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Through Cooperative Group Learning:
A Case Study of a Fifth Grade Classroom

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Sue Ann Holloway

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"Humans: we have been and are strange, willful creatures who in part accept a given social and natural world, but in part struggle to re-create that world through imagination and action...we think the most fascinating part, the least measurable and least predictable part of the human condition concerns the reinforcement or creation of meaning through symbolic expression" (Ingersoll, Jr., 1987).

TEACHING AND LEARNING COOPERATION
THROUGH COOPERATIVE GROUP LEARNING:
A CASE STUDY OF A FIFTH GRADE CLASSROOM

By

Sue Ann Holloway

A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

TEACHING AND LEARNING COOPERATION THROUGH COOPERATIVE GROUP LEARNING:
A CASE STUDY OF A FIFTH GRADE CLASSROOM

By

Sue Ann Holloway

This study examined how a teacher and her fifth grade classroom made sense of trying to cooperate as students participated in academic learning through cooperative group work. Its purpose was to increase understanding about the potential successes as well as problems of CGL in contributing to meaningful academic learning and to social learning about communal aspects of human experience.

The study was based on ethnographic methods of participant observation. Data included fieldnotes and audiotapes of students in natural cooperative groups in the classroom, tapes of interviews and class discussions, and samples of students' written work and other projects. Units of analysis were utterances and behaviors of the participants. The site was a multicultural classroom with an experienced teacher dedicated to increasing awareness, understanding, acceptance, and appreciation of others.

The study shows how the larger context of schooling, the implicit hierarchic power structure of the classroom, and experiences of the students outside the classroom influenced the teaching and learning of what it meant to "cooperate." Students were pessimistic about cooperation, which meant to them that a lesser power gives in to coercion by a dominant power. They transferred this understanding to CGL contexts, in which students' interpretations of cooperation often

assumed that it was more important to "behave," or "comply," and finish the work than to work together with peers. Students sometimes excluded peers, concentrating on cooperating with the teacher rather than each other. Alternatively, students sometimes utilized group structure to resist academic engagement, focusing on expediency rather than excellence in their learning.

The teacher's context included various constraints against teaching cooperation in its ideal form. Standardization of the social studies curriculum made it difficult to allow students time to work through conflict or explore new ideas and reflect on social relationships. This study raises curricular questions about learning as process versus product. Describing the experience of one excellent teacher, I show the difficulties of nontraditional or "adventuresome" teaching and trace her attempts to make a paradigm shift from behaviorism, which assumes learning is an individual endeavor, to social constructivism, which assumes learning is social and communal.

Dedicated to my children, and to all the "Mouses" of my life who believed in me and provided love and encouragement during the writing of this dissertation.

By Noahh Alexander Gerard

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Finally, I thank Mrs. E. and the fifth graders who shared their classroom and lives with me and made this study possible.

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OVERVIEW

A cursory glimpse around the fifth grade classroom whisked the viewer away, via four large murals, to other regions, other times, other ways of life. On one rose a large pueblo in the desert, replete with an eagle's nest atop the roof, protector against bad spirits, and a wandering turkey, whose feathers could become adornment for a special ceremony, with the remains unceremoniously devoured. Two large kachinas stared mysteriously, representing a promise to bring rain when needed, for the Pueblo corn crop. The paintings were accompanied by displays of artifacts, some original works and also student creations, representing Indian tribes from all over the United States. With a full-size teepee erected in the center, visiting students circulated around the classroom to view the scene in detail and make inquiries.

A second grader, curious about a segment of one group-created mural that depicted a buffalo skin drying, inquired, "How could skins be wet, in the first place?" Megen, a fifth grader, laughed uncomfortably and responded, "Well, they'd be sort of bloody!" Her voice got very high as she spoke, and she added, "So, they'd dry 'em out!" (Fld 11/18/88).[1] The fifth graders were sharing their learning that day with students from each classroom in Lincoln Elementary School, as well as with visiting parents and other school personnel.

This day represented the culmination of a seven-week cooperative group learning unit on native Americans which was a significant focus of my three-month study of teaching and learning in this classroom. What follows is the story of events which led to the bustling scene of excited, engaged learners, and what followed. I trace the experiences and interpretations of the teacher, Mrs. E., and her classroom of 16 fifth graders as they learned about cooperation through cooperative group learning (CGL). Participating in activities centered around units in the various subject areas, the students represented multiracial, multilingual, and multicultural populations, with two grandchildren of native Americans and others from Latin America, the Middle and Far East, and the West Indies. The teacher, a veteran of eighteen years, represented to me the "ideal" teacher. Predisposed to humanistic, reflective, creative teaching, she utilized cooperative learning as a way of organizing her students to learn to cooperate. To complement the organization of student learning into small, heterogeneous groups, she also selected curricular content which would heighten students' sensitivity to diversity.

I saw the investigation of her classroom as a way to construct a positive case study about how students learn cooperation by doing it and living it in the classroom. Chapter 1 provides the background for the study, citing flaws in traditional approaches to teaching and learning, the need for nontraditional approaches in schooling, and the potential for the various forms of cooperative group learning to meet those evolving needs of a diverse nation. In addition, I discuss the shifts in paradigm regarding the nature of knowledge and learning, and the purposes of education which underlay the changes in organization,

curriculum, and pedagogy that represent the move to nontraditional teaching.

Chapter 2 describes the site and methodology for the study. In particular, the site was selected for student diversity in race, language, and culture; the teacher was chosen on the basis of her goal to teach cooperation and allow students to work through conflict. The study was conducted as fieldwork, with methods of participant observation and interviewing. I also designed and taught lessons, to gain further insight into a teacher's perspective on using CGL to teach cooperation. I saw cooperation as working together, resolving conflict and differences in a way that honored and respected the perspective of each party.

Chapter 3 explores the classroom teacher's interpretation of cooperation and her goals. It indicates changes in how she interpreted her role in guiding student learning about cooperation, in response to the macro context in which she taught, and the influence of the school's power structure on her thinking.

Chapter 4 explores students' academic responses to CGL. In particular, previous out-of-school experiences influenced their interpretation of in-classroom cooperation to create an unintended meaning of cooperation as compliance. Focusing upon their relationship with the teacher, and the obligation to finish "work," students continued to view power as one-way. They responded at times with resistance, bargaining for a lesser commitment to academic learning.

In Chapter 5, I describe students' responses to the social learning possible in CGL. I found that global perspectives of power as domination further reinforced students' impressions that cooperating was

giving in to coercion, i.e., compliance. In some contexts, students excluded certain peers, based on their own conceptions of communicative competency for group work, which included use of humor, directness, predictability. Analyzing the stories written by student groups, as well as input from private interviews with students, I show how students continued to portray cooperation as an individual responsibility, focusing on withdrawal, rather than social resolution of problems.

Chapter 6 suggests implications for practitioners, administrators, teacher educators. In particular, I note structural constraints for teaching cooperation as working together to resolve differences; students and teachers face problems with the power base, the organization of teaching and learning in a hierarchical bureaucratic setting, the district's standardization of the social curriculum and loss of decision-making power and creative response both for the teacher and for the students. I discuss issues of communicative competency for peer involvement in CGL activities, and possible relationships to the theory of status generalization; and I describe the dilemmas of teacher and students in making a paradigm shift from traditional teaching which assumes responsibility of the individual for resolving social differences, to the nontraditional approach of CGL which assumes social, communal action for resolution of conflict. I conclude that many outside factors mitigate against the teaching of co-operation in today's schools. Within the school structure, aspects of inter- and intra-personal understanding have been inadequately attended to; I stress the importance of the interpretive aspects of learning about cooperation. I recommend that teachers expand conceptions of the value of CGL, to utilize this social organization not only for "impressive

products" and a way to engage disenchanted students, but also as a springboard to guided reflection, for greater student understanding of social relationships.

PROBLEMS WITH TRADITIONAL SCHOOLING

In contrast to the introductory portrait of Mrs. E.'s fifth grade classroom, descriptions of schooling in the United States have portrayed conflict between diverse students who have "turned off" and become disengaged from learning and resistant to teachers' authority (Cusick, 1983; Everhart, 1983; Sedlak, Wheeler, Pullin, & Cusick, 1986).

Traditional education has consisted of students sitting quietly at desks, isolated from each other, with little chance for discussion, learning knowledge which has been simplified and rigidly categorized to reduce uncertainty and avoid conflict. The "ideal" classroom has been one that is quiet and orderly, with the assumption that, under these conditions, students learn best. However, in this context of passivity, school learning has become an accumulation of decontextualized and unapplicable knowledge and skills. In response to superficial knowledge and trivialized learning, massive numbers of students in today's high schools have become disengaged, viewing knowledge acquisition not as intrinsically interesting and rewarding activity, but simply the accumulation of "products" such as high grade point averages (what Sedlak et al., 1986, refer to as "proxies" for learning).

Evaluated competitively on the grounds that learning is individual, and some individuals are more "intelligent" than others, students have had inequitable access to high-status knowledge; this has exacerbated

differences among diverse social groups and led to conflict, antagonism, and creation of enemies, rather than friendships. Some groups have been effected more than others from the inadequacies of public schooling. Since universal access to schooling became available in the late 1940's, a history of "low effort syndrome" has emerged, the result of mistrust and coping mechanisms developed over generations in response to inequities (Ogbu, 1988).

One attempt to compensate for the lack of "excellence" in our schools has been a focus on increased accountability by instituting greater controls and top-down reforms in the form of standardized testing and curricula, which have not only bored students, but removed critical decision-making power from teachers. The move to standardize, based in part on the assumption that teachers need outside "experts" to "help" them design curriculum, has had the effect of deskilling teachers from their creative roles of responding contextually to the learners, reskilling them as technicists who follow "experts'" instructions, pushing learning as covering texts and finishing products (Apple, 1983; Shanks, 1990).

Traditional schooling has not resulted in academic excellence or equity; nor has it adequately prepared students in the area of personal and social learning and preparation for democratic citizenship. Encouraged to compete, students have learned to manipulate their academic status and grades for personal gain, becoming "possessive individuals" with little regard for others; this has, until recently, remained unquestioned, considered appropriate to the liberal ideal of freedom as an individual matter (see, for example, Bricker, 1988; Greene, 1988; Popkewitz, Pitman, & Barry, 1986).

With students in conflict, unable or indisposed to resolve differences, school administrators have focused on keeping control and order; excellence and excitement in learning are put aside, to appease and "please" kids, maintaining a pact of mediocrity for appearance' sake (Cusick, 1983).

What I have portrayed has been a circular argument, intended to show the cycle of dysfunction evidenced in traditional responses to learning and teaching. Schools are the result of complex social interactions, each facet affecting others, each reform effort creating new "glitches"; today's schools are a product of the history of these cycles of solutions and the chain of accompanying problems (Cohen & Neufeld, 1981).

How do we break the cycle? Current reform efforts such as Tomorrow's Schools (The Holmes Group, 1990) focus on improving the life of the teacher. Yet, while already promoting the process of change, teacher educators acknowledge that there are many unknown facets of moving from a traditional to a nontraditional mode of teaching. Even traditional teaching is inherently uncertain, with dilemmas between choices, none of which are ideal. To try "adventuresome" teaching makes the context even more complex, and evaluation problematic (Cohen, 1988).

We are in the midst of major paradigm shifts in education. One concerns the purposes of schooling, and assumptions about the transferability of learning, a major premise established over 150 years ago through the salesmanship of Horace Mann and others, who claimed that people with school learning were better workers (Mann, 1842). The assumption was that literacy and abstract knowledge produced by schooling would be useful in the workplace. Today, anthropologists

question this perspective, showing that learning is context-specific, grounded in "the logic of immediate situations" and therefore, not necessarily transferable (see, for example, the synopsis in Resnick, 1987, p. 80).

Another major shift is from the assumption that learning is an individual process, acquired from behavioral and cognitive science, to the understanding that learning occurs as a <u>social</u> process, as shared social cognition (Erickson, 1984; Resnick, 1987). This accompanies a shift in the epistemology of knowledge, once viewed as "fact," independent "truth," now acknowledged by many as socially constructed and ratified as a reality which changes over time and is different across cultures.

How does a teacher make daily decisions, often under pressure, while operating in the midst of paradigm shifts? How do the previous schemas enter into the sense-making of daily practice?

EMERGING VISION OF SCHOOLING

In response to incomplete assumptions about individual learning and transferable aspects of schooling, two basic recommendations result: 1) that schools change the focus from individual cognition to shared intellectual functioning (Resnick, 1987); and 2) that school learning not be an <u>end</u> in itself, but a better means to a higher goal, which could include development of intentional learning, personal enlightenment, and communal participation as preparation for democratic citizenship (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Lanier & Sedlak, 1989; Resnick, 1987). This emergent image of schooling goes beyond goals

focused on the individual, and views school learning as purposeful socially constructed activity (Bricker, 1988; Langer, 1988). Focusing on learning as a community does not disregard development of individual intellect; however, the individual is not the ultimate focus. Instead, schooling is portrayed as a means to improving society. Dewey (1916) claimed that, to learn cooperation, students must cooperate in the classroom context.

I studied teaching and learning in a cooperative group context because of the potential for CGL as a mode of classroom organization to address many flaws in traditional teaching and learning. In CGL, learning is a social event, rather than individualized; it has potential for overcoming the trivialization of learning by increasing the level of student participation, and for providing opportunities for students to learn to work with others, to resolve conflict and to accept and appreciate diversity, in preparation for democratic participation.

COOPERATIVE GROUP LEARNING AS A RESPONSE TO THE INADEQUATE EFFECTS OF TRADITIONAL TEACHING/LEARNING

To reorganize school learning as a socially constructed activity implies that students must be able to talk and interact. Yet, educators have assumed, with regret, that having large numbers of students crowded into a small space requires a social organization with stress on conformity, order, and quiet (Jackson, 1968; Goodlad, 1983). Therefore, most traditional forms of classroom organization do not provide much opportunity for student talk of any kind. In fact, "talk" has been condemned in most typical classrooms, viewed as a deterrent to learning,

rather than a catalyst or vehicle which makes learning possible (Cazden, 1986; Gilmore, 1986; Silberman, 1971).

Cooperative group learning has already been established as a successful pedagogical method and organization which accommodates social, interactive aspects of learning. Known by various terms, including cooperative learning (CL), cooperative group learning (CGL), or multiability cooperative learning (MACL), as well as other acronyms which specify specially-constructed forms of cooperative learning, it features small, heterogeneous groups of approximately four students working together on a common goal. In cooperative group learning, rather than having one authority (i.e., the teacher), all of the students are potential experts for teaching each other. Students learn together. The teacher acts as a facilitator, rather than a dispenser, of knowledge. She is available, but not constantly controlling issues such as who may speak next, etc.

Cooperative group learning, cited by Oakes (1985) as the most promising medium for development of equity, social acceptance, and a sense of community, has the potential to enhance the interactive reasoning of students, and allow them to take a collaborative, proactive role in resolving conflict. In CGL contexts, students have an opportunity to talk together on issues of knowledge; this addresses the problem of the passive, disinterested learner. Cohen (1986) claims that students are more interested if they can talk with each other and be actively involved.

There is a link between communicating on an equal level and developing respect for and support of others; CGL allows students to communicate with each other, creating the potential for development of

"dialogue" which has had the effect of improving intergroup relationships, with more cross-ethnic and racial acceptance (Allport, 1957; Frank & Maruyama, 1987; Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1986; Greene, 1988; Habermas, 1979; Slavin, 1983, 1985). This interactive, communicative process also has the potential to contribute to the development of fidelity, concern, caring, and generosity, which are important elements of democratic decision-making and the maintenance of freedom within a community (Bricker, 1988; Greene, 1988; Noddings, 1986; Popkewitz, et al., 1986; Schmuck, 1985). Students develop friendships become more generous, develop a desire for classmates to do well (Hertz-Lazarowitz, Sharan, & Steinberg, 1980; Slavin, 1975). What we do not know is _how_ this concern is developed and maintained, or what enhances or detracts from positive interactions in peer learning contexts.

Cooperative group learning is not a novelty; we currently have metaanalyses of over 20 years of operation, particularly about a few "packaged" versions of cooperative learning, developed and promoted by teacher educators. However, it is still tricky to make sense out of the lived experiences of the participants, because cooperative learning is a term used for so many different organizations, some of which are actually still oriented to classroom competition among peers. For example, STAD (Student Teams-Achievement Divisions) consists of peer "coaching," in which students help each other by "drilling" facts, after which they return to a traditional mode of individual quizzes. Students are rewarded for the improvement in the tutoree's performance. Similar to this mode of CGL, which essentially is a "piggy-back" to a standard curriculum, is TGT (Teams-Games-Tournaments), which utilizes game tournaments and a bumping system related to improvement, rather than

quizzes. Although these systems are sometimes useful tools to peer memorization, they do not resolve the problem of competition or a trivialized curriculum based on a boring conglomeration of "facts."

Another alternative is Jigsaw I and II, which features a division of labor, in which students provide each other with necessary information, again from a more traditional curriculum, thus producing an interdependence in task structure. After sharing, the evaluation for learning becomes individualized again. Another system, FO/D (Finding Out/Descubrimiento), features a prepackaged science curriculum which is based on student-centered activities of discovering tenets of science through group experiments and oral and written reports. Group Investigation and Coop Coop feature still greater student curricular choice and decision making, and more freedom to work through conflict. The latter system represents the most "pure" cooperation, with the goal being to help other students, as well as those in one's group, thus, totally eliminating competition (Cohen, 1986; Kagan, 1985).

Experts working with CGL, no matter which form, have different conceptions of its potential in diverse classrooms for attaining cooperation and resolution of conflict by peer decisions. For example, Cohen (1986) claims that students do not automatically accept each other as equals. Nonacceptance and rejection of certain individuals can occur because students enter interactions with preconceived notions, or expectations, regarding the possible value of contributions from various members (Berger, Cohen, & Zelditch Jr., 1966, 1972). Status generalization, Cohen claims, results in bias which serves as the basis for blocking dialogue and producing differential access to the

participation process and academic learning (Cohen, 1983; Cohen, Lotan & Catanzarite, 1986).

The findings of Melnick & Raudenbush (1986) partially support the theory of status generalization as a way that human beings make decisions. Adding the teacher's perspective, these authors investigated the effects of gender, race/ethnicity, behavior, and ability on teacher judgments about the appropriateness of responses to students. The study found that preconceived characteristics did affect the teachers' decisions. However, one more factor influenced teacher decisions: the element of context specificity, i.e., the students' perceived behavior (on/off task) within that context also affected the teachers' decisions about whether or not to sustain interaction with that student.

Many other studies point out the influence of context on teacher/student construction of meaning and learning (Au & Jordan, 1978; Erickson & Mohatt, 1982; Labov, 1972; Mehan, Hertweck, Combs, & Flynn, 1982). Yet, potential discrimination and exclusion of students from peer interaction is a serious concern, because it can result in lost access to knowledge and academic learning, and can create a barrier to students' social learning, and deflect development of acceptance and appreciation of each other.

It can also result in conflict. Cohen (1986) recommends that teachers avoid conflict, because it can be "costly in terms of human relations and emotions." This stance would be supported by many administrators, who see conflict as politically, culturally, and racially explosive (Cusick, 1983). Thus, although cooperative group learning is one approach to teaching and learning which can potentially be "an exploration of interdependence" or a "project of social

improvement," it is also potentially explosive (Lewin, 1935; Slavin, 1985). This is true particularly in socially diverse contexts, where conflict during CGL, if not resolved, could actually exacerbate negative social relations.

As a way of avoiding debilitating conflict, Cohen (1986) offers an alternative to "pure" organizations of CGL, modifying the structure to provide for teacher-assignment of roles of special "jobs," each with a description of duties, or obligations. Assignment of roles, such as facilitator, recorder, timekeeper, and clean-up person, clarifies the rights and obligations of peers to each other in the learning process. In addition, the roles specify certain "appropriate" things to say to others. They serve to "script" students to a certain extent, into "effective" communication as functioning group members, thus avoiding conflict and potentially negative social interactions. The conflict which most people fear and object to is interpersonal, rather than intellectual, conflict. Cohen (1986) and others support utilizing CGL as a basis for working through intellectual differences. However, Cohen advises to avoid interpersonal conflict through role assignment unless a teacher is working specifically on human relations. That, however, is what I am addressing, in the context of conflict resolution, which is rarely only an impersonal, intellectual process in the classroom (or anywhere).

An additional concern is that, although roles are rotating, rather than permanent, the potential remains for students to be limited from the full range of possible interactions in any given context. In this case, it is not an issue of exclusion by peers; but the students may limit their efforts to token interactions and the "scripted"

contributions.[2] We have, on the one hand, a publicly supported
tradition of avoiding of classroom conflict, a history of social and
cultural diversity in our public schools, and recurring problems of
violence and conflict; and on the other, recent research indicating that
a major goal of schooling should be learning how to cope with conflict
(Resnick, 1987). That leaves us with a paradox.

In order to work through the complex process of democracy, some
conflict is necessary (Oser, 1986). Stanford (1977) describes conflict
as a natural _stage_ in cooperation. Yet, the school community itself
denies the process, seeking "order" in classrooms (Cusick, 1983). And
conflict _can_ exacerbate nonacceptance and contribute to peers' going
beyond being "strangers" to becoming "enemies" (Noddings, 1988). In
response, teachers may be tempted to restrict goals of learning to more
easily attainable and observable objectives, attempting to control
potential _interpersonal_ conflict through role assignment of the
interactions of students. However, if roles are limited and controlled,
the model of CGL becomes more traditional, with inclusion of the teacher
as ultimate authority telling the students how to interact.

In order to develop a sense of community and a cooperative mode of
learning, teachers must provide opportunities for students to drop the
years of social conditioning as egocentric individuals; to internalize a
process of working through difficult problems of diverse interests,
concerns, and agendas; and to develop a communal discourse based on
working through moral conflicts (Oser, 1986; Popkewitz, Pitman, & Barry,
1986).

To teach this, however, is to change teacher practice, embracing
two heretofore negatively sanctioned processes in classrooms: allowing

students to talk with each other and explore learning together; and permitting possible conflict to occur in the process. The teacher who attempts this faces the additional uncertainty of little knowledge available to help guide teaching students to cope with conflict (Resnick, 1987). This study contributes to our understanding of CGL as a sense-making process by identifying how the teacher and the students thought and talked about the problems they encountered as well as the successes they created.

Communal learning is a kind of socialization which has traditionally not existed in public school teaching and learning. We know a great deal about technical aspects of what makes schools "efficient," but little about the interpretive elements of establishing cooperation through cooperative group learning situations. The uncertainty of such situations relates in part to the uncharted territories of nontraditional teaching (Cohen, 1988). It relates also, however, issues of meaning, interpretation, and human agency and choice, and to an element of unpredictability inherent in social interaction which becomes particularly "sticky" in diverse classrooms when working through the process of conflict.

There is a need to identify, in different contexts, the problems and constraints of practice as well as the potential successes of CGL that allow students to work through conflict as a necessary component in the development of cooperation.

CLASSROOM CULTURE

The classroom is a culture, with a set of rules and standards by which participants operate (Cazden, 1986; Erickson, 1986; Florio-Ruane, 1989; Michaels, 1981, 1986). There are many definitions for culture, but two in particular, by Goodenough (1981) and Geertz (1973), provide a basis for viewing learning events at the level of face-to-face interactions.

Goodenough defines culture as "learned and shared standards for perceiving, believing, acting, and evaluating the actions of others" (1971, p. 259; see also Goodenough, 1981, pp. 61-95). How teacher and students perceive what is "cooperative" or "uncooperative" depends in part on their interpretations of what counts as appropriate behaviors for those labels or designations. To look at culture as a tangible, identifiable code involves delving into the histories of those shared standards, as well as individual backgrounds to identify differences in perceptions.

Geertz regards culture as an ongoing process, described as the webs of meaning and interpretations that are created through the interactions of people. Research which follows this definition is interpretive, in search of meaning (see Erickson, 1986). Culture can be altered and redefined by the contributions of any or all of the participants, or by human interaction. This is accomplished through the process of face-to-face communication, what Giroux (1987) calls the "real stuff of culture" because it is creative and carries the possibility of intervention for change (Freire, 1986; Taylor, 1985). We do not yet have much information on how a teacher and students go about the

construction of a system of meaning about cooperation, in the communitarian sense.

Communication occurs in face-to-face interactions, the organization of which is influenced by the status that each person brings into the context (Cohen, 1983, 1986; Cohen & Lotan, 1987; Linton, 1971). There are two ways to view status. Cohen (1983) derives her definition from Berger, Cohen, & Zelditch, Jr. (1966, 1972), who view status as more or less fixed categories of higher or lower value. Goodenough (1971) offers an alternative definition of status, not as characteristics, but as collections of reciprocal rights and duties. The following section addresses theoretical constructs of power, which acknowledge status in the classroom, not only among or between students, but rather between all participants, including the teacher. This formulation acknowledges general categories of status, in terms of power; but does not view them as rigid and fixed. Instead, it acknowledges that roles are selected according to a specific context, and therefore, they are open to interpretation and can change (Merton, 1971).

THE POWER STRUCTURE

Although many researchers have traditionally highlighted the theoretical egalitarian nature of cooperative group learning, actually several theoretical frameworks of power operate. This section addresses theoretical constructs of power which represent idealized as well as actualized dimensions of cooperative group learning in general, considering the various dimensions of rights and obligations which apply to each construct.

Within the classroom, there are actually multi-dimensional aspects to the power structure. They include the ideal, egalitarian structure which in this study was the focus of the teacher's socio-psychological goals for student development; the traditional conception of power represented by students' previous knowledge of cooperation and student/teacher relationships in settings other than CGL; and the actualized CGL structure which included pieces of both of the other two, but which varied from context to context and among participants.

In order to understand the relationship of the various power structures better, I have arranged them in a visual construct, with t standing for teacher and s for students; the arrows point to the person with power in each relationship, denoting that the person from whom the arrow originates has obligations to, and is therefore is less powerful than, the person toward whom the arrow points.

Figure 1 shows the difference in the nature of interactions between a traditional power structure (A), the ideal, egalitarian structure of the teacher's vision of cooperative teaching (B), and the actualized dual power structure of CGL teaching and learning context (C) which includes pieces of both A and B.

Figure 1

Power Structure Models

Traditional   Ideal   Actual

(A)   (B)   (C)
t   t
^   ^

s   s<>t<>s   s <> s <> s <> s
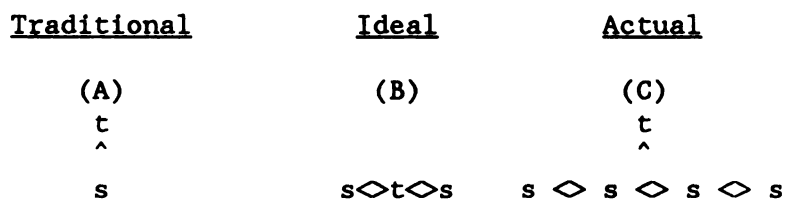
In (A), the relationship is between individual student and the teacher. Power runs one way, with formalized student obligations to the teacher. In (B), the duties and rights between students and student/teacher are more balanced and equal. The structure of part (C) retains elements of both the traditional (A) and the egalitarian power structures (B). Therefore (C) is much more complex, containing two <u>different</u> and potentially contradictory conceptions of rights and obligations in interactions and power relationships among the students and teacher.

The arrows in Figure 1 indicate power, i.e., who has the right to demand an obligation, or duty, from another person. To better understand what this means, in terms of interactions, I examine first the rights and obligations in a traditional power classroom structure. The emphasis in this structure is on the students' obligations to the teacher. For each student obligation there is a corresponding right, as indicated in the following model:

Figure 2

Teacher Rights and Student Obligations
in a Traditional Structure

<u>Student Obligations</u>   <u>Teacher Rights</u>

be silent   have "silence"

sit at individual desks
and work alone   have students sit at
individual desks
working alone

remain quietly in seat   have "order" of movement

This model represents a top-down hierarchical power structure with teacher as authority. Note students do not have equal or same rights with the teacher. It graphically illustrates Cherryholmes' description of the asymmetrical quality of classroom interactions between teacher and students, created because "teacher authority militates against symmetrical interactions" (1988, p. 169). Symmetricality refers, in this context, to power running in both directions, indicated in Figure 1, diagram B; asymmetricality refers to power running only in one direction, indicated in Figure 1, diagram A, which represents the traditional classroom organization.

Figure 2 is not meant to imply, however, that in the traditional classroom, the students have no rights, i.e., no reciprocity. Figure 3 indicates the rights as students have generally interpreted them under the traditional structure.

Figure 3

Student Rights and Obligations
under a Traditional Classroom Structure

Student Obligations to the Teacher	Student Rights with the Teacher
no talking with peers	can talk with teacher, with permission
work alone	work easiest, fastest way possible
sit quietly	talk with peer with teacher's permission

Figure 3 indicates how students interpret their rights, under a traditional power hierarchy. They have very different conceptions of what they ought to do, within a traditional system, than within a cooperative learning context. From the various models in Figure 1, it is possible to determine whether teacher and students are interpreting the context as fitting both systems, or one or the other, by examining their interactions and talk about what they should be doing and why.

In contrast to the traditional structure of teaching and learning, CGL provides opportunities for symmetrical interactions. The following model of rights and obligations within a CGL organization indicates the more symmetrical nature of the interactions. This, of course, is only the case when the rights and obligations are specified as between students, rather than between teacher and student.

Figure 4

CGL: Reciprocality of Rights and Obligations
between Peers

(Where Student A and Student B — any student)

Student A	Student B
Ob: talk with st. B	Rt: have st. A talk with me
Rt: have st. B talk with me	Ob: talk with st. A

Ob: take turns	Rt: get a turn
Rt: get a turn	Ob: take turns

Figure 4 (continued)

Ob: listen to st. B	Rt: be listened to by st. A
Rt: be listened to by st. B	Ob: listen to st. A

Ob: share ideas with st. B	Rt: have st. A share ideas
Rt: have st. B share ideas	Ob: share ideas with st. A

Ob: accept st. B's ideas	Rt: have st. A accept my ideas
Rt: have st. B accept my ideas	Ob: accept st. A's ideas

Ob: share doing work	Rt: have st. A share doing the work
Rt: have st. B share doing work	Ob: share doing the work

Ob: give help to st. B	Rt: get help from st. A
Rt: get help from st. B	Ob: give help to st. A

Ob: include st. B in decision-making	Rt: be included in decision-making
Rt: be included in decision-making	Ob: include st. A in decision-making

---

Note how different the rights and obligations are in the two different models of power structure illustrated in Figure 3 and Figure 4. In the latter, there is reciprocality between each action, so that students have corresponding rights and obligations with each other, so that each norm, such as listening, turn taking, sharing ideas, etc. is both an obligation and a right. In contrast, in Figure 3, only the teacher has the right to talk; the students are to listen and be quiet unless she indicates otherwise.

In the ideal (B) or actualized (C) CGL organization, as opposed to a traditional (A) classroom (see Figure 1), students have more rights, denoted by arrows pointing to them. This change in the relationship among students, the positive sanctions allowing peer interaction, is what is usually emphasized by researchers. Corresponding to the greater number of rights, students have fewer obligations to the teacher than in the traditional organization. They no longer have to be quiet or sit by themselves. There are several dimensions to student duties within the CGL structure. First of all, duties to each other are reciprocal. This is indicated by the direction of arrows in the horizontal dimension, with power running both directions between students.

Second, students are encouraged under this organization to help peers; ideally, this would lead to develop caring attitudes, and fidelity to their peers (Greene, 1983; Noddings, 1986; Slavin, 1985). This is different from the competitive structures, in which one student's success is another's failure (Skon, Johnson, & Johnson, 1971).

What is not usually emphasized is that, although students have fewer traditional obligations, they still actually have increased duties, being obligated in CGL not only to their peers but also still to

the _teacher_. This is denoted by the increased number of arrows pointing
from s. They apply to both the vertical power hierarchy and the
horizontal egalitarian peer structures. (Actually, diagrams B and C in
Figure 1 are greatly simplified portrayals; they cannot do justice to
the student interactional component, which when actualized is more like
a net, or web.)

Because of the increased opportunities for interactions, and the
increased duties and rights within both the idealized and actualized
structures of CGL, students have more "work" in determining what their
rights and obligations are within each context. It is a much more
complex situation than sitting in a chair, doing seatwork alone.

The dimension of _added duties_ is further complicated by the fact
that the original duties to the teacher are of a _different nature_ in the
CGL context. Although students still have a duty to do the work, to
complete the assigned task, this is now a _group_ rather than an
individual obligation. In CGL, work becomes a social construction of a
group of students, which requires learning to use a different set of
skills, particularly communication skills.

Florio-Ruane (1989) cites cooperative learning as an opportunity
for teacher and students to create a learning community by redefining
rights and obligations, with each other and their work (i.e., the power
structure). While this is theoretically accurate, one problem is
dealing with the tacit nature of the power structures in this form of
classroom culture (Goffman, 1961). Even though CGL alters the
traditional teacher and student roles, much of this remains implicit and
"taken for granted"; as a result, many different interpretations are
possible (Garfinkel, paraphrased in Cook-Gumperz, 1975, p. 138).

Students must make decisions regarding their obligations and priorities continuously throughout interactive tasks. Students have to make choices at times whether to concentrate on obligations to peers, sharing turns and ideas, or to concentrate on the primacy of task completion, the major obligation to the teacher. This study examines what affected such choices.

THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION IN LEARNING COOPERATION

Although the power structure may strongly influence participants' perceived rights and obligations and therefore, their interactions, there are other factors that influence interactions. One of the most powerful is language itself, the "stuff" of which CGL interactions are made.

As we shift our view of learning from an individual to a social construction, oral communication takes on a greater significance in the process of learning. Language in its spoken form, as speech, is the medium which unites the cognitive and the social, the way that the intellectual process becomes socially mediated (Florio-Ruane, 1989). Language provides the basis for personal reflection, elaboration of experience, and social communication; the meanings are dependent upon the interpretations of the participants (Cazden, 1986; Leach, 1976; Vygotsky, 1978).

In order to understand what contribution CGL could make toward development of a cooperative learning community, I looked at peer communications and examined how participants interpreted the interactions that were designed to be cooperative. I wanted to know how

what teacher and peers said enhanced or detracted from resolution of conflicts and creation of open spaces for understanding, acceptance, and appreciation of diversity in others.

In any given context, rights and obligations were not considered rigidly fixed categories, altered and negotiated in the process of interacting (Philips, 1972; Erickson & Shultz, 1977). This was due to the interpretive and constitutive nature of language (Taylor, 1985). It was through the use of language that students mutually constructed, altered, or reconstructed rules within a given event, "redefining the situation itself in the process of performing it" (Erickson, 1975, p. 484).

What was elicited by a speaker as a message was still open to interpretation by the listener (Leach, 1976). There were interesting cases of differences of interpretations, both among and between students and between students and the teacher. This is crucial, because differing interpretations between student and teacher may result in differential access to knowledge.

Breakdowns between student and teacher are a result of differing conceptions of what is happening. In CGL, there can be breakdowns between peers also. How students interpreted what was happening was related not only to the current context but also to personal experiences, norms, and values (see also Au & Jordan, 1978; Bremme & Erickson, 1982; Erickson, 1981, 1982; Erickson & Mohatt, 1982; Gumperz, 1977, 1982; Mehan, Hertweck, Combs, & Flynn, 1982; Michaels, 1981, 1986).

According to Bernstein, power relationships outside the school "penetrate the organization, distribution, and evaluation of knowledge

through the social context of their transmission" (1972, p. 150). This study explores the school bureaucracy, as well as outside-school factors which affected the teacher, curriculum, students, and meanings produced. It identifies previous meanings brought to the classroom and relates them to the local production of meaning as students were encouraged to cooperate with each other (Freire, 1970, 1986; Habermas, 1976, 1985; Taylor, 1985). This study explores how these various outside influences -- both of personal and institutional histories -- affected students' interpretations of cooperation.

When a group is diverse, the possibility for differing interpretations increases, as a consequence of participants' different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Because a speaker's primary language and culture may have an impact on the shaping of ideas, the diversity of linguistic background could result in differing interpretations of verbal and nonverbal information (Whorf, 1956; Cole, Gay, Glick, & Sharp, 1971). Even greater complexities in creating shared norms of cooperation exist in the diverse classroom.

Language enabled me to access the knowledge and thought processes of the participants. I asked questions that normally were not asked, elicited information that was usually tacit to find out what we can know (Barnes, 1976). To date, there are few case studies available about the sensemaking of participants in the cooperative process in CGL activities.

NOTES

1 The coding system for data is presented in Figure 8, page 40.
   Transcript conventions are presented in Appendix A.

2 As an instructor of a field decision-making lab which focuses on
   multi-ability cooperative learning, I have both observed this on
   countless occasions and read many student reports in journals of such
   experiences. Certain roles, in particular, such as timekeeper and
   materials person, seem to "turn off" students to further interactions
   on the basis of having less status. These roles are seen as less
   important by students, and they assume that _they_ are less important,
   also, within the group context. Even if those "lesser" roles are
   changed and renamed, students seem to identify quickly which roles
   provide higher decision-making regarding interactions and
   contributions. Some students, when not given the most active roles,
   such as recorder or facilitator, choose to drop out of the
   interactions.

Chapter 2

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROJECT OVERVIEW

This research project took place in a fifth grade classroom with 16 students of multilingual, multicultural, multiracial backgrounds, and a middle-aged female teacher with 18 years of public school teaching experience. Observations took place over a three-month period, during which the teacher initiated the cooperative experience, beginning in late September and ending in mid-December. I observed a range of classroom organizations, including traditional classroom operations, class discussions, and hybrids of various organizations; most of all, I observed cooperative group work. The kinds of CGL which Mrs. E. utilized were most similar to Group Investigation and CoOp CoOp; however, Mrs. E. wrote some of the curriculum, providing basic information from which students selected projects, conducted follow-up research, etc. Never were any of the cooperative group organizations competitive; students cooperated not only **within** groups, but also across groups. This was particularly typical during the Indian unit, in which the four groups ultimately combined their projects and reports into one large presentation for visitors. Mrs. E. rewarded the students with a group grade (a certain number of points) for participating and contributing to the Indian unit; in other cases, she did not necessarily assign a grade.

Figure 5 indicates the major events which occurred during the research. Not all CGL activities are included; highlighted are the

dates of the major cooperative group unit, the Indian unit, as well as the storywriting and other relevant lessons. Also included are events from outside the classroom, such as the national Presidential elections and a school district meeting which occurred during the research and were connected to the teaching context.

Figure 5

Major Events during the Research

Date	Event
Prior to 9/21	Initiate cooperative group work in "Narnia" reading group
9/21*	Enter site to commence research project
9/21	Initiate cooperative group learning with whole class in science
9/22*	Interview individuals who had left out Willie's ideas, to reconstruct "what happened
9/27	"Narnia" group CGL map lesson (involved 1/2 of the class)
9/29	Parent Night/Open House
10/4,5	"Narnia" CGL lessons, listing traits of story characters, followed by teacher-led group discussions
10/4	Initiate Indian unit with whole class discussion
10/17*	Interview with Group One about leaving out Gilberto
10/18 or 19	School district meeting announcing to fifth grade teachers standardization of the social studies curriculum
11/1	Class discussion on cooperation; student written responses
11/7	National presidential elections

Figure 5 (continued)

Date	Event
11/7*	Conduct first set of individual interviews
11/14	Mrs. E. announces termination of Indian unit
11/16	Mrs. E. reinstates Indian unit
11/17	Students rehearse presentations for Indian unit
11/18	Culmination of Indian unit, with group presentations to visiting parents and other classes
12/6-9*	CGL storywriting unit (designed and taught by researcher) which included class discussions each day of what students have learned about cooperation
12/15	Class discussion on cooperation and ideas from storywriting unit experiences; end of formal research
2/24*	Follow-up interviews with teacher and 10 students

*Note: Asterisk indicates actions initiated by the researcher, rather than teacher or other in-school personnel.

Interviews were conducted during and after the focal period, from September to the end of February. Research focused on teaching by the classroom teacher, but also included segments of teaching which I did, as participant observer.

Group work featured students working in groups of 3, 4, and 5. Some of the early group work in the first month included only part of the class; this was particularly true in reading lessons using cooperative group activities. Most, although not all, cooperative group activities were related to units of two or more sessions.

Content areas featured in cooperative learning activities included language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. In-depth research was conducted on CGL during a 7-week project, the Indian Unit, which extended from early October to mid-November.

Mrs. E. organized the class into four learning groups associated with four geographical areas of the United States. In the study, I refer to the groups interchangeably, as Mrs. E. did, with seating arrangement in the classroom: Northeast (Group One), Plains (Group Two), Southwest (Group Three), and Northwest (Group Four). Each group studied common themes such as shelter, food, recreation, arts, etc. Although assignments and projects were similar, the information for each was different, as they were studying different tribes which inhabited the assigned geographic area.

Figure 6 indicates members of each group.

Figure 6

Student Groups during the Indian Unit

Northeast	Northwest	Plains	Southwest
Robbie	Sivan	Onochie	Ricardo
Joshua	Willie	Megen	Mun Sing
Gilberto	Michael	Emily	Lina
Asbeid	April	*	Courtney
			Hasaan

*Note: One student abstained from participating in the
        study, by parental choice.

In cases of individual lessons or units other than the main ones, then I designated the group by the names of participants (i.e., rather than saying "Group One," I say, "Robbie's group," etc.).

Some assignments within the larger unit were completed in one session, which could vary from an hour to several hours; some were extended to a week or more. Specific assignments included reading aloud teacher-prepared texts and locating main ideas; doing library research to find information on various tribes; filling out large group "retrieval" charts with research information; making group murals; creating artifacts; etc. A few students also did individual written reports and projects at home.

During the second week of December, I conducted the final storywriting unit. Figure 7 indicates the student groups for this unit.

Figure 7

Student Groups during the Storywriting Unit

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Courtney	Joshua	Robbie	Lina
Asbeid	Emily	Megen	Gilberto
Michael	Ricardo	Sivan	Willie
Onochie	April	*	Mun Sing

*Note: one student abstained from the study

During the storywriting unit, students participated each day in a class discussion on current thinking about cooperation; for three days, they worked together to compose group stories, written in three parts based on the assigned themes of conflict, resolution, and cooperation.

The final class discussion about their experiences occurred the following week, when the classroom teacher returned from a brief sick-leave. Follow-up interviews with the teacher and ten students conducted in late February, two months after the basic research period, concluded the data collection phase of the research.

The Site

The district, which houses one high school, two middle schools, and several elementary schools, is located in a Midwestern urban area containing several universities and colleges. The city itself is extremely diverse, in terms of race and nationality, housing many students from the local university and colleges. Although it is not the most widely-publicized nor widely acclaimed school district in the area, nevertheless it is known for its diversity and fine curriculum.

Lincoln Elementary School is a medium-sized elementary school with students from all over the globe, as well as a majority of U.S. states. This is a matter of pride to the school, and a member of the local PTA worked for months assembling information about countries and states represented in the student population that year. This was then displayed on a large map of the world in the hallway near the school office.

There are many special programs to meet diverse students' needs at Lincoln. A county-wide program for the hearing impaired is housed in a recently-built special wing. Special buses transport children from two cities to the site each day. In addition, there are many support personnel for the students in the areas of English as a Second Language,

speech, reading, counseling, and special education. This year, the district had also increased support by extending specialists' time in art, music, and physical education. This was designed to provide classroom teachers with ninety minutes more of planning time each week.

Everywhere were signs of the school's cultural, racial, and linguistic diversity. Identification tags on lockers hosted names such as Isma, Mirna, Arwa, Min Jing; children of various nationalities and races passed through the halls during the school day, meeting with a specialist who taught English as a second language.

The classroom I studied consisted of 16 students, with one additional student who abstained from lack of parental consent. One student, April, joined the study in October when she enrolled in this school; Hasaan left the school in November. Although 16 students participated in total, often there were only 15 enrolled at one time.

In terms of demographics, the students did not represent a "typical" American public school classroom. This was true in terms of race, culture, gender, and level of education of parents. Nine of 16, or 56% of the students, were from cultures other than the U.S. They included representation from Brazil, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Iran, Israel, Korea, Japan, and Bangladesh. In terms of race, 10 out of 16, or 62.5%, were other than European Caucasian. There were black, Asian, Hispanic, American Indian, and non-European Caucasian students. Gender representation of this classroom was tipped in terms of males, with only 6 of 16, or 37.5%, female. Table 1 indicates more specifically the composition of the classroom in terms of culture, racial, gender, and parents' education.

Table 1

Study Demographics

International Background (Cultural)

Country	No. of students
Bangladesh	1
Brazil	1
Iran	2
Israel	1
Jamaica	1
Japan	1
Korea	1
Mainland U.S.	7
Puerto Rico*	1

Total: 9/16 or 56% diverse cultures

*Mother born there; student born in U.S.

Racial/Ethnic Composition

Race	No. of students
American Indian*	2
Black	1
European Caucasian	6
Hispanic	2
Non-European Caucasian	3
Asian	2

Total: 10/16 or 62.5% other than European Caucasian

*These children were 1/4 native American; also European Caucasian

Gender	No. of students
Female	6
Male	10

Total: 6/16 or 37.5% female
10/16 or 62.5% male

Table 1 (continued)

Education of at least one Parent	No. of students
Higher degree than B.A.	13
University student	1
(level unknown)	1
Unknown	2

Total: at least 13/16 or 81.3% held higher degrees

_____

Although the classroom was unusual in many respects, perhaps the most
unusual feature of these students' backgrounds was the high level of
education of most of the students' parents, combined with a lack of
social class differences. All students lived in moderate housing, with
many located in University housing. At least 13 of the students'
parents were seeking degrees higher than a bachelors degree; most were
seeking a doctorate. Some students had both parents studying for
doctorates; other students' parents were seeking a second doctorate. In
many communities in this country, families with such a high level of
education would live in very expensive housing and the children would be
distinguished by their designer clothing. That was not the case at
Lincoln School. Students either lived in modest University housing or
relatively small homes in the immediate community; rather than designer
jeans, they generally wore corduroys or jogging pants. There were no
obvious or visible signs of social class differences.

However, this is not to say that the families would not be
distinguished as a higher social class in their own countries. Once I
did hear of a student's having referred to having higher status in his
country; the comments from a peer indicated that she was antagonized by
his claim to royalty. But it seemed a rare occurrence, and to my

knowledge, made no obvious impact on CGL interactions with peers, who continued to accept him as a valued participant.

Many parents frequented the school, particularly at the beginning and end of each day, to accompany their young ones home across a busy main street. They made a social event of the visits, congregating and chatting in Chinese, Spanish, French, Arabic and many other languages.

Although many parents personally accompanied their children to and from the building, still a well-organized program of safety patrols stood guard in the morning, at noon, and after school. Parents, in fact, were very active in many facets of running the school. They held fund-raising "fairs" and also participated in policy concerns. One teacher of thirteen years' service in the school had been transferred to a different site because parents had insisted upon the change. They were powerful and listened to with respect.

Part of the reason was that the parents themselves were extremely well-educated. Most children in the school had at least one parent who was studying or teaching at the university. Many were educators from foreign universities. When they wanted action, many knew the system and were articulate in pursuing their goals and needs within it, although of course some faced linguistic and cultural barriers.

The faculty itself was also diverse, with representation of various racial and ethnic backgrounds, as well as a teacher with a physical handicapping condition from an automobile accident. The staff, as a whole, was warm and friendly to outsiders, and many were close with each other. An early indication to me of the school climate was the reception given to me and all visitors by the school secretary, Annie,

who was personable, receptive, and helpful. When I got a flat tire,

Annie came halfway across the school to help me with arrangements.

The teachers at Lincoln School had a three-person "social

committee" which planned the Friday food-sharing festivities and special

staff get-togethers. Before the winter holidays, they had two sign-up

sheets for social activities in the teacher's lounge. A huge sheet of

paper sported personal notes written from each of the teachers to their

"secret Santa," thanking the person for some special gift. Mrs. E., the

teacher who participated in this research project, said it was "uncanny"

how well the person knew her needs (Fld 12/15/88). (See Figure 8 for

notation system of data sources and Appendix A for transcript

conventions.)

Figure 8

Coding Symbols for Data

Code	Type of Data
CD	Class discussion
Fld	Fieldnotes (collected in the natural group settings)
Int	Interview
Ints	Interview of two or more students together
N PC	Notes from phone conversation
Tr Fld	Transcript/Fieldnotes (took notes and audiotaped)
Tr Int	Transcript of interview (from audiotape)
SW	Student writing

The staff maintained not only social ties of friendship. I also

observed many signs of collegiality, in which teachers would share

materials, ideas, and concerns about students or curriculum. They

worked out sharing of time and materials, such as the computer

facilities, without need for administrative intervention. They also worked with the community, gaining support services and also sharing their resources.

The school principal was an extremely tall and large man, who mitigated his potentially threatening size with kindness and gentleness and an impressive button collection in his office which served as an object for conversation with visitors. On a couple of occasions, I caught sight of him donning a sweatshirt with a Lincoln Elementary School logo, worn for special events such as assemblies. At assemblies, rather than distance himself, Mr. G. sat on a folding chair situated on the gym floor with students and faculty. The school had a very family-like atmosphere.

At a fire drill, Mr. G. addressed the faculty and student body outside the tennis courts with a megaphone; the scene was encouraging. He spoke in positive terms, praising their progress, reminding them of the relevance and importance of the project. When he passed through the halls during a tornado drill, he gently motioned occasionally for a student to put his/her heads down, never speaking in a raised voice.

The school climate was one of nurturance, rather than of stress on discipline and order. Those things were taken for granted, even by the students. One of the fifth graders, Ricardo, compared this school to a previous one he had attended, in which violence was common. He had concluded that such violence did not occur at Lincoln School, the difference being the absence of poverty associated with the urban areas (Int 2/24/88).[1]

Mrs. E. was a middle-aged teacher, going into her last year before "retirement" and moving on to other roles as an educator. She had

taught in several states, as well as several schools within this particular district. Perhaps because of her diverse experiences and contacts, Mrs. E. was astute politically with what was happening on the district level, as well as within her own building.

I chose to collaborate with and learn from Mrs. E. in her teaching context because I knew from previous contact with her that she and I shared philosophical notions about cooperation. It was essential to find a teacher who would allow children to work through conflict, if I were to find out anything about the potential of this teaching method and classroom organization to the building of co-operation. I was particularly interested in how she associated CGL with social studies, which she described as,

> social relationships -- how we relate to each other. How
> we take care of things? How we look out for our
> environment...it's all part of it.
> (Tr Fld 11/14/88)

Mrs. E. stressed interpersonal relationships. In mid-summer, she was already establishing goals for the next school year, emphasizing what she called "the other side of the report card:" concerns about friendship, fear, goal setting, being creative, learning "not just textbook" (Int 7/8/88). Mrs. E.'s caring attitude had become a benchmark of her teaching early in her career, when she first taught in a southern industrial city. She reported that she had refused to paddle students in a school where "everyone had paddled -- for everything -- if they stayed too long in the restroom, if they talked, if they didn't get their work done..." Mrs. E. was adamant about her belief, although the principal had told her "You'll change your mind, soon enough!" She did not, although "it took two or three months to get across to the kids

that you care about them, and that's why you didn't paddle" (Int 10/21/87).

Mrs. E.'s students' views matched her self-perceptions as a caring individual. One student, Ricardo, pointed out that the kind of learning provided in Mrs. E.'s room could make a difference in the world, especially "if we had teachers like Mrs. E. who're nice enough to give you a chance" (Tr Int 2/24/89).

Parents saw Mrs. E. as a distinguished and outstanding teacher.[2] One parent told her "it's a miracle" what Mrs. E. had accomplished with her son, who she never expected even to speak, that year, due to problems incurred in another school district (N PC 1/5/89).

When students were unable to concentrate, Mrs. E. devised special "centering" activities, with the help of a book for teachers and some special New Age music she provided. She spent only five minutes calming the students; "it worked!" she pointed out to me, as children responded to her in hushed voices (Fld 10/24/88).

Mrs. E.'s humanistic concerns were evident not only in the way she approached the students, and in her organization of instruction, but also in what knowledge she chose to include and stress in the curriculum. When she introduced the native American unit, Mrs. E. provided additional input regarding the difficult living conditions these Americans have faced. The following statement reflects Mrs. E.'s personal concerns and experiences revealing the plight of native Americans, which she shared with her students:

> They were called savages, not people. And they were
> thought of as being less than people. This social
> studies book does a better job than the old ones, of
> presenting their situation, but when you see it in
> person, it's worse...in Scottsdale, Arizona, as you drive
> up this one road, on one side, you have a rich community

and on the other side, you have an Indian reservation.
It is so striking, the difference...they're not the
people living in poverty, either...up north...where the
Four Corners are, you will see Indians walking in the
middle of nowhere, and it is 110 degrees. You wonder how
they can do it. Their houses are hovels...the land...
gets depleted...there's illness. If kids grow up and go
to school, they usually don't move back. The incidence
of alcoholism is very high, and tuberculosis.
(Fld 10/4/88)

Mrs. E. was caring, selective, independent, and nonconformist.
Although helpful and collegial to her peers, she also had her own
opinions. For example, she did not agree with the rest of the teachers,
who, she reported, would "hang her" if they knew she was complaining
about the extra planning the district had allotted elementary classroom
teachers, providing teacher release time by booking more student time
with art, music, and physical education specialists. The others saw it
as a gift to them; she saw it as a "loss for the students," since they
would have less time for integration of subjects, spending more time
fragmented with the various specialists.

Everything she did had her own personal touch. The cooperative
group units were her own design and a "tradition" of hers at Lincoln
Elementary School. Mrs. E. was familiar with many specialists on
cooperative group learning, but still chose to create her own terms to
talk about what she was doing. Instead of standard terms such as MACL,
CGL, CL, she coined her own: cooperative teaching, or cooperative
education. Her individualistic approach was not because a lack of
knowledge, but rather a synthesis or combination of the writing of
various people. When I asked who she was using as models, she informed
me:

> Johnson and Slavin and Cohen: a little bit of each one is
> called **salad bowl**. That kind of follows my philosophy.
> I don't like predisposed or preconceived notions about
> the kids' abilities.
> (Tr Int 11/17/88)

Mrs. E. approached her teaching with seriousness but also a dollop of humor, as she showed in labeling her approach "salad bowl." A very reflective teacher, she adapted her instruction constantly according to her current perceptions of the needs of the students. One example of this concerned a rule she had made about the reading corner, which had two beanbag chairs in it. Because students often crowded around this area, Mrs. E. had told them that only three students could be there at a time. One day, she returned after lunch, to find four people in the group. Onochie sat next to Megen on one beanbag; Robbie rested with his head on the periphery of Emily's. Mrs. E. surveyed the situation and commented to me: "My rule is usually three, but this group seems to be able to handle it. Maybe I should change the rule to be about noise" (Fld 10/4/88).

She was always willing to reassess and change, according to the most recent evidence. Mrs. E.'s statement to me in one informal chat, "I have rethought what we'll be doing," was typical of her reflective stance to her teaching practice. In this case, she had made the decision, "I think I need to have the group work be more open ended" (Int 11/7/88). This orientation to her teaching practice was not surprising, given the kinds of things she found inspiring in people who had taught her; she used words like "creative," "unique," "dynamic" (Tr Int 11/17/88).

With reference to her use of cooperative group work, she described it as having "evolved" out of the needs of the students and her own needs, as well.

> It's evolved; it's come just from looking at groups and seeing what they need, looking at the curriculum, and seeing how I can use that curriculum to meet those needs; and sometimes, because I enjoy doing it, it comes out of my own experiences and joys and thinking about my own children...when they've come home and excited about things, usually those were the teachers with a not paper-pencil traditional basis of doing things -- yet they've accomplished so much more.
> (Tr Int 11/17/88)

Her reasons for teaching cooperation were based on multiple factors, which included philosophical concerns, professional concerns about learning, and psychological concerns both for the students and for herself. Mrs. E. claimed that having students work together "can strengthen their knowledge" (Tr Int 2/24/89).

Most of all, she said, she taught "to please kids":

> not only curriculum, I always teach the curriculum and I always teach...my goals and the district goals but I teach to please kids, because I want them to be comfortable in that classroom every day.
> (Tr Int 11/17/88)

By offering cooperative group activities, Mrs. E. encouraged the students to feel ownership of their classroom. When they were preparing for parent visitation evening, she said to the class, "Look at the room. Do you see anything else that needs to be done? This is your party, your room. You want it to look nice" (Fld 9/24/88).

Mrs. E. spent extra time and effort to make the classroom special for students. She framed and displayed the students' art projects as it was difficult for the art specialist, who was not always in the building. When the other teacher realized what Mrs. E. had done, she

thanked Mrs. E., who responded, "It's my job; well, maybe it isn't my job, but I do it, anyway!" (Fld 9/29/88). Several times during the observation period, Mrs. E. spent prolonged periods working on special projects after school or on weekends, sometimes with the help of her husband. It may have been her eighteenth year of teaching, but she was not doing the "same old things."

Several times during my visits, Mrs. E. shared information she had read in teacher's journals and other sources of research on education, hunting down the sources and encouraging me to read and share them with the students in the teacher preparation foundations classes I taught. In addition, Mrs. E.'s colleagues sought her expertise, frequently borrowing materials or sharing resources Mrs. E. had located (Int 10/18/88; Int 10/10/88; Fld 11/18/88). When a teacher left this school to join her husband in another state, Mrs. E. made a special gift of several teacher resource books she thought the friend would need for her new job.

Although this particular school did not have apparent problems related to social class differences, Mrs. E. maintained a strong concern about social issues. She lived those concerns, raising her own children to be social advocates for the downtrodden. Mrs. E. explained that she and her husband "had tried to instill this commitment" in their children, as a family (Int 11/3/88).

The reason for the planned early retirement was not because Mrs. E. was tired of teaching; she said she had "enough money" and wanted to do something more for children. She had considered several possibilities, including working with minority students from "tough" inner-city neighborhoods of a large metropolis who moved and transferred into local

area elementary schools. Mrs. E. perceived that these students did not know how to "play the school game" and that she could help them to acquire the knowledge and requisite social skills to succeed.

RESEARCH ORIENTATION

The study was qualitative in approach following the interpretive research tradition which Cusick represents, assuming that a small in-depth study would be more valuable than a large superficial sample, because "participation on an intimate level gives one an access to the deeper life and the deeper meanings of the institution" (1983, p. 7). And, I would add, of the individual.

Utilizing methods of fieldwork, participant observation, teaching as research, and interviewing, I conducted the study over a three-month period, with one additional day two months later allotted for follow-up interviews with the teacher and ten students.

The study focused on learning as a part of everyday events in the classroom (Cazden, 1986). Within these contexts, people played a central role through face-to-face interactions (Gumperz, 1977, 1982; Hymes, 1982). The students and teacher mutually established and negotiated the interactions, jointly constructing and interpreting what they were doing through communication (Erickson & Shultz, 1977).

The local meaning of interactive events was determined through methods of inductive analysis and sociolinguistic analysis of data from observations of what participants said and did to accomplish cooperative activity, and also through interpretation of students' group

storywriting. Supplementary data from interviews further explicated the participants' perspectives.

Transcripts were prepared according to the system developed by Jefferson (1978) (See Appendix A). Categories emerged (were extracted) as a result of inductive analysis of the data (Erickson, 1986).

Information from out-of-school contexts such as experiences in the home and in organized sports, as well as global perspectives of students, was used, because the meanings of cooperation which resulted from these experiences provided a backdrop against which students made sense of the classroom cooperative learning activities. This particular body of information emerged from private interviews with students. Many of the questions utilized came from hypotheses about the nature of students' preexisting views of cooperation from outside contexts; some ideas emerged from my experiences and observations independent of the research itself, representing an attempt to connect the meaning of this local research with larger societal issues.

These previous experiences of students provided insight into student perceptions of cooperation and their construction of meaning within the initiation of the cooperative process. The role of context, including both the students' dual context of obligations and rights, and the teacher's macro context, was incorporated into the discussion.

Although certain students were utilized as informants more than others, it was not necessary to identify and isolate informants, as the class was so small. All of the participating students were interviewed, with the exception of Hasaan, who moved before the major portion of the interviewing process began. Figure 9 indicates codings for the teacher's and students' names.

Figure 9

Coding of Participants:

Code	Name of Student
Ap	April
As	Asbeid
Ct	Courtney
Em	Emily
Gi	Gilberto
Hs	Hasaan
Js	Joshua
Li	Lina
Mg	Megen
Mi	Michael
MS	Mun Sing
On	Onochie
Ri	Ricardo
Rb	Robbie
Si	Sivan
Wi	Willie
ME	Mrs. E.

I traced how definitions of cooperation and participation, with corresponding rights and obligations, changed within and across various contexts. Of particular interest was when, and in what way, students' views differed from those of the teacher, and from each other; and how the differences affected perception of what was "happening," i.e., what was "cooperative," or not.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The key question at the start of the study was:

> HOW DO TEACHER/STUDENTS MAKE SENSE OF AND RESPOND TO THE NOTION OF COOPERATING, IN TEACHING/LEARNING COOPERATIVE GROUP LEARNING IN A FIFTH GRADE CLASSROOM?

Subsidiary questions included the following:

A. What are the teacher's beliefs about what cooperation
    is, and how she can best teach students to cooperate;
    and what does she identify as the constraints and
    problems in teaching cooperation?

B. What are the teacher's beliefs about the role of
    conflict in the cooperative process? What are the
    teacher's goals, in terms of conflict?

C. What are the students' beliefs about what cooperation
    is, what cooperative contexts are, why and how they
    learn to cooperate, and the problems of learning
    cooperation?

D. What are the tasks and activities that the teacher
    and students do, to make sense together of the
    cooperative process?

E. What is the change over time in teacher/student
    beliefs and actions? How do definitions of
    cooperation change over time, for teacher and for
    students? What influences the change?

A switch in the focus of data collection occurred halfway through
the three-month period, as a result of two changes. One was the effects
of the standardization of the curriculum on the teacher. Noting that I
was "one more constraint, or one more variable she had to balance when
deciding what to do with the kids," I feared that my presence might be
an additional pressure and imposition on the teacher, who was facing
added demands and feeling stress. I began to shift my focus of
attention away from the teacher, after Mrs. E. expressed concern about
her ability to do as much in-depth cooperative work with students
because of the new district requirements. As a result of this shift, I
began to spend more time with the students, which was appropriate anyhow
because of a growing interest in the possibility that students were
thinking about cooperation as compliance. I began, at that point in
November, to conduct private interviews with students. The effect of
shift in data collection is the great amount of information about

individual student perceptions about what it meant to cooperate. This might never have occurred had there been no district change in context.

GENERALIZEABILITY

In quantitative terms, this study is negligible. The sample is exceedingly small, involving only one classroom, and the time period was relatively short, although I obtained rich data from the 90 hours of observation and transcripts drawn from the 40 hours of audiotapes of student interviews. The teacher herself mentioned a year later she wished I could have returned to see the "end result." The study does not represent a typical public school classroom, in terms of the "teacher-pleasing" fifth graders, supportive and well-educated parents, and the experienced, humanistic, innovative teacher.

However, the unusual confluence of circumstances was a strength of this study, for it enabled the removal of variables that normally confound the interactive CGL situation, so that other factors could be brought to light.

One other issue is how -- or if -- this study could contribute to our knowledge about CGL by comparison with other studies, as part of a meta-analysis of CGL effects. It is doubtful that this type of study would "fit," since the teacher's approach was eclectic and not specific to a particular program such as Finding Out/Descubrimiento (FOD) (Cohen, 1987) or Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD) (Slavin, 1980). On the other hand, although the study does not fit a neatly-prearranged category, the fact that the teacher did not use only one approach may more closely approximate the reality of teaching, in which teachers

select ideas from and base ideas on many sources, in order to deal with the complexities of everyday teaching.

Despite what it is not, the study provides an in-depth look at things that are only summarily dealt with in other methodologies, in terms of sense making of the teacher and students about cooperation and the dilemmas and paradoxes involved in instituting a nontraditional practice such as CGL in the classroom. This study illuminates the real world, where teachers draw from multiple sources and students come from diverse backgrounds. It contributes to our understanding of how teachers and students in schools interpret and create meaning out of experiences designed to promote cooperation, and it points to concerns about switches in paradigms from traditional to nontraditional teaching and learning.

DATA COLLECTION

Data included fieldnotes, xerox copies of selected student work, notes of telephone conversations with the teacher, photographs of the classroom displays of children's work, and 40 hours of audio tapes. The tapes included students' conversations recorded during group work sessions and interviews with students and teacher. Data were drawn from planned cooperative group learning contexts, as well as from informal or spontaneous student-created peer learning situations.

Interviewing the students added a further perspective, and gradually took the form of personal discussions, which elicited some very philosophical reflection from some of the students. There were 34 formal interviews conducted with students, 31 of which were taped;

several included more than one person. Interviews with the teacher numbered 20, 3 of which were formally taped sessions. From the tapes, 48 transcripts were developed and analyzed.

To understand the participants' perspectives, I played multiple roles, not only observing and inquiring, but also teaching occasionally. In October, I conducted a lesson on the identification of various native American artifacts; and later, I designed and taught the four-day storywriting unit.

I selected the theme of conflict, resolution, and cooperation, based upon my assumption that that was what they were learning to do: resolve differences and learn to cooperate. Stanford (1977) writes of conflict as a necessary part, or stage, of learning to cooperate in CGL. I had begun the study interested in the role of conflict in this classroom learning process; now, I wanted to see what they had learned about it, and thought I could find out best by assigning an interpretive topic that was open-ended for students' responses.

Small as this study was, with only 16 individuals, I did feel it was necessary to select specific "informants." Nevertheless, I found in retrospect that I had interviewed certain individuals, such as Courtney, Robbie, Joshua, and Mun Sing, more often than others, unconsciously choosing to talk with the students who were more outgoing and who voiced a desire to share their ideas with me.

CONFIDENTIALITY

A major issue of all research in the public schools is that the parents of students have informed choice as to whether or not their

child will participate in the study. To provide such information, Mrs. E. sent home a letter to each parent explaining the study before it began, and then invited them to talk with me further at the schools' parent night, scheduled in September. In addition to the letter, a short explanation of the study and consent forms were provided. Parents were requested to sign the form that indicated their preference, and return it to the school. Mrs. E. kept the signed parent slips in her classroom.

In accordance with her invitation, I was available in the classroom during parent visitation; Mrs. E. preferred that no formal presentation be made, but rather that I be available to chat informally with interested parents, which I did.

About a week after I spoke with parents, I made a short presentation in the classroom, explaining further the research project to the students, and their right also to consent or not to participate in the study. Thus, the opportunity to abstain from the study was provided on a dual level, for both parents and students, to further protect the rights of the students.

It was explained that if the parents consented, but the student did not, then the child would have the last "say" not to participate in the study. If, however, the parent rejected participation, but the child gave consent, the school and researcher would honor the wishes of the parent first. The child still would not participate.

At that time, all students but one had obtained parental consent to participate. All students signed the form giving their assent to participate in the study; the student whose parent had refused permission asked Mrs. E. for another slip, so s/he could ask the parent

to give consent. However, the parent remained adamant that this child was <u>not</u> to be in the study. This provided further dilemmas, which are described later in this section.

To protect the identity of the participants, I have assigned pseudonyms. That is also true of the site.

ANALYSIS

Based on the idea that the social act is an event, which is decoded as meaning by the interactants, the research focused on data gathered from the observable acts, including speech events, of individuals (Mead, 1934; Leach, 1976). Interactants make sense of these events, of course, based upon previous events, which have formed their current notions of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Mehan & Wood, 1975).

To understand the ways that participants in the study constructed meaning of their events, I examined such data as the utterances, actions, products, and subsequent self-reports of the teacher and the students. The utterances and behaviors of teacher and students, as well as students' written stories about cooperation, were the main units of analysis.

Acknowledging that meaning is context specific and the same utterance can mean different things in different contexts, I examined utterances in terms of occupants (status relationships and accompanying roles), activity, perception (by the occupants), and control (who controlled the frame and which occupants controlled other occupants) (Cazden, 1986; Erickson, 1971; Green, 1983). Identifying who spoke, and who did not, and how students determined the right to speak, I then

interpreted how cooperation was played out in the interactions of students in group learning (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1978; Cohen, 1986).

In addition to sociolinguistic analysis, I also analyzed student stories, assuming that literature is symbolic and that stories mean something, or are as Eagleton (1983) says, "acts of enunciation." I explored the relationship of the cooperation not of students within groups, but of the characters they created in the stories. What made these stories so unique was they were created through a process of social construction; the portraits of reality they represent, being socially-agreed upon phenomena regarding what it means to cooperate. Analysis focused on the power structures and relationships of the characters portrayed, as well as the views of participants in the groups on what their roles were in the creation process.

INTERPRETATION: POTENTIAL FLAWS

An additional potential flaw revolves around my presuming to have interpreted what Mrs. E. -- or anyone else, for that matter -- really meant. I feel, in retrospect, that many of my talks with the teacher, in particular, were oblique and implicit and I did not ask the right questions. I realized, after reading Campbell's discussion in Berkey et al. (1989), of the problem of attempting as a researcher to represent the "voice" of a participant/colleague, that this is a potential flaw in any interpretive study which does not include fully the perspective of the participants. And it is incredibly presumptious for a researcher to

"represent" a teacher's thoughts, in their "best interests" (Foucault, 1977).

Some of Mrs. E.'s "voice" may be underrepresented, because I shied away from probing questions, in the attempt to avoid adding stress to what I perceived to be an already overburdened context. I felt compassion for Mrs. E., and I also feared to tread on a potentially explosive situation which had the potential effect of having Mrs. E. cancel doing any more cooperative group learning, which would have simultaneously terminated my research project. Therefore, because of my own fears, I did not ask in particular instances if she would talk about her assumptions, or about decisions in her practice. My work on the dilemmas in teaching practice lacks the depth it might have had with greater input from Mrs. E.

I also find problematic the data from the final class discussion. The situation seemed so obvious, I would never have thought to ask the teacher whose point of view she was representing in that class discussion. After all, she was sitting in the front of the classroom, teaching the class. What she said, I presumed, represented her own thinking. Now, I realize that my presence in the classroom could have influenced what Mrs. E. said, since I was observing what she said about the stories that the students had written when I had been the teacher.[3]

I had failed to consider that Mrs. E., like I, was acting in a dual role. In that context, she was both teacher and observer of what students had produced while I had been the teacher. In a sense, Mrs. E. was being the researcher, observing what the students had accomplished with my teaching. Did she think the conclusions students had drawn about what was cooperative, were something I had taught them? Did she

validate their responses that sometimes it is cooperative to withdraw, in the attempt to be supportive and nonevaluative of what I had done? Was she protecting me because it involved my professional relationship with her as a collaborator? Was she reacting with those middle class eyes Paley (1979) talks about, not willing to point out what might be sensitive or embarrassing -- especially, since it might be questioning me in front of the group? Could it be, that while I was assuming she was representing her viewpoint, she was assuming that she was representing mine? Was this a major trompe d'oeil regarding the roles she and I were playing?

The flaws inherent in attempts to reconstruct preclude my having any "conclusive" information on these questions. I have retained the analysis in my discussion of Mrs. E. and how she thought about cooperation because there is evidence that this was compatible with comments she made previously with regard to students' withdrawal from group work previous to the class discussion in question. But interpretation is problematic -- the obvious is not always as it seems, and my presence as researcher compounded the complexity of the situation and the meanings and interpretations of the participants.

ADDITIONAL METHODOLOGICAL CONCERNS

As a participant observer, one dilemma was how to meet the teacher's expectations and description to the class and principal of me as "just another pair of hands," and yet not alter in some unintended way the students' interactions or interpretations. Insights on this issue were offered by Corsaro (1981), who blended into a preschool

setting, recognized by the students as one of "them," but simply bigger -- known as "Big Bill." However, my job was not that simple, as the teacher wanted me to function partly as a "teacher." Attempting to balance my presence as an adult teacher/expert/observer/inquirer, with a desire to be "invisible" at times, was a challenge. There were often times when students would stop interactions, to check what I was writing. They were concerned about my writing "everything they said" and from time to time made such comments as "I'm glad you're not writing down my growling." One time, two students slipped into a fabricated "foreign language"; when I commented that it would be difficult to write that down, one informed me "I know, that's why we're doing it" (Fld 10/10/88).

Another problem was how I might, as participant observer, make suggestions or contributions without interfering with students' working things out for themselves. If I interfered, what would I learn from the students? When was it worth it to forego that information, so that I could learn under what circumstances a teacher's comments could make a positive impact upon group interactions? Sometimes, my comments encouraged students to participate; still, I was interfering. Under the worst of circumstances, my interference may have backfired and led to negative student reactions to peers.

Another dilemma was how to conduct interviews during the academic task activity, i.e., informally ask questions without interfering with the natural process. Just by posing a question, I was instilling certain kinds of thoughts in the heads of students. In the end, Mrs. E. described the response of one student as being more "philosophical" because of the questioning. But was that the purpose of the study?

Acknowledging that researcher presence has effects on the subjects, how could I use these findings to add to the body of knowledge of teaching cooperation, i.e., how could my input as researcher help teachers to know more about classroom instruction for teaching cooperation?

A further dilemma I faced was how to ask candid questions so as not to offend the person being questioned. I was particularly sensitive, toward the middle of the research period, in asking sensitive questions to the teacher. I felt that she was under so much stress from other contexts and concerns, that if I added to the stress, she might refuse me further entry.

I had similar concerns regarding students: I had made explicit the understanding that students could withdraw any time. Because of this, I reasoned, if I made them uncomfortable, they would do just that: withdraw. I was wrong on both counts; but this was a recurring fear of mine as a researcher, and something which I had to work to overcome. Through the interviewing process, I learned that I could ask personal, tough questions about what teacher and/or students were saying and doing, and get honest, candid responses.[4]

RESEARCHER AS TEACHER

A concern in this study was my dual role as researcher and sometimes teacher. Mrs. E. introduced me to the principal, students, and parents as "another pair of hands," i.e., another teacher. She encouraged me to act as teacher, to design lessons and even a unit, which I myself would teach, to further my inquiry and increase my insights of the teacher's perspective.

However, my acting as teacher created further problems, one of which was how to teach the entire class, and involve all students, when one was denied parental consent to participate in the study. I could not, on the other hand, leave the student out of an all-class activity, because that student wanted very much to be a part of what we were doing. Further, I was taping all groups. I had to develop transcripts which accurately portrayed the student interactions, yet leave out one student to protect his/her identity. I have done this, knowing that leaving one person out creates gaps at times in the discourse, and omits information which could illustrate certain points and be useful to the reader. To counter this problem, I generally did not focus upon group work which included this child, but rather focused upon others.

The issue of my presence raised other questions, related to the ethnographic ideal that Campbell (1988) refers to as "neutrality and nonintervention." Although it was implicitly related to Mrs. E.'s organization and goals, she never explicitly named what she was doing with the students as cooperation. She always said groupwork or working in groups. It was I who infused the word into the classroom context.

Because I introduced it, I did discover something interesting about it that might never have emerged without my explicit referrals to cooperation as representative of what they were working on. I wonder, however, how much the different conceptions would have interfered with the development of cooperation if the word itself had never been used in the discussion? Would it have been -- albeit ironically -- better not to use the word cooperation when teaching it, because of the potential negative connotations?

I never intended to study my own role as participant, the same way I was going to study Mrs. E.'s; it was not part of the design, and I collected no special data on the subject. Yet, in the end, I was compelled to include myself in this, because the data I collected indicated that I, too, had influenced the students -- in ways never anticipated or intended; and the problematic nature of my encounters with students had to be aired.

In retrospect, I am troubled about some aspects of my participation in the learning of these students, and pleased with others. I learned that the participatory aspects of being a researcher are much like Lampert's (1985) description of being a teacher: complex, fraught with dilemmas about decisions, some of which may be the "least of the two evils."

I was not sure I should teach; I was uneasy about impacts on the students; yet I felt an obligation to respond to the teacher's requests also. The experience helped me to understand better the element of agony in going back and reflecting upon one's impact as a practitioner on interactions with children. In fact, there was a time during the data analysis, as I listened to a tape recording of my interactions with one group, when I actually began to question the effectiveness of my entire practice of over twenty years. Putting me in the shoes of the teacher was illuminating on many levels.

SPECIFIC CHALLENGES

It is the nature of ethnographic research that the question can change, according to what the researcher is seeing during observations.

In addition, perspectives can change during analysis of the data. This is both an advantage and a disadvantage. On the positive side, this provides an advantage over prearranging the categories to be considered, prestructuring the interpretation and thus predetermining to some extent the type of outcome considered. It allows what happens within the site to help shape the questions.

However, it is also limiting in some respects, and can result in incomplete data. What I wanted to look for at the end was different than at the beginning. I was assuming common conceptions of notions such as cooperation and friendship; only after I discovered that the participants were utilizing multiple meanings did I seek more specific information in the form of student interviews.

It was difficult, grappling with the ambiguities and contradictions in the concepts I had assumed I and the others understood in a common way. I only began to ask the students midway through the Indian unit questions of meaning. I did not ask about world views until long after the end of the three-month initiatory period of CGL. There was no way to go back and reconstruct to be certain about how the participants would have talked about cooperation before they began CGL, and therefore, no way to compare progress and note certain kinds of change.

An entire year after the study, I realized how important certain aspects of the students' thinking were; I was able to utilize the data to trace back and note important changes and developments in two students' thinking. However, the data on others was too fragmented. From the limited information, I assume the possibility for similar kinds of developments in other students. However, there is simply no way to

know if the two cases are at all representative of the rest of their peers. They have to stand as examples of what (some) children are capable of doing.

NOTES

1 Ricardo contrasted Lincoln School with an inner-urban school he had previously attended; the latter had problems of violence and disorder because, he said, "there's a lot of poverty in [the city], and poverty causes distress and distress causes anger and anger causes violence" (Tr Int 2/24/89).

2 A colleague of mine, for example, in a private conversation with me had acknowledged Mrs. E. as the most outstanding teacher in the school, in recognition of her attitudes and instructional techniques which celebrated diversity. Other parents have also indicated similar opinions, in informal settings.

3 Mrs. E. had been out of the classroom, ill, part of the time that I worked on the writing portion of the project.

4 Regarding the openness on the students' part, Mrs. E. felt that it was because they were protected and knew they "would not be hurt."

Examples of questioning in sensitive areas with students include the following:

1) I asked the Southeast Group what they could tell me about the taped incident in which Asbeid said he did not want to work with Gilberto.

2) I asked Mun if he was being cooperative, fighting with Lina over a chair.

3) I asked Robbie what he meant when he said, "I hate democracy."

Chapter 3

TEACHER, MEANING, AND POWER

MEANINGS BROUGHT TO THE LEARNING CONTEXT BY THE TEACHER

Mrs. E. initiated the teaching of cooperation with a goal which extended beyond the classroom, to the global future and promotion of peace by students' increasing self-awareness and improving interpersonal relationships. Mrs. E. wanted students to develop <u>awareness</u> of the connection between interacting and learning from each other: "to realize they can strengthen their knowledge by working with someone else" (Tr Int 2/24/89).

Mrs. E.'s evaluation of students' academic learning in groups emphasized both the social interactive process and the product. It was the <u>aspects</u> of product that were particularly relevant. Early in the year, Mrs. E. assigned a cooperative project related to a book one group had read from the "Narnia" series; groups of four would develop a list of the character traits for each of four main characters in the book. At the end of the time allotted, Mrs. E. reconvened the two groups, to discuss academic and social progress. Both groups had discussed only two of the four assigned characters. Courtney's group had developed a schema with the name of the character in the center and lines coming out like spokes of a wheel. It was filled with words. At first glance, it appeared that her group had done more work than Robbie's. Courtney had written down virtually everything anyone had said, including many words with similar meanings; while Robbie's group had taken time to discuss words which were similar and to select the most appropriate descriptor.

Mrs. E., noting the groups' charts, suggested that it may have appeared to Rob's group that "They did more than we did." She explained,

> The quantity is not more important than the quality. This group might have consolidated and figured out the relationships. You may have written fewer ideas, but got your point across.
> (Fld 10/4/88) (See Data in Appendix B)

Mrs. E.'s statement also served to discourage competition between the two groups and encouraged the groups to reflect on how they had thought out the concepts and to judge their work on its own merit. Although neither group finished the chart and both needed to work on two of the four characters listed, Mrs. E. never talked of their need to finish the product. Instead, she emphasized the quality and process: consolidating and figuring out relationships of those characteristics students had listed.

That paralleled her encouragement to students to figure out social relationships through group interaction, moving beyond egocentrism: "leaving behind the 'me' stage--the egocentric stage [to] think in terms of other people; away from self-interest." Mrs. E. felt if they could develop this expanded social awareness, then they would also feel better about themselves "because they can see themselves in light of another person" (Tr Int 2/24/89). If students could "learn how to live with each other," the social interactional skills would serve as "tactics...for dealing with drastically different situations," such as entering middle school (Tr Int 2/24/89).

Although Mrs. E. wanted students "to accept other peoples' ideas and be open to another person's ideas;" at the same time she encouraged

students to maintain their own individuality in the process, maintaining "their own thoughts and guidelines" (Tr Int 2/24/89).

Group discussions focused not only on academics, but also on the interactive process. For example, when Mrs. E. discussed issues of excellence with the "Narnia" reading group, she also focused on how students had interacted with each other. From students' responses, Mrs. E. suggested specific things to try in the future, to improve social relationships during group work, such as listening to each other and letting everyone provide input (Fld 10/4/88).

Later, when she had integrated the entire class into CGL, she held similar class discussions stressing the process. The first such discussion began with a request by Mrs. E. for students to talk about some of the things that "bothered" them in the group so they could "iron out some of the problems." From the various student responses, she synthesized their ideas, writing on the board: 1) Stick to the task, 2) Give everyone a chance, 3) Accept everyone else, 4) Do your share, 5) Talk about things. Although some of the student responses indicated that they were concerned about completion of task, Mrs. E. never talked about products in this discussion.

When she asked students what they liked about groups, they talked about ease of the task, with more ideas from peers and being social, getting to know each other, having fun. Mrs. E. also felt that these social aspects were important; to her, they had global implications because "this world is growing so small." By helping "these children coming from all over the world to learn more about each other," Mrs. E. felt she had the potential to help improve world relations in the future

(Tr Int 11/17/88). She predicted that many of the children would become

leaders; and,

> that leadership may take them anywhere in the world and
> ...there are certain things they need to be aware of: how
> to get along with others and how to accept them.
> (Tr Int 2/24/89)

What she wanted students to learn in the classroom was "compromise

in broken relations." She hoped that "if they start it out here, maybe

some latent effect will go through!" (Tr Int 11/17/88). She likened the

school learning about cooperation to the pebble metaphor:

> It's kind of like when you throw a stone in the water,
> and it makes waves. That's kind of what you live in.
> We're part of a very big world. We need to learn how to
> UNDERSTAND each other, how to LISTEN to each other.
> (Fld 10/27/88)

Mrs. E expressed her global concerns not only to me, but also

directly to the students, speaking of problems within our society, and

relating them to world-wide situations, which needed to be addressed by

people "working together":

> It's important, in this world, that we learn how to work
> and cooperate with each other. It can't be just "my" way
> all the time. Some people constantly have the "me" idea,
> and other people don't count, so we have wars and drugs
> sold...we have people who need to be Number One, and we
> need to learn how to work in groups. The whole world
> needs to work together.
> (Fld 10/27/88)

In this statement, Mrs. E. was concerned about egocentrism ("the

'me' idea") in our own society and individuals who "don't worry about

what happens to others." She related the issues of the "selfish

individual" and not "caring" about others to her goals of having them

work "in groups" so that in the future, people would work together on a

world-wide basis. Mrs. E. therefore had presented a holistic system with far-reaching implications to her students.

These original goals remained intact throughout the initiatory unit. A month after the Indian unit had ended, in the final class discussion I observed, she was still referring to global problems and the need to "think together":

> In this world today, if people don't start thinking together...we're gonna have a world that's lost. We need to learn to work together to solve those problems. (CD 12/15/88)

Other than these occasional remarks about social and global connections, Mrs. E. did not do a lot of "formal" teaching of cooperation -- it occurred in the process, she told me (Tr Int 2/24/89).

EXPANDED MEANINGS: RECONCILING THE IDEAL WITH THE REALITIES

The major CGL project during my research, the Indian unit, began on October 4. A seven-week project, it involved students' working together extensively on research projects, to create murals, reports, and simulated artifacts, including clay bowls, woven baskets, an ornate potlatch box. Students also constructed representative clothing: a heavily-fringed shawl, vest, skirt, leggings with criss-crossed bandolier, mocassins with side lacing, and Haida hats from which stared enigmatically many eyes.

Two weeks into this unit, an event in the district happened which was to affect social studies instruction including curricular content and organization, and the teacher's interpretations of cooperation. At a district- wide meeting of all fifth grade teachers, Mrs. E. learned

that they would henceforth be required to cover <u>all</u> of the material in the social studies book. Previous to this time, Mrs. E. had been able to selectively choose which material to cover and elaborate (Int 10/21/88).

Even before the mandate of new requirements, Mrs. E. had expressed a concern about time, related to other changes on the district level. One concern was the provision of more specialist time, to allow classroom teachers more time for planning. Mrs. E. said that this took away from her time with the students; in effect rather than the gain intended by district officials, it was an hour and half "<u>lost</u>" in terms of what she wanted to accomplish with the kids (Fld 10/21/88).

The timing of the change in requirements was particularly problematic, then, since Mrs. E. already felt pressed for time. In addition, the year was in progress and now there was no time to plan for this change. Now, she faced the dilemma of how to meet the requirements of covering more material in less time and thus satisfy the administration while still meeting expectations of parents and other students and teachers in the building, who anticipated student presentations about the Indian unit. She found herself in a complex predicament of having to make curricular revisions to fit multiple criteria.

The new mandate impacted the way Mrs. E. talked about time with her students and affected changes in her curricular decisions regarding the Indian unit as well as other social studies content. It altered the way she viewed conflict, even changed the way she spatially responded to the classroom.

Although it was not unusual for her to express general concern about time to me, after the announcement of the new requirement she also began to specify to students her concerns about time. A week after the district meeting, Mrs. E. began to share her concerns about time with the students. Mrs. E. read a native American myth lent by the Cherokee grandfather of one student. Commenting "Isn't that a marvelous way of explaining nature?" she responded unhurriedly to comments and questions of students. Suddenly, she switched the discussion to concerns about time:

> "I'm getting antsy; there are only 54 more days before
> the end of the [calendar] year. Two of those days, we
> have for conference time."
>
> Mun Sing, an empathic student who often expressed concern
> for the teacher's welfare, added: "And a lot of half
> days."
>
> Mrs. E. confirmed: "And a lot of half days. You have
> your daily assignments; I also have a greater assignment
> that covers the whole year.. " Courtney inquired: "How
> many days in school are left?" Mrs. E: "Maybe 18 days
> this month and 15 next month..."
> (Fld 10/25/88)

Mrs. E. was worried -- 54 days might seem like a lot of time, but she had already ruled out those days not alloted for classroom instruction, and pared the number to 33. Her use of specific numbers, along with relating her feelings of anxiety, drew students into the concern about how much time they had.

Mrs. E. became impatient with the amount of time students took working on group projects: "This took 30 seconds; 30 seconds is a lot of time to waste" (Fld 10/27/88). I had never before heard Mrs. E. speak of a time frame like 30 seconds. Knowing how easy-going she appeared in her teaching, this comment appeared unusual; however, it made sense,

given her growing concern about not having enough time to accomplish her "larger assignment." She urged students to be punctual returning from library group research time:

> If I say 11:45 is the time to return, you need to be
> back. Today, it took a lot of time. We lost about ten
> minutes. This is a problem with your Indian unit --
> you're wasting time on organizing. It just takes _so_ much
> time.
> (Fld 11/1/88)

Mrs. E. shared with the students her anxiety about all the things she was expected to do:

> We are running out of time. We have Bill Brittain (a
> visiting author) coming tomorrow, and the shadow boxes to
> finish, and science projects. It's mind boggling.

Mrs. E. felt like she was "running out of time," and, although she expressed multiple concerns, she still related the problem to social studies as the greatest area of distress. After addressing the class, she turned to me, and added: "I kind of knew it was going to _be_ like this, with the new curriculum!" (Fld 11/3/88). Mrs. E.'s concerns about time were a confluence of three critical variables in her teaching situation: the increased requirements in the social studies curriculum; her having already chosen to extend one chapter into a unit; and utilizing cooperative group learning, which takes more time to implement.

Mrs. E.'s worry about time even affected the very pace at which she spoke. One day, as she was demonstrating several native American crafts projects to the students, she suddenly stopped and said, "I've been _rushing_ all morning; I'm going to _slow down_" (Fld 11/11/88).

Her decisions as to what to cover -- and how -- were also affected by time considerations, as Mrs. E. pointed out one day while showing a

filmstrip on the history of the electoral process. Towards the end, she whipped through part of the filmstrip, without showing it. She explained to the students, "I don't want to push you, but we have something to do, yet." As we watched the filmstrip skip by in a blur, Mrs. E. seemed to have put her instruction in "fast motion" -- one way to react to the problem of time.

After the filmstrip, she held a mock election, instructing each student to vote for a candidate so they compare their responses with the national election results. Mrs. E. reminisced, as they tallied, "it can be _fun_, to do a long unit. But we didn't have time" (Fld 11/8/88).

When the class discussed the electoral process, Mrs. E. told her students, "We need to study this, this year, so I'm putting it in a capsule for you" (Fld 11/9/88). The use of the word "capsule" referred in this case to something like a space capsule, a concentrated form which takes up little space. The metaphor, applied to the curriculum, reflected her concerns about amount. Her focus in this case was to concentrate the presentation of social studies material, abridging the students' interactional process.

That the pressure was especially related to the extended group learning unit became clear, with the change in the way that Mrs. E. talked about time when the native American unit was over. Mrs. E. commented several times that she was not going to be "driven by time" anymore. She referred to this as the "rat race of time" (Int 11/29/88). "I'll get there, when I get there" became a phrase that Mrs. E. used, to describe her new perspective (Int 11/19/88; Int 12/1/88). With the Indian unit completed, she no longer expressed the same worries about time. Mrs. E. explained, "I think I'm okay, now, with the time."

The press of time affected Mrs. E.'s decisions to abridge certain aspects of the social studies curriculum -- aspects which she felt were meaningful and also "fun."

This particular cooperative group unit took seven weeks to accomplish and technically dealt with only one chapter of the social studies book. With the new mandate, Mrs. E. had to figure out how to "cover" the rest of the material, having already obligated herself to spend several weeks extending and enriching the one chapter on native Americans.

Mrs. E. did not want to short-change the students on the magnitude of the unit (Int 10/21/88). Already, a handful of days after the meeting, Mrs. E. was trying to figure out <u>how</u> she could do both -- cover all that extra material, and still have something which the students would feel was special.

A few days after the meeting, Mrs. E. talked with the students about the situation:

> After attending a meeting last week about the social studies and science curriculum, I found we have more things to do, than before. The district <u>does</u> have certain requirements, and I will meet those requirements, in addition to you having something to show.
> (Fld 10/25/88)

One way to encapsulate this unit was to borrow Indian units in the form of displays, from the Indian center and the local museums and historical society. We also talked about objects I could bring in. Bringing in other sources of materials would help reconcile the desire to produce the "ideal" unit and the realities Mrs. E. faced in having to finish in less time and "move on" to other material. "It will look like

there was a lot done, and the kids won't notice they <u>did</u> less," she concluded (Int 10/21/88).

A week after the national elections, Mrs. E. announced that time had run out and they would have to finish the Indian unit that week: "I have given all the class time I <u>can</u>, on this project. <u>I must move on</u>," she told the students (Fld 11/11/88). It seemed to Mrs. E. that she could not give the students the time it would take to complete their projects. For example, two of the four murals remained unfinished at this point.

The concern about lack of adequate time to do what she wanted -- and needed -- to do also affected the instructions Mrs. E. gave to her students. Although it was not unusual for students to have homework, it <u>was</u> unusual for Mrs. E. to assign homework on the spur-of-the moment. Mrs. E. usually had prepared a packet that went home at the beginning of the week, pre-announcing all assignments for that week. But toward the end of the Indian unit, she was giving an assignment that needed to be finished immediately and returned the next day. Mrs. E. had told students that they would not have a homework assignment that night; yet, when she thought about all the things she needed to cover, she changed her mind.

> I heard her "thinking out loud" to herself, in the back
> of the room, "We haven't done much this week. I said
> there's no homework tonight, but I'm going to have to
> renege on that."

> She announced to the students: "Boys and girls, I'm gonna
> have to take back what I said about no homework. We
> haven't gotten much done this week."
> (Fld 11/17/88)

When Mrs. E. began a new chapter in the social studies text, she introduced it within the context of limited time to spend on the topic:

"We are very quickly going to move in through the explorer section and move on" (Fld 11/14/89).

They read the chapter aloud, had a short discussion about it, and "moved on." Mrs. E. seemed to carry a constantly pressing concern about this new requirement and how she was going to meet it. It just kept "popping up" in her conversations -- both with the students and with me. She mentioned it, in the car, returning from a luncheon interview with me:

> We're only on page fifty-something -- I notice that. We didn't do everything, last year...and I didn't really feel bad about it...we'd done other things, instead.
> (Fld 11/17/88)

Her decisions about curriculum focused on balancing the entire structure. Even after the Indian unit -- and, as she had much later indicated to me, all through the academic year -- Mrs. E. had to deal with the problem of coverage in limited time. A year later when I saw Mrs. E., it was clear how much the administrative regulation had affected her. "They never let up," she complained, "the administration piled on too much in the curriculum" (PC 9/16/89).

For example, Mrs. E. adjusted the schedule one day, because they had PE and music (both involving specialist time). She decided, in order to "get in" reading, she would move it to the afternoon, skipping science (Int 11/29/88).

By November 14, Mrs. E. announced she was cancelling further work on the unit; time had run out. After discussing individual responsibilities, she talked about the group work and the project as a whole:

I am sorry the project did not work out the way I wanted
it to. Maybe later on this year, we will try it again.
The people, who got the murals done, I compliment
you...those groups really came together, you worked
together. Other groups had a lot of in-fighting, a lot
of making fun of each other, a lot of trying to tell
*people what to do, instead of doing their own share.

You see--that's what happens in countries: countries
that, even though they don't get along, they come
together...see, that's what we're talking about: groups.
It's learning how to work together, even though you don't
agree, it's learning how to work together.
(Fld 11/14/88)

At this point, Mrs. E. saw fighting as directly related to not

finishing work; and she added a new interpretation which did not focus

on working out problems jointly. "Compromise in broken relations" now

had a different twist: the emphasis was on working together, but not

necessarily agreeing. This represented a new kind of thinking about

cooperation on Mrs. E.'s part, a kind that was compatible with covering

more material in less time. An adjustment of her original ideals, it

represented her reconciliation of the ideals with the realities of her

teaching context at that point. She felt she had to terminate the unit,

even if some of the projects remained incomplete.

The extra responsibility for Mrs. E. to cover all of the text made

her feel "cluttered" with the "mind boggling" task of academic subject

matter to contend with. In addition, she began to feel spatially

cluttered. One day, I arrived, to find Mrs. E. moving furniture out of

her classroom. She had removed two desks and a large, square table out

into the hall, when she spotted me approaching and commented, "It's too

cluttered -- I'm cluttered enough, without too much furniture" (Fld

11/11/88).

I was surprised because, earlier, Mrs. E. had told me that she was going to "guard" all of the furniture in her room, to "save" for the teacher who would replace her upon retirement. She explained that it had taken _years_ to gather what she presently had in the classroom, and once it was out it would never be seen again!

The pressure Mrs. E. felt from the district-wide mandate had changed her thinking. Adapting what she would otherwise have done, she reacted to the feeling of being "cluttered" -- note that she said "_I'm_ cluttered," rather than "the _room_ is cluttered." In order to accomplish both her goals and those of her superiors in the bureaucracy, the "frills" had to go -- not only curricular ones, but also extra furniture. The press of time created by the imposition of content was forcing her to a more traditional mode of operating in the classroom, even with spatial arrangements.

The concern about space and time, encapsulated in the term _clutter_, affected Mrs. E's views of conflict. Although Mrs. E. firmly believed that students should learn to work through conflict as a part of learning to interact during group work, she amended her rules about two weeks after the mandate. She was very explicit that the new rules were designed so they wouldn't "waste time" (Fld 11/1/88, 11/3/88, 11/11/88).

She described time "wasted" as "standing around, arguing" (Fld 10/25/88). The term was an interesting paradox, with _arguing_, a very active, involved position contrasted with a passive one of _standing around_. Mrs. E. meant that "standing around" was not _working_; students were not working because they were "bickering." This reasoning preceded a radical departure in Mrs. E.'s treatment of conflict. Mrs. E.

subsequently told the students that "If bickering occurs, that person will be removed from the group and have to work alone" (Fld 11/1/88).

In spite of this first-time negative sanction against conflict, now termed "bickering," Mrs. E. still made benign comments about conflict in her evaluation of their group work that morning:

> I was not unhappy with the groups this morning, although there was a lot of arguing and fighting about who would do what project. I thought I had it settled ahead of time...but they did solve it.
> (Fld 11/1/88)

A contradiction was developing within Mrs. E.'s schema of what was okay and what was not, in the process of students' working together. Although she still said it was "okay" to work through conflict, how that fit with the rule against bickering was not clear. As the unit progressed, she discouraged conflict in another way, by validating as cooperative actions such as "dropping out," which would avoid conflict.

These new sanctions represented a shift from the original holistic system into expanded conceptions of what constituted cooperation. Mrs. E. never gave up her original philosophical, social, and pedagogical notions of cooperation. Yet, as she felt more and more pressed to meet the demands of covering more material and still completing the CGL Indian unit, Mrs. E began to develop some contradictions in her treatment of cooperation, adjusting the way she talked about the interactive aspects of cooperation.

Soon after the district meeting, Mrs. E. assigned a project in which students were to create tracings of the 28 states with native American names. Each would include a "translation" of the word and be hung in the room to share with visitors at the end of the unit. The project took two days; on the second, Mrs. E. provided information on

additional projects students would begin after finishing the states. It took 18 minutes to give all the complicated directions "so we get this done." This was the day Mrs. E. had told students they had "more things to do than before." As students worked, Mrs. E. circulated, busily advising students on the various projects.

Twenty minutes after students had gone to work, Mrs. E. came by me and commented, "I just noticed something. They're not working in groups today." Mrs. E. had been so busy, coordinating activities, finishing one and beginning another, that she had not even noticed that students were not working in their groups. Her focus at this point was on the students getting the work done. Even after she realized that the groups were not operative, she did not mention it to the students; what she did mention was her appreciation of their cooperation with her: "I'm gonna congratulate a couple of people who did exactly what I asked them to do: Sivan, Michael, Gilberto" (Fld 10/25/88).

Mrs. E. had began to talk about students' projects in a different way, i.e., completion of the task rather than the interactive process. Unlike her response about quality rather than quantity to the "Narnia" groups, Mrs. E. later alluded to cooperation as getting the work done. She told the students:

> I don't have the slightest cooperation. Last year, every person could tell something about what we're doing. Everybody. Everybody in that class could do that. In this class, five out of you have got the work done.
> (Tr Fld 11/14/88)

I have highlighted the two phrases, to show that they were used interchangeably. In this case, cooperation was with the adult, rather than focused on peer interaction. It meant getting the work done. Students didn't get the work done; therefore, they did not cooperate,

regardless of what they had accomplished in the groups.

This gradual change in emphasis to finishing the product might have occurred naturally in the evolution of the group unit, which eventually was expected to end with a product. According to Stanford's (1970) model of phases, it would be appropriate to expect productivity of a group in a later stage. A shift from stressing quality alone to stressing product might not necessarily be a contradiction.

However, related to this change was another: Mrs. E., in response to expanding concerns, also changed her interpretation of process, no longer always depicting deciding and working together as the most appropriate interactions. In the process of adjusting her own goals with the district's goals, Mrs. E. also reconciled the original ideal of working together with more pragmatic actions of temporary withdrawal or compliance. The original goals and means became, at times, submerged under the heavily expanded concerns and burdens placed upon Mrs. E.'s teaching situation. She began to sanction various forms of non-participation, focusing on finishing the project. It was not, therefore, the emphasis on product per se which was unusual for Mrs. E.'s thinking; rather, it was validating students short-cutting of the process by withdrawing or giving in to get the product finished.

I will preface the discussion of Mrs. E.'s incipient pragmatism with comments about teaching in general. It is not unusual for pragmatic thinking to occur in teacher decisions. The fact that an elementary teacher is always responsible for "covering" a certain amount of material would necessitate that some decisions focus on getting the job done within a certain time frame.

The dilemmas of teaching, and the press of classroom life have been well-documented (see, for example, Jackson, 1968; Lortie, 1975; Lampert, 1985). Mrs. E. described it as "the many pulls you have in day-to-day teaching" (Tr Int 11/17/88). Historian David Cohen (1988) claims that teaching has for centuries been so fraught with its own dilemmas, contradictions, and pressures that the context itself mitigates against teaching in any way other than a traditional manner.

However true that may be as a generalization, somehow Mrs. E. has been teaching selected parts of the curriculum in an "untraditional manner" for many years. And however "logical" and "necessary" it may be for a teacher to be pragmatic in evaluating students' work, this was not Mrs. E.'s way of thinking or talking about cooperation at the beginning of the Indian unit, before the district informed her of increased requirements in social studies text coverage.

After Mrs. E.'s rule on November 1 negatively sanctioning bickering and threatening removal from the group, students began to voluntarily leave their groups. Mrs. E. informed me that Ricardo had left his group one day, because he could not "get along." Another time, Mrs. E. herself decided that a member could leave the group. She inquired if the group needed Courtney, and from the response of other group members, established that they could proceed without her.

> Group three was working near the back sink area on their mural for the Indian unit. Courtney approached Mrs. E. and told her, "I'm not cooperating...They keep getting mad at me." Mrs. E. walked over to the sink area, where the other members of Group Three were working on the mural. She asked, "Do you need her right now?"
>
> Mun responded, "We don't need her right now." Courtney left the group area and worked on something else.
> (Fld 11/3/88)

I asked Courtney later what she meant by "I'm not cooperating."

The story which follows is Courtney's description and interpretation of

what she, her peers, and Mrs. E. said at that particular event:

> I went over to Mrs. E. and I said, 'I don't really have
> anything to do, so, because I don't: I don't want to
> fight with them any more...and so, I said I don't have
> any more to do, so can I go over and do some of my own
> work, like finish my Hopi [kachina drawing]?' and she
> said, "Yeah, go ahead."
> (Int 11/29/88)

Another member of her group viewed this exit as not cooperating and

told Courtney she would be penalized: "You're not gonna get your 25

points for cooperating." Courtney responded, "I'm not cooperating, but

Mrs. E. said I don't have to do group." She went back to Mrs. E. and asked,

> "Does that mean that, Mrs. E., I'm not cooperating? Am I
> not cooperating because I'm not doing anything? Like,
> they're angry at me, and they said I won't get my 25
> points."

> Mrs. E. responded (according to Courtney), "You will,
> because you are cooperating. Sometimes when you
> cooperate, you're outside of the group."
> (Tr Int 11/7/88)

Courtney's interpretation of what Mrs. E. told her concluded that

she, as a group member, was allowed to leave the group and finish

another project separate from the group project, for which she still got

credit for "cooperating" with the group and contributing to completion

of the group mural. There was no group agreement on this action, and

the whole group was not working together; yet, from Mrs. E.'s validation

of her leaving and willingness to still grant her the points for

participating and cooperating, Courtney assumed that this was

cooperating. It was cooperation because her withdrawal meant they would

no longer fight. In other words, it was cooperating with the teacher.

The group could work more efficiently without "bickering" with Courtney.

An important facet of the amendment of Mrs. E.'s thinking about
cooperation was that, although the pragmatic concerns initially applied
to specific individuals in particular contexts, gradually, the rationale
was incorporated into the global context, which itself had originally
represented the more ideal, philosophical perspective. She told the
class,

> In this world today, if people don't start thinking
> together...with all the waste, and factories...we're
> gonna have a world that's lost. We need to learn to work
> together, to solve those problems -- you don't have to
> agree, but work together.
> (Fld 12/15/88)

The possibility of working through differences was no longer
mentioned. Although after the Indian unit, Mrs. E. said that she no
longer felt so pressured by time, she continued to use the expanded,
more pragmatic interpretations of what constituted cooperation. The
larger context of curricular demands continued to influence her thinking
about the way learning should take place.

Her statement about working together, but not necessarily agreeing,
was made in December, at a time when she was discussing the stories
students had written about conflict, resolution, and cooperation. Mrs.
E. had been absent during the last two days of the storywriting unit,
which I had conducted as surrogate teacher. The class discussion was a
sharing of the stories by the students. This was Mrs. E.'s first
exposure to these stories; as she read them, she discussed the students'
interpretations of what cooperation was, as depicted in the stories.
She also inquired about the interactive process of the groups as they
worked on these projects.[1]

Mrs. E. listened to the martian story, which portrayed two characters fighting over the same piece of property. Mrs. E. asked the group that wrote it if the characters had solved it "together," or if someone had "given up." Joshua and Ricardo answered in unison: "Gave up." She then inquired, "Is that the way we solve problems, sometimes?" to which several students responded, "Yeah" (Fld 12/15/88).

The story had portrayed cooperation as capitulation, a very different type of process than working through and making decisions together. Mrs. E. was aware of the differences, explicitly stating them as a contrast: giving up or solving together. Yet, she did not question the students' interpretation further, to see why they saw giving up as a way to cooperate and solve problems. Her leaving the "Yeah" stand with no further questioning indicated an implicit validation of the students' portrayal of giving up as a way to resolve problems.

In that same group discussion, a peer from Group Two complained that Joshua had not participated in the decisions, saying repeatedly "I don't care." Mrs. E. discussed with Joshua how he had felt at the time, and concluded:

> "You may have made a good choice -- withdrawing, for a while. The choice you made is: If I continue to argue, we won't get anything done."

> Joshua responded: "Yes."
> (Fld 12/15/88)

Mrs. E. was, at this point, talking differently about conflict than she had at the beginning of teaching cooperation. Although she had threatened with the November 1 rule to remove students for bickering, she had not done so. Now, she rationalized with the students that this would be helpful to them; it was "not a punishment, just giving you

choices." She elaborated the rule, now deciding that if conflict
continued she would remove the individual "with the problem" not only
from the group, but from the room:

> You will continue to have conflicts. I may ask you to
> take a walk around the hall. Not for punishment; if it's
> a matter of rethinking of how you can work better with
> the group -- not me, but you -- and hopefully, you'll
> have resolved some of the feelings you have...Get out of
> the situation for a while -- it's much better. Has a
> tendency to <u>defuse</u> the situation. Sometimes, you need to
> get away from people.
> (Fld 12/15/88)

Getting away from people is a different approach to the resolution
of conflict than working through problems and making group decisions.
Mrs. E.'s situation illustrates the tensions of teaching -- the
balancing of multiple goals and having to select an action appropriate
to a particular context (see Lampert, 1982). She wanted students to
learn together, have fun, learn more, and make decisions together. But
she was balancing this with helping individuals who were not "getting
along" in a group, while also working within a time constraint.
Sometimes, she needed to do something about kids' unresolved conflict
and proceed toward completion of the project.

To encourage a student to leave the group and take "time out" to
"cool off" is a common classroom practice based on the idea that the
individual can better find a resolution by separating from the group.
The dilemma in Mrs. E.'s case was that she wanted to help students to
achieve more self-understanding by having them <u>be</u> with others, working
in a group. Her goal of student intrapersonal development was based on
self-learning as part of a social, communal enterprise.

To encourage withdrawal, then, represented a different perspective
from Mrs. E.'s original goal of dealing with personal growth via the

social context of cooperative activity, i.e., having the individual resolve conflict <u>within</u> the group, <u>with</u> the other peers. It was a psychological rather than a social solution. It put the responsibility on one person to change, rather than expecting the group to accommodate and adjust so that each person's contribution was represented.

Mrs. E. was aware of the dilemma of reconciling "individuality" and acting as a group member: "when you're working with a group, you have to take your individuality and act as a member of the group" (Fld 12/15/88). This statement seemed to parallel her own circumstance, in trying to design an individual, unique curriculum within a larger context of being a member of a school district with its own required body of curriculum. She had selected a solution of withdrawal as appropriate for students' learning to resolve problems. Did this in some way parallel her interpretation of what she felt she had to do, to cope with her own tensions and dilemmas as a teacher?

MRS. E.'S CHANGING INTERPRETATIONS OF POWER, RIGHTS, AND OBLIGATIONS

The changed requirements for Mrs. E.'s social studies teaching also provided a context for comparison of teacher responses to issues of power before and after the mandate. Issues of roles, rights, and obligations -- both hers and the students' -- emerged, and the multi-dimensionality of the power structure became more explicit with the new emphasis.

Interpreting the students' duties was not only a problem for them; it was also a problem for Mrs. E., who in addition had to reexamine her

own rights and duties, as her context shifted due to various factors which included the district changes.

Initially, Mrs. E. saw utilizing CGL more as giving up control as a teacher. After the increase in district requirements and the stress she experienced trying to fit in both the district demands and her own goals with CGL, she began to remind students of their duties to her. She was emphasizing the traditional portion of the actualized power structure (i.e., the vertical portion of Figure 1, diagram C) rather than the egalitarian part of the power structure and students' duties to each other (the horizontal portion of Figure 1, diagram C).

Mrs. E. first described her role in teaching CGL in terms of sacrifice. She told me in September that the "hardest thing" was "not being in charge" (Fld 9/29/88). By altering the term "cooperative learning" to "cooperative teaching" or "cooperative education," Mrs. E. placed the focus on her role, as teacher, which she portrayed as giving up "control." This perspective is the one expressed in Figure 1, diagram B. In the beginning, then, Mrs. E. described CGL as an idealized power structure.

One of the major differences between a traditional notion of teacher power and Mrs. E.'s conception of her own role in general was the obligations of the teacher to the students. Note in Figure 2 that the traditional focus is on students' obligations to the teacher, not vice versa. However, Mrs. E. had her own version of teacher obligations to students; she taught to please them. This was not a result of using CGL and changing the power structure; actually, it was the reason that she utilized CGL. Her role in offering CGL was providing an alternative to "boring" and "tedious" traditional learning (Tr Int 11/17/88).

Rejecting the conflict model which has been built into the hierarchical mode of traditional teaching, she organized her teaching "to please kids...because I want them to be comfortable in that classroom every day...so they realize...we're not adversaries" (Tr Int 2/24/89).

She saw a huge difference in "pleasure" between traditional and CGL learning, and highlighted the differences to Robbie and the Narnia group one day, when Robbie expressed dissatisfaction about the group experience:

> "You know what I'd like? It'd make me really happy to have everybody sit quietly all day and just work, with no talking. That's what I'd like."

> Ricardo responded, with a smile, "Yeah, but if we didn't ever talk, you would never hear from us, and maybe you wouldn't like it. Mrs. E. smiled back. "Maybe I wouldn't."
> (Fld 10/4/88)

Note that the three elements which she uses to contrast with group work are the three listed in Figure 3. She was describing the traditional one-sided power structure in classrooms, in which the teacher can move about and talk as she pleases, but students must be passive: "sit quietly," "just work," and don't talk.

In November, when she informed the students that they had run out of time for the Indian unit, she also told me she was going to do "traditional work for a while...they need to see the contrast" (Int 11/14/88). I have highlighted certain words, to emphasize that even toward the end of the Indian unit, Mrs. E. still assumed the contrast between traditional work structures and CGL.

However, she had gradually been placing greater emphasis on one element of the traditional structure: student duties to her, so that she could control the outcome and amount of time to get the work done.

At the end of the Indian unit, Mrs. E. described in an interview an amended perspective of cooperative teaching/learning. No longer did she see her obligation simply as giving up control. This second version acknowledged a duality in the situation:

> There's friendship level; there's also the teacher level,
> and I have the responsibility to get something done.
> (Tr Int 11/17/88)

Mrs. E. referred to the two different dimensions as "levels," hinting of the structural aspects of power which entered into her considerations. The "friendship level" represented her own personal goals of teaching, which offered a more egalitarian structure to both peer interactions and teacher/student interactions (see Figure 1, diagram B, the Ideal Structure). The "teacher level," in contrast, referred to the responsibilities she had as a teacher, to meet various demands determined by others, such as administrators, parents, and state and federal guidelines; they represented a hierarchical structure, in which there were various levels of power.

Her description reflected many more components than simply her and the students. In this, she also had responsibilities to others and thus was subordinate in one respect, while having power over students who were, in turn, subordinate to her. This latter portion of the structure is seen in Figure 1, diagram A, the Traditional Structure.

The trick was balancing these two levels, which were very different in philosophy and goals and in structure of power. Mrs. E. had to balance what she wanted to do and achieve, and give to kids, with what she was responsible for achieving, or "covering" with them. She elaborated,

> One of the negatives about cooperative teaching and the
> idea of building strong respect between the students: it
> can go too far the other way and then you do find that
> you've gotta' bring 'em back...you have to establish
> limits.
> (Tr Int 11/17/88)

Relinquishing power was not easy. Sometimes, Mrs. E. had to "call them back," re-establish the limits, i.e., rules, duties, and responsibilities of students to her. Sometimes, she redefined their duties, as on November 1, when she added "no bickering" to the classroom rules, as she wrestled with getting her responsibilities accomplished for the people who expected her to have something to "show."

"Calling students back" involved "calling in" their obligations to her. This represented a switch of emphasis from student obligations to each other to listen and decide together, to obligations to her, to do their work. When Mrs. E. temporarily amended the culmination activity of the native American project, so that there would still be displays but no parent visitations, she explained that the reason was they had not cooperated. She told the class:

> OK -- now on Friday, we are supposed to have parents in
> -- many of you were in the third grade when we did
> that...we're not going to do that this year, because I
> don't have the slightest cooperation...I've excused three
> people, and [only] five out of the rest of you have got
> the work done.
> (Tr Fld 11/14/88)

In this case, cooperation referred not to a focus on student interactions with each other, but getting the work done. The incomplete work related both to group projects as well as individual research written reports which would have been incorporated into the various groups' oral presentations. The students had not learned what they needed to know, in order to bring in parents, many of whom would be

knowledgeable about the subject themselves, as Mrs. E. pointed out to

the class:

> That does not make me <u>comfortable</u>, having people come
> into the room and say, 'Ok, these children will explain
> to you about the Northwest Indians...I'd feel very
> uncomfortable, because they're going to ask questions --
> and believe me, they do ask questions...Many of these
> people who are coming...are very knowledgeable about the
> American Indians, and about a <u>lot</u> of things.
> (Tr Fld 11/14/88)

The students had not fulfilled their obligations to her, and

therefore, Mrs. E. was cancelling the previous plans, which she had felt

were her obligation to <u>them</u>, to maintain a tradition they had looked

forward to:

> This is <u>it</u>, as far as I'm concerned...I am not sorry I'm
> canceling it...I have to let you know what I expect, in
> order to move you on.
> (Tr Fld 11/14/88)

The kind of cooperating Mrs. E. was talking about included previous

norms of "coming together" and sharing, but her "bottom line" this time

was finishing the work. She disclosed to me later that day, while the

students worked independently, that,

> they enjoy working together, but they need to finish what
> they start -- there's two things they don't understand:
> <u>closure</u> and finishing a <u>product</u>.
> (Int 11/14/88)

The focus of this talk which Mrs. E. had with the class was a new

one, emphasizing their obligations to <u>her</u>. Although she explicitly told

them that "...this is an "I" statement -- I'm not bawling anybody

out...," the message may have been more influential than she thought.

It certainly impressed Mun, who commented to Sivan as they returned with

chagrined faces to their seats, "That was a long lecture" (Fld

11/14/88).

The question which emerged in Mrs. E.'s dilemma of trying to "balance" all of the goals and trade-offs, was: when should the teacher emphasize the symmetrical relations, and when the hierarchical obligations?

Mrs. E. had foreseen that her unit was going to become abridged, after she learned of the expanded social studies requirements. She explained to me shortly after the district meeting that one way she would deal with avoiding a disappointing experience for them was that she would do more _for_ the students, in the place of what they would ordinarily have done, to make up for lost class time (Int 10/21/88).

Three weeks later when she announced cancellation of the final presentations, Mrs. E. indicated she had thought a great deal before making the decision. Foremost in her thoughts was the issue of rights and responsibilities: whose responsibility had not been fulfilled -- hers? or the students'? Mrs. E. had delineated her responsibilities, telling the students:

> My responsibility is to make sure the assignments are
> clear, and to provide resources and materials for
> you...I went to the trouble of running off packets so you
> could know exactly what to do...I think, if you look at
> the back of the room, I had about 50 books back
> there...and nobody even looked at them.
> (Tr Fld 11/14/88)

She had expressed concern weeks before that the students would miss out on some things they had traditionally done in the native American unit. Now, she had decided, part of the problem of incompleteness was not due to lack of time, but lack of student commitment to _do their_ _part_. Still, she had considered "making up" for their incomplete project. Mrs. E. had reflected and agonized over exactly what her obligations were to her students; she told them,

> I made a conscious decision over the weekend that I was
> not going to -- I even took the overhead projector and
> thought, 'Oh, I think I'll kind of make up for it...by
> tracing all of these pictures and having each group do
> that and then have it...again going and running some
> materials off and having each one of you take it home and
> (voice lowers).' I'm not going to do that. I'm not
> going to do that.
> (Tr Fld 11/14/88)

This was a radical decision for Mrs. E., who taught most of all to "please" the kids. In light of the many extra responsibilities she faced, at this point, she concluded that it was not her responsibility to cover up what they did not do and do extra work herself to make the unit "look good" and the students happy.

It is indicative of Mrs. E.'s position as a reflective, non-traditional teacher that she subsequently reversed this decision, responding to the impassioned requests of students that she allow them another couple of days to finish the unit. Because of her flexibility and positive response to the students' rallying with enthusiasm to finish the work, the unit culminated with great success and positive student self-concepts about the cooperative group process and themselves.

Still, Mrs. E. concluded later that the students did finally finish precisely because she had called in the obligations to her. I asked her how she had managed to "save" the unit; I wondered what had happened after my visit on the fourteenth of November to convince her to reinstate the unit. "How did they finally come around, with the projects?," I inquired. "They snapped to, because I raised my voice," Mrs. E. replied. "They were reacting, to please...it takes either a carrot or a threat. They love the praise, but it just doesn't carry over" (Int 11/29/88).

In the final interview with Mrs. E., I found her still struggling with the desire to liberate and the need to control for optimum learning and progress. We were talking about the progress of various students, and she mentioned that Josh had "come around a lot." "He's very willing to cooperate with me. Really he's an ideal kid," she concluded (Tr Int 2/24/89). Cooperating with her was the criteria she used at that point, rather than how Josh had learned to cooperate and work with peers.

UNCERTAINTY

A latent effect of the extensions of meaning was the development of uncertainty in her own thinking about cooperation, as Mrs. E. acknowledged confusion at one point, in trying to describe what is cooperation. In the February interview I had with Mrs. E., she was as clear as always about her goals of what she wanted to accomplish with children. However, she voiced her conception of cooperation at that point with uncertainty:

> When we had the elections, I talked a lot about both :
> candidates and their attacks on each other and how
> divisive that was, and they seem to understand the
> feeling toward accomplishing something...at least they're
> willing to listen to the other person -- but that's not
> so much cooperation, I guess that's learning to coexist
> (voice lowers). But maybe co-existence is also
> cooperation. I don't know. It is possible.
> (Tr Int 2/24/89)

Up to this point, Mrs. E. had developed many different interpretations of what it is to cooperate, from listening to people, understanding and accepting others, making joint decisions, working through conflict and moving on, to dropping out, or withdrawing from group interactive process. Although some of these ideas were in

conflict with others, i.e., making joint decisions is different from dropping out or withdrawing, Mrs. E. expanded a definition to accomodate her ideals with the reality of time crunches and a larger amount of material to "cover."

Her comment in this interview indicated to me that she had been processing these different ideas and at this point was acknowledging her uncertainty about the limits of what defined the concept of cooperation. It was by virtue of Mrs. E.'s reflective practice, and the fact that she continuously assessed and questioned her own definitions, methods, and other assumptions that she was at that point caught in the complexity of her context, left facing uncertainty. What made her a good teacher also made her situation more difficult and ambiguous.

CONCLUSION

This chapter relates how one fifth grade teacher adjusted her thoughts about cooperation as she worked to maintain her ideals within the changing reality and dilemmas of her teaching situation. Mrs. E., a teacher with strong ideals, was knowledgeable and well-informed about current research and reflective about her own practice, experienced, and disposed to being non-traditional in her approach.

During a three month period of initiating the learning of cooperation in her classroom, she maintained her original goals of teaching for a humanistic kind of excellence in the academic and affective realms. However, she adapted her notion of what constituted cooperation as a response to a district-level change which occurred several weeks after school began.

When the district announced a new mandate to cover all of the social studies text, Mrs. E. responded with various adjustments, centered around her concern about time constraints. She talked more specifically with students about time and the "mind boggling" tasks she was to achieve with them.

Her ideas about allowing time for students to work through conflict while working together in groups changed; she described various amendments to the social studies curriculum which would have been "fun," had there been time; she made changes in furniture arrangements, perceiving clutter spatially as well as temporally.

In addition, Mrs. E. adapted her interpretation of what students would do in order to achieve cooperation. She originally equated cooperation with working together. Mrs. E. perceived global implications in teaching students to learn to get along and solve problems together. She utilized cooperative group learning, assuming that the social interactions contributed to students developing more acknowledgement, understanding, and acceptance of each other.

After the district-mandated change, Mrs. E. began to talk more about completing work and "moving on." She expanded her definition of cooperation to include student withdrawal or giving in as cooperative because such actions facilitated getting the work done more efficiently within the constrained time frame.

Goals like students accepting each other's ideas and working together on a project were sometimes submerged under the growing concern about getting done which related to "the rat race of time." She was unwilling to give up her own goals, based on ideals; thus she faced the dilemma of having to meet multiple and conflicting goals -- her own

focusing on quality and the district's focusing on quantity. Perhaps they would not have conflicted, had there not been a time constraint.

But a confluence of factors mitigated against a facile resolution of the quantity-quality issues revolving around the social studies curriculum and Mrs. E.'s organization of social studies learning. Several weeks of the school year had passed before the new requirements were introduced; there was less time to work with students as more time had been alloted to specialists in art and music; and Mrs. E. was already in the middle of an expansion of one chapter which took more time because it utilized cooperative group learning and focused on group research, as well as hands-on projects.

As a result of these various factors, time became an even more pressing factor than previous years. The adjustments in Mrs. E.'s interpretation of what constituted cooperation were a response to her accommodation of the multiple goals. Her attempt to make sense of the "mind boggling" situation ended in uncertainty -- a _conceptual_ kind of uncertainty, in which she was no longer certain what cooperation _was_.

That uncertainty is a feature of teaching has been discussed by Jackson (1986); this study adds a case in which the constraints of the teaching context contributed to the development of dissonance in one very experienced and knowledgeable teacher. Four months after the mandate, she indicated uncertainty as she described to me an example she had utilized in her teaching to show students what cooperation was all about. She was at that point questioning her original assumption, thinking of terms of what _might_ constitute cooperation. Where months before, she had been very confident and clear of her conception, she now was left with uncertainty.

The unexpected twist of Mrs. E.'s interpretations about cooperation was inadvertently similar to the students' preconceptions of cooperation, which assumed a power hierarchy rather than egalitarian, reciprocal relationships. Mrs. E.'s reminder to the students of their obligation to _her_ to complete work was rare; yet, many elements combined to make this a major emphasis in the minds of the _students_. Her later sanctions on student withdrawal from interactions had other implications regarding closing those "spaces" to each other, which, through dialogue, could have nurtured the development of new friendships.

NOTE

1 I have discussed in Chapter 2 the problematic nature of utilizing
   Mrs. E.'s statements about these stories as evidence of her own
   thinking about cooperation. If there were not corroborative evidence
   from other sources, incidents involving student interactions in CGL
   contexts, I would not feel comfortable using this. However, there
   were several times in the month previous to this discussion that Mrs.
   E. had validated students' withdrawal from groups. Therefore, I
   include her comments about the story characters and _their_ actions,
   claiming they follow a similar line of reasoning. However, I still
   acknowledge the possibility that contextually, because of my
   influence, they were biased in a direction she had only tentatively
   explored previously, as a _favor to me_.

Chapter 4

STUDENTS, COOPERATION, AND ACADEMICS

PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES WITH COOPERATION

Just as Mrs. E. entered the CGL context with prior assumptions, the students also brought preconceptions of what constitutes cooperation and appropriate ways to act within the rubric of "cooperating." According to students' feedback, previous school experiences with working in cooperative groups were rare, and their understandings about cooperation came from other sources, including previous schooling in a traditional mode, in which students equated cooperating with "behaving," i.e., doing what the teacher wanted. Referring to the home contexts, students described cooperating as "getting along" with siblings. Students did not refer to a particular quality of relationship or interaction between children, such as increased understanding or appreciation; instead, they were responding to adult mandates. In other words, they were cooperating for an adult.

There were major departures in context between cooperating in the home or a traditional school setting and cooperating with peers during CGL. The previous experiences they cited were not initiated with the intention of cooperating; the need to "cooperate" derived from problems which arose during arguments or fights, at which time the children were requested to cooperate. To the students, cooperating meant to stop the fighting.

In contrast, the CGL activities were set up with the intention of cooperating to produce a tangible result related to learning. The

home/traditional schooling contexts of cooperation were forced, and carried connotations about misbehavior or dissatisfying an adult. The CGL contexts, in contrast, were presented as opportunities to work with peers, to have fun, to share and increase ideas.

Although the previous conceptions of cooperation as compliance to an adult's request were unrelated to CGL, students still carried them into the contexts of group work. Midway through the study, Mrs. E. held a class discussion and asked the students to write about what they thought cooperation was, why it was important, and what working in groups had to do with it. One of the key metaphors, "behaving," emerged at this time as Sivan wrote explicitly, "to cooperate means to behave with other people." More than half of the students equated cooperation with not arguing, not fighting, getting along, and being "nice."

Students equated cooperation with doing something for an adult -- in the case of school, this meant doing work. How they accomplished this was by not fighting. Many students had brought the idea of cooperation as not fighting or not arguing from home; several portrayed cooperating at home as essentially stopping conflict situations. April spoke of cooperating to avoid "fighting all the time" with her brother and sister; Joshua cooperated with his mom when they were "not getting along"; Emily and Mun reported being asked to cooperate by mothers when they argued with siblings during gaming contexts like playing Nintendo or chess (Tr Int 11/29/88). Squabbles over the sequence or number of turns, or whose idea would be accepted, were the same kinds of issues that students had to grapple with in learning to cooperate in small groups in the classroom.

Many students associated cooperating with not arguing or not fighting in order to get the work done; the focus was on meeting the obligation to the teacher. Paris explained, "You need cooperation because without it...you will fight and not get any thing done. You will be to busy fighting" (SW 11/1/88).[1] Inadvertently, this was compatible with what Mrs. E. had presented, talking about CGL as working together, working in groups, or group work. The word work always appeared in each of these expressions, and work was what was done for the teacher. Although Mrs. E. saw CGL as surrendering authority and giving students more freedom, with a focus on interacting with peers, the students still saw it as doing something for her. That was the single most compelling feature of group work. Asbeid and Emily focused on the amount of work, as the important aspect of cooperating in groups, to "get alot done"; while Megen pointed out the efficiency: "things go a lot faster" with cooperation (SW 11/1/88).

Written responses of half the students to Mrs. E.'s questions midway through the program reflected this stance even though the school and home contexts were different. Mun and Michael equated cooperating directly with not fighting: "to cooperate is to not fight." Both kept the "not fight" phrase intact, rather than saying "not to fight." Five more students explicated the relationship, portraying cooperation as a vehicle or method for not fighting. Paris said it would "help people get along so they don't fight so much." Ariel assumed that "without it [cooperation] you will fight..."

There were glitches to this reasoning, with regard to participation in CGL. The first problem was equating not arguing with "behaving," with implications of how to cooperate that did not necessarily involve

working through the conflict together. Solutions included withdrawal of requests or demands, giving in, changing, leaving.

The second problem was how students interpreted "not arguing" in CGL contexts; because they assumed that it was necessary to avoid arguing, they would not only withdraw themselves at times, but they also sometimes selected to cut off peers from the interactions. All interpretations were an attempt to avoid conflict, which is a necessary process which students need to work through, if they are to function as citizens in a democracy in the future (Oser, 1986; Resnick, 1987).

Cooperating in this sense was seen by the child as changing behavior to please adults. The relationship was a power hierarchy, with the student acting with another child, but in relation to what the adult wanted him or her to do. The actions taken under such circumstances did not represent the "self" of the child, nor did they represent an equitable solution for all parties. Instead, "resolution" by withdrawal or giving in represented an expedient way for a person of lesser power to fulfill the wishes and will of someone with greater power.

Mun's descriptions of playground activities conveyed this relationship, as he described the student obligation when peers are not cooperative. Instead of talking about working out the problem with a peer, he emphasized the student's relationship with the adult in charge, saying that students should not "tattle tale about those things" (Tr Int 12/15/88).

The act of not cooperating sometimes implied bad behavior; Sivan used the word bad to denote the need for cooperation in sports contexts. Sivan described cooperation as not "yelling" at fellow team mates who had committed errors: "Don't yell...don't be bad to the team." In

saying not to be bad, Sivan was concentrating on his relationship with the coach as power authority. It would be the adult who would say it was bad to yell; if he had been thinking in terms of his relationship with other team members, Sivan probably would have talked in terms of what they would say: "don't be _mean_."

Mun was concerned about implications of being "bad" when I asked him to elaborate on what his mom meant when she asked him to cooperate. He responded, "Well, she wouldn't know, but it's something not _that_ bad" (Tr Int 11/29/88).

Mun had not directly answered my question; his response indicated a desire to absolve himself from what I might have been imagining that he had done. Instead of specifying what his mother said, as I had asked, he instead concentrated on what _he_ had or had not done, to have precipitated his mother's request.

ENHANCING COOPERATION AS COMPLIANCE: STUDENTS AS "TEACHER PLEASERS"

Students entered the CGL context with a notion of cooperation as compliance and a focus on their relationship with the adult, even though what they _did_ was with peers and siblings. Although Mrs. E. had talked with students about her objectives of having group work to develop greater awareness of peers, the altered context of social studies teaching did influence her to talk occasionally about cooperating with her. While this was not her focus, it did inadvertently play into students' preconceived thinking about cooperation.

Probably a more powerful element, however, of how Mrs. E. inadvertently contributed to the students' previous sensemaking of

cooperation as compliance was her personal relationship with students. These students liked her and were, in her words, basically "teacher-pleasers." She told me one day at lunch, "When I came back [from being absent], they clapped...a teacher has a lot of power. Some teachers don't realize how much power they have with kids" (Int 11/1/88).

Students were truly concerned about Mrs. E. as a person. One day, when she had misplaced a National Geographic which came from her home, Mrs. E. told the students her husband would be upset if she didn't find it. Someone made a comment, and Mrs. E. asked, "Are you worried about my being in trouble?" "Yeah," Mun responded (Fld 10/27/88).

Because they were all "good kids," as Mrs. E. said, and had basically positive attitudes about learning and school, this situation ironically lent itself even more to students' thinking in traditional terms of power, because they did not dislike or resent the person with the power. Mrs. E. recognized that this was a problem:

> There is the problem of wanting to do well -- and please the teacher. It really isn't even for their peers; it's for me. It's nice for me, but sometimes, not best for kids working together. They want to do a good job -- for me.
> (Int 11/1/88)

The fifth graders were at this point well-versed in what "works" in school, and accustomed to operating under an authority model. Because they liked their teacher, on top of this they were less disposed to question the power structure. Equating it with her as a personality, they did not explore other possibilities.

Cusick (1983) pointed out how teachers at the secondary level operated on the rationale of getting the kids to like the teacher so

they will not cause "problems" and will do what s/he wanted. In response, the high school kids acquiesced with "behaving" but also bargained over the academics. Although there were major differences in this context with those Cusick described -- the school was not a site for conflict, and still students learned a great deal in this classroom -- nonetheless they still bargained away some of the academic expectations.

However, the CGL context was complicated. Students both expanded and limited academic learning in various ways, within the group situations. The following sections describe both aspects and explore how, in spite of Mrs. E.'s efforts, students sometimes chose to utilize CGL to downgrade learning. I show some more problematic ways in which students and the teacher interpreted cooperation in various CGL contexts. Some of the cases I cite involved myself as teacher and the stories represent the individuals rather than characteristics of the relationship of CGL as a classroom organization within the context of schooling in the larger society. The complex factors lend themselves to multiple and alternative interpretations about the potential contribution of CGL to teaching and learning. The final section explores some of the positive effects of having used CGL for academic learning, in spite of the students' preconceptions and predispositions to sabotage lessons or otherwise disengage.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING/RESTRICTIONS OF ACADEMIC LEARNING

Earlier, I cited CGL as a method of classroom organization which created a reservoir of extended resources for academic learning. While

this is true, not all CGL opportunities were productive or contributed positively to advancing the academic teaching of the students. The CGL occasions also provided opportunities for students to diminish the academic expectations of the classroom. I found that students sometimes utilized the context as a way to limit effort and confine learning by making CGL a tool for collective bargaining. Provided with the ability to talk about assignments, students sometimes capitalized on the extended power gained to better play the game of school. They understood the value of cooperating with others as banding together to increase power, revealed in a discussion about why the five Iroquois nations joined together. While Asbeid suggested that it was to make peace between them, Robbie felt it "would be easier to fight war with more tribes and more people." As he concluded that "they'd have better [advantage]," before he could finish, Josh cut in with agreement, "Yeah -- it would probably be what they'd do" (Fld 10/27/88).

This example paralleled what groups of students in the classroom sometimes did, working together to increase their power, to make war with work. They would collectively figure out what they would have to do within the confines of a particular assignment. Everhart (1983) described how kids bargained their ways out of assignments with teachers; I found that the CGL context provided another opportunity for students to manipulate the context to limit work. In this bargaining, the teacher was not even always included, as students worked out how to narrow the extent of their involvement.

The following vignette follows a CGL lesson in which each group was directed to choose a number of projects out of a longer list of possible choices the teacher provided. She had photocopied packets for each

cooperative group, with descriptions of various aspects of the lives of the native Americans in that area. The students then read the descriptions and the assignments associated with each topic, and talked about what they would do together as a group. Observing Group One, I found that the students achieved consensus, deciding together. They did this, not by exploring mutual interests and preferences, but rather by determining together what would require the least work of them -- i.e., tasks that were easiest, fastest, or least unattractive. In this case, CGL provided a context ripe for subtle disengagement, since the teacher was no longer part of the bargaining process. Students could take the time to go into great detail, trying to figure out ways to get out of certain parts of a task. Thus, whatever they did accomplish later in the project was limited by decisions made in the early stages: decisions based on efforts to confine efforts and downgrade assignments.

In the process of selecting several projects they would do as a group, the students in Group One read about various topics, including shelter, food, religion, crafts, geographic location, and political organization. A lengthy discussion ensued over two descriptions, each of which had similar linguistic constructions which can be identified as (verb) and (verb) or (verb). Previous to this segment of discourse, Joshua had indicated that he objected to "reporting everything" and told the group "I don't wanna' do one." Asbeid then conspired to try to find a project which would allow the group to avoid the reporting part.

> Asbeid suggested, "Uh, let's do 2, too." In response,
> Robbie read aloud the description for this project.
> Asbeid continued, "We draw...we only draw on that one."

> Robbie cites the paper they are reading: "'Report on the
> ways of getting food and other...' You have to do a
> report on every single one of these." Asbeid responded
> with surprise, "You do?" Robbie retorted, in a mocking
> tone, "Y:eee:es."

Asbeid did not accept Robbie's insistence that they had to do a

report. Instead, he persisted in the attempt to find a loophole in the

assignment description.

> Asbeid read: "'Report on the use of the masks...or draw'
> -- we could draw it -- because (he reads) 'or draw a mask
> similar to...'" But Joshua did not agree with the
> interpretation. He read: "'Report on the use of the
> masks and make or draw a mask.' Or. Or."

The discussion that ensued focused on the segment "report...and

make or draw..." The students went through an intricate reasoning

process, focusing on linguistic proof, to figure out what they were

obligated to do, according to the teacher's written directions. The

distinction being made, whether or not the verb in the middle of and -

or belonged to both words or only one of them, determined whether or not

students had to do two activities for that category, or only one.

> Robbie asked, "Do you know what or means?" Jason
> reinforced, "Yes -- or -- 'make or draw.' You have to
> report on the use of masks and make or draw the masks,
> too." Robbie emphasized, "You don' have a choice."
> Asbeid responded, with disappointment, "Aauw," while
> Robbie drove home the point, "E:eevery si:iingle oo:one"
> (in a sing-song), "we do a report."
> (Fld 10/14/88)

The distinction was how to group these phrases: Asbeid interpreted

it as follows: [Report...and make] or [draw], whereas Robbie and Joshua

interpreted it as [Report...] and [make or draw]. In the first

interpretation of the construction, students did not have to report and

make a model; they could simply draw. In the second, students not only

had to report, but they also had to do something else: make a model or

drawing. There was clearly more work involved in the second interpretation, and it included reporting.

These students were viewing the task in terms of obligations to the teacher to do the assignment, but _only_ what was asked. The overriding perspective in Group One's discussion that day was how to minimally satisfy the teacher. Assuming an unequal power structure, Group One did not capitalize on the opportunity to get to know each other better by discussing what interested them. The silent member, Gilberto, remained silent, and they knew no more about him after this set of interactions than before the lesson.

In this example, the savvy of individual students was extended to the other members of the group who were attempting to debase the project. The effort in this case was foiled; and the resistant members finally capitulated, accepting the necessity of doing two parts to each assignment, including writing a report. What I have showed, then, was not totally the demise of the design of a CGL project, but rather the potential of students to collectively figure out how to waylay an assignment.

There is a double twist to this particular story: the collective aspects of bargaining in one way became a tool for the teacher and the students to keep each other in line. Mrs. E. did not have to "waste" her time discussing technical aspects of the assignment; students worked it out themselves. However, the student bargaining still detracted from in-depth discussion about the topics. In essence, _discussing_ the assignment displaced _doing_ it. If, instead, students had discussed more what interested them, the context could have provided more information about the various topics, as well as drawn in the silent member of the

group, Gilberto, to gain awareness of each other. The displacement of work with negotiation over an assignment is a particularly sensitive area in the teaching/learning context, as students can maneuver a case of "not understanding" as the rationale to extend a discussion about teacher expectations for their learning. In classes limited to a specific period of time, students can redirect the time, from working to talking about the work, and "run out the clock." When such bargaining involves a group, rather than simply an individual, the learning of more people is jeopardized. The case I cited is still more problematic because the teacher was not there as part of the bargaining.

Another aspect of how students utilized the group context to restrict academic engagement was the loss of intentional learning which might have occurred had the group not talked an individual out of something. Group One's discussion, which was designed to select projects which were less work, also influenced one of the individuals to not do something he was very interested in doing. Asbeid wanted to do a project building a log cabin. The others thought it would take a very long time, so the group did not choose to do that. While others did projects on the side, such as Robbie's mocassin that he constructed and the picture story of Mun and Ricardo's, Asbeid never did make a log cabin. I suspect that Asbeid had seen such a project in a previous year (I had) and had anticipated building a log cabin for a long time. He was the only one in the group who talked about wanting to do something specific, and he mentioned his interest three times. It is possible he would have still chosen to do this on his own, if his peers had not so adamantly convinced him of the lack of feasibility of the project (Fld 10/14/88).

There were other cases in which the students talked each other out of doing certain parts that were not "required." Recall from chapter 3 the description of the cooperative group project of developing a list of traits to describe characters in the Narnia novel they had been reading. On their first day Mrs. E. had discussed with them her and their own evaluations of the project, which had resulted in a fairly comprehensive list for two of the four characters. As the groups reconvened to work on the remaining two, Robbie had a thought: "Hey! for [a specific character] we could put fast: a fast runner." Both Mun and Ricardo concurred, but Asbeid pointed out the technicality: "We don't need to do that one, anymore." The fact that students did not add this trait to the list was not determined by the value of the contribution; all agreed that the addition was a positive expansion to the work they had done the previous time. However, no one wrote it down because it was not an obligation to the teacher that they work on that character anymore. It was not required.

Obligations to the teacher as main authority came first, so that, even if students did not agree with something or thought it was incorrect, if they thought Mrs. E. wanted it that way, they did it. That was the case when one of the "Narnia" subgroups met to list traits of characters. Courtney was writing down ideas for one character; she suggested "Suspicious?" Asbeid disagreed, "Courtney, she's not suspicious." But Megen cut short the discussion, stating, "We have to put it cuz the teacher says" (Fld 10/5/88). They did.

Along with acknowledging the primacy of obligations to the teacher, in this case, there was a corresponding displacement of concerns of academic quality. Once Megen had said that the teacher expected this

response, there was no further argument, in spite of the fact that they did not agree that the response was correct, according to the text. They disregarded their own knowledge and opinions, in the assumption that primacy of obligation was to the authority outside their group.

Students had a complex balancing act to perform within any given circumstance; operating within a group, they had to incorporate parts of both traditional and egalitarian power structures. Sometimes, students did not get past the traditional and primary obligation to follow the teacher's instructions to sort out rights and obligations with each other. An example was the impasse Group One experienced, when students tried to reconcile the differences in the group with teacher obligations.

In this lesson, Mrs. E. had announced that they were having a "group thinking day." The lesson was a much more traditional one than many of the projects in the native American unit. Students were to read material from the packets provided about each Indian group and select the main idea from each paragraph. Mrs. E. had instructed the groups to have one person read a passage and then discuss it as a group. Group One could not agree upon who would read.

> Rb: I'll read.
> ME: No, you're going to decide in the <u>group</u>. Together,
>   as a group.
> Js: I want to.
> Rb: I know.
> Js: Then let's have someone <u>else</u> read, because we <u>both</u>
>   want to.
> Rb: Mrs. E., who can read, because Joshua wants to, I
>   want to, Asbeid wants to?
> ME: Decide in the group.

Members of the group suggested alternatives, such as taking turns, or reading silently and then sharing information. No one could agree:

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Rb:  We can each read a paragraph.
Js:  No, Robbie, we can't.
Rb:  We'll just read paragraphs.
Js:  No.
(Fld 10/27/88)
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They never came to consensus because the alternatives did not meet the teacher's original criterion to have one person read.

The group's only agreement in this case was that they could not make a decision even to get started with the activity. This was the result of legalistic thinking of the same nature as the analysis this same group had conducted to try to bend the rules and do less.

Mrs. E. tried to encourage a group decision by suggesting an alternative: "How about if I just read?" Josh agreed quickly, "Okay." Mrs. E. queried, "That's fair? Because I've made the decision?" Both Asbeid and Joshua responded jointly, "Yes." That is how the group started functioning, with Mrs. E. reading first and then directing the group discussion. The students had waylaid the CGL process, focusing on a technicality in the obligation to the teacher. Possibly in the interest of time, Mrs. E. had intervened in the breakdown of the group process and made the decision herself. She was caught in the middle of two decisions, neither of which were ideal: to allow the group to continue indefinitely in an impasse and chance their never getting to the main task; or to reinstate herself as the traditional authority with the power to decide for the students. The decision to bypass the group's decision making power was not what she preferred, having told students before:

> I can't emphasize this enough. In your group, you must
> decide...If it comes to that, take a vote. If you can't
> agree, I'll decide. It would be much better if you
> decide. It would be better if you decided.
> (Fld 10/21/88)

Neither was it easy for the students, who, according to a strict interpretation of the teacher's instructions, were balancing an implicit contradiction among their obligations to the group, their own wishes and "personal agendas," and the obligation to do exactly what the teacher had said: select one person to read.

Once the teacher had stepped in, her presence made it possible for the group to take advantage of having her all to themselves. She remained much of the period with the group, and they managed to use that to their advantage, also, to get her to continue to "tell" them what to do. The academic objectives were to gain in understanding about a particular Indian group by identifying main ideas. When Mrs. E. would probe, by asking leading questions, the students several times inquired, "So, we underline that sentence?" "Do we write this down?" "That's all we underline?" The task became one of doing what the teacher said, and getting her to tell them what to do.

Group One had managed to turn this CGL context into a more traditional, teacher-led one, with one major difference from the traditional classroom: they now, in the small group, had Mrs. E. all to themselves. This allowed them not only to get more help with the "answers," but also to utilize the time to talk with Mrs. E. more and make the lesson more interesting than the printed matter alone. During the half hour that Mrs. E. joined them, she participated in several small digressions of the readings. Some were initiated by her, some by students, as points of interest arose. At one point, Mrs. E. could not resist re-entering the conversation, even after she had announced that they were going to take over the discussions and she would remain briefly "with the first one to make sure it runs properly." Joshua had

read a section on fishing, and then led a discussion of the kinds of fish the native Americans might have caught. When Asbeid mentioned that lobsters were from Maine, it sparked Mrs. E.'s interest and she re-entered the discussion:

> Oh, I see some geography. This is great. What other --
> since you have -- I'm interrupting, I'm sorry -- but
> since you brought this up, I can't stay out of it -- but
> -- when you think in terms of the oceans...

With that, the group was off on a conversation that extended to the Seminole in Florida, and from that to movement of certain groups of Indians from one geographical location to another, and the Trail of Tears. What happened was not a monologue by Mrs. E., but a discussion in which the students were contributing major pieces of information and thus were also helping to steer the conversation.

I initially referred to this kind of event as a "digression," and in traditional terms of "staying on task," that is what it was. However, an alternative to assessing the incidence of Mrs. E.'s involvement is that she participated in and guided expansions of the text, in which the students were doing more than just reiterating someone else's information, but were also helping to construct a more meaningful and holistic picture about native Americans by providing details derived from their own experiences and understandings. The students were involved in a different way during these expansions, not asking technical questions about what to underline. Not only was it more interesting, personal, and relevant for the students; but also for the teacher, who had told them enthusiastically that she had done more reading (Fld 10/27/88).

The point of this discussion is to show the effects of student manipulation of the CGL context. Students had sabotaged the structural organization of the lesson, according to fundamental principles of cooperative learning. Although the teacher had originally intended for them to learn together without her supervision, students collectively had gotten Mrs. E. to alter the context and the nature of their involvement and hers. However, even with the students' manipulation, the teacher had managed to make the learning, in academic terms, more meaningful with such changes. It was a different kind of teaching than either traditional or cooperative learning settings, strictly defined. CGL had become something both less and more than the original intent, providing an opportunity for Mrs. E. to share her new learning with the group. She related to this group of students in a more intimate setting which was less pressured in terms of numbers, while the rest of the class worked cooperatively on the task, as assigned. In some ways, the change was serendipitous, allowing for sharing of ideas and the emergence of a larger picture of native Americans that involved a crucial social issue. The confines of discrete locations for tribes, necessary for her organization of the groups, was loosened in this discussion, to give a much more dynamic historical picture of native Americans in this country. The curriculum as planned was expanded.

Lampert (1985) describes the dilemmas of teacher decision making, asserting that rarely are the choices between an "ideal" and something else, but generally are between the "lesser" of the various evils. Mrs. E. had cleverly "saved" this one dysfunctional group from a potential disaster. In terms of academic learning, the decisions were very effective. However, she had made the decisions for them and led the

group; and these students had not learned by direct experience how to work through differences and make group decisions, a major purpose of cooperative learning. In addition, the teacher's interesting discussion was geared toward these four students and not the rest of the class; she spent most of this lesson with only a few students. Whether or not the understandings of this group from this discussion were passed on to others, I cannot determine. For her to have shared with everyone, she would have needed to speak to the whole class. That was not her agenda.

This example of the students' manipulation, Mrs. E.'s intervention, and the complicity of all participants in the undermining of the original plan of the lesson indicates how complex it is to evaluate interactions of cooperative group work, with multiple academic, social, and personal goals. This complexity was mirrored in Josh's response, when I asked him to describe cooperation. Usually very articulate and polished, this student suddenly paused, unsure about which way to describe cooperation. He then changed the wording from "You have to" to "you get to cooperate" (Tr Int 12/15/88). In the first phrase, Josh portrayed cooperation as an obligation; then he changed it, to indicate that cooperation was a right. It was both, and the ambiguity of interpretation for any particular situation sometimes invited a variety of responses, some of which involved minimal compliance.

Although Mrs. E. often emphasized the quality of products, the students still saw getting done as the single most important aspect of the work they did. In the first example provided, Joshua really did not want to write. He wanted to do minimal effort. Often, however, the students were not necessarily resisting, as in trying to "trick" Mrs. E. This type of "resistance" could often be linked to the students' attempt

to please the teacher, with the main objective as finishing the work. By determining how to make it easy and fast, they may have been attempting to guarantee that they would be able to complete the work. Rather than doing this "against" the teacher, the manipulation to minimalize tasks may have been some students' interpretations of how to please her.

STUDENTS' DEPICTIONS OF COOPERATION IN GROUP STORIES AFTER TWO AND A HALF MONTHS OF CGL

In spite of some levels of manipulation which resulted in downgrading particular assignments, students had learned a great deal during the seven-week CGL unit on native Americans. At Mrs. E.'s suggestion, I designed a one-week storywriting unit to find out, after two months of cooperating in CGL, how students were thinking about cooperation. I hoped to gain insight into students' interpretations from the textual portrayals of their characters. An essential feature of these stories was that they would be socially constructed, representing situations in which characters cooperated in ways that made sense to whole groups of students, rather than individually-written pieces.

I intended to examine the students' interpretations of their own and their characters' relationships with each other; but I learned that for many, the relationship with me as adult giving the assignment was still paramount to other considerations. I inadvertently exacerbated this by creating a problem in the design and criteria for writing the story, instructing students to select two or more characters, present a

conflict between them, resolve the problem, and end the story with the characters talking and acting cooperatively.

For many students, including all of these concepts in the order required in the same story was not reasonable or realistic. Robbie and Megen flatly informed me later that their characters did not cooperate because "You can't have a happier ending; we need to not have them argue so much" (Tr Int 12/16/88). Other student responses varied; one openly protested the inclusion of conflict, while others dealt with it by subtly sabotaging or making an ironic allusion to the theme of cooperation. In each case, the students were in effect telling me the story could not have both conflict and cooperation.

Mun, usually very supportive of the teacher's stance, had tried to talk me into altering the assignment, inquiring, "do we have to have a problem in there?" When I suggested as characters the president and vice-president from another country, Mun adamantly rejected the idea, responding uncompromisingly, "No. No arguing" (Tr Fld 12/7/88).

In the other three groups, students resisted my criterion of transforming conflict into cooperation by constructing stories in which characters were not very cooperative at the end. Although some groups had argued over character selection, no one challenged the resolution or representation of cooperation in their stories as being unrealistic, incorrect, or unrepresentative. Even when given an opportunity to change the story in retrospect, Asbeid critiqued the technical construction, such as language and dialogue, but he did not challenge the group's construction on the basis of tenets of cooperativeness (Tr Int 12/16/88).

Some students saw cooperative endings as "happily ever after" themes that were inappropriate for characters who had been in conflict. When I inquired if Robbie and Megen thought that in order to have resolution to a story, the two people had to be happy, Robbie responded, "Not exactly" and Megen agreed, adding, "Just give in" (Tr Int 12/16/88). Similarly, when I asked if Garfield resolved breaking the scale in Garfield's Diet, Courtney claimed, "Yes -- they just threw it away!" Asbeid concurred, "I think it's the best [solution]" (Tr Int 12/16/88).

Some of the students, savvy school-goers, had subverted the section on cooperation, still meeting the most basic obligation to the teacher, which was to complete the work by writing a story with the specified three sections. The story depictions of cooperation did not tell me all that students knew about cooperating, but only how they thought about it in terms of the assignment. One storyline, for example, depicted resolution as changing oneself and cooperation as withdrawing.

In Mirror Martian, Group Three had introduced two look-alike martians with nearly-alike names. The one named Really Unhuman was a newcomer to Unhuman's territory. The problem was that both looked the same and wanted the same thing. In order to resolve the dilemma, the group decided that one character must change appearance, so the two martians would no longer look alike; then he could "get out of this place!" The newcomer decided to paint itself yellow. However, this was not for the sake of determining property rights; the martians did not share the land. Once one was different, the characters resolved their differences by avoidance of further fighting through one's actual physical withdrawal from the planet. (See Appendix C for complete story.)

When I suggested that they "take a look at the end," Megen acknowledged that she knew the ending was not "ideal," replying, "They still didn't make friends." The students in Group Three had chosen withdrawal over other possible scenarios, which Rob and Megen produced easily upon my later request to hypothetically change it and make it work out. Rob and Megen offered the following solution:

> Rb: Probably what I'd do, is I'd say, 'Well, this is my
>   planet, and no one has ever come here, before, and
>   so we can work this out, you can be on the other
>   side of the planet and so we can work this out, you
>   can be on the other side of the planet and...
> Mg: [Rent-free.
> Rb: No way.
> Mg: (laughter)
> Rb: ...and then they can just sorta' have half and half,
>   and that way, they can sorta' (?) each other, if
>   they want to come over, they can.
> (Tr Int 12/16/88)

Although they were perfectly able to construct a more equitable solution, the group did not write one because it did not fit the students' ideas of cooperation based on power as coercion and on human nature as coercive, selfish, and uncontrollable when angry. "I mean, lots of arguments just don't end, like 'OK, I'm sorry,' Megen explained (Tr Int 12/16/88).

That was also the portrayal in the story Garfield's Big Diet, which described three characters, Garfield, Jon, and Odie, fighting over the last piece of lasagna and pizza. They argued about who deserved it the most, based on what kind of food it was (i.e., cat food? dog food? or human food?). The second section was actually not resolution, but a literal fight scene, with characters throwing plates, hitting each other with pans, and "swacking" each other on the head. In addition, Odie threw lasagna; and Garfield, at one point, fainted. The final page

showed two characters recovering, and Jon saying, "Okay, don't start it again. Let's talk." The cooperation portrayed was Jon's cutting the pizza into thirds and making another lasagna to share.

When I enquired later about alternative endings, Courtney suggested, "There could be a mess all over, and they would clean it up or something." However more cooperative this might have seemed, neither Courtney nor Asbeid wanted to change the ending; inappropriate for the context, it did not "sound right," as Asbeid told me (Tr Int 12/16/88). Both Courtney's and Megen's groups did not see equitable resolution as a real possibility with characters in conflict.

These group stories represented the kind of cooperation they had learned before entering this classroom, one of compliance, withdrawal, on the part of the characters. In addition, the group's cooperation with me in completing the assignment as requested represented cooperation as <u>accommodation</u> to me as the teacher. The students felt they could not honestly do the assignment the way I had constructed it.

In seeking alternatives, students had several choices; one was to change the assignment and remove one of the elements. That was Mun's original request, preferring to write about cooperation but not conflict.[2] Robbie's group had chosen to exploit the conflict section of <u>Mirror Martian</u>, which came "naturally," he and Megen informed me, borne out of their own conflict. Although they did not drop the cooperation part, they reinterpreted what cooperation would be, under those circumstances. Each response represented an accommodation of an "impossible" request, in essence, "playing the game of school" and doing what the teacher wanted, even if it was ridiculous and contradictory in

form. They were cooperating with me, complying with an assignment that did not make sense.

The students had both complied and resisted, subverting the very thing I was most interested in: the part that showed how people cooperate with each other. Inadvertently, by the very nature of the assignment, I was feeding into the students' resistance patterns of minimal compliance; by asking the "impossible," I was indirectly teaching the very opposite of what I believe cooperation should be. I had no idea I was encouraging students to comply with something they did not believe in; I thought I was asking them to interpret, in their own way, what cooperation is. I had not seen this as a relationship to me.

"The deeper you get into an argument, the harder it is, to cover up," Megen explained. If you cannot mask the disagreement, then you leave, which is what they had the martian do in their story.

"Cover up" seemed a curious phrase to describe people trying to resolve differences. That is what they were doing with me and my assignment: covering up the incongruities by doing the work, creating the story. This made sense, in terms of what several students had learned were appropriate responses in previous experiences in outside contexts, such as the home. Many had learned that cooperative behavior was to placate, to "behave," to conform, to cover up the problem. They had brought these solutions from outside contexts and had also begun to apply them to CGL situations. During the Indian unit, Ricardo and Courtney had opted at different times to leave their respective groups and make no further contribution, with an understanding that that was being cooperative.

That students may have been covering up makes the situation even more problematic, for although in terms of critical theory, I might say that students were resisting my assignment and my assumptions, it is entirely possible that they saw their action as complying. That is, the covering up was for me, for my paradoxical assignment.

A holistic system of logic was emerging in the students' responses: cooperation meant not arguing, not fighting, complying. To not argue, you covered up, sometimes by withdrawing; other times, by giving in. In covering up, you denied your own wishes. What might be interpreted as resistance, then, could also have been a response in which students were actually submerging the self for the sake of "pleasing" the adult. There were, of course, instances in which students resisted, pressing for personal concerns and surfacing that submerged "self." But other instances of manipulation seem to have been done in deference to the teacher and the need to complete the assignment.

Rob's reactions in the storywriting unit indicate the complexity of a student's making sense of his relationships within the CGL context. Rob's initial response to the assignment was an attempt to coerce peers into accepting his idea of which character to adopt. In a way, he was attempting to create a sub-hierarchy, in which he, rather than the teacher, was in control. He shouted; he leaned across the table so the shouting would be more intimidating. The group was in impasse for most of that first period of writing; when I held a short class discussion to note progress, and encouraged Rob's group to "get going," he capitulated. In essence, my intervention symbolized a return to the "original" hierarchy, with the adult in control.

The remainder of Rob's actions looked quite cooperative and harmonious. He became very active in creating the dialogue in the story (Fld 12/7/88-12/9/88). In fact, Rob informed me later in an interview that he had become the character Really Unhuman, and the character's response to conflict and mode of cooperation represented Rob's within group interactions.

Robbie spoke interchangeably of himself and the character "I just gave in when I was : he just gave in 'cuz he : he got tired with the arguing, and he was just : : : 'I'm tired of that,' and he just gave up." The character had changed his color to be different, so he could "get out of this place!"

Giving in and getting out were Robbie's interpretation of cooperation, both in his own actions as a member in the group and in the character he projected as himself. Although the martian had wanted to stay in the back yard, "after all the arguing, it was just too much." Robbie concluded, "the martian that I was being just wanted to get outa' there, he didn't really care." Rob, tired of the group's arguing, just wanted to finish the assignment (Tr Int 12/16/88). Rob gave in to comply to my wishes to finish quickly; he interpreted his actions as withdrawal, what the character he "was being" did. Yet, when he ceased to argue, he actually did participate in a cooperative manner in the group. But he defined what he did in terms of the character's actions and therefore did not recognize that he actually had become a more egalitarian, contributing member of the group. What he did with them was not apparent, because he had capitulated, had gotten "outa' here" symbolically and psychologically. He no longer cared about the assignment on one level, and the actions that looked positive did not,

in his mind, represent himself or his interests, but rather simply a response to _my_ demands. That was cooperation: what he did with the higher authority in the hierarchy.

To Rob and others, cooperating was dealing with a structure of power that coerced "work." It was also a portrayal of human nature. Student portrayals of cooperation indicated a resistance to what they knew I wanted, on the basis of what is "real." While Megen's group resisted by not having a "happy" ending, another group, writing The Fight for the Apple, did just the opposite. This group showed their characters cooperating in a more egalitarian manner, but then made it explicit that it was a "happily ever after" story to cue the reader that it was, in essence, a fairy tale.

The Fight for the Apple, written by Josh's group, had two dogs fighting over who would get an apple they had each spotted in a tree. The argument was based on who had seen the apple first. Resolution did not concern the legalities, but the more pragmatic issue that neither could reach the apple by himself. They both, at the same time, said, "We've got to figure a way out of this." The cooperation section portrayed Spike standing on Spot's head to reach the apple. The conclusion stated that Spike "rips the apple in half; they eat it happily ever after." (See Appendix C for complete story.)

This is the only story that student groups wrote in which characters collaborated in the solution of the problem and reaped equally from the outcome. To get the apple, they worked together, creating a living ladder in order to reach it. Once they had the apple, one dog split it in two equal parts so they could share.

The story ended, "They eat it [the apple] happily ever after." The one story with no obvious violence <u>and</u> a happy ending concluded with words that typify the classical fairy tale ending: old-time fantasy. The words "They lived happily ever after" were altered only slightly, to "They eat it happily ever after." Since obviously the phrase "happily ever after" could not depict the continuity of the act of eating, it clearly indicated a fairy-tale quality to the story, i.e., unreality. The key issue was the theme itself: cooperation. Possibly, it seemed unrealistic because there was no fighting or violence in the story; at the least, the students did not see sharing the apple as realistic. Although these four students constructed the story according to my specifications, it appears by their fairy tale wording that it was not realistic to portray the two characters cooperating.

To support his point about "realism" versus cooperation, Robbie used the example of a recent appearance of a movie director on a television talk show who had shown how "it's a lot easier to make one [ending] that's sorta' sad." Megen agreed, "...a lot of times, they [the characters] end up having grudges, and it's kinda' hard to..." Robbie inserted, "get out of a grudge." He told me, "They're just angry at each other, now how are you supposed to have those guys make friends or something? It's kind of difficult..." I asked if there would be any way for the characters to realize that conflict is not the answer. I suggested an alternative, and asked if that would work. "Wait a minute," I said, pretending to be a character, "maybe we could work this out, so we both get basically what we want, and we don't have to <u>kill</u> anybody." Rob gave me an emphatic, "<u>No!</u>" and Megen said "Not (laugh) <u>actually</u>" (Tr Int 12/16/88).

Resolution and cooperation, as the "ideal," were incongruous themes together with conflict and violence. This whole storywriting unit remained a symbol of the hierarchy of how students thought about cooperation: first, with the adult or person with more power, and only secondarily, with peers. Resolution was either coercion or withdrawal, depending on the position of power. The kind of cooperation that "worked" and was more practical was evasion.

Bettleheim (1958) talks about the need for agency in The Informed Heart. He describes evasion as a serious problem, using as an extreme example, the parents of the heroine in The Diary of Anne Frank. It was easier to evade the problem than to take action and deal with it. As a result, the entire family died. Robbie, however, acknowledged the problem, and still evaded it. Even after three months of exposure to cooperative group learning, Robbie still saw evasion as the solution to disagreement. He was still missing what Greene (1988) calls a language of "possibility" for alternatives and was interpreting his group story, as well as group context, according to what was familiar: power hierarchies.

According to Rob's previous experiences with arguing, withdrawal was a more realistic solution than working out the situation so that all the participants could "win."

Although the students did not specify that one martian had less status as an outsider, their resolution of having the newcomer give in and leave, rather than the property owner, indicates the lack of power the second party had. The Group Three students viewed the second martian as having infringed on the first's territory. Barth (1969) discusses that groups create boundaries in order to keep others who are

different out; the students' story <u>Mirror Martian</u> is an interesting case because the two characters were <u>identical</u>. Yet, as a stranger, he had infringed on the boundary of a social organization to which he did not belong "initially" (see Simmel 1908, 1971). The notion of opening a space to this newcomer who looked exactly like the participant who "belonged" was not explored. It was too much of a hassle to work through difficulties; it was easier just to leave.

This same way of treating strangers, by making them leave, was mirrored in some of the student's responses to peers who were different. Sometimes, they actually tried physically to relocate them; more often, they cut off the person's turns to speak and provide input. This type of response to peers who were linguistically or culturally diverse occurred often when students felt threatened in their capacity to meet the demands to the higher authority to finish their work in time. Under such circumstances, one solution was to close the spaces to these "strangers" who did not belong. During times of stress, the "outsiders" did not have the same rights as the "insiders."

Mrs. E. had provided many opportunities for these students to learn to be more open. And Robbie had welcomed this notion. In spite of the disposition to be open, Robbie still considered conflict as unresolvable when he wrote the story with his group and when he talked about it afterwards. The others did not dispute this perspective.

EXPANDING ACADEMIC LEARNING: SHARING/INTENTIONAL LEARNING

Although I have thus far described some significant problems, nevertheless, there were many positive aspects to students' learning

about cooperation, which I describe in this following section. As could be predicted from previous literature, the CGL experiences in this classroom did provide opportunities for student academic growth in many ways, representing a reservoir of resources to accomplish something beyond the capacity of what a single student could do. Particularly with extended units, a learning community was developed through CGL in which students could discuss, brainstorm, help each other work through reasoning processes, and offer suggestions for improvement.

As a result of the combined efforts, the students amassed material to share with other classes, extending not only their own but also others' interest in the subject. One example was the second grader's questioning of Megen about the "wet" buffalo skin. (See Chapter 1.)

I noted toward the culmination of the Indian project that students were questioning each other, requesting information from each other, sharing information and applying it to the projects, responding with interest to each other's information, indicating pride in peers' work. They extended the chance to learn about native Americans by asking each other questions, which included but went beyond the factual. They asked each other questions which indicated not only confidence in peers' ability to reflect on higher levels and be "experts," but also showed that students were trying to construct meaning about how the native Americans lived and thought. Sivan, demonstrating a model totem pole his group had made of an owl and bear, explained that the Northwest Indians' totem poles were "stories: they thought their ancestors were animals" (Fld 11/11/88, 11/17/88). Ricardo's question, "Were the totem poles like idols?" reflected the attempt to make sense of the Haida religions system within his own schema of beliefs. "How'd they get the

whales back from the ocean?" another wondered, seeing on the mural the small canoes and kayaks that the Northwest Indians used.

The process of asking each other questions was also valuable as modeling for self-examination of what an individual had learned and needed to think about next, as demonstrated by Sivan's announcement to the class: "I have a question for myself. I don't know what kind of environment they had." Students also learned to help each other to select what information to seek next. Robbie suggested to Group Four that they explore more about the hunting that the Northwest Indians did because, he predicted, "someone's gonna' ask you that" (Fld 11/17/88).

Students were able to cite specific academic information they had acquired from others' projects during a class discussion on the final day of the Indian unit. When Mrs. E. asked what they had learned from the project, students responded about the Southeast Indians' pueblos: "I thought they had windows on the bottom floor." One student commented about the homes of Northeast Group: "I thought the longhouses had windows." April had made a pair of very homey blue and yellow polka dotted curtains on a window on her group's longhouse, until she checked the photographs and information in a reference book. Her change had attracted her peers' attention. About the Northwest native Americans, a student reported learning about potlatches as a social custom, as well as about totem poles and how the native Americans associated them with their ancestors (Fld 11/18/88).[3]

When students rehearsed their presentations to their own classmates, they did not just give "facts," but explained why the people they studied responded in various ways. For example, as Ricardo described the pueblo on the mural his group had created to depict the

life of the Southwest Indians, he explain that "the Pueblo and Hopis didn't move around a lot, because you can see their houses were hard to build." He also explained that "they planted crops near water, so it wasn't too hard to carry them" (Fld 11/17/88).

By working in groups, students were able to create the extended projects on native Americans. Mrs. E. pointed this out as groups finished their murals, praising the work and concluding,

> They're gorgeous. You can look back and be proud of what
> you did as a group. If you'd done that, as one person,
> it'd take you 'til doomsday.
> (Fld 11/3/88)

Working together, the students were able not only to produce more to see; but I noticed that, as they presented their final reports for groups of visiting classes and parents, students learned from each other. What one student said one time, another would remember and present another time. As the students shared their learning with others, the presentations actually began to take longer, because they had so much more to say. By the third presentation, Mrs. E. noted to the visiting teacher, "I set this up for a 15 minute presentation -- and this took 45 minutes. I'm very proud of that. It means they know a lot more than I thought!" She noted to the students how well they had "picked up from others," concluding, "so, you're learning from each other" (Fld 11/18/88).

CGL also provided an opportunity for students to extend assignments and be creative together. The ideas of one person could "turn on" another; and one of the most interesting and promising aspects of group work turned out to be the new sharing dimension of intentional learning. This did not happen often, but points to a positive area to

explore in the future. The best example was provided by Ricardo and Mun, in Group Three, who became excited about a book on Navajo symbols and utilized the symbols to design their own story, related to recent experiences, about a boy who had chickenpox. The project had furthered the boys' appreciation of the linguistic complexities of the Navajo language, and they pointed out during presentations to other classes that Navajo is not only "one of the hardest writing in the world," but also one of the "hardest languages to speak" (Fld 11/17/88, 11/18/88).

I will continue with this story in the following chapter, which is devoted to students' social learning and interactions within the CGL contexts.

NOTES

1 Spelling and punctuation are presented as in the original student writing.

2 Mun's group had selected a Garfield theme only after I had insisted that they write about conflict also. In retrospect, had I allowed the flexibility requested, I would have gotten a much different picture of how this group would depict cooperation. What I did learn was, again, cooperation and conflict do not "go together."

3 Mrs. E. had not geared the discussion to specific groups; one group, the Plains Indians, did not happen to be mentioned. Not all students responded, because the discussion was cut short by the arrival of the next group of visitors.

Chapter 5

STUDENTS, CGL, AND SOCIAL ASPECTS OF COOPERATION

MEETING MRS. E.'S GOALS: INCREASING PEER AWARENESS, UNDERSTANDING, APPRECIATION

Ricardo and Mun's Navajo sign writing project showed how a dyad could do something special together, and in the process, grow in understanding and friendship. Although every individual's progress was unique, the experience of these two boys is one example of student growth in acceptance and appreciation through CGL contexts in this classroom. In this chapter I explore aspects of both growth and limitations in social understanding which students experienced in the process of cooperating through cooperative group learning.

Ricardo and Mun had worked together in September with Megen on a group project creating a large map representing the geographical locations of a story they had read. Mrs. E. had informed me that the groups had tried this once before and the lesson had "bombed," because all the students did was "argue." When I joined Ricardo's group, Megen had greeted me with a wry comment, "You can stay here and see us arguing!" The two boys subsequently had fought constantly about the spelling of words, sharing the eraser, where to put the parts of the map, whether or not they should talk, what words meant, whether touching Mun's poison ivy would cause Ricardo to get it also. Ricardo complained about Mun's irritating noise when he scratched the poison ivy. Rejecting each other's contributions, they forced each other to re-do lettering, Ricardo telling Mun, "No! That's ugly, Mun." Mun's response was to sit back, arms crossed over his chest and retort, "Let's see you

do better." Ricardo erased all of Mun's lettering, and Mun criticized him for being "so slow" and wasting "lots of time." When Ricardo finished his own lettering, Mun said he wanted it to go all across the page, so Mun erased Ricardo's work and they argued about the height of a letter. Finally, Ricardo told Mun, "I'm doing this. There -- is that big enough, Mr. Sinister?" Over an hour later, the two had accomplished very little, in comparison with the other groups working on a similar project (Fld 9/17/88).

Less than two months later, the Navajo story project was a great contrast, with Mun and Ricardo demonstrating full acceptance of each other's contributions as they described their chicken pox sign story to me (see end of chapter 4).

> "We made it up. Me and him," Ricardo explained. "He found the pages and he helped me with the story, and I helped with the story." Mun added, "And he did the drawing." "We made the story together," Ricardo concluded with a smile.
> (Fld 11/17/88)

Not only did Mun and Ricardo grow in appreciation of each other's academic and conceptual contributions, but they had also manifested a friendship and now stood there, smiling at each other, with Ricardo's right arm around Mun's shoulder. These two and others had changed, acquiring new understandings about working with others after years of conditioning in traditional classrooms.

Accustomed to having the teacher decide student rights and obligations, students faced a new challenge, with the need to take on contextual interpretations of these responsibilities themselves in groupwork. At first, when they began to make sense of their obligations to each other, they thought in terms of what peers did not do for them,

focusing on themselves and personal rights, rather than their obligations to others.

In the first whole-class discussion about cooperation ten days after beginning the Indian unit, Courtney complained that she got stuck with all the work because peers "want for you to give the answer." Asbeid also talked about his personal rights rather than the obligations of everyone, complaining: "You can end up doing all the work while they talk, and they just write it down." Joshua thought about his rights in terms of not "getting a chance," because "one person talks a lot" (Fld 10/14/88).

These three students voiced concerns focused on individual rights and interests, rather than social responsibility. However, the way they responded may nevertheless have represented a certain awareness about their relationship to others as a result of working in groups. Although it was common for a student to speak in the first person, the students in this discussion all used the word you to indicate themselves. Perhaps a beginning bridge to considering others and their rights, students talking in the second person about their own individual experiences seemed to indicate that they were aware that this could apply also to others' feelings.

Two weeks later, some of the student responses had expanded beyond personal rights to focus on group responsibility. Students were expressing a greater sense of community. Courtney, comparing CGL to the operation of democracy, stated, "everybody has to share the responsibility." Emily spoke of the responsibility to cooperate, suggesting "if you have an idea, change it a little bit, to fit."

Sivan, worried that people might "feel left out," advocated that they "not use one person's ideas," but "everyone's ideas" (Tr Fld 11/1/88).

The way these individuals talked about working with others had changed. The use of phrases like should and has to indicated expanding awareness of the egalitarian part of the power structure. In addition, words like we and everyone, marked a collaborative effort and emphasized the groupness of the experience, rather than the individuality.

In the class discussion on the culminating day of the native American unit, students reported that they had learned to share and "use everybody's ideas," compromise and "do some things you don't want to do," and accept others. "You have to face it and try to help the other person and not start to yell," Sivan concluded. They had, as Courtney described, "met people more; learned how to get along with them more" (CD Fld 11/18/88).

I noted that some students had become advocates for other peers. Mun, for example, insisted that the group give Lina a turn to read when the group was taking turns reading selected passages and "learning all they could," in preparation for the presentations to visitors (CD Fld 11/18/88). Earlier, the same group was instructed to share what they were learning from their individual reports; Ricardo had told the group "Let her talk," when Lina had hesitantly begun to explain her report on Kachinas and sand paintings.

That was Group Three; likewise, in Group One, peers became advocates for Gilberto, who was learning English as a second language and was hesitant to speak. At first, they had argued over who would have to interact with Gilberto. Asbeid had flatly said "I don't want to work with Gilberto." When I played back the tape later, he stuttered,

"But he never: but he never: but he never talks when I work with him on something...he just: he just _smiles_." Joshua reported, "he just writes down on his paper, and he doesn't _tell_ us" (Tr Int 10/17/88). When Mrs. E. assigned Joshua to work with Gilberto to discuss a reading, Joshua bargained to limit the time: "For a _little_ while; then do we switch? Then do me and someone else...?" (Fld 10/27/88). During the three months of research, Gilberto never did talk much in the groups; his peers, however, began to go out of their way, looking for him if he did not appear, asking his opinion, learning to read his facial gestures as well as written responses (Fld 11/3/88, 11/17/88, 12/6/88). Through CGL experiences, these students and others demonstrated through their interactions increased awareness, understanding, and appreciation for Gilberto. Several students praised not only Gilberto's but also Onochie's work, as well as Robbie and Courtney's presentations, and Lina's report.

I had not originally traced how students thought about themselves; nor had I thought about the meta-cognitive aspects of their learning. I was looking for products: what they did and said, and what they said about what they had done. It had not occurred to me to step back and trace the changes in _how_ they thought about themselves, their interactions, and their peers.

My interest was sparked by a comment Mrs. E. made to me after the study was over. She mentioned one day that Robbie, one of her most "difficult" and "problematic" students when it came to cooperating with others, had benefited most from my presence as a researcher. She had concluded that my having asked him questions had helped him to become

much more "philosophical" (PC 1/08/89). From her comments, I decided to trace Robbie's progress.

Case A: Robbie

Mrs. E. had made me curious. When I interviewed her several weeks later, I inquired what she meant by the term philosophical; I asked what sorts of things Robbie was saying or doing that led her to conclude that. Mrs. E. explained:

> He seems to be more aware of what other people are doing;
> he seems to be more analytical about things, than turning
> into himself...I do think the research helped him, just
> to the point of : having you ask him questions, and
> making him think : I think his thinking process about
> someone other than himself : expanded...I think Robbie
> has come a long way.
> (Tr Int 2/24/89)

Mrs. E. was talking about the thinking process of this student. This further aroused my interest, and I traced Rob's thinking in interview transcripts. I had asked Robbie one time what he had learned about working with the group in the Indian unit, and he had responded "Um, the painting." At first, I thought he meant he learned how to paint better, but with more probing, he explained that it had to do with learning about Gilberto, the person he knew the least when he began working with Group One. He told me,

> it kinda' showed who liked to paint, and who liked to
> draw, because Gil liked to draw -- I thought he was gonna
> like to paint. And after he drew, then he wanted to
> paint.
> (Tr Int 12/15/88)

Robbie had concluded that knowing more what people _like_ made it easier to cooperate with them. He was referring to the beginning of group constructions of murals depicting the lifestyles of the native Americans for each geographical location. By the end of the unit, Gilberto had stopped working alone and had painted the leggings with Asbeid and then with Robbie. I asked Robbie how he had been able to tell what Gilberto wanted to do, at that point, since Gilberto had not really spoken; Rob responded, "Oh. It's just how he acted."

I realized that there had been a change in how Robbie thought about Gilberto. Originally, he felt Gil had the obligation to talk; later, he had accepted Gil's right to communicate in his own way and Robbie had taken on some of the responsibility to change, so that he could work successfully with this silent peer. He confirmed in a December interview that he could at that point communicate with Gil even if he didn't tell him in words (Tr Int 12/6/88).

As I traced Robbie's thinking about others, I realized that he also had learned to think about himself more analytically, so that he thought of himself in terms of how he affected others and how peers would describe or react to him, in certain situations. Robbie told me that he had some problems accepting others' ideas and that produced problems _with_ the others.

> Ummmm : yea, like, sometimes I can be hard on people that
> didn't do things er...if they don't (do what I like).
> They don't really like that. It tends to bother people.
> (Tr Int 11/29/88)

Through observations of his relationship with others during group work, Rob could candidly describe himself as others saw him and understand that when he did not accept peers' ideas, it caused bad

feelings. I asked Robbie if he had any ideas about what he could do about his tendency to be "hard" on others. He did: "You could say 'That's a good idea, but maybe we could change it a few ways...er, maybe it was better if we use this, instead of that'" (Tr Int 12/6/88).

What Robbie was suggesting was a compromise, changing his ideas and being less rigid. He could also cite a more considerate and mutually respectful way to talk with peers about their differences. He understood he should leave room open for peer response and not try to control the interactions.

Robbie had learned many things, both about peers, and about himself. He now knew how to pick up cues to communicate with peers even if the other person did not talk with him. He had re-thought the issues of his own rights and how that related to peers' rights, and had learned to accept Gilberto's right to be different. In addition, he had begun to realize that his peers had a right to express different ideas, as well. The thinking about his peers drew attention to thinking about himself; and Robbie had become aware of some of his own tendency to want to do things only his way. He could now describe not only how he responded to peers, but also how peers responded to him. He could see himself as an object of the reflections of others, and could talk about and analyze the situations that were problems for him and peers; furthermore, he could offer concrete and effective ways to compromise and be more diplomatic in peer interactions.

Case B: Courtney

I traced Courtney's thinking about intra- and inter-personal aspects of working in groups for two reasons: 1) because Mrs. E. considered her the most difficult student to teach to cooperate; 2) she was one of the most articulate and provided a great deal of input from interviews.

It was not only Mrs. E. who regarded her as having a hard time cooperating with others. Ricardo, who had participated with her in the Southwest Group during the Indian unit, described the problem from the peer's point of view:

> Like, with Courtney, the only way you / the only way you
> can be : like : Courtney's friend, and cooperate with
> her, is if you do everything her way...you know, I mean,
> she'd ask us, but she'd make the decision anyway.
> (Tr Int 11/29/88)

Ricardo explained that he finally rebelled and "didn't listen to her" after a while, but that presented problems, also,

> because we didn't listen to her, and that was good,
> except we weren't her friend once we didn't listen to
> her...It was still difficult working with her.
> (Tr Int 11/29/88)

Even though Courtney had some difficulty cooperating with peers, I found evidence of a similar kind of progress in meta-awareness that had occurred with Robbie. Her growth in understanding interactions had not necessarily been obvious because her overt actions had not always changed significantly. But she was also aware of this, and could talk intelligently about why she was so "forceful" with her peers: "Maybe

it's because I was an only child and I : I had my: you know, my : the way I wanted" (Tr Int 11/7/88).

Although Courtney told me that, to resolve problems, people should act democratically, i.e., "be fair," she was aware that this does not always happen: "Well, sometimes Asbeid fights about if he doesn't like what happens, and so do I -- mostly I do, because I was the only child in the family" (Tr Int 11/29/88). In spite of her being accustomed, as Mrs. E. said, to "running the show," Courtney had learned through CGL how to "treat" peers, growing in awareness and understanding. She had made adjustments in order to communicate with Gilberto, for example, without his talking, although she preferred to talk with him. She explained, "You should look at people : how they're acting : how they're acting, if they don't say anything" (Tr Int 12/6/88).

Although Ricardo may have felt that Courtney seemed insensitive to his needs, in contrast, her comments about Gilberto and others indicated awareness, understanding and acceptance of others, at least conceptually. Other peers saw Courtney as very interested in others and very helpful; when she spoke of being sad about the way others had treated Willie one day, Megen said, "That's Courtney." Courtney had been watching her peers and "...trying to relate other people with other people...the people that I think work well in groups."

Observing and analyzing peer interactions, Courtney made comparisons, noting that Willie "misses out" because "they won't listen to him," whereas, peers did listen to Ricardo because "he talks really strong." Courtney could cite which peers were able to work effectively in a group with her, according to very specific information on

communicative competencies regarding directness, humor, and predictability.

Courtney had developed the metaphor of "democracy" to talk about what it was like for her to work in groups. Like Rob, she did not always manifest her understandings in the interactions, but she had increased awareness and understanding. She explained, taking the role of someone who had lost an election in a democracy, "I shouldn't say 'No, no, no, I don't _like_ it that way, it isn't fair.' You shouldn't push : and also it should be -- democracy is also being fair" (Tr Int 12/16/88).

In fact, Courtney saw this discrepancy, or lag, between what she knew and could talk about, and what she could do, or put into action. She told me, "It's easier -- sometimes, it's easier to _talk_ about your friends than _get along_ with them" (Tr Int 12/16/99).

Discussion

Both Robbie and Courtney had learned a tremendous amount about effective social interaction -- more, in fact, than I had originally thought to look for. Courtney was aware of her problem of wanting her own way, and the source of it. She had learned to observe others, to see what made them effective or not effective with others. She could identify elements of communication that made interactions more comfortable to her.

Rob also had grown, in terms of meta-awareness of himself, others, and alternative ways to interact. He had achieved awareness, understanding, and acceptance of Gilberto; and he had assumed

responsibility -- at least the first step -- in terms of being aware of and acknowledging his own problem areas and identifying and developing ways of improving his interactions in working with others.

Looking at students' development of understanding about interactions with peers lends more light to David Cohen's (1988) caution about feeling an "illusory sense of failure" when evaluating innovative, nonconventional teaching and learning. What I had originally been looking for was a product with these students -- what they _did_ that was successful when they worked in groups. If I had only looked for "recipes," of _how_ kids cooperated, rather than seeking out students' constructions of meanings, I might easily have concluded that Robbie and Courtney had learned very little in this initiatory unit on cooperation, since they had argued and often dominated the group interactions in that last storywriting unit. But, actually, something important had happened, not in their _actions_, but in their _thinking_.

What Mrs. E. had wanted for these students -- to know themselves better through others -- had actually happened, with the two I was able to trace retroactively. In the process of learning to evaluate the role of others in the interactions, these students, and others, had also developed the ability to evaluate themselves, to take a step back and treat themselves as objects of study. They had developed a meta-thinking which enabled them to observe and think about their interactions with others; to reevaluate others; and to become more aware, understanding, and accepting of them. This new thinking had also transferred to themselves, so that they developed new self-awareness as they saw themselves through the eyes of their peers, as a result of the interactions with others.

The CGL contexts had provided a potential, an opportunity to meet and know each other in varying degrees in different contexts, so that students had eventually acquired new friendships. When I finished my observations in December, Courtney had become friends with Lina, Gilberto with Willie. Their peers had included both Lina and Willie in their group processes during the final unit of group work. Gilberto had spoken and participated in the construction of the group story. Major changes had taken place. Students had also grown in understanding of previously-existent friendships, and in self-understanding. In spite of these various accomplishments, not the least of which was peer acceptance of the "strangers" in the group, perhaps the single most important effect of this three-month period of teaching students to cooperate with others was the change in how they thought about relationships. I have traced this progress in the two students considered most difficult to cooperate. Although each had experienced cooperative interactions with peers during some group contexts, they also had manifested some very un-cooperative situations. The change was sporadic in terms of overt actions; but what was happening in their minds was less tangible, a less easily identifiable transformation.

STUDENTS' PRECONCEPTIONS OF INTRA-SOCIETAL AND GLOBAL COOPERATION

One of Mrs. E.'s purposes for utilizing CGL was to provide opportunities for students to interrelate and communicate with peers to develop awareness, understanding, and acceptance of diversity. In three months, she had accomplished this goal with many of the students.

However, in spite of many intra- and inter-personal changes, student retained the idea of cooperation as compliance and an understanding of power as hierarchical and coercive. This was not caused by the teacher's shift in perspectives, although it was sometimes supported by her responses. Participants' historical contexts, which included personal experiences from home, sports, and previous schooling, as well as knowledge about societal and global cooperation, had influenced interpretations of what it meant to cooperate.

Mrs. E. assumed that students could take their learning about cooperation from CGL, which involved learning to understand and take the perspective of others, work through conflict, make decisions together, and apply that as future citizens. She explicitly connected group work to both national and global situations, stressing the need to care about others and to cooperate in all aspects of life, emphasizing the many problems that result when people do not cooperate. She presented democracy as a process in which people take their differences to the polls and accept the decisions, without having a war or killing each other afterwards (Fld 10/14/88; Tr Int 2/24/89).

To her examples, the students applied their own understandings of cooperation on national and international levels, which were based on hierarchical power structures and the use of power to coerce and dominate others. Courtney had introduced democracy as a metaphor in a class discussion, saying cooperation, like democracy is "hard" (Fld 11/1/88). Students were learning about democracy with relation to the national Presidential elections, which occurred during the research period. In a mock election, all but two had selected the candidate who subsequently lost. This coincidence served as an example of voting as

winning/losing, and simply reinforced the notion that cooperation, even in a democracy, ended up being a power hierarchy. Rather than focus on the egalitarian aspects, Mun connected the limitations to freedom in the larger society to democracy in the classroom. "Still," he explained, "democracy does not include some things in democracy you have some things you don't want to do, because democracy isn't <u>all</u>, you know." He concluded, "Even if there's like democracy in our classroom, some things...they still just have to do it, even if there's democracy" (Tr Int 11/07/88).

After the elections, the students who referred to democracy as a metaphor for cooperation did not, in the end, change their preconceptions of cooperation; ultimately, it was still a context of power hierarchies. Joshua explained, "One person wins...you still have to cooperate, but you have to like ask: <u>ask</u> them" (Tr Int 11/29/88). There was no sense of people still working on common goals, after the election. Robbie predicted vindication, as he spoke of the Republicans and Democrats "always fighting"; he assumed it was never over because "you never know, 'til we strike again" (Tr Int 11/29/88). <u>Striking</u>, a militaristic term, implied that elections were a conflict to be continuously re-enacted, rather than people working together to represent all interests fairly.

The students' tendency to respond with a rationale of violence as the resolution to problems between groups was evident at the very beginning of the Indian unit. Mrs. E. had discussed the plight of the native Americans' losing their lands, comparing it to a take-over of Greene Platte by students from another school. Students responded, "We'd want <u>full</u> defense" and "I'd get a crossbow," assuming that

superior weapons was the issue, rather than learning to understand and accept differences, to develop compromises, to share the land (Fld 10/4/88).

Kids' interpretations of personal experiences sometimes included similar overtones of violence. Asbeid, referring to being "democratic" at home as trying to share, reported that his attempts always ended in his younger brother's eating the entire cookie. He and Courtney jokingly concluded that violence would be more effective. Although this might be "child abuse," kicking his unreasonable sibling would solve his problem better than trying to share with him. His solution resembled the classes' problem-solving for native Americans who were robbed of their lands; resorting to a power hierarchy and increasing the violence would "resolve" his problem (Tr Int 12/15/88).

Asbeid's conclusion was made after many weeks of CGL and resembled more what he knew from the outside world than what he had done with peers in groups to solve problems. Most students, whether speaking of national or international issues, had a generally dismal view of human beings' "cooperating" either to balance power or to make the environment better. These feelings, together with experiences from other contexts in cooperating, contributed to students' continuing to respond with the idea that cooperating was not fighting. Even when projecting herself to being an adult, Emily said she would still give in, in a case of dispute, and that she would feel good about it, because she wouldn't "have to fight anymore" (Tr Int 11/09/88).

Mehan and Wood (1975) caution against assuming that adult realities are childrens'. Mrs. E.'s hopeful view that these students would be instrumental later in improving global relationships was not necessarily

shared by the students. She had a philosophy about conflict that assumed "these things pass"; but the students, in contrast, saw the future as bleak (Int 2/24/89). Students in this classroom represented areas all over the world, including Latin America, the Far East, and war-torn countries such as Iran and Israel; many viewed violence, war, and destruction as the norm of human behavior. Nuclear war was not the only serious concern; the students also referred to ecological "catastrophes." The students' candid, sad predictions of the future expressed little hope for solutions; they assumed, instead, that humans in power would dominate those under their control.

After several months of CGL, with Mrs. E explicitly connecting their learning to cooperate with improvement of global interrelationships in the future, not one student of the ten I interviewed in February had an idea of how the world might be changed. Robbie's observations from watching the news were that people were not doing "too good...there are a lot of wars still on..." I asked, "What do you think's gonna change, then?" Robbie didn't know (Tr Int 2/24/89).

Student views about power as coercion diminished their hope for possibility of achieving global cooperation as Mrs. E. saw it, in an ideal form of understanding and accepting diversity, and working together. Asbeid thought "There's probably a very slim chance" for everyone in the world to cooperate. Josh predicted that their future held "a lot of catastrophes" while Courtney pointed to lack of human agency to take responsibility for problems, such as ecological concerns:

> I don't know why people do things now, because that means
> everyone will have to deal with it later. They could
> help it now instead of later.
> (Tr Int 2/24/89)

"We're all gonna' die!" Courtney concluded. Her remark, although presented in a flippant, apparently joking, style was followed by sounds which more resembled sobs than laughs (Tr Int 2/24/89). April had found the proposition of facing the future of the world as distasteful, responding "Eeuuw"; she added, "we might have another war...maybe more..." (Tr Int 2/24/89). Mun's understanding, from what was happening in Southwest Asia, was that if it continued, "the whole world will be involved in a war [in which] the world is almost like destroyed" (Tr Int 2/24/89). Michael also saw a bleak future in terms of what is happening ecologically with "so many factories, the world could just die...'cuz the ozone layer'd go away" (Tr Int 2/24/89).

Asbeid hoped that nations "would stop building nuclear warheads" but had little confidence in countries with dictators: "no matter how much the people protest, they don't listen" (Tr Int 2/24/89). Student portrayals of human nature consistently assumed a power paradigm, that same schema which had interferred with their investing fully in cooperative activity. Indicating that the more powerful will dominate the less powerful, it would be very unlikely, Sivan pointed out, that people would achieve cooperation in the world. He told me it would be "hard to have wars stop" because "there's always a country that would want something that another country has." Sivan figured that there "probably might be some big wars" because "there's lots of countries that are not really trying to get better."

Sivan thought it would take a very long time to resolve differences, or change human responses. I asked him if he thought if everyone was learning cooperation like he was in school, that might make a difference. He said, "Ummm, maybe in a hundred or something years,

after people really learn it"; but even then, he concluded, "It would be really hard!" (Tr Int 2/24/89).

The most poignant statement, from Ricardo, shakily voiced worries that had been present since he was much younger:

> Me and my friend Darin -- he's in Sioux Falls right now
> -- and we've been friends ever since six, or five; and
> we've been always worried about nuclear war and : so, you
> know, we were always worried about that in the future,
> and it hasn't come yet : and we hope it doesn't ever come
> and I guess : : I hope the future's good and everything
> and I hope there's no wars (voice becomes wobbly) or
> anything.
> (Tr Int 2/24/89)

These students' depictions of cooperation as a power issue, i.e., coercion and compliance, reflected a dominant paradigm in western civilization for perceiving human relationships which Eisler (1987) claims has existed for thousands of years. With such a view, students showed no evidence of a sense of communal agency for accomplishing change, something which Lanier and Sedlak (1989) claim is essential for educating for the future. Even with Mun's one positive example of countries cooperating, referring to Reagan and Gorbechov's Star Wars agreements, it was in terms of what the leaders said, with no apparent sense of underlying social action to influence those decisions (Tr Int 11/07/88).

The global understandings and previous experiences of cooperation as "behaving" with strategies of withdrawal and giving in made it more difficult for students to interpret co-operation in a more egalitarian sense. Even when they did focus on obligations with each other, this was often within a view of power hierarchy, in which students interpreted fulfilling of obligations to each other as vehicles to performing obligations to the teacher.

STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Even after some very successful cooperative activities marked the culmination of the native American unit, students still judged group cooperation according to criteria related first to the teacher and then to peers. They worked <u>with</u> each other, but <u>for</u> the teacher. Both Sivan and Robbie cited being cooperative as first having the product finished and looking nice; including everyone came only after meeting the obligation to the teacher. Obligations to the teacher came first; to peers, second (CD 12/6/88).

When I asked Joshua how he felt when the group had cooperated well, having received very positive public recognition for his group's contribution to the Indian unit, I expected him to talk about how enjoyable the experience had been, how proud he felt. Instead, he focused on the the work aspect:

> Sometimes, you just feel, "Oh, great, we did <u>that</u>, but now : now, we have to do something <u>else</u>, also -- now, we have to tackle this <u>next</u> thing."
> (Tr Int 11/29/88)

Josh did not even mention how it felt to work with peers; he concentrated instead on always having further obligations with the teacher. With whom, or how he completed the work, it was still the same issue: <u>more work</u> when that got done.

Josh's comment about always having more to do, no matter what they accomplished, showed how much the larger context of schooling influenced this student's thinking about their groupwork. The constant pressure of always having obligations to the higher authority in the form of more

work -- the name of the game with school -- had mitigated against his
feeling personal satisfaction or enjoyment with what he accomplished
with peers. An example of how this worked is the experience of Group One
students when they worked together to select several projects related to
the Southeast Indians. When they had reached consensus on several major
decisions, Robbie asked that they perform something which resembled a
ritual, to cement their agreement:

> All right, we're done, we're done with this." He looked
> up and suggested, "We'll place our little fingers against
> here..." He placed his little finger against the desk,
> with the corresponding finger from his other hand on it,
> crossways, and waited for the others to put theirs on top
> of his, thus making a formalized "pact."
> (Fld 10/14/88)

The pact was never made and the students never sealed their
agreement, because Joshua, discovering a loophole, protested, "Wait
-- we still have to get some more, too...we have -- remember, we
have to make four." At this point the discussion reconvened as to
which group projects to select (Fld 10/14/88). The group could not
make the pact among themselves; the obligations to the teacher had
a higher priority.

Josh had claimed that his group only really began to cooperate
when there was a time crunch and they <u>had</u> to finish:

> ...We had a lotta' problems doing it...we got pressured,
> but we had to get something -- that's when we started
> getting done...it's just like, there was the last 2 days,
> and it had : we had to get that done.
> (Tr Int 11/29/88)

Mrs. E. verified this position, claiming that the students had
"snapped to, because I raised my voice -- they were reacting, to
<u>please</u>." She also felt that the fact that she was going to make them
write their parents that they wouldn't "be having them in, because they

weren't ready," had proven to be a strong motivation to get students to finish. Her conclusion was "it either takes a carrot or a threat; they love the praise, but it just doesn't carry over" (PC 12/13/88).

The students finished work because they "had to"; an unintended consequence of the focus on completing work was that the teacher's authority outside the group sometimes was invoked, without her assent, as a filter for negotiation of differential rules within the group interactions. Students could utilize CGL contexts to create mini or sub-hierarchies, modeled on a traditional classroom structure. With an in absentia teacher as a referent "law," the group could gang up on a selected peer, forcing compliance with the threat to "tell the teacher."

A prime example of this was Group Three's treatment of Willie one day, as students were selecting projects to follow-up the murals activity. Mrs. E. had explicitly given students the freedom to work separately or in dyads, reminding students to "keep to the task" and "come up with a product." Sivan and Michael decided to work together and conspired with April to "trick" Willie into choosing first so everyone else could then select something different and not have to work with Willie.

> Mi: Where is Willie?
> Ap: I think he's outside
> Mi: Let's just pick this, so he doesn't see it.
> Ap: We've gotta' wait for Willie, so we can decide.
>   Here he comes, here he comes.
> (Fld 11/1/88)

As Willie approached, a barrage of questions greeted him, and his peers pressuring him to make a selection. Eight times, Michael and April asked him what he wanted to do; then Sivan demanded "You have to say first," and April added, "And then, you can't change." The rules of

how to cooperate had been altered, with differential treatment for
Willie. For twenty minutes, the three members of Group Four worked on
excluding Willie. Refusing to share with him any information about the
project or their own interests, the new triumvirate focused on technical
issues revolving around the rules for selection. At one point, April
excitedly turned to Sivan, "Cover it!" Sivan assured her, "It is
covered." Willie wanted to know his choices. He inquired what other
people were doing; the entire selection process for this group became a
series of guesses on Willie's part and evasive moves on his peers' and
civility broke down, with Willie's blaming them of lying. He realized
they were making differential rules, and resisted, "No, I don't. I
don't have to be first." Sivan told him, "We already decided." His
peers succeeded in getting Willie to comply, selecting something to do
alone, because Michael told him, "Willie, if you're not gonna' follow
the rules, we're not gonna' help you. You're done." Sivan threatened
to go somewhere else to work, and Michael agreed, "let's work it without
him." Sivan instructed April not to even write down Willie on the list
of group members because "he's not going to cooperate." Cooperation in
this case was defined as Willie's complicity in his own exclusion. The
other three had ganged up on him, with a final threat, "I'm gonna tell
on Willie, don't worry." They felt they were perfectly legitimate in
their stance, explaining to me later that he "bothered" them because "he
just copies and doesn't wanna do the work hisself. He wants to get off
easy."

Mrs. E.'s last exhortation to the groups before they met was "All
members work to complete the task. If bickering or squabbling occurs,
I'm going to make this rule -- you'll go back and do individual work"

(Fld 11/1/88). She had spoken to the group this particular day about being "antsy" with the time constraints, and had spent more time talking about rules -- new rules -- than the activities themselves. She had tried to foresee all possible problems, giving students options to work together if they selected the same project; she had exhorted them to "make at least two choices" so they didn't "have to fight over a project." Mrs. E. had concentrated on avoiding conflict over technical matters, so students could get make selections together and then get right to work in the library. Her focus had been on rules, to avoid students' focusing on rules; instead, the modeling had become the students' focus in this group.[1] And to further complicate students' interpretations of obligations this particular day, the new rule of not "bickering" had initiated further tension, with the need to figure out what this was in terms of talking, and arguing, and how they might avoid the negative consequences. Rights and obligations were less clear than ever, and students, unsure of what was going to be acceptable to the teacher, were also creating new rules. In the interest of avoiding bickering and the teacher's punishment, students in Group Four had argued more than ever.

Even when Mrs. E. did not explicitly refer to students' need for avoidance of bickering, students, operating under time constraints, still conspired to collectively exclude a peer. Group One excluded Onochie, a Japanese child, during the storywriting unit. Soft-spoken, petite, gentle, and amiable, Onochie was learning English as a second language; she sat quietly, drawing while the others were talking. I had noted the day before that Onochie was not being included in her group, so I suggested that they let her write that day. Although the group

publicly acquiesced, as soon as I was not listening, Courtney, having done all of the writing thus far, pointed out that there was no need for Onochie to do this because she had already completed the story. "You guys," she said to Asbeid and Michael, ignoring Onochie, "what does she [Onochie] have to write? You guys, we don't need to write the third one, do we? The solution is already there."

Courtney turned to Onochie and said very slowly, emphasizing each word, "Onochie, we don't need to write anymore." She then lowered her voice and gulped, "Isn't that sa:dd!" Asbeid adopted a similar tone as he reflected aloud about how Onochie might respond. "Onochie's like..." His voice lowered, and took on a slow, staccato rhythm similar to how Onochie spoke English, "'Oh, boy, I'm gonna be the best writer in the world. Chee! I can't write anymore.'" Asbeid, a generally jovial and humorous child, had joined in the exclusion, imitating Onochie and cruelly poking fun at her feelings (Fld 12/9/88). The group was excluding this peer from what I, the teacher, had suggested.

This was unusual; students generally complied to obligations to the teacher first, over obligations to each other. A statement of Asbeid's during a storywriting unit class discussion cued me in to how students might be viewing the teacher's authority during groupwork. Rather than refer to the enjoyment element of groupwork, Asbeid cited cooperating as "exercising self-control." I thought this was a novel phrase, not having surfaced in discussions or groupwork; it was also a rather formal phrase from the jovial and jocular Asbeid, using the word exercising, rather than a more colloquial using. I found that the same phrase appears on the elementary report card. The way students had chained descriptors for cooperation during the class discussion bore an uncanny

resemblance to the order of desirable behaviors listed in a section of the report card entitled "Personal and Social Growth."

The following figures indicate the descriptors, in the order presented, on the report card and the class discussion:

Figure 10

Listings on the Report Card

Social and Psychological Growth:

observes school and classroom rules
accepts constructive criticism
speaks and acts courteously
respects rights of others
cooperates with peers
cooperates with adults
exercises self-control

Figure 11

Student Metaphor for Cooperation

Cooperation means...

friendship
not fighting
exercise self-control
democracy

On the report card, cooperating appears between being courteous and respectful and exercising self-control. The students had associated friendship in CGL contexts with not fighting and exercising self-control; the report card stated students should be courteous and respectful to adults, which to many students was equivalent to being cooperative as compliance, not fighting.

No one objected to Asbeid's idea of cooperation as exercising self-control as strange, humorous, or inappropriate; the association may have inadvertently opened a window to show educators how students perceive notions of social/psychological "growth" as actions they have to demonstrate to please the teacher, to get a "good" report, as part of the "game-playing" that schooling has become, what Sedlak, Wheeler, Cusick, and Pullin (1986) refer to as "proxies for learning." The report card may have been a particularly powerful indicator that cooperation is compliance, because it represented two hierarchies: one in which they had to please the teacher to get a "good" report card, and the other as the home to which students would present the report card to please their parents.[2]

Grubb and Lazerson (1982) discuss the issue of society's considering schooling not only a responsibility to provide for each child, but contradictorily, a place in which a child can get ahead. One of the chief ways of doing so is by obtaining a good report card. The report card may be not only a powerful influence on children's interpretations of what schooling is all about, but also an influence on their interpretations of cooperation. This form of evaluating children, quite similar across districts, may be one more contradictory message to contend with for the teacher who wants to teach cooperation as an egalitarian structure.

This may also show why Asbeid and Courtney were so cruel to Onochie, when they overtly cut her out and made fun of her wanting to write. I suspect that this was a response to my use of authority, making a decision within their group instead of having them decide how to include their peer. They may have resented having to "exercise self

control"; and they resisted as soon as I left the scene. The cruel treatment of their peer may have been a parallel of the theme of story they were writing at that time. The ideas of complying and exercising self-control had been presented ironically in <u>Garfield's Big Diet</u>. In spite of Garfield's lower status, the cat had managed, by breaking scales, fighting, and stealing, to turn the tables on the power structure, to get what he wanted. A key to power issues is audacity: what Maxine Greene (1990b) describes as "recalcitrance (which) allows people to <u>rename</u> the power." In Garfield, the elements of the power were reversed, so that the underling used the coercion, rather than Jon, the dominant decision maker. Similarly, Courtney, Asbeid, and Michael had coerced Onochie, reversing the power with me.

When I later asked two students from Group One, Courtney and Asbeid, about the nature of resolution for their characters, they concluded that there might not be resolution, i.e., the scale was never fixed, the mess in the kitchen was never cleaned up, and Garfield didn't make another sandwich, but "...that's how Jon and Garfield comics close." As Courtney summarized contentedly, "He's <u>lazy</u>" (Tr Int 12/16/88).

This may be attractive to students, because there are times when they would like not to have to mind the teacher or "do work." Joshua, for example, felt he could not even enjoy the success his group experienced in the Indian unit, because there was always more to do. Garfield managed to eat what he wanted and got out of work. Students may have identified with Garfield's resistance to "work," and his resistance to power structures and society's myths of how a person in a

hierarchy should act. He set his own rules. And so, unfortunately for one student, did her peers.

SHUT-OUTS AND RULES FOR COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCY IN CGL

Kids were able to set their own rules, partly because of the ambiguity of the power structure.

Students had developed schemas about power which they applied to CGL. Rather than seeing groupwork as a fundamental change in power in the classroom, they instead viewed it as a "nice" version of traditional power: a "boon," a favor from the teacher. Chapter 4 contains examples of students subverting academic assignments. This chapter also showed how social subversion occurred. One rationale was that, although they still were required to do work, CGL allowed them to do it in a way that was more fun and easier (Fld CD, 10/14/88; 11/1/88). Courtney and April referred to the social "pluses" as "socializing" and "joking around" (Fld CD 10/14/88; Tr Int 11/09/88).

Students had to balance the tension of wanting to talk and socialize, to enjoy themselves while they worked, but also please the teacher, completing the work on time. Caught in the dilemma of what talking meant in this new learning context, several students' exhortations against "talking" in the November 1 class discussion referred to this confusing aspect, deciding that a way to improve the cooperation would be not to talk!

```
Mi:  I think it's going good -- if we just didn't talk,
     it'd be a lot more useful.
MS:  If it's about the subject, I think we should include
     that...
Ri:  There is a little too much talking -- fooling
     around...
Mg:  I agree with Ricardo.
Rb:  I : agree : have to agree more...
Js:  I think we should not talk
Rb:  Well, if you're talking about the project...
(Tr CD 11/1/88).
```

Previous experiences about what pleases teachers was not talking, as off-task behavior or cheating on work; within the CGL context, this understanding plus the ambiguity of rights and obligations left students unclear about their roles in talking. Agreeing to limit oral communication, the essence of group work, these students were focusing on what they assumed to be cooperating with Mrs. E., rather than listening to, sharing with, and helping each other. This made no sense in terms of CGL, but a great deal of sense according to classroom experiences based on a traditional power system (see Figure 3, Chapter 2), in which talking was what teachers instructed students not to do during learning (Gilmore, 1986; Silberman, 1971).

Group One, on this premise, had on one occasion (described in Chapter 4) drawn Mrs. E. into the decision making, leadership of the discussion, and instruction of right answers. Students accepted the rationale of cooperating by having the teacher provide the leadership. Willie's description of how to "get back on track" when people in a group were arguing had a similar focus. He suggested, "you go and tell the teacher and then after the teacher talks to us, we work much better" (Tr Int 11/29/88). Willie claimed that students cooperated better simply by being told by the adult to do so. He was not talking about students cooperating with each other by listening to each other, sharing

ideas, accepting others' ideas, or working through differences through communication; he was referring to a response to adult wishes not to argue. This conclusion was made _after_ the end of the Indian unit and more than two months of group work experience.

The ambiguity of students' obligations to do work and corresponding rights to comfort, enjoyment, and efficiency while working with peers inadvertently contributed to the decisions to talk sometimes only with selected peers. Assuming fun and efficiency during group work, some students chose to work with peers or not work on them on the basis of how fun they were. With humor as the key to fun, the flip side of this reasoning was that the lack of humor as a communicative competency in the group discussions became a mode of rationalizing gatekeeping and subsequent exclusion. Thus, an unintended effect of viewing CGL as "fun" was the exclusion of diverse peers on the basis of cultural criteria for communicative competence. That was also one of the facets originally contributing to Group One's exclusion of Onochie in the storywriting unit, although the degree of coldness was a response to my intervention of authority in the group's decision making power.

Everhart (1983) described high school students' use of humor as a subtle form of resistance, in which students diverted attention away from the teacher's academic agenda. In the fifth grade classroom that I studied, students also used humor to resist, but this time the focus was not only to avoid academic learning but also sometimes to subvert the teacher's agenda for social learning. However, students did not necessarily view this as resisting; focusing on efficiency of task completion (the relationship with the teacher) and comfort in dealing with peers (their own individual rights), what they were doing could

easily have seemed like compliance, to them. What they did with others was a secondary aspect.

Just as resistance to academic learning was enacted as a concern with technical aspects such as determining rules, social exclusion of peers also had "rules." Based on communicative competencies which facilitated efficiency and comfort, exclusion relieved students of the discomfort of working through communication with diverse others and sharing fully in the academic learning.

Group Three's exclusion of Lina during the Indian unit was partly related to Lina's lack of humor. Lina, an olive-skinned child with long, silky black hair and large, expressive eyes, was from Bangledesh where, as her father explained to Mrs. E., "people speak little, but _do_ a lot," in contrast to the United States, where "people talk a lot, but _do_ little" (Int 10/24/88). When I asked Courtney why Lina had been so consistently excluded from Group Three, Courtney cited Lina's strange responses to humor, attributing the difference to psychological reasons, rather than relating it to the fact that Lina might have perceived things differently for cultural reasons:

> ...you can't tell about her personality. She usually, when we laugh in groups -- I'm practically falling on the floor - - and she's looking at me like I'm crazy. Lina, um, Lina just smiles, and I think she : she seems nice, but she's so different.
> (Tr Int 11/7/88)

Lina's differences in responses to others' attempts to be "fun" resulted in Courtney's image of her as a "mystery person." Courtney felt she never knew what to expect with Lina; she might think she knew what Lina was doing, but "you just can't tell" (Tr Int 11/7/88).

Erickson (1975) described gatekeeping in junior colleges based upon "in-groupness" characteristics which made communication more comfortable.[3] Students also performed gatekeeping, requiring cultural understanding of how to use humor for in-groupness. Courtney had pointed out in a class discussion that joking around made people more comfortable with each other during group interactions (Fld 11/1/88). This was the reason she had become friends with Willie:

> ...in the _first_ one, in the first time we did something
> [in groups], I was with Willie and then I started making
> friends with him...I thought he was really _nice_, we can
> _laugh_, joke an' all, and I started making friends with
> him.
> (Tr Int 11/7/88)

Just as she had excluded Lina for not responding to or with humor, Courtney would accept a person who could use humor well, even if there were other problems. In spite of her considering Saeed "mean, sometimes," Courtney enjoyed working with him because "we can laugh." She said that although earlier he was a "slime," "now I find out he can be funny" (Tr Int 11/7/88).

Using humor to make work more enjoyable, students manipulated not only peer interactions but also interactions with the teacher. I experienced this on the last day of the storywriting unit, when I intervened after noticing that Group One was not including Onochie. While her peers drew pictures of Garfield and company, Onochie sat quietly, drawing a rabbit. I asked the group what Onochie could do to be a part of the group.

When Onochie responded that she wanted to "do writing," Asbeid, talking very fast, changed the subject, drawing my attention to a cartoon in the Garfield book he was using as a model for their drawings:

"Mrs. Holloway, I found something really funny here." He read, "'Hey, there's something in bed with me. Oh, it's you! Good morning, Belly.'" I told Asbeid that was cute, but asked, "Are we avoiding the conversation?" He grudgingly acknowledged, "Yea, yea, we're trying to um : trying to..." The intention had been to displace my attention with humor so that students could avoid talking about their responsibilities to include Onochie.

As an important competency, humor not only could contribute to exclusion or avoidance; it could also be manipulated for inclusion. In the storywriting unit, Willie used humor to gain entree to full participation in his group. Willie, a Jamaican child of slight build identified for his "flat," "annoying" voice, had experienced many rejections in the group he worked in during the Indian unit. The least tolerated student of the entire class, Willie faced similar objections when he first began to interact with peers in the newly-organized group. As the four worked together to determine details of characters, roles, and dialogue they would write, Mun alone made over three dozen negative responses to Willie's actions and ideas in the first hour of interaction. The following is one example, in which Mun comments on Willie's suggestions for the story: as Willie created his fanciful dialogue of the two fruit characters for their story, Mun responded with groans indicating something distasteful. They got louder and louder, until Mun finally shouted and Willie paused:

```
Wi:  They were playing, they were playing with a ball,
     then the ball went down...the street.
MS:  [Eeuuu (groaned)
Wi:  and then, the apple said, "I'll go get it, and the
MS:  [eeuuu
Wi:  banana said, 'I'll get it, I'll get it, No, I want to
MS:  [eeeuuu! (louder) NOOOO!
(Tr Fld 12/7/88)
```

Over an hour into the session, Mun's responses to Willie suddenly

changed, as he not only validated a suggestion, but complimented Willie.

Willie was not only suggesting ideas; he was changing his voice

patterns, to represent what each character would say, as if he were in a

theatre production:

> Wi: No. (switches voice into the character) 'Nooooo'
> (switches to normal) They s...it's 'I want the
> piece.' (said in character) (switch to normal) And
> it's <u>dog</u> food!" (laughter)
> MS: Ok. (said as a laugh) Write that - it's funny!
> Li: Yeaaa! (high voice) Hah! Yea!

Willie had managed to turn things around and open a space for

positive communication with his peers because, as Mun pointed out,

"Willie got <u>creative</u>!" (Tr Fld 12/7/88). He had not only said funny

things; Willie had also subtly redefined the social context. For that

brief time, Willie spoke as the other characters, throwing his voice and

<u>becoming</u> Garfield and company. For the remainder of the storywriting

unit, Willie's peers validated him as an important contributor to the

story composition.

Mun's use of the word "creative" in this context implied humor.

Actually, Willie had been intellectually creative in previous group

interactions. The first day the whole class did CGL during science,

Willie's group flatly rejected all of his ideas, as they brainstormed to

create a list of natural resources. I noted that Willie's suggestions

of wildlife, then wilderness, were classes of resources, whereas the

others' contributions were random elements such as coal, diamonds, oil.

When Willie's peers ignored his ideas, he switched to doing what <u>they</u>

were doing, listing specific items instead of broad categories; still,

they rejected everything he said with a resounding "NO!" Finally,

Willie endeavored to prove his contribution was relevant by using the glossary of the science book; but Josh cut him off with "So what?" Ricardo included everyone's ideas but Willie's (Fld 9/19/88). Willie had thought creatively, on two counts: one, to come up with broad classes of resources; and then, to analyze quickly how his peers were thinking, in terms of contributions, and find responses he _thought_ they would accept. Still, his creativity was unappreciated, and his ideas unacknowledged, although potentially they could have made the group work easier and faster. Only in the task in which he entertained his peers with humor and acting did peers fully accept Willie.

Student exclusions also focused on other communicative competencies, such as directness of response. Oblique, hesitant, or nonverbal responses sometimes left peers guessing. It was difficult to talk with Lina, Courtney explained, because it was so different than the customary direct expression of opinions from other peers. She did not have to figure out what they wanted; they told her directly:

> When I ask Megen, or Emily, or Hasaan, or someone, they
> _tell_ me _exactly_ what they think and nothing-_but_ : : Well,
> it's kind of like we : we : we _work_ differently [than
> Lina] I mean, you know what I mean?
> (Tr Int 11/7/88)

The peers that Courtney cited as more easy to work with did not "beat around the bush." Courtney's use of the phrase "nothing-but" was part of a larger legal phrase asked of persons about to testify in a court of law "to tell the truth and _nothing but the truth_..." She knew they would tell her their preferences. But Lina did not respond predictably to direct lines of questioning, and therefore seemed enigmatic to her peers. Mun, who on other occasions had tried to encourage Moni's participation, still reported about her work in Group

Three, "We were asking Moni, 'You want to do this? And this?' and she would just go to her desk and do her report" (Tr Int 11/7/88). If Moni had not been included, her peers assumed it had been her choice.

During the storywriting unit, Asbeid and Courtney had shut out Onochie from participation with a similar rationale. When I pointed out that she was not being included, her peers had initially protested, "But we asked..." (Tr 12/8/88). The assumption was that asking was sufficient as an obligation to include peers. If there was no response, the students attributed it to the individual's disengagement.

STUDENT TREATMENT OF CONFLICT

Toward the end of my classroom visits, students were more aware, from class and interview discussions, of the theme of cooperation in their group work. They began to talk explicitly in group situations about what they were doing and the implications. Ironically, this did not necessarily promote cooperation, as working through differences. Instead, students' focus on conformity often resulted in a rejection of conflict at any stage of group work. Some students became more sensitive to arguments and more adamant about not wanting to be a party to them, even procedural questions. Some began to leave, or withdraw from the dialogue, in order to avoid conflict. This was true of Simon, Courtney, and Joshua (indicated in Chapter 3); and Mrs. E. at that point validated these responses as cooperative.

Mrs. E.'s reasons for disallowing certain kinds of conflict were probably different from the students' -- the word bickering implied (to me) unnecessary arguing, not a ban on all conflict. However, the

students' understandings centered around possible effects of arguing:
teacher retaliation, punishment and shame, removal from the group and
its potential for fun. Perhaps the student who became the most troubled
about arguing was Willie. During the final storywriting unit, Willie
protested the arguing that was occurring between him and Mun:

> Willie had gotten a piece of paper, and began to fold it,
> to make sections for cartoon drawings. Mun and he began
> to argue about the appropriateness of his doing this.
> "Willie, wait. We don't know what we're doing yet," Mun
> told him. Willie responded, "I'm just fold..." and Mun
> interrupted, "Willie, you're wasting paper." "No, I'm
> not," Willie insisted. "Yes, you are," Mun persisted.
> (Fld 12/7/88)

Willie became unhappy with the arguing, pronouncing that it was not
cooperation. Lina, who previous to this situation had rarely spoken at
all in group interactions, was so uncomfortable with the arguing that
she also joined in to try to stop it. "This is not cooperating," Willie
complained. "Stop arguing," Lina told them. Mun continued, "Willie,
you're just..." and Willie broke in, "Is this cooperating?" "No," Mun
responded, "You're trying to go ahead."

Mun was defining cooperating as doing things together, i.e.,
simultaneously; and his protest was focused on Willie's going ahead and
working outside the group decisions. Yet, the fact that he protested
made the interactions seem like arguing, to both Willie and Lina, who
then defined the protest and subsequent discussion as not cooperating.

Willie began to get very upset, his voice change indicating the
level of concern:

> "This : is i:isn't cooper_aa:_ating." Willie's voice shook.
> Lina said, "Would you stop saying that?" "It i_i:isn't_,"
> Willie said in a very high voice.
> (Fld 12/7/88)

Willie's voice had increased in pitch during this interchange, getting higher and higher, the more upset he was. In addition, his voice shook, and his emphasis on the words became drawn out. These changes would be relevant under any circumstances, but are particularly so because Willie's usual pattern of speaking was radically different from this high-pitched interlude. Mrs. E. had identified Willie's speech as a "monotone." On two occasions, she had noted to me that Willie spoke in a "flat" tone that did not change, even when he was arguing with someone. "Even if he's yelling," she said, "there's no intonation pattern" (Int 10/21/88; Int 12/1/88).

There was an intonation change, this time, and the words were drawn out, as Willie's voice rose higher and higher.

The switch to a high pitch and emphasis on the words would indicate high concern and a level of emotional upset in any person. In Willie's case, it was even more significant, as he had changed his basic way of speaking, going from a flat monotone, to a pitch which grew higher and higher as he spoke.

"We are not cooperating on this. We're not cooperating at all, guys. We're arguing," Willie told his group. This concern about arguing as uncooperative had resulted in arguing about the arguing. Not only did this occur within the group, but it also included me.

I had heard Willie's comment and had explained to the group that it was okay to argue some of the time, as long as they resolved it. He responded, "We argue real _long_." I suggested that maybe that was a part of how they learned to cooperate. But Willie still looked unhappy, so I asked him, "Or do you not feel _good_ about that, Willie?" He responded with a definitive "No" (Tr Fld 12/7/88).

Chapter 4 discussed how students had rebelled to my assignment of including both conflict and cooperation together. Although they were able to develop a conflict section better, due to more familiarity with that part of the process, they did not feel it belonged in an assignment about cooperation. Because of the discussions about cooperation which I held each day previous to group work during the storywriting unit, all of the students became particularly sensitive to anything which might appear uncooperative. As they saw arguing as the antithesis of cooperation, they were particularly watchful for signs of this. A week after the unit had ended, during a class discussion with Mrs. E. Asbeid reported that Group One's participation in the storywriting unit had had some "bumpy roads." That phrase indicated how arguing felt:

> First, we went smooth; then the road got pretty bumpy --
> we argued over something -- like what should we put in
> for cartoons; sometimes, almost we fought.
> (Fld CD 12/15/88)

It was uncomfortable to Asbeid when his group was not cooperating during parts of the interactions; when they did, everything went "smooth." Ricardo, from another group, also reported feeling uncomfortable, even crabby, when he and his peers argued. He spoke of Group Two as having "worked it out, sorta'," but reported that "in the middle, we got a little bit crabby" (Tr CD 12/15/88). Roget offers two synonyms for crabby: grouchy and discontented. That is the type of discomfort Ricardo perceived when arguing during CGL; it was unacceptable, an unpleasantry, something to avoid. This could of course be true on the intrapersonal level, when a person would like to have their own way. However, I feel it was heightened because it also

related to issues of power and students' perceptions of relationships with and expectations from the supervising adult.

CONCLUSION

Greene (1988, p. 22) describes education ideally as a "process of futuring, of releasing persons to be different." I noted about two weeks into the Indian unit, that students had begun to reorient themselves to be more aware of peers, and their responsibilities to each other. Yet, by the end of the unit, students had returned to ideas about cooperation that focused on compliance with the teacher. Mrs. E. had become less tolerant to conflict, in response to her own needs from a changing teaching context, and students had returned to their original interpretations about cooperation as behaving and not arguing.

Students had originally cited the possibility of creating new friendships through working cooperatively in groups; yet, in the final groupwork I observed, the attitudes about friendship were mixed, with some students being very non-accepting of selected peers. In addition, the stories they constructed did not interpret friendship as an element of cooperation. Even when the issue was not diversity and the two characters literally looked identical, the actions in the stories were not empathic responses. Neither were students' responses to each other within certain groups contexts. The lack of perceived possibility of changing the power structure filtered into each response, creating a situation in which students did not optimally learn to understand and accept each other, but instead selectively excluded peers and became at times, themselves, authority figures and oppressors.

Students' responses to CGL were based upon implicit assumptions about power as hierarchical structures, identified from experiences in the home, in the bureaucratic structure of schooling, in our democratic society, and between nations. Although students did have many positive experiences with cooperation during CGL, their continuing interpretation of cooperation as compliance also led to responses to peers which were not receptive. Even if students had all experiences which appeared positive, if they continued to focus on cooperating with the teacher, rather than with peers, then schooling would not necessarily enhance the possibility for reconstruction of relationships which are more democratic in the future.

NOTES

1 This is the only group I observed at this time; I do not think,
   however, that this "bickering" occurred in all of the groups. It is
   one example of unintended consequences of even the best-laid plans of
   a teacher for group work.

2 An idea from only one student, with implicit agreement from others in
   the class discussion, does not make a conclusive argument; rather,
   this is offered as an area for further exploration on the various
   factors contributing to situations in which students' choices focus
   on finishing the work and pleasing the teacher, rather than
   developing a learning community with peers.

3 I realized later that I also responded to humor, like the students
   did, avoiding conversations (personal interviews) with those students
   who were difficult to talk with and cultivating interviews with those
   who had the greatest communicative competencies for speaking English
   with an adult. The students I spent the most time with quipped and
   joked about various situations; they seemed "enjoyable" to work with.

Chapter 6

STANDARDIZATION AND POWER, ROLE DILEMMAS,
AND THE RIPPLE EFFECT IN TEACHING/LEARNING COOPERATION:
CGL AS THE POTENTIAL WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING?

In this final chapter, I begin with a short vignette to highlight
the contradictions which Mrs. E. experienced in her role as a teacher:

> Mrs. E. had stayed late one September evening to prepare
> the classroom for Parent Night. Describing all the work
> she had accomplished, Mrs. E. commented, "It's amazing,
> what you can do when the kids aren't here!"
> (Int 9/29/88)

What had influenced the thinking of this teacher who called herself
a "student-pleaser," who prized interactions with students, to interpret
the success of her role as teacher, in this situation, as divorced from
the students? This incident was something every teacher could
experience, whether or not they adopt an "adventuresome" attitude toward
teaching; it was one of "the many pulls of teaching" Mrs. E. talked
about. The story becomes even more complicated, as we can see from Mrs.
E.'s experiences, when the teacher attempts to teach a non-traditional
approach.

This chapter draws upon stories of Mrs. E. and the students in her
fifth grade classroom to extract understandings which might help
teachers, administrators and policy makers, and teacher educators to
better understand some of the dilemmas as we encourage the
implementation of non-traditional practices in the public schools.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE 'DELIGHTFUL ADVENTURE'? HOW STANDARDIZATION OF THE CURRICULUM AFFECTED CGL IN MRS. E.'S CLASSROOM

Student responses to CGL had sometimes been development of intentional learning as well as new friendships; other times, students had bargained to limit academic engagement and had excluded peers from the social construction, limiting access to learning. In spite of the non-traditional teaching and learning, and the CGL structure that Mrs. E. intended to be "liberating," kids had sometimes disengaged.

The district policy reform to standardize the curriculum was one more burden to Mrs. E., whose actual classroom practice was already laden with the day to day realities of uncertainty, mandates, cliques and in-fighting among students, and the expectations of parents and this particular school community. In addition, the students had brought interpretations of cooperation as compliance, derived from previous in- and out-of school experiences and global understandings, which countered ideal conceptions of cooperation.

On the day of culminating presentations for the native American unit, students were, as Mrs. E. described, very "high." In their excitement from the positive feedback and dialogue with visitors, students were not just presenting what they had learned during the previous seven weeks. The progression of presentations indicated that a great deal of learning was taking place that day, as they listened to each other, and picked up new details. Students were generating various new theories, as they talked to others. Some of the most exciting thinking occurred in the culminating activity, borne of the delight of sharing and the dialogue with visitors. The project blossomed the final day, as the students' conceptual excitement grew.

Mrs. E. noticed this. At the end of the first presentation, she told students, "I'm _impressed_, how much you've learned. You've really done a good job." By the end of the fourth one, she noted that the presentations had grown. She told the other teacher present, "I set this up for a 15 minute presentation -- and this took 45 minutes. I'm very proud of that. Means they know a lot more than I thought." Later, Mrs. E. told the students she had noticed "how well you picked up from others. So you're learning from each other," she concluded (Fld 11/18/88).

Mrs. E. had also noticed that students were "inventing things," picking up knowledge from each other and then _expanding_ it during those presentations, constructing new meanings and generating new theories, going beyond the "facts" about how native Americans had lived to how they had made sense out of the world. The opportunity to grow was enhanced, not only through group peer interaction, but also by the presence of the visitors, who shared ideas. With the foundational learning established, many students were making conceptual leaps; the context had become a "learning community" at the culmination of the project, in every sense of the word, with students in other classrooms and parents also generating ideas and interacting with the fifth graders. One conversation which illustrates how students grew from the interactions with visitors occurred during the lunch hour as Megen accompanied her parents, along with Courtney, around the room. At the Southwest display area, the group paused to discuss a report on kachina dolls, and Courtney expanded on the writing:

> [Courtney said,] "Everyone was angry with each other, but
> then the god came down from a mountain and they smoked a
> peace pipe and then everything was okay."

> Megen suggested, "Tell 'em about how they put the
> snakes," and Courtney responded, "There was a dance,
> where they had snakes on their heads and it would never
> bite. Sometimes, they'd put them through here, (she
> pointed to her chest) and dance 'til they ripped apart."
> (Fld 11/18/88)

This conversation provoked Courtney's curiosity. "Why," she asked,

"didn't the snakes bite them?" And responding to her own question, she

theorized, "Maybe they could talk with them." Megen's mother, who was

carrying a small infant in a gerry carrier attached to her body in a

style adapted from native American child-rearing customs, suggested,

"Maybe when they danced, they moved -- like a baby, they'd be

hypnotized!" Courtney had appeared very impressed with this answer.

Observing the tiny child, peacefully slumbering in response to the

mother's swaying body, seemed to corroborate such a possibility, and

Courtney had enthusiastically validated this theory, "Yeah!"

In a later presentation, Megen added information as she talked

about how native Americans carried things. She told her audience that

women, dogs, and horses would carry things, adding, "Dogs would also

have a harness -- almost like a sling." The baby carrier was built

somewhat like a sling, and it seemed that the presence of this entirely

silent and oblivious observer had, together with the conversation with

her mother, heightened her awareness of other aspects of Indian life

that she had not previously referred to, aspects made more "real" by the

connections with her own lived experience, now brought into the

classroom. Courtney also added more information about the kachinas that

next time, not about snakes, but about the fact that kachinas were the

"spiritual people, that aren't really alive, a legend..." The fact that

she talked about kachinas as "legend" for the first time after the

discussion with Megen and her parents indicated she had accepted the theory about snake dancing as something based on real life situations, and had contrasted that with the idea that a god came down from a mountain and smoked a peace pipe.

Students had expanded their understandings with each presentation; not only did they draw upon what others said, but they added new information, elaborating the stories for their visitors, presenting a more complete picture. Students began the presentations by simply identifying objects; Sivan told the audience, "This is a totem pole. This is a potlatch. It would open up...they had lots of mountains." Michael added, "And canoes." In the original presentations students focused on "credits" for the displays: Asbeid told visitors, "Some of the things, we made. Some, we found, and some, we made." In later presentations, students focused less on the display itself, and more on the stories behind the artifacts. Where at first, Group One participants identified objects, later they elaborated, telling not only that an object was pottery, but how the Indians made it; "Got it wet, so it was easier to shape." Asbeid had also elaborated, at first identifying an object as fur, later adding information about function: it was "a design of fur, and it was traded." This was a new idea, possibly constructed from previous reading about settlers' fur trading with the Indians. After expressing his new idea, Asbeid paused for a moment, and to confirm, added, "Yeah, traded." Others began to expand; Ricardo picked up a ceramic hotplate with a Navajo design, and said, "This is a picture -- or plaque -- of a Navajo blanket" (Fld 11/18/88). At this point, students were becoming curious, thinking, taking risks,

creating new ideas; in the process, "making things up," as Mrs. E. noted.

Some of it was accurate, and some not; students had just developed these new ideas at the end of the unit. To my knowledge, none followed up with further research to validate their ideas. Just as they had begun to really ask their own questions and generate theories, the unit was over. Thakur (1990) describes the evolving paradigm for education, from a psychotherapist perspective, as a "delightful adventure," seeking to "reestablish the passion for knowing and learning." During the next two weeks of school, time constraints and Mrs. E.'s need to cover the social studies text took precedence, and I did not hear any more discussions about native Americans. Although it was the culmination, the experience might have been the beginning of many students' development of intentional learning about native Americans. Ironically, just when many students could have "taken off" and continued the learning, now a "delightful adventure" with their own choices and motivations, they did not do so because they had to "move on" to cover other topics. Mrs. E.'s need to meet the agenda of the standardized curriculum mitigated against students' following their own excitement, checking their own theories, researching to answer their own questions, generated by the interactive culminating reports.

The district curricular requirements had inhibited the expansion of student academic learning. In addition, it had negatively affected the teaching experience. David Cohen (1988) explains that teachers avoid adventuresome teaching, in the attempt to reduce the uncertainties. Mrs. E. did not attempt to avoid the complexity by cancelling the native American unit and returning to a more traditional mode. Whatever the

influences beyond Mrs. E.'s immediate control, she was not swept up in the vortex of the standardization movement. Retaining the agency to make adaptations and decisions in her teaching, she selectively amended, abridged, and cut, continuing to retain the essence of her curriculum, her personal contribution to the students.

Teaching remained a personal enterprise. Just as Mrs. E. had not previously capitulated when pressured to paddle children, so she continued to do what she felt was best for children, in this fifth grade context, retaining CGL and the native American unit. Her adjustments were not indiscriminate; for example, while she could have skipped the entire filmstrip on the electoral college, instead she carefully selected which portions to retain. Mrs. E.'s response to the increased complexity of her curricular responsibilities was holistic, including even the environment. When she felt "cluttered," with too much to do in too little time, she removed furniture to allow more "space," just as she had removed viewing a section of the filmstrip. Mrs. E. retained control of her destiny, but at a much greater effort and higher level of stress.

Standardization from the district level is a top-down approach, which is subject at the classroom level to teacher interpretation and alteration, potential adaptation or even sabotage. Schooling is "loosely coupled," which means that the administrators who make curricular decisions do not necessarily have control over how it gets implemented in the classrooms; teachers have a great deal of leeway in what they do with a curriculum (Meyer & Rowan, 1978). In Mrs. E.'s case, the "loose coupling" allowed her to add goals beyond district mandates.

Marilyn Cohn (1990), lamenting case studies of teachers as "victims," spoke of the need for more hopeful studies of teachers who still "make exciting professional decisions" and have surmounted the problem of unreasonable district demands. Such a portrait could portray loose coupling as a loophole which liberates "good" teachers to do it all: meet the needs generated by standardized testing and required curricula, and yet adapt and expand the curriculum to meet more contextual, personal goals.

While Mrs. E.'s example could lend hope to teachers, to interpret classroom autonomy as the "solution" to problems of teaching practice can detract from the primary source of the problems which is outside the teachers' decision making powers. While it is true that some teachers can take advantage of their "street level" operational freedom, to improve their lived situation, I would caution against romanticizing about loose coupling and the isolation of the classroom as structural aspects which can "empower" teachers.

That ray of hope led to Mrs. E.'s attempt to do more than there was time for. Shanks (1990, p. 16) found that elementary teachers in a standardization of curriculum in a Midwestern school responded similarly to Mrs. E.'s attempts to "do it all," calling the effect an "intensification of teacher's work." As teachers tried to both cover and extend the curriculum, a time press resulted in a focus on finishing work.

The cycles of reform of schooling each create their own problems (Cohen & Neufeld, 1982). Top-down mandates exist as a bureaucratic response to the lack of standards resulting from an "entrepreneurial" approach for a privatized teacher-produced curricula (Cusick, 1983).

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This implies the need for more teacher autonomy in planning and implementing curriculum and a reassessment of the assumption that "covering" a text is equivalent to construction of an excellent curriculum, or, alternatively, that "consistency" as covering identical material is the goal for educating children.

Tied to concerns about curriculum construction is the issue of evaluation. The very definition of curriculum as standardizing text not only ties teachers to coverage of certain material; it also implies that learning is a product with end points which are identifiable and assessed as tangible responses. Mrs. E. had noted the tremendous growth happening during the presentations, and was aware of the generation of student interest. Under the paradigm of learning as a product, she spoke in terms of how much students had learned from each other, rather than seeing an opportunity to seize on student excitement and let them choose whether or not to continue with the studies.

What if there were no pressure to cover a specified amount and nature of material? It is difficult to change from a traditional mode of approaching education. We must, to do so, also consider the question: is learning a process, a construction of knowledge, or is it a product, finished when something tangible is produced?

CONFLICT IN CGL: SHIFTING PARADIGMS FROM TRADITIONAL TO NON-TRADITIONAL TEACHING AND LEARNING

As they grappled with conflict, Mrs. E. and her students also faced problems in dealing with the paradigm shift that underlies how they made sense out of the face-to-face interactions in the classroom. Although Mrs. E. thought it was important for students to work through

resolution, time was also a concern, and it takes more time to work through differences. The most expedient solution was for her to resolve the problem. One way she could resolve differences was by making the decision for the students, which is what she did in with Group One's impasse (see Chapter 4).

Another tactic she tried was creating negative sanctions for "bickering," to heighten students' awareness about her expectations, and to discourage misbehavior with an explicit description of the consequences. Mrs. E. also attempted to avoid arguing, by carefully planning all kinds of options for a specific lesson, such as asking students to select more than one idea for projects or providing options for working alone or together on certain projects which later would be integrated into the final presentations (Fld 11/1/88).

In spite of various attempts to mitigate against conflict, it still occurred; and both Mrs. E. and many students, when under time constraints, tried to resolve conflict by relying upon old, familiar paradigms of teaching practice which focused on the responsibility of the individual to change, rather than group responsibility to work through differences and compromise. By the end of the research period, Mrs. E. began to recommend isolation to resolve problems, while some students chose to withdraw.

As she reflected on various group interactions, Mrs. E. had considered multiple influences such as personality, maturation, group dynamics. Courtney, for example, might look older but really was "very young." This group was "young developmentally -- not sophisticated" (Int 11/7/88; Tr Int 11/17/88; Int 11/29/88). Caring, informed, reflective, Mrs. E. was aware of individual stories, family influences,

episodes between students, and students' "wanting to please the teacher" (Int 11/1/88). She took into account different cultural experiences, understanding that a child from Israel, for example, might be "skeptical about people being able to cooperate and change" (Tr Int 11/17/88).

Although Mrs. E. was aware of many tensions and multiple influences in teaching and learning cooperation, she still most frequently made sense of the students' interactions in terms of behavioral psychology. She noted that "Some people are stronger than others. They want things their way" and "Some people don't get along well. They don't enjoy each other" (Fld 10/21/88; Int 11/1/88). She told me one student, "gets you going," and then would "push you right against the wall." Another, she reported, had an "I wanna' be on top" attitude; while a third "had his problems too" and if he had someone to kick, he would (Int 9/29/88, 10/21/88; Tr Int 11/17/88, Tr Int 2/24/89). Defining situations of conflict between students as "having too many bosses," Mrs. E. cautioned them not to "take over"; to "contribute, but not dominate" (Fld 11/3/88). She advised students to "move on" from conflict and make decisions together.

One of the factors which had appealed to me in conducting this study was that it could provide a rare window on a teacher who was willing to risk the existence of conflict between students because she felt it was important for them to learn to resolve differences. Yet, what I found was students were working to avoid conflict, based on the perceived need to please the adult and an understanding of cooperation as not arguing and not fighting, rather than resolution through peer dialogue.

When students talked about "bosses," their interpretation of appropriate responses was different than Mrs. E.'s. Referring to Courtney's relationship with them during the Indian unit as "like boss and slave!" Mun and Ricardo reported, "She wanted to make up everything and make us do the work!" Ricardo's solution was not mutual decisions; instead, he "didn't listen" and learned to "say 'no' and walk away" (Tr Int 11/29/88). Ricardo's perceived options to resolution of peer conflict were based on a power paradigm of inequality: he could comply or withdraw. To "bicker" after November 1 was to invite isolation anyway.

We can understand Mrs. E.'s decision to intervene to help students to resolve conflict by examining premises of behavioral psychology which assumes responsibility of the individual to change, to accommodate the group, and the medical model of teaching which assumes the need to heal individual pathology (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987). While both Mrs. E. and the students supported withdrawal, they had very different reasons. She was not encouraging students to avoid the problem, but rather to heal themselves and their bad feelings. Her role was not a power figure, but a facilitator who provided needed "time out" for the student(s) with the problem. This would allow the individual time to "cool off," thus "resolving" the conflict. Mrs. E.'s changed interpretation of what "works" to resolve peer conflict in CGL made sense to the students, who had already learned from previous experiences to avoid arguing and "make peace" by evasion and covering up of the problem.

Mrs. E.'s later decision to put a halt to the "bickering" represented a stance compatible with the traditional view of "discipline and order" in schools, and research supported her. Teacher educator E.

Cohen (1986) recommends avoidance of conflict; Cusick (1983) describes how administrators insist on it, to appease the public. Yet, there is a need for students to learn to work through conflict and resolve differences (Lanier & Sedlak, 1989; Oser, 1986; Resnick, 1987).

Mrs. E.'s decisions and assumptions about teaching cooperation as resolution of conflict exposed the problem of paradigm shift which underlies the attempt to move from traditional to non-traditional teaching in which she was layering a paradigm of communal responsibility for action upon a previous notion of individual responsibility for resolving problems. Putting the responsibility on the individual to change is problematic when applied to CGL, which assumes that learning to be a social, interactive process.

Mrs. E. and the students were caught in a tangle of sometimes disparate paradigms. Although Mrs. E. intended to liberate students and give up control, her lived situation of having the control and being responsible for using it made altering the power structure problematic.

In December, Mrs. E. concluded that removal from the social group would "help" the individual who was cut off from interactions with others, allowing time to "get it together." She called it "time out," a popular school euphemism for ending conflict or other problem behaviors by banning a selected participant from the interactions. Goffman (1961) describes a similar rationale for solitary confinement used by psychiatrists in asylums:

> The punishment of being sent to a worse ward is described
> as transferring a patient to a ward whose arrangements he
> can cope with, and the isolation cell or 'hole' is
> described as a place where the patient will be able to
> feel comfortable with his inability to handle his
> acting-out impulses...Reward for good behavior by
> progressively increasing rights to attend socials may be

> described as psychiatric control over the dosage and
> timing of social exposure. (p. 381)[1]

This rationalization also exists in the schools, with the belief that removing kids will "relieve" them.[2]   Mrs. E. told the students,

> You will continue to have conflicts. I may ask you to
> take a walk around the hall. Not for punishment -- it's
> a matter of rethinking of how you can work better with
> the group -- and hopefully, you will have resolved some
> of the feelings you have.
> (CD 12/15/88)

Mrs. E. felt that if students got "out of the situation for a while, it's much better." To leave the group allowed the individual the opportunity to "defuse the situation." She concluded that sometimes they needed to "get away from people, not a punishment, just giving you choices..." (CD 12/15/88).

Mixing the paradigms of behaviorism with social interactionalism, Mrs. E. construed that taking away all interactional choice was giving choices that would improve the group work. She provided an example of how this resolution of conflict worked when she taught kindergarten and all of the children wanted to use the climber that would accommodate only four persons at a time. "We would walk and talk -- they'd take my hand," Mrs. E. recounted to her fifth graders, and the youngsters would "calm down" (Fld 12/15/88). Mrs. E.'s resolution of conflict with younger students had required isolation from peers; but the "time out" for the kindergartner was also a treat -- private time with the teacher. Yet, when she talked about isolating fifth graders, it was in the context of leaving the room to be alone.

Mrs. E.'s conception that involuntary withdrawal was a helpful and calming way to resolve differences was radically different from the students' notion of what worked. Their stories were about staying

together to help each other. Ricardo and Mun felt that when people would fight and get upset, a friend could mediate the social context and "calm 'em." Ricardo concluded, "Everybody stops the fights, somehow -- that's how you get your senses back" (Tr Int 11/29/88).

The effect of Mrs. E.'s threat to remove students from the group was that some students became more concerned about avoidance of isolation as punishment than working positively on sharing and resolving ideas with peers. Willie allowed himself to be excluded from the group, even though he was aware that they were making differential rules and he did not have to follow them; he was in a "catch-22." Because Mrs. E. had created the new rule that day, with threat of removal from the group for "bickering," he could be isolated either way: by his coercive peers, or by the teacher. His way out was to "fake it" and pretend it was of his own volition to work alone, thus avoiding the shame of being sent out by the teacher, who would inadvertently have validated the others' judgment that Willie should work alone. Not chancing the teacher's being implicated, Willie could still lodge a verbal protest, even if he complied in action.

Ironically, while Mrs. E. instituted isolation in order to hold individuals responsible, students sometimes managed to turn this particular mode of conflict management around and to use it for their own gain, limiting academic engagement and/or interactions with peers. Although isolation was not their preferred mode for resolving problems, it was familiar, and it made sense to students' conceptions of inequal power. The students accepted it as appropriate, but responded in various ways.

Isolation thus sometimes became a way to get out of work, to avoid contributing to the group. Courtney isolated herself to protest the fact that others would not let her control -- a reversal of Willie's situation, in that her peers lost either way. If they did not let her take charge, they did not get her help; if they did, they were accepting a "boss-slave" relationship. Either way, the possibility of withdrawal could absolve the "strong" individual from working out differences. In CGL, isolation of individuals from the group was problematic, not only on theoretical grounds, because it altered the social structure and composition of the group and removed the possibility of and responsibility for dialogue; it also was an occasion for a counter-move of student resistance to academic and social learning.

That incipient problem of determining individual vs. social responsibility also related to student learning. Although CGL involves social responsibility for a lesson, Mrs. E. concluded in February that she needed to back-up the assignments with "individual follow-up." The paradigms under which she operated, as a teacher, assumed a power arrangement of superiors mandating accountability for curricular coverage. As Mrs. E. experienced pressure to "cover" the text, she reverted to a similar power paradigm that depicted teachers holding children accountable to certain standards of work, assuming that the kids also "need to be held responsible" (Int 2/24/89).

Mrs. E.'s experiences demonstrate the tension between responsibility for individual learning and social learning in non-traditional teaching and learning, and the problem of the teacher's status and lack of decision making power within the larger bureaucracy of schooling. Educators, policy makers, and administrators face many

challenges: how can teaching roles best be redefined in the larger
structure of schooling, so that teachers may restructure in the
classroom their and students' roles, rights and obligations; what
alternatives and possibilities can they identify to accommodate
differing paradigms of individual and social responsibility?

DILEMMAS IN THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN CGL: BEING LEFT OUT OF THE "FUN" AND
SITTING BY THE SIDELINES DURING CONFLICT

Mrs. E. constantly grappled with what her role was in teaching CGL.
In consonance with Lortie's (1970) finding that teachers rely heavily on
psychic rewards, it was important to her to be "liked." She wanted to
"please" kids and make life more pleasant as they took on the "hard"
work of school. Highly involved, she diligently compiled different sets
of packets for each group, collected dozens of books for student use
during the Indian unit, contacted various agencies to borrow artifacts,
communicated with the public and other classroom teachers, read to
increase her own understanding, and erected a life-sized tent in the
center of the room for the culminating activities. Committed to
teaching CGL, Mrs. E. told parents, "I insist that they work in groups"
(Fld 11/18/88).

Mrs. E. used CGL to enable social development and enjoyment while
students worked on academic projects. And yet, ironically, to use CGL
was by definition, to leave the teacher out of most of the interactions.
Heidegger (1968, p. 15) might have approved, reminding us that the
teacher "...has to learn to let them [the students] learn." But getting
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students can help teachers to access the students' sense making of "what happened" in their CGL experiences. I discuss this further below, with considerations of transferability of understandings of cooperation from group experiences to other contexts.

FUTURE STUDIES: STATUS, POWER, AND COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN CGL

In addition to tangles in her roles which the teacher had to interpret in various contexts, the students also needed to interpret her role. In this fifth grade classroom, the issues of status as a determinant for peer inclusion or exclusion was not simply between or among peers, but also between student and teacher. The power of the teacher was the highest status of all, and although there were instances of resistance, this was the most "static" status characteristic of this classroom which influenced peer interactions.

According to Berger, Cohen, and Zelditch (1966, 1972), people organize interactions around characteristics which derive from their status. They call this Expectation States Theory. Cohen (1986, 1987) described race, ethnicity, and academic achievement as characteristics, or status generalizations, which are commonly used by students as criteria for including or excluding peers in group interactions. In CGL, one undesirable effect could be shutting out those students who have already been socio-cultural pariahs of the educational system; another could be social conflict between students of different races, cultures, and/or social classes. The problems of peer exclusion during CGL in the fifth grade classroom I studied was not confined to issues of peer status; the relationship with the teacher was crucial to how

students interpreted their own obligations and rights, including with peers. These students' experiences were fundamentally related to the power structure, with conceptions derived from multiple sources of experiences, many of which were outside the classroom. This study raises the question: Is it possible to change students' conception of power and of human nature simply by altering the classroom structure? Or will the subtle presence of the dual structure combine with other information outside the classroom, to continue to mitigate against change, despite what a teacher says or does? Thakur (1990), speaking from a psychoanalytic point of view, doubts that any adult, with the exception of the more "pure" communicative context of mother/infant relationship, can respond without having power issues. Even if we were to assume that this power shift were possible, it becomes more difficult in teaching practice, when the teacher herself is part of a bureaucratic structure which is imposing its power on her.

Another question relates to students' conceptions of communicative competence for peers during group work. This becomes a particularly important issue in diverse classrooms, both with culturally and linguistically different students, as well as special needs students who are mainstreamed. The fifth graders based their criteria for accepting a peer in the group interactions on cultural aspects of communicative competence. The students' selecting out certain peers was similar to Erickson's (1982) descriptions of gatekeeping on the basis of "in-groupness." Two questions arise from this response of students to each other. Although it has been assumed that greater communication arises "naturally" out of group work, is it possible that communicative competencies need to be taught/learned prior to having children work in

groups? Also, could it be that breakdowns in CGL commonly attributed to social class differences may in fact have an underlying basis in communicative differences? Further studies might explore the relationship of breakdowns between students in two areas: the typical and mainstreamed student, and students of different social classes, to consider issues of "communicative competence," which relate to differing conceptions of what is appropriate to talk about, how to express humor, effective questioning and answering, etc.

Alternatively, we might explore more about changing peer perceptions and improving communication between diverse peers. We have little documentation on the role of talk and dialogue in the development of social process, in part because students have rarely talked with peers in traditional classroom settings (Cazden, 1986; Gilmore, 1986; Silberman, 1971). Contact theory assumes that the changes in perceptions of peers which have led to friendship were the result of learning about other students' abilities to think conceptually about academic matters, the often-expressed idea of "s/he's not as 'dumb' as I thought." But it makes intuitive sense that this is not what was most important to many students. From what the students have told us, they need to learn more about each other, and not necessarily in academic realms. This would make sense, in terms of creating new "in groupness" with diverse peers; getting to know the person and identifying common interests provided the basis for further dialogue connected not only to learning situations but to their own private lives.

One example is the growth of friendship between Courtney and Lina, who had not participated in group dialogue during the native American unit, and who was viewed initially by peers as shy and silent and

"mysterious." As Courtney learned how to talk with Lina, she discovered common interests for having baby brothers. Courtney wondered if, once hers could talk, she would fight with him. Lina became the "expert" in these conversations, as her little brother was already talking; and this common bond became a basis for further dialogue for the two as they explored their relationships with these younger siblings. As Courtney befriended Lina, other peers began to talk with her; and Lina grew in self-confidence and began to speak in group situations. The importance of "social" dialogue, in which students make connections with each other' lives, cannot be underestimated. In other instances, I heard students ask each other questions peripheral to the academic learning, such as April's inquiry to Sivan, "Do you like baseball cards?" A major concern of teachers has been that when students talk about other things (what teachers call "off-task behavior") it detracts from academic learning. However, the short dialogue thrown into a math problem-solving session about the baseball cards did not slow down the group's processing of the math problem. The "vector of action" that Doyle (1986) talks about remained in motion. And April became more a part of her new group because she knew something personal about Sivan; they were becoming "friends" through establishing connections of common interests.

In addition to needing to learn more about the nature and role of student "talk" during CGL which promotes social acceptance of diversity, we need to consider variations in the structure of CGL, to extend it to meet the needs of individual teachers and particular classrooms. Some of the greatest impact for CGL on academic learning and generation of student excitement occurred when Mrs. E. opened up the classroom, to

share with the rest of the school and students' parents. This extension of community served as a catalyst to increase the students' sense of value in what they did, increase their sense of competence as they taught others, and heighten academic curiosity as students engaged in dialogue with peers and interested visitors.

Although Josh said that Group One completed the unit so successfully because "we had to do it," that was still partly because others were scheduled to visit. The actual involvement of the extended community was, in the end, more conducive to learning than the pressure of preparing for the presence of the visitors had been. Future studies might explore how teachers can expand and open CGL contexts more, to establish a greater sense of learning and extend the sense of community.

TRANSFERABILITY: "THE RIPPLE EFFECT" RE-EXAMINED

I began this study with the assumption that, if students learned to work together in groups, the skills would transfer to future interactions and be useful to the preparation for citizenship, not only in this democratic society, but also globally. Convinced that the schools' complicity was pedagogical and evaluative practices based in competition, I assumed that changing from competitive to cooperative structures could resolve the problems of selfish individuals, and of enemies between diverse groups (Noddings, 1988; Popkewitz, et al., 1986). However, these students' global understandings, expectations, and prophecies indicated that they would not necessarily be disposed to act cooperatively in future contexts because they did not believe it was possible. The students had had varying success with cooperating with

peers. The crucial problem, however, was that they carried a schema of cooperation as compliance. The resolution of conflict was not "realistic."

Even if they knew how and wanted to be cooperative in future outside contexts, they might not be disposed to try, if they assumed that the rest of the world did not carry a similar disposition and/or ability to cooperate. As Sivan pointed out, everyone would have to learn this, and it might take a very long time -- 100 years!

In this study, I grappled with larger issues than semiotic or contextual differences between cooperation as an ideal versus a pragmatic view of cooperation as compliance. The major distinction for transferability was really conceptions of possibility; and students' schemas of power as coercive and cooperation as complying mitigated against such possibility.

Mrs. E. talked about her hopefulness in terms of the "ripple effect." She, like I, felt that the usefulness of CGL was more than a goal toward equity and excellence in academic learning. To teach students to cooperate was important in its own right, to prepare students to be effective participatory citizens in the future. As Mrs. E. talked with the students one day about the need for global cooperation, she used the following metaphor, "It's like when you throw a pebble in the water..." This represented the potential impact of her teaching: each student would carry skills of cooperation out into the world, influencing other people, in ever-widening circles.

In interviews, three students talked about what Mrs. E. meant by the pebble phrase, as it related to their learning how to cooperate as well as how this connected to their global future. The students'

responses to the meaning of the pebble metaphor varied, but were all different than Mrs. E.'s. Having just predicted global war based on his own experiences from living in Israel, Sivan understood the image, not as hopeful, but as proof of mushrooming, negative consequences of when "one person starts something and then it goes to other groups and stuff and starts [wars]." Sivan said "it means throwing something in and the other side grows bigger and bigger." To Sivan, the pebble metaphor expressed, rather than a language of hope and possibility, how difficult it would be to achieve global cooperation (Tr Int 2/24/89).

Mun offered a second interpretation of the pebble image, relating it directly to himself: "I think she means when you learn something, your knowledge grows" (Tr Int 2/24/89). His response showed how, even when discussing global futures, students did not automatically make the conceptual leap from the particular to the general, to understand that what they had experienced and learned in groups in the fifth grade classroom could apply to a larger, global context.

When I asked Asbeid what Mrs. E. had meant with the pebble story, he gave me a scholarly, analytical reply, identifying the phrase as "It's...one of those forms of speech..." I asked what he saw in his mind; Asbeid reported "a mound of pebbles." He did not "see" the ripples; to Asbeid, the ripples were not even a significant part of the metaphor (Tr Int 2/24/89).

Anticipating coercive personalities, Josh and Sivan saw the pebble metaphor as a one-way action, and they were not the pebbles at all. The people who made ripples were the "strong" ones, those with the power to coerce. Asbeid's interpretation, if he saw the student as the pebble, saw no ripples and all those pebbles were in a pile at the bottom.

Erickson (1990) talked about the same issue, saying he "never was sure what happened to the rock."[3]

The students' responses to the notion of ripple effect had varied; but none had talked about the difference they could make, with their knowledge of how to cooperate in the future. Mrs. E. had assumed agency for most of these children; by virtue of the parents' high educational status, these students would be the leaders of the future. However, the children's knowledge of the lack of cooperation in the outside world, with vivid images from personal experiences and/or the media, was very powerful in students' conceptions of what was possible in the future. They felt that the outside world would influence them more than vice versa. Assuming the dominator mode, and that other people would not be disposed toward cooperating, then even if skilled and disposed to work toward mutual agreement, a student as future citizen might be reticent to try to use what s/he knew, not believing people with power would choose to cooperate.

Other specific incidents also led me to conclude that CGL experiences would not automatically result in kids' transferring the skills of cooperation to other social contexts. The first consideration was student interpretations that being cooperative implied compliance and withdrawal, and did not promote effective participatory skills as a democratic citizen. Second, student interpretations of the success of a context could be influenced and colored by factors outside the group experiences themselves, so that even when I thought they were very successful, the students did not always think so.

When I had asked Josh about how it felt to have been the member of a group highly praised for their work on the Indian unit, I found that

what it meant to him had nothing to do with peer interactions. Joshua was still focusing on the aspect of "doing work"; because there was always more to do, he felt no sense of having accomplished anything. Josh expressed no strong sense of agency from those experiences. To him, they represented simply one more way to "do" school and comply to an adult's wishes.

In another instance, three members of a "Narnia" group later recalled the interactions with Robbie as having been unsuccessful, because Robbie had been skeptical of the success of the group during the discussion which followed the group's compilation of character traits. When Robbie had claimed that none of his ideas had been accepted, I had gone back to the fieldnotes to see why his conception of what had happened did not square with mine. Attempting to show the group what I had seen, I shared my fieldnotes which indicated that his ideas had been included on the final list. Two months later, some of Robbie's peers brought up the incident as an unhappy and unsuccessful one, although Rob himself had resolved the negative feelings and felt it had been fine (Int 11/29/88, 12/15/88). Although my observations indicated that the group interactions had been very successful and positive, some of the students did not think so. If group interactions were cooperative, but remembered as unhappy experiences, then students' failure to identify contexts of success and skills attained could mitigate against transfer of cooperative action to future efforts.

Coles (1986) found that children thought differently about global concerns, depending upon their lived social conditions. Children who coped with harsh day-to-day problems such as poverty, famine, or war were concerned about the local context and had little interest in global

issues. On the other hand, some middle class children with a promising future were very concerned about global issues. There were notable similarities in context and response from some of the students in this study. Ricardo, for example, resembled a high school female in Coles' study, who was very worried about global realities and talked about those concerns with peers. Ricardo, recall, had poignantly stated that he and his best friend had, since age five, "been always worried about nuclear war and...always worried about that in the future" (Tr Int 2/24/89).

Although students were concerned, they did not necessarily feel any hope. Mrs. E. had more to deal with, in preparing these children for cooperation in the future, than putting students in groups and having them "experience" what it is like to cooperate with diverse others. Ironically, it may be that the "liberation" of a certain group of people who have time and the propensity to be concerned about others on a more global basis, coupled with the availability of information about selected global issues in the media, ironically serve as a double-edged sword, carrying not only a potential impetus to reflection and action, but also the potential to conclude that the self and one's experience are, relative to the larger problems, insignificant or even helpless. Such a combination could discourage students to feel empowered as citizens or motivated to democratic participation.

These findings point to considerations of conducting teaching and learning as an interpretive process. This may be a fitting way to approach the goals that Brophy (1988, p. 80) recommends for students in the future: "... to learn how things are in the world today, how they

got that way, why they are the way they are, and what implications all of this holds for personal decision making and action."

All speech events are symbolic and open to interpretation; peers may have a different account of what "happened." Therefore, it is important for the teacher to encourage and guide student reflections about their social interactions, or they may, like Robbie's "Narnia" group, be interpreting them very differently than the teacher or other peers assume.

Students were very sensitive to issues of power. Their responses to questions related to larger issues of global concern point to how crucial it is for adults working with children to understand where kids are "coming from." Therefore, students need to not only have the experiences of what it is like to cooperate in a group, and acquire communication skills; equally important is the ability to reflect upon these interactions, identify implications, and create alternatives for future actions.

Ironically, students did make conceptual links about cooperation as compliance to other situations. This was true, both in the group stories they wrote, and private interviews. Mun, for example, assumed that a person in business would need to "cooperate," i.e., give the other person the price he wanted, or he would have no sale! Emily assumed that in a meeting, it would be better for her to give in, to keep things going smoothly. However, students did not automatically make links about the new idea of cooperation being possible for future contexts. Asking questions implied links; this was helpful in assisting student development of a "language of possibility" for the future (see Giroux, 1987; Greene, 1988). Initially, students did not make the

conceptual leap that what they learned in the classroom about cooperating could make a difference in the outside world, either through their own future actions or those of others who also learned to cooperate with peers. However, all eight students who originally cited dire consequences of future uncooperativeness, alternatively concluded after questions which implied possible connections, that this might not happen if others learned to cooperate in school, like they were doing.

In this study, Mrs. E. and I had worked as a team; she asked questions in class and small group discussions and I followed up with more individualized inquiries. While we do not know what is possible, in a large classroom with a teacher pressured to raise scores on standardized tests, this context indicated the benefits of asking students many questions. Mrs. E. had noted this, referring to Robbie's having become more "philosophical." The interviewing process had turned out to be more than my asking questions to gain information; it had provided opportunities to extend the CGL experiences and class discussions as objects for reflection. Students began to trace, objectify, and expand their own thinking about the process of interacting with peers.

Buchmann (1989) argues that teachers should be contemplative. I would add that students also need to be reflective, particularly about their roles and responses in social interactions. Earlier, I referred to CGL as a springboard for reflection; CGL can provide concrete contexts for observing and talking about students' social interactions. It is ironic that educators have assumed that social knowledge is best acquired implicitly, by simply doing it. It is so obvious that we cannot construct what Gardner (1988) calls inter- and intra-personal

knowledge without communicating with other people that we have accepted this as occurring implicitly. As Mrs. E. said, learning about cooperation "happens as you do it." However, the responses of teacher and students in this fifth grade classroom indicate the differences of perceptions and interpretations of any given social event. The need for reflection is evident, if learning about social aspects of ourselves is to be socially ratified knowledge.

Paradoxically, although we realize academic content knowledge is acquired within a _social_ setting, and are beginning to adopt constructivist approaches to search for meaning within academic disciplines such as math and science, we have continued to bifurcate social from academic learning, using the social context to construct meaning about academic learning, using social interaction to make academic learning more palatable and meaningful (see Duckworth, Easley, Hawkins, & Henriquez, 1990; Fosnot, 1989; Prawat, 1990).

It is strange that we have dissected "knowing" into discrete categories which separate personal and social learning from the academic, ignoring that the ultimate goal of knowing is to answer questions about who we are as human beings and what we are capable of constructing as a shared lived experience. Arendt's (1958) concerns about dehumanization of the post-industrialized world are realized in the way we have fragmented our world and ways of knowing.

The fifth graders had not asked questions, previous to the communal sharing event, about how native Americans were making sense of their world and what their lived experiences were like: they did not inquire how the Haida could give away their wealth to others, how many families could live together in one dwelling, whether it be a longhouse or a

pueblo. Courtney began to identify the idea of kachinas as "legends," but how people based their lives on those legends was unclear. Whether or not she also had legends, and if so, how she used them to make meaning of her own life, was not explored. The most "real" part of Courtney's experience was the connection with Megen's baby sister, sleeping peacefully and never dreaming of the connections being created because of her presence. My question, after watching the fifth graders learn, is, how can we possibly think we can separate social and personal understanding from academic knowledge, when the concepts are important most of all as they contribute to the sensemaking of one's own lived experience?

CGL is being used as the means to learning academic content. Yet, anthropological research has said academic learning is not particularly transferable to "real life" contexts. Although Resnick (1987) and others cite social learning as crucial in the future, we have still not understood how to promote such learning. The responses of students and teacher in this study raise some serious issues about <u>how</u> to teach social understanding about the need for reflection and social ratification of processes well-done, and about the paradoxes of operating within a power hierarchy while trying to teach students a dialogue of equality.

Mrs. E. conceptualized teaching and learning cooperation as a re-definition of power relationships and interactions, an attempt to decentralize power in the classroom. However, because of the inherent duality of the structure, with the teacher's role as still holding the ultimate power, teachers may need explicitly to de-emphasize student obligations to the teacher, so that students do not focus exclusively on

obligations to the adult and, in the process, neglect interactions with certain peers.

Teachers and students need to explore, identify, and address preconceptions of the notion of cooperation, particularly those which are counterproductive to maintenance of dialogue and group resolution of differences. The group writing exercise may be an interpretive tool for teachers in the future.

CONCLUSION

CGL is an important forum for social, as well as academic learning, to develop a sense of community; the fifth grade students learned to appreciate and praise diverse others, help, share, establish new friendships, and make group decisions. Yet some of those actions were subversive, and students did not communicate a sense of being empowered for social action. In the title to this chapter, I suggested that CGL has the potential to be the proverbial wolf in sheep's clothing.

To develop as citizens for the future, students must be able to develop a language of possibility, to be what Greene (1990a) described as "audacious" in a socially reconstructive way. Responding with conforming and compliance, evasion and withdrawal mitigates against working through differences and changing, even if done with a sense of community.

We are preparing children for something about which we do not yet know. How do we go about helping students to compare, alter, expand, begin to create new possibilities for their futures, experience a sense of agency? I am convinced that teaching students to cooperate must be

done, less as a technical "skill" and more as a construction of meaning, so that kids are fully engaged and invested in the learning process. The problem in educating children to cooperate is not simply to reorganize and have them "learn by doing." Just as children learn conceptions of the physical world by observing, reflecting, and experimenting, so, too, should they cultivate these skills in understanding the social elements of their existence. Only if they have optimal experiences in collaborating, co-creating, and co-constructing with peers will students develop understandings and dispositions to create a sense of agency and a language of possibility that can counteract the current sense of futility of public schools and prepare students for socially reconstructive work in tomorrow's society.

NOTES

1 A recent discussion of mine with a manic depressive confirmed that that person's experience in isolation was not at all "comfortable," but rather intense disorientation and humiliation (PC 5/90).

2 A student teacher told me that it was just as well that her black male student had been kicked out of school for the remainder of the year, not to graduate; he "needed space to get it together," she rationalized

3 The idea of utilizing metaphorical language is strongly advocated by Shulman (1986), and Kohl (1984). While they and others have shown how use of metaphorical language helped students to make connections from lived experiences to conceptual matters, the responses of students in my study showed how problematic it is to use images because they are open to multiple interpretations. Although Mrs. E. had produced this image in the context of the need for people to cooperate globally, and I had subsequently asked the question about its meaning in a context of global futures, the three students' interpretations were still very different.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Conventions for Transcript Analysis

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Conventions for Transcript Analysis

Underlining Indicates that the speaker stressed, i.e., said this part more loudly than the rest.

: Indicates a pause

[word] Brackets indicate that I inserted an implied word for understanding and continuity, i.e., linguistic information

(word) Parentheses indicate nonverbal actions by the speaker, i.e., contextual information

[A one-sided bracket indicates overlapping speech

APPENDIX B

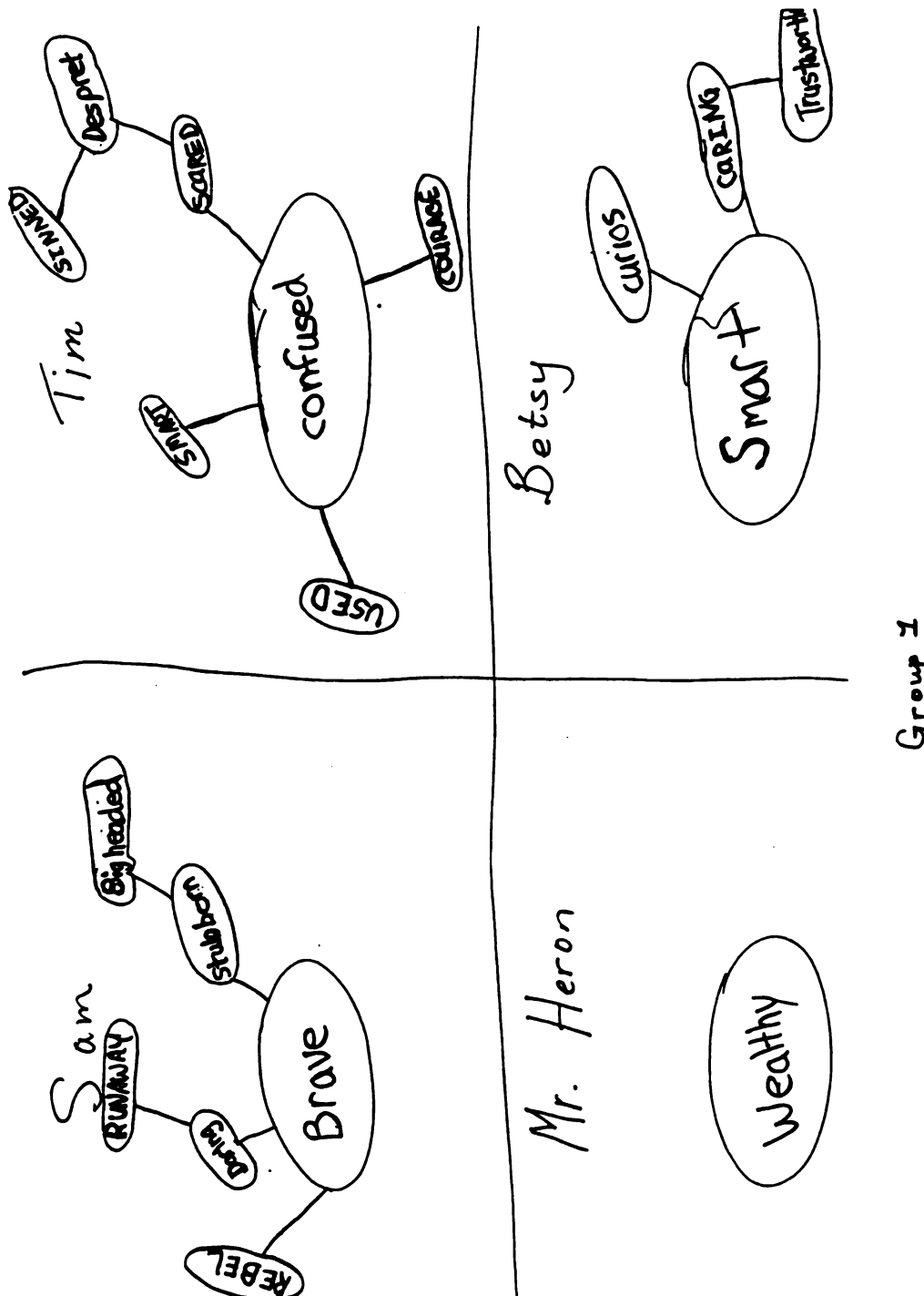Story Character Maps from "Narnia" Groups

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APPENDIX B
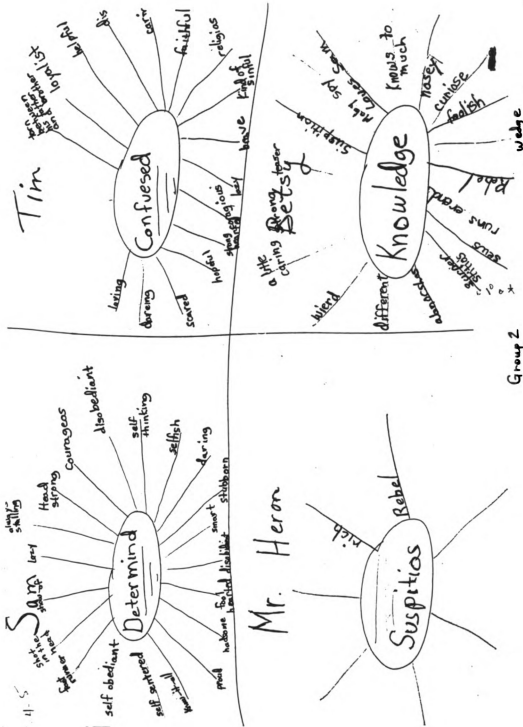
Story Character Maps from "Narnia" Groups

(Refer also to Table 1, Chapter 2: lessons on 10/4-5, 1988)

Group 1: Robbie, Ricardo, Emily, & Mun

Tim

Depret — SCARED — confused — COURAGE
STUNNED
SMART
USED

Betsy

curios — CARING — Trustworth
Smart

Sam

Big headed — Stubborn — Brave
RUNAWAY — Caring
REBEL

Mr. Heron

Wealthy

Group 1

Group 2: Courtney, Joshua, Megen, & Asbeid

Tim — Confuesed
helpful, big, caring, faithful, religios, kind of small, have, speaks, frustrated, religious, hateful, scared, strong, boring, don't really know what to believe in about Christ

Betsy — Knowledge
knows to much, messy, curiose, foolish, wage, rebel, runs away, smart, abandoned, caring, stubborn, sleep, different, weird, a little, bossy, strong, fast

Sam — Determind
curageous, Head strong, disobedient, self thinking, selfish, daring, smiling, long, mad, hardcore, dislikes, smart, stubborn, failed, self obedient, self centered, beautiful, easy, sister, not I'm mad, shy 11-5

Mr. Hern — Suspitios
Rebel, Rich

Group 2

APPENDIX C

Students' Group Stories about Cooperation

APPENDIX C

Students' Group Stories about Cooperation

Garfield's Big Diet

By Group One

(Asbeid, Courtney, Michael, Onochie)

Garfield is sleeping in his box. Jon walks in and says, "Wake up, Garfield. I need to weigh you! You may need to go on a diet."

Jon picks him up and says, "Wake up!" So Jon sets him on the scale and the scale says, "Diet time! Too heavy!" Garfield woke up and said, "Aarrrgh! I'm going to kill this stupid scale!" And he did! Springs were coming out of the scale!

"Garfield, you broke my $28.89 scale that my mom gave me!," said Jon. "Jon, how did you know how much the scale was!?" Garfield asked.

"It says on the piece flying in the air!" "Jon, you are 25 degrees on the Richter scale." "Very funny, Garfield! I'll go get your diet breakfast! And my lunch!"

They walk into the kitchen and Jon prepares his brunch and it's two peas and a three-inch celery stick! And he puts it in front of Garfield, and Garfield says, "Aarrrgh! I hate diets!" And Jon puts a Whopper on his plate. He walked by, and says, "Have a nice brunch, Garfield!" And Garfield jumps on his plate and eats his sandwich!

"Garfield, I know you hate diet time, so I won't put you on a diet, but could you make me another sandwich?

"Sure! Anything for no diet!" Garfield goes in the kitchen and starts making the sandwich.

Meanwhile, Jon was fixing the scale. When he's done throwing it away, he walks into the kitchen and there is a big mess. Food all over!

"Sorry, I just got a little carried away!" said Garfield.

<u>The Fight for the Apple</u>

By Group Two
(Joshua, Emily, Ricardo, April)

Two dogs were walking through someone's back yard. They saw an apple tree with only one apple in it. They both ran over to it, trying to reach the apple.

Spike, one of the dogs, said, "I get the apple." Then Spot, the other said, "No, I get it because I saw it first!"

Spike: "Wait! This isn't working out."
Spot: "Yup, you're right."

Spike and Spot (at the same time): "We've got to figure a way out of this."

Spike: "I have an idea. I can stand on your head and get the apple, then we can split it in half."
Spot: "That's a good idea."

Spike climbs on Spot.
Spot and Spike: "OOF! AAARRR! WAM! SNATCH! GRAB!"
Spike: "I got it!"
They fall down.

Spike pops his claw and rips the apple in half. They eat it happily ever after.

THE END

Mirror Martian

By Group Three
(Megen, Robbie, Sivan)

Once there was a martian who lived on Mars, and his name was Unhuman. One day a Martian named Really Unhuman landed in his backyard. (Which just happened to be just big enough for the spaceship.)

"Hey, you look just like me," said Unhuman.

"I just noticed that, and that's why YOU have to leave!" said Really Unhuman.

"Wait a minute, this is MY house, and MY backyard, and MY planet, so YOU git out of here," said Unhuman.

They kept on arguing for one full hour. Finally, Really Unhuman said,

"Wait, I know. I'll paint myself yellow, so I'll be yellow, instead of purple, and then we won't have to argue anymore.

"I want to be yellow," said Unhuman.

"Fine, then, we'll be different colors, and then I can get out of this place!"

THE END

Garfield's Food Fight

By Group Four
(Lina, Mun, Willie, Gilberto)

GARFIELD, JON AND ODIE

Problem: They're eating dinner, fighting over food. Having a food
           fight over lasagna and pizza. There is only one piece left.

Garfield: "There's only one pizza left, so I'll have it."

Jon: That's not fair. We should all have it!"

Odie: "No, I want it. It's dog food, not human food!"

Garfield: I want the pizza, it's cat food, not dog food or
             human food.

Jon: "I want the pizza, it's human food, not dog or cat
             food."

Odie: "No!"

They start in a food fight.

Odie and Garfield recover, and Jon says,

[Jon]:   "Okay, don't start it again. Let's talk."

Garfield: "Good grief! Okay, let's cut the pizza into
             thirds."

Odie and Garfield both eat pizza and Jon makes another lasagna and
shares it.

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