What is it that is going on when children collaborate to make art What is it that is going on when children collaborate to make art in a primary school workshop? A frame analysis.

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Abstract

This thesis examines a collaborative imaginary drawing workshop for primary school children in which values such as improvisation, collaboration and imagination lead the pedagogy. This model of collaborative drawing is at odds with an underlying conceptual framework for the art curriculum which still foregrounds individuals making unique art objects. In recent years, a number of British art educators have questioned this fine-art approach and contrast it with developments in contemporary art. For example, relational art is championed by the curator and critic Nicolas Bourriaud. Relational artists believe that aesthetic form can be found in relations as well as objects.

A creative workshop in a primary school is a complex social situation. In his book *Frame Analysis* (1974), the sociologist Erving Goffman develops an approach to illuminating what is going on in social encounters. Goffman looks very closely at micro-meanings embedded in social interaction. His methods are examined and interpreted in order to create a form for answering the question posed in the title of this thesis.

Data is collected about the workshops using methodologies and methods suggested by visual sociologists and visual ethnographers. An adaption of auto-driven photo-elicitation is developed specifically with children in mind. A version of frame analysis, a frame assemblage, is applied to facilitate an interpretation of this data.

The thesis also examines the conceptual underpinnings of both Goffman´s approach to frame analysis (1974) and Bourriaud's conception of relational art (2002). It is argued that each depend on an ontology located in forms of radical empiricism championed respectively by William James (1842 – 1910) and Gilles Deleuze (1925 – 1995). An argument is presented which posits that both children´s collaborative imaginative drawings and what is going on in the workshop are most usefully understood from this radical empiricist frame. The potential implications for primary school art education pedagogy are unfolded.

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Preface and acknowledgements

This thesis marks the end point of an art education research project. But, it takes its place as part of an ongoing personal narrative about a fascination with how and why young children make art in primary schools. After finishing a Masters in Fine Art in 1985, I was fortunate to be offered my first contract as an education officer at The Glynn Vivian Art Gallery in Swansea. Although I continued to work as a professional artist, I became intrigued by the obvious delight children seemed to show when visiting the gallery and talking about art. Indeed, it was the talking about and sharing ideas which seemed to underpin the most productive forms of their engagement with art. This flew in the face of my university education in fine-art, during which, thinking too much about what was happening in the studio was seen to inhibit felt, creative expression of an essentially private engagement with worlds inside and outside the self. The underlying rationale for my university fine-art course could be traced to one form of a post-war way of thinking about the development of young artists in higher education, which emphasised how to set conditions for art students to discover personal visual languages which were more felt than thought. For example, my professor at that time (1979), the artist Kenneth Rowntree, took me aside in my third year when he heard I was attending night classes in philosophy. His advice was forthright. Thinking in those terms about what I was doing would only damage my progress as a young painter.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, I was able to work alongside other artists and educators on the Gulbenkian funded Visual Impact Project. We explored how artists and primary school teachers, working together as partners in classrooms, might develop improved practical strategies for teaching art to children from 4 to 11 years. The end product of this was the publication of *Teaching Art at Key Stage 1*, (Meager 1993) followed by *Teaching Art at Key Stage 2* (Meager 1995). In both books, talking and sharing ideas take centre stage. Two claims were made: first, that there is a direct correlation between the quality of talk and the quality of art made by children in an art lesson and second, you don't need to be good at art to teach it well. In other words, seemingly difficult and special art skills could be broken down and simplified to make them accessible to all; and sharing ideas demystified making art. This meant that taking part in art was more accessible to all teachers and children, no matter what their previous experience of art had been.

Between 2000 and 2004, I worked on a series of projects with primary school educators for Cardiff County Council. We explored ideas about setting successful classroom conditions for creative teaching and learning from Nursery to Year 6. The projects were inspired by the early years' projects from Reggio Emilia in Italy. These foreground the way children can take command over their creativity by working together in partnership with adults, rather than directed by them. We found that it was possible to set up learning environments, controlled by teachers, yet within which children felt entirely free to explore their own ideas. This generated conditions for creative thinking and expression. The most successful initiative was called *Islands of Imagination*. Children worked together to form imaginary communities, which developed their own cultures through design, music, dance, storytelling and art. Many of these projects were included in a book, C*reativity and Culture – Art Projects for Primary Schools* (2006) published by the National Society for Education in Art and Design.

After working overseas, I returned to the UK to study for the PGCE primary at the University of East Anglia. Although I had been involved in training teachers at all levels of experience over many years, I had never trained as a primary school teacher. After I had completed the PGCE, I worked as a classroom teacher to complete my NQT year before returning to teacher training and devising new projects and initiatives for primary education as a freelance education consultant.

This Master's thesis should be seen as a natural progression from these experiences and influences. I would like to acknowledge the support, interest and contributions from:

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Introduction

Art education in British primary schools teaches children how to go about making and understanding art objects. For example, in February 2013, the Department of Education published a draft revision of the National Curriculum. In art and design this emphasises an: 'appreciation of beauty', 'technical mastery', and becoming proficient in 'using drawing, painting [and] sculpture' in order to 'create aesthetically pleasing objects' (p. 146). Lessons in primary schools are structured to fulfil learning objectives drawn out from the National Curriculum (Beere and Gilbert 2012).

In stark contrast to the art curriculum, recent critical commentary about contemporary visual art establishes that many artists express ideas using an aesthetic form which is *not* located in physical objects but in relations and encounters between artists, people, place and time – these relationships are the artworks and it is in relational forms that aesthetic experience is located (Irvin and O'Donoghue 2012). This has been called relational aesthetics (Bourriaud 2002).

As well as lessons in school, children also experience the arts by working with arts professionals and on special visits to arts venues. These activities are often called 'workshops'. Case studies published by ENGAGE, the organisation for gallery education based in the UK, illustrate the diverse nature of the workshop form in visual art (Engage 2013). These workshops reflect movements in contemporary art practice and often foreground an art experience which is collaborative, discursive and sensory — children may not make objects at all.

Relational artists often emphasise values. Bishop (2004) notes that Bourriaud (2002) 'argues that the criteria we should use to evaluate open-ended, participatory art works are not just aesthetic, but political and even ethical: we must judge the "relations" that are produced by relational art works' (p. 64). A motivation for this study was to do the groundwork needed to explore how ethical judgements, pertaining to relational art works, intersect with judgements about the appropriateness of teaching children implied by the proposed National Curriculum for Art (DoE 2013) which emphasises, for example, technical mastery and the production of aesthetically pleasing objects.

Another motivation for this research was to think about how the collaborative and social elements of art workshops work. Although, it seems likely that making collaborative art will be at odds with both accepted views about what art is in school lessons and the parameters drawn by formal curricula, could this contribute in a more central way to an art curriculum in school?   This theme runs throughout this thesis.

It was decided that a reading of Irving Goffman's (1922 – 1982) book *Frame Analysis* (1974), could contribute to a useful way of understanding art education activities. Goffman is considered to be amongst the greatest and most inventive of twentieth century sociologists (Lemert and Branaman 1997). He has influenced the disciplines of linguistics, anthropology, criminology, communications, ethology, postmodernism and semiotics, aesthetics, philosophy, photography and education as a whole (Chriss 1995). In contrast, a stocktaking of the discipline of art education offers a surprising paucity of influence. In over 50 years (up to today) of papers in: the *International Journal of Art and Design Education* and *Studies in Art Education,* there are only direct 14 references to Goffman in any form. All of these are minor asides. Goffman's ideas have never taken central stage; indeed they have never even appeared as a bit player or extra. There are no references to Goffman in the *International Journal of Education Through Art*. Yet, even a cursory reading of an introduction to Goffman, suggests that his view of social interactions and his ideas about the organisation of experience should have gelled with art educators.

Chapter 1 draws together the conceptual underpinnings to Goffman's approach with those of relational art as described by Bourriaud (2002). It is shown that a radical empiricist ontology, which influenced both writers, rejects the application of rationalisation *onto* experiences in order to understand them and instead insists that, all that there is to know is *within* those experiences. Experiences consist of relations, all of which have equal status in an on rushing flux of pure experience, so these relations are always in motion.

In order to attempt a Goffmanesque interpretation of the workshop, there had to be a way of capturing what was going on so that interpretation is possible. Children's art workshops are obviously visual affairs, so this study adapts methodologies and applies methods from the domains of visual sociology and visual ethnography to the collection of data. Two writers in particular are cited, the visual ethnographer, Sarah Pink (2001, 2007, 2012) and visual sociologist, Douglas Harper (2002, 2012). Chapter 2 is an extended discussion of the methodology and methods applied in this research.

Chapter 3 renders the workshop as assemblages inspired by a Goffmanesque approach to interpretation.

Chapter 4 presents an explanation of what it is that is going on as children collaborate to make imaginative drawings. This in set terms of frame analysis, relational art and a brief discussion of the radical empiricist ontologies of William James (1842 – 1910) and Gilles Deleuze (1925 – 1995) respectively.

The notion of an assemblage, introduced at the end of Chapter 2, is a useful metaphor for how the experience of participants is both meaningful and aesthetic. The qualities found in the workshop and collaborative drawings are seen to chime with Bourriaud's notion of relational art (2002). A potential for a pedagogy which encompasses creative relationality is discussed. This is needed to bring the culture of teaching art in primary schools more in line with contemporary culture. Through pedagogy for making collaborative art, teachers should be able to help children understand how creative ideas are formed with others. This will enable them to see themselves more completely as learners and could take the form of a self-reflexive meta-cognitive understanding of their creativity.

Granville (2011) writes: 'There has always been a tension in art education, between the tendency of schooling towards convergence, and that of art towards divergence… The autonomy of art has never sat easily within the context of compulsory schooling' (p. 358). This sentiment seems to encapsulate a feeling echoed by many educators who write about art education in an academic context. What follows was also motivated by a desire to find a way to express the value of what happens in art workshops, such as the one examined in this thesis.

Chapter 1 – Art education, relational art and frame analysis

Art education – individuals, institutions and fine-art

Addison (2011) shows that various histories have been written that map out the shifts in school art education in both the UK and the USA (Addison 2010; Dalton 2001; Efland 1990; Romans 2005). He identifies that there is always a conflict between progressive initiatives which are about individuals, and conservative views which emphasise the acquisition of skills and knowledge (something more institutional in flavour). Of course, argues Addison, many educators draw on both liberal open ended approaches to teaching art *and* closed discipline based methods. After all, skills are needed to express original ideas well. Steers (2010) also expresses the differences between individualistic and functional conceptualisations of art education (which he equates with design), describing a 'tension that continues to this day between art and design education as a matter of economic necessity and art for art's sake' (p. 24).

There have been attempts to reconcile ideas about individual expression with cultural conformity as represented by institutions since the first formal art education initiative in Great Britain, the Royal Academy of Arts. This, Britain's first art school, based its education philosophy on debates around the accepted neo-classical ideals and influence of growing romantic impulses, evidenced in the arguments presented from 1769 to 1790 in the series of lectures, or discourses on art, delivered by Joshua Reynolds (1723 – 1792). Moving into the nineteenth century, Hallum, Lee and Gupta (2007) describe a Victorian conception of art education as a skills based subject which was useful in the development of a skilled workforce of artisans who could work (often making technical drawings) in manufacturing. They then continue by contrasting this with an early twentieth century conception of the value of child art and a child-centred approach. This valued each child as an individual artist who should be allowed 'freedom of expression and preserved from adult influences' (Steers 2010 p. 25). The post-war period in twentieth century art education saw a movement towards a fine-art influenced curriculum for art in school which taught skills, explored materials, developed visual observation and built a critical awareness through knowing and understanding more about works of art (Herne, Cox and Watts 2009 p. 12). This was increasingly at the expense of teaching design, which was first marginalised in the

1992 curriculum, with design demoted to a supporting role in both the subjects of art and technology. Although design was later re-instated in 2000 alongside art as *Art and Design* and in 1995 alongside technology as *Design Technology*, Steers (2010) argues that successive versions of National Curriculum statutory provisions for art were based on an increasingly unquestioned view of the fundamentals of the subject in school. This shows that 'little progress has been made to halt the subject's retrenchment into a limited fine-art approach' (p. 27). Addison (2010) shows that art educators, who often joined the profession having first been to art school and having seen themselves as practicing artists, emphasised their subject's distinctiveness in the curriculum as fine-art in fostering 'individuality, self expression, autonomy and spiritual well-being' (p. 8). This is one form of expression of the value of art which is also embodied in the, 'myths that have accrued to the practice of fine artists... coalesced in the popular imagination around the figure of the outsider, frequently tragic artist' (p. 8). Addison (2010) gives a number of examples of this popular stereotype as Hollywood cinematic representations of Van Gogh, Francis Bacon, and Jackson Pollock. This is a vision of an artist, almost always male, working alone to produce single objects to be displayed (and sold) in formal settings (galleries). The works demonstrate utterly individual expressive sensibilities. For these kinds of artists, it is almost as if the more powerfully they present their individuality, the more they are admired. Atkinson (2005) notes that Addison (2003 and 2005) argues that in adopting an almost unquestioned fine-art philosophy to teaching art, 'the school art curriculum has evolved an insular approach to art practice and understanding art practice'. This is to such an extent that 'practice in art education has reached the point where the subject is in danger of becoming an anachronism' (p. 17).

Herne, Cox and Watts (2009) organise an overview of academic writing specifically about art and design education for children aged 3 – 11. They identify Geoffrey Southworth's (1982) *Art in the Primary School: Towards First Principles*, as articulating a conception of primary school art. This will seem very familiar to those interested in primary school art education, as it articulated the debates about curriculum development in primary school art which still inform most practice today – not least because this rational became embedded in the first Department of Education and Science (1992) publication, *English National Curriculum for Art,* and still underpins the current statutory National Curriculum orders *Art and Design* for English primary schools (DfE 2011). Southworth (1982) highlighted the *visual aspect* which enables children to 'observe and investigate the visual world and record and express their 'findings' in visual terms' (p. 219), and *knowledge and*

understanding, a term which came to represent an appeal to teach children about examples of historical art and design by introducing children to works of art, artists and how they work. Southworth also argues the idea that 'individuality is intrinsic to the artistic process' and that 'art involves the individual's experience with the world. Art education is implicitly concerned with individuals and a regard for individuality.' (p. 218). He emphasises how 'private understanding and meaning' can 'provide the child with specific, highly personalised opportunities to come to terms with his or her inner world and the objective world and all the myriad ways in which the two are connected' (p. 225).

However, despite this fine-art preoccupation with individualism being deeply embedded in a fine-art practice of art education at both primary and secondary level, some new thinking about secondary school art education has identified the opportunity for the subject to promote a more social model of learning (Burgess 2010). Addison (2010) discusses how this has developed out of the principles of constructivist theories of education derived from thinkers like Vygostski (1978) who shows the importance of the social aspect of learning and how children make meaning from experience. Children should be encouraged to be curious, open to discoveries and be encouraged to share and express ideas. Group work and talk are emphasised (Addison 2010). Despite this constructivist momentum, Burgess (2010) echoes Addison (2010) and describes how in art teaching 'the isolated, studio artist is taken as the model for education, a model that sits uncomfortably with the realities of schooling where learning takes place in a collective, social environment' (p. 67). Burgess (2010) goes on to counter the idea of a preoccupation with the individual and identifies the social organisation of pedagogy; the metaphor of classrooms as ecosystems; the construction of communities of learning through collaboration; and a pedagogy focused on a dialogical approach as evidence that some recent thinking about education recognises the social processes behind learning. However, despite the fact that constructivist ideas about children's learning in primary schools are very influential (Littledyke and Huxford (Eds) 1998) and use child interaction, questioning and co-operative learning (Hoye 1998), art lessons for 4 – 11 year olds are still usually about making personal objects which reflect traditional aims and 'valorise individual expression' (Burgess 2010 p. 72). Even, Hoye (1998) in writing specifically about a constructivist view of primary school art education leads her chapter by citing Barrett (1982) who sees a central aim of an art curriculum as being about developing individuals' *senses* as a way of receiving the world.

Art education and relational art

Nevertheless, in the world outside of education, there is a cultural shift in art practice since the early 1990s and Burgess notes how writers about contemporary art theory including Lacy (1995), Bourriaud (1998, 2002), Kester (2004) and Bishop (2006) have articulated models of artistic practice 'in which social interaction is foregrounded – collaborative, socially engaged, reflexive and dialogical practices' (p. 67). Reflecting this, some recent writers about art education (Illeris 2005; Burgess 2010; Granville 2011; Irvin and O'Donoghue 2012) present arguments around this pedagogical 'turn' in the contemporary cultural practice of art in Europe. They suggest this cultural movement, represented by the conceptual frame, *Relational Aesthetics*, articulated by Nicholas Bourriaud (2002), might be of value to art educators.

For example, Illeris (2005) in her essay *Young People and Contemporary Art*, argues that it is possible to focus on a different form of aesthetic which is manifest in social settings rather than 'self enclosed' objects. Viewers are replaced by participants who have 'an invitation to take a break from the 'normal' instrumentalised experiences and to experiment.' She shows 'several examples of how young people prefer to engage in encounters with art as active participants rather than passive viewers' (p. 253). She continues, 'One could say that relational aesthetics is educational by nature, because it aims at making the audience explore different kinds of experiences and meaning making' (p. 238). Granville (2011) also discusses this pedagogical 'turn', which he also describes is a feature of current art practice, curating and criticism. It is also in these terms that Irvin and O'Donoghue (2012) cite Bourriaud's 'relational aesthetics' as moving towards a theory of pedagogy rather than a theory of form. They note that contemporary art practice from the 1990s onwards has been theorised by Bourriaud (2002) as an aesthetic which is bound into relationships between the artist, people, place and time. It is the context that is the artwork rather than an object. This way of conceptualising offers a pathway towards understanding much contemporary art practice in Europe. As an example of what this means in practice, the aesthetics of some kind of encounter, in or out of a gallery is the centre piece of the art rather than any particular object. Bourriaud defined the approach simply as, 'a set of artistic practices which take as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole of human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private space' (Bourriaud 2002 p. 113). The artist can be more accurately viewed as the 'catalyst' in relational art, rather than being revered at the centre as a maker

of self contained aesthetic objects. This view of an artist as a catalyst for encounters and experiences chimes with how a teacher might be seen as the catalyst for artistic experiences of children in an art workshop. A workshop for a class of children is likely to be highly social in nature, and the resulting art objects come into being through active participation and collaboration. Children and their teachers form communicative relationships. It is this kind of primary school class activity which is examined in this thesis.

Bourriaud and relational art

Nicolas Bourriaud was the Gulbenkian curator of contemporary art from 2008-2010 at Tate Britain, London, and in 2009, he was curator of the fourth Tate Triennial there, entitled Altermodern. Since November 2011, he has been the director of the Beaux-Arts de Paris (École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts), the main art school in Paris. Bourriaud's collection of essays, *Relational Aesthetics*, first published in French in 1998 with a revised version in English in 2002, is a highly influential text accounting for much contemporary art practice developed through the 1990s and into the first decade of the twenty-first century. These artistic activities intensify the trend towards interdisciplinary practice and crossovers that became a hallmark of artistic post-modernism as 'artists produce work that thematizes and multiplies connections between art and other spheres of human activity' (Ross 2005 p. 160). This emphasises interdependence over autonomy in relation to the artist, the art work and the participant audience. The aesthetic experience is bound into relations between audience, artist and artwork and not simply into single unique art objects or our perception of them.

Bourriaud's own glossary definition of art first acknowledges the narrative of art history, which describes the genealogy of objects such as paintings and sculptures. However, this is but a prelude to what he argues is a more accurate definition of art for now: 'art is an activity consisting in producing relationships with the world with the help of signs, forms, actions and objects' (Bourriaud 2002 p. 107). This definition helps encompass much contemporary art practice which is characterised by forms of art which include installations, interactions, videos, soundscapes, projections, events etc., both inside gallery spaces (spaces especially reserved for the presentation of art) and outside in landscapes, communities, streets, living rooms, the internet – in fact anywhere where humans go. Bishop (2004) argues, 'rather than a discrete, portable, autonomous work of art that transcends its context, relational art is entirely beholden to the contingencies of its environment and audience' (p. 54). The words 'activity' and 'relationships' are key

components of Bourriaud's definition. So in this paradigm art is clearly more than just about single self contained objects such as paintings, drawings and sculptures.

Bourriaud argues that criteria for making judgements about art are still mostly located in a modernist view. This is still part of the continuum of an art history which is all about objects. Thinking about art as only being about producing objects does not sufficiently reflect the social arena (society) which has moved far and fast towards many forms of fluid expression through communication media. A better rational for art must be: 'perceptive, experimental, critical and participatory' (Bourriaud 2002 p. 12). This suggests artistic interactions with the physical and conceptual worlds as being moving, not fixed by one object, determined by an objective, or dominated by an ideal. Bourriaud captures this as he characterises the artist who 'catches the world on the move', which leads him to postulate *relational art* as operating in the realm of 'human interactions and its social context' (Bourriaud 2002 p. 14). Artists are catalysts for 'encounters' and 'the collective elaboration of meaning' (Bourriaud 2002 p. 15). These encounters with art are intrinsically different from what happens when watching television as we sit still and usually in a private space; or in the cinema, where nonnegotiable images are presented in a darkened theatre with seats all facing the same way. We engage, and have engaged, with art in a more dynamic way, even static paintings and sculptures, by moving past it, through it, going back to it. The possibility of dialogue with another is immediately possible. The invitational spaces created by much contemporary art amplify this 'conviviality'. The potential for communicability takes centre stage.

If a key value of art is as a 'state of encounter', then, argues Bourriaud (2002), this 'arena of exchange must be judged on aesthetic criteria, which he lists as: 'the coherence of its form, the symbolic value of the "world" it suggests to us, and the image of human relations reflected by it' (p. 18). So to talk about a relational aesthetic is also to talk about relational form. In other words, the encounters artists catalyse between participants (viewers) and stuff of the world (animate and inanimate, real and imagined, material and immaterial) have a form, and it is this form which can be judged aesthetically and which holds the most powerful value in the work.

> Form only assumes its texture (and acquires a real existence) when it introduces human interactions…Artistic practice thus resides in the invention of relations between consciousness. Each particular art work is a proposal to live in a shared world, and the work of every artist is a bundle of relations with the world…As part

of the "relationist" theory of art, inter-subjectivity does not only represent the social setting for the reception of art, which is its "environment", its "field" (Bourdieu), but also becomes the quintessence of artistic practice (Bourriaud 2002 p. 22).

An obvious location for inter-subjectivity is dialogue. Images are made assuming that others will respond to them. Bourriaud (2002) cites film maker Godard: 'it takes two to make an image' (p. 26). Dialogue can be 'the actual origins of the image-making process… negotiations have to be undertaken, and the Other (sic) presupposed… a negotiation with countless correspondents and recipients' (Bourriaud 2002 p. 26). Placing Bourriaud in a developing history of late twentieth century art, Bishop (2004) refers to Umberto Eco who also foregrounds 'communicative situations' as characteristics of how:

> … the "work in movement" (and partly that of the "open" work) sets in motion a new cycle of relations between the artist and his audience, a new mechanics of aesthetic perception, a different status for the artistic product in contemporary society. It opens a new page in sociology and in pedagogy, as well as a new chapter in the history of art (Umberto Eco 1962 pp. 22-23).

A critique of this reading of Bourriaud must acknowledge that the political and ethical dimensions of relational aesthetics have not been discussed. Bishop notes that Bourriaud 'argues that the criteria we should use to evaluate open-ended, participatory art works are not just aesthetic, but political and even ethical: we must judge the "relations" that are produced by relational art works' (Bishop 2004 p. 64). Bourriaud sees a correspondence between aesthetic judgments and an 'ethicopolitical' judgement about relational art. Also, Ross places Bourriaud into a conceptual frame which derives from aesthetics in Marx and argues about Bourriaud in terms of 'the relation between aesthetics and politics developed by philosopher Jacques Rancière' (Ross 2005 p. 67). O'Donoghue (2011) shows that, in this political domain, Bourriaud has recognised art's commitment to move into the relational realm, 'an effort to resist forces of globalization, and the standardization of culture that ensues. In short, the "collective sensibility" that Bourriaud writes about is one that values, derives from, and generates acts of collaboration, participation, interaction, and exchange that in turn creates conditions for dialogue which promotes understanding and offers new ways of being together' (p. 6).

Goffman and organising complex experiences

The hugely influential sociologist, Erving Goffman, focuses on micro-matters at the heart of the experience of interaction. His book *Frame Analysis* (1974) sets out to describe a way of understanding how complex human experiences are organised. Art workshops or lessons as Elliot Eisner's (1999, 2002, 2004) vision of artistry in education proclaims, will be set against attempts to impose order, alignment and certainty at any cost. They will remind us of aspects of teaching that are often overlooked: openness to surprise, trusting in embodied knowing or a sense of *feel*, the making of sound judgements in the absence of rules and formulae, the limitations of verbal language and the importance of aesthetic satisfaction (Eisner 2004 p. 5). An art workshop in a primary school, which embodies Eisner's conceptualisation of art education above, will be a highly complex situation to describe (let alone encapsulate) in a research thesis, even if the question of a relational aesthetic is set aside. Directed by teaching and supported by adults, a class size group of children will be making art, set in a context of primary schooling in England. Ideas about experience, art, creativity, imagination, meaning, drawing, curriculum, school, teaching and learning are likely to feature in some of the educational frames of reference used to make sense of what it is that is going on. None of these terms is straightforward and taken together, and happening synchronistically, their meaningful interrelation in a single activity should be tough to explain. However, this project proposes that it is possible to come to an understanding of this educational activity by evoking Goffman's (1974) central question about the organisation of experience: what is it that is going on here?

Evoking Goffman

Goffman's style of writing is literary as well as observational and creates an imaginative form in its own right (Lemert 1997). To such an extent that 'There was a time, and in some quarters there still is, when the word "Goffman" evoked an understanding so distinctive that one hardly knew what to do with it.' (Lemert 1997 p. ix). Goffman is speaking to us as mutual insiders in a social reality we share by *not* referring to it as something systemised and external – as though there were a kind of coherent, stable truth to which we aspire to fit our experiences once we discover it. His way of looking carefully is to conjure equivalent situations in his text – a text which is both *what* is being examined and the *how* of the examining. Therefore, when reading Goffman, it is difficult to extract a self standing scheme or theoretical structure (Chriss 1995). His writing creates a *seductive* social place for ideas which helps those who enter see the world they inhabit anew (Craib 1978). How

does Goffman achieve apparent alchemy of illuminating our understanding without systematising? Firstly, by paying close attention and secondly, synchronistically, by asking the question: what is it that is going on here? 'The world calls, everyone sees it, it is reasonable someone try to answer' (Craib 1978 p. 79). Even if there is no easily replicable external method to apply systematically, appeal to or even criticise, nevertheless Goffman illuminates, he draws the reader out from the dullness of the ordinary and expresses surprising insights by shedding a carefully rendered light on micro matters of social interaction. In doing so, he allows us to speculate that perhaps we see more clearly how the world works. Zooming out, to take the broadest of possible views, on sociology itself, Goffman can be perceived as part a cultural shift from an interest in content to form, 'from the concrete meanings of the raw material in question to the way in which they mean' (Jameson 1976 p. 119). No wonder that a playwright such as Alan Bennett is invited by The London Review of Books to write about Goffman's *Forms of Talk* and does so warmly with many allusions to equivalent sensibility in literature (Bennett 1981). No wonder also that this literary and non-systemic Goffman is easily adopted by many outside the field of sociology. The distinguished cultural anthropologist, Clifford Geertz (1983), suggests that Goffman is among those who have blurred distinctions in the human sciences (pp. 23-26). Evidently then, one does not have to be writing in the field of sociology to bring Goffman to bear on a matter at hand.

The organisation of experience

In the introduction of *Frame Analysis* Goffman begins to spread before us his territory: 'this book is about the organisation of experience', he is addressing 'the structure of experience individuals have at any moment of their social lives' (Goffman 1974 p. 13). Jameson (1976), in one of the earliest reviews of *Frame Analysis*, suggests that at the root of Goffman's endeavour, 'meanings, in everyday life, are the projection of the structure or form of the experiences in which they are embodied' (p. 119). Goffman calls these everyday moments 'situations'. In *Frame Analysis*, Goffman illuminates situations by 'an indication, a gesture which reveals the world as it really is, as it obviously is. It is just that we have not seen it this way before and all it needed was somebody to direct our gaze, somebody to show us' (Craib 1978 p. 79). It is not a picture *of* the structure of experience as though we are looking down onto experience and attempting to see patterns and rules – that is what experience is – but an image looking into how experience works – the nuts and bolts that structure our experience for us.

To account for this experience, Goffman pays 'an almost painfully focused attention to the microstructure of meanings…that most people are unaware of most of the time', and applies 'a rigor in exactly describing such behaviour' (Berger 1985 p. xii). His theoretical strategy is to build from strong observation (Berger 1985). But this observation is focused beyond the foreground of meanings that people make in social situations towards the implicit 'definitions' of the situations that shape the meanings generated within them. It is this veiled dimension which defines situations which are the 'frames' in Frame Analysis. The background, context, or setting for meanings are other notions which allude to a Goffmanesque idea of frame (Berger 1985). Apart from the term *frame*, Goffman formulates, amongst other terms, the metaphors of *keying*, *fabricating* and *anchoring*, to account for how vulnerable frames are to change in any given *strip* of a situation. Strips are sliced or cut 'from the stream of ongoing activity, including here sequences of happenings, real or fictive, as seen from the perspective of those subsequently involved in sustaining an interest in them' (Goffman 1974 p. 10). Strips will encompass any 'raw batch of occurrences' that are drawn attention to, in which it is assumed, 'that when individuals attend to in any current situation, they face the question: "What is it that is going on here?"… the question is put and the answer to it is presumed by the way individuals then proceed to get on with affairs at hand' (Goffman 1974 p. 8).

Organising experience in frames

Goffman's *Frame Analysis* (1974) is about the organisation of experience. The principles of organisation are *frames*; it is these which give meaning to social situations. For example, the same activity (say, making a fine piece of furniture) could be framed as a hobby or occupation. This is important in making sense of how others relate to this activity. We might not view a small mistake in joinery in the same light if made by the hobbyist or the professional cabinet maker. In the first case, the mistake could be a very small matter to be overlooked in the light of such an achievement in making a wonderful sideboard from scratch. In the second, the same mistake might be an offensive aberration considering just how much is being paid. A dialogue which began, "This is simply dreadful, you can't be allowed to get away with it," might be understood as far too harsh a jibe if spoken by a friend to a hobbyist but much a more justifiable exclamation from a customer to a cabinet maker. Goffman believes that how we define (find meaningful) any given situation we view, or find ourselves in, and how we continue to respond or act, is built up in accordance with frames such as these (Branaman 1997).

A frame is not a picture frame, a containing and delineating structure but rather an enabling scaffold for credible stories about what is going on Koenig (2004). Goffman calls frames 'basic elements' which are parts of a definition of a situation, or how those involved might understand what is going on. Goffman does not easily say what frames are rather he intimates what frames do. Scheff suggests that what could represent a frame includes a word, phrase or proposition. These become scaffolds, hooks, labels or prompts, which 'can be instructional as a step towards unpacking the idea of context' (Scheff 2005 p. 368). To help understand frames further, Scheff (2005) uses the concept of a frame assembly – a technique whereby frames are juxtaposed in a text one after another showing how micro-meanings can be given context by frames with a broader macro context. Frame assemblies should help to illuminate a micro-macro link between contextual meanings of the wider view and close subjective meaning making which individuals experience. How might this work in practice?

First look at the example described by Scheff. He exclaims: "RIGHT-WING BASTARD" (Scheff 2005 p. 378). Scheff claims that a useful way to come to understand this exclamation is to apply a frame assembly – a form of frame analysis. This curse is because Scheff has been forced off the road by an SUV coming directly at him in his lane. He begins to assemble the frames as follows:

> There is a fast car driving dangerously; the car is an SUV; Scheff drives safely; fast driving is dangerous; Scheff believes dangerous driving is illegal; fast driving is uneconomical; fast driving wastes resources; there is a war in Iraq; Scheff believes this war is about exploiting oil resources; drivers of SUVs who drive dangerously and fast do not care about oil and are probably pro-war and right wing; right wing politics is reckless and uncaring.

Scheff does not talk about the frames which may apply to the SUV driver's view at the time (could it be he drives an SUV to incorporate a wheel chair for a disabled child and has veered into Scheff's lane to avoid injuring an elderly person walking down the freeway and is even a democratic fund raiser). There are also differences in the frames applied to the situation as it occurs and those applied retrospectively. Even for this small incident and its two word curse there are multiple orders of framing. This leads to a potentially vertiginous layered interpretation of the meaning of the curse. But, in laying out this small strip of a situation and paying close attention to the possible scaffold of frames which could be

employed to illuminate meaning, there is no doubt that it becomes potentiate, richer, deeper, more fruitful, engaging and life full.

When teaching primary school children, the researcher has often caught himself exclaiming or even imploring: "Don't worry about making mistakes" (Meager 1995 p. 83). He has just organised this class of 9 and 10 year olds with paper and drawing media and has asked them to draw. What lies behind the cry?

> He believes children worry; they worry about pleasing adults and doing what is expected; they worry about looking foolish in front of friends; they may worry that their drawing will not look real enough and that this will neither please their teacher nor them; the researcher believes that most children think that their drawings should look real; many children think that drawings, which do not look real, look stupid; most children in school mostly try to avoid making mistakes; mistakes mean a kind of failure; this is a lesson in school and therefore children assume it is possible to make mistakes; the children are sitting at tables in their usual places, so it appears art is not so different from the usual subjects – mistakes can just as easily be made; the researcher believes that a fear of making mistakes will impede their drawing; he believes that drawing is not like some other curriculum activities in school – mistakes should be made; if children stop worrying about making mistakes they will make better drawings; the researcher comes from an abstract expressionist tradition as a painter; he views himself as a liberal creative type; he does not particularly like accurate drawing from observation; he believes that attending to too much detail in a painstaking way sucks the life out of the activity; he does not want children to find drawing dull, painstaking and difficult.

The uncovering of each possible frame suggests others. This brief example has not even addressed the subject of the drawing, the drawings themselves, the teaching that led up to the drawing, what the children say about the activity or what an external observer might say. However it is clear that a frame analysis or a frame assembly made in relation to the activity of drawing will illuminate.

Taking stock of both Scheff's example and that of not worrying about making mistakes, an understanding a strip of a situation from any point of view, not only the subjective, benefits from an assembly of frames. Some seem to fit inside and be entirely enclosed by others,

different frames appear added on, overlapping or at a tangent to another. This seems to bear out what Goffman claims frame analysis is about - the organisation of experience (Scheff 2005). Scheff claims that we now have a potential model to build a structure of context for any discourse 'no matter how many persons, points of view, frames and levels of awareness' (Scheff 2005 p. 382). This could seem to be a road towards unmanageable complexity, but if a step back enables a view of a broader strip from the micro subjective experience of a situation (for example, the content of an individual child's imaginative drawing) to the macro level of a context which might include a series of meta-learning terms or a curriculum objective or an even wider frame of the social construct of a class in a school, then we could decide where to look for interpretation of meaning we seek at a level which is useful. However, in order to proceed in greater depth, it is now necessary to look specifically at how Goffman constitutes various elements or layers of experience in situations.

Primary Frameworks

Primary frameworks could be understood as 'schemata of interpretation' which enable a meaningful rendering of concrete occurrences (Goffman 1974 p. 21). The interpretations are applicable as much to bystanders who are merely looking on as to participants (Goffman 1974 p. 38). There are natural and social frames. An example of a natural frame would be 'the state of the weather' (Goffman 1974 p. 22). Social frames provide a 'background understanding for events that incorporate the will, aim and controlling effect of intelligence' (Goffman 1974 p. 22). The reporting of weather in a news bulletin would be an example of a social frame. In an art lesson in school, a natural frame could pertain to the crumbliness of charcoal (or the fineness of a hard, sharpened pencil) whereas a social frame to the deliberate crumbling of charcoal to create atmosphere in a landscape drawing in response to a Turner stormscape. Another way of describing a social frame is as a 'guided doing' (Goffman 1974 p. 21). A teacher considering a child's landscape drawing might acknowledge the materials used (a natural frame) as a prelude to wondering why and how they were used (social frames). For example, the subsequent 'why' might include a realisation that because every child was given charcoal, charcoal *had* to be used. Goffman (1974) gives the following example of the difference between a natural and social frame:

> When a coroner asks for the cause of death, he wants an answer phrased in the schema of physiology; when he asks the manner of death, he wants a dramatically social answer, one that describes what is quite possibly part of an intent (p. 24).

Goffman uses the notion of primary frameworks to highlight matters that, if considered, throw how frames of understanding are considered into sharp relief. These are: *the astounding*, *stunts*, *muffing*, *fortuitousness*, and *joking* (Goffman 1974). Similar playful, entertaining but also sometimes expressively powerful, off quilter shifts from the 'normal' seem to infuse much meaning making in children's imaginary drawings. It will be a frame analysis of these shifts which render more clearly how meaning works in the collaborative imaginative drawings under examination.

Keys and Keying

Goffman's concept of *key* (loosely analogous to the term key in music) formalises the kinds of transcriptions from activities understood as primary frameworks into similarly patterned activities but understood by participants or observers as being something else (Goffman 1974 p. 44). Goffman offers a categorisation of ways of keying as follows:

1. *Make-believe:* forms of representing which include, *playfulness* (for example a non-serious mimicry); *daydreaming* or fantasy; and *dramatic scripts* (including experiences made available to others through TV, radio, newspapers, books, stories, role-play etc.) Many of these make-believe keys feature in children's experiences in school including examples of: reporting back, writing stories, writing non-fiction accounts, role-play scenarios in class as well simply playing games in free-time which recreate adult scenarios. A frame analysis of children's imaginary drawing, although not used as an example by Goffman, should reveal many examples of meaning made using a make-believe key.

2. *Contests*: which include activities such as boxing and horse racing and seem to be of less relevance in primary school classes except to note that an oft used teaching strategy is to challenge groups of children to compete with one another in an activity to see, for example: 'who can finish first', 'who can work the best as a team' or 'who can get the best score in a time-tables test.'

3. *Ceremonials*: which are forms of social ritual. Goffman refers to how individuals become characters other than themselves, to represent a social role. In schools, whole rafts of activities are virtually scripted with the teacher as choreographer, a professional officiator of what happens in class. Teachers and parents in conversation often note how elements of a character of a child at home may be quite different in school, where they take on a different social role.

4. *Technical re-doings*: these include *practicing* (for example run-throughs and simulations); *demonstrations*; *documenting*; *experiments* (trying something out). These, in all these various forms, are everyday features of teaching and learning.

5. *Regroundings*: this is where an activity does not have the prime motive it may at first appear to have. For example, a teacher might offer children an unstructured free-choice of activities, claiming that this is motivational and child centred even though the real motivation is to create some time to mark work. Goffman briefly offers the example of participant observation as a form of regrounding. In relation to this thesis both the role of researcher as teacher and observer of what happens *and* of children as both participants in the workshop activity and knowing themselves as participants in a research project, are examples of how meanings expressed as keying through regrounding might emerge through frame analysis. (Goffman 1974 p. 75).

Designs and fabrications

As well as through keying, the primary frames of strips of activity could also be transformed through *designs and fabrications*. Goffman refers to 'the intentional effort of one or more individuals to manage activity so that a party of one or more others will be induced to have a false belief about what is going on' (Goffman 1974 p. 83). In England, children are required to take a test for numeracy and literacy at seven years old. It is quite normal for teachers to assess progress towards these tests by giving children past tests pretending they are not real tests at all, claiming that they are a form of practice or that the outcome is of no consequence at all, even if they are later used to steam teaching groups by ability. Or, it is possible to goad a class into renewed concentration by saying only five minutes is left for an activity where in reality fifteen minutes are left. Teachers often fabricate reasons for an activity so that children willingly take part whereas the way the activity is framed by the teacher is different, only the teacher (or another aware observer) will see it that way. For example, a whole lesson could be structured around reforming random groups of children to work together, not because this formation has any determining pedagogical reason but because the teacher wishes to disrupt a difficult social dynamic between three boys and offer them an example of how they might get along well working with different friends. It is possible to imagine that children might try to produce what they think the teacher wants, even if what is wanted has not been openly declared, and they misread the design of lesson (even if that lesson is not a fabrication), thinking the lesson is about something it isn't.

Many of these may be *benign* fabrications (Goffman 1974 p. 87) as they are purportedly in the interest of the child. Adults are also capable of *exploitative* fabrications (Goffman 1974 p. 103) in relation to children where the private best interests of the child are ignored. It is perfectly possible to imagine a senior teacher deciding to fabricate a believable framework for class reorganisation so as not to have to teach a particularly awkward child in their own class, even if that means the child misses something of value.

Layering and laminations

Goffman shows that a simple reading of a strip of activity can appear to be understood in terms of untransformed natural or social frames (primary frames). However, more complex readings are possible if possible transformations are considered in terms of keyings and fabrications. He suggests that this involves a layering of definitions of a situation and coins the term *laminations* (Goffman 1974 p. 156) to describe this. Moreover, Goffman gives many examples of how keys can be fabricated, and fabrications keyed, rekeyed and re-fabricated which become complex structures of meaning within one situation (Goffman 1974 pp. 156-200). He asks the questions: 'How many laminations can a strip of activity sustain? How far can things go? How complex can a frame structure be and still be effective in setting the terms for experience?' (Goffman 1974 p. 182). A précis of Goffman's answer is that it is possible to conjure considerable depth to how situations are understood, but only to the point where there is a value in proceeding (Goffman 1974). This thesis proceeds with this pragmatic approach in mind; it is worth pursuing the layering of definitions with a situation only in that is useful to do so.

Out-of-frame activity

When, observing children engaged in a teacher led activity whose objective is phrased in terms of what it is hoped these children might learn, it is often possible to see that simultaneously the same children are involving themselves in a strip of experience which is framed in terms of a different story line altogether – for example, by a dispute continuing from playtime or an obsession with make-believe founded in a toy from a popular and branded series of films or books. They may seem to be attending to a practical numeracy activity whilst at the same time attending to a drama entirely outside of the frame the teacher intended. Goffman calls this an *out-of-frame activity* (Goffman 1974 p. 201). Goffman discusses four variations of out-of-frame activities; he calls them *tracks* as they may run in parallel within the same situation. These can be of great subtlety, but a

consideration of which can illuminate what it is that is going on in any give situation. These are *disattending*, *directional cues*, *overlay channels*, *evidential boundaries* (Goffman 1974 pp. 216-218). Relations between children and adults are particularly susceptible to the effects of evidential boundaries. Imagine a teacher and teaching assistant who are able to act (and communicate) in a manner not perceptible to others in the same situation, in this case children. The reverse is clearly also true as children effect to screen and conceal behaviour in order to conform to expectations set by teachers or parents; the adults simply do not see what children are actually engaged in as children are adept at concealing all evidence for that activity from observing adults.

Relating framed strips of activities to contexts by anchoring

Goffman declares, 'the relation of the frame to the environing world in which the framing occurs is complex' (Goffman 1974 p. 248). An illustration: A group of children sit down to draw. They have been given a choice by the teacher. They can either copy a landscape from a small selection of landscape photographs printed from a photographic library or they can draw an imaginary landscape of their own imagination. The difference between the two is considerable for the individual child and their drawings will unfold quite differently depending on how much they choose to copy or invent. But, should someone (child or adult) walk into the classroom on an errand it might be quite sufficient to know that children are simply drawing. In addition, whether or not the light is on, or there is enough space to draw, or time to finish the drawing find a place in the on-going world which seems to be relatively independent the core activity of drawing by copying or drawing from imagination. Of course, the effect of these apparently external circumstances can be very significant. For example, if the space to draw is curtailed by only having a certain small size of paper, then certain kinds of drawings (large ones) will never appear. Goffman calls the way an activity sits in the on-going world which surrounds it *anchoring* (Goffman 1974 p. 247). How activities are anchored in their contexts is very significant to an understanding of what it is that is going on. In one sense where materials for drawing come from and might or might not go back to (the school art store, a box, an education supplier, a child's personal pencil case) are part of the ongoing *resource continuity* of a given situation (Goffman 1974 p. 287). Another example of anchoring is what Goffman calls *episoding conventions* (Goffman 1974 p. 251). These are of great significance to how schools work as activities are bracketed by timed beginnings and ends of lessons or by where available space for an activity is only limited to a classroom. Also, how individuals accept pre-

determined roles in situations can also anchor a frame in a wider context. For example, in a school class to what extent a child accepts the role of learner and the adult that of teacher and what can happen if those conventional roles are relaxed are part of contextualising the situations under examination. The way roles work in social situations Goffman calls *appearance formulas* (Goffman 1974 p. 269).

A Goffmanesque way of paying close attention

All of the above is of interest (at the very least in a literary kind of way) and shows how a frame analysis can illuminate any situation. However, if how an individual frames an activity establishes its meaningfulness, then the concept of frame is not just about what a situation might mean, but far more significantly for the individual, it is about how that person is involved and how they go on to act. In other words, all frames involve expectations 'as to how deeply and fully an individual is to be carried into an activity organised by frames' (Goffman 1974 p. 354). This has to be of interest to educators, if only in that those helping children to experience meaningful motivation to be active learners seek ways of understanding how children experience meaning in order to catalyse sustainable participation in educational activities in schools. It is also worth pointing out that, in any given situation, including an activity organised for a class of primary school children, there is always likely to be both an affective reserve and a cognitive reserve (Goffman 1974), which doubts the flow within the frame which is occurring and infers that perhaps what is occurring needs to be reframed in some way. For example, it might be that teachers feel that the track of a lesson needs realigning as what children do or do not understand is not what was anticipated. In a similar way, for children, there might be a certain doubt about what it is appropriate to do given what they think the frame is that the teacher intended or what their previous experience suggests might work out well. This particularly happens in more open activities such as art but also when logical understanding is key (as in a mathematical process). These are symptoms of the vulnerabilities of framing which affect our sense of what is going on and make that vulnerable too (Goffman 1974 p. 439).

In his own conclusion Goffman explains that frames refer equally to different 'realms of being' whether these are ordinary and everyday face to face dealings; more obviously framed situations such as rituals, games, (and in the case examined in this thesis) a workshop; or the fictional and fictive such as stories, films and dreams (Goffman 1974 pp. 563-564). For example:

The situation may be richly laminated in the following ways as frame analysis might uncover:

> The interrelation between fictive meanings within imaginative drawing; meanings framed by children in the activity as they interpret what they believe is expected and what they are actually experiencing; meanings framed in interrelations as part of the social fabric of the class between children themselves and children and their teacher; meanings framed by the teacher in the intended unfolding of the activities often visible in how the activity is planned; meanings framed by children disattending to the core activity; meanings framed in the rituals of a school class; meanings anchored in the on-going physical and social reality of school; meanings framed by educational contexts such as curriculum; meanings framed by an observer who may or may not see an educative or artistic process under way.

This is very far from exhaustive and is itself based on supposition rather than actually paying attention to an event itself. That *actually* is what is at stake in this thesis. It is this paying close attention to the actual event of an art workshop for which a Goffmanesque approach will be employed.

Goffman, James and radical empiricism

Goffman (1974) begins his book *Frame Analysis* by vehemently attacking the tradition in philosophy which assumes that a veil is somehow lifted to reveal an underlying reality, if only a reader takes note of what a writer says about conceptual matters such as thought, language and culture and applies them to that reality in order to understand it. In pressing his argument, Goffman cites the influence of William James (1842 – 1910) a thinker who, from the perspective of physiology, psychology and philosophy, argued from a radical empiricist standpoint for the primacy of *pure experience*, something that can be thought of as the immediate flux of life. James (1912) writes, 'The instant field of the present is at all times what I call the 'pure' experience. It is only virtually or potentially either object or subject as yet. For the time being, it is plain, unqualified actuality, or existence, a simple *that*.' (p. 23). James calls himself a radical empiricist, rather than simply an empiricist because of this insistence on *pure experience* (Lapoujade 1998). This is an 'ensemble of all that which is related to something else' (p. 193). Rather than there being only things and thoughts, subjects and objects there is this flux of experience which is formed of relations that precede the categories with which it is traditionally partitioned (Lapoujade 1998).

James writes, ´there is only one primal stuff or material in the world... we call that stuff 'pure experience´´. He continues, 'the relation itself is part of pure experience´ (James 1912 p. 4). James argues that this experience 'has no inner duplicity´ (p. 9) conceptualisations and rationalisations are built from pure experience 'by way of addition'. The flux of experience, 'the instant field of the present' (p. 23) comes first, and it is to that which Goffman pays attention in order to build out of it his answers to questions about what is going on.

James (1912) states that empiricism is the opposite of rationalism which, 'tends to emphasize universals to make wholes prior to parts' (p. 41). It is better to 'start with the parts and make of the whole a being of the second order' (p. 42). James refers to a mosaic which includes 'the relations which connect experiences which must themselves be experienced relations, and any kind of relation experienced must be accounted as 'real' as anything else in the system' (p. 42). In other words, relations between things are as real as things or as 'anything else' and cannot be thought of as less real. Pure experiences, including relational experiences, sit before rationalisations which are of a secondary significance. Goffman suggests that James was referring to all the ways we pay attention. One way should have no more status than the other as we attend to what is going on. After all, argues Goffman, we are all usually interested in, 'what is really happening' (Goffman 1974 p. 7). Starting by rationalising will obscure what is going on. Of course what is *really* happening in situations such as dreams, or in the theatre, or (as in this thesis) in imaginative drawings, could be seen as complicated; especially as we think about the notion of *really* with its connotation with the question, "What is real?" However, suggests Goffman, there is a way to proceed if we pay attention to these social situations, to particular moments, in their own terms, without prejudicing one form of experience over another – or even one so called reality over another. In other words, we can find a way to make progress in answering our question, "What is it that is going on here?" unhindered by the imposition of a predetermined conceptual frame. This situates our understanding *in* the event as it is experienced and not *upon* the event as it might be understood. As James (1912) explains 'radical empiricism does full justice to conjunctive relations, without treating them as rationalism always tends to treat them, as being true in some supernal way' (p. 44).

Bourriaud, Deleuze and radical empiricism

Bourriaud (2002) makes references to the empiricist philosophy of Gilles Deleuze (1925 – 1995) and his collaborator Félix Guattari (1930 – 1992), throughout *Relational Aesthetics*. Art works, claims Bourriaud, should not claim to form imaginary or utopian realities, but as 'Althusser said, that one always catches the world's train on the move; Deleuze that "grass grows from the middle"' (p. 13). He argues an artist is in the midst of the present and 'catches the world on the move' (p. 14). This capturing is not a form of defining in the sense of the imposition of some form of conceptual structure onto the world, but in instead, the artist creates a 'block of effects and percepts', as he claims Deleuze and Guattari put it, which 'keep together moments of subjectivity associated with singular experiences' (p. 20). This is art which, for Guattari, becomes a 'form of living matter rather than a category of thought' (p. 86). Bourriaud´s argument for relational art is founded upon a Deleuzian empiricism in which relations between experiences form the flux or flow of events. These are one plateau, or matrix, in which all understanding, along with everything else, is located and to which we must first attend to if we are to make sense of what is going on. These relations are in constant movement, always unstable and problematic and therefore always moving and creating the new. The relational art championed by Bourriaud is part of this ever moving flux. It is set in opposition to aesthetic forms which objectify experience in fixed and static ways. A discussion of this Deleuzian empiricist ontology follows.

Colebrook (2002) contrasts empiricism with ways of thinking which accept the primacy of ideas. Idealists may argue that ideas form the fundamental building blocks from which we come to understand the world. This means that the raw, chaotic, substance of the stuff outside of us, which in us is formed of unmediated raw sensations, is separate from ideas. We organise ourselves in response to the world by applying ideas we have learnt. In the twentieth century, for example, theories emerged which suggested we think of the world by constructing meaning through language or learnt cultural expressions. Meaning making is a shared activity. What is real is only given to us through ideas we have constructed about it.

However, Deleuzian empiricism 'argues that ideas do not order experience; ideas are the *effect* of experience' (Colebrook 2002, p. 80). Deleuze believes it is unhelpful to think of ourselves as subjects, in a condition somehow outside of the world about which we think. Subjectivity and our ability to create practical separations between subjects and objects are formed *from* experience. Experiences take place in the mind, which is no more than a site,

a place for experiences. All experiences whatever they are, including raw sensations or learnt ideas, have the same status and are on the same plane. It is from here, this ever moving flux from, from which we build pictures of what, who and how we are. Empiricism is a commitment 'to beginning from singular, partial or 'molecular' experiences, which are then organised and extended' (Colebrook 2002 p. 82).

This means that empiricism is an ethical stance for Deleuze because we do not need to begin from an idea to explain why things are the way they are; instead we chart the emergence of the idea *from* particular experiences and connections. In other words, views should be built from those experiences not arrive ready assembled and applied onto experiences. Colebrook (2002) notes how Deleuze exemplifies this point by pointing to the literature of Marcel Proust (1871 – 1922) in whom Deleuze sees how all those tiny, gestures, textures, smells and memories create collections of intense experiences to make up characters and relations between them. This chimes with Goffman's insistence that we pay such close attention to the micro-matters in social situations in order to build understanding of what is going on. As has been argued, Goffman also builds from experiences and assiduously avoids imposing systems onto experiences in order to understand them.

Roffe (2005) also discusses Deleuze as an empiricist and points to his study of the philosophy of David Hume (1711 – 1766), in *Empiricism and Subjectivity* (1953). This ends with the statement that: ´philosophy must constitute itself as a theory of what we are doing, not as a theory of what there is.' (Deleuze 1953, p. 83). Khalfa (1999) suggests that this characterises individual experience as a flow of events. He argues that Deleuze adopts the term *immanence* to stand for the empirical real, or the flux of existence. This chimes with James' (1912) use of the term *pure experience,* which also suggests that everything that exists must be considered on the same plane, the same level, whatever that may be – ideas, objects, feelings, concepts, sensations. Both Deleuze and James imply that what drives understanding is a movement of thought through this flux, a movement driven by relations. If we want to understand what is going on, it is necessary to look at relations between objects, feelings, concepts, sensations etc. In this way, this radical empiricist ontology dictates a description of experience which is in flux, moving and dependent on a matrix of ever shifting relationships. Therefore, rather than static definitions, Deleuze looks for a constant state of uncertainty.

Colebrook (2002) picks up this theme of movement and uncertainty following another thread: 'Deleuze took nothing for granted and insisted that the power of life... was its power to develop problems' (p. 2). This constant problematising, argues Colebrook, is what Deleuze called a *becoming* – a state of constant evolution and mutation. This is a late twentieth centenary evolution of thought which can be traced back to the phenomenology of Husserl (1859-1938) and Heidegger 1889-1976). These thinkers also wanted to reject previous constructs of knowledge which applied conceptual structures to the world, as it were from the outside, in favour of conceptualising by first examining life just as it appears, starting from the inside and working out. 'Instead of providing yet one more system of terms and ideas, Deleuze wanted to express the dynamism and instability of thought... the aim of writing should not be representation but invention' (Colebrook 2002, p. 4).

The idea that closed conceptual systems and definitions fail to account for the flux of becoming, and dynamic creativity – life – is also given form in Deleuze's collaboration with psychoanalyst Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* (1977). The usual standards of theory and rational argument are set aside in favour of a view of life which is an 'open and creative whole of proliferating connections' (Colebrook 2002, p. 5). Deleuze and Guattari take the view that it is possible to think differently and not simply accept the restriction of the repressiveness of rational argument and reason. Again, the momentum is towards thinking which opens rather than closes, liberates rather than restricts.

Bourriaud picks up on this theme suggesting that Guattari and Deleuze created 'a "polyphonic interlacing", rich in possibilities' (p. 87). This continues to evoke movement so that as Bourriaud puts it, 'What if real style, as Deleuze and Guattari write, were not the repetition of reified "making" but the "movement of thought"?' (p. 95). This polyphony, movement, flexibility and sense of life situates aesthetic experience as being the opposite of 'the buffer defined by classical aesthetic perception, exercised on finished objects and closed entities' (p. 100).

It has to be acknowledged that the empiricist philosophies of William James and Gilles Deleuze are complex. This chapter merely brushes against this huge body of ideas. However, what is certain is that both Goffman's *Frame Analysis* (1974) and Bourriaud's *Relational Aesthetics* (2002) are located in an empiricist tradition which argues that we can only make sense of what is going on by attending to experiences themselves first. This can be summarised for James (1912) as 'the instant field of the present' (p. 23) and for Deleuze as a realisation of the flux of immanent becoming. Any theories or rationalizations are built

out of this pure experience from the bottom up and, in an important sense, are secondary. Understanding what it is that is going on as children collaborate to make imaginary drawings in the workshop is approached in this thesis from this radical empiricist foundation. This is via a methodology which enables an interpretation informed by Goffman's belief in the power of illuminating social situations by paying close attention to *pure experience* without systematising, and by Bourriaud's Deleuzian idea of a *polyphonic interlacing* in the matrix relations which form the ever present flux of living.

Chapter 2 – Methodology and Method

Introduction

As has been noted, Goffman's theoretical strategy is to build from strong observation (Berger 1985). Frame analysis is then used by Goffman in order to uncover the structures of experience. This will illuminate complex social situations in a way that will help answer questions about what it is that is going on. Scheff (2005) argues that *frame assemblies*, built upon, or inspired by, Goffmanesque frame analysis will unpack the idea of context. He argues it is possible to reveal both the close subjective meaning making which individuals experience *and* a wide-angle view of what an event is – in this case an art workshop for children – and the contexts in which it is set. Therefore, this chapter sets out to describe the story of a research process, in terms of methodology and method which aimed to facilitate detailed observation by the researcher. The methodology should allow a way for participants to express and interpret what they think is going on. It should allow the workshop, and participant's interpretation of it, to be presented for both the researcher and the reader. An interpretation by the researcher, inspired by Scheff's (2005) notion of frame assemblies, should then be possible.

Taking the above methodological aims into account, the research process created six methodological considerations which are dealt with in turn: 1) the nature of qualitative methodology in this research; 2) a pedagogy which promotes children's collaborative creativity and social interaction during the workshop – an approach which chimes with Nicolas Bourriaud's (2002) notion of relational art; 3) the situating of participants in the research and the corresponding ethical considerations; 4) the prevalence of images both as data and a research tool used to facilitate an interpretation of the workshop event; 5) questions about a research methodology in an education context which is sensitive to issues of children's drawings in research. The chapter concludes with, 6) how Goffman's ideas about frame analysis are applied to the data collected about the workshops.

Before reading the rest of this chapter, the reader is invited to look at the photo-story of the workshop presented overleaf. This visual narrative describes the workshop sessions as they happened. An extended descriptive text, which could be read to accompany the photo-story over leaf, can be found in Appendix 1. The photo-story will orientate the reader in the visual character of what is being examined and could be held in mind when reading about the methodology and methods discussed as part of this research.

INSERT PHOTO STORY

Two panels from the final workshop session – two more can be seen on page 64.

Section 1 – Qualitative methodology in this research

General features of this qualitative research methodology can be summarised by a framework – naturalistic, descriptive data, concern with process, and meaning – used as an overarching structure by Bogdan and Biklen in their book *Qualitative Research for Education* (2007 pp. 4-7).

It is a **naturalistic** study which takes part is a real-world setting – with classes of Year 5 children (9 and 10 years old) in a British primary school. This researcher was the 'key instrument' of the research and planned the practical requirements of an art workshop with the school managers and class teachers. The workshop sessions were set up to be thoroughly observed, using methods adapted from visual ethnography and visual sociology, in order to facilitate the possibility of interpretation and analysis. This places the researcher, as a 'participant observer', at the centre of the activity he seeks to interpret. As the anthropologist Geertz, (1973) explains, 'A good interpretation of anything…takes us to the heart of that of which it is the interpretation' (p. 18).

The research is not quantitative but depends on qualitative **descriptive data** as the data collected 'takes the form of words or pictures rather than numbers' (Bogdan and Biklen 2007, p. 5). In this research, this includes transcripts of conversations and elicited responses from participants, photographs, as well as art made by children. The photographic images of the workshop carry a significant burden, and they augment written description to help the reader visualise the workshop event. Photographs also form part of how the researcher forms a narrative of the research for himself and contain a potentially detailed record and reminder of what happened. That a photograph can easily show something useful about the experience, also better enabled participants to reflect on what was going on after the event – a discussion of this follows in Section 4.

There is a continuous and reflexive **concern with process** in this study. The researcher continuously formed and reformed definitions of the research and the workshop as he assessed how children, other adult participants showed their understanding of what it is that is going on. The process also had to be flexible and adaptable to be able to take on board the continuous small real-life changes inevitable when researching with a class of children and other adults who are all participating in a creative activity.

Planning to use Goffman's approach to frame analysis was designed as a theoretical framework for an inductive interpretation as 'abstractions are built as the particulars that have been gathered are grouped together' (Bogdan and Biklen 2007, p. 6). The definitions and reasoning are built from the bottom up – that is from the observations up. The interconnectedness of the descriptive data and potential definitions of situations are important. This means, 'You are not putting together a puzzle whose picture you already know' (p. 6). Because of this, the choice of auto-driven photo-elicitation as one of the research methods was designed to minimise the inevitable preconceptions that the researcher brings to the research table (see Section 4 of this chapter). This research places the participant's experience at the centre. Goffman also begins by paying close attention to a situation (Chriss 1995).

All this must be with **meaning** in mind – after all, how do different people (in this case: participants and readers of this thesis) make sense of what has been going on in this art workshop from their perspective? The overarching aim of the research methodology is to enable an articulation of what the workshop and its outcomes mean. This should include the way the thesis document itself presents the workshop and articulates arguments about how it might be understood. However, Bogdan and Biklen (2007) do not include the nature of the thesis itself as a part of the qualitative methodological debate and instead distance it in terms of 'Writing It Up' (p. 198). Kamler and Thomson (2006) form a persuasive critique of the phrase 'writing up' as though it is separate from the research process. They go as far claiming that 'data is produced in writing not found… These choices [made when writing] often have profound ethical dimensions and raise issues that need constant attention by doctoral writers' (p. 4). *How* what happens in the art workshop comes to *mean* something in this text is a methodological consideration because of choices about interpretation set by the academic discourse in this research. There is also a need to situate the activity experienced by children in the context of academic research and the required outcome as an academic text. These considerations are manifested in this thesis as a tension between synthesising understanding from assemblages of data in Chapter 3 and analysing data in Chapter 4. Also, the visual nature of the event and the visual data that is an inevitable outcome of research into this event must be considered in how the thesis is organised and presented. All these considerations are also methodological and are discussed further in Section 3, about situating participants (together with the corresponding ethical considerations) and in Section 4 about the prevalence of images in the research methods and their relationship with text.

Section 2 – Pedagogy and the workshop design

Paying attention to social interaction

A core insight of the social constructivism of Vygotsky (1962) and Bruner (1960, 1996) was that children participate in the creation of their own knowledge in specific social contexts, in the form of transactions between people. Teachers can facilitate these situations for children which catalyse the emergence of the kinds of qualities needed to make meanings in collaboration with others. In the English curriculum's *Early Years Foundation Stage Framework* (2012), for example, this includes setting a context for learning so that children take risks and make connections with ideas. Later children are encouraged to question and challenge; make connections and see relationships; envisage what might be; explore ideas; keep options open and reflect critically on what they do (Siraj-Blatchford and Siraj-Blatchford 2011, p. xxii). It is these kinds of constructivist values which took centre stage in the planning of the collaborative imaginative drawing activity which lies at the heart of this thesis.

Dorothy Faulkner and Elizabeth Coates (2011) begin their essay about the theoretical and methodological approaches to understanding young children's creative expression by reminding us that these are demonstrations of their imagination, thought processes and how they understand the world. These thought processes are revealed and enhanced through drawing, storytelling, imaginative play and spontaneous dialogue and are 'rich, complex, multi-modal and embodied' (p. 1). Faulkner and Coates also point out that there are many different qualitative, methodological approaches to understanding children's creative expression, but researchers often use a case study approach supported by 'detailed and careful interpretative, phenomenological and/or conversational analyses' of individuals, pairs or groups of children (p. 1). These case studies draw on ethnography, naturalistic observation, conversations and playful interactions with children. Many researchers agree that children's creative narratives are improvisational in nature and that understanding 'the discursive event' (Sawyer 2011) lies at the heart of understanding what is going on. This is especially since meanings and the interpretation of what is happening change from moment to moment and the end products children show or make undergo many transformations along the way. For example, Oers (1998) claims that children's

creative activity is continually and progressively re-contextualising itself so that any after the event interpretation or judgement about finished objects is likely to fail to take this into account.

Using research about children's drawing Susan Wright (2011) 'argues that the activity of drawing emerges as a multi-modal event, the semiotic unit of analysis should be the event rather than the marks children produce' (Faulkner and Coates 2011, p. 4). In this way discourse and collaborative meaning making become the content for children, whose drawings are vehicles for communication rather than end points in themselves. Moreover, this communication is often intensely affective and fuels emotional energy (p. 5). This is a challenge to the assumptions of Mathews (1984, 1998) about how valuable is it to look at the formal qualities of drawings themselves in isolation. Indeed, Susan Cox (2005) writes:

> Drawing thus becomes a constructive process of thinking in action, rather than a developing ability to make visual reference to objects in the world. In being integrally related to the development of thinking, drawing activity is integrally related to communication [see Pahl 1999]. In the same way that drawing activity is not isolated from other modes of sign-making, it is not an isolated behaviour but a socially meaningful activity... meanings are constructed and negotiated in a social context (p. 124).

Faulkner and Coates (2011) conclude that It is vital that adults, 'widen their horizons and pay attention to social interaction, collaboration, imagination and playfulness 'that are central to children's collaborative creative drawing narratives' (p. 10). The collaborative imaginative drawing workshop was designed to reflect these pedagogical and methodological considerations and bring social interaction into focus. In practical terms, children were taking part in an activity structured to enable them to collaborate in creative meaning by making imaginative drawings together.

Collaborative improvisation

Collaborative imaginative drawing is improvisational in nature; it is unscripted so, 'the outcome cannot be controlled by any single participant; rather it emerges from the collective actions and contributions of each participant' (Sawyer 2011 p. 11). These improvisations are social situations and come out of the discourse of the group. The music educator, Pam Burnard (2012), writes about collective improvisation in music. She draws attention to how improvisation 'requires us to examine how new possibilities are

generated or authored' (p. 151). She cites Solomon (1986) who characterises improvisation as discovery and invention in the midst of performance without a preconceived form. Improvisation is often spontaneous, chance is a feature, and sometimes ideas just tumble out. Ideas are created, exchanged and developed in real time, and there is a constant flux as one idea leads to another or is dropped in favour of a fresh contribution. It is analogous to conversation. The improvisational discourse in the case of collaborative drawing is both visual and verbal with ideas expressed and exchanged by speaking *and* by drawing. This image and verbal base for discourse allow for quite complex scenarios and imaginary interactions to be explored. Sawyer (1995) outlines five key characteristics of improvisations as he explores how children improvise as they create narratives. It is possible to adapt these for a collaborative imaginary drawing workshop as:

1. Unpredictable outcomes – the content of the drawings is not planned
2. Moment to moment contingency: subsequent additions and ideas depend on and may relate to what has gone before
3. Collaborative
4. This is a 'performance' in the sense that a made-up situation is enacted on the stage of the drawing surface, but not scripted by adults
5. The social context for improvising together is part of how what happens takes shape

Sawyer (2011) also argues that narratives that emerge from collaborative improvisation are collective social products. Sawyer's concept of 'collaborative emergence' (1999, 2002) is a possible theoretical framework to help determine suitable methodologies which acknowledge 'the moment-to-moment, processual, contingent nature of improvisation and its social and interactional nature' (p. 29). His research shows that the 'skilful introduction of scaffolds and loose outlines of plots... can help to guide children's natural collaborative improvisations' (p. 32). Sawyer demonstrates how adult supported skeleton scripts (or scaffolds) can enhance children's improvisations. The *script* of the imaginative drawing workshop is evidenced in the verbal brief given to children. This is presented in Appendix 2. The concept of creative improvisation was a vital influence on how the workshop was designed and so on how the research unfolded.

Metacognition

Iram and John Siraj-Blatchford (2011) explain how improvising narratives and engaging in collaborative activities are powerful catalysts to help children develop a valuable awareness and knowledge of their own cognitive processes and learning dispositions – metacognition. As well as being fundamental for learning to learn, metacognition is important for the development of children's creative imagination 'as it enables them to describe, explain and justify their thinking about different aspects of the world to others' (Siraj-Blatchford and Siraj-Blatchford 2011, p. xxv). As children are knowing participants in a research process of coming to understand more about the collaborative imaginative drawing activities at the heart of this thesis, enabling their appreciation of the value of metacognitive ideas in relation to both creativity and the research was built into the planning of the core activity under observation. There is an account this was approached in practice as part of the discussion of ethical issues in Section 3 of this chapter.

The structure of the workshop sessions

The imaginative collaborative drawing workshop was planned in partnership with Whitchurch Primary School in Cardiff and Cardiff's Arts Support Team. Whitchurch Primary School is a brand new 600 pupil school which is in its first year as complete school. It was created by merging two smaller schools. The children who took part were from Year 5 (aged 9 and 10), and each of the three Year 5 class was formed from children from both former schools. The head teacher has emphasised the importance of integrating children from both schools as well as building community values in the new school. This was seen as particularly vital, given vociferous campaigns by parents and governors from both former schools against their closure and the subsequent merger into the new Whitchurch Primary School. As the project foregrounded collaborative values, and as children were to make art together rather than as individuals, the head teacher felt this was a contribution to this aim of building a new integrated community of teachers and learners. Cardiff Arts Support Team was established to aid schools integrate arts activities and experiences into children's learning. The Schools Arts Support Officer was able to provide logistical and practical support for the project.

The observed activities, the workshop, took place over three sessions. All children from three Year 5 classes took part in the first session – there were 3 parallel sessions with identical content in each class. This took place in their normal classroom during one

complete morning or afternoon with resources normally available in school. The second and third sessions took place in Bay Art Gallery in Cardiff. This is a contemporary artist's run gallery, funded by grants from Arts Council Wales and other trusts and charities. The gallery hosts contemporary art exhibitions. The gallery's directors take a great interest in art education and its relationship with contemporary art and made the gallery space available for Sessions 2 and 3. There was no exhibition in the gallery at the time and the gallery walls could be used for informal displays of on-going work made by children. Resources were provided by the gallery and Cardiff Arts Support Team. The second and third sessions involved 16 of the ninety Year 5 children. They travelled to the gallery by local train with one of the three class teachers. This smaller number was dictated by the school because of practical and financial constraints. The content of the sessions can be seen by turning back to the photo-story displayed on page 35. To augment this visual narrative, a written description of the content of the workshop is included as Appendix 1.

Section 3 – Situating participants and ethical considerations

Pahl and Pool (2011) write about ethnographic research with children. They acknowledge the potential 'messiness' (citing Law 2004), of an approach which has to be flexible enough to take account of what children say and do as a project unfolds in unpredictable ways – 'To do this, we needed a methodology that listens in a more situated way' (p. 18). This research proposes that, before any attempt at an analysis of what is going on in art workshop, the experience of children as they experience it should lie at the core of the thesis. This should be, as much as is possible, a situated presentation of what children do and say about what they are doing. As this not only involved children interacting in creative and social ways but also the improvisational character of much of the art produced as a result, this is inevitably 'messy'. Pahl and Pool (2011) also tackle the issue of academic writing which can distort children´s epistemologies in favour of an adult´s. To some extent, this academic voice is replaced in their analysis by the voice of the children themselves in the form of transcriptions. In this research, the situated voice of participant children is found not only in transcriptions of what they say about what they are doing, but in photographs of what they are doing, some of which are deliberately taken to render a viewpoint of *their* experience and tell the story of that experience. Vitally, children´s ideas are also clearly and directly visible both in the drawings they make and the way they go

about making them. Because of this, data is both visual, in the form of photographs and drawings as well as textual in the form of transcripts of conversations. These conversations are all informal – either natural as children talk in the midst of activity or as a result of auto-driven elicitation techniques (see page 54).

Acquiring this data and involving children as knowing participants highlighted ethical issues. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) state two key traditional guidelines for qualitative research: firstly participants voluntarily take part and secondly that they benefit from the research. They state that here is 'no substitute for evaluating and being in touch with your own values, for continually taking your subjects' welfare and interests to heart, and incorporating them into your practice' (p. 53). This research took their statement as a core principle in the design of the project. As Hatch (2002) points out, researching what children say and do can be a revealing, close-up kind of looking and listening. There is real danger in trying to take a lot from participants, in quite an intimate way, without giving much back in return. Because of this, reciprocity was an ethical issue in the design of this research. How could the research benefit the participant children? Also, how could the research benefit the children´s class teachers and their school, who were bound to be, in some sense, inconvenienced? After all, the adults involved would also be likely to feel observed. Hatch (2002) comments on how teachers often feel 'subordinate' and reluctant to say 'no' to becoming involved in a research project. Hatch (2002) also comments on the importance of leaving something behind from a process during which participants have given their trust and willing participation to the researcher. Because of this workshop sessions were planned in partnership with the school. There was to be an outcome (four permanent panels) for display in the school. This meant that these sessions had to be practical and realistic in terms, for example, of school realities such as time table, available space, numbers of children, available resources and where the panels were to be displayed. Children should also feel that the sessions were valuable, enjoyable and of benefit to them and their school.

Before this project took place, a trial workshop was organised in each of the three Year 5 classes. No data was recorded. The aim of the trial was to fully brief teachers and other adult assistants and helpers about the research, so that they could not only offer the benefit of their experience to the design of the workshop in advance of the research but also had the opportunity to opt out of the project before it commenced. Everyone involved was pleased to take part.

Informed consent from children's parents and carers for photography by any external agency is a requirement of all schools. In addition, parents and carers were invited, after receiving a letter and information sheet, to agree consent to allowing their children to participate in the research project, including the use of photographs in the subsequent thesis, by positively opting-in to the research via a reply slip returned to the class teacher. Details of this are included in Appendix 3. The project was designed so that all 90 children in Year 5 could equally benefit from the first session and any children for whom permission was not granted were still able to take part in the activity, although they were not photographed or recorded and do not form any part of the data used. Parents were informed of this in the letter and information sheet so that they were able to opt-out of the research without their child missing out on a beneficial activity. As has been described, Sessions 2 and 3 were planned to extend the project into the creative space of a contemporary art gallery in Cardiff. For practical and financial reasons the gallery and school were only able to offer 16 children a chance to take part in Sessions 2 and 3. Because of this, five or six children from each of the three Year 5 classes were chosen by their teachers to represent their class at the gallery Sessions. The criteria for this choice was left to the class teachers and varied from child to child. For example, one child's confidence may be boosted, another would particularly benefit from collaborative work, and another who struggles with writing has shown that they can express ideas fluently in visual form. The researcher, who did not know the children prior to this project, did not take part in this decision.

Introducing children to the research

A specific method was employed to inform children and discuss with them their role as participants in the research. After this introduction, all children were given the opportunity to opt out of being part of the data collection process which involved recording what they say and photography of what they make and do.

The three Year 5 classes were shown an animated PowerPoint presentation explaining that not only were they taking part in an art workshop but also in a research project. This was designed to introduce children to the concept of participant researchers and prompt talk about the research. There was active questioning by children and many examples from children's practical experience were used to illustrate the PowerPoint statements and questions. There was also a demonstration of the technologies in use to record the project

– the cameras and voice recording equipment. The sequence of PowerPoint slides follows (Fig. 2), and a transcript of the introduction and questioning is in Appendix 4.

RESEARCH

What is research?

- Investigating
- Exploring
- Looking carefully
- WHY?
- To find out what is going on
- So that everyone can learn
- To improve things in the future

What are we researching?

- What happens when you make imaginary drawings collaboratively.
- WHY?
- So that I can improve this kind of art for other children and teachers.

You are participants!

- That means you are taking part in the research
- I am a participant observer
- That means I am taking part AND looking at what is going o at the same time!

How do we find out what is going on?

- by taking photographs
- by recording what people say
- by asking you what you think
- by asking other partcipants what they think

What happens then?

- I will I write about what has happened during the project
- WHY?
- To find out what is going on
- So that everyone can learn
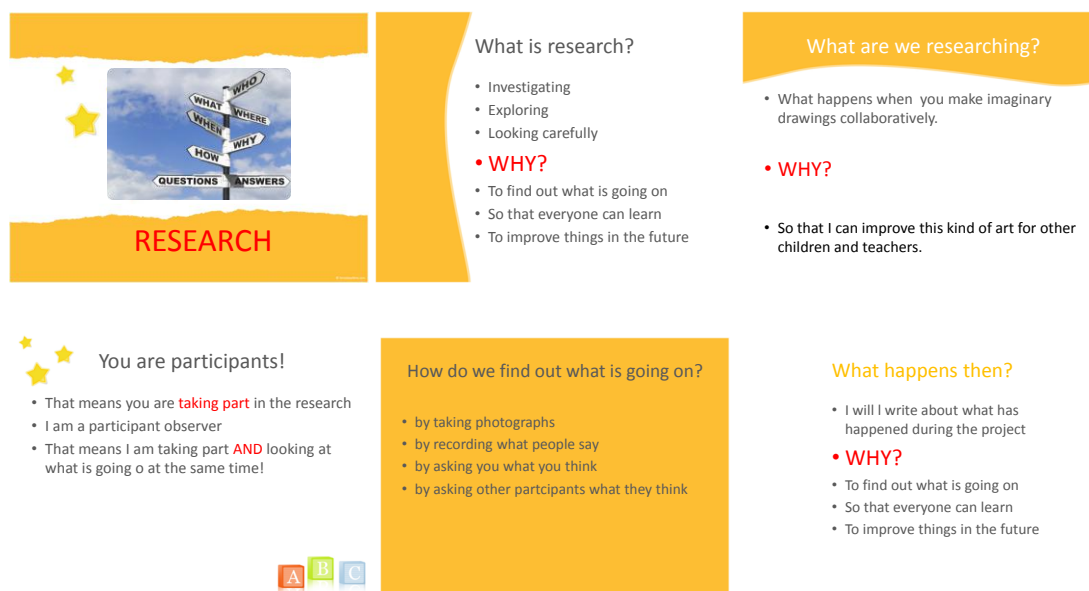- To improve things in the future

Fig.2

Ethical principles applied in education research, such as those described by Hatch (2002) and Bogdan and Biklen (2007), are only informative in the most general sense. Perhaps, it is better to think of such statements as guidelines rather than principles as the ethical implications of the research design are located 'in the very process of the research itself, rather than in the application of codes and principles of practice' (Simons and Usher 2000, p. 10). This research and the project being researched were self-reflexively and self-referentially designed with research in mind. They are formed from a highly specific, indeed unique, set of circumstances. As Simons and Usher (2000) remind us, this kind of research is a rhetorical practice whose design is influenced as much by values as by methods and anticipated outcomes. The researcher and the participants are *both* active creators of knowledge in the research process where the aim is that of '*exploring* (sic) what reality could become, rather than simply *explaining* (sic) what it is' (Simons and Usher 2000 p. 10). The methodology and methods are beneficially reciprocal and are potentially more liberating than constraining for both the researcher and the researched. This means that in the context of the creative, collaborative and highly social settings of this art workshop in a

primary school, the ethical values that lead the research design should be situated in the circumstances of that context for the mutual benefit of all those taking part.

Section 4 – The prevalence of images – a discussion of methodology and method

Visual sociology and visual ethnography

A few years just before and after 2000, a small body of publications emerged which focused on visual research methodology and method. Sullivan (2005) identified these as: Banks (2001), Emmison and Smith (2000), Heywood and Sandywell (1999), Pink (2001), Prosser (1998), Rose (2001) and Van Leeuwen and Jewitt (2001). This heralded a rapidly expanding literature in this field which had previously been an aside in social research.

In visual sociology, Douglas Harper (2012), founding editor of *Visual Studies*, the journal of the International Visual Sociology Association, is one of the earliest and leading proponents of the visual in social research. He recently published (2012) a comprehensive survey on visual sociology which encompasses: embodied observation; semiotics; an approach to visual data as empirical, narrative, the phenomenological and reflexive; the photo-documentary; and the role of multi-media techniques for presenting research. Harper uncovers hundreds of research articles and papers across diverse disciplines including 'public health advocacy, leisure and tourism research, disability research, child development and environmental management' (p. 6) which use visual methods. Although Harper's monograph is comprehensive, it is almost entirely focused on the use of photography and video in research. In just under 300 pages, he devotes fewer than four pages to commentary on drawings in social research. From the perspective of visual sociology, research with children's drawings is considered part of a narrower domain of research in psychology and child development, rather than part of the broad field of social sciences. Indeed, Walker's (2007) review of research about how we can come to understand children's worlds through their drawings cites numerous papers, the vast majority of which are concerned with child psychology or child development. However, there are examples where children's drawings are used effectively as data and in the presentation of education research. For example Susan Wright (2001, 2004, 2007, 2011) combines paying attention to young children's drawing with close attention to what they

say and do. Both drawings and transcript extracts are presented together in her texts to illustrate, for example, 'how young children engage in graphic-narrative play' (Wright 2007 p. 1). Her example of the juxtaposition of transcripts, images and interpretation helped form Sections 1 and 2 of Chapter 3 of this thesis.

From the standpoint of visual ethnography, one of its prominent exponents, Pink (e.g. 2001, 2007, 2012), describes the impact of the 'postmodern turn' and one of its legacies – a reflexive approach to visual methodologies, which is evidenced in social anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, photographic studies and media studies. Pink (2007) argues that methodologies should be developed for and with particular projects, interwoven with theory; and that researchers know 'it is not unusual to make up methods as you go along' (p. 5) — an approach which encompasses improvisation and flexibility. In this research, as Pink (2007) suggests, the uses of visual images and technologies were 'creatively developed within individual projects' (p. 5). The quality of improvisation, the flexibility to form and then play with ideas and their inter-relationships during a reflexive research process mirrors how children made collaborative imaginative drawings at the centre of this research.

However, the use of images in both the generation and interpretation of anthropologic and ethnographic data has a history of controversy (Pink 2007 p. 9). After all, drawings or photographs may be aesthetic, have an expressive and subjective complexity, and encourage an ambiguity which files in the face of the carefully argued rationality of academic text. In the case of this research, the visual permeates the activities at the heart of this study to such an extent that images in the form of art are produced by participants directly within the parameter of the research. Seeing these and interpreting their meaning must be a vital part of interpreting the whole art educational event. Many of the photographs of the participants at work also include this art, in varying stages of completeness. Clearly, questioning what happens during the production of this art by children is at the centre of the research. So not only are images necessarily vital to recording what happens, but also those produced by all the participants, which include the drawings made by children, also contain the kinds of tacit, intuitive and even aesthetic knowledge which Hickman (2008) suggests are inevitably bound into an understanding of art education activity.

Using photographs

Photographs in qualitative research range from largely objective records to expressions of intimate subjectivity (Harper 2012). They may be used simply as inventories of objects, people and artefacts or they can show events which were shared. Photographs can also show quite intimate interrelationships or highlight personal perspectives (Harper 2002). Pink (2007) suggests that photographs can aid research as cultural texts, representations of ethnographic knowledge and as part of sites of cultural production; for example, through social media as expressions of individual shared and experience. Clearly photographs embody great significance for all of us, which should include those of us engaged in qualitative education research.

During an episode of *The Audience* (2012) a reality documentary TV program on UK's Channel 4, one of three adult brothers living together since the death of both parents and then grandparents in childhood and adolescence are interviewed at home. It is noticed that there are no family photographs on the walls. On being questioned about this, one of the brothers remarks that they prefer to keep the photographs stored away under the stairs. After retrieving them from a battered cardboard box, great emotion is unleashed as the images of the dead parents are shared with the interviewers. But much more than emotion, the images make the fact of the dead parents in this shared public arena more real to the interviewers (and the viewer) and elicit a much more open and thought provoking series of insights from the brother (Channel 4, 2012). This shows that photographs may elicit a different kind of response than words alone (either written or spoken). The photographs are more tangible evidence than words to be shared; they stand for the presence of the subject of the photographs in an emotive and felt way. In terms of sociological or anthropological research, Harper (2002) comments that a photo-elicitation interview does not only seem to elicit more information but 'evokes a different kind of information' (p. 13).

Steiger (1995) shows how technical aspects of photographs can contribute to communicating sociological ideas. For example, by using the camera in a particular way (wide angle lens, view point and compositional focus) the researcher can point to the view point of a child. Or, researchers may take a more documentary stance to how photographs are used to show contextual information (Harper 2002). There have been a number of photo-elicitation studies during which a researcher takes photographs of a group taking part in an activity and then interviews are used to help the subjects define what they can

see happening in the images. Harper (2002) comments that this is a technique obviously suited to circumstances where 'local cultures have a distinctively visual character' (p. 20). The character of the art workshops in this research is distinctively visual. Photographs aid reflection by providing visual information for participants and the researcher which would be impossible to recall from memory alone.

The photograph also bridges the gap between the researcher and the participant as both are anchored in a shared object which can be understood by both. Talking together should then increase an understanding of the situation the photograph shows. Looking at photographs together may jolt participants into reconsidering what was a 'taken-for-granted experience' and reconsider what is going on (Harper 2002). Children, teachers, the researcher, education academics, and visual artists will all see different things when looking at the same situation, in this case an art workshop or lesson. It is proposed in this research that photo-elicitation, using the same images of the same situation with different participants, might help define differences in perception and help compare and eventually understand how each of the meaning sets has been constructed by the different parties. Finally Harper (2002) states: 'When two or more people discuss the meaning of photographs they try to figure something out together. This is, I believe, an ideal model for research' (p. 23).

Introducing photo-elicitation and auto-driving as revealing children's perspectives as arbiters of their own experience

Researchers have sought methods that are able to reveal children's perspectives as arbiters of their own experience. Clark (1999) discusses the problems of researchers attempting to understand situations from children's perspectives. Children's authentic meanings are apt to be missed in the medium of the survey or interview as adult's privilege their own pre-conditioned view points. Clark (1999) describes techniques where interviews are conducted using a still photograph as a stimulus and visual aid for the informant's (the child's) commentary as photographs are useful non-verbal prompts which invite interpretation and a mental return to familiar events (Collier and Collier 1986). In her own research, Clark (1999) shows clearly how 'photos served as a mediating prop aiding the interview process – substantially contributing to levels of rapport and child involvement – and as a window into emotional or abstract ideas'.

However, a verbal interview or discussion, which is adult led, does not necessarily reveal ideas from a purely child perspective as most children more willingly open up about their own ideas if adult superiority is set aside rather than accentuated (Fine and Sandstrom 1988; Clark 1999). For this reason, this research investigated *auto-driving* as a tool to enhance photo-elicitation, borrowed from adult consumer behaviour research (Heisley and Levy 1991). This technique was developed by Clark (1999), who used auto-driven photo-elicitation to understand children's own perspectives on chronic illness.

The term *auto-driving* refers to a technique "driven" by the informant, who sees their own experience and explains or comments on that experience (Heisley and Levy 1991). Respondents collaboratively self-select relevant photographs that show aspects of the situation they found most important and in doing so articulate to each other the reasons and thinking behind their selection. Through this process, auto-driving helps ensure that the technique includes ideas relevant to the child and not simply suggested by the conceptual framework of the adult. In this research, photo-elicitation and auto-driving were developed as practical research tools for the classroom to help understand how children are conceptualising the complex experiences that make up the art workshop. The methods employed for this form of auto-driven photo-elicitation are detailed later in this section.

How visual material is used in this study

Visual material was made or used in the study in following ways: first, photographic images were made by the researcher to record and then build a picture of the activity; second, the photographs were edited by the researcher to ensure a breadth of content representing all aspects of the workshop, and to reject photographs of an inferior technical quality and; third, a selection of these images were chosen by participants and used to elicit their views about the activity after the event; fourthly, images were made by participating children in the form of drawings; fifthly, images including both photographs and reproductions of children's drawings were edited, selected and processed by the researcher to be used in this academic text.

Photographic techniques

The photographs used in this thesis encompass a range of technical, descriptive and interpretative qualities. Each of these can be called upon as part of a process for expressing answers to the question, "What is it that is going on here?"

There were photographs taken from:

a. the physical perspective of the participant children – the camera was amongst the children at their level seeing what they saw (Fig. 3);

b. the camera was positioned to provide an overview of the activity sometimes above the participants or, as it were, looking over their shoulder and apart from them – this includes a camera positioned above a group of participants in a fixed position and set to take time-lapse images during the activity (Fig. 4);

c. the camera enabled the researcher to show his subjective viewpoint on the activity and the participants – this was enhanced by cropping and processing the final image (Fig. 5);

d. the camera was able to keep a record of tools, equipment and the physical context of the activity (Fig. 6);

e. the camera recorded the artwork made by the children (Fig. 7).

Each of the above is affected by: choice of camera; the nature of the lens; the choice of ISO setting (the in camera processor's relative sensitivity to light); the chosen digital resolution of the image; the angle of the camera; the viewpoint of the camera; compositional decisions including what is included within the image; which part of the image is in focus or not; the speed of the shutter; the size of the aperture; and how the flash is used. In practice all these factors inter-relate to form reasons why an image looks the way it does in the raw before any processing or printing takes place (Wright 2004).

After the image has been captured, how the reader understands that image is affected by: post-production digital enhancement techniques which can, for example, change the colour, brightness, contrast and sharpness of the image; the way the image has been cropped or resized; how the image is printed and on what quality of paper; whether a caption is used; and whether and how the image is referred to in the text (Wright 2004).

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Fig. 6

Fig. 7

Editing the images

A total of 923 photographs were taken during the workshops and to record the artwork children made. They encompassed the full range of technical, descriptive and interpretative qualities described above.

It was immediately apparent that if the researcher were to be entirely responsible for selecting images for participants to discuss, then that selection would be likely to reflect what the researcher, rather than the participants, considered as the most useful or relevant images in terms of describing what was going on in the workshop. However, approaching 1000 images were far too many for participants to sort through given restraints of time and powers of concentration. Printing all those images to a size which

was large enough to be useful was also time consuming and expensive. A practical solution had to be found. For this reason, the researcher generated a number of categories which reflected the range and character of photographs, guided by the framework used in the discussion of photographic techniques above. These were:

- photographs of a poor technical quality which masked the content (these were rejected);
- photographs as simple records of equipment and materials used;
- photographs taken from a child's physical point of view;
- photographs which showed an overview of activities from above;
- photographs of activity in the different venues – the classroom and the gallery;
- photographs which included images of the adults taking part;
- photographs of art work made by children;
- photographs taken by the researcher as aesthetic, personal images about the workshop event;
- photographs which represented the range of activities from the start to the finish of the workshop.

Fifty photographs, which encompassed these categories, were selected by the researcher for the auto-driven photo-elicitation sessions. Many images fitted several categories. Only basic post-processing techniques were used to enhance the image so that it was easily readable by the participants. Each photograph was the same size and shape. Each was printed on stiff A5 size paper. The selection of images is presented in Appendix 5.

Auto-driven photo-elicitation method

The day following the last workshop session, the researcher returned to the school to attempt to find out more about what children and other adults thought about what had been going on in the workshop. Following an editing of photographs taken during the workshops and taking into consideration the discussion of auto-driving and photo-elicitation methods in academic texts, the following method of auto-driven photo-elicitation was designed.

A number of photo-elicitation sessions were organised. These took place in a lobby area outside of two of the Year 5 classrooms. This is a quiet corner with a table used for one-to-one and small group teaching away from the distractions of whole class teaching. Firstly several groups of three children, who had all experienced the entire workshop process,

came to meet the researcher in the lobby area. The aim of the session was discussed. The researcher explained he wanted to find out what they thought was going on (what was happening) as they took part in the three workshop sessions. This involved recording their conversations and discussions. Children were reminded about the research project and asked if they wanted to take part.

The researcher showed the children the photographs. Firstly, could the children select nine photographs from the fifty available, which they thought would show the most useful aspects of the project? The children were shown the 'jury' technique used by selectors for the Royal Academy Summer exhibition to select art work for show from the many thousands of objects submitted. Each image is shown in turn and the 'jury' (in this case the three children) have a few seconds to show approval (thumbs up), disapproval (thumbs down) or not sure (thumbs in a horizontal position) – (Fig. 8). Three piles were made according to the majority vote for each image. Soon the children had whittled down the approved images to less than fifteen or so. The process was repeated until nine images remained. These nine images were to be used to elicit their views about the workshop.

Diamond ranking used to prompt talk about the photographs

Children in Whitchurch Primary school are familiar with the diamond-ranking technique to help order ideas. This was used so that children could work independently of the researcher to discuss amongst themselves the relative qualities in the images, and then form opinions about their relative value in describing the workshop.

Jill Clarke (2012) argues that this pedagogical tool can be effective when used for the purposes of research, particularly visual research methods:

> Diamond ranking is traditionally a recognised thinking skills tool (Rockett and Percival 2002) praised for eliciting construct generation and for facilitating talk around a specific topic. Its strength is in the idea that when we rank items, statements, objects or images, we are required to make explicit the over-arching relationships by which we organise knowledge, thus making our perceptions available for scrutiny and comparison. (p. 223)

Which image would be at the pinnacle of the diamond? Which at the base? How would children order the images between to form the diamond shape? What would they say

about their reasons (Fig. 9)? The School Councils Wales' template for diamond ranking and explanation for children are included as Appendix 6.

Children were left alone to create a diamond form with the nine images they had selected. Once finished, the researcher returned and talked with them about what they had chosen. This process generated a large amount of recorded data about what children thought about the workshops.

The identical process was repeated with three participant adults: the head teacher who had not observed all of the workshop sessions, the class teacher who had attended each workshop session with the children, and the Cardiff Schools Arts Support Officer, who had seen each workshop session and offered logistical and practical support.

Fig 8   Fig. 9

Voice recording

Children's conversations with each other and adults were recorded as they took part in the workshop and in the photo-elicitation sessions. Various methods were explored including using wireless microphones, and boom-mics. However, the lively activity of a class of children making collaborative art with plenty of movement and noise either inhibited the wireless signal or created too much background chatter for a good transcript of what was said to be made. Because of this it was decided to use small, individual, data recorders which children could be discreetly attached to clothing or carried in a pocket. A lapel microphone was connected by wire to the recorder (Fig. 10). This method was effective.

The recorders were light in weight and compact in size, and the microphones were tiny. Children soon completely forgot they were wearing these. The choice of children to be recorded was partly self-selected (the researcher asked for volunteers) and partly advised by the class teacher because this particular volunteer would both treat the equipment with respect and have plenty to talk about. The microphones were sensitive enough to record conversations between children if one was wearing a microphone.

Harper (2012) suggests that there is not a standard procedure for photo-elicitation interviews. 'The biggest challenge is to move...to conversations where subjects reflect on the meaning of the images' (p. 238). Harper also describes how most researchers commit to full transcriptions of what was said. Complete transcriptions were made of all the recorded conversations with and between children during the research.

Fig. 10

Checks and balances with time-lapse photography and video

Data from time-lapse photography and video recording is not referred to in the interpretation of the workshops. However, it was necessary to keep a structured track of what was happening as the activity unfolded, so that voice recordings, photographs and the drawings could be matched in terms of time, location within the classroom or gallery, and with the children and adults involved. In the classroom, a smart phone was used together with a small flexible tripod (Fig. 11) to record the session with time-lapse images using an 'app' downloaded for this purpose. This apparatus is small and easily attached to any furniture or classroom equipment. In the gallery, where there was more space, a video camera and tripod were used. All the photographs and voice recordings contain precise data about the time and date that they were captured. These can be matched to the same information available from video and time-lapse sequences. This enabled cross referencing of the various forms of data possible. The various stages in the development of the

children's drawings are also visible and can be cross referenced to recordings and photographs in the same way.

Fig. 11

Making visual data readable – integrating image and text in the thesis

Kress and Leeuwen (1996) write about an opposition to visual communication and visual literacy as valuable forms of expression where they 'form an alternative to writing and can therefore be seen as a potential threat to the present dominance of verbal literacy among elite groups' (p. 16). One reason for this is that images are thought of as too open to various meanings: 'to arrive at a definite meaning, language must come to the rescue' (p. 16). Roland Bathes (1977) argued that there is always an image-text relation where either the image extends what related text might mean or the reverse where text elaborates and extends the meaning of an image. However, Kress and Leeuwen criticise this because 'the visual component ... is connected with the verbal text, but no way dependent on it...' (p. 17). They claim images carry meaning independently of the verbal text which may accompany them or seeks to interpret them. These debates are methodological considerations in this research. Images carry weight as both data about the workshop

event and weight as part of how that event is interpreted. As this is a Master's thesis, it has to be presented as an academic text in a particular stylistic form. However, how images are presented with, alongside, supported by or supporting the written text will influence how both that text and those images are seen and so how they are interpreted.

Pink (2007) explores the relationship between ethnographic photography and printed text in some detail. She argues that texts in ethnographic research cannot communicate immutable truths but are 'like any other visual or verbal narrative or image, representations' (p. 147). She confirms the essential reflexive character of such writing and suggests that photographs can be combined with written text in an equally reflexive manner. Photographs are most often connected with text either with captions or referenced within the text. However Pink (2007) notes that Chaplin (1994) suggests that photographs can also be separated from text to achieve more autonomy. In some cases, it is better that photographs are seen in relation to one another than to text. Meaning is suggested by the photograph in a different way. Indeed, as Pink (2007) writes, texts (including photographs), 'are given meanings by readers on their own terms' (p. 167). She continues:

> Novel textual strategies that combine photographs and written words to use reflexive subjective or expressive texts or images alongside objectifying, realist texts may challenge conventional approaches. To read or create such texts reflexively ethnographers should account for how photographs interact with, cross-reference and produce meaning in relation to other elements in the text, and how these connections are given meaning by discourses and gazes that exist outside the text (p. 167).

These considerations inform the presentation of images throughout this thesis. Holt (2012) also uses a methodology for education research in which *how* she makes visual data readable becomes central to seeing meaning in the situations her participants describe. This involves a research construction in which the photograph has a central role to play as she argues that the complex and multilayered ways her participants understand their experience would transgress written text alone. She argues that photographs and interview data should be presented in an interdependent way. Pink (2001) agrees that the verbal and visual can be interdependent and contextualise each other. Holt (2012) cites Shirato and Webb (2004) who suggest that both words and photographs work together as visual texts.

In this text, images are used as illustrations (e.g. Fig. 10), as narrative description of the workshop event (e.g. page 35), as part of showing 'strips' of a situation for frame analysis (e.g. Chapter 3), as tools to elicit participants views (e.g. Fig. 9) and as reproductions of art work (e.g. Figs. 12 and 13, page 64). The case of the status of the image both as a reproduction of *art* produced during the workshop and its potential to contribute to the research is discussed in the next section of this chapter.

Section 5 – Children's drawings in research

Kathleen Walker (2007) reviews research about children's drawings and their use as a source of data in research literature. She asks what we know about children's drawings and how children's drawings have been used to help better understand children and their world. A great deal of research, from the start of the last century, has taken place in the fields of child development and child psychology. For example, Walker comments that there have been numerous attempts to interpret the relative sizes of figures in young children's drawings.

Walker (2007) also cites much research which has asked children to draw in order to discover more about what they think about their teachers, their classrooms and what and how they learn. In other words, the aim of this kind of research is to capture children's perceptions about school settings. Children are asked to draw specific subjects in order that the researcher can find out more about those subjects. An analysis of these drawings is used to understand the perspective of a developing child on a subject chosen by the researcher.

The use of drawings as data in this study is different. The class teachers determined the theme or subject of the drawings, 'rides', but the pedagogical approach was designed to highlight creative collaboration and imagination. The absolute minimum of information about rides was presented to children. All the content of the drawings was to be generated by children. So within the theme, children were in complete control over what they chose to draw. The aim of presenting these drawings in this thesis is not to analyse the stage of development (visual or otherwise) of these children, nor to examine what their drawings tell us about their visual culture, nor is the content of the drawings intended to tell us something about what children think about a specific aspect of their schooling. Instead,

reproductions of the drawings as art will help unpack the structure of the participant's experience. After all, the imagery in the drawings carries much of the meaning children generated together during the activity.

Because of this, the art works (the drawings) made by children are an integral part of the collaborative and imaginative activities described by this thesis. For this reason reproductions of the art must be included. These should present the qualities of the objects themselves as best as is possible within the technical constraints of how an academic text is presented. The reader and the researcher, in forming a view of what was going on, cannot fully do so without at least seeing clearly the art that children made.

Walker (2007) notes that many researchers have found that 'the verbal input from the child is essential to understanding the content of his or her drawing and the meanings he or she wishes to convey' (p. 99). This research presents what children say about the drawings themselves and the situations in which they were made together with the drawings because it is only in this way that an effective Goffmanesque 'strip' of experience can be presented and analysed. The presentation of various kinds of data, including reproductions of children's art, must encompass and meld the visual and the verbal. In the following chapter, the art forms part of the presentation of a strip of experience used as the basis of a Goffman inspired interpretation.

Section 6 – A Goffmanesque approach to interpreting data

Chapter 1 presented Erving Goffman´s way of understanding ´raw batches of occurrences' concerning social interaction. This is to ask the question, ´What is it that is going on here?' (Goffman 1974 p. 8). The general features of Goffman's approach to interpreting meaning adapted for this thesis are:

- To pay 'an almost painfully focused attention to the micro structure of meanings´ in social situations – this attention is built upon strong observations (Berger 1985 p. xii).
- To uncover the veiled structures which lay behind what people say and do by considering frames which help see the world a new way (Carib 1978).

- Frames are what Koenig (2004) calls an enabling scaffold to tell credible stories about what is going on. Scheff (2005 p. 368) suggests these 'can be instructional in unpacking the idea of context'.

- Goffman´s concept of frame is opening and enabling rather than enclosing and constraining (Carib 1978).

- Goffman does not present a *system* which can be used for analysis. Frame analysis is not a self standing scheme or theoretical structure (Chriss 1995).

- Goffman illuminates what is going on in a literary way which, Lemert (1997) suggests, is an imaginative form in its own right.

- Goffman´s approach is to start with the raw fact of the experience itself, observe it with great care and then lift the veil on how that experience shows the often hidden forms of meaning which lie behind or beneath what is being seen or heard as people interact (Carib 1978).

- Goffman (1974) does not consider events in the round or as a whole as he comments, 'I make no claim whatsoever to be talking about...social organisation and social structure´ (p. 13).

- Goffman (1974) isolates *strips* of experience 'from the stream of ongoing activity´ (p. 10).

- In his text, Goffman (1974) presents the raw material around, or sometimes within, an account of how the meanings implied by the material can be uncovered.

- Goffman accepts that it is possible to create too many layers of interpretive frames, so that these become unhelpful as there is a danger of creating a jumbled over complexity (Goffman 1974).

- It is only worth pursuing these layers – Goffman uses the term laminations – in that it is useful to do so (Goffman 1974).

In his paper, *The Structure of Context: Deciphering Frame Analysis*, Thomas Scheff (2005) argues that applying a Goffmanesque conception of frames allows us to present a strip of discourse in terms of implied contexts and that this may require 'frames that reach up to the institutional level' (p. 378). He suggests that it is possible to uncover the meanings implicit in any social situation by creating an assembly of contexts which include micro to macro levels of *framing*. This assembly also needs to be able to incorporate different points of view of participants and sensitivity to 'mutual awareness' (p. 374) which is a powerful conduit for establishing shared understandings. In his own example of a frame assembly,

Scheff considers an order of frames with one seeming to contain another. This creates a potentially vertiginous thrust from micro to macro meanings – the macro frames contain the micro but are built from or suggested by them. He suggests that this kind of assembly needs to be more 'compact' (p. 379) to be useful. His answer is to continue by presenting various mathematical metaphors (such as fractals) for building frame assemblies. However, these fail to take into account Goffman's deliberate avoidance of systemisation. The way *Frame Analysis* (1974) is written shows that Goffman wants us to attend to any situation *itself* first in order to understand it, not to attend to an overarching, disconnected, theoretical framework which constrains and inhibits understanding rather than opening and creating the possibility meanings which arise from *within* the situation at hand. However, Scheff´s idea of contextual assemblies is helpful if the attempt to systemise is resisted. In view of this, the term *assemblage* rather than *assembly* might be more appropriate when using a Goffman inspired analysis of the collaborative imaginative drawing workshop in question. This will be more sensitive to Goffman's original text.

Assemblages

An assemblage is a collection of persons or things and can refer to the state of being assembled. The Museum of Modern Art (2009), New York, uses a text, adapted from the Oxford University Press, to explain the use of the term *assemblage* in art: in assemblages, diverse materials and techniques maintain their different characteristics despite artistic manipulation (MoMA 2009). This means that different objects can be juxtaposed within a coherent composition whilst still retaining their original, recognisable character.

Assemblages were made by a diverse range of artists through the 20th century including, Picasso, Mertz, the Russian Constructivists, the Surrealists, Rauschenberg and many other post second world war Western artists. Many contemporary visual artists develop the assemblage idea. For example, a review of Damien Hurst's 2012 exhibition at Tate Modern, London, talks of his 'punk assemblages' (Economist 2012). The painter Chris Ofili has been described as making 'Hip-Hop Assemblages' (Cosentino 2000). Michael Landy assembles disparate and diverse objects in his 2013 exhibition at the National Gallery, London (Searle 2013). An assemblage might bring together an almost limitlessly assorted collection of qualities, technologies, found, made and co-opted objects, and even the experiences of participants, into a single coherent artistic work. The way Goffman constructs the text of his book *Frame Analysis*, has much more in common with the form of assemblages in art

than Scheff´s final analogies of fractal mathematical assemblies. The notion of *frame assemblages* will be applied to the presentation of data in Chapter 3.
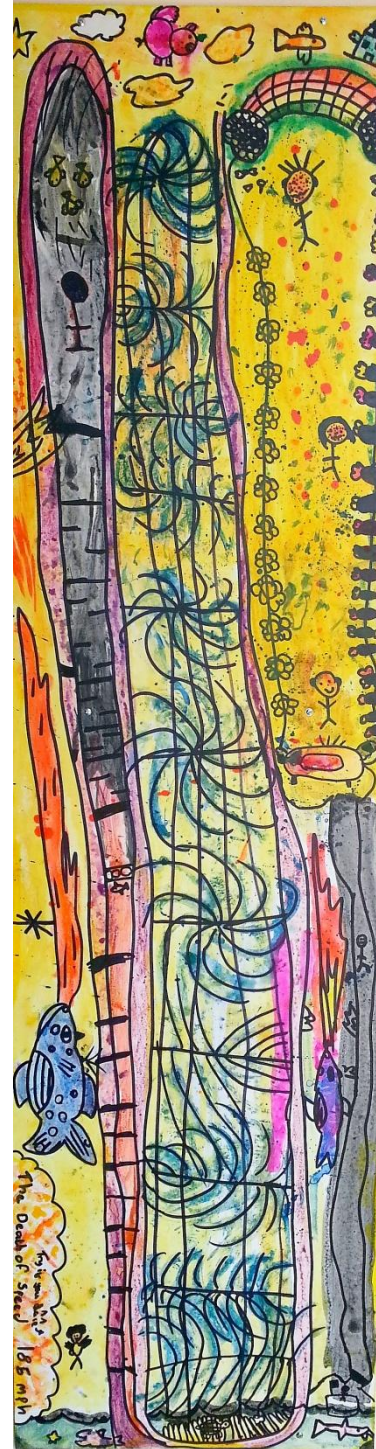

Fig. 12 – finished panel from the workshop

Fig. 13 – finished panel from the workshop

Chapter 3 – the workshop

Strips, assemblages and the organisation ideas through Chapters 3 and 4

Goffman use strips in *Frame Analysis* to present situations. These are sliced or cut 'from the stream of ongoing activity, including here sequences of happenings, real or fictive, as seen from the perspective of those subsequently involved in sustaining an interest in them' (Goffman 1974 p. 10). Strips will encompass any 'raw batch of occurrences' that are drawn attention to' (Goffman 1974 p. 10). Goffman uses strips throughout *Frame Analysis*. They are short. Here are two examples. During his discussion of talk, Goffman (1974) presents two strips of dialogue as examples, one of 15 lines and a second of 22 lines (p. 548). As part of his discussion of re-grounding in keying (pp. 74–77), Goffman presents three strips of text extracted from journalistic writing, autobiography and the rules of a game. The longest runs to 23 lines of text. This reflects his commitment to uncovering what is happening by paying close attention to the micro-matters of experience by starting with that experience. What Goffman is pointing to is available in short extracts. There is no need to present a social situation as an extended narrative.

Goffman's radical empiricist conceptual grounding, discussed in Chapter 1, means that understanding a situation is built from that situation not from superimposing onto experience a pre-existing and separate conceptual frame – he does not claim to be addressing ´social organisation and social structure´ as a whole (p. 13). As intimated in Section 1 of Chapter 2, this creates a tension with the concept of *analysis* which could be understood to involve understanding more by breaking down the subject at hand into smaller parts, as its etymological root in the Greek *analusis* suggests. However, Goffman wants us to understand situations by building up rather than breaking down – starting with the parts and building understanding from those parts. In this spirit, it is worth noting that Goffman does not then unpick his examples, line by line or concept by concept, in an analytic way. As has been noted in Chapter 1, Goffman is not interested in the content of concrete meanings of raw material but 'the way in which they mean' (Jameson 1976 p. 119). A better way to think about Goffman's text is as 'an indication, a gesture which reveals the world as it really is, as it obviously is' (Carib 1978 p. 79). His is text is seductive in a literary way and not intended to be systematic (Carib 1978). His example of indicating

what is going on by presenting short extracts of experience, showing rather than telling, is followed in this chapter.

Chapter 4 provides the accompaniment, as an academic analysis within the terms of this thesis, to the descriptive interpretation of the workshop in this chapter. This includes how the data can be understood in terms of frame analysis, relational art and their radical empirical foundations. The more systematic account of what is going on in the workshop presented in Chapter 4 does bring to light the way what is going on in the workshop has meaning in the academic frame set by this project. But meaning is also situated as much in the situations as they are presented in Chapter 3 as in the concepts used in Chapter 4. This is evidence of an inherent contradiction in this research which seeks to build understanding up from experience in the radical empiricist tradition of which Goffman is a representative, and at the same time is required to show how ideas can form conceptual frameworks which can be used to structure the breakdown experience into constituent parts to build understanding.

In Section 1 of this chapter, two strips of experience are assembled using data collected from the workshop sessions. This takes the form extracts from transcriptions of recorded dialogue as children interacted during the sessions alongside reproductions of the relevant imaginary drawings and photographs which represent what was happening at the time the children were talking. In Section 2 the strips are assembled from transcriptions of dialogue recorded drawing photo-elicitation sessions alongside reproductions of photographs under discussion. In each case, this data is augmented by an interpretive text written by the researcher designed to draw out Goffmanesque frames. These are analysed in Chapter 4. The strips have been selected because they most succinctly exemplify what it is that is going on. Just as in *Frame Analysis*, these are short snippets from a vast collection of possible extracts. As Goffman (1974) says, 'I do not present these anecdotes, therefore, as evidence or proof, but as clarifying depictions' (p. 15).

The concept of assemblage, discussed at the close of Chapter 2, is applied in order to give form to the combination of the strips of dialogue and images which are presented alongside the interpretive text. Each component of the assemblage – dialogue, image or interpretation – retains its own integrity, whilst contributing to an assembled form within a coherent composition. For this reason, the images, transcripts and interpretive text are

formatted, as much as is possible, to sit together on one page. In Section 1, photographs show information about natural primary frames which contextualise the dialogue and reproductions of of art. In Section 2, photographs are included because they were the selected by participants and are the images referred or alluded to in the transcripts. The dialogue makes much more sense with the image and vice-versa. Another form of description, which combines text and image as a photo-story has been presented on page 35.

Notes about the assemblages:

- Words and phrases as used by participants are in single quote marks within the main text.
- In Section 2, key ideas, which could be thought of as useful primary frames, are drawn out of the data as part of the interpretive text in each situation. As Goffman (1974) puts it, 'Each primary framework allows its user to locate, perceive, identify and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences defined in its terms' (p. 21). He continues at the close of his chapter on this theme, 'It seems that we can hardly glance at anything without applying a primary framework' (p. 38). The approach used in Chapter 3 is descriptive. A structured approach to an analysis of primary frames is found in Chapter 4.
- Images from the diamond ranked auto-driven selection of images are shown alongside the relevant dialogue and commentary.
- It is intended that the images, dialogue and commentary carry equal weight and should be considered together as an assemblage.
- The text in each assemblage has been formatted so that the photographs, transcript and interpretation appear together.

Key to the transcriptions:

- C1, C2, etc., stands for participating child 1, 2 and so on.
- R stands for researcher.
- PSAES stands for participating primary school art education specialist.
- CT stands for participating class teacher.
- HT stands for head teacher.

Speed cameras and infinity

C1:   So you start off and you get on and you're in like this ice cream shaped carriage, random but we like it.

C2:   Splattered ice creams.

C1:   It's all lovely and there's the sun and there's a bird pooing. And there's all these lovely mountains and rivers.

C2:   Just relax.

C1:   Ah, relax! And then you burst through the curtain, it's all been special effect, MUWHAHAHA!

C1:   Or not.

C1:   Burst through the curtain, or not, and welcome to infinity!

C3:   What's the point of a speed camera?

C1:   It just scares you.

C2:   I didn't have the idea.

C1:   It just scares you!

C4:   I don't know.

C1:   Because you go across and then…

C3:   What kind of camera [inaudible].

C2:   Just to scare you I suppose.

C4:   Instead of a speed camera it can be like a camera that makes a loud noise.

C2:   Yeah, it is a camera that makes a noise.

C1:   Speed camera.

C2:   That makes a loud noise.

C1:   [inaudible]... and then there's like boom! And you're like oh no! Oh no, my driving licence.

C1:   [voices overlap]...So it is a real speed camera.

Detail from panel

The ride starts from a 'lovely' landscape. The sun shines. There are snow capped mountains and rivers. 'Just relax'. But perhaps this setting is not so peaceful? Birds are flying... and pooing. People get into a carriage which is shaped like a splattered ice-cream. Ice creams, which melt too quickly, fall on pavements and splatter like this to cue both simultaneous disappointment and laughter. So with birds pooing, ice cream cones splattering and the sun wearing shades, not all is working as usual in this setting. Fun is to be had – playfulness is at hand. And yes, these ideas can be 'random', not so much under control. But even so, you are invited to believe at the start you can 'relax'.

But then, hold tight, as the status of each possible lamination of reality takes the form of a ride, as you burst from this scene, which is already make-believe, through a curtain, drawn apart as though on a stage, into another fabricated setting – the ride – still within the first fantasy, which is within the frame of an imaginary drawing, which is also on the floor of a gallery for contemporary art, which is anchored in the ongoing world of a Welsh city. All of which could be part of ideas about imagination, art, cities and Wales which would be tough to easily frame here!

The curtain is red, dramatic, and stretched across the entrance. It is all for a 'special effect'! Is this benign, just for fun, or exploitative, to trap you from its seductive peaceful beginning into fear and danger? Eyes are wide open; hair is standing on end; the ice-cream-cone-carriage is plummeting. Now you know you are in danger. You have entered infinity. And what could we say about infinity?

So, what is 'the point of a speed camera?' Surely speed cameras are out to slow you down? That´s not fun. Plus, speed cameras come up on you fast. They 'scare you'. Or they scare your parent, who is driving too fast with points on their license, in danger of being banned or attending a speed awareness course, with all the inconvenience or shame involved. Never even mind the idea that the cameras record an image of your car passing in a digital form, which is real evidence that you were really there, at that time, really speeding. So real, in fact, that it is proof in law. But that is an out-of-frame thought running somehow on another track. And the speed camera is not everyone's idea. It is not one girl's idea at all. But if the camera is really to scare you, perhaps it should make a loud noise, which real speed cameras don´t do. But if they 'boom' you know your license is lost and you might be really scared. So maybe it is not a fantasy camera, a make-believe camera, which makes a noise on a ride to

scare you '... it is a real speed camera', which takes your license away. This is worse than a pretend speed camera and more frightening. But this idea, in the ride, is fun.

Douchebags and playing good

C1:   You douchebag.

C2:   Ow! Who are you calling a douchebag? Is that a swear word?

C1:   No.

C3:   Douchebag?

C1:   Good.

C4:   We're playing good.

C1:   Are we?

C2:   What? No, we're not.

C4:   I hope we are!

C1:   And then you get like a blow dryer, loads of blow dryers, so it's like getting a bath!

C3:   Guys, this is a snake in this bit.

C4:   Oh! Why don't we have a streamer thing where there's a cannon.

C1:   Oh yeah, like a confetti canon?

C4:   Yeah.

C3:   Yeah, that'd be really good!

C1:   Confetti cannons!

C3:   Like with party poppers and that sort of thing.

C1:   Yeah, that's called confetti! Confetti cannon! This is absolutely crazy! Confetti cannon!

C3:   Awesome.

C1:   Are those sheep?

          [inaudible 3:59]

C2:   I'm going to have a sheep on…

C4:   A slime machine!

C1:   Slime!

C3:   Yeah.

C1:   Oh, we've got to do that.

C3:   No, this is going to be the Slime-o-Tron 3000, and what happens is…

C1:   [imitation slime noises]

C4:   See, this is actually going really well.

In this out-of-frame activity, on a parallel track, not at all in evidence to the supervising adults who are out or earshot, children rib each in good humour other as one calls another 'douchebag', which might be a swearword, but is probably inappropriate. Children know this, as if it is out-of-frame, and posit that really they are playing good or at least they hope they are, even if one has used douchebag on another track to suggest, 'that annoying guy that always talks about how cool he is, how tough he is, and acts like he is better than everyone and doesn't catch the fact that he's making a fool out of himself' (urbandictionary 2013). Although, all this is not really meant as a real insult, as the directional cue of a smile and tone of voice tell us – because, all of this is enjoyable, even absolutely crazy. So, this is not the time to play bad.
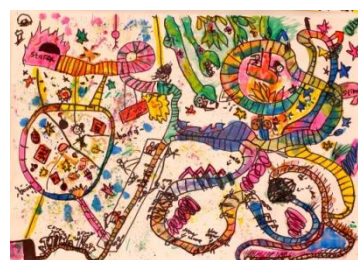
Along the crazy ride anything is possible. Hairdryers, snakes, streamers, confetti canons, sheep, and a Slime-o-Tron 3000 tumble into existence in a few seconds of drawing and talking. Ideas are forming, reforming and solidifying in the drawing, which is 'going really well'.

Drawing from Session 1

Photo elicitation pyramid – children's group

Frame assemblage 1 – freedom and control

C1:   And like at the gallery, you can do anything. Sometimes in school, there's a certain subject you have to do, you can't just go free. I'm not saying we were trying to be naughty at the gallery, no.
R: No, you weren't.
C1:   Yeah, at the gallery, you could just let your ideas run free. But at school, sometimes like…

Protective polythene sheeting covers the floor. Materials and tools are scattered about. These include coloured inks, paint brushes and a marker pen. There are sheets with try-outs and experiments near-by. The drawing is half-finished. It is large. Three children are all working on the same drawing. We know this is not in school. It is a large space – a contemporary art gallery.

To 'do anything' is desirable for a child. Yet, the children were in a highly controlled environment, during a school day under the care and supervision of teachers. They could not leave the gallery, they could not play. In fact, taking a broader view, what they could do was very controlled. It was far from being anything.

To 'go free' might be what could be termed 'naughty' – especially by adults, as if a child being free is the same as a child being out of control. Children want freedom but they don´t usually want to be naughty. But to feel free, children are sometimes naughty, as this implies escape from adult control. This is different. There is freedom but it is not at all like the freedom which could be called naughty.

It is 'ideas' that are allowed to run free in the gallery. But at school this is not allowed. In school ideas are more controlled especially if there is a 'subject you have to do'. The school

curriculum constrains the freedom for a child to think as they choose. Being free to let 'ideas run free' is highly valued by this child. It is a contrast to the way she thinks in school.

Where are the ideas? What are they? The free running ideas are seen on the board as imaginary passages of the drawing children have made together.

Frame assemblage 2 – art objects and experience

30

16

43

C1:	Well, we were trying to sort out like if you didn't know anything about the project and you went and looked at, say, that, you'd probably say so the children have drawn a rollercoaster.
R:	Yeah, this is picture number 30, yeah.
C1:	Yeah. But then, say you went and looked at that, you'd say some children are working together on a big picture with paints and markers.
R:	This is number 16. Okay, what do you think? No, it was very interesting.
C2:	But we did sort of talk about the ride but we didn't talk about the ride itself. We talked about the ride, like we said that we liked the teamwork and the big boards, and you've got loads of space to see the ride. We mentioned the ride but we didn't actually explain…
R:	What the rides were. Is that right?
C2:	Yeah....
	.....
C1:	I think the only really like deciding about the rides and knowing about the rides would just be like to look at them. And that explains like everything you probably need to know. You don't need to say, oh, what's this bit, oh, I don't know, I think that's…I'm not sure, it's part of the track.
R:	You're looking at picture 43, yeah.
C2:	I'm not saying there's anything wrong with that, I'm not, that's just...a random thing. But if you just look at it…

There are two qualities at stake. There is experience of making art together. There are the outcomes, the art objects.

There are the 'rides', the art work itself, and then there is what´s happening in the workshop as 'children are working together on a big picture with paints and markers'. On its own, the art work does not say much about the workshop because there is a difference between talking about the art and talking about the workshop. Image 16 shows the experience of

making the art, as 'teamwork' and the 'space' in the gallery are valued more than just the art itself. This image of the workshop is more valued in the diamond than the images of the art.

The only way to know about the art – the rides – 'would just be like to look at them'. There is no need to talk about all the details because focusing on these is just arbitrary, 'a random thing'. Even though talking about the detail in the art is okay, does it tell you anything more than just looking?

Frame assemblage 3 – ideas sprouting
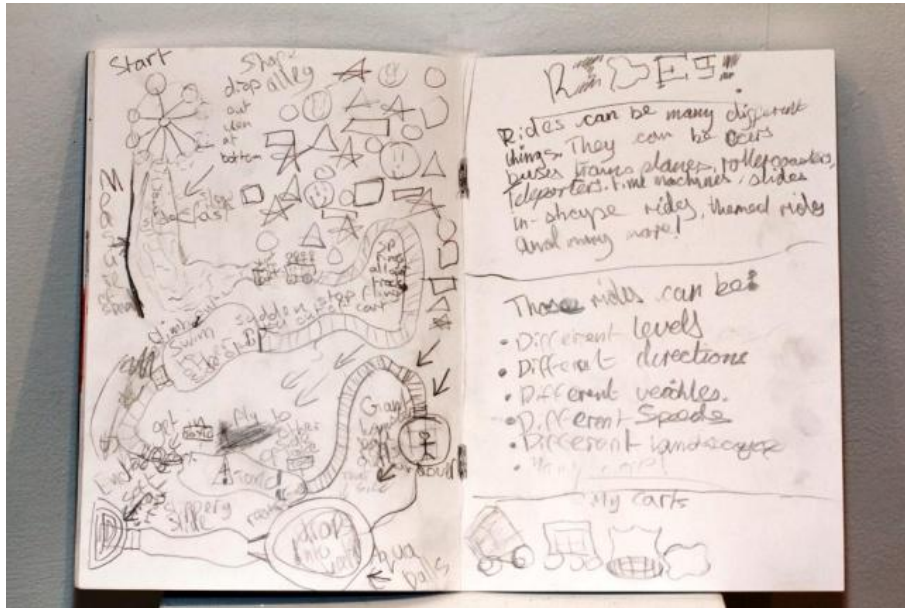
C1:   I think because like it shows the planning and the thoughts behind and before we even started on any of the boards and everything, like when the ideas were just sprouting.

R: That's a really, really nice way of putting it, ideas sprouting, I like that description. What do you think because you must have agreed roughly that it should be near the top, the sketchbook?

C2:   Yeah. Also, I agreed with that because it's sort of like, as she said, it's the idea that came first. And it's got all of the different sort of things that we used to create that what we came up with, so all of them. And it's quite inspirational. That's why I thought we'd put it near the top.

'Thoughts' about the rides lie behind the art work, 'like when the ideas were just sprouting'. So this is a fertile environment for ideas. A shoot that sprouts is new, it is growing into something. There is an expectation.

To 'create' something is to make something that is new. This is valuable. The sources of that creativity, the ideas, are 'inspirational'. It is the force that propels the work.

'Planning' work in school (for example, writing) is a familiar idea in a primary school classroom. Planning comes first. Planning is a preparation for work. Here, 'it's the idea that came first' and there are different sorts of ideas – 'all of the different sort of things that we used to create that what we came up with.' Not least ideas which are visual and ideas which

are conceptual. These are used to create the work. There is a difference between ideas and 'what we came up with', the work.

Sketchbook is a term with a specific connotation in art. Sketching is quicker, rougher, and more informal. Artists collect ideas in sketchbooks. These sketchbook pages maybe rough but they are important. They are near the top of the pyramid, above the images of the finished art work.

Photo-elicitation pyramid – the primary school art education specialist

Frame assemblage 4 – sharing ideas

PSAES: Well, the top of the diamond to me is the most important part, where they began to have ideas on their own and they shared them initially, because without that...you know to me it all stems from that, their own individual and then showing them to their friends.

R: So just to recap, they made individual drawings in individual sketchbooks.

PSAES: Just a selection of images right from... back in the classroom, so really there's their sketchbooks and it shows all the work and all the ideas, then the most important bit of that was where they shared in their group so you got the chance for them to look at each other's, that's quite important.

'To have ideas' which were shared is at the root of everything that happened in the workshop. It all stems from the individual who shows and shares with others. The absence of sharing is left hanging – not worthy to be said or not worth saying. Stem could be almost synonymous with shoot and suggests growth but also support.

Creating ideas in the sketchbook is 'work'. This takes what is happening back to the classroom. Back from the gallery experience. Sharing involves looking. It is more than just

telling. Ideas are found in images as well as in what is said. The children are looking at what they are being shown. But they are listening as well.

This is in a classroom. Children are working in normal sized groups for a Year 5 class. They are wearing the uniform of the school. The sketchbooks are the same type and size. They have all used similar pencils. Their individual ideas and the sharing of them are contained within this broader frame of school.

Frame assemblage 5 – scale and choice

PSAES: But then honestly the trip to the gallery was absolutely amazing, because in there they were then able to do this enormous scale work, you know kind of warmer and they absolutely loved this. They could choose then… I mean they could choose the material and for some of them that really made them comfortable in the space. They did two of those, they did one with charcoal and mark making and then they did one with marker pens, and there they began to create versions of the ride. But what the gallery allowed to happen was this, which we've never done before normally they just have a pot of ink and they go with it. But they had such… well two groups particularly spent an amazing amount of time on exploring colour.

The gallery allowed an enormous scale of work. This is 'absolutely amazing'. Why? Is it because it is so different from school or such an unusual event where they were able to 'do this enormous scale work'?

The workshop was a place which was warm inside. Not warm as in a higher temperature but humanly warmer after the institutional constraints of school. This natural warmth was appreciated by children. 'They absolutely loved this'. This must have been visible – perhaps in how children responded and behaved. Children 'could choose'. Having choice was part of the sensation of warmth – children felt 'comfortable in the space'.

The gallery allowed time to explore without restraint as 'two groups particularly spent an amazing amount of time on exploring colour.' A contemporary art gallery is not like a primary school. But it has its own constraints. It exists to show art in a formal and careful way. The walls are all white and lit with spot lights. High quality polished hardwood wood floors must be protected. It is a vast empty space almost without furniture. Some might say without art it is a cold space with an absence of human warmth. If it is empty, it seems to be just waiting for art. There is warmth in the experience of creating art in the empty space.

Frame assemblage 6 – colour, creating together and art 'in its own right'

PSAES: This one here with the colours simply because the experimenting and the learning that went on in there for them, from the colour into the board, has just taken it to another level. This is so… *[Image centre]* number one it's all very exciting and they defended very single part of it. The others love listening to this groups comment and making criticism on it, why that, and what this and the very fact that they want the colours to be so vibrant at the top because it's so happy and joyful. It really is important that the colour is bright and that's what they want and then it goes mellower down, I just think that the way they created that together was just… and they got on so well, they loved their jobs. But the rest of the group really loved this piece of work, they were really interesting in it weren't they; they asked loads and loads of question.

R: They certainly were yes. And that photograph actually does have them working together; it has the inks and the experimental sheets, and the sense of the space that they're working in yes. And the bottom one *[Image right]* you chose this… out of your nine, which I know you've chosen your nine but this was the least significant of the nine.

PSAES: Yes because there's an absolutely beautiful end product and that is a fascinating one they did before, this is the one they did in the classroom, brought it to the gallery and I think it's just a lovely starting point for what they ended up doing there. But in its own right there it's just super isn't it, like it is.

Finding out about the possibility of colour and trying out different ways of applying the ink was experimenting but it was also 'learning'. Children were able to reach another level (a higher level) as they worked on the imaginary ride for the panel. This was very thought out; to an extent that when questioned by other children, the group defended every part of their work. They meant it. The image was complex but fascinating to other children who wanted to know more about it. Commenting, questioning and critiquing were natural. 'They asked loads of questions'. The colour had an emotional power which was intentional and considered.
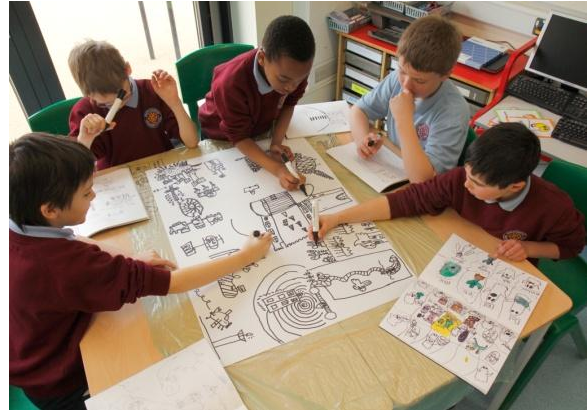
Children get on well and work together. They experiment, question, listen, comment, criticise and learn. These kinds of qualities are more valued more than final art work, 'the end product', which stands in its own right. 'It's just super isn't it, Like it is'.

Photo-elicitation pyramid – class teacher

Frame assemblage 7 – studious thought process

CT: That's important to me because you wouldn't necessarily have that group working quite so studiously and they are all very engaged.

R: That's 37 *[right image]*. I might do that from time to time. It's got the number on the back.

CT: It's quite important at the moment. I'm possibly going to put the ink down here because I'm not sure if any medium we had used they would still have had the same experience. I think the experience itself has been quite important, not necessarily the medium that we use although I might change my mind.

R: Yeah, of course, it's fine.

CT: I'm very much drawn to these collaborative working things. I don't know I'm really drawn to… At any point a lot of the children would have felt that thought process. I'm very drawn to that *[left image]*.

The valued 'experience' has something to do with thinking – 'that thought process'. The boy appears deep in thought – he is 'engaged' in thought. He is showing what all the children would have felt – a powerful process of thinking. This is attractive, engaging and something to be drawn towards.

A group of boys is working and engaged. That doesn't necessarily happen in a classroom. Those children are studious and getting down to work and this is important for a teacher. The classroom is ordered, tidy there is a purpose shown by engagement. There is a sense that the boys are working together. It is a 'collaborative working thing'. But, the nature of the collaboration is difficult to define. But it is a thing. It has some substance.

The experience is different from simply talking about the materials and techniques, the medium. It is quite important but there is doubt. So perhaps the inks, the materials children are asked to use, should be more highly valued. But for now the children's general experience wins out over the specific mechanics of using art materials.

Frame assemblage 8 – working together without any problem

CT: I suppose in the same way, yeah, because what they produced on a blank piece of paper with a brief to create some line, I think… is amazing and it looks great, you know, such a simple thing really and not one of them encroached on each other. They picked their spot.

R: We should say just to explain that this is number 32 *[left image]* and it's the large collaborative drawing, isn't it, where there were all 16 children drawing in the same space. Well, that's fantastic. May I take a photograph of the finished diamond?

CT: You certainly may.

PSAES: Interestingly this was in Ann's top *[middle image]*.

R: It was.

CT: It's funny, isn't it? It sort of sums up… Having watched them, many of them were in such deep thought about things; it sort of sums it up... Yeah. This as well for that very reason. Some in the middle of the paper around… They just got on and worked so well together without any problem *[right image]*.

Not encroaching on each other, maintaining control, picking a spot, even in a shared space. It is impressive to be deep in thought and to be working together. Working 'well together without any problem' is highly valued by teachers in school.

Photo-elicitation pyramid – head teacher
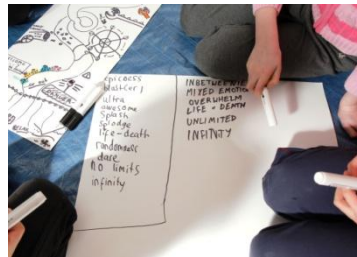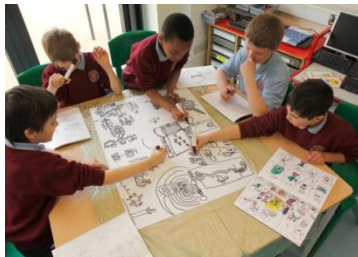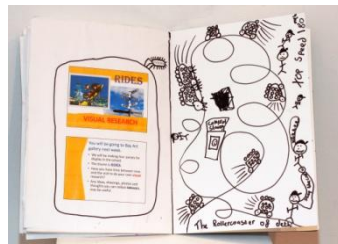
**Frame assemblage 9 – collaborative working and the process of thinking within a brief**
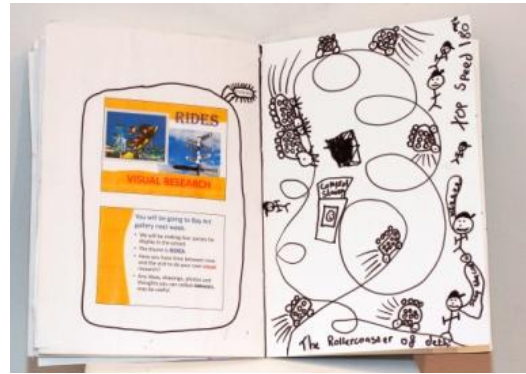
HT: The rationale behind the project was collaborative working, and to come to an understanding about developing the pupils' thinking skills through a creative process. So, it's about the level of engagement, and sharing their ideas, recording their imagery in pictures and sketching. So it's not the children that may have the most articulate language or the best spelling that will come and shine through in these kinds of projects. So, for me, it was giving an opportunity for the creative arts to shine through, and to raise their levels of engagement and understanding, on the process of thinking. So, all their prior knowledge has been drawn together, so they were given a brief, which is why I then went on…so this gives us the framework and the clear rationale behind what they're doing. So it's not just plucked from thin air, so they've got an understanding…

R: Yes, that's the image with the handout I printed for them, yes.

Usually in school it is 'pupils' who most fit the kind of learning that schools promote who shine through; for example, children who are the most articulate and good at spelling. Shining children – polished, glowing, radiating, and clearly visible – are valued. If the arts can shine through then different children can be caught in that kind of light.

There was a pedagogical 'rationale' behind this work which was concerned with thinking about what it is to be creative. This creates a 'level of engagement' as children's understanding of a creative 'process of thinking' is enhanced. The engagement is visible as children share and record ideas. This is 'developing the pupils' thinking skills.'

The 'brief' means that the children could see that their experiences were not arbitrary or random, or just plucked out of the air.

Frame assemblage 10 – journeys, thinking and creative flow
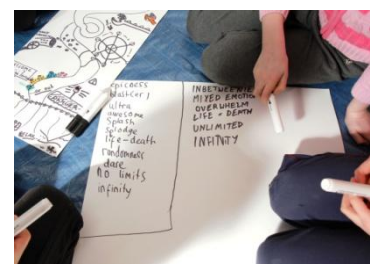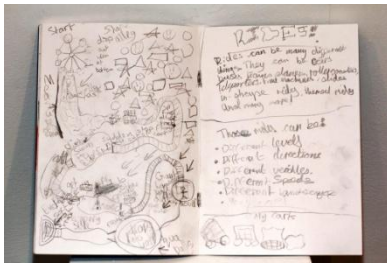
HT: Yes, and then I loved this *[image left]* because it was a complete mix of drawings and words, and shapes, and it just shows the journey that that child has been on, to talk about rides can be many different things, they can be cars, buses, trains…so they tried to articulate their ideas in words, but also in pictures. There's an awful lot of thinking going on in that. So that's why I chose that one. And I loved the one I chose next, because they've taken their sketchbooks and their ideas onto the bigger scale, with collaborative group work. So they're going to have to listen, they're going to have to share, they have to agree…so all those skills, lifelong skills that they need when, hopefully they go into the world of work, they've had an opportunity to share and to grow, because these are the skills we want our children to develop. Again, *[image right]* fascinated by the way the language links in with the sequence and flow of their creativity, transferring from the black and white imagery with pen work, the artwork brings it to life for me, with the colour.

'Articulating ideas' can be through pictures and/or words. This is 'thinking' and is a journey made visible as both words and pictures. 'An awful lot of thinking is going on'. A journey implies motion in the form of travelling – perhaps a voyage, expedition, or a trip. Children are experiencing creativity as a flow. There is movement and life.

Scaling up meant collaborating and working together, listening, sharing and agreeing – highly valued 'lifelong skills'. We want this for our children. This work is preparation for 'the world of work'.

Frame assemblage 11 – work, art and products

HT: All of a sudden it's taken a different dimension, *[image left]* a different perspective on it, some of them, you can see are far happier with bold, bright colours, others are quite keen to do small intricate work, so the different scale and the dimension, so the art skills can be seen there. The fact that we took them on a journey, we took them out of school into the gallery, I think was an amazing opportunity for these children, because they haven't had that before. And for them to understand that we're appreciating and valuing their work, well that for me…

R: This is the image of the single child in front of the large drawing.

HT: …is just, the level of engagement, the actual thinking that's going on, if only I could lift his head and get in there, I would love to know what's going on in that child's mind at that moment in time! And then, I had difficulty choosing this one, because I didn't know whether it was the journey, but then we needed to finish it, to round it off at an endpoint.

R: With the product, yes.

HT: Yes, so beginning, middle and end, for me, I suppose that's the scientific brain in me, I wanted to see what the end result was.

There is the 'level of engagement' and the quality of 'actual thinking'. Thoughts are going on. That a child is thinking is visible, but what that child is thinking is not. The adult would like to get inside that 'mind'.

The children's work was in the 'journey' and the adults were 'appreciating and valuing their work'. So, there is the work along the way and the product, the work, the 'end result'. It was displayed in the gallery but also children knew that panels were to be for permanent display in school.

The artwork produced is an end product and a result of work. But if the workshop is a journey, should the actual art be valued? Is the journey worth more than the product? But, the journey needed an end point. The product comes at the end to finish. There is a concrete resolution of the process in the form of the product. The art. The work of art.

Chapter 4 – what is it that is going on

Introduction

As the story of this research project unfolded, it became clearer that both the workshop and the methodologies designed to look carefully at it were trials of an approach to primary school art education – collaborative imaginary drawing – and a methodology and associated methods to enable research about it. In this context, what comes out of the workshop and the research is also a function of what was put in. Firstly, what is going on in the workshop can be understood in terms of a narrative which presents what happened. This is described by the photo story on page 35 and by an extended descriptive text in Appendix 1. Secondly, the way data about the workshop is collected, selected and presented is a determinant of how the researcher and reader form their understanding of what it is that is going on. This input can be found in the description of research methods in Chapter 2. Assemblages of data are presented as interpretive descriptions about what is going on in Chapter 3.

In contrast to these various forms of description, Chapter 4 seeks to answer the question, what is it that is going on when children collaborate to make art in a primary school workshop, through the lens of explanatory frameworks. The first framework draws on Goffman´s *Frame Analysis* (1974), the second on Bourriaud´s *Relational Aesthetics* (2002). The chapter concludes by examining how what it is that is going on in the workshop might be informed by the underpinning of the radical empiricist frame that both writers evoke.

Goffman and understanding social situations

As demonstrated in Chapter 1, Goffman's approach eschews systemisation. He builds understanding about complex matters of social interaction by first paying close attention to situations at hand (Goffman 1974). This is an appropriate frame for explanations about what is going on in this workshop because this art education experience is a complex situation – for example, art is being made. This embodies characteristics such as openness to surprise, feel, the absence of formulae, the limitation of verbal language and aesthetic satisfaction (Eisner 2002). These qualities should be difficult to analyse.

In order unpack meaning implicit in complex multi-layered social situations, Goffman (1974) refuses to apply predefined conceptual frameworks as it were from the outside

looking in. In this way, in Chapter 1, it was shown that Goffman illuminates. He does this by using frames which draw out how complex definitions of what it is that is going on. These are often hidden or veiled. When the characteristics of frames are brought into focus, how any one situation might be defined is shown to be an assembly of richly laminated contexts which inform how participants are seen to get on with what is at hand (Scheff 2005). What they go on to do and say can be interpreted in terms of how the situation they find themselves in is framed (Goffman 1974). Goffman's approach is now applied in a more organised way to data presented as assemblages in Chapter 3.

Primary frames

Each primary framework 'allows its user to locate, perceive, identify and label... concrete occurrences' (Goffman 1974 p. 21). Goffman argues that the way an individual responds to a situation can be interpreted through identifying the primary frames of understanding they employ (Goffman 1974). These are often straight forward. For example, because the rain has stopped – a natural frame – the game can continue – a social frame.

The data in this section of Chapter 4 has been selected in order to show the principle primary frames participants use to talk about what it is that is going on. The approach used here to draw out primary frames from the data can be summarised in the following way:

1. Participants were able to select and then rank photographs in the auto-driven photo-elicitation sessions. Images which are highly valued by participants have been chosen for analysis in this chapter.

2. Primary frames, which 'allow its user to locate, perceive, identify and label... concrete occurrences' (Goffman 1974 p. 21), are found in transcripts of conversations during the photo-elicitation sessions. These frames, as Scheff (2005) suggests, could be a word, phrase or proposition. These are presented alongside the image. In this way, each frame is located in what participants were saying about images of the workshop they had chosen.

3. A number of natural and social primary frames are visible in the photographs. Although these may be obvious, some are identified. For example, Children will get on with what is it hand differently depending on whether pencils or marker pens are available to use.

The image at the centre of Fig. 14 is the only image out of fifty possible choices which appears in each of the photo-elicitation pyramids selected by the children, the art

education specialist, the class teacher and the head teacher. The children placed this image at the top of their diamond ranked pyramid and the adults placed it on line 3, 4 and 3 respectively. It, therefore, has significance for all the participants.

Fig. 14 shows some of the primary frames which could be drawn out of this situation. These are either visible in the image – for example the marker pens and ink – or can be located in the transcripts as participants were talking during the photo-elicitation session – for example 'teamwork', 'engagement', and 'ideas run free'. The source of each primary frame is identified by colour.

Fig. 14

In Goffmanesque terms, these frames are both natural – for example, inks and brushes – and social – for example engagement. A number of frames incorporate both social and natural elements – for example, *space to work*. In other words, the natural frame of space facilitated work. Once primary frames are identified, interrelations between frames can be deduced from both the images and how participants are using these ideas as they talk. To present just a few examples, the transcripts and photographs found in Section 2 of Chapter 3 show:

- This is a contemporary art gallery which is different from school

- The floor is protected which frees children to use drawing inks

- Children wear their own clothes as opposed to their usual uniforms

- Paper for experiments facilitates learning about how inks can be mixed and the effect of different brushes

- Working together suggests listening, sharing and agreeing

Fig. 15 is a second example of this approach to unpacking the primary frames. The image was ranked second by children and also chosen by the art education specialist and the head teacher. Although a social situation is not directly visible in the photograph of a sketchbook spread, these individual drawings emerged in the social context of the first workshop session and formed an individual child's first response to the theme. These sketchbook drawings were made to be shared.
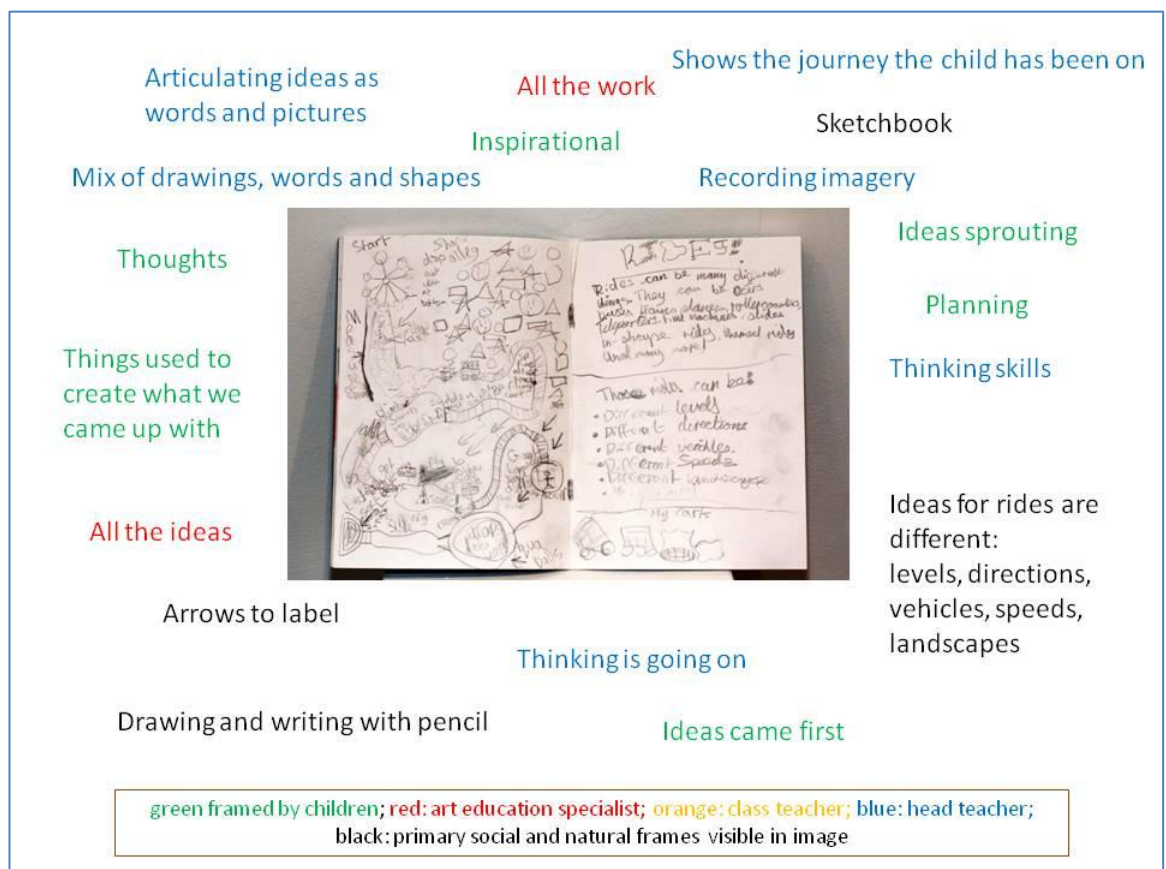

Fig. 15

Fig. 16 is a third example of primary framing and is taken from the image ranked first in the photo-elicitation pyramid by both the head teacher and art education specialist. It shows a

group of two boys and two girls talking about a drawing. It can be seen that educational primary frames which have a strong affinity with valued qualities of teaching and learning are instrumental in how these educators make sense of what it is that is going on.
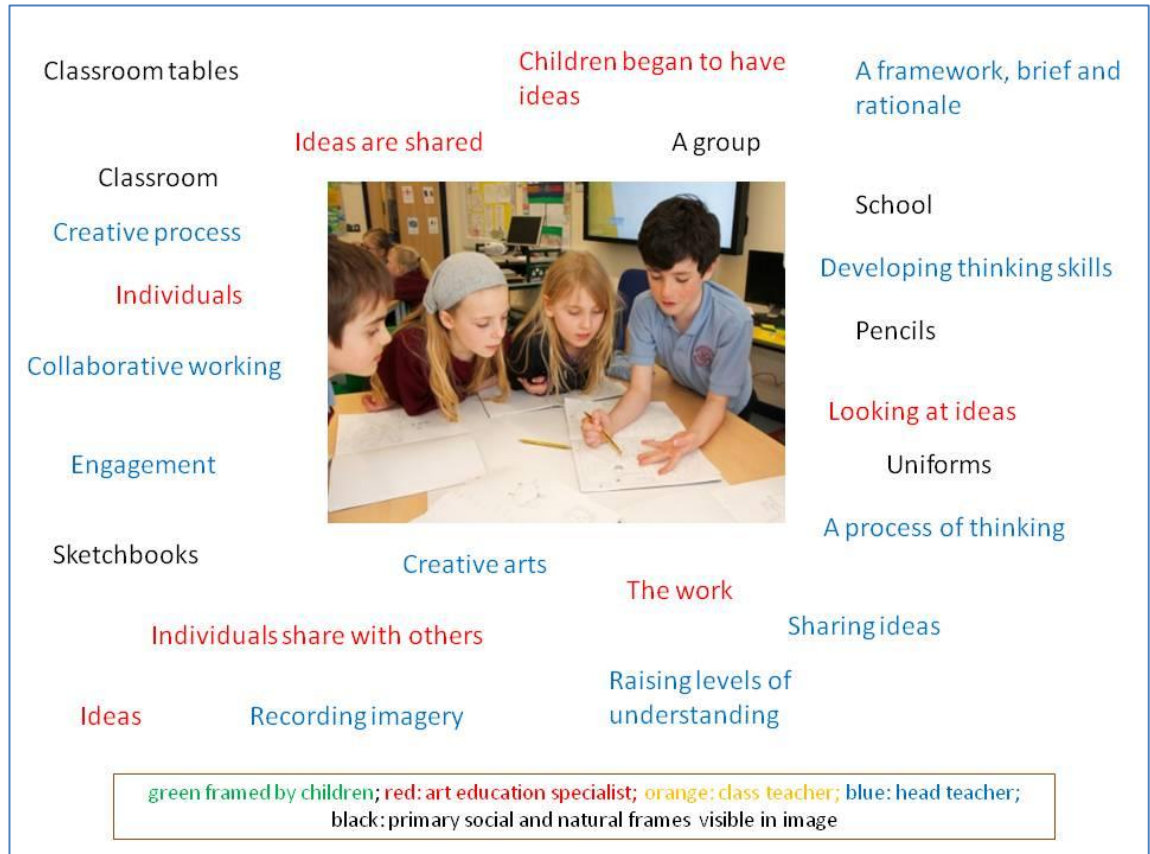

Fig. 16

In this way, it is possible to examine each of the chosen images and, after listening to what participants say as they discuss their choices, identify primary frames which show how participants locate, perceive, identify and label their understanding of what is going on (Goffman 1974). This is also an example of how Scheff (2005) suggests that frames can unpack context. For example, a vertical assembly of these frames could encompass both a covered floor and contemporary art. In this way, both a floor and contemporary art are part of how participants framed the situation indicated by the relevant photograph as they got on with the matter in hand during the workshop. This approach to assembling answers to the question at the core of this thesis shows the value of visual methods. Therefore, an explanatory framework needs to be able to encompass information available from both words and images.

A brief summary of what is it that is going on in the workshop based on the evidence of primary frames unpacked from Figs. 14, 15 and 16 can now be attempted:

Children are working together. Teamwork and collaboration are valued qualities. Adults see that children are engaged. Ideas, which are images and words, are created freely. There is evidence of a process of thinking. Ideas are valued, are inspirational and come first. These include experiments and explorations. There are differences between drawing in the gallery and the classroom. For example, children wear uniforms in school and their own clothes in the gallery. There is more space to work in the gallery. An artwork is being produced and children's understanding of creative thinking is raised.

In order to broaden the analysis, a number of outcomes from the frame assemblages created for Section 2 of Chapter 3 can be summarised using the above technique. This is by using the strategy to identify primary frames, by paying close attention to the images participants choose and what they said about them during photo-elicitation sessions. These outcomes can be summarised as follows:

- Participants, both children and adults, valued the process and the experiences of the workshop over the finished panels.
- Children were engaged in that process. The end products, the finished panels, also show this commitment.
- Children felt able to let their ideas 'run free' during the workshop. This was highly valued. They contrast it with the restrictions on thinking necessary in school lessons.
- The space and opportunity of working in the contemporary art gallery changed what was possible in terms of both experience and outcomes.
- Participants, both children and adults, saw working together to share ideas as beneficial as opposed to children working on their own.
- Ideas were formed in both pictures and words in the process of drawing and talking.
- The art skills, tools and materials were not valued highly.
- The participant educators valued the qualities of engagement and collaboration very highly.
- The participants, both children and adults, did not need to explain the finished panels. What could be said could be shown and seen by looking at the drawings.

It is also valuable to draw out the difference in frames used by different participants when talking about similar situations. For example, whereas children commented that their ideas were running free to such an extent that it might be construed as naughty, their class teacher preferred to frame their experience as studious, controlled and as work. Both children and the art education specialist talk in terms of space and experience, whereas the head teacher prefers to speak about rationales and engagement.

Keying and re-keying in a situation as children make meaning spontaneously across realms

It has now been established that a relatively straight forward reading of the data from the photo-elicitation sessions can be analysed in terms of primary frames. However, if we pay attention to situations which include what is going on in the imaginary drawings and how children are talking as they make them, then primary frames will no-longer suffice.

The drawing shown on the floor of the floor of the gallery in Fig. 14 was at the centre of an exchange involving several children. This formed part of the first assemblage in Section 1 of Chapter 3. Although a number of primary frames have already been illuminated in the previous section of this chapter, and these can be used to describe something about what was going on as children drew on the panel, this is only part of an answer. Children talk with ease about what is going on in the drawing. What they say as they draw shows that this is more complex situation. In this case, an explanatory framework is needed which operates both in terms of a literal explanation of the situation and in terms of the various layers and laminations of fabricated scenarios evident in the drawing. To show this, Fig. 17 which follows takes the drawing shown in Fig. 14 and, using transcripts of what children said as they talked about what was going on, unpacks the structure of experience in terms of *keys* and *laminations*. How Goffman (1974) uses these terms has been described in Chapter 1. If the reader wanted to begin to assemble a more substantial structure of experience implicit in the situation indicated by the images at the centre of Figs. 14, 15 and 16, then the primary frames presented in the previous section above should be set alongside the keyed and re-keyed frames of Fig. 17 which follows.
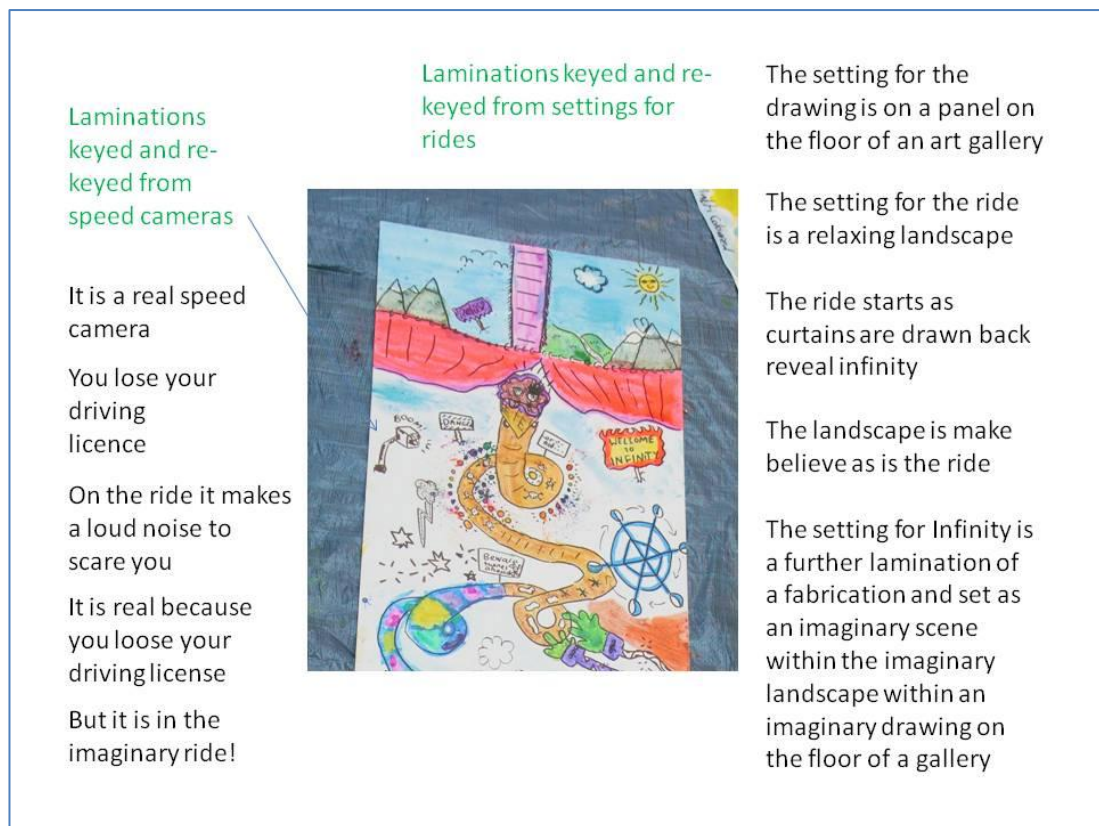
Fig. 17

Goffman's approach to such a situation shown by the photograph in Fig. 14, which includes the image at the centre of Fig. 17, is to draw attention to how various *realms* of reality, including both what could be described as everyday actual activity and what could be described as make-believe, occupy the same plane of ongoing experience. Goffman (1974) first uses the term *realm* in his introduction (p. 4) and then in his chapter about *keying* (p. 46). It takes the place of James' (1912) use of the term *world* to differentiate between, say, how 'the "world" of dreams is differently organised from the world of everyday experience' (Goffman 1974 p. 5). Goffman does not define realm, but returns to it in his conclusion arguing that 'realms of being are the proper objects here for study; the everyday is not a special domain to be placed in contrast to the others, but merely another realm' (p. 564).

In *Frame Analysis* (1974), Goffman can be seen to rally against attempts to identify what is real in any given situation and contrast this with what is less real, less certain, as though what is labelled as less real automatically has less significance. He introduces this idea in his introduction, 'one is left then, with the structural similarity between everyday life and the various "worlds" of make-believe' (Goffman 1974 p. 6). He might argue, for example, that a rehearsal for a dramatic reconstruction of an historic event, although it might be

considered as not the real performance – nor is the real performance considered as the real event – it is nevertheless perfectly real to actor trying to grapple with a role which is out of character to the types she usually plays. These kinds of considerations, Goffman calls them *laminations*, are helpful in making senses of what it is that is going on in this workshop when children make imaginary drawings together. Goffman uses the term *key* to help identify shifts between the every-day realm and other realms, for example, make-believe. The descriptive interpretation on page 72 shows that as children draw and talk about their drawing, keys can be re-keyed and keyed again as meaning slides spontaneously and often effortlessly from one realm into another. Using Goffman's approach to unpack what it is that is going on as children collaborate to make this drawing is highly illuminating. Any complete answer to the question posed in the title to this thesis must pay equal attention to what it is that is going on in the drawings as children make them as to what it is that is going on in the on-going world into which the activity of drawing is anchored.

What can be deduced from Fig. 17 *and* from applying this approach to the second frame assemblage of Section 1 of Chapter 3, *Douchebags and playing good*, is that coherent meaning can be keyed and re-keyed from different realms within the same situation in a spontaneous and improvisational way. The effect of these laminations includes:

- children constantly talked as they drew and ideas tumbled out spontaneously as they talked and drew
- children were committed to the relationships between diverse kinds of visual and conceptual ideas
- ideas were assembled together in a coherent aesthetic form in the finished drawings
- children felt a freedom from constraint which had the potential to be interpreted as naughty
- this freedom was in how they were able to think not how they behaved as a class teacher commented on qualities of engaged and studious work (see page 90)

A great deal of *Frame Analysis* is about showing how situations which are, 'fun, deception, experiment, rehearsal, dream, fantasy, ritual' etc., can be understood in terms of laminations of keyed and re-keyed meaning (p. 560). In a mischievous way, typical of Goffman's style, the term *analysis* is also included in the same paragraph as a 'lively

shadow of events... geared into the ongoing world' (p. 560). Goffman's ambivalence towards understanding frame analysis as some form of breaking down a whole into components in order to uncover meaning which is somehow hidden is confirmed in his introduction. He prefers to exemplify 'what frame analysis is about' (p. 20) by submitting his own introduction to a play of interlacing laminations (pp. 16-20). Goffman, as he presents real-world examples, prefers to indicate rather than analyse. This shows his radical empiricist base as he chooses to build understanding of frame analysis up from close observation of what there really is, rather than down from the application of previously determined conceptual frames. This is further evidence for the inherent contradiction in this research, suggested in Section 1 of Chapter 2 and expanded in the introduction to Chapter 3, which relies on a Goffman inspired explanatory framework to conduct a form of analysis for which *Frame Analysis* was not intended. In this way, although a reading of *Frame Analysis* has been taken into account in the presentation of how explanations are presented here, the term *analysis* might lead to confusion. Synthesis as well as analysis is in play.

Out-of-frame activities and anchors into the on-going world

Because the workshop can be seen to be anchored into the environing world, observers from outside the project may frame the activity in the most straightforward of ways. For example in Fig. 18, it might be sufficient for a school cleaner to get on with deciding where to work next, by seeing that children are in a classroom rather than a playground. In this way, much that is in the frame of understanding for participating adults and children would be *out-of-frame* for a passerby who glances into the room to see children drawing but who can draw on no evidence at all to see the activity in terms of participant research for a Master's thesis. Fig. 18 shows a situation as children were making a collaborative imaginary drawing in the classroom. What it is that is going on can be understood by how the activity is anchored into the ongoing world and how a number tracks, which are perfectly meaningful for some participants, may be out-of-frame of other participants and observers.

Anchors into the
environing
world

Drawing materials
supplied by the
school are the same
in the classroom and
gallery.

During Session 1 the
usual chairs and
tables in place in
the classroom.

Children are
working in
groups which are
the same as for
other curriculum
activities.

Out-of-frame activities

One child calls another
'douchebag' this is
evidence of disattending
as children are also on a
parallel track of personal
interrelationships and
outside the evidential
boundary of supervising
adults.

Children are dressed as
characters from children's
fiction because co-
incedently it is author's
day.

Fig. 18

Paying attention to Goffman's concept of how the same situation can contain different *tracks*, where one is out-of-frame of another, can show how different participants might frame understanding out of the frame of the main activity. For example, one child ribs another with the term 'douchebag'. The resulting exchange is not perceived by the supervising adults who have a stayed within their *evidential boundaries*. The *appearance formula* of what children usually would wear in school is disrupted because, coincidently, they are dressed as characters from children's fiction. Not only is this out-of-frame of the imaginary drawing activity, it is outside the frame of this thesis. An account of Goffman's use of the terms: *out-of-frame*, *anchoring*, *evidential boundaries* and *appearance formulas* can be found in Chapter 1.

Summary of what it is that is going on in terms of an explanatory framework based on Goffman's *Frame Analysis*

Goffman's way showing how meaning can be unpacked by paying close attention to micro-matters visible in social situations has been used to analyse what is going on in various strips of activity, which can be seen in workshop. Although, what is going on has first been interpreted through primary frames used by participants, it is shown that this is not

sufficient if an interpretation of what is going on is to include interpreting how children are talking and drawing as they make collaborative imaginary drawings. There is evidence for how, in Goffmanesque terms, meaning is made fluidly as improvised ideas are keyed and re-keyed spontaneously across realms. The same workshop situation may also contain various tracks of meaning making, some of which are not immediately apparent to all participants and observers. How a workshop situation is anchored in to the on-going world must also be considered. These considerations are based on evidence collected through the research methods which allow an interpretation of the workshop in terms of how participants frame their understanding in terms of what they say and do.

In his conclusion, Goffman (1974) comments that when confronting different realms within one reality, 'what is sovereign is relationship, not substance' (p. 560). In a way which chimes with the sovereignty of relationships in Goffman, Bourriaud (2002) suggests that meaning in art can be located in relations rather than in objects. Indeed, this workshop could be described as a convivial social encounter during which the process of creating ideas and the relations between them had more significance to participants the art objects they made. This seems to fit with ideas about relational art introduced in Chapter 1. Could ideas about relational art and relational aesthetics frame an answer to what it is that is going on as children collaborate to make imaginative drawings?

Collaborative imaginary drawing and relational art

Chapter 1 introduced a critique of the fine-art approach to art in the school curriculum, for example Atkinson (2005) and Addison (2003, 2005, 2010), which foregrounds individuals making special kinds of unique, discrete and personal objects. In contrast to an established fine-art rationale, a number of art educators including Burgess (2010), Granville (2011) and Irvin and O'Donoghue (2012) turn to ideas about relational art represented by Nicholas Bourriaud (2002). A review of the data presented in Chapter 3, together with the Goffmanesque interpretation in this chapter, provides evidence that the workshop could be thought of as an example of relational art. How both Bourriaud and writers in the field of art education who have cited his ideas have written about relational art and relational aesthetics has been described in Chapter 1. Applying those ideas here, what is going on in the workshop could be understood as relational art in the following ways:

- The drawings emerge in a social setting (Illeris 2005).

- The workshop is a set of practices which could be said to be founded in 'human relations and their social context, rather than an independent private space' (Bourriaud 2002 p. 13).

- Children can be seen to make successful drawing collaboratively rather than as individuals. Art is made in a social context rather than a private space (p. 113).

- The workshop takes form as a synthesis of relations between various diverse qualities and people such as: the facilitator (the researcher), the children, the places of the school and the gallery, the various frames of research and primary school education (Bishop 2004; Irvin and O'Donoghue 2012).

- The experience of the participants has a quality which is valued more than the objects themselves (Bourriaud 2002 p. 18).

- The facilitator is a catalyst for aesthetic encounters children experience as they make art together. This is equivalent to how Bourriaud conceptualises the relational artist (p. 15).

- The aesthetic quality of the workshop is '...beholden to the contingencies of its environment and audience' (p. 54).

- The underlying pedagogy promotes improvisation and meta-learning about creativity and is 'experimental, critical and participatory' (p. 12).

- The imaginative drawings are produced from a 'state of encounter' (p. 18).

Relations, context and assemblages

The concept of the assemblage has been applied to bring together photographs, dialogue and interpretive text in order to interpret the outcome of the photo-elicitation sessions for the reader. The results of this approach appear in Chapter 3. The data from Section 1 of Chapter 3 shows that the way ideas emerged in spontaneous and improvised ways. Despite, what on the face of it might seem an almost random collection of ideas, children are easily able to assemble these into drawings. In this way, concepts such as infinity can inhabit the same space as a squashed ice cream cone carriage and a dangerous speed camera. It can be seen that the passages of imaginative drawings in which these ideas appear are coherent, meant and have aesthetic form for children who make them. This is because the meaning of these drawings is formed from keyed and re-keyed *relations* between the drawn elements and their unpacked context both inside and outside the drawing. These relations are fashioned as children work and talk. For example, the

assemblage of ideas beginning on page 68 shows great play is possible by setting a real speed camera at the start of an imaginary ride. Relations between a real speed camera and the ride are engaging for children who created them. It is to this matrix of relationships, rather than to the drawn elements themselves, to which children are committed. In other words, the drawings have an aesthetic power because of the coherence of the relations created as improvised ideas are assembled in a containing form. In this way, although the finished drawings are discrete portable objects that can be taken out of their context, the ideas within the drawings are assembled and have meaning for the participants as they build spontaneous and improvised relations between them. The quality of the drawing in terms of its relative skilfulness seems by-the-by, as the ideas and their context in the drawing are expressed. In this way, the drawings can be understood as the result of 'an activity consisting in producing relationships with the world with the help of signs, forms, actions and objects' Bourriaud 2002 p. 107). These collaborative imaginative drawings can be described as a product of a relational art activity.

Finally, in this context, it is worth noting that Deleuze (1925 – 1995) adopts the term *assemblage* to account for how meaningful experience is built out from 'single, partial or 'molecular' experiences' which precede ideas about subjects and objects (Colebrook 2002 p. 82). This represents Deleuze's empirical view of how we 'chart the emergence of an idea from particular bodies and connections' (Colebrook 2002 p. 82). We should not begin with a concept and then use that to explain what is going on (Colebrook 2002). This Chapter concludes by discussing how the workshop might be considered in terms of radical empiricist ontologies in which both Goffman and Bourriaud's ideas are grounded.

How does what it is that is going on in the workshop exhibit the characteristics of radical empiricist ontology?

Chapter 1 introduced how Goffman's approach to understanding micro-matters of social interaction by paying close attention to what it is that is going has foundations in the radical empiricism of William James (1842 – 1910). James (1912) wants 'to start with the parts and make something of the whole a being of the second order' (p. 42). This he argues is the opposite of rationalism which, 'tends to emphasize universals to make wholes prior to parts' (p. 41). One form of the nature of analysis might be described as a process of breaking down a whole into constituent parts using a conceptual frame devised or co-opted to give coherence and structure to the task. There is an irony in the title, *Frame*

Analysis, as Goffman never uses the terms he unravels through his book to analyse the various examples of social interaction he presents. These examples are shown alongside his text as prompts and illustrations. It is not possible to turn to an overarching theoretical frame first in *Frame Analysis*. Goffman does not supply such a frame. He would argue that it is futile to do so. To understand what Goffman means by *frame analysis,* the reader must synthesise this understanding from the constituent parts of the book. The parts come before the whole. This presents a reader who is looking for solid ground on which to build a method for analysing the meaning of social interaction a problem. Carib (1978) describes this beautifully, writing that Goffman's work is, 'difficult to retain and present in an organised summary... There seems to be no 'core' concept or conceptual framework that can be focused on... There is little in the way of logical argument with one step leading necessarily to the next...' (p. 79). Goffman might have replied, "Nor should there be!"

James (1912) writes, 'there is only one primal stuff or material in the world... we call that stuff 'pure experience'... the relation itself is part of pure experience' (p. 4). The data presented in Section 1 of Chapter 3 is evidence for how children form drawings as spontaneous and improvised parts are synthesised together into complete images on the panel or paper. Bearing this in mind, reading what the children are saying as they draw together (see pages 70 – 75), nothing that might resemble a predetermined framework, core concept or initial organisation is apparent in the way they are working. Ideas are improvised spontaneously and slip easily into existence. It is not as if children have learnt a way of creating this content for an imaginative drawing and are now applying what they know. These parts are preceding the whole. As Children draw and talk the relations between the ideas spark into existence and spontaneously ignite new ones. The imaginative drawings take form as these parts – of ideas and relations between ideas – are built-up one with another until eventually the drawing as an object is synthesised into a whole. Could children, as they make art together in the workshop, be said to be in 'the instant field of the present' (James 1912 p. 23)?

To develop this idea, the frame assembly about the 'real speed camera' (see page 103) shows how a purchase on what the drawing means is only possible because any idea about reality, inside or outside the context of the ride, is a contrast term. This is how Goffman (1974) expresses it:

> When we decide that something is unreal, the reality it isn't need not itself be very
> real, indeed, can just as well be a dramatization of events as the events themselves

– or a rehearsal of the dramatization, or a painting of a rehearsal... leading one to think that what is sovereign is relationship, not substance (p. 560).

In other words, the play of keyed and re-keyed laminations created by the speed camera in the drawing has purchase for children because it is just as meaningful in one realm as another. The interest lies in the playful *relation* between real speed cameras, which might cost a parent her license, and an imaginary speed camera at the top of a fantasy ride. The quality of the drawing of the actual camera itself is probably by the by. As has already been set out on page 108, it is possible to argue that it is the quality of the relations generated as children draw which has aesthetic form and power.

Dezeuze (2006) writes: 'Bourriaud's relational aesthetics emphasize events, performance, behaviours and alternative modes of exchange over unusable, commodified objects, while privileging flexible notions of form instead of trying to define art' (p. 147). If this is the case, returning to the critique of the fine art curriculum which began Chapter 1, we do children of the twenty-first century a disservice if we *only* give them examples of artistic practices to try as facsimiles and pastiches of practices which have gone well before. They may understand something important about how individual artists made art objects in a historical sense, but they will be less open to the restless world of polyphonic meaning making at the heart of contemporary creative production and the heart of a society becoming immersed in immediate access to mass communication media.

Even a cursory glance at the data gathered from the collaborative imaginary drawing workshops, can show that as children create the imaginative drawings, there is constant movement of thought, a restless play of ideas with one spawning another, in an improvisational and fundamentally creative flow. The rapid movement as hairdryers, snakes, streamers, confetti canons, sheep, and a Slime-o-Tron 3000 tumble into existence in a just few seconds of drawing and talking – and for that to make sense – can be located within the frame of Deleuze's radically empiricist ontology introduced in Chapter 1. Colebrook (2002) puts it in this way, 'instead of providing yet one more system of terms and ideas, Deleuze wanted to express the dynamism and instability of thought' (p. 4). Moreover, real style, according to the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari (1994), is not in repeating patterns of making but the movement of thought.

Subjectivity and the value of relational art in schools

However, if aesthetics based on relationality is foregrounded, then what is to be said about subjectivity? As has been argued, an embedded view in art education in schools is that making art is an individual pursuit, drawing on deeply subjective qualities, and places the artist centre stage as an independent agent of what he produces. It has been noted that this is reflected in the way art is taught. Children are introduced to certain skills, processes and concepts to enable them to create an object themselves. Mostly, children are encouraged to demonstrate subjectivity and agency – to take what is given and develop it, at least to some extent, in their own way. However, Bourriaud (2002 p. 91) holds an expanded view of subjectivity by citing Guattari (2001) who argues that subjectivity cannot exist in an independent way; it is dependent on differences between the individual and otherness – an otherness found in human groups, socio-economic and informational cultures. If this is so, then the educative value of artistic experience will be found in fostering forms of dialogue with others and otherness not in isolating individuals in private worlds. Artists, including young artists, should be operators of meaning, 'rather than a pure "creator" relying on crypto-divine inspiration' (Bourriaud 2002 p. 93).

The value of imaginary collaborative drawing does not sit neatly with the kinds of objective driven fixed outcomes demanded by the formal curriculum. What then is its use? Deleuze's collaborator, the French psychoanalyst, Guattari (1995) puts a question and then makes an appeal for a pedagogical outcome: 'how do you make a [school] class operate like a work of art?' How can it become 'the source of a "purchase on existence" for the children who compose it' (p. 133)? This research demonstrates one example of an answer to that question. Creative workshops are fluid, convivial events where 'form holds sway over the thing, and movements over categories' (Bourriaud 2002 p. 103). This form of teaching could deliver the self-enriching, self-reflexive, aesthetic joy of collaborative relational meaning making to children and demonstrate personal and shared qualities which boost how they go on to operate in the social flux. This can be shown as well as taught. Within the context of learning, children will understand more about how ideas form. They will also understand the ethical importance of always being aware that conceptualisations and rationalisations are the secondary products of pure experience. Perhaps Guattari suggests one answer to the question posed in the title to this thesis: What is it that is going on when children collaborate to make art in a primary school workshop? Children are finding a purchase on their existence as they self reflexively delight in the spontaneous

improvisation of ideas and the assemblages of relations which form their collaborative drawings. The challenge for educators is not only how to create conditions for this to happen, but how to help children reflect on creative thinking and see themselves as active creators, as well as passive recipients of ideas.

Conclusion

The task of finding answers to the question posed by the title of this thesis has been addressed by paying close attention to situations in the collaborative imaginative drawing workshop and what participants said about them. A visual methodology, which incorporated auto-driven photo-elicitation methods, enabled the research to situate participants' understanding of what it was that was happening in the workshop in terms of frames which they express, rather than those suggested by the researcher. The use of photographs kept the visual characteristics of the workshop to the forefront for participants, both as they reflected on the images they choose, and in the frame assemblages of images and verbatim transcripts presented in this text. The analyses in Chapter 4 also used photographs to better situate frames drawn out of the situation at hand, and to provide visual confirmation of primary frames. Reproductions of children's drawings were set alongside children's verbal exchanges. These reproductions, together with transcripts of what children were saying at the time, confirmed how what was going manifested the Goffmanesque characteristics of laminations of keyed and re-keyed frames as children assembled meaning as they drew.

Goffman's (1974) example is followed, as understanding about what it is that is going on in the workshop is built up from micro-matters of participant's experience as presented through the methods employed. This has created a tension in this thesis. As it has been shown, Goffman (1974) prefers to indicate and illuminate in terms of the situation at hand, rather than analysing from the point of view of a conceptual frame located outside the situation. This tension has been demonstrated by the use of assemblages to present strips of the workshop, assembled from the photo-elicitation sessions in Chapter 3, alongside, in Chapter 4, a more analytic text within an academic frame. In other words, understanding of the workshop in this thesis could be said to be synthesised from the direct experience of participants in the descriptive and interpretive assemblages presented Chapter 3 and, in Chapter 4, analysed from the contexts of academic frames presented in this thesis. This relationship, between Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 could also be described as an assemblage. How ideas about analysis, synthesis and assemblage in art education research are set in the context of radical empiricist ontology, especially when ideas are presented in a visual form, should be explored further.

As they make collaborative imaginative drawings, children seamlessly slip to and fro within different realms of fantasy and reality in what they draw and what they say as they draw. This is different to what they usually experience in school and they value the opportunity to 'let ideas run free'. They exhibit the flow and flux of spontaneous and improvisational creation of ideas which chimes with the radical empiricist notions such as *pure experience* (James 1912) and *immanence* Deleuze (1953). As Susan Wright (2007) has commented in relation to young children's graphic-narrative play, 'such open-ended... forms of knowing, expressing and communicating unleash and reveal children's deep meaning, multiple perspective-taking and fluidity of thought' (p.24). This thesis shows that collaborative imaginative drawing with 9 and 10 year olds exhibits similar qualities. The similarities between this form of collaborative drawing workshop for older children and how younger children draw and play should be explored further.

Chapter 2 introduced collaborative improvisation as one of the pedagogical concepts which provided a rationale to the planning of the workshop. In this workshop, these 9 and 10 year olds show, through collaborative drawing, the 'moment-to-moment, processual, contingent nature of improvisation and its social and interactional nature' (Sawyer 2011 p. 29). However, teachers are asked to plan for specific outcomes and show how a lesson fulfils specific learning aims and objectives (Beere and Gilbert 2012). This day-to-day classroom practice is as apparent in art as in other subjects. If children are to experience the collaborative improvisational qualities of creative thinking manifested in this workshop, then another planning rationale will need to be applied. Teachers will need to set conditions which allow children to think freely. These are apparent as this workshop unfolded and include:

- Unpredictable outcomes are valued and encouraged.
- How moment to moment contingency is catalysed as new ideas form and are assembled in apparently impulsive and random relations.
- Full and interactive collaboration between children is established and valued
- There is an arena within which assemblages of new ideas are rehearsed. For example, the arena in this project was a shared drawing surface.
- Children are asked to reflect in a meta-cognitive way on the qualities needed to create ideas with others. This should provide a powerful tool for reflexive understanding about qualities needed to learn and create.

The value of this as learning will be in showing children the qualities of creative thought. This can be compared and contrasted with other forms of cognition expected by the curriculum. For example, qualities of thinking needed to work methodically through a mathematical process of long division will be different. The way sentences are grammatically structured observes certain rules. These are worth learning in order to express ideas clearly when writing. However, it should benefit children if, for example, they learn to recognise differences between thinking in terms of these grammatical rules and thinking creatively about the narrative form of a story. These meta-cognitive qualities were amplified in this project as children were helped to understand more about the research process of which they were part.

The workshop shows characteristics of relational art as set out by Bourriaud in his book *Relational Aesthetics* (2002). The relations between ideas, as they tumble into existence as children draw and talk together, have meaning for children. This experience takes precedence over the finished object. Drawing skill did not feature in the pedagogy, nor was it mentioned as a factor by children or adult participants. The relative skill with which the drawn elements were presented seemed by the by. The technical process used to make the drawings was straightforward and available to all children regardless of perceived ability as artists. This allowed spontaneous and improvised ideas to have precedence. Children delighted in the way their ideas could 'run free'. Nevertheless, children adroitly collaborated to assemble disparate and diverse ideas into a coherent visual form with commitment and engagement. Children were seen to be working hard and produced significant concrete outcomes in the form of art.

This way of teaching may allow children to take 'a purchase on their existence' (Guattari 1995 p. 133) as they find purchase on themselves as thinkers, learners and creators. There should be a place in pedagogy for primary school art which offers children opportunities to experience and reflect on the genesis of ideas in social arenas and the way all kinds of relations between themselves, ideas and the world around them take form. This pedagogy and the practical form it might take in teaching practices need further exploration and development. After all, the purpose of this research is that real children experience real teaching in a better way.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – the content of the workshops, a textual description

Session one took place in the classroom with a whole class. It began with the researcher introducing and then discussing the research project with children. How this was done is described as part of Section 3 of Chapter 2. Children were going to be knowing participants in the research. They were shown the photographic and sound recording equipment and how it was going to be used. They were invited to ask questions, comment and given the option not to be recorded or photographed.

Children were then reminded about the qualities which contribute to creative learning. They were familiar with this approach from work during the previous term. The school encourages class teachers to help children develop their skills as learners and so introducing meta-learning concepts is seen as an important contribution to helping children improve how they learn. The conceptual qualities, which children thought about in terms of creativity, were linked with those concerned with the project as research. It was not just that they were going to be taking part in an art workshop which was important but that everyone could be interested and aware of what that activity means. The diagram (Fig. 19) shows the final image from an animated PowerPoint slide, which was used as a prompt to re-introduce creative meta-learning values to the children.

Fig. 19

The theme of the workshop was then introduced. This theme 'rides' was chosen by the three Year 5 class teachers as it supported work underway in literacy. The children were shown an image and brief video clip. Right from the start, the concept of imagination was stressed: "If you could design an imaginative ride where anything was possible, what would you do?" Ideas about settings for the imaginative rides and what would happen along the ride were talked about with many children contributing ideas.

Children were then invited to go back to their working groups. There were five groups of six children sitting around five table clusters – a normal working set-up in the classroom. They could talk about their ideas. Each child was given his or her own A4 sketchbook (a visual ideas book), something already in use in Year 5, and asked to create ideas about possible imaginative rides. This was individual work, although there was no bar to working and sharing with others if they wished. The ideas could be drawings or notes. Labelled drawings and diagrams were introduced as possibilities. Children were told that the ideas were the most important, so they didn't need to be concerned about making 'good' drawings. For example, stick people or animals were fine if they simply wanted to illustrate an idea. Time was limited and children were encouraged to generate more rather than few ideas.

When most children had at least a page of ideas, they were asked to take it in turns to show and describe to other children sitting around their table what they had imagined about the rides they might want to create. After this, some children shared what they thought were the best or most exciting ideas with the whole class. The meta-learning concepts of sharing ideas, collaboration and taking risks were revisited.

Children were shown an A1 sheet of cartridge paper and black marker pens. They were invited to work collaboratively in their groups to create a drawing of an imaginary ride together. How were they going to go about this? Was it better to include ideas from everybody? Did the group think that one person's ideas were worth emphasising? Every child was given a marker pen. Did that mean everyone was going to draw at once? How the group went about the task was left to them to decide, "You can use any ideas already created in their sketchbooks could be used but why not create new ones?"

Children worked for about forty-five minutes on these collaborative imaginative drawings. The previous term the three Year 5 classes had been shown a technique for using water based drawing inks to add colour to line drawings. They were reminded about this and inks were made available. All the groups decided to add colour. Each class worked until the end

of the session which was determined by either lunchtime or the end of the school day. None of the drawings were finished, but each class teacher made time available in the following week so that each group could finish their drawing.

Session two was the first of two three hour long sessions to take place at Bay Art Gallery. Sixteen children arrived with the collaborative drawings from Session 1 and their individual ideas from Session 1 in their sketchbooks. However, they had also been invited to think about the gallery workshop in advance. Would they like to do any of their own visual research about rides before the gallery visit? They had been told that the school was going to prepare four wood panels to be permanently displayed in school. Their task was, in four groups of four, to create an imaginative ride for each of these panels. The technique of line drawing with marker pens and adding colour with drawing inks was to be the same as they had used in Session 1. The medium density fibreboard panels were pre-primed with white emulsion paint ready for their drawing.

The contemporary art gallery is a different space from the classroom. First, children were invited to explore. One gallery director told them about the gallery and explained that artists had studios in the same building. Children were reminded about the research project and introduced to the various pieces of technical equipment which were to be used in the gallery. The first two activities were designed as warm-ups. They were also designed to re-introduce the meta-learning concepts used in Figure 19.

The first warm-up was about drawing lines. There was a variety of drawing media available, each with different qualities. Children began sat around a 2.5 square metre sheet of drawing paper taped to the gallery floor. The researcher sat with them. Who could climb onto the paper and make a line? Who could make a very short line? What about a curved line or a line that twists? How about making the same kind of line but with different drawing media? Children were invited to explore and experiment making lines. They started as individuals but soon realised that as they worked, they came across a neighbouring child working nearby on the paper. How were they going to collaborate, negotiate and combine their lines? What would happen when they, in turn met other children's lines?

For the second warm-up, on another 2.5 square metre sheet, children were invited to create spontaneous, improvised and quickly made imaginary rides using any ideas from Session 1. Again, they started as individuals but soon encountered rides created by their

neighbours. How were they going to collaborate, integrate and continue to draw now they had come across other children's visual ideas? Soon the paper was entirely filled with spontaneous, improvisational and collaborative imaginary drawing.

Following a break for refreshments, the sixteen children were shown the four MDF panels. They were asked to sort themselves into four groups of four. This they did with no intervention from the adults. Each group was told it would be responsible for one of the panels. However, the rest of Session 2 was reserved for planning their imaginary ride so that they were ready to make their panel at the start of Session 3 on the following morning. Both the marker pens and the drawing inks were available right from the start and there was paper for experiments, tests and for working out ideas in relation to the size and shape of the panels. Each of the four groups had a mock-up of what they wanted to draw on the panel at the end of this session.

Session 3 was reserved entirely for drawing and colouring the MDF panels. None of the groups had finished a panel by the end of Session 3; these were taken back to school to be completed by each group as time allowed.

Summary: This is a brief written description of the workshop. It is clear that although it can provide a simple narrative account which states how the workshop unfolded with various items of factual information about numbers of children and practical organisation, this kind of text on its own provides no information about the content of the drawings the children made. The art, which lies at the centre of the activity, does not feature. How that art was made is also not described. It will be difficult for any reader to have anything other than a monochrome, skeletal idea about what took place. As the aim of this thesis is to answer Goffman's (1974) core question, 'What is it that is going on here?', and that what was going on in the workshop has a vital visual character, visual methods are essential to show information that would be difficult to present only with words.

R: Researcher, C: Children

R: Right, what's the theme going to be? Now you're going to need your sketchbooks. Are those they? Yeah, you're going to need your sketchbooks. So the theme - and we'll have a quick little brainstorm about this - is going to be rides. Now because this is imaginative, I'm going to not actually show you any pictures to start with. What is a ride? What do you think by a ride? What do you think?

C: It's kind of like you're like in little kind of like say a cart kind of thing and then it goes on a track, and it goes upside down, all around, doing anything it wants.

R: Alright. Okay, so there's some really good ideas there. It's a ride, it might be on a track, it might be a cart, it can do anything it wants. Anyone else got any…you can have memories of rides, you can tell me about rides you've been on, you can have ideas for rides. What do you think?

C: It's sort of a thing that you can get in and then it'll take you somewhere.

R: Something you get in, good, and it can take you somewhere. So your idea is it can go anywhere it wants, your idea is it can take you somewhere and you can get in it. What do you think?

C: Some rides like take control of them.

R: Some rides don't let you take control of them?

C: Take control.

R: They take control, yes. So you don't know necessarily where you're going and what's going to happen. What do you think?

C: Well, with rides you can sometimes get in them or on them. Like a horse could be a ride sort of because it takes you somewhere.

R: Exactly.

C: But you don't get inside the horse because that would be a bit gross.

R: [laugh] Excuse me, you're making me laugh.

C: Then the car, you get in it because if you sat on top of it, you wouldn't…

R: Alright, great. So you can decide, when you're thinking about your rides, whether you're going to get in things or whether you're going to get on things. What do you think?

C: Does it go upside down?

R: It can do, yes. So your ride can go upside down. Don't forget, this fellow - and I'm not going to remember your name, so I'm really sorry about this - was saying that it could go anywhere it wants. Of course, it can go upside down. What do you think?

C: A ride could be loads of things. It could be like a boat that could take you somewhere, and like a rollercoaster, a car, it could be loads of different things.

R: Great. So a ride can be loads of different things. You've had an idea, a rollercoaster, a car. I'm just going to pause with that idea. Anyone got any other ideas about rides could be? So we've had boat, cars.

C: Unicorns.

R: Unicorns.

C: Like the London Eye, like in the day, it never stops, it keeps going.

R: The London Eye. Sorry, I'm going to stop you. The London Eye that never stops, keeps going. I'm interrupting because I want to get lots of ideas out.

C: A piggyback ride.

R; A piggyback ride, yeah, wonderful, yeah.

C: A bike.

R: A bike.

C: Any vehicle.

R: Any vehicle.

C: A train.

R: A train. Where could the rides be? What kind of imaginary settings could you have for your rides, do you think?

C: The moon.

R: The moon, fantastic, a ride to the moon or on the moon, wonderful. What do you think?

C: Maybe like where cowboys are.

R: The Wild West?

C: Uh-huh.

R: Yeah, where cowboys live, the Wild West, what a wonderful idea.

C: Sponge Bob land.

R: Okay, Sponge Bob land, I really like that. In the sea, bottom of the sea, in the sea.

C: A rainbow.

R: Oh, fantastic, a ride on or to or over a rainbow.

C: Clouds.

R: Clouds.

C: Haunted house.

R: Haunted house, yeah, great, haunted house.

C: Heaven.

R: Well, that's a lovely idea, a ride in paradise. I wonder what that would be like.

C: And then you fall off.

C: A unicorn ride.

R: And then you fall off. Who said that?

C: Me.

R: And then you fall off. Yeah, then it all…then you get back down to earth [laugh]. Very good, I really like that. Okay, how about you?

C: Space.

R: Space, yes, fantastic. Out of space, wonderful.

C: A theme park.

R: A theme park, okay, so let's stop. One more?

C: I was going to say, flight into the [inaudible 0:21:37] with like a time machine.

R: Okay, great, you could have a ride which is through time. Wouldn't that be interesting, a ride that takes you through history and into the future, a time machine. Right, okay. So now in a minute, we're going to put you into groups. We're going to have - one, two, three, four - five groups. And the first thing is, on your own in your sketchbooks, you can also talk to the people in your group, but I want you to come up with some ideas and just draw and/or write, I don't mind you writing words if you want to, or draw little drawings of what you would like to explore as ideas for rides. They could be the settings for the rides, they could be what you ride in or on, where the rides go. They could be completely imaginary. Now you're in charge, guys. I don't mind what ideas you come up with. And the first part is only for you to start having ideas, okay. So the first part is just to share ideas and when each group has got quite a few ideas down in their sketchbooks, we'll talk about how we're going to do the imaginary drawing on the larger sheet of paper. But it's quite similar to the panel you've done. A couple of questions. Yes?

C: I can only draw left-handed, so it's really hard because I broke my collarbone.

R:	Well, luckily it doesn't really matter about whether it's a wonderfully accurate or neat drawing, it's the ideas that really count.

F1:	Just have a go.

R:	So it's the ideas, okay. And because you're working collaboratively in a group, you might have a great idea and somebody else might be able to help you with the drawing. Okay. How about you? Okay, well, we'll sort that out in a minute when we've got our groups sorted. Alright? So I'm going to turn this mic off now and we'll get the groups on the go.

Appendix 3 – Parent and carer information

This was sent to all parents and carers of all the children in Year 5 at Whitchurch Primary School, this was approved by the ethics committee at the University of East Anglia under the chair of Jacqueline Watson on 4th February 2013.

11th February 2013

Dear parent/carer,

Research about creativity in primary schools

Last term, we organised imaginative drawing workshops with all 3 Year 5 classes. I am an experienced art educator and an associate lecturer on the PGCE primary course at the University of East Anglia (UEA). I am also researcher currently studying for a Master's by research degree at UEA. An important part of my project is to understand how children and teachers can benefit from creative teaching and learning in art.

I will complete a thesis based on a study of how children collaborate to make large imaginative drawings. I will observe what happens. This will be done by taking photographs, recording what children say and taking notes. The project will take place this half term. I will work for half a day with each Year 5 class. We will then follow up this work with projects for smaller groups.

Please let me know if you would give your permission for your child to take part. I am happy to answer any questions you may have (N.Meager@uea.ac.uk). I will also be available in person on Wednesday March 6th after school to discuss this project and answer any questions in person. If you are willing for your child to take part in this study, please sign and return the consent form enclosed by 4th March 2013.

I am required to present my observations and reflections from this research to university tutors. This will take the form of an illustrated written thesis. This will include photographs taken during the project. Your child's name will **not** be identified and material will be shared only with teachers from the school and UEA supervising tutors and examiners. However, if you prefer that your child is not included in the photography they will still take part in the project with the rest of the class, although they will not appear in any photographs.

If you have any further questions or any concerns about the research please contact me or my supervisor Professor Victoria Carrington, (V.Carrington@uea.ac.uk). Should you have any cause to complain about the research please contact the head of the School of Education at UEA, Dr. Nalini Boodhoo (n.boodhoo@uea.ac.uk).

This will play an important part in my understanding more about how creativity in teaching and learning can contribute to the curriculum.

Yours sincerely,

Nigel Meager,   February 2013

Research about creativity in primary schools

I have read the letter and information sheet about the research and **<u>give my</u> <u>permission</u>** for my child (name of child).......................... to be included in the photographs and recordings which will be used as part of this research and appear in a Master's thesis.   Please tick

☐

I have read the letter and information sheet about the research and do **<u>not</u> wish** for my child (name of child).......................... to be included in the photographs and recordings which will be used as part of this research and appear in a Master's thesis.   Please tick

☐

Signed …………………………………………

Dated ……………………………………………

Research about creativity in primary schools

Information sheet

- Children will take part in an art workshop and will make individual and collaborative imaginary drawings.
- The projects will be planned with their class teacher and take place during a number of mornings and afternoons later this term.
- The work will link to current curriculum themes and contribute to learning in other areas of the curriculum.
- I will take photographs of what children are doing and the drawings they make.
- I will record what children say about what they were doing and take notes.
- The photographs, extracts from recordings and my notes will be used in a Master's thesis for the University of East Anglia. Children will not be identified by name.
- It is possible that this research may be written for publication in academic journals. If a photograph which includes your child is to used in this way, your specific permission will be sought before publication.
- **Please note: if your child is not included in the photographs they will still take part in the project with the rest of the class.**
- Please read the accompanying letter about giving your permission. I will be grateful for your support.
- Should you have any cause to complain about the research please contact the head of the School of Education at UEA, Dr. Nalini Boodhoo (n.boodhoo@uea.ac.uk).

Appendix 4 – Introducing the research to children

R: Researcher, C: Children, CT: Class Teacher

R: Now let me tell you a little bit about the research. If I can plug this in. Oh, there it is, it's working. Hang on a second. Okay. Do you want to start a smart interactive connection with…no, I don't. Okay, guys. So we're going to be doing some research. Now who can tell me what research is? Anyone got any ideas? What do you think?

C: When you want to find something out about something, so you may go on the Internet and look something up.

R: Okay, so you want to find out about something. Anyone else got another way of describing what they think research is? And it's good, yeah, I agree. What do you think?

C: You could [inaudible 0:06:05] where you could do research on a project you're doing.

R: Yeah. Why would you do that? Why would you do research?

C: Because the project that you're doing is very important and you've got to know a lot about it.

R: So you want to know more about something. Yeah, good. What do you think?

C: Research is when you want to find something out, so you go somewhere where you know where you think it'll have it, and then you sort of research [inaudible 0:06:33].

R: So you want to find something out, so you have to go and look for something, you have to go somewhere. It could be on the Internet, it could be in a book. One more comment, what do you think?

C: Like if you've got a question, you can go on the computer and research.

R: Okay, so questions. So you've had a few good ideas there. Now how can I go forward on this? Ah, yes, that's it, thanks guys. So what is research? Investigating. So we're going to be investigating something.

CT: If you tap the screen, just tap it. It's all interactive.

R: Fantastic. Sorry, it's because I've not come across one of these wonderful new machines before. Sorry, guys.

CT: It's taken me ages to get used to it, [voices overlap 0:07:25].

R: So investigating, exploring, looking carefully. These are all words that I would associate with research. So we're going to be investigating, exploring, looking carefully. Why? Why are we doing this? To find out what is going on, so that everyone can learn, to improve things in the future. So we're going to be researching how you make collaborative imaginary drawings, rather like you did on the big panels. So the people at my university really want to find out what is going on when you make those drawings, so that everyone can learn, to improve things in the future, so that teachers and other children can learn more about…because you were so good at it, how we can improve things in the future. So what are we researching? What happens when you make imaginary drawings collaboratively? Who remembers what collaboratively means?

C: Was it like all together?

R: All together, that's perfect, yes. So when you make the drawings together. Why? So that I - I'm the researcher - can improve this kind of art for other children and teachers. Because if we find out how it works, we can do it better and better next time. So you are participants. Now who knows - that's a posh word - who knows what a participant is?

C: It's like say you're taking part in something, you're participating in it.

R: Perfect, great, yes. That means you are taking part - well done - you are taking part in the research. So you're all going to be participants, you're all going to be taking part. I am a participant observer. So who can be really intelligent and see if they can find a way of saying what a participant observer is? Go on.

C: Is it sort of like you're not…you're looking at the participants and you're like watching them and like telling them how to do things?

R: I am but I'm a participant observer, so I'm watching and observing and I'm taking part as well, yeah. So I'm taking part because I'm working with you and we're all doing the work together, but I'm also looking at what's going on. That means I'm taking part and looking at what is going on at the same time. So how do we find out what is going on? We will take photographs, we will record what people say - and I'll show you these bits of devices in a minute - and we will ask you what you think. And we will also ask other participants what they think. So is there anybody else in this classroom who's a participant? Who do you think's a participant apart from me and you? I'm a participant because I'm

a participant observing, and you're participants because you're doing the project. Who else is participating, do you think.

C: Mrs Ashfield.

R: Mrs Ashfield. Anyone else? Because there is.

C: Miss Clark.

R: Yes, absolutely. Anyone else? Yeah, absolutely. So in a way, all the people in the classroom are taking part, okay. So we can ask those people too what they think. So what happens then, what happens after we've taken all the photographs and we've recorded what you say, and we've asked you what you think's going on? I - that's me - I will write about what has happened during the project. Why will I write about what's happened during the project? Because I want to find out what is going on, so that everyone can learn, to improve the way we do these things in the future. And I'll write a long report about it, so that other people can read it, other teachers and people who work in the university. Yes?

C: You could also write about it so you have memories of it in the future.

R: Exactly. And out of all the things I've said, what will help the memories do you think as well as the writing?

C: The photographs.

R: The photographs. And?

C: The videos.

R: The videos if we take videos, but I'll explain in a minute what we're doing instead of video.

C: And the recordings.

R: The recordings, yeah. Okay, now has anybody got any questions about that? Okay, yeah?

C: What does that do?

R: Good, I'm going to explain, that's a really great question. I'll come back to you straightaway in a minute. Has anyone else got any questions about the idea of research? Does anyone feel sort of slightly…has anyone got any feelings about it that you want to share, or are you okay, more or less? Yeah, have you got anything? It's very, very helpful that you're participating in this; very, very helpful indeed.

Okay, so let me tell you about what we've got for the equipment. Because somebody said look at…can you see what's up there? What do you think that is in that little cradle?

C: A smartphone with a camera.

R: It's a smartphone with a camera. It's my iPhone 5, yes.

C: Is it recording?

R: Yeah. Well, what it is, it's going to…I've downloaded an App which has got a time lapse photography function on it. Now who knows what time lapse is? Yes?

C: Time lapse, every now and again, it's on like a timer, so when it reaches a certain time, it'll do something. Like every so often, it'll take a photo.

R: Exactly. Perfectly put. I couldn't have put it better. Well done, yeah. So what I'm going to do is when I set it off - it's not going at the moment - every minute it'll take a photograph; every minute. So over a period of an hour, how many photographs will it take? Yeah, sorry, 60, of course. So 60. And then at the end I can choose. I can either look at each of those photographs on their own, or if we join them all together, we can make a time lapse video, so we can play it so you can see how, over the period of two hours, say, which would be 120 photographs, you can see how the table's changed and the drawing changed bit by bit. Yeah?

C: Is it anything like the nature videos where they take a few pictures of a [inaudible 0:14:22]?

R: I'm sorry to interrupt because I was excited you mentioned it. Yes, of course, that's exactly what happens. Have you seen those nature videos with things growing or the clouds? Yeah, the leaves opening in spring, mushrooms growing is a perfect example. I've seen some lovely ones sometimes of clouds rushing across the sky or night coming on when the sun goes down. Have you seen them when they do it the sun goes down?

C: Yeah.

R: Yeah. That's exactly what you can do with a smartphone now. You don't need the fancy bits of video equipment, you can just use your smartphone to do it. So that's what I've done. As well, in my pocket, I have a voice recorder. And can you see what's on my lapel?

C: Yes.

R: What do you think that is?

C: A microphone.

R: Yeah, of course. Yeah, it's a microphone and it's connected the voice recorder and it's recording what I'm saying. Now in a minute, I'm going to stop this because we're going to do a little experiment. Because you're the first group we've worked with and I want to check whether this technology's going to work well. We're going to see if somebody - and I might need some help with this - because this person, it would be better to have somebody who likes to talk rather than somebody who's very quiet. Because we're going to ask for a volunteer to test it while we're doing the first bit of the work. So it's got to be somebody who said yes to the research obviously. And what we'll do is, we'll ask them to put this in their pocket and we'll just put…like me, the wire can go between your jumper and clip the microphone onto your lapel, and we'll have a little test. And what it'll do is, it'll just…if you're collaborating making the imaginary drawings, it'll just record all your conversations about your drawing. So we can see what it's - I've not used this before.

C: Don't talk about what you watched on telly, then?

R: In a way, it doesn't matter if you do because sometimes that happens, okay. But the person who has it on will hopefully forget about it actually, although we won't let you take it out to playtime, I've decided because it's really for here. And the other piece of technology I've got is my big camera which you saw last time, which just takes ordinary photographs. So that's the way we're going to record what happens.

And there'll be something else which is recording what happens, which is….what do you think that is? It's quite a difficult question this. What do you think's going to be a good memory of what we're doing during the morning that you're going to make? What do you think?

C: Video?

R: No. What do you think? What are you going to be doing which is going to be left that we're going to have at the end? What do you think?

C: The drawings.

R: Yes, exactly. Congratulations, exactly right, the drawings themselves. Okay. Right, that's enough talking about the research. Well done.

Appendix 6 – Diamond ranking – the School Council Wales

Diamond Ranking

Audience: pupils.
Time: 10–15 minutes.
Group members: 8 or more.
Resources: post-it notes (or coloured A4 paper).
Purpose: a visual way of deciding what's most important.

Adaptations for pupils with additional needs.

Large cards can be used on the floor and moved around according to the priorities the pupils decide upon. Pictures can be used instead of words.

- Think of a list of topics or topics or issues to be prioritised - e.g. using the 'Three Wishes' activity.
- Group members could also use ideas from talking with other pupils or classes - e.g. what should the school council concentrate on this term?
- Explain the idea of a diamond of priorities (see diamond ranking template); the most important issue goes in box 1, and the least important one in box 9.
- Ask the group members to discuss each topic and negotiate as a group how important each topic is.
- Continue until most people agree on the order.
- Plan what you need to do next.

Diamond Ranking Template

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

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