also shows an awareness of herself as travelling a journey of genre acquisition and of her ideological becoming a teacher/researcher: "I won't be using those words now. I might, maybe next year."

Linked conversations: Rhizomatic negotiations of research design

In the rhizomatic movement of our conversations, our process of learning the genre of research was multi-dimensional: feedback came from all directions, and the person describing their research was responding to questions and concerns from everyone present. Granted, Kelleen's feedback had a great deal of power, especially for this particular activity of designing research. Rossi and I, following Kelleen's model, often phrased our suggestions in tentative ways. The direction of our curriculum was negotiated within the conversations, with the university-based researchers' voices stronger, Kelleen's perhaps the strongest, but with a full component of teachers as well. Sometimes the teachers' comments to each other seemed more persuasive. Donna's rejection of Bakhtinian terminology offers an interesting case in point. Donna accepts Marcy and Sharon's re-phrasings of her idea and builds on them. She seems to acquiesce to Kelleen's re-phrasing, and if there had been no further reference, it might have been easy to assume that Donna had been 'internally persuaded' by the research language. However, the next week Donna reported her rejection.

The way these excerpts from January 20 and 27 refer back to each other also shows the multiple dimensionality of our conversations. While we are talking about Donna's research on January 20, Kelleen rephrases one of her ideas, using Bakhtin. The next week, while giving Katerina feedback, Donna reflects on rejecting these words as not her 'own.' She relates this to the possibility that Katerina's students may not have their 'own words' for talking about the classroom and their learning in it. These research interests link to Kelleen's inquiries into appropriating language, and also connect to each other: Donna wants to know whether her students have taken 'to heart' her philosophy about community and inclusion and Katerina wants to know whether her students demonstrate a sense of belonging in their classroom ("Is this my room? Can I explain it from me?"). There are layers of links in these two discussions —links between articulating research questions in TARG and articulating understandings of community. Links between how we are learning in TARG and how students are learning in classrooms. As a rhizomatic meta-genre, these discursive connections suggest complex contextual relations between different sites of learning.

Getting it 'right': Refining a research question

As our discussion on January 27 continued, we moved to talking about children in classrooms, and then later returned to refining Katerina's research focus. In the excerpt cited earlier in this chapter, Katerina had thought that her question might be too broad, while Kelleen had wondered if it was too narrow. As meta-generic cues, 'broad' and 'narrow' do not seem very helpful. A broader question, Kelleen clarified later in our conversation, might ask 'What are you learning here?' rather than assume their learning is "spatially connected." Like parents asking kids "what did you learn in school today?" Kelleen continued "You want to be the parent that

gets a real answer," and there may be ways to ask the question to accomplish this. A 'good' research question, then, would be more open but also structured so as to get a more 'real' answer. While this exchange focused on Katerina's question, the rest of us were picking up and trying to interpret these meta-generic cues as well.

Learning through 'uptake'

My ongoing activity, every week, of roughly transcribing our conversations and then producing notes from them for our next session, meant that I was spending a lot of time engaged with our conversations. My transcriber notations at this time show that I had questions about the developing research projects. I also made field notes during and after the sessions, and sometimes after giving Rossi a ride home, based on our debriefing of the conversations.

Excerpt from February 3, 2000

The following week, February 3, I asked Katerina a question about her project: "when you're wondering about if the kids are learning, how is that looking at it from the point of view of trying to find out something that you can *research*, rather than something that you can assess, you know what I mean?" Katerina responded by saying that her question was not about assessment, explaining further:

Katerina: What's important to me to is engagement. And I don't know how to ask that question, except to say 'do you feel you're learning something?' Because to me if they feel they're learning, that's something really important. And kids don't always say they are, they say 'this is boring' or 'I have to do it' . . . but they don't always say they're learning.

Bonnie: [Oh, okay so when you see

Katerina: [So I need to ask the question better

Bonnie: So when you see engagement, you see learning. Yeah, okay, that fits. Now I see what you mean. So you want to find out if they're engaged in that way, if there's some, if there's, you've used other words like, if they're awake, if they're...

Others started to chime in here. Kelleen suggested reframing the question as *how* not *if* they are learning:

Well I was just thinking that ... not to ask *if* they're learning but *how* they're learning? Or what evidence do I have? Or something like that? Do you know what I mean? (AT Jan27/00, p.24)

Donna thought that the question might have more to do with whether the kids see what's going on as relevant and useful to them: "Like what use is it in their life?" (Ibid.). Sharon followed up on this: "But are the kids really connecting, are they personalizing or is the curriculum isolated from their needs?" Rossi came in then as a research guide, suggesting to Katerina: "That's what you'd try to find out, I think, right?" Katerina agreed, hesitantly, and Rossi continued:

I mean my sense from your questions is more like, are they doing it because I want them to do it or are they doing it because they feel they're involved and they really like it, they belong here (Ibid.).

Our session continued, and we again went overtime on our discussion.

"That fits": Recognizing a research question

This excerpt from February 3 further demonstrates some of the ways our accrued feedback was developing into a meta-genre for how to frame research questions. My question obliquely tries to suggest my concern that Katerina might not get useful or 'real' data; I worried that her plan would lead to a situation where the students would be constrained to give only 'right' answers. I am adding to Kelleen's meta-generic guidelines from last week about asking more 'open' questions. Not recognizing Katerina's question as research until she used particular language, I picked up on the last part of her explanation and related that to other things she has said at other times.⁵ I underscored my rephrasing—"when you see engagement you see learning"—by stating "that fits." Like AA old timers selectively building on elements of newcomers' stories, I reinforced the ideas I found useful (Cain, 1991). When Katerina used these words, I was reassured that the project might generate data that 'fit' within TARG's research parameters (in particular, within a sociocultural framework which sees learning as social).

After the exchange between Katerina and me, Kelleen, and then others, jumped in with their ideas. Kelleen suggested asking 'how, not if' to investigate how learning happens. She was modeling a common meta-generic framework for qualitative research questions (e.g., Becker, 1998). Rossi helpfully interpreted the feedback from both Donna and Sharon: Katerina's research could find out if the students are 'involved' and if their language 'belongs to them.' Rossi's comment emphasizes inquiry and investigation, and names recognized objects within sociocultural research on language: membership and participation.

A rhizome of belonging

A common theme of belonging can be traced through these parts of the discussion about Donna's and Katerina's research projects over these three sessions (January 20 and 27; February 3). If our conversations are like rhizomes, then 'belonging' might be an interconnected, underground root system that sprouts up at various points. This theme of 'belonging' is

⁵ This is an example of how I kept a running personal memoir of the discussions, and sometimes drew on this to emphasize something I said.

particularly interesting to me because of the multiple dimensions on which it was working in TARG at this time.⁶ We were talking about how children in classrooms might use language that 'belonged' to them and that demonstrated a sense of 'belonging' in the classroom. At the same time, we were learning to speak a language of research and to demonstrate our belonging in TARG as teacher/researchers (and as collaborative researchers).

On January 20, Donna wondered if the students in her class feel ownership of her ideas about community—do these ideas 'belong' to them or are they just performing a script for her? Kelleen gave the Bakhtinian term 'appropriation' to describe this. On January 27, Katerina wanted to find out about if her students can articulate in their own words what they are learning in their classroom. Donna related this to her interests, and talked about how the academic terminology Kelleen offered does not belong to her yet: 'those aren't my words.' The third week, on February 3, I interpreted Katerina's question as assessment. When Katerina explained her ideas more, I grabbed onto her word 'engagement,' saying "that fits"—in my view that concept 'belongs' in the kind of (sociocultural) research we are doing in TARG. Rossi summarized and offered her interpretation of Katerina's research question, again reiterating the theme of belonging "are they doing it because they feel they are involved and they really like it, they belong here?" While part of what Katerina and Donna seemed concerned to find out was whether the language children used would demonstrate a 'sense of belonging' in their classrooms, they were also struggling to articulate their research inquiries in ways that would demonstrate 'belonging' to this discourse community of TARG. As part of becoming teacher/researchers, they were taking the language of research and making it their 'own' (or not).

This rhizomatic commentary, discursively linked by the notion of belonging to community, indicates how talk about genres is embedded in its context of use.

Like genres themselves, meta-genres are indexed to their context of use: every activity—or discipline—having its own relation to and life in language, and meta-genres representing or advancing these relations, positioning genre in relation to other activities (Giltrow, 2002b, pp. 195-196).

In the instances analyzed above, some of the meta-generic commentary offered 'represents or advances' activities of classroom teaching, other commentary positions itself within theoretical frameworks; still other commentary points to larger discourses of community and inclusion. We refine inquiries about belonging while negotiating our own sense of belonging in this research community.

"I need to ask the question better"

Not just any research question will work in TARG. While latitude and leeway exist, and each project is different, some questions 'fit'. Our data gathering methods and our beliefs, values

⁶ I have traced the theme of 'belonging' through one set of exchanges excerpted in this chapter. However, multiple themes were present, and this set of exchanges could suggest other links.

and ideas about learning and teaching inform the kind of research that came to 'belong' in TARG. We were learning to ask the kinds of research questions that demonstrated our membership in TARG. Katerina wanted to improve her questions, and at the very end of our February 3 session, she asked: "I'm [going to] have to do these questions again, aren't I?" Kelleen suggests that she think about what Kate will video—what Kate will see that can tell Katerina what she wants to know: "That might tell you what the best way of articulating the question" (AT Feb3/00, p.26). For all the research projects, thinking about where Kate will point the camera proved to be very useful in this struggle to get the questions 'right.'

Getting down to practicalities

Kate comes to work with teachers in their classrooms

If our weekly discussions can be seen as a rhizome, then Kate's arrival in TARG would signal a sprouting of new growth and energy. Suddenly, what it meant to 'do research' became more visible: the research projects seemed to gain a new clarity of focus. Part of this was just because everyone had continued to think and write about her research. However, with Kate's input, our discussions became more concrete and the mystique of 'doing research' was brought down to practicalities. Kate also bonded with the teachers, exuding confidence and knowledge of classroom conditions as well as sharing their commitments to ensuring that the students come first. Kate's new input motivated further identification of and with the genre of research we were learning in TARG.⁷

When Kate came to her first meeting on the afternoon of February 10, she had had lunch at Kari's school where she had met the kids and some of the parents (without her camera, as part of gently introducing the classroom research idea). Kari had been wondering if her project, on parent participation, would show the positive effects of participation on the parents. Kate helped to focus what can and cannot be substantiated by video data: "It's gonna be tricky to show what the parents are thinking [*pause*] because there's not a product per se" (AT Feb10/00, p.12). Video data shows what people do—their practices and interactions.

Further explaining how data collection would work, Kate expressed her comfort with an emergent research focus:

Excerpt from February 10, 2000

Kate: I think the first time (*pause*) it's really difficult to, to narrow it down too precisely=

Kelleen: = [Yeah

⁷ New to most, Kate had previous connections with some members (Kelleen, Marcy, Rossi, and myself) through the university.

Kate: [so don't feel like you have to because, because it can depend on ((*pause*)) the way the wind's blowing. I swear, some days, you know ... whether the kids are really conscious of the equipment or whether they're not or just what's going on in the school. And so sometimes if you really ... try to really narrowly define it ((*pause*)) ... things happen. You know, you respond to the kids based on whatever they've come in with from the night before. And so ... sometimes the first time we just see what we get. And then we, ((*little chuckle*)) you know.

As well as reassuring everyone that 'narrowing it down precisely' is not necessary, Kate showed that being flexible and responding to what happens in the classroom is something she is comfortable with. She also made it clear, by her use of first person plural –'we'—that this project will be done in tandem, supporting each other, and working together: 'we just see what we get'. She gave permission to work in a much more fluid way, responding to the particularities of each person's classroom, which each teacher knows best.

Kate also offered a different uptake to Katerina's ideas for research, which we had worked on the previous week. Explaining her idea to Kate in a mildly ironic tone, Katerina implied that it was *not* a great one: "So, I have this great idea, I wanted them to be able to say what they were learning" (AT Feb 10/00, p.). Katerina had learned, from the kinds of uptake she received, that her question needed improvement. But Kate responded with exclamations: "Oh, cool!" and "Super!" as she listened to Katerina's description of her tentative research ideas. Referring to filming she had done in another school setting, Kate explained that the camera might be able to show children talking about how they saw their classroom.

Kate demonstrated that she shared teachers' concerns and understood classroom conditions: "You respond to the kids based on whatever they've come in with from the night before..." (Ibid.). Teachers in TARG were passionate about teaching; a commitment to 'kids' was named as central in interviews of TARG members. Katerina and Marcy both listed this commitment as one of the strengths of the group. Kate, in her interview, named this commitment as 'core' to TARG:

That bottom line commitment to the needs of the child [was] not just a verbal commitment, [but] a core belief ... And that ability for people to come back to that. Every argument that we get into, eventually, somebody wings it back to that (p.5).

This set our priority: research would serve the teaching, and teaching could continue to serve the children. In Kate, teacher/researchers found someone who understood and shared their commitment to 'kids' and to the delicate ebb and flow of classroom life. She somehow made research more 'kid-friendly' and 'classroom compatible.' Kate was an ally in the classroom, as

well as another eye. If meta-genre is like an atmosphere surrounding a genre, Kate came into our conversation about research design like a fresh spring breeze.

Kate's arrival in TARG signaled a turning point in our journey: we were now actively planning data collection. The practical realities of accommodating a video camera in the classroom seemed to accelerate the articulation of a research focus. The material presence of a camera also seemed to facilitate teachers' recognition of themselves as researchers and their classrooms as sites of research. Kate embodied a bridge between classroom and research experience. Like the teachers, she knew what classrooms were like—but from the other side of a camera, because she had worked with researchers before and knew what they needed. In TARG, she occupied a unique position: aligned with the university through her work, she was not an academic—not faculty or scholar, like Kelleen, Rossi, and myself. Her perspective made research easier to 'get' and to 'get right.' Meeting her needs—where do I point the camera? what do you want me to focus on?—provided a concrete way to understand the activity of classroom investigation. The commentary Kate added to our cumulative meta-genre on research design seemed particularly useful to our ongoing collaboration.

Learning to do research: Assembling a meta-genre

Through excerpts from our first discussions about 'doing research' I have traced our collaborative process of formulating research questions in three stages: 'getting it' (what kind of research this is); 'getting it right' (refining our research focus); and 'getting down to practicalities' (where to point the video camera). Our first readings on teacher inquiry and our questions, suggestions and re-phrasings all contributed to a meta-genre about the kind of research valued in TARG, and attempted to represent a genre of research design. As discussed earlier, giving oblique meta-generic cues represented values about learning from experience and 'owning' one's research. While the oblique and sequestered nature of meta-generic commentary may have been intended to foster ownership (or at least prevent take-over through direct instruction in the 'right' way to do research), the indirect communication of tacit expectations for the research also seemed to contribute to a protracted grappling with research design.

A rhizomatic curriculum

These excerpts show the rhizomatic quality of our conversational curriculum. Similar issues and questions popped up in successive sessions and our discussions did not stay 'on track.' Rather, a recursive and multi-dimensional aggregation of feedback formed an organic and somewhat chaotic body of knowledge for us to draw on as we learned what constituted 'research' in TARG. The facilitator of such a group could have used guidelines from a book on research methodology, citing an established (but not necessarily effective) meta-genre for the research genre. While fragments of such a meta-genre could be discerned in some of the advice Rossi, myself and/or Kelleen offered, mainly the group improvised its own meta-genre from available

materials. As "a mediated symbolics of practice," TARG's meta-genre symbolized values embodied in our teaching and research practices (Giltrow, 2002b, p.203). The improvisational way the research genre was learned, discussed and recognized in TARG reflected the discursive context of this teacher/researcher group, and how our conversations were organized by political commitments to a view of such collaborative research as emergent, negotiated and respectful.

Recognizable paths as we 'walked alongside' each other

Practices of recognition are central to 'making sense,' to constructing conditions of intelligibility within a discourse community. Through the kinds of uptake and reception that each research proposal received, the kinds of research questions that would be recognized within this particular local culture of research became more apparent.

As we walked alongside each other, we navigated the terrain of collaborative research design using recognizable cues, convenient routes and inventive itineraries. Some statements got picked up and developed, so we headed in that direction. Other statements met resistance, or at least a less positive response, and so we adjusted, moved over a bit, and sometimes took another route. The ways different articulations of research were received in TARG was a matter of concern to the teacher/researchers—they wanted to 'get it'—to understand what kind of research to do and to articulate 'better' questions.

Entering this second stage of our first year's journey, we entered a border land: research and practice met here, embodied in those of us who were immersed in teaching children in public school classrooms and those immersed in scholarly research and university teaching. In TARG, we were engaged in border work, and the jostling of differential and diverse expertise met in a "contact zone": a social space "where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other" (Pratt, 1992, p.4). As we collaboratively designed research in TARG, research practices and classroom practices were learning each other's language. Often the relations in a contact zone are "highly asymmetrical" (Ibid.). In TARG, we tried to flatten hierarchies that separate scholarly research and elementary classroom teaching, but our collaboration was implicated in larger contexts of authority and expertise. A genre of research—sensitive to classroom conditions but able to count on considerable cultural capital—dominated our border-talk.

Meta-genres flourish at ... boundaries, at the threshold of communities of discourse, patrolling or controlling individuals' participation in the collective, foreseeing or suspecting their involvements elsewhere, differentiating, initiating, restricting, inducing forms of activity, rationalizing and representing the relations of the genre to the community that uses it (Giltrow, 2002b, p.203).

At this threshold—as we moved to designing research in TARG—meta-genre multiplied like rhizomatic crabgrass. Tentative research ideas were probed and pondered, their reception demonstrating levels of acceptance—perhaps enthusiastic, sometimes ambiguous, often inquisitive. Like a new friend being introduced to the relatives, research proposals met diverse

kinds of reception. Meta-generic guidelines can be discerned in the ways we differentiated between proposed research ideas—restrained some, motivated others. Like the disciplining and nurturing of stories in an AA meeting, research plans and ideas were assisted towards further development—urged forward through an open door or ushered onto another path.

Learning to be collaborative researchers and teacher/researchers

Throughout these complicated negotiations, teachers were becoming teacher/researchers and we all were becoming collaborators: in learning a genre, we were also learning who we could be in this community (C. Miller, 1994). Our protracted grappling with formulating research questions interlaced with processes of ideological becoming (Bakhtin, 1981). In the ongoing conversations of TARG, what occurred most often was an “intense interaction” within one’s own consciousness between discourses that were, to varying degrees, internally persuasive (Ibid. p.345). Becoming a teacher/researcher was an incomplete process of negotiating, resisting, and accommodating the ideas about one’s research ideas offered by others.

‘Interesting’ and interested research

The idea from the beginning was that teachers would research what interested them—they would direct the focus of inquiry. Questions that came ‘from inside’ demonstrated the kind of reflection on practice that is lauded within teacher inquiry. Acknowledging that research questions arise from one’s own interests referenced the obligation, within qualitative research, to show one’s own stance. These internally persuasive discourses of reflective practice and researcher standpoint were part of the meta-genre of research design that became more visible through our ongoing conversations.

However, the field for research was not open to just *anything* of ‘interest.’ We learned over successive weekly sessions that articulating a research proposal involves a nascent theoretical and methodological framework as well. As we struggled along together in TARG to refine the research projects, we were not just coming up with questions ‘interesting to us’ but also questions that could be answered by the research methods we would use and that would be analyzed using a sociocultural approach (‘like in Kelleen’s book’ and the other studies we read in the fall). This sociocultural theoretical framework, which sees learning as occurring in social interactions, meant that sites to investigate would be kinds of interactions. Kate’s response to Kari (‘It’s gonna be tricky to show what the parents are thinking on video’) helped make this more concrete, and also clarified how research instruments set parameters for the kinds of questions that are possible. Within our theoretical and methodological frameworks, studying practices and interactions meant researching what people do and/or say, what could be seen or heard on video or audio tape.

Dynamic tensions in a conversational curriculum

Learning this genre of research was not a linear process, a trajectory of development that could be readily traced from point I (ignorance) to point K (knowledge), with hierarchies of knowledge firmly established, and experienced researchers leading novices to understanding. Rather, a common understanding was benignly enforced, produced through disciplinary power (Foucault, 1972), as we regulated ourselves to certain behaviours, certain kinds of speech, in order to belong and to produce research questions that 'belonged' in TARG. Research practices are not so easily represented or assimilated; our cues were sometimes contradictory and confusing and markers of struggle can be traced in statements such as "I think I get it" (Jan20/00), "I have to ask it better" (Feb3/00) or "I still don't understand" (Feb17/00). I have analyzed instances that feature our discursive work to formulate research questions, the meta-genre that surrounded our research design. The excerpts chosen for this chapter show Donna and Katerina refining their questions; the other three classroom teachers also went through similar efforts to identify a research focus. This process was characterized by "an intense struggle within us for hegemony among various available verbal and ideological points of view, approaches, directions and values" (Bakhtin, 1981, p.346).

In Donna's struggle, her rejection of the Bakhtinian term *Kelleen* offered could be seen as another example of teacher disregard for academic discourse as distant and irrelevant to classroom realities: a rejection of "those congeries of discourses that do not matter, to us, that do not touch us" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 345). However, within this setting it was also part of Donna's ideological becoming, becoming a teacher/researcher.⁸ Donna's reflective story about *Kelleen*'s re-phrasing suggests an internal dialogue, as she ponders a new theoretical frame in relation to her own way of thinking and talking about her classroom, her own 'ideology' of community. Notice the 'yet' at the end of her sentence: "those aren't my words. They don't belong to me yet" (ATJan27/00). Bakhtinian theory came along with Donna in the car as she drives home; it remains a whisper in her ear. It seems to help her create a story of resistance. It keeps returning under different guises, in her questions to Katerina, for example, but without the fancy, academic packaging, questions from the bulk bin section, a staple in Donna's constant search for a way to help kids "connect" in a community of learners.

As Donna demonstrated, sometimes a researcher's suggestion was tossed back without being accepted. Those of us who were more experienced researchers learned that our interpretations could be rejected, not only 'misunderstood' and requiring further explanation.

⁸ Donna chose to apply for a master's program in February (two weeks after this January 27 conversation). While this doesn't mean her ambivalence was resolved, it does suggest further that this was not a simple rejection. Also, asked about this later in January 2001, when I used this excerpt for a conference presentation, Donna said that she was engaged in a process, and had been uncertain about accepting and using academic discourse at that time.

Powerful discourses, encouraging teachers to 'talk back' to theory, were reinforced by the writing of memos and the tenet that research should come from 'inside.' Passionate about teaching, the teachers' priority was to do research that respected 'kids' first. Teachers might know best about how to do that, not researchers. Also, our discussions were populated with many stories about classrooms, shared stories that reinforced a teacher discourse, a collegial discourse less familiar to researchers. These stories will be the subject of the next chapter.

Within TARG, there was an "internanimation" of different ways of thinking and talking about the world (Taylor, 1991, p.314). Multiple discourses were simultaneously present, in "dialogic interrelationship" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 342). Discourses of qualitative research and of sociocultural theory spoke to some aspects of research design. The projects were also shaped by commitments expressed through our fall's reading and discussion: discourses of teaching and learning, of social justice and democratization of schools, of inclusion and respect for all children. In the ongoing, rhizomatic curriculum of our conversations, and in the process of becoming collaborative teacher/researchers, multiple discourses struggled for hegemony. Sometimes, this 'talking back' led "to productive dialogue and generative reflection" (Ritchie & Wilson, 2000, p.18). TARG's overall discursive heterogeneity embodied a dynamic tension: at times, unresolved differences remained and we were, as a group, balanced in between meanings.

Chapter 5: Stories

"A storytelling group"

While I had anticipated that women whose daily work was teaching in elementary school and women whose daily work was study, research and teaching in university would bring different perspectives to our joint efforts, I was not prepared for how our conversations filled with stories, regardless of our activities. Teachers arrived at TARG after their school day, brimming with tales. Reflecting over the year one member said, "we talk in stories; we're a storytelling group" (Kate, Interview, p. 9). One of my first reactions was to be disgruntled. We were reading articles and books through the fall, and I thought we would discuss them in the more disciplined way that was familiar to me from many university seminars. I would sometimes comment to Rossi privately after the session: "We didn't talk about the article, we told stories again" (FNNov/99).

Further on in my data analysis, and as I began to present work-in-progress at conferences, I began to appreciate the rhizomatic movement of our conversations, stories sparking more stories, and to realize that this organic structure generated more possibilities, not less. But why did we tell *stories* so often? I sensed that storytelling was serving vital functions in TARG and became curious about this tendency for teachers to tell stories about their practice. Turning to teacher education literature, I realized that the activity I had initially seen as 'telling stories again'—a digression from our 'work' of learning about, designing, and implementing research—was set in a larger discursive context that offered powerful incentives for teachers to tell stories about their practice.

Settings for reception that welcomed and cherished teacher stories

Within the educational field, strong claims are made for narrative: it is considered "essential to our efforts to understand teaching and learning" (McEwan & Egan, 1995, p.xiii). Stories help us understand "the practices of teachers ... [and] the matter of practicing how to teach in informed and sensitive ways" (Ibid.). Teacher stories make excellent teacher education and professional development curriculum because they best represent teacher knowledge, *and* they encourage and encode 'reflective practice' (e.g., Clandinin & Connelly, 1999, 2000; Ritchie & Wilson, 2000). Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their classroom experiences, and to express these experiences in narratives, e.g. of critical incidents or teachable moments. Stories, which have "moral, emotional, and aesthetic dimensions" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, p.2) provide a curriculum for teachers to learn "not only what they should know or do but ... [also] who they can *be*" (Schwarz, 1998, p.23). Teacher narratives "reaffirm the role that teachers play in humanizing and democratizing students and in unleashing their ability to make a difference in the

world" (Preskill & Jacobvitz, 2001, p.1). Not only are teachers described as 'humanizing guides,' their stories also provide guidance:

Furthermore, these narratives are guides to living well. They show that to foster student growth, teachers must experience their own ongoing self-development—their own continuing educational renewal. Thus, great teaching grows out of a clear and often reinvented sense of self, and the most moving teacher narratives chronicle the emergence of a better self and a better teacher (Ibid. p.1).

These claims about 'great teaching' and 'a better self and teacher' are made for 'expertly crafted stories of teaching'—those by teachers with experience and wisdom (Ibid.). The ideal teacher stories extolled by Preskill and Jacobvitz contribute to the cultural construction of teacher as moral guide and guardian of democracy. These models guide the production of more pedestrian teacher narratives, which are less loaded with expectations, but still constrained: not just any kind of story is cherished. Aspiring stories need to embody a particular kind of teacher self, the reflective practitioner. They need to perform 'self development.'

No wonder teacher stories are venerated and cherished: they trade in some of the most valued discursive resources educational sites have to offer. They are occasions at which tropes like democracy, morality, and self-development may preside and where reflection on practice, the guiding saga of teacher education, can be performed.

Critique: Redemptive stories

However, some critical and dissenting voices have been raised against these celebratory claims for teacher narrative and the cultural construction of teacher that they exalt. Feminist educational theorists argue that some stories elide the contested realities of teachers' lives within material and discursive constraints (Weber & Mitchell, 1995; Britzman, 1991). Mary Bryson and Suzanne de Castell (1997) critique the ubiquity and deification of teacher narratives, opening their anthology with a promise that it is not bound by

the currently popular confessional practice of 'telling our stories;' these accounts are not, then, to be read as 'teacher-narratives,' those peculiarly venerated vehicles for sense making. In particular, we have eschewed 'narratives of redemption' as their apotheosis in too much contemporary educational writing (p.4).

In redemptive stories, the teacher plays a saviour role: performing miracles of transformation between September and June. What Bryson and de Castell decry in contemporary educational discourse is "the obligation to 'be positive' ... no one dares to speak of obstacles, impediments, difficulties without in the same breath expounding on 'solutions'" (p.4). This incitement to confess a sanitized, Pollyanna version operates to obscure the violence and continued discrimination that is actually lived by many in schools.

Bryson and de Castell's (1997) impassioned cry to stop ignoring harsh realities faced in schools is necessary. However, it tends to feed into that all-too-easy practice of placing social ills

at the feet of education, and in particular of teachers. Such criticism points fingers without extending a hand. At the risk of being construed as requiring 'solutions,' I would align myself with a different way of living in the world, a way that offers more than (only) critique. Norman Denzin (2000) has called this a "politics of hope"—in which one can both "criticize how things are and imagine how they could be different" (p. 916). Some teacher narratives may be capable of this doubled action.

A middle view

Although teacher narratives may have been overly romanticized and reductively used in education, Joy Ritchie and David Wilson (2000) argue that they can be critically used as well: narrative can be "a critical instrument, a form of language as action for revision of teaching and self" (p.22). They cite Paulo Freire (1986) and Audre Lorde (1984), advocates for social change, who claim that when people name their own reality and write their own worlds, they are taking a form of action towards freedom. Teachers' stories can be used to examine how the "school-as-lived is organized and maintained daily and over time through a multitude of discursive and material practices" (Orner, 1998, p.292). In contexts of reflection and critique, Ritchie and Wilson argue, narrative can create possibilities for teacher change.

I am sympathetic to this view that teacher narratives can be such 'critical instruments.' As feminist literary theorists have argued, what is needed is analysis of "the *context* of how stories are told, by whom, and for whom" (Mezei, 1996, p.1). A teacher narrative cannot be judged outside its context of use. Like Charlie Chaplin's cane—the metaphor I described in Chapter 1—a story can be used for many purposes, across diverse spaces of production and reception (de Certeau, 1984).

The claims made above for teacher narratives—that they represent and guide teacher knowledge and practice, and embody a teacher 'self'—need to be interrogated further by a discursive and rhetorical analysis. Rhetorical genre theory points to how teacher narratives can be told from many different positions and serve different, even opposing, interests; thus, it is misleading to consider them instances of the same genre. Using a rhetorical genre theory approach, I analyzed the narratives in TARG as situated actions responding to exigencies of this local discourse community (C. Miller, 1984, 1994). I viewed stories as performative of identities and of social relations, as iterating (and sometimes unsettling) available meanings. TARG provided a local space for 'taking up'—e.g., for assembling, negotiating, sanctioning, enacting and displaying the images and tropes available within larger discursive contexts.

TARG allowed a space for different kinds of stories—mostly stories of classroom life, but also personal stories—in response to the readings, the ongoing research projects, and as a way to debrief our day or our week. Teacher stories in TARG displayed multiple teacher actions or inactions, difficult or joyful incidents, dilemmas and institutional constraints. We tell some stories,

and not others, and it is important "to think about why we are invested in telling the particular stories we tell" (Orner, 1998, p.285). The stories told in TARG expected and played to the group's responses. Some stories thrived in the discursive space of TARG, and some were less fortunate. Within TARG, what Bourdieu (1991) calls "the power to impose reception"—to have one's utterances listened to—would seem to be a given (p.55). We are respectful of each other and listen. However, reception was marked by heterogeneity and fluidity, as the group offered multiple and complex responses. Stories might spark more stories, questions, comments, exclamations and/or laughter. An utterance could simultaneously receive contradictory and/or overlapping rejoinders, be greeted with noisy choral responses that might cover or fragment individual contributions, and/or be presented with more regulated, but still often very divergent responses, one by one from individual members. By analyzing this rhizomatic context of reception, I was able to discern how our particular investments and our familiarity with particular discursive resources led to the telling of certain stories.

In the next section, I discuss some typical teacher stories that circulated in our conversations, reporting my observations of some ways they functioned within this particular discursive space. In particular, I note how our narrative practices articulated with larger discourses. TARG's stories participated in educational discourses about 'teacher narrative,' with its heavy load of expectations and its incentive to perform 'reflective practitioner.' They were vulnerable to the critique of these "peculiarly venerated vehicles for sense making" as "'narratives of redemption'" (Bryson & de Castell, 1997, p.4). However, this did not 'tell the whole tale' of what stories did in TARG.

Observations of teacher stories circulating in TARG

De Certeau (1984) sees stories as "spatial practices": their everyday work is to "traverse and organize places; ...select and link them together; ...make sentences and itineraries out of them" (p.115). He distinguishes between "tours" (which gesture to immediate, shared places) and "maps" (a more "scientific discourse," which over time "has disengaged itself from the itineraries that were the condition of its possibility") (p. 119-120). The stories teachers told in our weekly conversations can be seen as 'tours': first-person eyewitness accounts of daily classroom events, fleshed out with concrete, sensory details. With their vivid descriptions of a teacher's life in public elementary school, these 'tours' brought listeners along into the classroom. Some 'tours' displayed teaching strategies that worked well or portraits of a particular child or group of children. These stories would invite us to see 'in this corner, a child labeled 'slow' who is now working easily with others, contributing to a group activity.' Sometimes, then, there was a 'moral' to these travelogues, as they encoded a lesson in 'good' classroom practices ('good' was often defined as inclusive and engaging, as in this example). The portraits often strongly advocated for a fuller view of the child, displacing assigned identities (e.g. 'slow' above).

As this subtle 'moral' illustrates, descriptions are never neutral. As I inquired further into the functions of stories in TARG, I began to see that they could be analyzed as stories that either desired or resisted certainty. Those stories that desired certainty tended to follow a redemptive trajectory, while those that resisted certainty tended to refuse closure and resolution. For analytical purposes, I divide these types, but more often a story both resisted and desired certainty, containing varying degrees of comfort with ambiguity.

The above-mentioned portraits often served to advocate for a child who was having difficulty in school or who had been labeled as deficient in some way (lacking English language skills, or learning disabled or emotionally challenged). There was a not-so-hidden hope that the teacher could solve the insoluble problem, could uncover the key hitherto undiscovered that would 'make things right' for the child/children involved. In this teacher-as-saviour version, her classroom was a lifeboat where she valiantly pieced together a makeshift community each school day, forging bonds of love and hope, despite storms of political ill will, social injustices, willful ignorance, poverty and violence that threaten to sink this boat. Stories that traded in redemptive tropes functioned to provide some hope amidst the many forces ranged against a caring teacher's efforts. The redemptive trajectory read like this: 'I got these kids at the beginning of the year and they were impossible, but by June they were so much better.' However, the teacher in these stories was often a 'powerless saviour.' The teacher was powerless against the 'big bad system,' a lone female ranged against forces of capitalism, class, race and gender hierarchies, cruel and inhumane institutional bureaucracies. Her classroom door was locked against these forces, but it was porous: however much she tried to make her classroom a haven and a refuge from discrimination, these forces 'blew the house down.'

Thus, even in stories that desired certainty, closure, and a sense of accomplishing 'great things' between September and June, there was always another tale, or a question that opened a fissure, or a story of a further problem that could not be solved. This uncertainty could not be attributed solely to forces outside the classroom, but also to ambiguities of teaching practice. These more open stories were like distilled dilemmas: capturing a critical moment in teaching practice, a moment where there was no easy answer. The teacher would speak of 'not knowing what to do' in a particular situation, or doing something that wasn't effective (that didn't get the desired result), or being left with not knowing the effects of an action or inaction.

Some of these bigger questions opened up towards the end of the school year, when the closed classroom door (closed to keep kids safe and happy in a carefully constructed community) was now to be opened, the kids released into summer, and then scattered into various classes for the next grade. The powerlessness of teachers, their continued worry about letting the children go, to be at the mercy of other, less understanding teachers or placed in less friendly schools, rose to a peak at that point. But, throughout the school year, questions arose about the institutional constraints under which 'happy classroom life' was created. Some of these we could

laugh incredulously about, such as the imposition of 'silent lunch' at one teacher's school: when the weather was bad, students were to eat lunch at their desks, but not talk. This met union requirements that teachers have a non-instructional break during the day, supposedly eliminating classroom management. It also effectively eliminated language learning during that time, often a time for rich peer conversations. This rule seemed laughable and ridiculous, as it was so obviously counter to any educational objectives. However, teachers had to comply with this institutional imperative.

Against these constraints, the resilience of storytelling in TARG contributed to a shared belief in the need for a contextual response to issues of educational practice, one that took in multiple factors of the situation. Narrative's ability to show particulars served this need, suggesting that it was difficult—perhaps impossible—to generalize and come up with a solution that would work in another situation. These narrative 'tours' represented the complexity, chaos, and contradictions of classroom life with children. The story I present next demonstrates some of this complexity, and its uptake within TARG shows how our responses traced certain trajectories. In analyzing the uptake of stories in TARG, I attend to the conditions of intelligibility that welcomed some tales and not others (Foucault, 1972). Set within a larger context of educational discourses on teacher narratives, this local group invited (certain) stories into our weekly conversations; our responses showed how we made room for them. Like the AA stories discussed in Chapter 4, responses might also suggest interpretations of story elements (Cain, 1991).

A story and its reception

In the rest of this chapter, I investigate a linked set of stories told in conversation: the first excerpt is from October 1999 and the second from March 2000. Stories were told each week and, over time, we came to recognize recurrent dilemmas and familiar characters, often children in each other's classrooms. The excerpts discussed here are linked by reference to a 'familiar character'—a child in Marcy's classroom—even though they occur six months apart. The initial story takes multiple actions: advocating for a child while raising a dilemma and critiquing the institution of public schooling. It describes an incident with a child, reports the strategy used, and opens up questions about the interactions. I will first discuss this story and a reference to it six months later. I will next discuss its 'uptake'—the stories told or untold in response.

The first story I analyze was told early on in TARG's history: October 14, 1999 was only our fourth session together, and we did not know each other very well. We were still defining the space of TARG. Like people moving into a new house, we were unpacking boxes of things (in this case, tools of talk, of learning in groups) that had been useful in the past; putting up photos (stories) of treasured people (children or teacher role models); negotiating where to put the couch or chair (what central organizing features would structure our gatherings). In this session, there

are few interruptions or times when we 'talk over' each other. We listened as each speaker talked, and then there are usually momentary pauses between speakers. This contrasts with other audiotapes, such as the March 2, 2000 session also discussed in this chapter. These later sessions seem raucous by comparison, with loud laughter, talking over and interrupting, and choruses of background sounds expressing affective responses (e.g. "oh, no!") or agreement (e.g., "yeah" "umhum").

For October 14, 1999 most of the group had read the article, "Learning English as a second language in kindergarten: A community of practice perspective" (Toohey, 1996), which argues that Lave & Wenger's (1991) model is useful for understanding how children negotiate identities, engage in practices, and access resources in the classroom. The main item on our 'agenda' for this session was discussing this article. As the session began, Rossi, the other doctoral student in the group, initiated a brief discussion about its language, as possibly "alienating" to teachers (AT Oct14/99, p.1). Marcy opened her long sharing by talking about how she decoded the article, finding it "fascinating but also very dense" (Ibid., p.2). She had found that reading about communities of practice in the classroom made her look at her own classroom in a new way, and see the many communities and sub-communities within it.

Marcy next told a long, compelling and dramatic story, speaking quickly, with liveliness, colour, and emphasis in her voice. She gave us a 'tour'—a rich visual picture of her school and of a dramatic incident. Perhaps her 20 years of storytelling to primary children contributed to her ability to exploit narrative tension, animate dialogue, and describe settings in vivid detail. She entertained us, her audience, with effective pauses and intonation, dramatically setting the stage for the climactic event, acting out the dialogue throughout. She began by linking her story to one line of the article.

Excerpt from October 14, 1999

Marcy: ... I was struck by the line "somebody had an identity that was problematic for him at times." Looking at kids in that way, which is what I did today as I sat there... was a new way of looking at them. I liked "problematic at times" because it allows for the fact that the situation doesn't stay the same all the time, that it constantly changes. And it reminded me of a really difficult moment for me, the one that just really struck me, in the first couple days of school.

Now, I have kindergarten and grade one, and my kindergartens hadn't started and so I had grade ones and we have 3 assigned grade one teachers and 60 grade one children and no sense of how the staffing was going to work out. And because of that, because we did not want

the children to bond with us ((*Marcy pauses for effect; rueful chuckles begin from group*))

And we were trying to prevent bonding you know. We rotated them constantly, so no one could get attached to anybody ((*laughter continuing in background*)). Because we didn't know what was going to happen at the end of the week, and sure enough at the end of the week we had a complete staffing change, and you know, we had people who were grade one teachers who weren't. And so for a whole week we tried to keep everybody from forming attachments, so they rotated.

And they were also brand new grade one kids. They've never been at school all day; they'd never been in that part of the building. We had to give them a maximum amount of support. So about every 15 minutes we'd pick all of them up and take them to the bathrooms. And because our school was being remodeled, there were no signs on the bathrooms. The water wasn't running in some of them, there was no toilet paper in some of them ((*I can hear a laugh or two in the background*)). And, so it was a really insecure situation. The kids didn't know whether they were coming or going, they didn't know who was who, they didn't know, their teacher was different every day, they were constantly being picked up and taken to this place, they were sorted out boys in here, girls in here, etceteras.

At one point I was standing outside and waiting for them to come back from the bathroom, and hoping that I could remember which ones were my responsibility that day and I heard, because all the grade ones would kind of do it all at the same time, so there'd be all the 60 of the kids in the bathrooms, I heard somebody saying, ((*She shouts in a kid's voice*)) "there's a girl in the boy's bathroom!" And I thought "oh, no" ((*distressed tone of voice*)).

And I kind of waited and then I heard the cry pick up. "Oh, there's a girl in here; hey there's a girl in the boy's bathroom! There's a girl in the boys' bathroom!" and I thought "well, some girl's going to come shooting out of there and I'll just shoot her into the right one and hope it just goes away." But it didn't and nobody came out, so I thought, "gee, I'll have to go in the boys' bathroom." And the urinals of course are right as soon as you come in and so there's no way of going in and not looking.

And I, um, I thought, "this poor little girl's probably huddled in a corner and they're just attacking her," and so I kind of came around the corner and I saw a little ((*pause*)) Sikh boy with the, um I don't know what it's called, even ((*gesture to top of head, looking at Kari*)) the ((*pause*))

Kari: Cover,

Marcy: [the cover on his head

Kari: [the patka, it's called =

Marcy: = Yeah =

Kari: = just, we just say a scarf.

Marcy: Scarf? Okay. ((*Pause*)) And he was cornered in there with all these boys screaming, "there's a girl in the bathroom!" And I, you know, I don't know, I guess, I've thought about it since then, whether what I did was right, and there's not a 'right' but it's what I did. And I can't think of anything better to do. I just whirled around and I said, ... "that's not a girl!" and just turned around and left as though, I mean, how could anybody make a mistake like that! ((*Marcy chuckling here*)) And then it wasn't discussed again.

But the little boy's turned out to be in my class ... and I keep looking at him and wondering whether that was the most helpful thing I could have done for him ... to just act as though *of course* he's a boy. ((*Umhum in background now, sounds like Rossi's voice*)) Whether it should have been discussed afterwards. And I feel this special connection with him because I saw him that way; that was my first introduction to him. But when I got to this part [in the article] about identity, I thought, is he still in some respects a boy who looks like a girl? And is that part of his identity? And whether it was created by that incident or perhaps happened a long time earlier, how is that for a child to be a boy who looks like a girl? And have that part of yourself from a really early age. I don't know what that's like. Um ((*pause*)).

Kari: Does he speak English?

Marcy: Umhum. ((*intonation suggests yes*))

Kari: Did you, did he say anything to you about it?

Marcy: He didn't say anything. He wasn't in my class that day, he was one of the ones I wasn't supposed to, I mean, he was one of 60 kids, I didn't know his name or anything.

Kari: Umhum. I remember having a similar incident too a few years ago, but this little guy was very outgoing and he just, this lady said, "oh what a cute girl" and he just put his hands on his hips and looked her in the eye and said, "I am not a girl, I am a boy!"=

Marcy: = Yeah

Kari: But then it depends on how many students say with the, you know, long hair and the patka are at the school and some kids just, you know, know. But I've found adults who just assume they are girls. Yeah, so it's something that I think needs to be discussed.

Kelleen: I think it's gotta be the most basic kind of identity thing

Marcy: [that's right =

Kelleen: [that happens when you go to school like whether you're a girl or you're a boy, when you're a little kid ... I guess it's ... [right from the time kids are babies

Bonnie: [Yeah, is it a girl or a boy when you're born

Marcy: That's right, it's the first thing, the first identification you're given

Kelleen: But it's a real big one at school: which bathroom you use

Marcy: Right

Kari: Even kindergarten children get confused ... when the teacher is talking about being a parent [asking] "are you the mommy or are you the daddy?" ((*some chuckles in background*)) it's a difficult concept ((*pause*))

Marcy: Anyway, it was new for me as a teacher to start looking at my kids in terms of ... their identity ... (AT Oct 14/99, pp.2-4).

Kari was first to respond to Marcy, asking further about whether it was discussed afterwards. Kari then told a story from her own experience, of a very different boy, a different interaction, and then softly stated her opinion that this kind of incident is something that needs to be discussed.

Kelleen spoke next about the regulation of gender in schools, and even from birth; I supported this last point, as did Marcy, but then Kelleen moved back to school's gender sorting practices.

Kari briefly mentioned that kindergarten students demonstrate other confusions about gender.

Then, Marcy focused back on identity, her original question, and went on to present another portrait of a boy with a 'problematic identity' (a selective mute).

Marcy's story uses many details that seem geared to this particular audience of women and of teachers. Her use of irony in describing the proscription against 'bonding' with the new grade one children at her school effectively ridiculed this regulation: her chuckles and the answering laughs from her audience showed that we saw the humour and absurdity of the

situation she was forced to participate in. 'Good' teaching presupposes bonding with children, not keeping them at a distance. Grade 1 students in particular, 'new to the school,' are still making a school/home adjustment. Marcy used this long introduction to show how confusing and difficult the situation was for all the children. She set up a dramatic situation: teachers don't know the students, there are 60 new Grade 1 students, and to add to the confusion, there are renovations in the school. She also used humour in citing the familiar routine, which must be regularly organized in all activities with groups of children, of 'going to the bathroom'.

Then, she signaled a complication with the phrase, "At one point." A catastrophe in this strictly regulated space: 'There's a girl in the boys' washroom!' At first Marcy hoped she would not have to intervene, except to rescue the girl as she emerged from the wrong place. But, no, she has to enter the male space herself. Her aside about the "urinals"—"you can't help but look"—seems particularly addressed to this group of all women; with this visual detail, she brings us along as she enters the bathroom. There we see the child she must rescue, and she acts quickly, using scorn to deflect the humiliating chant. Marcy looked to Kari, for the word to name the covering on the little Sikh boy's head. She reported that she now has this little boy in her class, feels a "special connection to him" because of this first incident, and keeps wondering about it. She ended with a series of questions about her own action in this situation: "Was that the most helpful thing I could have done for him ... to just act as though of course he's a boy? Should it have been discussed afterwards?" She relates her questions to the article, the "part about identity": "is he still in some respects a boy who looks like a girl? And is that part of his identity? And whether it was created by that incident or perhaps happened a long time earlier, how is that for a child to be a boy who looks like a girl? And have that part of yourself from a really early age? I don't know what that's like" (AT Nov25/99, pp.2-4).

Discussion of Marcy's story: Uptake and performativity

TARG was a gendered space and Marcy depended on a certain reception from a group of women. Her story dealt directly with the constraints of gender—the regime of heteronormativity that requires the designation of male and female in all public spaces, through the institution of separate public washrooms. Her story also played to a sympathy with the constraints of public schooling. (As mentioned in Chapter 3, those who chose accept the invitation to join TARG shared to varying degrees a critical/political view of schooling). It both depended on this sympathetic reception and also helped create it—its rhetorical force convincing listeners of the ridiculous nature of schooling arrangements. In fact, these institutional practices are one of the villains in this story —the henchman for the 'mob boss' or godfather (an unjust, hierarchical society). Schooling regulations were to enforce societal demands for a particular kind of gendered, raced individualism. Within this story the regulated performance of gender and race braid together with violent effects. The teacher tries to intervene against this violence. The

climax of Marcy's story cites a recognizable teacher role within school and society, as advocate and protector as well as educator of children. Her audience can identify with this teacher role and also, to some degree, with the humiliated student.

This story performs a teacher self embedded in discourses of race/ethnicity, gender, and schooling. It embodies a critique of schooling arrangements, in the opening irony about an absurd regulation to produce docile bodies and the prohibition against bonding. It shows a teacher taking action as an advocate for a child within a heteronormative regime. It also shows a teacher dilemma, as Marcy raises questions for her colleagues in TARG. This is a teacher who cares passionately, who wants to 'do better' by reflecting on her actions. In raising questions about her own practice, particularly so early on in our weekly sessions, Marcy opens TARG up as a place where this kind of vulnerability can be shown. As she says much later in the year, she values TARG as one of the few places where one can "talk passionately" about teaching (Marcy, AT, Apr27/00, p.16).

The story appears again, six months later

Six months later, on March 2, 2000, Marcy referred to this boy—and we remembered this story—as she talked about her research project. Most of this session we talked about and watched the recent video (Feb29/00) Kate had done in her classroom; she had caught some interesting interactions between the group of girls who were the focus of Marcy's research. Our lengthy discussion centred on how this video revealed the kinds of unseen interactions between children that take place "24 hours a day non-stop in all classrooms" (Marcy, AT Mar 2/00, p.10). Both Kelleen and Kate talked about wanting to collect more data.

Excerpt from March 2, 2000

This next excerpt came late in our discussion. Marcy explained that next to the table of children that had been video taped had been

A little boy with the scarf on his head? (*rising intonation*) who still weeps about being, the other day, I mean, actually that afternoon, he went into the bathroom and he said, "the boys in there say I'm a girl." That's been a constant theme for that little guy (*sounds in background: Oh no!*)

Kari again tells another story in response:

Kari: I'm sorry to interrupt, but today one of the moms came in and her son has the little bun with the patka. And we had a volunteer from Korea, for 8 weeks ... So she wrote, Tuesday was her last day, so she wrote a thank you card to all the kids. And so we opened them all together and then he took it home. And his mom said that she put in there that you are such a cute little girl (*background comments: Oh no!*). And she

said it happened before. And he didn't say anything, you know, in class when he was reading, and I didn't think to tell her either, and I should have thought of that at the beginning. So I said to the mom, what did you do? And she said, well, I whited it out and changed it to boy ((background comments: Yeah, good idea)) because it's a really special card for him ((more comments: Oh yes! Umhum!)) ((3 second pause))

Marcy : ((in a musing tone)) Yeah, that would be nice to do another tape of the kids

Kate agreed, and Marcy continued about a next video taping session. Kelleen alerted us that we were close to the end of our time—" [Tonight] I absolutely have to leave in 3 minutes"—and we began to wind down (AT Mar2/00, p. 14-15).

Usually a soft-spoken contributor to our discussions, who does not jump in or talk over others, Kari did an unusual thing for her in this excerpt: she interrupted. Kari's story was received with affective concern, mostly in background comments as she told her story. When Kari finished, Marcy returned to a previous suggestion about collecting more data from her classroom, and we soon ended this session.

Marcy's story and Kari's answering stories

One way to see Marcy's tale of the 'boy in the girls' bathroom,' and Kari's answering story is in terms of story and counter story. Critical race theorist Richard Delgado (2000) argues that telling stories that counter dominant narratives can serve the valuable function of subversion: he sees "counterstorytelling" as a powerful way to undermine narratives that naturalize inequities and render privilege invisible (p.61). Noting the power of stories to "create their own bonds [and] represent cohesion," stories told by "outgroups" can strengthen their shared understandings and meanings, in opposition to those imposed by dominant groups (Ibid. p.60). Asserting alternative representations, counter stories can compel listeners/readers to re-evaluate their worldviews (Ibid.). While Marcy's story hardly qualifies as a 'dominant narrative' that justifies inequities, it does contain some elements that are made more visible and thus available for re-evaluation, in relation to Kari's answering stories.

On October 14, Kari's shorter anecdote juxtaposes an outspoken boy to the first "cornered," humiliated and silent boy. In Kari's story the boy claims a space for himself. Kari's answering anecdote displaces a view of all boys who wear the patka as victims of bullying and harassment with a counter story of a hero who asserts his power to name himself. On March 2, Kari's second story again asserts an alternative perspective. This time the boy's mother is able to advocate for her boy, and take the power to re-name him into the appropriate gender category. In Marcy's first story the little boy is the victim of racial and sexual harassment; he remains silent.

The little boy in Kari's story speaks up for himself: "I am not a girl, I am a boy!" In Kari's second counterstory, the support of family and religious tradition stands behind another little boy, mistakenly named 'girl' by an adult.

The uptake: Building in certain directions

Discourses of gender and race/ethnicity circulate within TARG; our conversations cite prior meanings and sometimes disrupt them. We hear Kari's two responses, and appreciate them. However, there are further roads we might have explored in 'taking up' her stories. In answering Marcy's first tale of the 'girl in the boy's bathroom,' Kari points to how the background knowledge of those present makes a difference: "But then it depends on how many students with the ... long hair and the patka are at the school and some kids ... just know" (AT Oct 14/99). We might have built on and followed Kari's added information that the assignment of gender "depends" on who is looking. In analyzing these stories, I may have been ready to attend to this instability of identification partly because my own life experience, as an adoptee of indeterminate heritage, taught me how the background knowledge one brings to 'reading' influenced others' assessments of what my ethnic/racial origins 'must' be.

Understanding "an identity that was problematic for him at times"

Kari's point that 'whether you are seen as a boy or a girl depends upon who is looking' affirms that we are literally bodies of knowledge, read differently depending on the context, and disciplined through visibility (Foucault, 1977). Bodies are produced through activities of surveillance, they "become what they are because they are looked at" (Chow, 1997, p.518). Our reading and writing practices can be interrogated: whose reading counts? Whose naming counts? These stories raise the issue that difference must be understood as relational and contentious (James, 2000).

A heterosexual gender regime is being violently reinforced in the 'girl in the boys' bathroom' story. The little boy is humiliated for 'looking like a girl.' As well, racism cannot be separated out from this event. The little boy's gender transgression is read off his body by those who are looking through a mainstream lens for boy/girl appearance, who are ignorant or disrespectful of Sikh codes of appearance.

Marcy's more general questions about 'how is that for a child to be a boy who looks like a girl?' elide the issue of who sees him as a girl. Kari says, "it depends on how many students say with the, you know, long hair and the patka are at the school and some kids just, you know, know." This was not a ('generic') boy but a Sikh boy. If there are other Sikh boys with the patka, or others present who are familiar with a boy appearing this way, then he will be seen as a boy. Within his own community, the wearing of a patka does not mark him as a girl, but as a traditional Sikh boy. It is not a mark of gender, but a mark of religious adherence. We do not, as a group, explore what it is like to be a boy with a patka in a Sikh community. We continue with the more

familiar question of how gender identity is enforced in schools. We do not explore the contextuality of 'what a boy looks like.' The trajectories traced by our responses grooved certain paths; we sometimes missed other possibilities for discussion.

Both of Kari's counter stories assert that this is an issue that needs to be talked about. Kari answers Marcy's questions about her own actions in 'rescuing' the boy in the girls' bathroom: 'was [that] the most helpful thing I could have done for him ... to just act as though *of course* he's a boy? ... should [it] have been discussed afterwards?' Both times Kari offers teacher strategies for dealing with incidents like this: discuss the issue, educate children and adults about the wearing of the patka. In the first story, she states her belief directly ("it is important to discuss it"). In her second story, Kari confesses her own 'mistake' in not educating the volunteer—again a subtle way of saying that this kind of 'education' and/or discussion is important. Many writers and activists in feminist and race theory would agree that 'talking about it' can be a way to combat further ignorance (e.g., Anzaldúa, 1990; Ng, 1995; Bannerji, 1993; hooks, 1994). How to 'talk about it' is the subject of much anti-racist pedagogy (e.g., Boler, 1999; Britzman, et.al., 1993; Razack, 1998). Some authors examine 'common sense' racism and sexism in schools; these practices are difficult to talk about, because they become part of the fabric of daily life (Ng, 1995). Those who experience these subtle, daily discriminatory practices may find that their "theorized experience [offers] critical entry points" for analyzing them (Bannerji, 1993, p.xvii); those whose lives articulate at many points more easily with dominant, normative ways of doing things may find these 'common sense' discriminatory practices more difficult to see and to name.

In these exchanges, Kari raises the importance of 'talking about it.' Sometimes, in other TARG discussions, we talked more generally about raising and educating about difficult issues in classrooms. For example, as mentioned in previous chapters, some teachers in TARG had followed Vivian Paley's (1992) example of talking directly with children about her rule of inclusion and its ramifications.⁹ However, in analyzing the reception of Marcy and Kari's stories in these instances, missed opportunities for 'talking about it' become visible. In investigating 'missed opportunities' or paths not taken within TARG's conversations, I point to the possibility for re-accenting (Bakhtin, 1981), or re-signifying (Butler, 1993), for taking up familiar material and turning it to new uses, demonstrating resources within a story that could not be exploited in a more 'common sense' reading.

The space of reception in TARG was complex: our conversations were rhizomatic and multi-dimensional, and yet they also built in certain directions. Tracing our routes, I noted that some stories secured further uptake and thus guided the direction of our discussion for awhile. These stories tended to offer topical material that became recognizable and familiar—recognizable and intelligible—within this community. Some paths were easily passed

by; others were frequented often. Over time, telling stories and taking up those stories, we tended to groove certain paths most recognizable to the group. A story, de Certeau (1984) says, "authorizes" the creation of a field for action (p.125), sketches out "habitable places" (p. 106). In TARG's conversations, we easily inhabited some places. Other stories seemed to offer only temporary lodgings, or remained in shadow, uninhabitable.

Silent story

A silent story had hovered over these conversations about the boy mistaken for a girl in the boy's bathroom. In October, 1999, I did not share my personal experiences of gender transgression, of being a 'girl' who looked or acted like or felt like a 'boy' when Marcy posed her question to the group, "how is that for a child to be a boy who looks like a girl?" I had felt that silence acutely. Each time a reference to gender norms arose, I knew that I was not saying something; I heard a suppressed story shouting. I felt connected to the little boy with the patka huddled in the boy's bathroom. We were both silent.

The little boy huddled in the bathroom was harassed for 'looking like a girl.' His gender transgression was (mistakenly) read off his body by those who have an Anglo Christian dominant lens. Behind him stood a religious tradition, family support, ethnic identity. My gender transgression may or may not be read off my body: it is definitely less visible. This is partly because I conform to other visible signs of 'normality.' It depends on who is looking. I choose clothes and hair to suggest 'masculine,' and these signifiers and other body language cues are often read by other lesbians, who accord me recognition. However, these signifiers do not translate well outside a particular lesbian culture, and my clothes/hair are still within an acceptable range of 'professional woman' or 'student.' I often need to assert my gender transgression through language, by naming myself. When I 'come out', behind me stands the histories of gay pride, feminism, queer theory and activism. But, in TARG, I did not name myself lesbian until a year later (October, 2000). The stories I might cite, of gender transgression and mis-recognition, remain silent. Thus, our discussion was not made more complicated, did not explore these ways identity can be 'problematic at times.'

Stories and their uptakes: Citing the familiar

Those of us who use narrative in teacher education must ask: What is the context in which the story is told? Where are the gaps, the silences, the tensions, the omissions? What narratives from other lives might contradict or complicate our own? Who is privileged by these narratives? What positions and relationships do they reinforce? (Ritchie & Wilson, 2000, p.21).

⁹ Later in the year (June 7/00), Marcy talked about how she had been inspired through TARG discussions to talk directly with children about difficult things that happened in school.

The stories analyzed in this chapter cite discourses that circulate through TARG—a local space embedded in larger social, cultural and institutional spaces. As suggested by the list of questions above, a story will privilege some speakers and listeners, reinforcing their 'positions and relationships' while others are omitted or ignored (Ritchie & Wilson, 2000). Marcy's story and its uptakes suggest some of the 'positions and relationships' reinforced within TARG. Tracing how our stories reiterate certain ways of understanding and living in the world (and not others) can show the places and spaces they create to inhabit (de Certeau, 1984).

When we tell a story, we cite larger discourses that organize the resources available for local instances of performativity. Marcy's story cites educational discourses of teacher as nurturing, as advocate, and as reflective practitioner. Her irony about how the situation was set up to keep the children from 'bonding' reiterates a 'nurturing teacher' in opposition to the 'unfeeling institution.' Her action is a strong advocacy for the humiliated child, and her questions about her action show a reflective practitioner 'at work' in the coda to her story. Kari also cites teacher discourses of nurture, advocacy and reflective practice, as well as urging education about 'these issues.' Marcy's story might have remained a tale of a successful intervention in a case of humiliation, but the questions Marcy poses at the end, and the counter stories Kari tells, resist any such simple closure. Both stories disrupt the redemptive trajectory critiqued by Bryson and de Castell (1997).

Marcy's story cites familiar locations in her 'tour' of a public elementary school where numbers of children are managed daily and testifies to the disciplinary practices of schooling, which requires the regulation of bodies. This surveillance of bodies is further exercised through the space of the public washroom, a site that organizes heteronormative gender categories. Marcy's story cites this gender regime: as a teacher, she is caught in the institutional and cultural imperatives, and must reinforce the sorting of children into boy and girl. However, she also demonstrates through humour and dramatic effect her particular reading of how gender plays out in the lived practices of schools. Marcy uses the strategy of scorn to reverse the humiliation directed at the Sikh boy: she belittles the other children for not being able to read his gender correctly. In so doing, she reiterates the normativity of gender (there are 'correct' genders). However, her action also shows how gender is a matter of reading: the harassing boys have not read correctly.

Kari, in referring to sites where the Sikh boy would be read differently, offers additional support for understanding that we read bodies depending on the background knowledge we have, the available discursive resources we have in our cultural repertoire. Kari's counter stories cite discourses of family, ethnicity and religion that further complicate the reading of boy/girl within Marcy's story. My silent story, untold, would also confound a complacent gender binary, further shaking the ground on which it operates. These linked stories point to powerful, centripetal forces: euro-hetero-normative discourses that govern everyday practices, not only within

elementary schools. The uptake for Kari's stories demonstrated that some 'positions and relationships' were reinforced and/or privileged within TARG. At a moment when we could have taken a path less worn, even a 'new' path, we tended to keep to well-maintained paths for discussing gender, rather than further explore trails tangled with 'complicating' factors.

As in many conversations, silent stories hovered unspoken, their resources unavailable. I cite one silent story here, my own on this occasion and this issue, to indicate that not all possible stories did secure a space in TARG. My silent story suggests some of "the gaps, the silences, the tensions [and] the omissions" that existed within TARG. I have often speculated about the rhizomatic links that might have been generated if I had spoken my stories of gender transgression. Hodges (1998), theorizing from her dis-identification in an early childhood education program, analyzes "moments when participation is organized by structures of privilege that deny difference and diversity" (p. 278).

At the time, I told myself that I did not want to jeopardize my data collection. Keeping silent meant (I hoped) that "nothing observable . . . [would suggest] I don't belong" (Ibid. p.283). While in this setting I could not justify this fear, my internal dialogue drew on some of my past experiences, when 'coming out' resulted in distance and awkwardness. I felt I was compromising my integrity, but I promised myself I would 'come out' after I completed the interviews. Through the first year of TARG's existence, I was very invested in maintaining a sense of commonality in TARG. This is some of why I did not reveal my dis-identification and discomfort in conversations such as those analyzed here, as we chose well-worn paths that excluded queer perspectives on gender.

While teacher narratives told in TARG were too complex to be categorized as simple tales of rescue or injury, I do not want to downplay the ways that certain perspectives were reinforced by these stories and their reception. In the midst of the tangled rhizome, our conversations often seemed fluid and multi-dimensional. However, they were building in certain directions. The pathways our conversations took influenced the uptakes made possible in TARG and set parameters for what became (un)intelligible in this setting.

In this chapter, I have analyzed the more ephemeral stories that populated our weekly discussions—stories told in conversation. In Chapter 6 I will discuss the stories in TARG that were deemed successful enough to be performed in a public space and to represent this teacher-research community to a larger audience at our first conference presentation in May 2000.

Chapter 6: Our first presentation

In Chapter 3 I argued that over time/space members of TARG developed a sense of ourselves as a community: we learned who we could be and what we could do in TARG. I explored Hodges' (1998) claim that "a community of practice is organized in such a way as to make participation contingent on identifying, or dis-identifying, within ideological constructs" (p.289), using evidence to show some of the common values and beliefs that we came to identify with in TARG. I analyzed some of the ways we articulated who we were as members of TARG, analyzing our identifications as contingent upon material and discursive spaces. In this chapter I will be investigating an occasion when TARG was called upon to present itself to a larger audience: to demonstrate who we were and what we did. I view this occasion as a place to display the cumulative text of our self-reflection on our community and its collaborative work. This was an invitation to represent the knowledge our community had generated. It became as well an opportunity to reflect on and represent the journey we had traveled together.

The occasion was a one-day conference on teacher inquiry held at a nearby university on May 13, 2000. The call for proposals suggested that our audience would be other teachers, student teachers, teacher researchers, graduate students, and faculty. With the group's agreement, Kelleen prepared and sent in a short proposal, and we were accepted to present. This public performance validated our work; the occasion invited us to see ourselves as legitimate, as speakers who could secure reception (Bourdieu, 1991). Further, this validation did not occur only as we stepped up to the podium, but also in the larger discursive context of being accepted to present, appearing on the program, attending a conference together at another institution. It was also the first time Kate videotaped us as a group: our performance was to be documented. The exigencies of this occasion were institutional, collegial and professional, as we would be speaking as teachers to other teachers, as researchers to other researchers, and also speaking as a collaborative teacher/research group from another university. Each of us would be stepping up to the podium from multiple locations.

Preparing to present TARG to a larger public

How would we represent ourselves for this occasion? In analyzing the work of constructing the set of linked narratives that became our presentation, I examine the linguistic and discursive resources made available in our conversations. This performed 'story of TARG' developed over time: it emerged as we talked about what we were doing as a group and reflected on our activities and our experiences. Within our conversations, we took up particular resources, which in turn authorized a particular telling of our public stories.

Opening up certain spaces, authorizing arenas of practice, is part of what we do when we tell stories. De Certeau (1984) argues: "The story's first function is to authorize, or more exactly, to *found* ...[to create] a theater of actions" (p.123). Narrative "makes places habitable," peoples them, describes their possibilities for use (Ibid. p.106). While we did not begin formally preparing our presentation until April 20, in another sense preparation to present our work began with our first meeting and continued weekly. We were continually building a self-reflexive text about TARG, a story about ourselves. As analyzed earlier, our understandings about who we were and what we were doing were cued by time/space, by implicit and explicit expectations in research design and by the 'uptakes' teacher stories secured. Our conversations were a tapestry of stories drawn from diverse sites of experience. Our ongoing stories of 'who we were' and 'what we were doing' organized our journey, opened and authorized spaces for further stories, offered narrative resources to make these stories 'habitable' (de Certeau, 1984).

Although the construction of our self-reflexive text was ongoing, there were a few focal points when we made space within our conversations specifically to reflect on ourselves and our activities thus far, to talk *about* TARG. Examining these times, it is possible to trace 'habitable spaces' that were made ready for representing our work and our journey. Some of the resources that we would later call upon to construct our narratives for performance appear within these self-reflective conversations. In these spaces, we provisionally organized the particular tropes and themes we later selected to represent ourselves to outsiders.

In this chapter, I analyze the discursive practices of preparing for our presentation. I first examine an early occasion when we set aside time for reflecting on our activities and ourselves. This discussion was initiated by my research on the group, and I discuss some influences my study had on our process. I next analyze how a particular metaphor achieved synecdochic status for representing TARG's collaborative process at this time. I then move to our more formal preparation, beginning with the session when Kelleen brought her draft of an introduction for our presentation. Finally, I analyze the performance itself. I do this by tracing the overall movement or itinerary suggested by the eight individual stories. As an occasion for public recognition of our work, I argue that this first presentation operated as a celebration and a consolidation of certain spaces/stories within TARG.

Emerging narrative of TARG

The researched researchers reflect

My participation in the group, as a researcher studying our activities, had an ongoing influence. We could not help but recognize that our work had an importance, even if we were not able to name precisely what significance it might have, since it was not only funded but also studied. The central presence of the tape recorder, documenting our words, contributed to a self-consciousness about our work. We knew we were objects of research, not just subjects of

research. As I took field notes as we talked, transcribed our taped discussions, and handed out weekly Notes (my interpretation of the highlights of the previous week's discussion), I demonstrated my attention to and documentation of our activities. Because my thesis depended on our conversations, I had a powerful investment in TARG continuing and being successful as a group. My organizational support served my own interests as well as the group's. I was also aware, as I discussed in my methodology section, that my role as participant observer, as historian and record keeper, had potential to impact TARG's past, present and future—our sense of where we had been, where we were, and where we might be headed. However, during these first months of TARG, I was still adjusting to the idea that these conversations would comprise the data I would write a thesis about and beginning to understand what that meant. I was also preoccupied with completing my comprehensive examinations (accomplished at the end of March 2000). I was also scheduled to present a paper-in-progress at the annual conference for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), which would be held in early in March.

The first occasion when I was asked to talk about my research with the group came on March 8, 2000. I did not say much, as the following discussion will show. My tentative ideas at this point were mostly based on my proposal for the study, rather than on in-depth data analysis. However, as mentioned above, I did intend to give my first presentation on my work-in-progress at the upcoming TESOL conference. At our regular TARG session the week before my presentation, Kelleen asked me to speak about how my research was going and what I would be presenting.

Excerpt 1 from March 8, 2000

- Kelleen:** Okay. Well, we have a few minutes before we have to go get our library cards and I don't know, Bonnie, if you wanted to say anything, but I'd like to know how your research is going *((laughing begins here, as I squirm. I felt like I was being put on the spot and exaggerated squirming in my chair to indicate this, and to mime as well my dread of the upcoming conference presentation. This generated general laughter.))*
- Bonnie:** Yeah, you can tell me! *((pause))* How's it going? *((I say this last sentence like a greeting; the response was general laughter from the group.))*

After the laughter subsided, I went on to talk about how I "haven't thought too much about what I'm going to say," acknowledging that I was "scared" of presenting. I said that I would just "report on what we've been doing" (meeting weekly, designing research projects in classrooms, offering each other support and feedback). I opened the question again: "I see people nodding, that's good *((general laughter))*. Anything else I should say?" (AT Mar8/00, p.24).

For the next 17 minutes, people offered me suggestions for what to say about TARG. This was the first time we had consciously set aside time to talk about our experiences of being in this group. It became an opportunity for us to begin to articulate a narrative about our work in TARG. The following are selections from the longer conversation (AT Mar 8/00, pp. 24-29).

Donna said that she has gotten "more curious" about what goes on in her classroom. Sharon said that she "questions a lot now." Even though she always did question against the system now she does "even more so;" being in the group, she continued, "validates my beliefs." I responded here, saying that I did notice "the support that we get from each other for the kinds of things that we're trying to do." Katerina affirmed this, claiming that TARG was a space to bring important questions that were not easy to ask at school. Katerina also wanted me to emphasize that this type of research focuses on classroom practices from a teacher's perspective, unlike some other research. Sharon mentioned how limited she has found professional development workshops, in comparison with the learning in TARG.

Rossi offered a suggestion to me: "could you just use excerpts from this tape?" I again turned the question back, asking the group: "Yeah. How do you feel about that?" I looked around the table, but no one answered right away. Kelleen asked, "can I have a perspective?" I acknowledged that there were several people not yet heard from (Kari, Marcy, Kate had not yet spoken), and then Kelleen took the floor, speaking about what she liked about the group. She liked not being "in the position of having to know." She didn't know about many of the elementary classroom teaching practices; she would "learn stuff" here that she would take back to her undergraduate classes. For Kelleen, the group was "very enriching" and she liked being "just differently situated, but not knowing the answers to your questions and not feeling like I need to." The excerpt that follows gives Marcy's response, which was accompanied by nods, murmurs, and comments of agreement from other teachers present.

Excerpt 2 from March 8, 2000

Marcy: For me, I think it's a little bit the same as what you're saying Kelleen. I've had a lot of contact with the university as a student and as a trainer of teachers and as a student again and again and again. ... But this is the first time that I've felt ... the process that we've been going through since the fall has sort of knit me into this place (*her gesture is fingers intertwined*). Like, the two places have been kind of woven together in some kind of a profound way. ... I should probably not admit this since most of my family are academics and I have a lot of academics who are very nice friends of mine (*general laughter*). I've often wondered what the purpose of that was. Sort of sitting up here on the hill and writing these things that none of us ever read (*laughs continue*) unless we

have to take a course. But this process has really done a lot for me in terms of bridging that gap, =

Donna: = [Making some use of all that stuff

Marcy: [understanding all that. And making you useful to me and a feeling that I could be useful ... it's made a huge difference =

Sharon: = [I agree with you

Marcy: [And ... it's a working group ... we have a common interest in doing something.

Throughout Marcy's talk, Donna, Sharon (verbally) and others through body language were agreeing and affirming what she said. Kari followed up, responding in particular to Marcy's metaphor of "knitting together" academic with school realities.

Kari: I think with something like this ... it's ... going full circle ((*agreement sounds in background*)) from the theory to the practice to understanding, so that you know how intertwined they are.

The discussion continued with reflections on how we all learn from each other, whether we are 'new' (beginning) or 'old-timer' teachers. Katerina and then Sharon related this to how children can learn in classrooms from each other, even when their 'skill levels' are different. Kelleen then commented on how the constraints of institutional demands (e.g. to assess students, to keep them 'quiet') can result in a kind of teacher alienation or hopelessness. Marcy and Donna, long time teachers, both spoke of still feeling self-conscious or incompetent when their classes are too noisy or don't read at grade level or higher. Marcy added, "I think it's amazing that we keep going because it's really hard, you know?" and there are 'yeah's in the background (AT Mar 8/00, p. 28). Kelleen pulled our discussion back to closure, saying: "well, Bonnie you should have a lot to go on." Everyone laughed.

Kelleen added that this discussion should be useful for the conference presentation TARG would be doing in May, two months from now. What we had said here could help focus what we want to say then. Kate, who hadn't spoken yet, was the last one to add to our discussion.

Kate: I'd just like to say something that I said to Kelly yesterday, that I'm just having way too much fun with this ((*laughs*)) ... after spending a number of years ... doing research *to* people, it's really wonderful to be doing research *with* people. It just feels more connected to what I started doing here many, many decades ago. So thank you. I feel very

welcome in your classrooms; your kids are great. And it's just been lots of fun (Ibid., p. 29).

This discussion did give me 'a lot to go on' for my TESOL presentation the following week. Some of what was said I cited verbatim. The fact that I did not know what I was going to say, that I did not take a distanced stance of 'telling them' but rather asked for direction, contributed to the dynamic that Marcy had described: we were 'useful' to each other. This 'usefulness' was acknowledged by Rossi, Kelleen, and myself at various points throughout the discussion. In extending authority to describe the group to its members, I was embodying a particular research ethic: reciprocity in the negotiation of meaning (Lather, 1991). This reciprocity was performed not only in this conversation, but also several weeks later, when I reported back to TARG about the conference and my presentation, as I will discuss later. This first occasion of explicit and extended reflection on ourselves created a 'theater of actions,' in de Certeau's (1984) words, for continued construction of our self-reflective text about TARG.

Besides performing reciprocity, this discussion also gave members of TARG a chance to say what they found valuable in the group to each other. It was an opportunity to contribute to a shared narrative about TARG, about who we are as a group, and what we do together. The main points of this reflection were that TARG increased curiosity and learning, and was better than other sites for professional development, and better than other kinds of research 'on' rather than 'with' people. We learned from each other, were 'useful' to each other, as TARG 'knit together' two disparate spaces, allowing us to see the 'full circle' of theory/practice/reflection. TARG was 'fun' as well as a place to be critical of schooling practices and name difficulties of one's teaching life. These major points would be reiterated in our public presentation on May 13. They formed some of the resources we drew on to build our narrative.

Citing TARG sources

Reporting back to TARG about my presentation

On April 5 I reported back to TARG about TESOL. I gave my presentation again, with handouts, and talked about how I had cited some phrases from our March 8 discussion verbatim. I had built especially on Marcy's words about TARG "knitting together" two spaces and ways of being in the world (academic practices and classroom teaching) in a new way for her. I also cited Donna, Katerina and Sharon, including some of their words about asking questions and 'being (even more) curious.' I also did my own analysis, going back through the transcripts and trying to characterize our discussions. I explained how I had used the phrase "shifting centres of expertise" to name the circulation of different kinds of knowledge that were valued in TARG: how we drew on diverse sources of knowledge in giving feedback to each other and how we learned from each other.

At this time, in March/April 2000, the ways this phrase—shifting centres—was "half someone else's" was both apparent and, in other ways, not so apparent to me (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 293). I could see how it grew out of our talk about being 'useful' to each other. However, later analysis revealed that Donna had first mentioned the idea of 'shifting' expertise as early as November 25, 1999. We were discussing Barbara Rogoff's (1994) article on communities of learners; in particular, how sometimes children seemed to learn to be 'more' (to increase their competence) through participation in communities—and sometimes they learned to be 'less.' In Donna's class there were students of many different abilities and strengths, and she tried to find ways for all to move out of limiting assigned identities into more valued positions. She found she could do this sometimes by "shifting roles and keeping things moving:"

I've challenged a few of my quiet kids to be chatterboxes. Because if you get too locked into a role, then that's where you're gonna get stuck. So I try and challenge kids in roles they've slipped into to try on a different hat (AT, Nov25/99, p.5).

Donna continued, linking her own trajectory of identification to this idea of 'shifting centres.' Describing herself as always quiet as a child, Donna talked about how she is "now, in my 40s trying to shift myself out of that role. But if I had been challenged more ... I feel it wouldn't be so ingrained " (Ibid.).

As Donna's research project developed, she often talked about her efforts to help children move out of 'stuck' identities and to 'keep things moving' in her classroom. Thus, the term that came to represent my analysis of TARG's processes at this point was in some ways another citation, an instance of my making "ever newer ways to mean" from Donna's descriptions of her practices (Bakhtin, 1981, p.346). This terminology arose from within our conversations, although not as directly as the verbatim words from our March 8 discussion. Like the linked conversations analyzed in Chapter 4, where the rhizome of belonging (and its branches to ideological becoming and inclusion) marked nodes of correlation between classroom and Blue Room, the term 'shifting centres' also connected diverse sites.

Shifting centres, shifting power/knowledge

A synecdoche is taken up

People liked this term 'shifting centres' and by the end of this April 5 session, it seems to have been adopted as part of TARG's common language. The Notes for April 5 reiterated the 'main points' of my TESOL presentation:

1) The concept of 'shifting centres' – how different ways of knowing were valued in this working group, so that there was not one static centre of expertise, not one way of looking at things that was privileged; and 2) a related theme: the reciprocity between researchers/teachers in this group. [Donna] related this to her classroom and shifting the expertise, valuing different, and multiple kinds of

expertise. Throughout today's discussion, this notion of 'shifting centres' was repeated or referred to.

'Shifting centres' became a synecdoche, a shorthand signal for complicated processes, standing in for the many complexities of our participation in TARG.

'Shifting centres' told a story of reciprocity, of being of 'use' to each other, of circulating and shared expertise. Stories, de Certeau (1984) claims, go before practices, opening up and authorizing spaces for use. "The story ... does not limit itself to telling about a movement. It *makes it*" (Ibid. p.81). 'Shifting centres' arose from and also became a sign for the reciprocity it named. As a story of the circulation of multiple sources of valued knowledge, it also contributed to this fluidity, shaping our understanding of possibilities and parameters within TARG. It 'went before' our formal preparation for presenting, 'authorizing' and 'making habitable' a particular space for stories about TARG.

My using this terminology to represent our work in a public and academic forum further validated it as a resource towards our cumulative self-reflective text. As the participant observer of our group, my naming of our activity contributed to the narratives we developed for public performance. When we began the more formal preparation of our presentation, we drew on this conceptualization, along with other linguistic and discursive resources developed in the discussions both before and after my TESOL presentation

Preparation for presenting

Our more formal preparation began on April 20, 2000 when Kelleen opened the session by handing out the draft of her introduction to our upcoming presentation. As the introduction, this draft framed the overall presentation and gave us a place to start. In sharing her draft, with blank places where wording was still needed, Kelleen modeled her writing process, her preparation process, with us. We all read through what she had written and then talked about it. I started the discussion, commenting on the following statement about Kelleen's initial expectations that the group would analyze instructional approaches in classrooms:

Initially, I had expected that we would focus on trying out instructional ideas--i.e. That we would read about particular practices of which we approved, or didn't approve, and the teachers would try out particular approaches in their classrooms and we'd gather videotaped data about those practices, and analyze them (Apr 20/00, Kelleen's handout).

Invoking my position as 'memory' or historian of our discussions, I said, "you say that you asked these teachers to focus on methods but I'm not sure that ever happened" (AT Apr20/00, p.1).

There was general laughter at this, and Kelleen acknowledged that when she went back to read the Notes she saw that "it wasn't framed like that" in these textual trail markers of our journey.

She continued, "I think I did say 'whatever' ... what are you interested in? What do you want to

do?" (Ibid. p.2). Kelleen then quickly pointed to what she wanted to emphasize in her draft, the following statement:

... something I think is much more interesting is happening. And that is, each teacher has developed really complex questions about the social relations among their students, among students, their parents and teachers, and we're not going to come out of this project with a list of sure-fire techniques to use in classrooms with students learning English. Rather, I think these teachers are asking questions about their classrooms that go way beyond methods and techniques and instead, focus on questions of social responsibility, power, respect and _____ in schools and classrooms (Apr 20/00, Kelleen's handout).

This statement, that she had held initial expectations that changed, and that what happened was better than she had imagined, set a tone for our May 13 presentation. Her introduction inscribed a narrative of surprise, of revised expectations and of learning through the process of being in TARG. This learning trajectory theme was echoed in the other narratives that we prepared to present.

Our previous reflections on our activities, and in particular the synecdoche *shifting centres*, 'authorized'—in de Certeau's sense of opened up and made habitable space for—this tale of a journey to new insight, this rhetoric of being surprised by something other than the expected. In this instance, Kelleen, initiator of TARG and the one who had set the original parameters, was now shifting her ideas about our direction. This movement is appropriate within the story of reciprocity we had been telling about ourselves. Something unexpected can happen, particularly if the 'person in charge' is not 'in charge' all the time: if expertise shifts and different ways of understanding and different practices can take the lead.

April 27: We plan our May 13 presentation

These practices of reciprocity continued the following week, on April 27, as we planned our presentation in more detail. The structure of our presentation was negotiated in this discussion. We would each speak in turn, briefly, as a way to support each other in this first public appearance. We talked about putting together a handout that would give more information, because with eight people and thirty minutes, we would each only be able to speak for a few minutes. We agreed to prepare handouts about each individual classroom-based research project, covering research questions, methodology and preliminary results; Kate would prepare stills from the videos to illustrate each project. Each presenter was to prepare a script for her contribution.

At the beginning of our discussion, Kelleen suggested that we could each talk about the research questions we investigated in our "particular place of practice ... [and] describe a little bit of the data" (AT Apr 27/00, p.3). Katerina had another idea to add: "I think the process of coming together, learning from each other, is really interesting" (Ibid. p.5). She felt it was important to emphasize the ways the project had changed, as Kelleen had described the previous week: it

was not about teachers discovering improved practices to implement. Kelleen asked the group why they thought it had changed. Marcy, Donna and Sharon talked about the resistance to coming up with 'best practices' and the desire to investigate more closely what was happening in each classroom. Better teaching could arise from this kind of understanding, not from taking on someone else's 'great idea.' Rather than giving more one-size-fits-all solutions to teaching dilemmas, these teachers wanted to understand their practices more deeply. Our research needed to be "useful in terms of helping teachers reflect on their practices" (Rossi, AT Apr 27/00, p.4). The parameters of usefulness, of what 'research' should do for practitioners, were defined differently by TARG than by some powerful outside forces, such as the publishers of Kelleen's book—who had wanted her to write more about 'implications for teaching' to reach a broader audience. However, within TARG, we wanted to structure our presentation to reflect our interests, and our sense of what was important about our journey in TARG. We decided to organize the presentation in three sections; each person chose which topic they would speak on: expectations (Kelleen, Katerina), process (Sharon, Kari, and Rossi), and research projects (Marcy, Donna, and myself). Kelleen would open and I would close the presentation, book-ending the talk. The first two sections would cover original and changed expectations for the group, and how we work together; the third section would focus more on the research work, covering two of the classroom based projects, and my research on TARG itself. I would talk about shifting centres of expertise, building on my TESOL presentation.

An occasion to speak in public

We were now, as a group, invited to talk about our practices for a public audience, for other teachers, student teachers, graduate students, and teacher educators. In preparing to talk, we ourselves were learning that we had something to say as a group. This occasion offered a place to publicly reflect on our work together. In contrast to presentations we went on to do in our second and third years, this first TARG presentation placed more emphasis on changed expectations and the process of TARG, rather than on stories from the classroom. Each of us constructed for this occasion a narrative about what we were doing, and each presentation referred in some way to a learning trajectory, or to new insight.

Stories we told about TARG: Our May 13 presentation

A common thread

This first formal occasion for reflecting on what we were doing helped us see, as Sharon said, "what makes this [group] special": that we learned from each other partly because each person had a different perspective (ATApr20/00, p. 3). Donna added an important point: even though our stories were "very diverse, there is certainly a common thread that runs through it all, and it becomes a stronger thread all the time" (Ibid.) As we tried to name this 'common thread'

running through all the research projects, Donna offered "the issue of power," Sharon said, "yeah, the system, it's a hindrance," and Kari added, "maybe looking at too where the power is being distributed" (ibid.). The notion of shifting centres echoes in these ideas about difference as a strength and resource for learning, and attention to the distribution of power. As discussed in earlier chapters, TARG took a critical stance towards 'the system,' towards structures and institutional constraints of schooling. We were examining the distribution of power in classrooms in a variety of ways, focusing on the creation of communities in which those historically left outside could be included.

Doing this presentation also helped us see the common consensus we had formed over time. The stories we prepared to tell about TARG in our conference presentation resonated with ideas about inclusion and community that we had been discussing since our first reading of Vivian Paley (1992). As Kelleen's draft introduction had stated, TARG members "developed really complex questions about the social relations among their students, among students, their parents and teachers" (ATApr20/00, handout). These kinds of questions had been fostered in our discussions of how to apply Paley to actual situations, of how practices described in Kelleen's (2000) book reminded us of classroom incidents and experiences. Over time, our conversations, through the processes of recognition and uptake analyzed in earlier chapters, fostered core values and beliefs that TARG members came to identify with.

In preparing the handout for our presentation, we had to briefly describe and summarize each of the classroom-based research projects; doing this enabled us to detect the similarities, even though each teacher/researcher had her own focus. All five of the projects dealt with issues of community, identity, and inclusion. Taking up Paley's (1992) dictum of inclusion in diverse ways and articulating with concerns similar to those in Kelleen's book (captured in its subtitle "identity, social relations and classroom practice"), each inquiry explored topics arising within the different classroom settings. One project focused on the importance of friendship in language learning (Katerina), and another about including family members in the classroom community, even taking the children outside the classroom walls for power walks in the neighbourhood to meet community members on their own turf (Kari). Sharon's project examined how some cooperative group work could interrupt school's usual display of deficiencies, freeing students from deficit labels and allowing more equitable participation in learning for all. Marcy had investigated the relationships between three girls and their struggle for powerful identities. Donna had focused on a boy with an assigned identity that he seemed stuck in, and what worked or didn't work to shift this. The 'common thread' woven through the five classroom projects reflected our long process of honing research foci that 'belonged' within the research parameters of TARG (as described in Chapter 4).

Stories of journeys

Each of our presentation narratives also referred in some way to the sense of a journey taken in TARG. Kelleen's introduction spoke about how TARG had changed her ideas about its work. She had initiated the group with one set of expectations, and had been surprised to find that something "more interesting" had emerged. Katerina and Sharon each spoke about how they changed as a result of being in TARG. Katerina had brought a certain idea about research as distant from classroom practices, and was happy to find that TARG was different: in this group she could explore and question in new ways. Sharon's contribution seemed most persuasive in demonstrating 'how I changed' and I will discuss it further below. Rossi's idea about what she could contribute to TARG had changed (referred to in Chapter 3). She had thought she would be bringing her immigrant identity, but found that her research experience was called upon. Kari spoke about TARG as a place where she could learn new ideas and share ideas, acknowledging particular insights she gained from each TARG member. Marcy and Donna focused more on talking about their research projects, but emphasized how TARG had helped each of them see more in their classrooms than they had been able to see before doing this kind of research. I offered closure to our presentation with my analysis of TARG as a place of change and exchange, as a fluid, nurturing environment of sharing diverse expertise—invoking the shifting centres motif. This aspect of our stories reflected on trajectories of becoming in our collaboration thus far.

Gaining confidence, learning to breathe: Sharon's presentation

Sharon's presentation most strongly represented a journey of transformation in TARG. Our presentation went in this order: Kelleen, Katerina, Kari, Sharon, Rossi, Donna, Marcy, and myself. Sharon was the fourth to speak, and began by emphasizing that each teacher/researcher was able to follow her own "personalized" research interests (VT May 13/00). She gave an example of "how I conducted my research to give you an idea," describing how she set up cooperative learning groups with children of very mixed abilities. For example, one group of three consisted of a child labeled ESL, one labeled as needing learning assistance, and a child considered a "learning star." She audio taped and Kate video taped children working together on open-ended assignments, and then brought the transcripts and clips of tapes "to our research group and received productive feedback" (Sharon, VTMay13/00). Sharon explained that the tapes had shown her that

each member in this cooperative group is contributing. They are not seen as deficient or different or exceedingly intelligent over one another. All three are highly engaged and secure in their environment (Ibid.)

After giving one more example of a successful cooperative learning group she had analyzed, Sharon moved to talking about herself as a new teacher, and how she had changed as a result of being in TARG.

Excerpt: Sharon's May 13 talk

Each year as a classroom teacher, like many new teachers I have been confronted with challenging classes. Challenges to meet various student needs. As I was individualizing programs, and trying to meet specific needs, and maintain a paper trail, I forgot to breathe.

I needed to step back and relax. I wasn't enjoying my job. My job as a teacher was becoming impossible. I slowly began to let go of control and forgot about the fact that certain students and a segment of my class population required special services according to their assigned identities. I treated them no differently and no longer cared about the paper trail. I just needed to breathe. In all this process of letting go of control and allowing my students a greater hand in the direction of their learning, my formal lessons became shorter and my expectations on how or what the learning product should be like, look like etc. declined.

Instead I gave greater autonomy to my students by arranging them into cooperative groups of two to four. As they became increasingly dependent on one another, I realized I was being pushed to the side. I was no longer in the center. I could now stand on the sidelines and watch my students orchestrating their own learning.

In turn by allowing myself to breathe, I allowed my students to breathe. My students with labeled identities were no longer frustrated with activities. They were part of the classroom system in which their dialogue and voice was important. Their words were validated and not crushed by those who were defined as the learning stars in my class.

The teacher action research project is providing me with the confidence and awareness to analyze my teaching practices, to better meet my students' needs, and at the same time step back and enjoy my students for who they are (VT May 13/ 00).

Setting up the familiar-to-teachers situation of a class with children of many diverse needs and institutional pressures that require a 'paper trail' to document how you are meeting these, Sharon next invokes a powerful metaphor to trace her journey out of this prison of impossible expectations: the metaphor of breathing. Particularly as a new teacher, Sharon had worried aloud in TARG conversations about being judged by other teachers, e.g., because her class was so noisy. As Marcy and Donna, long time teachers, had said in March, they still felt self-conscious or incompetent when their classes are too noisy. Being in TARG helped Sharon to see that she was not alone in this feeling. Sharon's journey towards allowing herself and her students to breathe articulates her growing confidence in her teaching.

Sharon's narrative traces a dramatic learning trajectory, from a teacher suffocating in her job to one who enjoys it. She uses a mixture of terminology from public schools and the teaching profession (e.g., "a segment of my class population required special services; virtually eliminating clozed activities"). There are echoes of the sociocultural learning theory we have discussed (e.g., "labeled identities," "dialogue and voice") (Bakhtin, 1981; McDermott, 1993 cited in Toohey,

2000). Her story also veers from passive ("I was being pushed to the side") to active voice ("I gave greater autonomy... I could now stand"), perhaps indicating further an internal process as she incorporates her newfound ideas and confidence. As I will discuss further later, her story resonated with our audience. Here, I would point out that like the other stories of TARG, but perhaps most persuasively, Sharon speaks of new awareness generated by her participation in TARG.

In the narratives we chose to present on this first public occasion, we had taken up the linguistic and discursive resources available through our reflections on our work and ourselves. Some of these resources were the shifting centres synecdoche, the story of reciprocity and interdependence (usefulness to each other), and the story of revised expectations and 'surprise'. This last story, which traced a learning trajectory, a journey towards greater insight, echoes narratives of progress so integral to education and tropes of salvation that resonate in larger social, cultural, and historical discourses.¹⁰ A common rhetorical thread running through all our narratives was this theme of transformation or change.

Performing TARG: (Re)presenting our work

Over time, as we told stories about TARG, we constructed a cumulative text—a 'growing understanding,' a way of talking about ourselves. Our stories were performative of social relations; they made certain spaces and not others 'habitable.' Performativity is a "reiterative and citational practice" (Butler, 1993, p.2). Through repeated iteration—as citations accumulate—they produce over time ways of understanding and acting. We took up and reiterated certain linguistic and discursive resources—these became the materials we used to create our 'habitable' story of TARG. To extend de Certeau's (1984) metaphor, these citations, these available tools for narrative construction, were like furnishings, flooring, paint, upholstery, doors, windows, and walls—the particulars that make a space habitable for human activity. We can understand how we performed certain selves that flourished in this setting by examining our 'reiterative and citational practices,' as we used particular resources in building our narrative of TARG (up to this point).

Stories about ourselves are performative of those selves—'shape us into' particular kinds of people. Engaging in a critical analysis of the stories we produced as constrained and enabled by TARG's material and discursive space, I have viewed our narratives of experience not as representations of 'reality' or 'truth,' but as positioned and partial, as "temporary, contingent and context-specific fictions" (Orner, 1998, p.284). As Carolyn Ellis and Art Bochner (2000), writing about the use of self-narrative in research, argue

¹⁰ The urge to tell redemptive stories of the classroom (discussed in Chapter 5) seemed echoed in these narratives of our journeys in TARG.

The question is not, "Does my story reflect my past accurately? as if I were holding a mirror up to my past. Rather I must ask, "What are the consequences my story produces? What kind of a person does it shape me into? What new possibilities does it introduce for living my life?" (p. 746).

Rather than attempt to argue that our May 13 presentation represented TARG at that point in time, I am more interested in exploring the possibilities opened and/or foreclosed by the performances we chose to enact. This view emphasizes the role of recognition and reception in performativity. The stories we told each other in TARG, and those we chose to tell a larger public, were produced within particular conditions, summoned by particular audiences, molded towards anticipated reception. What stories became recognized and valued? I have examined in this chapter some of the processes through which we came to recognize and value the narrative resources we chose to use to represent TARG to a public audience.

Investments in telling our stories

In TARG, there were strong investments in producing a particular narrative, in sketching a certain trajectory about ourselves and our activities up to this point. Like Mimi Orner (1998), who investigates "school(ed) stories," I also wondered, "why we are invested in telling the particular stories we tell?" (p. 285). Stories encode desires: we select and authorize certain aspects of our experience, organizing them into a pleasing coherence.

I can speak of my own investment in TARG, particularly during this first year. This first spring, I was at the point in my analysis of TARG's conversations where I was most struck by the fluidity of our talk, the multiplicity of 'uptakes'—the multiple sources of knowledge we cited in our group conversations. I found pleasure in using the synecdoche 'shifting centres of expertise;' in retrospect, I have wondered if I liked this name for our complicated processes of collaboration partly because I wanted to see expertise circulating freely.

I know that I wanted TARG to flourish partly because my thesis data depended on it. However, over time, that self-centred wish became just the first hook that 'knitted' me into the group. As I examine yet again the performance we chose to enact for our first presentation, I can see how I was, and I think others were as well, emotionally engaged in representing TARG as a place we treasured. As Kate had said, TARG was different than other research she had done: it was "way too much fun" (AT Mar8/00, p. 29). Donna once described TARG as "a fun time on Thursday nights" (AT Nov25/99, p.1). Our meetings have continued to be times of laughter and shared personal stories, as well as productive work. TARG's success as a community is indicated by the fact that we are still meeting in our fourth year. All of those who participated in that first presentation are at the time of this writing involved in writing a book of their stories. Part of why TARG worked was the emotional commitment and investment in each other and in our collaborative enterprise.

In the self-reflections reported earlier in this chapter, several teachers had spoken about the trials of teaching, which Marcy summed up in the statement: "I think it's amazing that we keep going, because it's really hard, you know?" (AT Mar 8/00, p.28). A chorus of 'yeah's in the background affirmed that other teachers, too, struggled against the isolation, alienation, institutional pressures, and difficulties within the everyday challenges of teaching. As I discussed in Chapter 3, TARG offered a supportive place to share and problem solve together about teaching.

Kelleen spoke about what she hoped to gain from being in TARG, during our April 27 session, as we further planned our presentation, asking if others in TARG shared her desire:

Part of my interest in the group is about finding a way to speak more authoritatively about classroom practice ... and what I want to understand better from you is how ... classrooms work ... I just wondered if it's the same for teachers, ... if one of your interests is having more access to a space, finding a community, where you can appropriate more powerful language about your practice? (AT Apr27/00, p.13).

This generated a discussion about the impossibility of talking in staff rooms. Sharon talked about racist remarks and how she, as an Indo-Canadian teacher, felt she really had to "be very careful and tiptoe with what I want to say" (Ibid.). Others joined in to the critique of staff rooms as very inhospitable for talking about teaching. Marcy had learned that it was "not cool at all to talk passionately about what you were doing" in a staff room (Ibid. p.16). In most teachers' experiences, opportunities to connect with colleagues were not facilitated in schools; while some valuable conversations happened, most of them were stolen moments. TARG offered a place where we could and did connect with each other and talk passionately, especially about our care for children and families, our schooling experiences (from preschool through university), and our teaching/learning practices. Over time, we developed emotional investments in this group and our work.

I recognize that invoking emotions is "risky", especially in sites such as "higher education and scholarship," where reason is privileged (Boler, 1999, p.109). However, as Megan Boler (1999) argues, "a feminist politics of emotion" does not lack scholarly rigour, but rather rethinks emotion as "collaboratively constructed and historically situated, rather than simply as [an] individualized phenomenon located in the interior self" (p.6). Our emotional investments in performing particular narratives to represent TARG were constructed over time. As analyzed in Chapter 3, our weekly rituals of meeting, and the formation of community and identification over time contributed to feelings of solidarity. As we prepared for a public display of our work and ourselves we wanted to 'put on our best' and to perform solidarity. We wanted to show that TARG was a nurturing, generative place. We wanted to demonstrate what we had learned through our experiences in this group.

In doing this, we were also responding to the desires of the audience to hear about 'what worked' for us and to come away with a new learning for themselves. Our performance was a series of short, almost sound bites, of each person's experience. Only once, when Sharon finished speaking, did spontaneous applause punctuate our talk. This story, which persuasively spoke of her transformation, seemed to resonate with our audience. Like many teacher stories, Sharon's story was inspiring "in the original sense of that word;" the audience seemed to "'breathe in' its message" (Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995, p.3). They applauded her story of dramatic change and her powerful metaphor, recognizing themselves perhaps in the image of not being able to breathe within institutional constraints, and of breaking free to finally allow breath and life.

The audience also wanted 'answers': the first comment as we opened for questions was from someone who admitted she had come "wanting a product;" she had wanted to come away with better practices she could implement in her classroom (VT May13/00). She added that she had been disappointed at first—when Kelleen's introduction had indicated we would not be providing teaching methods—but that she had learned a lot from the panel (Ibid.). We did not fulfill this audience desire for answers and solutions, but we had anticipated it, in our earlier discussions. Rather than 'best practices' we emphasized, as summed up in Rossi's statement: "research should be useful in terms of helping teachers reflect on their practices" (AT Apr27/00, p. 4). In place of 'one-size-fits-all' solutions, what we offered were inspiring stories of reflection on each person's practice, a persuasive rhetorical choice.

To return to Ellis and Bochner's (2000) question, "What are the consequences my story produces?" I would suggest that one consequence of performing as a community, about our collaborative work, was that we inspired not only our audience, but also ourselves. It was a significant event in the construction of our continued emotional investment in TARG. The public recognition we received further consolidated our solidarity. We felt good about this first presentation and went on in our second, third and fourth years to present at school district conferences, for large groups of student teachers during their in-service workshops, and for the annual American Educational Research Association conference.

There are other, perhaps not so benign, consequences of telling this public story. It was, of course, only a partial representation, a selected version that evoked inspiration and solidarity, tropes of salvation and progress. The metaphor of shifting centres of expertise has not been one I have chosen to reiterate throughout this thesis because, as I did more in-depth analysis, I felt that it was too celebratory. It seemed to suggest a kind of fluidity that was too easy, without constraint or direction. I have referred instead to the multiplicity of uptakes in our conversations through the metaphors of improvisational jazz and the rhizome. I prefer the metaphor of the rhizome because of its image of linked, subterranean roots, which sprout into visibility at opportune junctures. Some stories remain subterranean, untold and/or unheard, as I discussed in Chapter 5.

Silent stories also haunted our public performance. One of these might be Marianne's sense of discomfort in TARG, her sense that her desire to talk 'theoretically' about issues was not received well. She had just joined the group on April 5, and felt it would not be appropriate to present with the group. Missing out on our May 13 presentation, she did not share in the recognition and sense of accomplishment that further bonded us. Another silent story was Kate's. She chose to remain safely behind her camera for this first presentation. The following year, she did come up to the podium with us, and her speaking presence enriched our presentations from then on.

In May 2002, Marcy and I met in a coffee shop near where I lived to discuss the article she was finishing up for a journal on language learning. After an hour or so, the question that has seemed to hover over many of my conversations for the last few years appeared: "How is your thesis going?" I can't remember what answer I gave, but I know that at that point I was not feeling confident (FN May 7/02). Marcy asked me directly, "Do you know what TARG means to us?" (referring to the K-12 teacher/researchers). I replied that I was not sure that I did or that I could. I repeated how glad I was that a book of teacher stories was getting going, because I knew that my study was not and could not be the 'full story' of TARG (FN May 7/00). There are many stories of TARG; all are partial and partisan, spoken from particular positions, spoken to particular audiences.

The first public presentation we did offered some stories—situated, contingent narrative actions designed for the moment. The impact of this occasion began as we set aside time to reflect on our work and ourselves and continued as we organized these reflections into a carefully orchestrated performance. It continued past the 'big day' of speaking in public, to further consolidate a sense of communal achievement.

This chapter has selectively focused on our presentation, and does not give a 'full story' either. In fact, in some ways our May 13 presentation can be seen as a diversion, as a huge effort that took energy away from our 'real work'—the ongoing research in classrooms. After we debriefed the conference experience on May 18, there was some relief at 'getting back to the research.' Our May 29 and June 7 sessions filled with new, heart-wrenching stories, as teachers reflected on their school year as a whole; they grieved over the approaching loss of children they had become so close to, and over the scattering of carefully built communities of caring at school year's end.

Our last activity of this first year led us down a narrowed path that did not encourage free circulation and distribution of expertise, as we worked to produce a 'product' of our research in the form of a research article. Chapter 7 will explore this activity and how it increased the divide between those who had a particular kind of knowledge and those who did not.

Chapter 7: 'Writing up' the research projects

As the school year came to an end, TARG's data gathering began to wind down: the classroom communities that had been their focus, and the children who had become familiar to us in our conversations, would soon disperse for summer break. Stories reflecting on the school year filled our sessions: September's hopes faced June's reckoning and requisite farewells. Teachers continued to bring memos, ideas in writing, transcripts and video data to discuss and analyze in our sessions. Now, our focus shifted towards our task for the summer of 2000: writing up the first year's research projects. As a result of producing organized overviews for our May 13 presentation, TARG's classroom-based research projects became more consolidated. As a way to further share these research insights, Kelleen encouraged the writing of publishable papers.

Our last collaborative activity of the year

This final activity for the year seemed to lead us down a narrowed and divided path, across shaky ground as the first year of our collaboration came to an end. As discussed in Chapter 1, despite the often-high ideals of teacher/researcher collaborations, they can still replicate traditional power/knowledge relations between teachers and university researchers (Evans, 1998; Moje, 1998). Microanalyses of relationships display how even in these alternative spaces, these relations articulate with and sometimes reinforce institutional and structural hierarchies (Ilieva & Waterstone, 2001). In earlier chapters, I have shown how we were invested in seeing TARG as a place where 'shifting centres' of expertise circulated, a view that suggests a group of multiple experts, each having her area of expertise. However, the metaphor of 'shifting centres' tends to simplify our collaboration and does not confront differential valuing of expertise. As Evans (1998) notes,

issues of power and equity are anything but clean and simple. Rather they are messy, fraught with uncertainty and ambiguity, and raise many troubling questions about whether equity is possible or even desirable in collaborative research relationships (p.7).

The problems that emerged in the process of 'writing up' TARG's research opened again that divide between theory and practice, university and school, research and teaching that our collaboration was intended to bridge.

I have previously analyzed some of these difficulties in a co-authored chapter in *Critical pedagogies and language learning* (Toohey & Waterstone, 2003). Kelleen and I examined TARG's sharing of expertise in the activity of 'writing for publication,' analyzing data from our whole-group meetings in January and August 2000. In concluding, we raised further questions about the products of teacher/researcher collaborations:

What should collaborative research groups produce? What difference does it make to produce an educational research journal article as opposed to something else? Should collaborative research groups see the major audience for their work as teachers, or academics, or both? (Ibid.).

In this chapter, I consider these further questions, drawing on different and additional data from tapes, transcripts and emails—from small group meetings and emails between Kelleen, Rossi, and me; from our whole-group meetings in June as well as August; and from the one-on-one interviews I did with TARG participants between August and October 2000. Analyzing these various sources in relation to each other, I was able to trace fault lines in our agreed-upon plan to write papers over the summer, and to understand more about the complex valences of authority that wove through this collaborative activity.

A genre approach to analyzing this writing activity: Different questions

In this analysis, I use a new rhetorical genre theory approach, which sees rhetorical actions as a fusion of substance, form and situation, as social actions arising in response to a recognized social need. From this perspective, writing is always addressed, always a matter of entering into a conversation. I analyze how conflicting ideas about the desired audience(s) for these 'publishable' papers created difficulties and raised further questions, showing how TARG's participation in this activity of producing papers was pulled in multiple directions. I noted that the ways we understood this writing was informed by different readings of the situation: what was this task of 'writing up' research? I discussed in Chapter 4 our protracted struggle to design the classroom-based projects. In our conversations, meta-generic commentary guided us (in a non-linear way) towards understanding how to 'get it right,' how to articulate research foci that fit within TARG's parameters. Similarly, in producing papers, writers were trying to understand how to articulate the 'results' of their research and how to meet Kelleen's expectations for these papers, how to participate in this activity of 'writing publishable papers.' Not understanding what genre we were writing—what social need we were addressing—created difficulties. The adjective 'publishable' suggested a public audience for this writing. But, who was this audience? What conversations would we be joining? Where was the place/time in the social order that invited response from teacher/researcher collaborations? Asking questions about what such groups 'should' produce obscures issues of addressivity: 'writing up' research is always 'writing to' an audience. While we might imagine an audience that 'should' hear what we have to say, if we are to publish we must find an audience ready and willing to hear us.

Deconstructing questions that recommend: Imaginary audiences?

The question, "What should collaborative research groups produce?" suggests moral recommendation, its deontic modality (i.e., 'should') pointing to assumptions about good and bad. Invoking the ethics of research, particularly educational collaborative research, this question is set

within a larger field of concerns about equity and exploitation within a discursive economy of knowledge production. Can there be a 'right answer,' a way to fulfill the implied moral obligations implied in this question? The question points towards the purposes of such collaborations: what are their intended or 'ideal' genres? The third question—"Should collaborative research groups see the major audience for their work as teachers, or academics, or both?"—also summons moral recommendations while offering multiple choices.

This question focuses on 'audience'—who are 'we' talking to? Audience shapes the work of writing, and this question unravels an implied sense of collaborative unity. Deconstructing this question, we find that 'we' are not one; different members of TARG may want to talk to different audiences. Cracks appear in the joint between teacher/researcher, as the audiences break down into 'teachers' and 'academics' and then attempts a synthesis— 'both' rather than either/or. This question opens up more problems: it does not resolve whether these two audiences, each with their own distinctive discourse practices, are to be addressed at once, or addressed together in the same work. How might we meet diverse desires within these discourse communities?¹¹ Will multiple products be necessary to meet these diverse contexts for their reception? This chapter traces the rocky path we took as our 'writing up' of the research projects led us into a messy arena where expectations about the 'products' of TARG met conflicting and heterogeneous notions about what genre we were writing, who we were addressing and from which platform we should speak.

The second question avoids 'should' but points to effects on those who are writing and reading: "What difference does it make to produce an educational research journal article as opposed to something else?" One might ask, difference to whom? Differently situated participants in TARG experienced different effects, as this chapter will show. It made a difference to us whether we wrote to academics in a research journal or to teachers in another venue—a difference in how we understood this task and in what we produced. This difference was apparent not only in the final product, but also in the entire process. From a new-rhetorical genre-theory approach, 'process' and 'product' are not so easily separated: genres represent and guide practices. The way this question is phrased hints at some of the difficulties that attended our writing: a binary is posed between 'an educational research journal article' and 'something else.' Academic research is defined, while its 'other' is left vague. As this chapter will show, we would speak of 'something else' (e.g., a book, a practitioner journal article, a presentation, a web site), but return to the more defined (and traditional research-based) genre.

Considering the 'difference' research products make raises questions about the purposes of collaborative research: what does such research intend to do or effect in the world? Different

¹¹ While these desires are often characterized in simple binaries between theoretical complexity or 'accessibility'; between the 'hard' or the 'easy'; the complicated or the common sense, I resist this. However, this subtext can be traced in some of our conversations excerpted in this chapter.

kinds of 'products' muster differential authority within different fields. Depending on their contexts of reception, an 'educational research article' could be considered 'useless and impractical' and a teacher's reflection on her practice, 'just another teacher story.' This chapter traces some of the ways we appealed to diverse sites of authority throughout our collaborative process of 'writing up' the first year's research projects.

Plan for the summer

Setting up the task

Kelleen felt that the research projects could become "publishable papers" given the high quality of the data, the important questions being addressed, and our successful May 13 presentation (Interview, Sep11/00). In early June, she began to outline how this might be accomplished after the school year ended. First, she called Rossi and me together in a small group meeting to discuss how we might collaborate with teachers in this writing:

I have been wondering if we get it down to writing publishable articles ... each of the teachers will need collaboration with a more experienced researcher to whip them into shape (SGJune5/00, p.1).

We spent the rest of that small group meeting discussing a tentative plan for one-on-one collaboration to support each teacher in writing up her classroom-based research. As doctoral students who had had fairly extensive experience with a variety of research projects and chapter and paper publication, Rossi and I were to assist the teachers. We would continue our employment as research assistants through the summer, funded by the research grant. We agreed that Rossi would assist Kari and Donna, and I would assist Sharon, Marcy and Katerina.

Two days later that same week, at our half-day whole group meeting on June 7, 2000, Kelleen introduced this plan for collaborative writing through the summer. Sharon, Kari, Marcy and Donna wanted to receive university course credit for this summer writing project, as they had for the previous two semesters of TARG's work, while Katerina continued her participation without receiving credit.¹² Kari and Katerina were also planning to teach summer school; Marcy was planning several weeks of holiday; Donna and Sharon were planning to take an additional summer course in July. Kelleen, Rossi and I assured the teachers that we could meet at their convenience, and that they would be supported through the process. We didn't finalize our schedule until later in June, at which time we also agreed to meet as a whole group for two full days, August 3 and 17. Kate came to these August whole group meetings and Marianne came to the first one; they contributed to the group's feedback and analysis of the papers.

This plan seemed to promise rewards of university credit and employment to almost all of the collaborative writers, and to be flexible in its time demands. 'Writing up' the research was

¹² Katerina said that she saw writing collaboratively as an opportunity to learn (Interview, Oct6/00).

both a research assistant task and a university credit requirement. This activity also signified continuing membership in TARG, and the opportunity for continuing professional development. And it could be enlisted to meet Kelleen's research obligations for publication, fulfilling requirements within the grant that funded TARG's work. Kelleen had mentioned the importance of publishing written work about our research on several occasions over the spring. Although she might use a joking tone, making light of these obligations —e.g. repeating "product, product!"—she communicated that there were expectations for this sponsored research (AT May 29/00, p.12). Were these some of the social needs that our activity was meant to fulfill? In a sense, this writing became more like a course term paper (as well as a research task) with these rewards: the expectations we needed to fulfill were Kelleen's.

Presenting the models

"Are we allowed to use first person?"

Our June 7 session began with Kelleen explaining our summer goal: "to produce journal-ready articles" (ATJun7/00, p. 1). As soon as we finished setting the schedule, Sharon, the youngest teacher, jumped in with a question for Kelleen: "are we allowed to use first person?" (Ibid.). This immediate question and her later one about how many references would be needed are common student questions. Some of the subtext for asking these questions came out in her interview on August 8. First, she wanted to satisfactorily fulfill the requirements of Kelleen (who she described as "the professor, the one in power") (p.2). Sharon spoke of the "pressure" of having to produce "an end product" (Ibid.). For her, this was one of the ways TARG was a class, as opposed to just a group:

I'm getting credit for it, so definitely a class.... I don't like the word class, but it is a class. Because I am being evaluated, and there was also pressure associated with the fact that ... there's going to be an end product after all of this (Ibid.).

Sharon was very aware that writing up the year's research projects was an assigned task, required to get credit for the summer's course.

Sharon's common student question about using first person prompted Kelleen to move to the next item on the agenda for our June 7 session, an explanation of the two models that she had brought to demonstrate the range and possibilities for writing something for publication. The fact that these were not just 'papers' but 'publishable papers' raised the expectations. What would these papers look like?

One example was an academic article—Bonny Norton's (1995) "Social identity, investment and language learning," published in *TESOL Quarterly*, an international, academic, refereed journal. Aiming to represent a broad, interdisciplinary readership, and to "contribute to bridging theory and practice in the profession" this journal publishes a range of studies on teaching English to speakers of other languages (*TESOL Quarterly*, 2003, Editorial Policy, ¶3).

Rossi had brought examples of journals to show what they looked like. In addition to *TESOL Quarterly*, she presented issues of *Canadian Modern Language Review*, *TESL Canada*, and *Canadian Association of Applied Linguistics*—journals also in the field of English language learning and applied linguistics. Some of the examples she brought contained articles authored or co-authored by Kelleen, Rossi and me. Supplementing Rossi's presentation, Kelleen had brought a three-page map through the Bonny Norton article, which she had used in another class, to demonstrate the grid that this kind of article often followed.

The second model that Kelleen had brought was not an article, but a chapter from an anthology: Amar Sanghera's (1985) "My experience on the Bedford mother tongue project." Kelleen presented this case study of second language learning in a Yorkshire school as "a more first person, teacher article" which might suit some of the teachers more (ATJun7/00, p.1). Sharon's question, then ("can we use first person?") was answered: 'yes, and here's an example of how to write up one's experience as a teacher for publication.' We didn't discuss these two different models immediately, but took them home to read and discuss at our next session, June 15. For the rest of the June 7 half day we moved to other agenda items, including reading and discussing writing Donna had brought about her school year and her research on classroom community. While it seemed we had agreed to produce a product for Kelleen, a product that had some flexibility (at least two models had been presented), the rest of our discussion showed that there were some significantly divergent views about what the product of TARG could or should be.

A 'journal-ready article' or something else?

Our June 7 discussion about Donna's writing showed a struggle already beginning, fissures opening in the goal we seemed to have all agreed upon—'writing publishable papers' and getting credit and employment to do so. Donna handed out copies of her writing (nine typed, 14-point font pages) to the group, saying,

I did some writing, trying to reflect on the whole year and then focus in on the four kids [that Kate had followed in the video taping] and the process we went through to come up with plans to support those kids. I'm hoping to pull out some things that will help me to get started on next year. It's in a very, very draft form (ATJun7/00, p.10).

We read silently, and then began to comment. Kelleen started us off, saying: "great ending! So, what do we want to say to Donna?" Marianne responded, "I was just thinking I wish you were my kids' teacher! [General laughter from the group] Their classrooms are very different" (Ibid.).

Kelleen then asked if Donna meant to expand this by writing more about each of the four kids (Donna hadn't finished writing about one of the four). Donna felt that she needed to do that "for me"—to help her understand better why this year her classroom had really 'jelled' into a community. Kelleen reflected about this more personal purpose, writing for yourself as a teacher

to record responses to the rhythm of a school year, and its emotional ending, saying good bye. She then posed a general question to the group: "there are a lot of purposes for your writing [as a teacher]. Are the rest of you having that sense of your writing?" Marcy talked about how she always reviews at the end of the year, struggling with what she expected of herself and what has actually happened. Sharon mentioned getting attached to kids and then worrying about them when you have to let them go. Kelleen returned the discussion to writing, saying that

because this is a special, highly charged time, writing the cold hard facts might be tough. I understand what you [Donna] mean when you say, I have to write it for myself and then I can find a focus (Ibid.).

Kelleen contrasts 'cold hard facts,' a synecdoche for more distanced academic research genres, with 'writing for yourself' which she suggests here as a preliminary stage towards finding a 'focus.' This echoes her meta-generic commentary in Chapter 4 about 'doing some writing' about questions 'of interest to you' to guide the classroom-based inquiries. Responding to Kelleen, Marcy initiated a discussion that sparked a popping back and forth of ideas about where this writing should be published, and in what form. She started by commenting on the "huge difference" between Donna's title, "Creating a classroom community that challenges the assigned identities of its members using systematic inquiry and experiment as a classroom based researcher," and the "very personal" writing. As the excerpt below shows, Marcy felt that Donna's writing perfectly fit a particular audience.

Excerpt 1 from June 7, 2000

Marcy: And, I think [Donna's paper is] the kind of thing that teachers really like to read. It's extremely intelligent and it's well organized and it's, um, professional. And yet, it gives you the feeling, "I'm glad I'm a teacher too! Aren't we neat people?" You come across as such a neat person in there ((I can hear Donna clearing her throat in background)). I think it's wonderful, it's wonderful! ((pause 5 seconds))

Kelleen: I was thinking that if we can't find the journal that it belongs in, ((she chuckles)) we have to make the journal that it belongs in, because I think you're right, [it's

Marcy ((interrupts)): [but teachers don't read journals=

Kelleen: = no ((short, affirmative, and said in background, Marcy continues speaking over))

Marcy: you know, and there's so much really useful stuff for teachers in here and I think teachers would want to read it

Marianne: Well then, write a book

Kate: Let's do a website!

Marianne: Everybody do a chapter

Kelleen: Hum? ((5 second pause))

Sharon: That would be fun!

Kelleen: Okay ((softly))

Marianne: It's more easy to get it out there, more than journals

Sharon: Yeah, I agree

Kelleen: Hm ((short, quick))

Marcy: It seems to me, you [Donna] did a really good job, from a teacher's point of view, very practically and simply setting out what you did—boom, boom, boom—what you need to do it

Kari: And then the warmth you have when you're writing it.
[And what you've created

Marcy: [That's right, it's very clear, it makes you think I could do this too, it's not threatening in any way, it doesn't make you feel like a piece of dust or anything ((General laughter from group)). It's just not overpowering; it's really practical

Sharon: You've got lots of feelings in it ((6 second pause))

The discussion continued with teachers taking a lead. Kari commented that she could visualize the classroom moments, which led to more descriptions of such moments.

Unheeded warning: Teachers don't read journals

Marcy's strong claim that 'teachers don't read journals' sparked an animated exchange about other, more teacher-friendly and 'fun' ways to present Donna's writing to a teacher audience. In the energy of overlapping talk, Kelleen's short responses may indicate agreement or disagreement, but they do not interrupt the flow, as Marianne suggested writing a book, Kate inserted her enthusiasm for a web site, and Sharon joined in with a vote for 'fun.' We seemed to be shopping for a situation, a receptive place for our words, and we had lots of ideas. This excitement and divergent directionality was not evident in the talk about writing journal articles. Within these few moments, questions opened up that were not followed through at this time, but

which continued to haunt the rest of TARG's first year together: who is the audience for our writing? Where and in what form should it be published?

However, despite the clear warning—teachers don't read journals—we continued with the plan laid out by Kelleen at the beginning of this session. We continued to call what we were writing "articles" or "publishable papers," ignoring that 'publishable' meant addressed to a listening public, that these broad, vague descriptors lacked useful clues about the genre we were working in. Even though there was flexibility, assistance, support, and a warm reception to the offerings teachers brought to the group, we continued to march down this path, to head in the (uncertain) direction of the goal set by Kelleen.

Writing through the summer: Producing drafts, giving feedback

Through July, as agreed, Rossi and I worked one-on-one with each of the teachers we were 'helping.' Our goal was to bring drafts to the August whole group meetings for feedback from all members. On August 3, we met at Kelleen's house for the day, and gathered around a dining room table to discuss drafts that Kari and Donna had been working on with Rossi. On August 17, we discussed Marcy and Katerina's drafts and then spent the remaining time on Donna's revised paper. In our feedback, we sometimes responded to the classroom incidents described, telling related incidents or delving deeper into the interactions. Sometimes we linked the practices described to concerns we had about teaching, or to the video data we had viewed over the previous year. Questions about genre, about the form/substance/situation for our writing, surfaced throughout the summer.

Donna's paper: Who is it for?

Divided views about the audience for Donna's paper appeared again on August 17. Since the June 7 discussions excerpted above, Donna had been working on her paper, and an earlier draft had been carefully read and discussed on August 3. On August 17, I started off the feedback for Donna's revised paper by saying: "I thought 'wow!'" Everyone laughed, and Marcy and Kari joined in with positive comments. Immediately after this acclaim, Kelleen and myself, the two university-based researchers present, took turns offering suggestions for changing Donna's paper for publication. Kelleen presented her suggestions as coming from two different points of view ("one side of my head... and then the other"). On the one hand, Kelleen felt that Donna had "woven together the theory and the stories" well, and it read with a coherence that should be left as is. On the other hand, its structure deviates from a "normal journal article"—but with a "little reorganization, it [Donna's paper] would look more like a typical journal article" (ATAug17/00, p.11). Since the task had been assigned as writing a 'publishable article' (which Kelleen defined here as the 'typical'/'normal' academic research article), there seemed to be more weight to the 'other side' of her head, which suggested a "little reorganization." I followed Kelleen, assuming the position of intermediary and attempting to explain how the

changes she had listed could be implemented. This resulted in almost 7 minutes (6.6) of talk, contributing to the overall effect of a researcher-expertise monologue on improving Donna's paper (see Toohey & Waterstone, 2003). Added to this was the power Kelleen held to grant or refuse to grant credit for this paper. Donna remained notably quiet during this time.

However, after this monologue (two voices, same theme), Marcy returned to the earlier assessment of Donna's paper as valuable for teachers and advocated for it to remain as is.

Excerpt 2 from June 7, 2000

Marcy: Um, I found from that perspective, of reading it as a teacher, and someone who's interested in training teachers, that the way it was written in a very personal way is really inspirational.=

Kelleen: = [Yeah.

Marcy: [And um being not a very, there must be some kind of places where you can publish this kind of stuff where, you know, your average run of the mill classroom teacher will read it. ((Laughs from several voices in background.))

Kelleen: Yeah

Marcy: You know, and be inspired by it and say, yes this is the kind of classroom I wish I had. Um, and if it gets too journalized up then it's not going to be read by those people =

Kelleen: = [Yeah, yeah.

Marcy: [Um, and I don't know about publications for teachers, I don't, maybe they don't read them, magazines, or I don't know where you get things like that published.

Kelleen: What do you read?

Marcy: You read the, that Teacher thing [magazine] that comes from the BCTF.¹³
Umm. ((Pause)) You read it during silent reading usually one day.
((General LAUGHTER begins at silent reading))

As the discussion continues, the problem of a publication venue or how to reach teachers and student teachers was not resolved. Kate suggested the group do a presentation for student teachers, Donna said she would revise the paper with Bonnie's help, the group mulled over the idea of leaving the paper as it is and putting it into a book collection, and so on. No decision was reached.

¹³ The British Columbia Teachers' Federation

(Un)resolving the problem: The university-based three confer

Our August sessions were the last whole-group meetings of TARG's first year. However, Kelleen, Rossi and I (the three university researcher TARG members at this point) continued to email back and forth and met together in August to talk about the summer's activities and plan for the new year beginning in September. We continued to struggle with the issue of publication of the papers resulting from TARG's first year's research projects. We had trouble resolving the 'problem' of an appropriate venue for the 'publishable papers.' This demonstrated, in part, our lack of knowledge about diverse venues and about venues for teachers (as suggested by Kelleen's question to teachers in TARG above—'what do you read?').

The excerpts below, from emails sent on August 18, the day after TARG's last meeting of the summer, show how Kelleen, Rossi and I seemed to come to consensus about 'a book' being the best venue.

At 09:47 AM 8/18/00 -0800, [Kelleen] wrote:

>>hi Bonnie, just wondering if you had any further thoughts about an
>>appropriate publication venue for the group's papers--maybe we hold onto
>>them for awhile and make a book, maybe we should look for practitioner
>>journals? ...

At 12:59 PM 8/18/00 -0700, [Bonnie] wrote:

>Hi Kelleen,
>I keep mentioning book partly b/c ... the teachers are saying teachers
>don't read articles in academic journals, but they do read books or
>practitioner journals.

At 14:49 PM 8/18/00 -0700 [Rossi] wrote:

> . . . I also feel a book is a better venue for the teachers' papers than academic
>journals.

At 12:17 PM 8/18/00 -0800, [Kelleen] wrote:

>>Yeah, more and more I think a book too.

At this point, one might assume that the papers will go into a book, and that TARG's next task in relation to these papers would be to work on that prospect. However, when Kelleen, Rossi and I

met four days later in person, further issues were raised that disturbed this ready consensus. Kelleen had ideas about the benefits of publication, while Rossi and I had alternative perspectives from our experiences of collaborating one-on-one with the teacher/researcher writers throughout the summer.

A small group meeting

The following excerpts are from our small group meeting in Kelleen's office on August 22, 2000. Rossi started off by reiterating our email consensus: "I really feel it's better to have a book" (SG AT Aug22/00, p.1). She listed two main reasons: most of the papers are narrative in form, and might not be publishable in an academic journal; a book would be more likely to be read by teachers, and thus, more "useful to teachers" (Ibid.). Kelleen countered that "we also want to make it useful to researchers as well" and that publication could benefit everyone (Ibid.). She wondered whether one beneficial effect of publishing their writing might be that the teachers would feel more like authors and less like students. Rossi countered this, as the excerpt below shows.

Excerpt from August 22, 2000

Rossi: . . . I'm just wondering to what extent, because I think for them it wouldn't make a difference whether they are authors of an article or of a chapter in a book. The prestige we put into academic article, I realize . . . it's not part of their world at all. They just want to tell their stories, that is the sense I got. ((Pause)) In terms of publications for the grant, it's better to have them in an article, right?

Kelleen: I don't think it will matter so much for the grant. What I promised was that they would do conference presentations, and a book and a book about the process of the research, which you'll [Bonnie] do... So it doesn't matter for the grant ...

Rossi: My fear is that this is something that *we* feel strongly about. ((Both Kelleen and I repeat 'yeah, yeah' in the background))

As we continued to debate these concerns about TARG's writing activity, I supported Rossi's sense that journal publication was more important to us as researchers, pointing out that with new projects starting in September, teachers would likely be less interested in continuing to work on papers about last year. Kelleen, however, felt that teachers should not be expected to "do it all: collect and analyze data and produce a paper" (Ibid.). After all, she suggested, the benefit of writing an article collaboratively is that one person does not have to do all the work—maybe we should take on more of the writing. Rossi and I, however, who had been the collaborative writers, raised objections. Rossi felt that if we did more of the writing this would be "imposing something" on the teacher/writers and "taking control of [their paper] to make it a

product which may not be what they want to have as a result of their work " (Ibid.). I agreed that "ownership of their own work" is crucial. However, as we talked further about our positive experiences of writing journal articles collaboratively (both Rossi and I had written collaboratively with Kelleen, with each other, and with other professors), we ended up agreeing that we should continue to work on the papers, try submitting to some journals, and still keep the idea of a book in mind. This is where the question rested, in our minds: we would pursue publication.

What motivated our pursuit?

Even though Kelleen had said that grant constraints were not motivating the push for publishing 'articles,' her response nevertheless affirmed that some publication was necessary. And, although we all had heard Marcy's strong statement that 'teachers don't read journals,' we did not drop the idea of publishing journal articles. As university researchers, we still returned to our more familiar touchstones in our debate over authorship, authority, and audience, such as the process of collaborative writing, the search for appropriate publication venues, and the prestige publication could offer. As Carolyn Miller (1994) says, genres tell us what motivations we may have, and Kelleen, Rossi and I were very motivated by the research article genre. Our strong identifications with this genre made it difficult to deviate from this standpoint embedded in the research practices that were our livelihood.

As we struggled with the unresolved problem of publishing the papers produced over the summer, we acknowledged the "differences in time and rewards available for teachers and researchers for engaging in such work" (Evans, 1998, p.2). We raised questions about issues of ownership and purpose: who was this writing for? And, who wants to write for journals?

Our ambivalent decision (to try journals, and also think about a book) did not take into consideration feelings of performance, not only for teachers but also for research assistants. Kelleen's stated expectation that this would be a 'publishable' paper had raised the bar, and seemed to suggest that 'publication' would mark the completion of the writing. The lengthy suggestions (on August 17) to revise Donna's paper for publication also contributed to this interpretation. Sharon had articulated her sense of pressure to complete the assigned task in her interview. My field notes show that I worried about not having completed drafts for our August 3 meeting (whereas Rossi and the two teachers she had worked with had drafts to share) (FNJul24/00). These 'unfinished' papers continued to haunt our process through the fall of 2000. The one-on-one interview data offered perspectives on this writing activity that were not available in the small group's deliberations.

Reflecting on this activity: Interviews in the fall of 2000

My end-of-year interviews with each of TARG's participants took place from August through October 2000. TARG began new classroom research projects in September, and everyone except Sharon (who was getting married and moving out of province at the end of

August) continued for the second year. In some of the interviews, participants spoke of their experiences of the summer's task of writing.

Some of these experiences were framed positively. Katerina expressed surprise at receiving help in the writing: "I've never had support for that, so that's something new" (p.3), and also at the quality of writing in the group: "I am really surprised at the wonderful writing that's there ... the creativity in the papers is quite wonderful" (p. 6). Her comments reflect an appreciative view of the experience of collaborative writing and of the papers as worthwhile, high quality products. Kari reported telling her daughters, both university students, that her paper might be published, and how she felt that was "quite exciting" (p.6). This comment might support Kelleen's contention, in the small group discussion above, that authorship (getting published) would benefit TARG members. However, authorship of what, addressed to whom, was another issue.

Sharon, who had asked about using 'first person' in her writing, talked in her interview about the positive experience of speaking her own views about teaching. She had initially been "afraid" to state her views in writing and "put herself out there": "when we were planning the paper, I said, you know I have a hard time putting myself in first person point of view, and stating it as it is" (Ibid. p.9). Sharon clarified that she did want to write in 'first person,' "but then when I started writing, I thought, 'oh, my goodness! I'm just putting myself out there to be attacked!'" (p.10). When it came to writing, she felt vulnerable about stating her strong beliefs about teaching. I had worked with Sharon on her paper, mostly via email. She sent drafts; I edited and re-arranged sections, adding linking and framing sentences, and sending the revised drafts back to her. We did this several times. Sharon seemed surprised that I had not 'cut' more of her own words. When I asked her how she felt about the paper she had just finished, she replied:

I feel very good actually. It's almost like a validation to my beliefs, and it's a validation to, really, me. These are my words, this is my thinking, and if you want to read it, you can read it, if you don't want to read it, okay (Ibid.).

Sharon had shared her paper with a few selected friends and colleagues and had been pleased with their reactions. Through the process of writing, Sharon felt that "my words have been legitimized" (Ibid.). Her positive answer may have been constrained by the fact that I was the one who worked with her. However, she went on to conclude that overall, her participation in TARG "allowed me to grow in the area that I needed to grow" (Ibid.). Sharon's descriptions seemed again to support Kelleen's idea that authorship could have a beneficial effect on teacher/researchers in TARG. However, important questions about publication still were unanswered: To what conversations would Sharon's paper contribute?

Marcy, who had most strongly stated "teachers don't read journals," spoke in her interview of how the task of writing had worked against reciprocity and equity and shadowed an otherwise 'happy story' of TARG's collaboration. She spoke specifically of the power imbalance

in the summer's writing activity, and how it separated teachers and researchers in a different way than she had felt up to that point:

with moving into writing the papers for me it's become a little bit more like a class. I have to sort of figure out how to do it right. ... The university based people know how to do something that the classroom based teachers don't know how to do (p.12).

This activity seemed to re-inscribe traditional hierarchies of knowledge between teachers and researchers. However, TARG's university-based members, more commonly readers of research-oriented literature, were not as knowledgeable as this assumed. Curiously, a year later (2001) we found that articles reporting on teacher research needed to meet reader expectations that Kelleen, Rossi and I had not predicted, as I describe below.

Teacher research: A hybrid tale that plays with an academic grid

When we submitted the paper written collaboratively by Kari and Rossi to a call for teacher research in 2001, the editors requested revisions that pointed to our lack of familiarity with the expectations for such writing. The collaboration between Rossi and Kari had produced a theory section an academic reader might expect to "wade through" in the beginning of the article. But the editors wanted a different structure:

With teacher research it is typical to begin with a classroom story or vignette that represents what set the stage for the inquiry . . . the manuscript needs to move between theory and practice more . . . reflecting on what you believe and are thinking about theoretically as it relates to these events in your classroom (T. Smiles, personal communication, May 2, 2001).

Readers of teacher research prefer theory to be woven together with stories of classroom events (T. Smiles, personal communication, May 2, 2001). These moments of classroom life, rather than citation of other studies, would then hold the article together, giving a portrait of the writer as a reflective practitioner. Stephen Fishman and Lucille McCarthy (2000), a college composition teacher and a university researcher, learned through their collaborative journey that successful articles about practitioner inquiry artfully blend narrative with analysis, telling dramatic stories of classroom incidents, *and* demonstrating theoretical and/or educational policy implications. Through trial and error during their ten-year collaboration, they developed a more "hybrid methodology"—combining Fishman's "narrative, personal, and teacher-centred" style with McCarthy's "analytic, academic, and data-oriented" mode (p.220). Arguing that their collaboration became more democratic and equitable when they each recognized the value of their initially two very separate approaches, they also found that their hybrid, artful blend produced work that was able to reach a larger readership, an audience interested in alternative qualitative research paradigms and narrative inquiries. It might have been helpful if we had known about this location in our shopping around for conversations to join. However, unlike Fishman and McCarthy,

TARG's collaboration was between elementary teachers and university researchers. Our motivations were more diverse than theirs were—they both wanted academic publications.

As the curtain closes on TARG's first year, a glimpse of the future

TARG survived this first summer's trip over shaky ground, the cracks and fissures that threatened our reciprocity and membership. Although in our first year our collaborative writing process left much to be desired, our failures pointed to a collaborative direction we could take for the future. In a way, we answered the questions about what genres to produce and what conversations to join with our actions. Continuing beyond this first year, TARG has spoken to a larger public beyond our oval table, in multiple ways. We have given presentations to teachers, to student teachers, and to an academic audience interested in teacher/research at the very large American Educational Research Association (AERA) annual conference. Our work will appear in an in-press anthology, which gathers teacher groups' responses to selected reprinted *TESOL Quarterly* articles. TARG was solicited to submit a chapter responding to one of Kelleen's articles; to do this, Rossi and I worked from a transcript of TARG discussing this article to compose a short piece that included all our voices; this piece lists all of us (except Kelleen) as authors. Kelleen and I have written the chapter mentioned earlier, which was first presented at AERA. One of the teachers' papers has been accepted for publication in the journal *Language Arts*. As of the beginning of our fourth year, Marcy has begun to collect and edit TARG transcript material and writing in preparation for publishing a book aimed at teachers. I am writing this doctoral thesis for an academic audience.

Fault lines: Paradoxes of our participation

genres serve as keys to understanding how to participate in the actions of a community (C. Miller, 1984, p.165).

My story of the first year's journey of this teacher/researcher collaboration, however, ends on a difficult note, with members trying to fulfill expectations while also struggling against them. The authority of the research genres, and of Kelleen as initiator/facilitator of this sponsored group, was counterbalanced by assertions from members of TARG who had a different audience in mind, and saw different purposes for their work.

Our participation in TARG divided along questions of genre: what social actions were recognized as 'needed' by different members? Teachers were motivated to speak to other teachers; academics were motivated to speak to other academics. These two distinct discourse communities, represented by our diverse sites of practice, seemed, in this activity, incommensurable. This was particularly strange, when teacher/researcher collaborations are celebrated as embodiments of an educational discourse aligned with practice. This chapter has pointed to some of the fault lines in that alignment.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

A year in the life of a teacher/researcher community

My study has examined the first year (September 1999 to August 2000) in the life of a community of university and elementary school teachers collaborating on the design, implementation, analysis, presentation and documentation of classroom-based research. My carefully analyzed story (interpreted through my own questions and interests) has focused on our becoming a community, our learning a genre of research, and our first attempts to report on our work. Gathering around a table every week after school to talk about dilemmas of teaching and research, blending the personal and professional in our stories about heartening and terrible moments, TARG opened up a creative space for exciting inquiry. This was partly evidenced by continued enthusiasm: at the end of our first year together, we were looking forward to more weekly meetings and more collaborative research in a new school year's classrooms. My story ends on an unresolved note and suggests that TARG's university-based collaborators had more learning to do: we had not understood the discursive contexts, the particular expectations, for reports from teacher/research collaborations.

At the end of Chapter 7, I listed TARG's continuing representations of our work to a larger public. In December 2000 the warning "teachers don't read journals" was heeded, as the direction of our future work indicates. The desire to present to other teachers guided us in successive years. The first year of TARG's ongoing journey contained the seeds of this future direction, which veered away from publication in academic journals and towards presentations to teachers, student teachers, and teacher/researchers. TARG's first May 13, 2000 presentation consolidated our collaborative work, while the summer's writing efforts split us as a group. We continued repeating the positive experience of presenting and changed the direction of our writing efforts. At the same time, opportunities presented themselves through Kelleen's academic connections that we chose to take up or not.¹⁴ TARG is still 'in process,' still producing; the group has added and lost members, with eight of the original members remaining. My study of the first year in the life of this community suggests that flexibility (including the ability to change direction) contributed to our resilience. Bonded together through storytelling, through a shared space/time to reflect each week during the school year, we survived our first summer. Strong identifications kept us together. However, these co-existed with division and dis-identifications, with tensions and struggles that I have traced in our journey.

¹⁴ Examples of this would include our presentation at AERA in April 2001 and our upcoming publication in an anthology, *TESOL Quarterly dialogues: Rethinking issues of language, culture and power*.

In this first year, I focused on itineraries of our beginning collaboration, the struggles to learn (and later to write) the genre of research valued in TARG. I inquired into the operation of 'exigence' or socially recognized need: what possibilities did we recognize, what uses did we make of available resources, what directions did we take? At particular thresholds, one can discern possibilities for a "disloyal repetition" of the norm (Butler, 1993), for opening up "ever newer ways to mean" (Bakhtin, 1981), for taking a detour (de Certeau, 1984). Our 'uptakes' indexed our direction, where the conversations traveled, and what routes were bypassed. This direction could be traced in the stories invited to our conversations, the stories we chose to perform, those that were less nurtured and those that remained untold. We walked this landscape of collaboration using recognizable cues, convenient routes and (sometimes) unexpected paths.

My investigation of our practices, filtered through my interest in knowledge, power, and desire, is centered on how *certain* stories, selves and research interests/foci were encouraged within our conversations. I analyzed the conditions that made particular discourse practices possible (and others impossible); the discursive events that secured response, in particular ways; the activities of uptake, of recognition and reception that shaped the possibilities for meaning making in this group.

Metaphors of the rhizome and improvisational jazz

Maxine Greene (1994) advocates for the use of imagination and metaphor as a way to think past "old oppositions" in educational research:

[Metaphor] opens the way to unexpected connections; it makes unexpected resemblances visible; it draws attention to alternative modes of being and thinking (p.457).

Metaphor lends researchers resources for talking about the multiplicity, contradiction, and paradox that attend social inquiry in these postmodern times (Ibid.). Although the synecdoche 'shifting centres' did serve to capture the flexibility in TARG, I have chosen alternate metaphors, which I feel better describe the complex negotiations that were taking place, and offer more resources for charting the development and direction of our conversations. I used metaphors of the rhizome and improvisational jazz. These metaphors could be applied to other group settings, particularly those characterized by a multiplicity of uptakes, and conversations of groups committed to equity and 'hearing all voices.' I found them particularly useful in analyzing TARG, to show the more subtle direction in conversations where flexibility marked the facilitation and to show those statements that were taken up and built upon, and those that were not utilized—to chart how our conversations developed in certain directions over time.

Strategic possibilities

I link these metaphors to Foucault's (1972) conceptualization of discourse as a field of "strategic possibilities" (p.37). 'Strategic' emphasizes the activity of agency within material and discursive constraints. The field of possibilities is "a limited system of presences" within "a distribution of gaps, voids, absences, limits, divisions" (Foucault, 1972, p.119). This has parallels with how organic forms such as rhizomes grow—finding the opportunity, the most favorable and advantageous opening from a range of potential pathways. It also resonates with how jazz players improvise music within "the constraints of the task, the conventions of practice and the enactments of other players" (Barrett, 2000, p.230).

Rhizomes: Charting chaotic growth

Within TARG, possibilities were multiple and complex, overlapping and interwoven in the fluidity of talk. Like rhizomes, our talk tangled together, rather than following an orderly linearity. The discursive heterogeneity of our conversations, their multi-voiced "interanimation" (Taylor, 1991), made them difficult to synthesize and analyze. Within a moment of conversation, the overall shape of our collaboration could not be seen. Viewed from within the tangles of an underground root system, the overall direction of the rhizome can be obscured. Easily visible are the aboveground evidence, the leaf and flower that push into sight. My study of our first year's journey looks not only at our products (e.g., the presentations and writing that became public), but also at the connections throughout the activities of our first year's work.

Rhizomes' DNA programs multi-directional growth, but environment and circumstance play a major role in providing advantages for (or obstacles to) development. An underground root system like a rhizome is versatile in taking advantage of multiple opportunities and their direction may seem chaotic. However, while their tendency is to sprout in many directions, not all routes are clear, some may be blocked. Root systems build certain configurations. The metaphor of the rhizome offers an image of a route/root pattern within our conversations, a way to trace their overall direction and to pull out underlying themes, unspoken links. For example, in Chapter 4, I was able to trace a rhizome of belonging in linked conversations about research and classroom practices. Underground connections between our weekly conversations became more visible through my retrospective analysis of our developing collaboration over time.

Improvisational jazz: Routes socially negotiated

Improvisational jazz has the organic, multidirectional aspects of a rhizome, but it adds to the image of an underground root system a sense of interaction with other human 'players.' Rather than DNA coding, cultural codes or resources define parameters for improvisation. Players utilize their knowledge of harmonic modalities and their repertoire of jazz genres to join in a musical conversation. Depending upon players' cultural resources and upon what they offer in the moment, some directions are more likely than others.

In order for jazz to work, players must be actively listening and responding to one another, attuned to the unfolding world that they are simultaneously creating and discovering (Barrett, 2000, p.240).

This "ongoing social negotiation" shapes the development of the music; participation opens certain fields of possibilities (Ibid.). Similarly, in TARG the negotiation of meaning was facilitated by the available material and discursive resources that were offered within our conversations.

Tracing our journey

Applying these metaphors to the group discussions I studied, I used the rhizome to analyze how our conversations built along certain pathways and not others. Rhizomes suggest the growth path, evidenced in utterance, or not, that developed according to our direction. Improvisational jazz provided a way to think about performance and participation within our conversations, the tonalities and the interplay of our conversations. Jazz helped to capture the sound and tempo of our speech with all its dynamism: overlapping or interrupting utterances; pauses, background murmurs, loud laughter, soft chuckles. As I analyzed the "ongoing social negotiation" (Ibid.) within our conversations, I was able to better understand a directionality that was multi-dimensional, opportunistic, and spontaneous. These metaphors helped me chart the co-construction of meaning within this space, within an "unfolding world that [one is] simultaneously creating and discovering" (Ibid.).

Within a field of strategic possibilities, within the material and discursive space of TARG, we actualized some possibilities and not others. In the statements we made and how we took them up, I was able to map activities of recognition and reception. The directionality of our talk indicated how we came to construct *certain* selves and knowledges within this space.

Collaborating within community

My study arises from my questions about knowledge, power and desire: what kinds of relations, what kinds of knowledge were made possible/impossible within our conversations. I wanted to better understand settings intended to foster equitable relationships, and the actual practices of relating across differences within them. The community I studied was a site for engaging in border work across two disparate sites of livelihood for the members of this group: the elementary school and the university. Based in a social justice framework, collaborations like TARG hold a promise: to democratize research relations, challenge traditional hierarchies of knowledge, and open up spaces for useful inquiry. My study has examined this local instance of collaboration against the normative frameworks of equity, inclusion and praxis that attend such efforts. Motivated by powerful hopes to relate across our differences in respectful ways, we found ourselves caught in "tangles of implication," complicit in exclusions while desiring to be inclusive (Britzman, 1997, p.32).

Tensions were situated in what Michelle Fine (1994) calls the "Self-Other hyphen" (p. 70). Fine, analyzing "the complicity of researchers in construction and distancing of Others" (p.71), examines how "qualitative researchers work this hyphen" which joins Self-Other, "[speaking] 'of and 'for' Others while occluding ourselves and our own investments, burying the contradictions that percolate at the Self-Other hyphen" (p.70). Earlier in this work, I tried to expose some of my investments as a researcher. Here I borrow Fine's metaphor of 'working the hyphen" to examine the punctuation of teacher/researcher.

Tensions in the problematic joint of teacher/researcher

The tensions that live in the 'slash' between teacher/researcher represent relationships that are joined and yet distant. This violently named punctuation mark indicates a problematic joint that we "worked" within TARG. Different sites of self—elementary school and university—came together in our collaborative effort, in the practices of our community. 'Teacher/researcher' can be used to represent all of us in TARG: we were all teachers; we were all researchers. However, the difference in time and energy allotted to these activities within our work lives was significant. For Rossi, Marianne and myself, teaching was occasional or in the past; our main occupation was 'student.' Another reading of this amalgam suggests we lived on different sides of it, divided by it, yet coming together as a group of teachers *and* researchers. Less static versions, that attend to moving identifications within our lives, might modify the dividing line again: we were elementary school teachers becoming researchers, taking on an additional practice; we were researchers who also were practicing teachers in the university, or perhaps in a distant past, in a K-12 setting. As I have shown, we were all becoming collaborative researchers together in this first year of our work.

In my thesis, I have tried to use teacher/researcher to represent all of us. However, as suggested here, this can be seen as a hopeful attempt to name solidarity where in fact more complications existed. Tensions lived in the in-between space, between teaching and research practices; between these different ways of living in the world, with their different investments, interests, and needs. We struggled to negotiate co-ownership of TARG's agenda within these tensions.

TARG was a space that opened up many possibilities and supported teacher/research in many ways, but there were still "contradictions [percolating]" within the '/'—the space that separated while joining 'teacher' and 'researcher' (Fine, 1994, p.70). These contradictions came to the forefront in representing our work to a larger public. Beyond the oval table in the Blue Room, further pressures were exerted on this problematic joint. The struggles of this first year index contradictory and contested ideologies and identifications within TARG. I looked particularly at stress points such as, 1) when we moved from talking about research to doing it; 2) when we moved to present our work, to reflect on ourselves and what we were doing; 3) when we

moved from informal writing about tentative research ideas to writing for publication to a larger audience. Analyzing thresholds, I have been able to show struggles of ideological becoming through our processes of reading/writing ourselves into different situations.

Negotiated readings of teacher / of researcher

"Knitting together" a community

the process that we've been going through since the fall has sort of knit me into this place [academe]... (Marcy, Mar 8/00)

Sometimes previous readings of our different locations, the academy and the elementary school, were challenged in TARG. One of the questions in the interview specifically asked, "has anything about the group surprised you? If so, what?" (Appendix A). We did surprise each other in TARG, disturbing expectations. Donna was surprised at the curiosity and interest "you big university guys" showed in elementary classroom life; we seemed "like regular people" (p.5-6). Kelleen, in her interview, talked about how TARG provided a place where she could be a learner along with everyone else and about how much she learned from the wisdom of the teachers in the group (p. 3-4). Marcy, as the quote above states, experienced a new and different intertwining taking place around TARG's table. Rossi, Marianne, and I had expected TARG to be more like a graduate seminar, discussing ideas rather than telling stories.

The ways it was not like a graduate seminar and not like other, more rigid research initiatives surprised everyone.¹⁵ Everyone spoke in their interviews about Kelleen's flexibility: e.g., "[it's] so relaxed and so flexible" (Kari, p.6); "I like the flexibility of it" (Rossi, p.6). Kate, who had worked with Kelleen but hadn't seen her facilitation skills before, remarked on how she "created a safe environment for people to share and learn in" (p.6). Katerina also marveled at the facilitation of TARG more generally, including Rossi and me as assistants to Kelleen's facilitation; she reported how she watched to try to understand how this more fluid kind of facilitation worked.

The "flexibility" that characterized TARG practices was also symbolic. As discussed in Chapter 4, this flexibility was linked to views of collaborative research as emergent, negotiated and respectful. Thus, the meta-generic commentary offered by Kelleen, Rossi and myself represented a "symbolics of practice" that valued co-ownership of TARG's research agenda (Giltrow, 2002b, p. 203). Our use of the term "shifting centres" also indicated this practical and symbolic flexibility. First used by Donna to describe her classroom practices and later by me in naming the heterogeneity in our conversations, this term became an easy, familiar synecdoche to characterize our collaboration.

¹⁵ Rossi, Marcy, Katerina, Kate and I found TARG different than other research projects we had experienced.

However, as my earlier discussion of metaphors suggested, TARG's flexibility contained direction and shape. TARG was a sponsored research project, and Marcy's surprise that Kelleen didn't try to keep the research projects more focused on "on meeting her needs, or what I thought were her needs" presupposes that the research grant would direct TARG's work (Interview, p. 7). Marcy expected that Kelleen's interest in English as a second language (ESL) would constrain the projects more. As I showed in Chapter 4, while the parameters for research in TARG were not as narrow as ESL, they were circumscribed by sociocultural theoretical frameworks that resonated with Kelleen's research interests; they also conformed to similar data gathering and analysis methods. While the classroom-based projects were to emerge from teachers' own interests, they also needed to 'fit' within certain frameworks, "like in [Kelleen's] book." My analysis of our process of designing appropriate research questions shows how TARG research was "interested," situated within certain ideological constructs; this co-existed with flexibility, and meta-generic guidelines that suggested research should focus on something "interesting to you." At the threshold of learning this genre of research, conflicts and differences in how we understood it became apparent, and its ideological underpinnings could be discerned. As Anthony Pare (2002) suggests, "a genre's façade of normalcy is cracked by resistance, inappropriate deployment, unfamiliarity, or critical analysis" (p.60). My analysis revealed the values and beliefs about research implicit in our work. As I have shown, TARG members' protracted struggle to formulate a 'good' research question indexed ongoing processes of ideological becoming within our community.

Community as the product of struggle

The facilitation of teacher/research collaborations, Peter Grimmett (1996) argues, needs to be re-framed to encompass "the recognition and celebration of struggle *per se*" (p.64). My study has shown how becoming certain kinds of researchers was an ideological process fraught with struggle (Bakhtin, 1981). Identification was an incomplete process of negotiating, resisting, and accommodating the 'words'/understandings of others, and community was formed through this identifying and (dis)identifying (Hodges, 1998). Rather than hoping to overcome struggles, teacher/researcher collaborations could acknowledge that they are necessary. When we understand community not only as affiliation and alliance, not as "predicated on sameness" (Talbert, 2000b, p.3), then we may move towards respecting and acknowledging differences. Biddy Martin and Chandra Mohanty (1986), analyzing exclusions within feminist politics, argue that

Community ... is the product of work, of struggle; it is inherently unstable, contextual; it has to be constantly reevaluated in relation to critical political priorities; and it is the product of interpretation, interpretation based on an attention to history, to the concrete (p.210).

I have shown how community was negotiated within TARG, describing our ongoing, incomplete process using Burke's (1989) view of identification/division as linked and Bakhtin's (1981) concept of centripetal/centrifugal forces constantly in tension. Heteroglossia, Bakhtin's term for how multiple voices intermix, also indicates how interactions are entwined in a constantly moving dance, a push/pull of diverse points of view—of accents, echoes, murmurs, interruptions, exclamations, disavowals. 'Community' in this view, must confront dilemmas of inclusion. Taking action means choosing one path over another: each choice is an exclusion as well as an inclusion. There is a pull to the centre, to reiterating the normative, which always contains its constitutive outside:

the normal of the normative order produces itself as unmarked sameness and as if synonymous with the everyday, even as it must produce otherness as a condition for its own recognition (Britzman, 1998, p.220).

Simple notions of inclusion are troubled by this understanding that otherness is a condition for the production of the normative and that it is through difference that 'sameness' can be recognized. Community as 'the product of struggle and interpretation' suggests that what we recognize as intelligible can be contradictory.

Walking recognizable paths: Reading legible signposts

I have analyzed our group's conversations using new rhetorical genre theory, which understands that genres structure our participation in human activity by organizing practices in socially recognizable ways. Inquiring further into the activities of recognition, I investigate the concept of exigence, the socially recognized need at the heart of social action (C. Miller, 1984). Through a careful examination of uptake and reception, a more nuanced understanding of recognition can be traced. Reception and recognition within our conversations guided the kinds of conversations we had, the ways we saw our collaborative possibilities and ourselves. In my transcript analysis over the first year of TARG's collaboration, I was able to trace some of the links occasioned by our uptakes and see some stories that "founded" more spaces for social action (de Certeau, 1984, p. 124). As we walked this landscape of collaboration, we took some paths and not others, developing over time recognizable paths, familiar characters, synecdochic phrases that signaled membership. The most well grooved routes were paved with values and experiences that the majority of us shared, those most frequently cited in our conversations.¹⁶ Side routes dwindled away more quickly, and were less likely to become the foundation for further uptakes and thus for further development of the alternative worldviews embedded within them. Our direction was guided by what we read as legible signposts. These signposts (recognizable signifiers) not only acted to point us toward certain directions, but also acted as interpretative

guides, representing our journey to ourselves, narrating our travels. These 'ways of acting together' arose in response to socially recognized needs.

Directionality can be traced in retrospect: I have been able to map some of the spaces we made habitable, through the stories we told and how we heard/responded to them. In tracing our 'uptakes,' a path is revealed; in the moment, we constitute direction through our uptake, our recognition. As we traveled through TARG's particular material and discursive space, we read and wrote ourselves into subject locations that we recognized along our journey. In the next section, I discuss one of the salient positions that were offered for identification and membership not only within TARG but also within larger educational discourses.

The desire for a particular performance

As my study shows, in our presentation and in publication venues for teacher research, a particular performance of self was requested: the reflective practitioner. Teachers must display a 'self' in the midst of everyday practices through narrative incidents; this display must include a commentary, a 'reflection' or interpretation of the significance of the selected situation. The desired combination is a demonstration of an everyday, active self with a running self-commentary of reflection.

An academic, in a 'typical' academic journal article, is required to present herself as well. Sometimes this presentation is encoded within her theoretical frame, which will indicate her interpretative tools and her location within a particular discursive field. Citational markers signal "these are the texts/authors/ideas I align with, over there are those I stand against: you can read who I am by my surroundings, by whose company I keep." These representations sketch a 'self' active in everyday practices of research. However, more recently, with poststructural, postcolonial, and feminist critiques of such shadowy, sequestered clues to self and the bias they can thus obscure, the requirement to 'situate oneself in the research' (discussed in Chapter 2) has occasioned the production of a researcher who attempts to disclose her social/political/historical location. As I have argued in Chapter 2, such attempts are always partial and incomplete. Although we may try to write ourselves into subject locations, this process is difficult: it is complicated by multiple ways of being read and implicated in our own practices of reading others.

What are the consequences of different ways of performing teacher self and academic self in texts? Thinking about the implications of valorizing the performance of 'reflective practitioner' for teachers, I wondered what discourses are re-inscribed by this position. Why is it so necessary for teachers to show concrete, material particulars? Re-inscribing a gender binary,

¹⁶ I have suggested some of the ways these recognizable paths articulated with locations such as white, Western/Christian, heterosexual, women, and with markers of shared values, such as commitments to democratization of schools, views of learning as social, etc.

this would seem to once again code the commonly feminized profession of teaching with woman/body/matter, while the academic researcher remains in the realm of ideas.

When teacher/research collaborations produce reports of their work to audiences interested in practitioner inquiry, these powerful incentives to re-inscribe the icon of reflective practice may set limits on the "cultural identity" and the "field of mature practice" for teacher/researchers (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p.112). This performance of reflective practitioner may unwittingly reinforce theory/practice differentials: the alchemy of reflection bringing forth enriched, relevant theory out of the dross of daily living. The teacher is once again positioned within the walls of a classroom, telling individual stories, little stories, rather than making bold statements about the discursive arrangements of schooling, about public education policies, and/or institutional failures. Teachers remain securely in their small, circumscribed place, not disturbing larger public or scholarly discourses too much. My critique of the desire for a particular performance is not meant to undermine the *practice* of reflection. Rather, I am pointing to how the incentive to speak from this location articulates with other discourses that position the teacher as gendered, and as outside public or more 'expert' forums.

Locations open to academics involved in teacher/research are different than those available for K-12 teachers. The 'cultural identity' for academics involved in collaborations has a higher status position to occupy, particularly within educational discourses: they can be seen as aligned with practice/practitioners, but still able to garner reception, to accrue cultural capital, in the hallowed realms of scholarly work. Their 'field of mature practice' is accorded authority. While they can be disregarded within some realms as too removed from 'reality,' there are ready audiences and publication venues for 'experts' and their 'expertise' in the knowledge economy.

As 'teaching' and 'academic research' articulate with larger discursive economies, they accrue differential capital and achieve different kinds of public recognition. TARG's attempt to bridge differently valued sites of elementary schools and university was implicated in these unequal relations of knowledge and power. Susan Noffke (1997) argues that if teacher/research is to transform normative theory/practice relationships, "issues related to political economy of knowledge production" need to be taken into account (p.333). As mentioned earlier, the problematic joint between teacher/researcher was stressed in the activity of writing for publication (particularly as it was defined in TARG's first year).

Possibilities for disloyalty

I have shown how we traveled the material and discursive landscape of TARG's first year, "taking up...the tools where they lie," using available genres and identities on our journey (Butler, 1990, p.145). For example, in our May 13 presentation, our stories performed reflective practitioner and those we chose to present reiterated a dominant educational trajectory of change and development. We walked familiar paths, reading legible signposts to guide us as we

responded to recognizable social needs. However, Butler (1993) argues that the iterability of the normative opens possibilities to re-articulate signifiers and engage in a disloyal repetition. How might the recognition of other needs be encouraged? Recognizing *other* needs, one might choose a 'newer way to mean' (to paraphrase Bakhtin, 1981, p. 346). What conditions might foster disloyalty and a transgression onto different territories? In the following section, I consider some answers to these questions.

Queering the direction

"nothing looks familiar, everything looks a little unnatural"
(J. Miller, 1998, p.373).

While a retrospective analysis can map out where we went, it is less clear where we could have and did not go. In Chapter 5, I suggested that if I had told my silent story of gender transgression, other trajectories might have opened up. However, these resources for community remained unavailable. Some of the implications of recognizing other needs and other socialities are suggested by queer theory: "perhaps we can re-cognize what the 'normal' mind views as 'natural'" (Doll, 1998, p.287). 'Queering' as a verb suggests 'making strange.' The Oxford English Dictionary (2002) offers other definitions for the verb to *queer*: to spoil (as in milk gone queer); to interfere with or spoil the business of (queered the game) (*OED Online*, queer, v.). Eve Sedgwick (1993) considers more etymologies:

Queer is a continuing moment, movement, motive—recurrent, eddying, *troublant*. The word "queer" itself means *across*—it comes from the Indo-European root - *twerkw*, which also yields the German *quer* (transverse), Latin *torquere* (to twist), English *athwart* (p. xii).

Twisted, transverse, "left-turn alternatives" and "deviations from the straight and narrow" can reveal aspects not available to normative perspectives (Doll, 1998, p.287). In making the familiar strange, what other possibilities for recognition might occur? We might 'think the unthought' (Britzman, 1998), imagine the 'not yet,' push "the brink of intelligibility" (Haver, 1997).

Queering narratives

Another root of the verb 'queer' comes from the archaic *quare*, meaning to question (*OED Online*, queer, v.). Odd, strange, questionable stories challenge the accepted, the usual, the expected; they suggest places open to question and uncertain terrain. Queer curriculum theorizing disrupts and exceeds "official school knowledge, identities, and visions of revolutionary educational practice" (J. Miller, 1998b, p. 372). Rather than re-inscribe what is "already familiar [and] identifiable," it disrupts simple identifications with self and with others (Ibid. p.373). Queer stories have the potential to challenge

the limits of a developmental and incremental notion of both learning and autobiography . . . [and may threaten] to dismantle the dominant educational

narrative in which one passes from ignorance to knowledge about both the 'self' and other (Ibid., p.372).

This 'developmental and incremental' trajectory, which I have analyzed as a redemptive one, shapes many teacher narratives. Loaded with expectations of 'improvement,' like some teacher narratives, it assumes a linear trajectory of transformation between September and June. But, what might happen if the familiar became strange, if we transgressed a boundary and entered a territory where "nothing looks familiar, everything looks a little unnatural"? (J. Miller, 1998b, p.373). In such queered landscapes, a teacher and a researcher might not recognize 'self' in familiar tropes and story lines.

As I argued in Chapter 5, TARG provided a local space for 'taking up'—e.g., for assembling, negotiating, sanctioning, enacting and displaying the images and tropes available within larger discursive contexts. Strategic possibilities existed for unsettling available meanings, and some teacher narratives in TARG both resisted and desired certainty and closure. Like these narratives, my story is chronological and tries to satisfy desires for coherence. But I hope this conclusion has opened up questions that disturb an easy closure. I hope to unsettle the space in between teacher / researcher—to read it askance, as oblique, perhaps queer. To suggest that this diagonal, crosswise mark might be read differently, obliquely: maybe it could be jiggled, twisted, turned askew; picked up like Charlie Chaplin's cane and turned to unexpected purposes.

A dissonance of close harmonies

A cappella choir

Listening to an a cappella Bulgarian choir recently, I found myself noticing the dissonance of their close harmonies; the sounds were on the edge of displeasing to me, with my rather narrow musical literacy. But I found myself intrigued with how the harmonies played with the edge of tension and resolution, blending in complex patterns and ending on chords that left me still wanting a more comfortable closure. In music, this dissonance is represented by "a chord which by itself is unpleasing or unsatisfactory to the ear, and requires to be 'resolved' or followed by some other chord" (*OED Online*, 2002, dissonance, n; discord, n.). In Chapter 1, I discussed how Hargreaves' (1994, 1996) critique of collaborations that include only those teachers who will harmonize with researchers fails to recognize that harmonizing is about working with dissonance. Musical harmony depends upon the interplay of discord/resolution. Further, as the definition suggests, the experience of dissonance is subjective: one might ask, unpleasing or unsatisfactory to whose ears? Thinking about dissonance differently opens further questions: how do dissonant voices blend in rich harmonies? How can we enlarge our understanding of 'pleasing' harmonies and disturb our desires for familiar closures?

Suggestions for the future

I have examined a local instance of collaboration against the normative frameworks that attend such efforts and problematized assumptions of inclusion, equity, and the democratization of research relations. My analysis of our conversations contributes to understanding how 'selves' articulate with(in) community, to understanding the complicated and contested negotiation of co-ownership of the agenda in collaborative groups. My study suggests some ways that we might create spaces for the discursive heterogeneity of dissonant harmonies. The recommendations I have for other collaborations and for more ideal relationships and practices within them arise from my analysis.

Acknowledging dilemmas of inclusion

Teacher/researcher collaborative groups are involved in complex processes of community formation, which need to be acknowledged and understood. The happy version of inclusion that often attends communities committed to 'hearing all voices' elides more complicated realities. Community is the product of struggle, an ongoing, incomplete process that inevitably involves both exclusion and inclusion. Recognizing this tension, playing the edge of dissonant harmonies, enables one to confront how we are caught in "tangles of implication" and cannot control the "unruly movements of bodies, voices, and narratives" (Britzman, 1997, p.32). Rather, we acknowledge the "instability of meanings, identities, and experiences" (Ibid.). This understanding of community holds more promise for respecting difference, for welcoming dis-identification along with common identifications. It might reveal shared tacit assumptions that are shaping the community and in doing so, open up more space for disloyalty to the norm. Such queer or disloyal interventions need to be encouraged. Communities are shaped by processes of identification *and* division; it is important to acknowledge the necessary value of forces that pull to the centre and those that threaten to disrupt the bonds of community. Conflict then becomes a resource for better understanding the ongoing (dis)identifications within communities, the complex processes of ideological becoming at work within them.

Negotiating the agenda

Dissonant voices blend in rich harmonies in communities that are open to what might at first seem 'unpleasing' to some or even to the majority. At the same time, the movement towards resolutions comfortable to the majority must also be acknowledged. This expands on my suggestion above about valuing the resources of centripetal and centrifugal forces. Reflecting on the journey of the community over time and opening up the agenda to re-negotiation could both consolidate community bonds while encouraging divergent proposals for direction.

Such re-negotiation of the collaborative agenda requires flexible facilitation. My study has suggested that willingness to change the direction of the writing efforts in the second year contributed to the resilience of TARG as a community, while a singular focus on producing

'publishable articles' despite enthusiasm for other forms threatened TARG. Flexible facilitation is necessary for co-ownership and strong community formation. TARG members' reflections on the group as a 'fun time on Thursday nights' and the sense of being 'valuable and of use to each other' give some indication of the co-ownership generated by the flexibility within this group.

However, my study has revealed a more complex view of the processes of ongoing social negotiation within this collaborative group. The path may have been 'flexible' or open to negotiation but there was also a direction to our journey. This was partly linked to the nature of sponsored research. The initiator of a teacher/researcher collaboration who holds funds, university credits and employment as support for participation in the group exerts a strong influence, concomitant with her status and affiliation with the university. Kelleen was surprised that the first year's research projects did not produce the examples of 'best classroom practices' that the publishers of her book desired. However, what was produced fit within broader parameters of her research interests. TARG members, invited by Kelleen to join, identified to varying degrees with her work. In a general sense, this is to be expected: members of communities will identify shared places to stand together. In sponsored research collaborations these influences need to be acknowledged, and the parameters of the research, including the expectations of the funding bodies, need to be on the table when negotiating the agenda for the group.

Political directions

My study has contributed to a more nuanced understanding of the subtle ways that the work of collaborative groups is directed. Our uptake of stories indicated which ones were welcomed; often these tales were also solicited within larger discursive fields. Earlier in this chapter, I suggested that the desire for teachers to perform 'reflective practitioner' may unwittingly re-inscribe gendered hierarchies of knowledge and thus limits their sphere of influence. I do support reflective practice, and feel that academic researchers could do more of it. Those involved in teacher/researcher collaborations need especially to acknowledge how they are situated within particular disciplinary contexts, and how their scholarly work serves local purposes and is addressed to particular audiences.

The position I would recommend for teacher/researchers is one that is still 'under construction.' It depends upon de-centering positivist paradigms, on re-conceptualizing what counts as knowledge and unsettling the political economy of knowledge. This more politicized position would be aligned with others who are working to effect this change, with the growing body of work articulating alternative epistemologies and pushing the boundaries of qualitative research paradigms. Not all of these knowledge revolutionaries are to be found in feminist, post-colonial, queer and critical race theory enclaves of the university. They are artists and researchers crossing disciplinary boundaries, bringing embodied and aesthetic sensibilities to

scholarly work, producing performance ethnographies, narrative inquiry and defining an ethnopoetics of anthropology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). They are also activists using web based technologies in the electronic world economy to disrupt traditional modes of knowledge dissemination. In my vision, reflective practitioners would align with these movements to more explicitly challenge the status quo, gathering strength and inspiration through coalition.

Queered directions

My analysis has shown how the direction of our collaborative conversations was constructed through activities of recognition and reception. I have argued that the operation of exigence at the heart of social action motivates the construction of meaning within a community. Recognizing (certain) social needs, members in community move forward along one path or another, reading legible signposts, grooving familiar paths over time. For the vibrancy of community, what teacher/research collaborations need to do is 'queer' the direction now and then. This could involve opening up basic assumptions upon which the group is founded, e.g. assumptions about what constitutes research and about the purposes of the group. This willingness to unsettle the foundations has the potential for making the familiar strange and allowing multiple and divergent views of 'what we are doing here' to come forward.

Recognizing fellow travelers

In closing, I would recommend the creation of more spaces like TARG. These would be spaces for reflection and spaces for celebration as well as for critical inquiry. In my vision, these spaces would be journeys, opening opportunities for making connections and links to other alternative and politicized work. Teacher/researcher communities could selectively gather theories and practices useful on their travels, engage in border skirmishes on the edges of traditional disciplines, push the margins of their professions, and meet strange and familiar travel companions.

Appendix A: Interview questions

What has your experience of the Teacher Action Research Group been like? (or describe your experience of the ...). Related question: Has it changed over time?

Why did you join the group?

Why have you continued with the group?

How would you describe your participation in the group? Has it changed over time, and if so, how?

What kind of a resource is the group for you? (what functions does the group serve for you?)

How would you describe the social relations (or relations of power) in the group?

What do you think are the strengths of the group?

How could the group be improved?

How has participating in the group affected your teaching? Your life more generally?

Has anything about the group surprised you? If so, what?

What constraints (if any) have you experienced in the group, particularly in what can be said, and how?

How would you describe the collaboration in the group?

How would you describe the relationships between teachers and researchers in the group?

How would you describe the discussions of the group?

Is there anything more you would like to add?

Appendix B: Transcript conventions

Square brackets indicate the onset of simultaneous and/or overlapping utterances:

Example:

Marcy: [Right
Kelleen: [Except it would involve the teachers

Equals signs indicate contiguous utterance, in which the second is latched onto the first; or an utterance that continues beyond an overlapping utterance.

Example:

Katerina: What you're saying =
Donna: =And not that it's good ...

Underlining indicates emphasis. Capitals indicate loudness.

Example:

Marcy: ...to just act as though of course he's a boy?
Example: ((General LAUGHTER))

Pauses and details of the conversational scenes or various characterizations of the talk are inserted in double parentheses.

Example:

Kari: it's a difficult concept ((*pause*))

Items enclosed within brackets indicate explanatory additions:

Example:

Donna: that's the feeling I got with what you're [Katerina] wanting

I have represented casual speech using the standard English alphabet, the way authors of literary works demonstrate a particular pronunciation.

Note: These conventions have been adapted from Ochs, 1996, pp. 432-433.

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