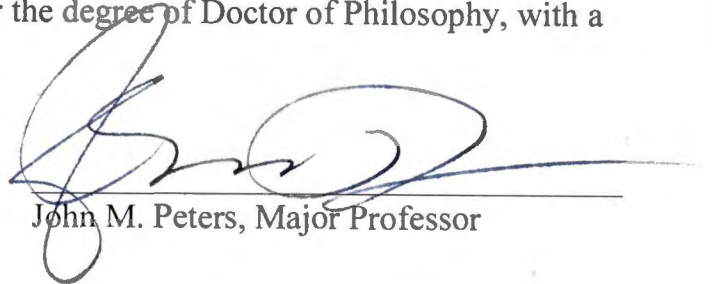


To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Stephen Lee Alderton entitled "Dialogue: A Case Study." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Education.



John M. Peters, Major Professor

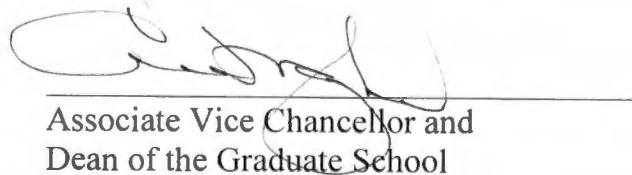
We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:

Robert L. Williams

Luther Kindall

H. Dudley Dechert

Accepted for the Council:



Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of the Graduate School

DIALOGUE. A CASE STUDY

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Stephen Lee Alderton
December 2000

Copyright © 2000 by Stephen Lee Alderton

All rights reserved

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family

My Parents. Jack Lee Alderton and Marilyn Ann Alderton

My Brother: William Michael Alderton

My Grandparents The late Mildred Ruth Markert and the

late Robert Harry Markert

and

My Aunts: The late Roberta Louise Manuel,

Judith Adele Walters and

Deborah Kay Mealiff

Thank you

for showing me love and compassion;
for giving me support and guidance,
for being who you are without any pretense,
but most of all,
for always being there throughout life when I needed you.
I will never forget

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Within any significant event, there are always people who make it possible. The completion of this dissertation is no exception. I am indebted and grateful to Dr. John Peters, my advisor, committee chair, and mentor. Without his guidance and support, I never would have finished this process and been able to make this dream a reality. More important, I learned more about learning and how to interact and create learning opportunities from him than from anyone else. Dr. Peters is a true adult educator.

In addition to Dr. Peters, other members serving on the dissertation committee who offered their assistance, expertise, and support included Dr. Robert Williams, Dr. Luther Kindall, and Dr. H. Dudley Dewhirst.

To members of the dialogue group who allowed me to observe and then interview them concerning the dialogue process, thank you for your patience and interest in my research.

I would also like to thank Ms. Monica Wallace, Ms. Susan Stockdale, Ms. April Bennett, and Ms. Paula York for taking time out of their busy schedules and assisting me in this process. Without your help, I never would have been able to get this process completed. A special thanks to Ms. Janie Bean for transcribing numerous audio tapes and Ms. Charlotte Duncan who spent numerous hours proofing and editing this document.

A special thank you to Dr. Kary Jessup, Dr. Sharon Yarbrough, and Ms. Sue Greene who supported me in this process and allowed me to vent my frustrations and self-doubts. Your patience and words of encouragement always kept me on track.

To my parents, Jack and Marilyn Alderton, it's been a long journey, one filled with difficulty, self-doubt, and sacrifice. Without your undying support and love, I never would have conceived and then realized this dream

ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken in response to the need for research on alternative teaching and learning approaches in higher education. It focused on the experience of adult learners in a nontraditional classroom environment, as perceived by the learners themselves and by outside observers. The study also focused on a particular mode of classroom discourse, itself a promising new form of teaching and learning. It is about dialogue, a way that students and teachers can think together.

Ethnographic and phenomenological techniques and outside observer ratings were used to collect and analyze data. Themes derived from interview results, field notes, and frequency counts based on observers' ratings described participants' experiences with dialogue in a course designed to help participants develop their dialogue skills. These same sources of data also were used to describe participants' experience with three types of teaching and learning, and outside observers rated participants' use of selected types of questions.

The results were consistent with related studies in the area of dialogue and collaborative learning. Themes that stood out for special discussion included the role of strong interpersonal relationships in creating and sustaining dialogue, the critical factor of time to learn, practice, and develop

dialogue skills; differences in how dialogue is understood; and the relationship of the dialogue process to three types of learning and teaching

The study's findings are discussed in terms of (1) theory development, (2) related research, and (3) implications for practice. This discussion includes a commentary on the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods in research on the dialogue process

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>CHAPTER</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
CHAPTER ONE	
THE PROBLEM	1
Introduction	1
Conceptual Framework	2
Significance of the Study	12
Organization of the Study	12
CHAPTER TWO	
LITERATURE REVIEW	13
Introduction	13
Isaacs' Theory of Dialogue	13
Key Practices	17
Questions	18
Other Dialogue Theories	20
Summary	34
CHAPTER THREE	
METHODOLOGY	35
Introduction	35

Participants	35
Data Collection	36
Ethnographic Observation	36
Interviews	37
Observers	40
Data Analysis	42
Observers	43
Thematic Analysis	43
Personal Bias Statement	44
Summary	46
CHAPTER FOUR	
FINDINGS	47
Introduction	47
Course Structure	47
Data Analysis	49
Research Question One	50
Phenomenological Interview Results	50
Semistructured Interview Results	71
Semistructured Theme Summary	94

Additional Ethnographic Observations	95
Results of Observer Ratings	97
Research Question Two	100
Results of Observer Ratings	102
Research Question Three	104
Structured Interview Question	104
Results of Observer Ratings	105
Summary	106
CHAPTER FIVE	
SUMMARY and DISCUSSION	108
Introduction	108
Summary Findings and Discussion	108
Research Question One	109
Participant Experience	109
Rater Observation	114
Comparing Rater and Participant Observations	114
Research Question Two	118
Participant Experience	118
Rater Observation	118

Research Question Three	120
Participant Experience	120
Rater Observation	120
Comparing Rater and Participant Observations	121
Conclusions and Implications	122
REFERENCES	128
APPENDICES	136
Appendix A	137
Appendix B	138
Appendix C	139
Appendix D	140
Appendix E	141
Appendix F	143
Appendix G	147
Appendix H	148
Appendix I	150
VITA	151

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1.	Dialogue Model	15
-------------	----------------	----

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4 1	Group Attendance Summary	96
Table 4.2	Interobserver Agreement Dialogue Phase	99
Table 4.3.	Interobserver Agreement Key Practices	101
Table 4 4	Interobserver Agreement Question Types	103
Table 4 5	Interobserver Agreement Teaching and Learning	107

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Remarkable technological, social, and economic changes occurring throughout the world challenge traditional institutions to adopt increasingly flexible, diverse, and inclusive modes of operating. This imperative of change strongly suggests that institutions develop new approaches to communicating, learning, and thinking to help ensure their survival and growth in a global environment. How these approaches are to be understood and implemented is perhaps the larger challenge faced by most institutions.

For educational institutions, this may mean the adoption of new ways of teaching and new forms of relationships with learners. This is especially true for institutions of higher education, which are challenged by an increase in the population of working adult students and a pressure to respond to the diverse needs of informed publics. It is arguable that traditional modes of teaching are not sufficient to meet the changing needs of adult students (Merriam & Brockett, 1997). Given the influx of older, more experienced learners in higher education classrooms, it seems reasonable to assume that they would benefit from teaching approaches that capitalize on their experiences and encourage

their active participation in developing new ways of understanding subject matter (Brookfield, 1990)

If higher education institutions are to respond by inventing new approaches to teaching and learning, there is a concomitant need for information about effective new pedagogies and how they can be developed and implemented in traditional environments. Research on teaching has followed conventional lines of teaching practice, focusing mainly on the role of the teacher and on teaching techniques. Far less research has been done on learners and the roles they play in shaping their own classroom experiences (Brookfield, 1995)

This study was undertaken in response to the need for research on alternative teaching and learning approaches in higher education. It focused on the experience of adult learners in a nontraditional classroom environment, as perceived by the learners themselves and by outside observers. The study also focused on a particular mode of classroom discourse, itself a promising new form of teaching and learning. It is about dialogue, a way that students and teachers can think together.

Conceptual Framework

Isaacs (1999) argued that our social institutions, like the cultures they represent, are inherently fragmented and lack a holistic view of the worlds they

serve. He proposed that members of social institutions learn to think together in order to resist fragmentation and develop a growth-enhancing systems perspective. For Isaacs, learning to think together means learning to *dialogue*.

Other writers join Isaacs in advocating dialogue as a means to improve institutional well-being. For example, Ellnor and Gerard (1998) claimed that "dialogue is a powerful communications practice that transforms those who engage in it" (p. 3). Clark et al. (1996) encouraged "dialogue as a means for achieving parity in collaboration while facilitating mutual reflection, growth, and change" (p. 228). These views of dialogue are similar to Buber's well-known "I-Thou" stance. As cited by Clark (1991), this is

A stance that transforms communicating people into coequal collaborators who cooperate in the process of negotiating meanings they can truly share, meanings that do not embody the dominance of one (but) enable people to develop a shared understanding of their common experience in an interaction that becomes more than the sum of its individual participants because the shared knowledge that emerges from it cannot be reduced to what each one of them separately knows. (p. 3)

Dialogue from another perspective "is about shared inquiry, a way of thinking and reflecting together. It is not something you do *to* another person, it is something you do *with* people" (Isaacs, 1999, p. 9). Dialogue from Isaac's perspective is about learning. It is a process of learning to understand self and the other. Thus, dialogue can produce "an environment where people are

consciously participating in the creation of shared meaning” (Isaacs, 1993, p 26)

Isaacs (1993) defined dialogue as “a sustained collective inquiry into the processes, assumptions, and certainties that compose everyday experience” (p 25) Isaacs believed that individuals begin by engaging in defensive exchanges but gradually learn to question and examine the reasons for their defensiveness. The transition from defensiveness to inquiry occurs across four phases, or what Isaacs called “containers.” It is these containers that form the basis of Isaacs’ model of dialogue. His model is divided into four phases: (a) instability of the container, (b) instability in the container, (c) inquiry in the container, and (d) creativity in the container. Throughout this process, Isaacs views the four key practices of listening, suspending, respecting, and voicing as crucial if a group is to engage in dialogue. These features of Isaacs’ model are discussed in Chapter Two.

Other authors, such as Mezirow (1991), Senge (1990), and Shor (1992), have similar theories of the dialogue process. Mezirow described three types of learning: instrumental, communicative, and emancipatory. He believed that instrumental learning can only be validated through empirical methods while the other two types of learning rely upon the relationship among learners and the ability of individuals to think critically and

reflectively. Understanding through dialogic communication is the key.

Mezirow (1991) pointed out that “dialogue or communicative action allows us to relate to the world around us, to other people; and to our own intentions, feelings, and desires” (p. 65).

The purpose of communicative learning is to establish relationships in which meaning can be jointly constructed. Mezirow (1991) stated that the most significant learning in adulthood falls within this category of learning because it “involves understanding, describing, and explaining intentions; values, ideals; moral issues, social, political, philosophical, psychological, or educational concepts, feelings; and reasons” (p. 75). For Mezirow, these attributes of learning are important because they are all shaped by culture, social norms, speech, and expectations.

Senge’s (1990) concept of the *learning organization* refers to five disciplines in which dialogue is a component. These disciplines are personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking. The central idea of the five disciplines is that individuals, groups, and organizations must learn to evolve and develop their capacity to create results. They must also use reflection and understand how internal expectations shape actions, how they need to build a common sense of direction and commitment, how to use conversational skills and collective thinking to create a more

unified approach, and understand the interrelationships between all the different components that form their group or organization (Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith, & Kleiner, 1994).

Parrott (1992), a social constructivist, stated that the individual's "sense of self is not something that is preestablished or self-contained. Rather, it is constructed from social relationships and institutions that are historically and culturally contingent" (p. 212). Shotter (1992) postulated that the individual creates the self through "socially shared identities of feelings they themselves create or construct" (p. 181). It is this construction with others that produces common places, moments, or shared mental models. This construction is also grounded in language that is more than talking or communication. It is that, but it is also grounded in the sharing and understanding of feelings that creates an identity for the individual as the interaction between people progresses. This is similar to the concept of relational responsibility offered by McNamee and Gergen (1999) in which "meaningful language is generated within processes of relationship" (p. xi). From this perspective, learning is understood as occurring in the process of human interaction.

In the interest of examining the dialogue process as it relates to the focus of this study, it is important to know how meaning is constructed in relationships, particularly in formal teaching and learning settings. This is the

focus of works by Peters and Armstrong (1998), who have identified three types of teaching and learning used in educational environments. Type I, "Teaching by Transmission, Learning by Reception," is the predominant mode of teaching and learning. In this situation, information is transmitted from the teacher to the student. In Type II, "Teaching by Transmission, Learning by Sharing," the flow of information still emanates from the teacher but can flow from student to student as well. In Type III, "Collaborative Learning," the teacher becomes a member of the group, thereby relinquishing the role of principal source of information and its transmission to students. This stands in contrast with Types I and II where the teacher is the primary source of information and manager of the learning environment.

The types of teaching and learning developed by Peters and Armstrong (1998) provide additional framework for understanding the role that dialogue plays in learning. In Type III, dialogue is the principal mode of discourse that learners use to construct new meaning, and this discourse is usually not used in the other two types of teaching and learning (Peters & Armstrong, 1998). Dialogue is thus a central component of collaborative learning, as it helps learners achieve parity in their relationships with one another and with a teacher.

The process of collaborative learning (Type III) was the focus of a study by Armstrong (1999) and a related study by Crosse (2000). Armstrong used ethnographic and phenomenological methods to study how the process of collaborative learning was experienced by students in a graduate course on the topic of reflective practice in education and psychology. He described the students' experiences in collaborative learning in terms of three thematic categories: group process, learning process, and group facilitation. Each of these categories had multiple themes.

The group process category contained the themes of cohesion, trust and respect, confusion and frustration, and conflict. The learning process category contained the themes of discourse, engagement, and questions. The group facilitation category contained the themes of facilitator actions and participants as facilitator. (Armstrong & Peters, 2000, p. 2)

Armstrong's (1999) study showed that participants experienced collaborative learning in terms of the interaction of these themes, such that the themes created a "patterned gestalt" of the process of collaborative learning. "The findings describe collaborative learning as a multifaceted, complex process that can be understood in terms of knowledge construction, relationships, and participants' role in facilitating their own and others' learning experiences" (Armstrong & Peters, 2000, p. 2).

Crosse (2000) examined a course in reflective practice in terms of how its participants experienced meaning making. Based on his analysis of participants' personal biographies and their descriptions of experiences in class meetings, Crosse concluded that their collaborative learning experiences transformed their way of making meaning.

Analysis of the data suggested that participants' everyday way of making meaning represented a subconscious, interpretive, projective, uncritical, and unselfaware way of making meaning which was biographically and culturally informed the philosophical and underlying processes of the class fostered a transformation of (participants') meaning making to a new authentic way of making meaning The new way of making meaning is described as a conscious, receptive, and critically self-aware way of making meaning (p v)

Crosse also attributed the transformative effect of the course to the formation of unique positive interpersonal relationship processes and experienced-based learning processes

Positive interpersonal relationships and a sense of cohesion and community within the group were essential ingredients for the group to effectively engage in the (collaborative) learning processes The data also suggested that a symbiotic relationship existed between the interpersonal relationship processes and the learning processes. (p. vi)

Crosse described the themes of trust, respect, and a sense of community as factors in the positive interpersonal relationships formed by participants in the course

Both Armstrong (1999) and Crosse (2000) concluded that questions played an important role in the participants' collaborative learning experiences. By asking open-ended questions, participants were able to delve deeper into their own and other participants' underlying assumptions and experience a deeper understanding of the content and process of the course

Portwood (1999), who examined how a collaborative learning environment affects students in a face-to-face and online graduate-level course, concluded that dialogue is the principal mode of discourse in collaborative learning. She also described the importance of environment in the collaborative classroom and the need for instructors "to be familiar with the shifts students make when transitioning from a traditional lecture-dominated class to one that is collaborative" (p. v). Themes that emerged from her case study of a single course (on the topic of "Writing for Publication") included the following:

the importance of participation by both the instructors and the students, the importance of students hearing and learning from other students, the creation of an environment (in which) instructors are not seen as the only source of knowledge, and the role and use of an online discussion forum (p. v)

Portwood concluded that it is possible for instructors to create "an environment for collaborative learning, where there is trust and comradery

(and) where the students see and understand that there are many sources of knowledge beyond the instructor..." (p. vi)

The studies by Armstrong (1999), Crosse (2000), and Portwood (1999) are illustrative of the growing interest in collaborative learning and inquiry into its processes. It is arguable that such studies of collaborative learning also include aspects of the dialogue process. For example, although it was of secondary concern in their studies, Armstrong, Crosse, and Portwood cited dialogue as a crucial feature of collaborative learning. However, all three researchers cited the need for additional research concerning the role of dialogue in formal teaching and learning environments.

This study addressed the need for additional research on dialogue in teaching and learning environments. A graduate course that focused on dialogue and utilized the process of dialogue as its principal mode of discourse was chosen as the setting for this study. The following questions guided the inquiry:

1. How do students who engage in dialogue experience the process?
2. What types of questions do students use while engaged in dialogue?
3. What types of teaching and learning is experienced by students who are engaged in dialogue?

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in the promise of its findings for advancing our understanding of the dialogue process, particularly as it is employed as a principal form of discourse in teaching and learning situations. The literature that addresses the nature of dialogue is characterized by a wide range of definitions and few studies that clarify its nature. This investigation, although limited to one case and a particular methodology, promises to lend additional clarification to the nature of dialogue in formal settings. In addition, the results of this study may be of interest to teachers who are interested in employing the ideas and techniques of Type III teaching and learning in their own classrooms. Whether or not the study contributes meaningful results to the academic community, to practitioners, or to both will be left to the discretion of readers

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one has provided an overview concerning the nature of the problem and the purpose of the study. Chapter two contains a review of the literature; and chapter three describes the research methodologies used in the study, including a description of the participants, data collection, and data analysis. The findings are presented in chapter four, and these findings are discussed in chapter five

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter presents literature directly related to the examination and description of dialogue. The first section of this chapter presents Isaacs' model of dialogue, including the role of key practices and questions. It continues with a discussion of dialogue as perceived by various authors, including Shotter, Gergen, Dixon, and Sidorkin. The chapter ends with a discussion of three types of teaching and learning and their relationship to the dialogue process.

Isaacs' Theory of Dialogue

Dialogue is a process in which collaboration, analysis, integration, and understanding through conversation takes place. Isaacs (1993) believed that dialogue can occur when individuals voluntarily enter an environment where they are aware "of the very process by which they form tacit assumptions and solidify beliefs. Then they can develop a common strength and capability for working and creating things together" (p. 25). He went on to state that "dialogue is a discipline of collective thinking and inquiry, a process for transforming the quality of conversation and, in particular, the thinking that

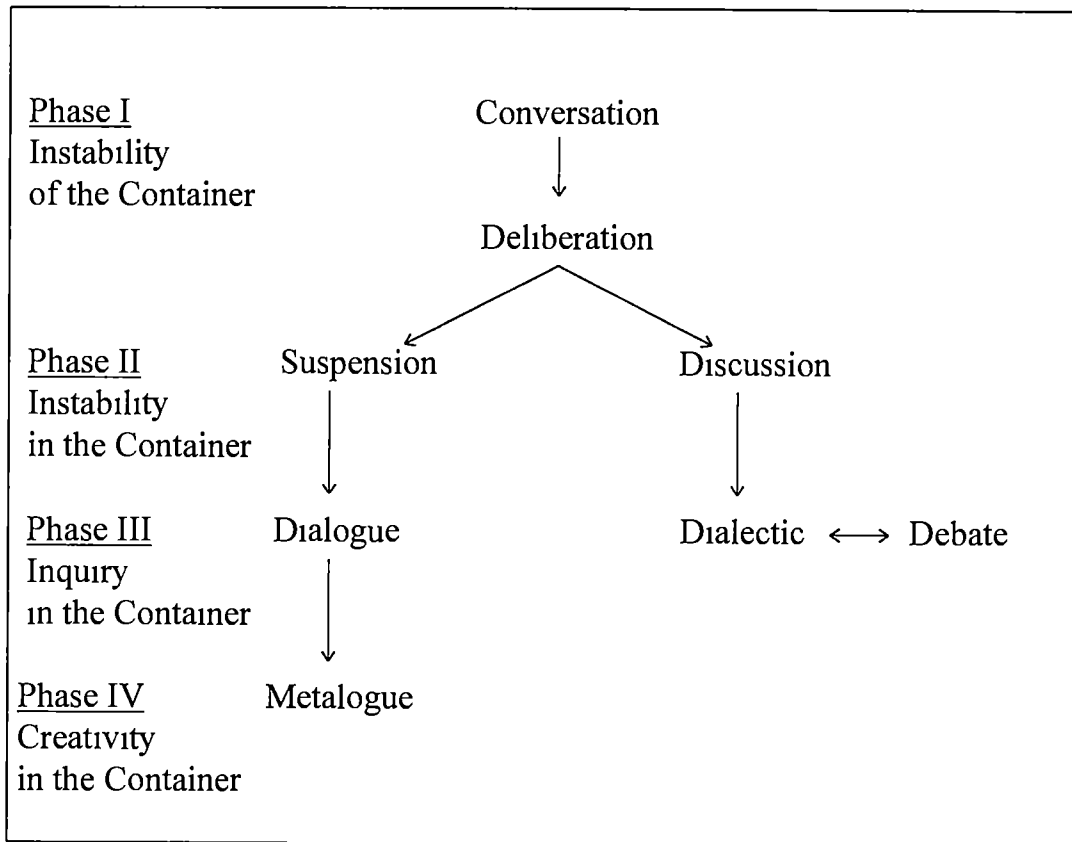
lies beneath it” (p 25) His description of what occurs within the dialogue process is stated as follows:

The central purpose is simply to establish a field of genuine meeting and inquiry (which we call a container), a setting in which people can allow a free flow of meaning and vigorous exploration of the collective background of their thought, their personal predisposition, the nature of their shared attention, and the rigid features of their individual and collective assumptions (p 25)

Isaacs’ model is illustrated in Figure 2 1 and is divided into four phases labeled “Instability of the Container,” “Instability in the Container,” “Inquiry in the Container,” and “Creativity in the Container ”

Isaacs (1993) used the term container because “a container can be understood as the sum of the collective assumptions, shared intentions, and beliefs of a group” (p. 34). In phase one, Instability of the Container, group members come together to begin the dialogue process through conversation. The first challenge for the group is to recognize and be aware that the reason they are participating is to work through their differences. During this time in the process, there will be conflict and defensiveness, which makes this stage unstable. Conversation is the beginning of the dialogue process, and it is at this point that a transformation begins. Group members move from confrontation and defensiveness to a realization that they can listen to others and suspend judgement.

Figure 2 1 Dialogue Model



Note From The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook (p 361) by P. M. Senge, C. Roberts, R. B. Ross, B. J. Smith, and A. Kleiner, 1994, New York: Doubleday.

Phase two, Instability in the Container, finds group members moving from the position of suspending their views to discussion of various other perspectives represented within the group. It is in this stage that group members begin to explore the underlying pattern of thought that supports and feeds the different views. Participants begin to realize that the points of view that made so much sense to them earlier are now no longer as clear. This is a time of frustration and disorientation, and there is a tendency for extreme

views to be defended, even though they make little sense to others in the group

The third phase, Inquiry in the Container, is a phase in which the group takes on a different personality. Members begin a process of inquiry in which communication takes on a different perspective. Instead of the fragmentation that occurred in the previous two stages, group members are interacting at a level in which thinking, speaking, and respect for the facts and opinions of others take on new meaning. As members participate, they begin to realize and see the underlying themes in their thinking and how their thinking is limited. This new insight creates a free flow of ideas in which new meaning is formed.

In the last phase, Creativity in the Container, group members create different levels of thought and meaning. Although they still may not all agree, group members are free from the rigid patterns that previously limited them and now are able to seek new levels of creativity and intelligence. It is at this new level of creativity and intelligence that the group talks in a new and different way. The old meanings, perceptions, and previous understandings are found to be inadequate to support this new level of meaning making. At times, words may not fully convey what members are attempting to communicate and silence ensues. In this stage, a richness in meaning is created; and the group propels itself to a different dimension of learning, creating, and understanding.

Key Practices

Isaacs' (1999) model has four central concepts that he calls "key practices": listening, suspending, respecting, and voicing. *Listening* is the ability to hear what others are saying and to "embrace, accept, and gradually let go of our own inner clamoring" (p 83). Listening allows for greater participation because it allows the individual to connect with people and things in the environment.

Suspending is probably the most difficult because it requires the individual to look at things from different perspectives. It is "to change direction, to stop, step back, see things with new eyes" (Isaacs, 1999, p. 135). In suspension, the individual acknowledges his or her feelings, thoughts, and attitudes; but they do not act on or advocate them to others. There are two types of suspension. The first is the ability to admit feelings and attitudes in an attempt to understand them. The second is becoming aware of the process by which those thoughts, feelings, and attitudes came about. By becoming aware of the process that fostered these particular thoughts, feelings, and attitudes, the individual then has the option of instituting changes.

Respecting refers to the process of examining the experiences of others in an attempt to understand how feelings, thoughts, and attitudes evolved. It is

also about accepting those varying viewpoints and understanding their legitimacy (Isaacs, 1999)

Voicing is allowing others to hear one's thoughts, attitudes, and feelings, regardless of the consequences. For an individual to be voicing, they need to ask themselves "what needs to be expressed now" (Isaacs, 1999, p 159). This simple question requires a great deal of composure and restraint because it means that not every idea or thought needs to be expressed to the group. It requires a willingness on the part of the individual to not articulate their thoughts until they decide upon the right way to express themselves.

Questions

Questions play an important role in dialogue. Isaacs (1999) claimed that "the power of dialogue emerges in the cultivation, in ourselves, as well as others, of questions for which we do not have answers" (p. 148) and that asking one good question is better than offering several answers that have no thought behind them. He suggested that members of a dialogue group search for questions that make people think instead of questions that elicit standard, superficial answers.

While Isaacs advocated questions that inquire and encourage individuals to think instead of transmitting well-rehearsed answers, not all questions perform this function. Dillon (1982) stated that some question types

have a “limiting and depressing effect upon expression.. because responses to questions are brief, typically a single word or phrase” (p. 142). Pollio (1989) suggested that there are two types of questions used in college classrooms. those of a lawyer and those of a scientist. The types of questions posed by a lawyer are those that illicit information already known by the other, and those questions posed by a scientist are questions that promote higher order thinking on the part of the other. Pollio stated that, while questioning about past information is important, “should we also not try to model a more open use of questions in which we truly seek a new answer rather than one already known?” (p 24)

Peters (1995) suggested that there are two characteristics of questions: power and technical. The technical characteristic is concerned with the types of questions and the manner in which they are asked. For example, in a collaborative classroom environment, the questions “What did you do?” and “Why did you do it?” might be asked in order to stimulate dialogue about a member's problem-solving experience. The power characteristic refers to who asks questions and their responsibility to others in the group. For example, a teacher's questions usually carry more power than questions asked by students. In a dialogue, however, the goal is to achieve parity among questions asked by all participants, including the teacher. The what and why questions echo Pollio

(1989) when he said, "Questions, asked in the present, open time in two directions what we as a culture already know and what we hope to know" (p. 24)

The Teaching and Learning Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (2000) created six categories of questions in an attempt to analyze the effect of questioning strategies on student involvement. Questions were categorized as (a) probing questions, which seek to clarify, increase critical awareness, refocus, and prompt, (b) factual questions, which require recall of previously learned knowledge by asking who, what, where, when, why, and how; (c) divergent questions, which have no correct answer and require students to consider various alternatives, (d) higher order questions, which require students to evaluate or use inductive or deductive reasoning through comparison, application of a principle or a concept, or problem solving, (e) affective questions, which obtain responses concerning emotions and feelings, and (f) structuring questions, which seek to obtain information related to learning.

Other Dialogue Theories

Dialogue is a process that allows individuals to contribute and share experiences, perceptions, attitudes, and ideas through group and individual problem solving, critical thinking, reflection, shared mental models, and trust.

The individual shares a part of themselves, a characteristic not usually found in our traditional learning and communication process. Dixon's (1996) perspective of dialogue was based on the concept that people are capable of understanding and interpreting the nuances and interdependencies of the world around them. Dialogue is a process in which the individual can learn through the efforts of the group. It is through the group that the individual can acknowledge

that everyone is blind to his or her own tacit assumptions and needs the help of others to see them. It acknowledges that each person, no matter how smart or capable, sees the world from a *perspective* and that there are other legitimate perspectives that could inform that view. (p. 30)

Greenleaf (1996), in a study of a group of corporate, midlevel decision makers, and Tisue (1999), in a study of a group of decision makers in a family-owned business, found that as decision makers learned and practiced the techniques of group dialogue, there was a change in group perception concerning the quality of their decision-making process. According to Greenleaf (1996), group members were able to "hear different ideas rather than just hearing different positions, the quality of listening changed from just listening to being interested in what was said, feelings and assumptions were brought out in the open, there became a real interest in creating new possibilities, and group members had an increased awareness of how

assumptions and attitudes were interwoven within their conversations” (p. 105) Tisue (1999) identified an increased awareness of patterns of communication, increased communication among all members of the business organization, and increased listening and learning on the part of family-business owners. These decision makers also recognized that an extended and uninterrupted amount of time was needed to be set aside on a regular basis for dialogue and decision making.

As a result of his work pertaining to the learning organization, Senge (1990) concluded that dialogue “can occur only when a group of people see each other as colleagues in mutual quest for deeper insight and clarity” (p. 245) Senge also believed the act of thinking is a large part of dialogue, which is a participative process, and group members who recognize other members as colleagues promote not only interaction as colleagues but assist in “establishing a positive tone and to offset the vulnerability that dialogue brings” (p. 245) He further asserted that a major assumption within dialogue is that it cultivates and supports a “larger pool of meaning accessible only to a group” (p. 248)

There are five basic disciplines that increase the capacity for learning in an organization. Common themes running throughout these five disciplines are trust, reflection, and sustained inquiry. By utilizing dialogue as the principal

mode of discourse, teams can “transform their collective thinking, learning to mobilize their energies and actions to achieve common goals, and drawing forth an intelligence and ability greater than the sum of individual members’ talents” (Senge et al., 1999, p. 32).

Sidorkin (1999) did not see dialogue as ordinary conversation and a means to obtain a goal but, rather, “dialogue becomes the goal in itself, the central purpose of human life” (p. 12). He interpreted human existence in the *I-Thou* relationship, which asserts that “another’s being is essential for my own being” (p. 12). In this perspective, self-awareness is not of primary importance but, instead, it is the dialogical relationship between individuals. Simply put:

If I do not accept and make sense of your existence, there is not a way for me to exist or make sense of my own being. A failure to affirm the being of the other brings myself into non-being (p. 12)

Bohm (1996a) believed that individuals engaging in dialogue should not have an agenda or goal because, once an agenda or goal is created, assumptions appear in the behaviors and thoughts of group members, thereby placing limits on the group. The purpose of dialogue is to “communicate coherently in truth” (p. 17); however, truth is tempered by meaning. For

Bohm, dialogue “may arrive at truth, but it is concerned with meaning. If the meaning is incoherent you never arrive at truth” (p. 37).

During the dialogue process, Bohm (1996a) believed the need for sensitivity is not just to sense that some type of process is occurring or that the individual is just using their senses. It is more than that; it is being “sensitive to the meaning, or to the lack of meaning” (p. 40) within the interaction between group members. When group members are sensitive, they can share and think together, releasing their individual assumptions, such as the need for authority and hierarchy within this process. When members reach this level of sensitivity, “people are no longer in opposition, nor can they be said to be interacting, rather, they are participating in this pool of common meaning which is capable of constant development and change” (Bohm, 1996b, p. 175). This is what Shotter (1993) called a third kind of knowing, which is “joint knowledge, knowledge-held-in-common with others” (p. 19).

In an analysis of people who had participated in a David Bohm dialogue seminar and engaged in the practice of dialogue, Cayer (1996) identified 18 difficulties that participants encountered when engaging in dialogue. These 18 difficulties were grouped into four categories. The first category, “Coping with Inconsistent Intentions,” identified group participants who have no intention of participating in dialogue. The second category,

“Coping with Paradoxes,” identified tension among participants. Tension resulted as participants engaged in two opposing behaviors at the same time. For example, some group members had difficulty in balancing the interests of the self versus the group. The third category is “Logistic and Physical Issues,” which identified, for example, issues of group size, frequency of meetings, and length of meetings. The fourth category, “Hindrances to Dialogue,” identified characteristics participants used when they do not know how to respond to what is occurring in the group. These characteristics to escape dialogue are used individually, by a few, or by the entire group and include inattention, domination of the conversation, and movement from the concrete to the abstract. In discussing the 18 difficulties, Cayer (1996) stated:

It does seem that certain difficulties would be an integral part of dialogue and that it is not possible nor desirable to avoid them without losing the essence of dialogue. On the other hand, it seems that other difficulties are not an integral part of dialogue, in the sense that they could represent a threat to the integrity and continuance of dialogue. (p. 183)

In her study of the role of the other in engaging teachers in critical reflection concerning their practice, Vasquez-Levy (1994) identified types of verbal interruptions that may affect the production of dialogue. These verbal interruptions were labeled (a) language difficulties, (b) preconceptions,

(c) anxieties, (d) defensive characteristics, (e) contrary purposes, (f) power, and (g) contextual elements.

Vasquez-Levy (1994) described language difficulties as “miscommunications that occur as a result of mispronunciations or the incorrect use of a word or phrase” (p. 146). Preconceptions are words or phrases that “indicate one individual made assumptions about the other” (p. 147). Anxieties are words and phrases that “indicated apprehension, dread, or alarm” (p. 150), and defensive characteristics are words and phrases indicating caution through the use of explanations, excuses, or rationalizations. Contrary purposes are identified as the other would be questioning teachers from one perspective and the teachers would redirect the conversation. Power is an interruption in the conversation to acquire control or is the amount of time controlled in the conversation. When either person engaged in dialogue attempts to control the conversation or when interruptions occur, opportunity to create mutual understanding is lessened. Contextual elements, such as time, space, and aspects of the physical environment, also can inhibit dialogue.

While the seven types of verbal interruptions identified by Vasquez-Levy (1994) affect the dialogue process, permanent damage to the dialogue is not necessarily the result. Vasquez-Levy did find, however, that when conversations came to a halt, it was usually the result of the other attempting

to interject formal knowledge or when the other made a judgement in the course of the dialogue.

Bowman (1997), in examining the use of dialogue in an organization undergoing change, explored the concept of group dialogue as proposed by David Bohm. This study revealed that the majority of participants relied upon positive relationships with others to cope with the change taking place within the organization. Additionally, participation in group dialogue improved communication and enhanced relationships among participants involved in the study. Bowman found that Bohm's concept of group dialogue "may facilitate initiation of important individual and group changes within the work environment" (p. 237). She also discovered that group dialogue may provide an approach that promises to reduce resistance to change in an organization.

Heekin (1994), in examining the role of narrative, image, and dialogue in multicultural psychotherapy, found that through interpersonal dialogue the therapeutic process can become an enriching process for both the client and therapist. Heekin stated that "if a creative, collaborative dialogue ensues, then therapy itself becomes a cultural process revealing itself as a continuous, dynamic changing process in individuals, whether in their symptoms, dreams, or dialogue" (p. 68).

For others like Shotter (1993), Anderson (1997), and Gergen (1994), the individual involved in the dialogical process is one who is open, involved, and responsive to others. For Shotter (1993),

Life by its very nature is dialogic. To live means to participate in dialogue: to ask questions, to heed, to respond, to agree, and so forth . . . Those denied this possibility can, to say the least, be expected to feel humiliated and angered (p. 62)

Anderson (1997) identified shared inquiry as a vital characteristic of dialogical conversations. She described it thusly:

Shared inquiry is a process in which the participants are in a fluid mode characterized by an *in-there-together*, two-way, give-and-take exchange. . . . In this conversational arrangement, participants do not assume they know what the other person is saying, means, or wants, rather, each is committed to learning about and trying to understand the other by negotiating meanings through the use of language (p. 112)

For Gergen (1994), knowledge is created through relationships, but the words by themselves are meaningless; it is the interaction with others that give meaning to language. He stated

Meaningful language is the product of social interdependence. It requires the coordinated actions of at least two persons, and until there is mutual agreement on the meaningful character of words, they fail to construct language. If we follow this line of argument to its ineluctable conclusion, we find that it is not the mind of the single individual that provides whatever certitude we possess, but relationships of interdependency. (p. viii)

Martin (1997) studied high school students in an investigation of the effects of narratives and interpersonal dialogues on interpersonal relationships. She found that personal narratives shared in the classroom by Lakota teachers were important for shaping the interpersonal relationship between teacher and student. This form of communication and interaction was also seen as a way to share knowledge. The sharing of personal narratives is the “primary social method for increasing relationships. It is used for social interaction, discussion of feelings, transmission of cultural knowledge, and general knowledge of the world” (p. 208). In Martin’s study, the use of narratives through interpersonal dialogues allowed participants to share and convey values, ethics, meanings, and beliefs.

In his phenomenological and ethnographic study of collaborative learning as experienced by two groups of graduate students, Armstrong (1999) identified collaborative learning as a complex process. Collaborative learning was described in terms of relationships, knowledge construction, and the role played by participants in facilitating their own learning. This study indicated that each group member was able to observe his or her own learning as a result of their relationship with other group members and the group as a whole.

Crosse (2000), in his qualitative study regarding how meaning is constructed in two graduate-level reflective-practice classes, attributed

meaning making to how interpersonal relations formed within the groups. He described interpersonal relationships in terms of participants (a) getting to know each other, (b) spending time together, (c) self-disclosing, (d) sharing common goals, (e) understanding what they had in common, and (f) using humor. As a result of these experiences, group members were able to create a sense of community within the class, which in turn supported an atmosphere for meaning making. The process of learning was accomplished through conversation that involved active listening and asking questions that were phenomenological in nature.

Howe (1963) stated that "every man is a potential adversary, even those whom we love. Only through dialogue are we saved from this enmity toward one another" (p. 3). In order to obtain the effects of dialogue, Howe asserted that dialogue must be mutual and engaged in by all, and those engaging in dialogue must persevere, for dialogue "can bring relationship into being, and it can bring into being again a relationship that has died" (p. 3). Dialogue is an "address and response between persons in which there is a flow of meaning between them in spite of all the obstacles that normally would block the relationship" (p. 37). It also necessitates that no views or perspectives are imposed, an honest attempt is made to disclose information, and each individual attempts to know and acknowledge the other as they are, without

attempting to influence or change those involved in the process. From this perspective, dialogue has four purposes:

1. To transmit information and meaning between individuals and groups through collaboration and a willingness for understanding.
2. To assist in the decision-making process
3. To restore vitality to relationships and shake individuals free of the conformity so they are available for transformation which originally produced them.
4. To bring persons into being so that there is a relation between the *thou* of the other and the *I* of myself (pp. 56-65)

For Howe (1963), there are two perspectives that compete in educational circles for dominance and acceptance. The first is education by transmission, which seeks to transmit the information and knowledge from the teacher to the student. This perspective assumes the teacher is the holder and guardian of learning. The second perspective is induction, which attempts to engage the student by utilizing their creativity, interests, and needs. While each perspective is competing to be accepted over the other, "the two belong together" (p. 16). "There must be dialogue between teacher and student, and between the meaning as formulated in theory out of men's past experience and meaning as it emerges out of their contemporary experience" (p. 17).

Howe (1963) went on to say that what is taught throughout our educational system is the result of the relationships between and among people

that furthers truth and creativity To further truth, there must be a deeper understanding of the relationship between teaching and learning.

While Howe (1963) discussed two teaching perspectives competing for dominance and acceptance in educational circles, Peters and Armstrong (1998) took it a bit further. They described three possible relationships between teachers and student. Type I, “teaching by transmission, learning by reception” (p. 78) is the dominant model used in today’s learning environments The content is selected by the instructor with the assumption that the instructor controls and possesses the knowledge deemed important. The student rarely participates in selection of the content, and they accept the relationship between student and instructor as outlined by the instructor. Assessment is usually accomplished within the boundaries set forth by the instructor without student participation The transfer of knowledge and interaction is unidirectional, that is, information flows from the instructor to the student, who plays a passive role in the process The lecture is the standard technique associated with this type of teaching and learning while the purpose is primarily for individual learning

In Type II, “teaching by transmission, learning by sharing” (Peters & Armstrong, 1998, p. 79) there is more interaction between instructor and student While there is information transmitted from instructor to student,

student to student, and at times from student to instructor, the principal holder and guardian of the information is still the instructor. The difference here is that in type two the instructor is not always the only source of information. There are times in which the student assumes the role of instructor but principally is still the receiver of knowledge. Reflections may be exchanged between students but are not usually utilized by the instructor. The lecture followed by a discussion is the standard technique associated with this type of teaching and learning; however, the purpose is still for individual learning to occur.

In Type III, both instructor and student assume very different roles. This type focuses on the joint construction of knowledge where the instructor is a member of the group of learners. As a group member, the instructor may have specific knowledge of the content; but that knowledge does not supercede the expertise of other group members, who have specific expertise in other areas. In this environment, no one is regarded as the keeper or guardian of the information; rather, all members are recognized as having valuable knowledge and experiences that are important for the growth of the group. Self-reflection and the sharing of those reflections is encouraged to create and expand group knowledge. Members of the group engage in joint construction of knowledge, which surpasses what any individual member is

capable of knowing. The relationship between participants in type three is from learner to learner, learner to group, and group to learner. While the lecture and lecture-discussion format may be associated with type three, the dominant form of discourse is dialogue. The focus of this type of teaching and learning is for both individual and group learning.

Summary

This chapter has presented a review of literature based upon the assumption that dialogue is a different type of communication technique. It addressed writings and studies supporting various viewpoints. It should also be recognized that no articles or studies were found that spoke against dialogue being a useful tool in human communication.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the methods used to conduct this study. It includes a description of the participants, the data collection and analysis procedures, and a personal bias statement.

Participants

The 14 participants were members of a graduate class from a major state university located in the southeastern part of the United States. The course entitled Dialogue was designed as a highly participatory experience in that the course objective for participants was to learn about dialogue, primarily through practice. This class met during a spring mini-term for nine sessions, each session lasting approximately 4 hours and 45 minutes. At the beginning of the first class, all participants voluntarily agreed to participate in the study by signing a participant consent form (Appendix A).

The following demographic information describes the participants

- ◇ 14 participants
- ◇ 9 women 5 men
- ◇ 2 master's students 12 doctoral students

- ◇ 3 part-time students 11 full-time students
- ◇ 4 employed part-time 10 employed full-time

Data Collection

This was a single case study utilizing both qualitative and quantitative research procedures. Ethnographic observations, personal interviews, and observer ratings were used for data collection. To answer the research questions, the data sources were: (a) ratings from observers, (b) thematic analyses of the ethnographic field notes, and (c) thematic analyses of the responses from the personal interviews.

Ethnographic Observation

I followed the ethnographic model outlined by Glesne and Peshkin (1992) for observing the graduate class under study. These authors suggest that ethnographic observation ranges on a continuum from mostly observation to complete participation. My role was that of observer, note taker, and manager of the audiorecorder. During each class, I arrived approximately 45 minutes early to configure the table and chairs in an octagonal design and to arrange the audio equipment in such a way that all participants could be clearly recorded. Throughout each class session, I sat in the corner of the room observing the group, taking notes, and changing audiotapes when required.

When each session ended, I broke the audio equipment down into its different components and stored it until the next class session.

Interviews

Once the dialogue course ended, a personal interview was conducted concerning each participant's experience in the course. This interview consisted of both a phenomenological question and a series of semistructured questions. Due to work schedules, summer vacations, personal commitments, and previously scheduled professional commitments that took one participant out of the country, 10 of the 14 personal interviews were conducted within 4 weeks and all 14 interviews were completed within 10 weeks of the final class meeting

The phenomenological component of the interviews was constructed around what Kvale (1996) believed to be the "main structures" (p 29) of a phenomenological interview.

1. centered on the interviewee's life-world,
2. seeks to understand the meaning of phenomena in his life-world,
3. qualitative,
4. descriptive,
5. specific,
6. presuppositionless,
7. focused on certain themes,
8. ambiguities,
9. changes,
10. dependant upon the sensitivity of the interviewer,

- 11 placed in an interpersonal interaction,
12. a positive experience. (Kvale, 1983, p. 174)

I constructed the phenomenological interview around Kvale's 12 points. Each interview was focused on the participant's experience, and each experience was described in the participant's own words. After each participant had described his or her experience, I asked questions seeking further understanding

In an attempt to obtain descriptions and interpretations of this event as experienced by the participant, I also used the guidelines from Glesne and Peshkin (1992):

- 1 be anticipatory and look ahead,
2. establish rapport because trust is the foundation of the interview;
3. learn by being naive and setting personal assumptions aside,
- 4 analyze what is being said and follow up;
- 5 be dominant but also submissive;
- 6 be nonreactive, nondirective, and therapeutic, and
- 7 probe patiently for more information (pp 79–87)

In the phenomenological part of the interview, each interviewee was asked, "What was your experience in the dialogue course?" This broadly stated question was an attempt to elicit their experience without attempting to direct them in anyway. The interview was scheduled in a neutral location at a convenient time for the participant. When the interviewee arrived, I greeted

him or her and explained the process, the types of questions that were going to be asked, and approximately how long it was going to take. Throughout each interview, I paraphrased, used silence, and utilized open-ended questions to follow up on what had been said.

The second half of each interview consisted of a list of semistructured questions (Appendix B). Using Gay's (1996) outline for creating an interview guide, the following items guided the interviews:

- 1 Questions were written in the order they were to be asked
2. All interviewees were questioned in the same manner.
- 3 Each question related to the study.
- 4 The questions and the interviews were semistructured, allowing additional probing and clarification
5. Questions were worded clearly
- 6 Leading questions were avoided

Once both interviews were concluded, many indicated this was a positive experience that provided some closure. Others said it was an opportunity to reflect on what they had been thinking since the class ended or an opportunity to think about and analyze what occurred so they could take their thinking one step further

Each personal interview contained both the phenomenological and semistructured questions and lasted from 55 to 90 minutes. All interviews were audiotape recorded and later transcribed by a professional transcriptionist. The transcriptionist signed a transcription confidentiality form (Appendix C), promising not to discuss any data and to protect the confidentiality of participants associated with this study

Observers

Four graduate students from the Department of Educational Psychology who had completed the course Reflective Practice in Education and Psychology were selected as observers. Three of the students participated in this project as partial credit for a behavioral modification course in which they were enrolled, and the fourth graduate student volunteered. It was felt that those who had completed this course understood the fundamentals of dialogue and collaborative learning

All four graduate students signed a rater's confidentiality form, pledging to not discuss any information heard on the audiotapes and to keep the identities of the participants confidential (Appendix D). Two observers using a rating form (Appendix E) rated the audiotapes for dialogue phase, key practices, and teaching and learning type; and two observers using a similar rating form (Appendix H) rated the audiotapes for question types. While each

team of observers listened for different elements within the process, both teams heard the same recordings

In order to determine which dialogue phases and key practices the course participants experienced, operational definitions were created for use by the observers. Two observers assisted me in defining the operational definitions for each dialogue phase and key practice (Appendix F). In addition to our personal experience in a dialogue group, Isaacs' (1993) model and description of dialogue was the primary source for operationalizing these definitions. Teaching and learning types (Appendix G) were operationally defined based on Peters and Armstrong (1998) description of Types I, II, and III of teaching and learning

To provide a framework to operationally define the question types (Appendix I), I reviewed the literature and specific information from the Teaching and Learning Center University of Nebraska-Lincoln (2000) and Peters (1995) I then created a general list of different types of questions Once that was completed, I created six major themes, grouping similar questions together, and then operationally defining each of the six themes

Since observers were used to rate the audiotapes, agreement between both observers on each team was important because

Assessment is useful only when it can be achieved with some consistency, assessing agreement is important because it minimizes or circumvents the biases of any individual observer, and assessing agreement is important because agreement reflects whether the target behavior is well defined. (Kazdin, 1994, p. 91)

Observers listened to and rated segments of the taped sessions that were not used as data for the study. This continued until each team agreed a minimum of 80% of the time. During this time, actual rater agreement fluctuated between 85% and 95%. Estimating observer agreement was determined by “dividing the smaller frequency by the larger frequency and multiplying by 100” (Kazdin, p. 93).

For ease of rating, I divided the last hour of each class session into 12 five-minute episodes with five seconds of silence between episodes. This was an attempt to ensure each team of observers was able to rate the same episode within each class session. Observers rated a total of 9 hours of audiotape or 108 five-minute episodes. The minimum agreement attained among observers for the 9 class sessions was 89.8%.

Data Analysis

While there were three data sources to answer the research questions, they came from four data sets. Those four sets of data are (a) observer-rated audiotapes, (b) ethnographic field notes, (c) participant responses to a

phenomenological question, and (d) participant responses to semistructured questions.

Observers

Frequency counts were used to assess each rater's observations. Frequency counts were selected for (a) ease of scoring, (b) ability to reflect any changes that occurred during observation, and (c) ability to show how much of the defined behavior was actually being performed (Kazdin, 1994).

Observers, while listening to each episode, recorded a hash mark for each observation of the target behavior. The target behaviors included the identification of the types of questions asked by group members, the dialogue phases experienced by the group, the key practices utilized by the group, and the types of teaching and learning experienced and practiced by the group in each of the 108 five-minute episodes.

Thematic Analysis

When data collection was complete, I separated the phenomenological interviews from the semistructured interviews. I then read all the interview transcripts to reacquaint myself with what was said by each participant and proceeded to perform a thematic analysis on these two data sets. Information was coded as described by LeCompte and Schensul (1999).

LeCompte and Schensul (1999) saw coding data on a continuum from the general to the more specific:

Coding simply means organizing data in terms of a framework the ethnographers can use to support the results and conclusions they reach at the end of their study. At a more specific level, coding can mean actually reading through interviews, field notes, and transcripts and assigning to sentences or paragraphs of text numerical or alphabetic codes representing concepts, categories, or themes. (p. 45)

During the second reading of the transcripts, I created major themes and put similar ideas, concepts, and statements together. These ideas, concepts, and statements were placed on separate sheets of paper and coded to identify the source, thus, creating general categories of themes. I attempted to create a general framework as suggested by LeCompte and Schensul (1999) and then moved on to the more specific. Once that was completed, a thematic analysis of the field notes was begun, using the same process.

Personal Bias Statement

In reporting findings in a research project such as this, it is important to understand and acknowledge my own personal biases. Taylor and Bogdan (1998) believed that "what you see and report as findings depends on who you are and how you see the world. Findings do not exist independently of the consciousness of the observer. All observations are filtered through the researcher's selective lens" (p. 160).

Bias statements are an attempt to get everything out or lay out the researcher's perspectives, values, and attitudes in the open. For Van Manen (1990),

It is better to make explicit our understandings, beliefs, biases, assumptions, presuppositions, and theories We try to come to terms with our assumptions, not in order to forget them again, but rather to hold them deliberately at bay and even to turn this knowledge against itself, as it were, thereby exposing its shallow or concealing character (p. 47)

In order to expose my assumptions, values, expectations, and attitudes, I submitted to a bracketing interview. This interview was audiotape recorded and later transcribed. Dr Dianne Whitaker, a faculty member in the Department of Educational Psychology, conducted the interview Dr. Whitaker questioned me concerning my understanding of the dialogue process, the class I observed, and any expectations I had concerning this topic

The results of the bracketing interview identified an assumption or attitude that I hadn't previously recognized. I entered this study with an interpretist perspective; however, the interview indicated that my experience and, consequently, my assumptions and attitudes of what occurred or what I thought was to occur was actually positivistic in nature. The bracketing interview helped me to identify an inconsistency in my behavior, attitudes, and

expectations. While I wanted this group to dialogue and learn by doing, I still had an expectation of how that was to be accomplished

For Glesne and Peshkin (1992), having a “continual alertness to your biases, your own subjectivity, also assists in producing more trustworthy interpretations” (p 147) I reviewed the transcripts of my bracketing interview prior to and during the data analysis phase of this study. Reading the transcripts of the bracketing interview helped to ensure that my interpretation of the data was not an extension of my own biases but, rather, supported by the data from the personal interviews, field notes, rater observations, and class audiorecordings.

Summary

This chapter presented a description of the participants, how the data were collected and analyzed, and my attempt to minimize my own personal bias throughout the analysis of this study. The findings of the data collected and analyzed are presented in chapter four

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

Introduction

Chapter four presents the findings of this study. Following a description of the course structure and purpose, four data sets are discussed. They include the results of phenomenological interviews, semistructured interviews, ethnographic observations, and observer ratings. The results are presented in response to the research questions.

Course Structure

The objective of this course was for participants to learn to dialogue by attempting to dialogue. The facilitator attempted to satisfy this objective by requiring a prerequisite course that discussed and practiced some of the foundational aspects of dialogue, including knowing how to ask appropriate questions, suspending assumptions, and honing active-listening skills.

This was a hands-on course in which participants were expected to verbally participate at each class meeting. There were three main activities in class. Each participant was expected to read material brought by the facilitator or any group member and be prepared to discuss it in class. Second, each participant had access to e-mail, and this medium was to be used to further communicate outside the scheduled sessions. An e-mail distribution list was

created so all participants could participate in the exchange of ideas. Finally, each participant was to keep a personal journal regarding his or her experience in the dialogue class. They could keep this journal in whatever manner was comfortable for them; and, at the beginning of each class, anyone who wanted to volunteer and describe what they had written, were thinking, had noticed, or had experienced as related to dialogue or any previous dialogue session was encouraged to do so. Additionally, the course was designed so that time was set aside at the end of each session, usually the final 20–30 minutes, for a debriefing in which group members could share any thoughts or observations about that session.

The facilitator described his intended role and responsibility throughout the course in the following manner:

Trying to get the, the whole course underway and something happening so that then we can learn from whatever happens. I intended all along to, to stimulate talk, for example, so that we could learn from talking and then learn from talking about talking and so forth. So uppermost in my mind, and I say mostly descriptive of my experience, would be that attempt to, to get things going and keep them going so that I and the other people could have something to learn from, in the way of our, in the way of our joint experience....The best way to learn to dialogue is to engage in it—talk and dialogue I'm using somewhat synonymously but not exactly—so that if we're going to learn to dialogue by dialoging then there has to be talk and there has to be interaction, verbal interaction, and verbal participation by everybody who's to learn how to dialogue, you know. So I wanted to get that going as soon, as

early as possible and to keep it going constantly and throughout the course.

The participants met in a typical university classroom. This classroom measured approximately 38 feet by 38 feet, with the door and chalkboards filling the majority of space on the north and east walls and with windows spanning the entire length of the west wall. The south wall had 2 large storage cabinets, an extra table, and chairs placed against it. All four walls were painted white, with white ceiling tiles and a brownish/burnt-orange carpet on the floor. The source of illumination for this classroom was primarily from overhead fluorescent lights with a secondary source being natural light filtered through the windows. The classroom was equipped with various types of chairs, and the tables used were 3 feet wide and 5 or 6 feet in length. These tables were arranged in an octagonal shape so that all group members could see one another. The facilitator began each session by turning the lights down and placing a lit candle on one of the tables. Eventually one of the participants brought a floor lamp for additional lighting and placed it next to one of the tables.

Data Analysis

To answer the research questions, results from the phenomenological interviews, semistructured interviews, ethnographic observations, and

observer ratings were used. To give a vivid and complete picture of what occurred in this course, the findings will be presented in relation to each research question

Research Question One

The first research question was “How do students who engage in dialogue experience the process?”

Phenomenological Interview Results

The phenomenological question stated as “What was your experience in the dialogue course?” was the first question posed to each group member in the personal interviews. Analysis of the answers given in these interviews revealed seven themes: *personal relationship, respect, atmosphere, involvement, frustration, empowerment, and facilitation*. These seven themes included issues that affected participants at both the individual and group levels.

Personal relationship In the phenomenological interviews, group members discussed how dialogue was about developing relationships and being aware of all the things other group members brought to the group. One participant described it as follows:

We are sometimes talking about personal issues or because we're dialoguing and we're considering our emotions, I think people personally have more at stake in what's going on or

they project more of themselves into class than just the typical lecture class. Because of that, I think the individual members you know—because, because our personalities, our emotions, have such a, weigh so strongly in determining what the class is like, then I think the individuals who make up this group have a large affect on what happens in the class. Because it is dialogue and there's a lot of personality involved, those personalities affect the class. And so this class was just very different from other classes that I've had. And again I think a lot of that is because of the individuals in it bring their personalities, they bring their styles of speaking, their styles of dialogue to the class. It seems like each individual has their own particular way of speaking and that affects everything else. What ----- will say and the way----- is has an affect on me. So the group or the personalities of the members of the group have a large, I think a large affect on what actually happens. You know, the silences that we have, the pauses, the number, their length, the subjects we talk about, how deep we go into particular subjects, these things are all a function of who's in the class.

One participant discussed that, within the group, there was a variety of topics to discuss because of the difference in experiences. He also said that however many participants are dialoguing, that's how many opportunities there are to learn and understand various perspectives. He said

I enjoyed it. People talking to each other, relating to each other, learning from each other. You can't really prepare for it. It's a thread that you follow as you, as you talk and with, with 10–15 different people in the class, there's all those possibilities of those people bringing their experience into the situation and maybe asking questions about things you never thought of before, and so it's a chance to learn more about how they came up with that question and where they got that experience. And it gives you a chance to compare your life experience with theirs. So, to me, it's, it's, if there's 15 people

in the class, there's 15 possibilities to explore....When the group is diverse there's different, different social backgrounds, ethnic backgrounds, religious backgrounds, different work experiences, younger people, older people So when I say exploring all these different possibilities it's, it's all those things, all those different possibilities to explore....There's just so many possibilities

Another participant described how "dialogue didn't go very far" in this class because a relationship hadn't formed among group members When I asked her to describe what she meant by a relationship not forming, she responded by contrasting her experience in the prerequisite course with the dialogue course. She said the following:

We developed a relationship between members of the class in that we really hated to think about the class being over We wanted to get together all the time and even stayed and talked late into the night after the class was over Three of us lived in the same apartment building and, as we walked, we'd talk and talk about the same issues we started talking about in the class We did a lot of communication through e-mail, and there were huge discussions. It was a really valuable class and it created trust and mutual understanding and respect and care about each other We felt comfortable in revealing our feelings, and some of them spoke about very intimate things I could not see in this class, I do not say that it isn't valuable, but, if I compare in the depths of trust, I would say the previous one was much more successful in this and because of this we had really dialogued during the class. Nobody wanted to interrupt Nobody felt that if he is not asked that he is neglected Everybody felt important There was one African-American young lady and for a couple of classes she kept silent, and then she was absent once or twice and the white group started e-mailing her, asking what's the matter, can we help you; and, you know, when she came back and she felt

this caring about herself, she just flourished. She shared with us such interesting pieces of information from her family experience that probably I learned more from her than from other members of the class because it is something that they have never been exposed to, and after that she was very active.

In further contrasting the two classes, she went on to describe her experience in the dialogue class by saying

We didn't communicate through e-mail much. We did not meet outside the class. We did not know each other well from other experiences. In a relationship, all kinds of encounters are very important. It's like in marriage. What you do at home or maybe outside home is important before making love, so it's sort of building the relationship, which makes an impact on the quality of dialogue.

Another participant said that if dialogue was to occur then people must be in a relationship. She said

If dialogue is people communing together and that's what it is, then it's about relationships; and there are many factors, like all of who you are is interacting with the other person, even if you think you're only interacting through your words. Every part of who you are is there and so I think that, that's why I think that whenever people are going to dialogue, and if you don't really know each other, then you have to have that time of really being open to the other person and that other person being open to you so that you've really got to know each other at some level.

In my field notes, a theme I noticed was a lack of interaction among group members. This interaction, while pleasant and polite, rarely included personal or intimate thoughts or emotions, as described by group members, as

being part of a dialogical relationship. A theme in my field notes is the lack of depth or intimacy in responses or in storytelling. The one instance when a group member did allow herself to open up and show emotion, the group quickly and very politely agreed with her and moved on to other business.

Respect. In the interviews, group members described the need for respect and how important it is to hear what other group members are saying.

One participant said:

I think that it's important to hear what others have to say, whether we agree with their perspective or not. We owe them that respect to hear and in some way dialogue with them because our assumptions about what they are saying could have some fallacy rather than diverting the attention. Perhaps if a person would just ask back, you know, it would open the dialogue to the extent that it could go in other areas.

Another participant saw things going on within the group as being disrespectful, and this disrespectfulness affected both her and the group. She described her experience as "for the most part it was alienating to me. There were things that I felt were very disrespectful of people." When I asked her to talk a little more about this, she said:

I think that there were times when there was what I thought was an agreement to do something, and then we began, there and then, it quickly, we didn't deal with, we didn't deal with what it was that we had agreed to do, like, for example, with the articles that I thought we were going to talk about. What came up for us within the articles that had to do with dialogue, and I thought that's what we were going to be, that

what we would use to dialogue around and I think that some people, people would make a comment or raise an issue and—but it wouldn't get dealt with.

When I asked her for some examples to clarify what she meant by the phrase “disrespectful of people,” she said.

Well, I think that the example I'll use is in the second class when, after we had read the Judy Brown article, and I thought that we were going to really be able to look at some of what she was raising and to challenge some of, to challenge it but also to really try to understand where she was coming from and what she meant. And because one person questioned it, it was just dismissed and nobody else was, you know, was able to say anything. So the situation was, had evolved into that she doesn't know what she's talking about or that it's not important or it's—yeah, it was just dismissed. And I thought that was really disrespectful of everybody else who had not, who didn't have a way of saying anything; and I think that there were some, lots of things that were unspoken.

Another participant described respect as changing his attitude and behavior when certain group members would be speaking. Through self-talk, this participant said he was able to listen and suspend his assumptions to give those particular group members the time and attention they deserved. He said

I would think about my views of her always talking about an ----- or ----- issue, and I would start to think, oh no, here it goes again. I'd say well, no, wait a minute. You're not being a nice guy. You really have to just not even go there and just listen and listen with an open mind, so I'd do that by trying to suspend my assumptions. I would be talking it over with my wife and I would think that's either her way of doing it or her culture's way of doing it... I would just, you know, get away from the well she's using the ----- issue or the ----- issue or

whatever I'm just saying there's probably been so many things that happened to her that this has just become a part of her for whatever reason, and I just need to think differently about races and classes and things like that....I don't mean to sound so harsh because I really do like her, you know, I really do. I liked everybody in the class, but sometimes ..I would say, okay, don't even think that and just listen to this interesting conversation, this interesting person that has these interesting facts. Just listen to this and I would, and then my looking at my assumptions would be thinking about, you know, what minorities have had to endure and how I can't even come close to even having a speck of their experience.

My field notes indicated that throughout the dialogue course, whether in class or on break, group members periodically discussed the need to respect one another. Most agreed that members were being respectful since participants were being polite and civil to one another by not talking over each other, being loud, or aggressive.

Atmosphere This category describes what several participants reported as a feeling, energy, or connection to other group members as the group was dialoguing. One participant described his experience as follows

That is really difficult because, you know, it is a feeling and it's almost, you have to experience it. That's what we talked about. It's like you can't explain to somebody what an orgasm feels like unless they've had one, you know, and even then it would be difficult cause they're all different. And I think dialogue is the same way. Once you get into it, you do sort of attend to that very closely, that it becomes pivotal, that it is, you're kind of centered on that and other stimuli fade into the background. Sort of like the magic-eye kind of things when you're staring at those figures and suddenly something

appears out of it that's 3-D. And you're intent on that and nothing in the environment is coming into focus, and as soon as this environmental stuff does, you lose it.

Another participant, in describing his experience when the group dialogued, said it was like being in balance and isn't easily measured in an objective fashion:

Just being in a circle doesn't make it dialogue and yet dialogue seems to happen better in a circle, you know, so being able to separate out what is dialogue and what isn't in an objective manner, I don't think I can do that... One of the things that I tend to equate it with is like riding a bicycle. You know when you're in balance, you can tell that by feel. Try to analyze the balance on a bicycle, you'll probably fall over because it's not something that really lends itself to analysis or objective measurement or whatever. I don't know. Maybe physiologists can do that, but I can't and that's sort of where I am with dialogue.

For another participant, it was important for the group to be connected.

There were times when it's like, particularly when it was dark and then there was just the candlelight that there were times where you could kind of like really forget where you were and just saw the people's faces. That's actually why I very intentionally once brought a candle for every single table. I brought a bag of candles and just kind of used them as whenever, but I once, intentionally, put a candle on every single table cause I was trying to get the energy in the room and have everyone connected in that way.

I asked her to talk a little bit more about what she meant by the energy in the room and everyone being connected, and in her description she said:

Probably the closest way I could describe it would be like how we've talked about it as knowledge of the third kind, like something that was, it's beyond a knowing look. It's, hmm. It's the combination of a knowing look, a feeling, a tacit understanding, and does have, it did have the ability to encourage or discourage. Let's see, it was, I think the base of it was created on the first day and that the, it subsequently was built upon, like you couldn't ever really totally take it away, but some days it could be really good and some days it could be really bad. And a connectedness I guess for me sometimes I just felt like people were giving off positive energies or vibes and that increased the—and it was more of an inviting kind of atmosphere, but there was once or twice where I intentionally was saying to myself, "You're giving off bad vibes, you need to stop."

When I followed up on why she once brought candles and placed one on each table, she said it was important for her to "Connect the group in a symbolic way Connect the group in a visual way. Connect the group in, like, a positive-energy-field way "

My field notes also support this theme Throughout each class session, group members would attempt to soften the coldness and harshness of the classroom This was accomplished by turning the ceiling lights off and lighting a candle. Eventually there was a lit candle on each table in addition to a floor lamp. Between the candles, lamp, and the light entering the room through the windows along the west wall, the group attempted to create a more relaxed and comfortable atmosphere. Additionally, during most sessions, sandwiches, pizza, or meals were ordered and delivered from local eateries I

felt this was another attempt by the group to create an informal setting and separate themselves from what normally occurs in a traditional college classroom

Involvement This theme discusses what hindered participants from actively involving themselves throughout the dialogue course. Group members described the ways in which they perceived their ability or level of experience affected their involvement. One participant who didn't speak much throughout the class said

I spent a lot of time watching and listening to other people and the kinds of questions they asked and things like that, and I don't, I don't participate a lot in terms of speaking because—and I don't know if this is the right way to go about it, and maybe it's not a good, maybe I don't contribute to the class enough in this way, but I have this thing about not speaking unless I really feel compelled to speak. I don't want to talk just because, and I hope that that doesn't seem like I'm not listening or don't care about where the group's going or what the group's talking about but, in that way I guess I participate more by listening. I try to think of ways that something can be taken from the really specific to more general and then going somewhere where the group hasn't gone before, that sort of thing. I also felt like, well, do I have a right to say that we're not doing it because I'm not speaking very much. And there were times that I wanted to "stop the music" and didn't because I feel like I really don't have the right to stop the music in a conversation that I haven't been verbally a part of.

Another participant who didn't speak much throughout the classes felt her lack of experience was an issue.

The diverse groups, I mean the different backgrounds, educational levels in the group and I always felt—well I felt that I was the low man on the totem pole or the one that knew the least and so I kind of felt like well ----- is going to expect me to know a whole, whole lot, you know. But I found that pretty much I didn't know all that some of the people that were working on their doctorates knew, but I knew some of the stuff. Not a lot, but I could kind of pick up on some of it; but it really wasn't until the end of the course that I could finally say, I think I've got it, you know, because there were times during the course that I thought I knew dialogue, that I thought I could distinguish between dialogue and monologue and discussion; but, then, something would be said and I was back to square one I didn't know anymore.

When this participant was “back to square one,” she said she would get disgusted. During one of the few instances this participant spoke out in the group, she was told that what she thought was dialogue was actually a monologue Her response was the following:

disgusted with myself. But then a state of confusion came about I was just totally confused and I don't know. I didn't get angry I wasn't hurt or anything It's just that I was confused....And so I became disgusted with myself because of that. Because people have termed me to be a perfectionist; why they think this, I don't know I just want everything to be right, you know, I don't know why they think that, but in the classroom I want to be able to sit down with the best of people and not, level's not necessarily the word, but to be able to talk and communicate with them. And I found myself, and at times I still find myself not being able to really do that So I kind of withdraw, and it's not withdrawing out of anger It's withdrawing because I'm trying to learn something, and if I keep talking, then I feel like I can't learn it so I just sit back and I just stay real quiet and I observe and I listen and then I

try to see how this would interact in my own personal life or if I could make the connection, you know

Another participant said what occurred prior to each class session could limit her involvement. I asked her to tell me more about how something occurring prior to class would affect her, and her response was the following

Well it's, like, how does anyone clear one's thought from what you just experienced, like, the moment before, I don't know but, like, if you know if your cat dies before you go to work you're going to have baggage before you go to work So if you've got some crisis that happened at work before you go to school, you're going, I haven't come up with an effective way to just not think about that. I mean, the way that I can kind of deprogram out is maybe I'll indulge in it for a little while, think about it, and then think, okay, well, let's put this aside and focus on this kind of a thing.

In a follow-up question, I asked if the group member having difficulty getting involved in the session has a responsibility to tell the group they're having a hard time focusing or interacting. She responded in the following manner

Hmm, I'm trying to think if I really remembered anyone doing that On occasion I think I heard people do it I think that maybe we didn't admit to it as much as it was really going on out of fear that we weren't doing the thing that I just was telling you I was embarrassed about that we weren't able to come in with unconditional desire to know There were a few times I think that I said....I was in the process of having, you know, blah blah blah, so people knew but yet—so maybe if it was something that was affecting me on an daily basis, then maybe I shouldn't have been in the class

My field notes indicate the group discussed that some period of time is needed to wind down from their daily activities before they can totally commit to the spirit of the class. For some it took up to an hour before they were able to totally commit themselves; and one participant indicated that in at least one instance, the class was half over before she was able to work through the issues of the day and focus on what was occurring in the group

Frustration Group members discussed the frustration they encountered throughout the dialogue class. Many said the level of frustration they experienced thwarted their ability to get deeply involved in the process. Participants said a lack of engagement by group members was a cause of frustration. One participant described a particular situation in the following way

We had problems finding a place to start, a starting place, or a starting point. So various people in the class tossed out different subject matters and gave their feedback on the paper. And we actually did not find ourselves in any form of engagement, just merely tossing about ideas to find a place to engage, perhaps. And at the end of that particular class meeting, I felt a bit frustrated. But then in the dialogue process I think we, we go through periods of, of frustration as we find, as we seek places to make connections. And the rest of the classes, I think that is perhaps the cycle experienced in dialogue. You find, you find places where you connect and then you find the places that are void, and you are searching and seeking for connections as you interact with each other.

The frustration and lack of involvement felt by another participant was described in terms of the group having poor self-management skills.

I found the course a little frustrating. I found us as a group not practicing good self-management kind of skills. We were not managing our individual talk very well. One time we talked about that a spirit of inquiry was either present or lacking, I can't remember, but I remember talking about that and I felt like that was lacking a lot of times. That we weren't focusing very well on what people were saying. We weren't doing those things. Listening really carefully and desiring a genuine quest for understanding seemed to be lacking to me. And I'm not being critical, you know, I did it too. We didn't move into that mode very often, and I'm not sure why we didn't.

Another participant described how the group would spend too much time trying to analyze the process and not attend to the content. The constant stopping and starting is what triggered his frustration because it disrupted the flow. He described his experience in the following terms:

Frustrating. And it's because, coming from my paradigm, of, you know, wanting to go on with the flow. If it starts flowing, then let it keep flowing and maybe it'll build up more rather than, oh, okay, it flows, well let's stop and analyze this, you know. Then you've got to work on getting the pump started again. It's a lot, it seemed to be a lot of that.

Another participant described her experience as being "frustrated and pissed off at times." She would get involved in the content of what was being discussed only to get "some messages" that dialogue is not about content.

Group members also identified frustration due to their expectations not being met. One participant said she expected the group would engage in dialogue and create something new. When she realized that the process wasn't progressing as she had envisioned, she offered the following perspective

I'm trying to think of the best way to describe it. The feeling when you know, and just based on my own thinking of what dialogue is, what this process is all about when we would maybe start with a critical incident or start with discussing something we'd read or something like that. And, of course, you start with the specifics and maybe move to general and hope you'll stay at general and move on out from there, jumping back to specific and sort of maybe moving out to general. Even after stopping by ----- and prompting by ----- or maybe even someone else, cause other folks stopped the music too, still sort of sticking with specific and asking questions and focusing on specific people instead of general things so, it just didn't feel right. It didn't necessarily feel bad because it's always interesting. It really is. It's always interesting to hear what other folks have to say, what their experiences are things like that, that's always interesting, but to know that I'm feeling afraid that this is not going to build and it's not going to create anything new.

This participant was so frustrated that her expectation of the group dialoguing and creating something new wasn't occurring that it manifested itself in physical discomfort. She told me that "in at least one case, maybe two cases, there really was that physical feeling associated with it where my stomach hurt "

Another participant expected to be able to take what she was going to learn and experience in this class and transfer it into her practice, but at times it felt hopeless and frustrating. She said the following:

Part of the frustration for me is that I want to use some of the things I learned in that class in my practice and, some nights I thought if this group of people right here cannot successfully dialogue without this stop and start, stop and start, and looking at ourselves, then I thought, I just felt kind of hopeless that there was no way that I could do this with people that I work with who are, oh, how can I say it, not interested in learning new things and not really interested in looking at assumptions or anything else I live in a, live, work in a pretty authoritarian position, and they know what's right They've done it for years, and, by George, that's what we're going to do I had thought, you know, just with, with our experience with dialogue that maybe I could cut off little pieces and have some small successes there. I got really worried or concerned that I wouldn't be able to do that with people who had not been exposed to principles of dialogue versus this wonderful group of people that had had at least some experience with reflective practice and some, some experience with dialogue before So it kind of took me aback that we were having so much trouble doing it. It's not as easy as we had thought it was. I'm sure we all walked in and thought, piece of cake, you know, we can do this dialogue stuff and really learn some stuff So I guess by frustration I just mean concern that it wouldn't play out like I wanted it to in my practice

Frustration was a term used and a subject of conversation for both the group while attempting to dialogue and among individuals when outside the classroom on break My field notes also indicate that while nearly all members verbally acknowledged being frustrated, there was not a noticeable change in

the type or style of interaction, conversation, or behavior throughout the nine sessions

Empowerment Empowerment is concerned with whether group members took control of whatever was occurring in each class session. Group members created goals but didn't take control of the class, as described by one participant

We never, I think we were a good group in that we liked each other, you know, and we were friendly and that, but I don't think we took control of what we were doing. And that's part of the, and if we had, I mean, I don't think my experience would ever be common, I mean, exactly like anyone else's. But if we, as a group, process that enough we could take control of it and take it in some direction that we collectively wanted to go, and we really didn't do that. We did throw out what this was like to me kind of thing; but that never went into okay, here's some commonality in our experiences, what do we want to, where do we want to take that. So we didn't empower ourselves to get what we wanted and needed out of the course. I don't think we, I don't think so. I don't think I ever really saw that. I certainly never felt it. But we were self-directed and we had goals. but we were not functioning such that we would move ourselves toward achieving those goals or toward making the process different for us.

In discussing the group's lack of empowerment, this participant went on to say that "We never formed a collective...it never developed such that we could take charge of it." When I asked her to tell me a little more about what she meant by "it never developed," she shared the following perspective:

I think we didn't want, sometimes I thought that we didn't want to or something. I don't know why we didn't want to, but we didn't want to. So we would move away, and I can't think of specifics about that, but we would get somewhere in our talk and it would seem to be the kind of talk that would help us with solidifying or even exploring further—seemed like we would get to some point and then that's far enough, and then we would go away from it. Not that, you know, anybody went, "Oh, no, we're stopping right here," but we diverted. We went another direction.

Another participant described how the group missed opportunities to explore differences within the group:

I thought it was interesting, the various dynamics with the different nationalities. I thought that was very unique. Maybe not unique but, which really was an opportunity for dialogue cause we're talking about dialoguing between different groups or countries or, you know, it's groups with differences where it seems like dialogue has the greatest opportunity for benefit. Like with Isaacs and the union management, you know those sort of things, and they talk about dialogue when they talk about the IRA or South Africa, you know, where you're establishing a dialogue with the groups. So I think that I really thought the first night when we started talking, or the second, first and second nights, we were talking about some of those differences and in the cultures and all, that was a real good opportunity. But it seemed, like, instead of exploring those and experiencing dialogue in those, around those issues we seemed to get, you know, into the more about what dialogue is.

Throughout my field notes, I constantly made observations in each class session that supports the theme of empowerment. I noted that, while the group identified specific goals they wanted to obtain as a result of their

experience, they made it difficult to obtain since group members did not take control or explore possibilities. Group members were very polite to one another and waited until the previous person was finished speaking before they began to talk, but rarely did anyone challenge, inquire, or explore statements or assumptions verbalized by themselves or others.

Facilitation In this theme, group members described the relationship of the course facilitator to the group. One participant described the presence of the facilitator

Well, that is bringing up another issue, the importance of -----'s presence on a ----- activity, sort of that big facilitator and little facilitator thing. He may, he may wish at times to not be so very influential; but, nonetheless, he is on a course like that. That was discussed one night when ----- was still in class before he broke his leg. I don't know, maybe ----- may think sometimes that he can just step back or pull back metaphorically and be a little facilitator, but, in fact, that's not the case. He very much remains the big facilitator in his presence. At any moment he's liable to not be able to stand it anymore and become the big facilitator.

Another participant described the influence the group allowed the course facilitator to have on them:

I think we reacted to some of ----'s frustration and you know that, nuts, it was pretty obvious he didn't think we were getting it. We weren't making the grade, I guess, at a certain point, but he made that pretty obvious that, you know, this is just not what I'm doing. I think for a lot of us at this stage of the game, well if -----'s not getting it and he's supposed to be the expert. Are we going to have this same sort of trouble

when we are in our professional lives and run into these kinds of roadblocks?

When I asked this participant how he could tell the course facilitator was frustrated, he offered the following assessment:

Well, he said he was frustrated. He wasn't subtle. He came in and said we need to change things, this is not working, and, yeah, that was unsettling, I think, in part because people do want to satisfy his, what he wants for the class and, you know, it's like, oh, gosh, are we not getting it after all the classes we've had and all the reflective practice and we still don't get it Geez!

The influence of the course facilitator within the group was described by one participant in terms of power. She also said the group "didn't explore" the roles of the facilitator and discussed an incident when she thought the facilitator dismissed what was being said and moved on to a different topic:

I think I tried to raise it in class about, about power that in any group the institution, the institution accords power in certain people and so, and that has to be on the table all the time in any group because, because no matter what you say to try to disconnect yourself from it, it's there and so why try to deny it or and so as a member of a group that's who you are. You can't say "Okay, now I'm just going to take this off and I'm going to go out there and hang it outside the door here and you're not going to see me like that anymore."

Okay, so that's, so an institution I think gives members power and so what you do with it in a group has to be, so you have to make, that has to be part of your group, whatever that is, however that is. The other, the other ways in which a person can have power is you can have power because of your expertise. You also have, I think, in a group personal power that there are people who can enter a room and,

because of the force of their nature, they can influence the whole environment I mean, you are aware of those people so you have to be aware of that kind of power. You have to be aware because, even if you're silent, that energy is still part of the group and that needs to be accounted for. And I'm not sure how much each of the individuals in that group that we were a part of had a relationship with him but I know that most people, most people, they've had classes with him in which he is the professor, the expert in the field and the controller of, of what gets discussed. I mean he's, I see it within, inside classes and I also see it outside classes, okay, so you can't, so I think that people have to be very, very self-aware of the effect that they have.

Another participant discussed the role of being a facilitator and a group member She described that each group member has the responsibility of assuming both the role of group member and facilitator:

Part of learning about this kind of thing is learning that it's a group of learners, we're all learners together, even though one of us, maybe more of us are may be a little bit knowledgeable about the subject matter, which in this case happened to be dialogue. I know that, I know up here, cognitively, I guess I better say it out loud since I'm pointing that my, that I can, I, too, can facilitate and should and it's part of my responsibility....Because as someone who signs up for these courses, as someone who's part of the collaborative learning program, it's part of my responsibility. And so I guess if I don't jump in and act as facilitator sometime then, maybe as a group, we're not getting as much out of it as we could. I'm not getting as much out of it as I could, other individual group members aren't getting as much out of it. So that's, I guess, where I have taken away by not participating in my learning experience, our learning experience.

My field notes indicate that the course facilitator did assume traditional types of facilitator roles in the beginning of the course to get the group started, after which he attempted to assume the role of group member. As discussed in the empowerment theme, the group strongly encouraged the course facilitator to assume those traditional roles found in a teacher-student relationship. While the last participant describes how it was her responsibility as a group member to assume the role of facilitator, my observations indicate the group didn't discuss the issue.

Semistructured Interview Results

Semistructured interviews were conducted after the phenomenological interview was completed. These interviews consisted of 11 specific questions and the same 11 questions were asked of all participants. Themes were identified from answers to each question.

Question one "What is your definition of dialogue?" The answers participants generated for this question provided two closely related themes. They are *special conversation* and *exchange*.

Special conversation. Some participants described their definition of dialogue as being a special conversation where understanding, respect, and honesty are a part of the process. One participant described her definition as follows:

It's a special kind of conversation where those involved have an intense interest in understanding, in ensuring their own understanding of the other people, what the other people in the conversation are saying

Another participant's description was as follows.

Like communication ..where each actually does understand what the other is intending to say and there are also some, some cautions, I guess, for each individual as far as being honest about your own intentions and then open to what the other is trying to say I guess that following up, questioning, and uncovering, uncovering of assumptions, that you may not know you have, but the other person is helping you see those

A central component of dialogue for another participant was respect and honesty She said, "I would define dialogue as conversation or discussion I think the main components there would be the mutual respect and the honesty."

Exchange Other participants defined dialogue as an exchange of ideas, feelings, and energies For one participant, dialogue was a "dynamic exchange of ideas that results in new or more complete knowledge." Another described it in the following terms.

An exchange between two people that may or may not involve words, I guess I could say words, gestures, energies, feelings, that kind of thing, all the above or some combination of those that helps the people in the exchange to understand more about what the other person was thinking.

Still another participant defined it in the following manner:

A process of exchanging of good feelings about each other...it is not discussion or argument... people exchange some phrases or words or information... It is comfortable with you just to discuss, to enjoy the process, and you are not afraid that this person will think that you are stupid or you do not know anything. You are not afraid to ask questions or just listen. It's the process when people are comfortable with each other.

My field notes indicate that group members did not share or discuss their personal definition of dialogue, but they did discuss definitions or characteristics of dialogue from selected authors discussed in class.

Question two: "Did your definition of dialogue change from the beginning to the end of the course?" Responses by most participants indicated they experienced no change in their definition of dialogue over the nine class sessions. However, of the participants who indicated a change in their definition, a common theme that emerged was one of *additional emphasis/element*.

The participants who indicated that a change took place in their definition of dialogue described the change as an added emphasis or component that they hadn't considered previously. These participants added inquiry, listening, and the need to suspend assumptions to their definition of dialogue. One participant offered the following description of his change in emphasis

The emphasis did I think, when I began the course, I was thinking of dialogue as more or less just open conversation So the inquiry element became much more important.. So the need to dig, to inquire, what makes you think that or why do you think that. To ask that not in a challenging way in the sense of, what makes you think that, prove it, but, rather, help me to understand what it looks like from where you sit. That's the kind of inquiry I'm talking about and as that, as we went through the course that seemed to me to become more important than when I went into it

Another participant described his change by saying the following:

I would say most of those, most of those parts I really had before class, except for the one about really, really listening intently to someone else. I really had never read that before It just sort of occurred to me in class that this is probably something that we should do And what I did, I would look back at my past behavior and look at instances when I'd had conversations with people; and I've remembered someone speaking and instead of really listening, I'd hear a word or two every once in a while, but I was thinking, well, that reminds me of such and such And then I start formulating in my head a conversation so, as soon as they're done, I can say, "Well, I think this " So, yeah. That is, that is something that I think I really sort of developed in class.

Suspension of assumptions was another element added to the definition of dialogue, as reflected in one participant's description:

I think the part about suspending the assumptions, that element of dialogue became clearer by the end of the whole course that it doesn't have to be—I believe it's Isaacs that said suspending the assumptions is holding them out, I do remember reading something about Isaacs, holding them out for all to see—and I'd had a very different idea of what suspending assumptions meant. And by the end of the course, I did feel comfortable with, well, whether everyone else

thinks that it is one or the other, it's okay if I believe that it is both. That's how I'm going to proceed. It's both a willingness to let others see what your assumptions are, to suspend them for viewing, but also what I had thought from the beginning, suspending your assumptions meant was not assuming that you understand what the other person is trying to say, not assuming their motives, especially if your assumptions are that their motives are on the negative side, just being much more open minded and, I guess, verifying what you may be thinking, validating it rather than assuming and not questioning

My field notes indicate the group did not discuss personal definitions of dialogue but rather different possible characteristics and definitions as related to the material covered in class.

Question three: "Did group members dialogue within the nine sessions?" All 14 participants indicated that dialogue did occur within the nine class sessions. The theme that emerged out of their experiences was a sense of *relationship/connection*. This sense of relationship was also discussed and identified as a theme in the phenomenological interviews.

When dialogue occurred, participants described an increased connection between group members. One participant described her experience in the following way:

There was a sense of relationship there, collective, well, a sense of attention, you know, true attention to what was being said. Respect for persons, people, talking, and true interest in what they were saying. That's like when we're talking, even if you're not talking, we're talking. And so that's what that's

like for me we're talking I didn't say a word or I might have said a word It doesn't matter. There's a little, our beings are butted up against each other and something's going on out there

Another participant saw the connection in the following terms:

An energy that flows around the group but everybody is keyed into that or attached into that energy, even if they're not saying anything; but they're really there, they're really connected, like, to the group.

When asked to describe what she meant by connected to the group, she went on to say

It's like, it's kind of like everybody settling in. There's a feeling of settling in and you're really, even though you might be puzzling about what... What it is that people are talking about but You're still like right there, you know, like whenever anybody is adding anything to the discussion and there's a sense of calmness, you know, like you're, I think that there's a feeling maybe of, of trust that you can pretty much be, you're free to say whatever it is that you are thinking about And you're accepting whenever anybody is saying something Cause it's giving you even more understanding.

Another participant described what occurred when the group was engaged in dialogue as a "dance " When asked to describe what she meant she said

Movement Connecting. In unison to some degree Well, yeah, I'll say unison, not that we all think alike but, but, but the movement was free flowing to suggest some unity.

My field notes indicate that the group did occasionally ask open-ended questions or closed-ended questions in an attempt to illicit information. Because of the increase in open-ended questions, group members may be assuming these occasions are representative of dialogue.

Question four “Did you develop or further develop skills of dialogue?”

Ten participants acknowledged that they had developed a new skill and four participants indicated they had not. *Listening* emerged as the theme from those participants who indicated they had developed or further developed skill(s) of dialogue, and of those participants stating they did not or were not sure, a *lack of time* was a theme.

Listening Participants saw a change in their ability to listen over the course of the nine sessions. While many said they already knew how to listen, this experience allowed them to further develop their listening skills. When asked what skill was developed, one participant responded, “I think just listening ..yeah, just the listening was the only skill that I really developed.”

Another participant said that while he already knew how to listen, this experience had increased his awareness. He said, “I’ve always been a pretty good listener....But I became more aware of the importance.”

Lack of time Of the participants who said they were not sure or they did not learn a new skill, lack of time was the theme common to these

participants One participant said that meeting in nine sessions wasn't enough time to improve their skill in dialogue In discussing the time constraints placed on the group due to the limited number of meetings, she said that "Being practical, I think there's not enough time....that skills really improved " Another participant described how the group didn't allow enough time to develop skills:

There was a tension between learning about it and then learning it by doing, and sometimes I think that we would move towards it and then, then we'd stop and look at whatever and we'd move towards it and then stop and then you know, to try to look at it, look at it and look at it and look at it and then it just, and then after that it wouldn't really go anywhere and there we were

She went on to say that by the group constantly stopping and analyzing the conversation she wasn't able to develop additional skills because exploration was limited due to the time available

My field notes indicate that, as the course progressed, group members would comment on the constraints placed on them by the limited number of meetings and that those meetings were compressed into a three-week time frame

Question six "How would you describe the group dynamics in the beginning, middle, and end of the course?" The two themes that emerged from this data were *friendly* and *not forming/passive*

Friendly In general terms, group members discussed how members were friendly and were willing to get to know one another. One participant said, “the group was close all the way through,” while another described the group as going through a journey.

It was, it certainly was a journey, and I think it was like a journey, like any other in which I think people learn to be who they are within that group so, I think that by the end, I think that there was, there was a real sense of connection amongst group members.

Another participant described it as friendly

I think everyone got along well, very well. I don't know if it was because the majority of them knew each other from other classes or not, but I think everyone got along well, really well I found the atmosphere to be very friendly. I found the people to be very friendly. I asked questions and I found that when I would ask a question that people were eager to answer And a lot of times it was when, like, we'd be leaving the class and I'd say, “Now I didn't quite get this, what did you think about this?” And then they would tell me and I found that to be, to me, that was very dynamic because, I mean, they didn't have to say anything

Not forming/passive Some participants thought the group never really formed. For one participant, there was enthusiasm in the group, but she didn't feel it went any further

I think there was a lot of enthusiasm at the beginning on the part of individuals and that was a shared sort of thing So, you know, we were sort of positive in our interactions with each other, based on this great adventure we were about to embark upon So that was nice Middle We were nice to each other

The group didn't form like a lot do, you know, where people have particular roles; and, no, I don't really think that was the case. We were nice to each other and friendly and I think people liked each other and treated each other kindly. I don't know. But we were sort of afraid of something. There was some fear kind of thing there.

Another participant, when describing the dynamics of the group, said the group was very passive. He said that while every group and class is different, this one was just not active:

I think it's interesting because every group takes on its own personality that is a function of the individual members who are in it. But, again, I think this group was, seemed to be awfully passive. There wasn't a lot of, I don't think there was a lot of energy in this class, and, again, I compare it to other classes. I don't think anybody ever really brought up anything that was, that was really emotionally based or really a deep-seated kind of issue that they would think, you know, I'm not going to let go of this. This is how I feel, this is how I think, and I'm not going to change. There was none of that. It was all kind of real passive and I don't want to upset anybody.

My field notes support the themes identified from the responses to this question. Group members were polite to each other throughout the course and never uttered a harsh word or challenged another group member in a statement they had made or an opinion that was offered. Except in one brief instance when one group member cried, group members did not outwardly display physical emotions or discuss personal matters related to the topic under

discussion. They very politely waited until each group member had finished before stating their own experience or opinion.

Question seven "How would you characterize the facilitator's role in the beginning, middle, and end of the course?" Data from the participants' characterization of the facilitator were grouped into themes of *traditional facilitator*, *participant*, and *forced traditionalist*.

Traditional facilitator Participants identified the facilitator as assuming the roles necessary to engage a group in dialogue and to satisfy the needs the group required at any given time. All participants characterized the facilitator's role as instrumental in getting the class started and back on track whenever the group stalled, fell silent, or was consistently engaged in a monologue. Most participants said the facilitator maintained the role of a traditional facilitator from one half to two thirds of the class sessions. One participant described it this way:

The facilitator's role at the beginning was very much, very, very active. Well, actually I'd have to say the first two sessions, very active. The middle section, in particular, when we had some trouble with the process, I actually felt sorry for ---- that he was stopping us so often and we could, we could sense his frustration. And I think that may have led to some of the, my characterization a minute ago of the middle part being less comfortable. And I think all of us were disappointed at that point that we weren't, that we weren't getting it; and we certainly sensed that in him. Toward the end, let's see. I think he, he was very much still the facilitator, but I think he backed

off some, a little bit And I would assume that that would, was very much on purpose so that we would not rely on him to bail us out when we stalled or whatever and to help us learn this is not working, somebody needs to do something to redirect And so I think it was very purposeful on his part that he backed off some.

Another participant saw the facilitator assuming a traditional role after the first couple of classes

He kind of stepped out of that participant thing and became the facilitator, and I don't know that he ever came back in as just, as a group member I think he still had that, that he was the facilitator for the class .. Yeah. Once he stepped out of it, it was kind of hard for him to come back in as just a participant

For another participant the facilitator assumed traditional facilitator roles when "he needed to redirect or steer people "

Participant Throughout the course, participants identified the facilitator as shedding the traditional roles of facilitator and assuming the role of participant One participant characterized the facilitator as blending in with the group

Oh, we had a facilitator? We had one? He just did a great job, I mean, because a lot of times, if I had been just an observer and not having known what the class was and just walking in off the street, I would have said the class didn't have a professor because he just blended in with everybody

Another participant characterized the role of the facilitator as that of participant Except for the first class session when traditional topics, such as

grades, meeting times, and various other housekeeping topics needed to be discussed, he described the facilitator's role in the following terms:

In the beginning I think it was to get us, to get us started and to get us focused. And the facilitator was a participant through the whole thing. A participant interested in what was going on as well as, as well as the content and the process. And I think the facilitator, especially in the middle of it, is the one who led off, pointing out that we were falling out of dialogue. But I view that facilitator as a participant as much as anything else.

Forced traditionalist. Some participants identified that the behaviors and actions of the group didn't allow the facilitator to assume the role of participant. One participant described how the facilitator was forced to assume traditional roles by the group:

As a group, I think we pressured ----- into behaving really in a way he did not desire to behave. We made him do it. And I know you can't make anyone do anything, but he couldn't abandon the group. So therefore, I think he chose to, I think he bent, you know, under some of the pressure.

When I followed up and asked if this occurred throughout the entire course, her response was, "I thought it did." Another participant said that "we struggled with material, struggled where are we going to go from there. And we had questions about the material, and I think we relied on him to give us some of his insights."

My field notes support this theme. I noted that, despite the facilitator's stating he wanted to minimize his role as the traditional facilitator in favor of becoming more of a group member, participants continued throughout the nine class sessions to address and interact with him as they would in a traditional graduate class with a professor acting as the facilitator. Group members sought clarification, answers to theoretical questions, reinforcement, and referred most questions that arose within each class session to the facilitator in an attempt to gain "the" correct answer

Question eight "How would you characterize your role in the beginning, middle, and end of the course?" The roles identified by participants were categorized into the themes of *listener* and *function*. Participants also examined the nine class sessions in its entirety rather than examining their role in the beginning, middle, and end of the course.

Listener. In this theme, participants described their role in terms of what they did over the course of the nine sessions, which most identified as listener. In describing his role, one participant said

I'm probably more of a listener ...and a lot of times I'm content listening to what everybody else says because I think that maybe there's some insights that I need to hear, some information that, experience that I might, might want to hear rather than get involved with at that immediate time.

In describing his role as a listener, this participant said that, since he predominately lectures throughout the day, he intentionally tried to be more of a listener and exhibit listener characteristics throughout the course:

You can probably tell from this interview I've always been a talker And I'm in a profession that encourages me to do that. So one of the things that has been important to me is learning truly to listen, as I talked about a little earlier today. At times in this course, I probably was too quiet. There were times that I should have been asking back, for instance. That, too, is part of listening. And yet, I would find myself feeling like I had listened to the person and yet at a loss of what question I would ask

Another participant described her role as "looking for openings to take it up a notch....So I guess listener might describe it. Listening for openings maybe?"

Function. In this theme, participants characterized their role throughout the nine class sessions in terms of the function they performed for the group. One participant described his role as getting things started:

Let's see. Gadfly I always felt like I was the first one to speak up, you know It's like what's going on today. And I would just blurt out, I didn't really care. It was just get the ball rolling Put some words out there and see what happens.

Another participant described her role as "Okay, in the beginning, I was the humorist I was the, some comic relief. In the middle, I was the provider of menus In the end, also the provider of menus "

Another participant said he primarily assumed a nonverbal maintenance and task role. He described it this way.

So, throughout the course, my role to a great degree has been one of those maintenance roles, you know, task roles, maintenance roles, sometimes asking for information but to a great degree a nonverbal one I was aware of giving good eye contact and nodding you know I mean genuinely nodding. Not just doing it as, you know, I've learned to be polite, I'm supposed to nod my head, so I'm going to nod even if I haven't heard a damn thing you've said. Not like that but nonverbally encouraging and through facial expression reacting, letting the person know they've been heard, that I'm interested And that's not been the exclusive role, but that has more and more become a role of mine in class And there have been times when I thought that I heard people starting to get crosswise a little bit that I would ask a question that was designed to bring out some of the assumptions

Question nine. "How would you describe the attitude of the group in the beginning, middle, and end of the course?" Participants described the attitude of the group in terms of what they were feeling in the beginning, middle, and end of the course. Data supported the themes of *positive beginnings, frustrated/incompetent middle, and mixed endings*

Positive beginnings Participants identified the attitude of the group in the beginning of the course in positive terms. One participant described the attitude of the group as "I think in the beginning I felt like there was some enthusiasm there." Another participant characterized it as follows.

Well, I guess I would characterize it as very respectful and open. Open to the idea that we were going to do this together and to learn together and be very open to any new materials or any new concepts that were thrown out. Open to what we, the possibilities of what we could do together—and very respectful of each other. I don't, I can't think of a time when we really, purposefully were disrespectful of anyone. So I guess that's it: open and respectful.

For one participant, having an opportunity to share a class with her cohort added to excitement in the beginning of the course.

In the beginning I would say probably excitement about coming together and being able to have a class on dialogue. Probably, if folks were like me, it's knowing that this may be the last time that we have a class with each other, the collaborative learning group, and with ----- for a long time, so you know, being glad that he scheduled the class and being, and just, which is what helped to be able to do the mini-term commitment, you know, knowing this was one of the last chances we had and that we're not going to be together very much anymore except for seminar. Excitement that there were different people in the group that we'd not had a chance to take a class with before or not had classes with in a long time. And we came up with that big list on the first night of all the things we wanted to get out of it, you know, we want to learn this, this, that, and do this, this, and that and so excitement about maybe learning all that.

Frustrated/incompetent middle Participants identified that it wasn't until the middle of the course that they realized attempting to dialogue wasn't going to be as easy as they initially thought. Thus, descriptions, including frustration and incompetence, were cited that correspond with the themes of frustration and involvement from the phenomenological interviews. In

describing the attitude of the group in the middle of the course, one participant offered the following assessment:

Bogged down after a few sessions and then there was frustration and disoriented a little bit and kind of fragmented, broken away from the group into yourself and worrying about, you know, the academic side of things. Then it was, I think there was a period where we were just sort of trying to renegotiate our position in the group and, or renegotiate bringing the group together on something

Another participant described the groups' change in attitude from the beginning to the middle of the course in the following way:

In the beginning, enthusiasm, positive, anticipation, self-congratulatory, not in a negative way, but we were already really on top of it, you know, by the end of the first class sort of thing. And we were congratulating ourselves and, you know, all that. Toward the middle, you can have more than one attitude, I think, going on in a group and there was some I've talked about this before I think there was an overall, no, no. There wasn't even an overall that. If there was anything overall it varied from frustration to a self-congratulatory kind of attitude Cause it really did change like night to night We were great, things were going great, oh, this is so bad You know, it's really variable. There was a feeling, not at the very beginning but somewhere in the middle, of incompetence, personal, personally expressed incompetence, and, then, group incompetence as well Somewhere in the middle there we were really into the self-expressed incompetence kind of attitude

Mixed ending In discussing the end of the course, participants described mixed feelings concerning the group attitude In describing her

interpretation of the group attitude, one participant discussed the frustration, disappointment, and varying excitement level:

It's just my interpretation of the group, but a little bit of, I don't know, frustration or a disappointment in thinking, "Oh, we're not going to learn all these things we thought we were going to learn." You know, maybe we were a little ambitious and maybe, maybe there aren't just 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 steps and boom you've got dialogue So maybe a little bit of a downer at that point But then I did think, even though we didn't end on a particularly high note, that when you have this acceptance of "Okay, we're not going to walk out of here in three weeks and be, like, dialogue kings and queens " Hopefully we all felt like we learned a little bit, so maybe the excitement level was up here and then went down here a little bit and came up just a little bit, that sort of thing.

Another participant described that the stress he saw in the group from the middle of the course stayed there through the end.

I think in the middle there were a couple of people who expressed what I expressed here today You know, kind of stress from the fact that we have to participate in dialogue and we wonder if we're doing it Well, we only have three sessions left and, you know, so if we're going to do it we've got to start, and so there was some stress. Towards the end still, I guess, still some of that stress but also, you know, just a feeling of, "Well we did our best and whatever happened happened, and we're about ready to finish and so, even if we wanted to, we can't do anything differently, you know, it's already happened " And so some were talking about that but being in general, being, I think, happy and satisfied with the process.

My field notes support the themes identified from the responses to this question The first class session appeared to set the expectations for the group,

as most group members participated and stated in the debriefing session at the end of class they were excited. As the course progressed and the group experienced difficulty in conducting a dialogic conversation, group members verbalized their optimism, frustration, incompetence, and excitement.

Question ten: "What is the most important thing you learned from this course?" Several participants described a *heightened awareness* that certain conditions needed to be met if the possibility of dialogue was to occur. One participant offered the following observation:

I need to read more Shotter Never arrive without your menus. Always eat a big lunch and also to be prepared for those type of intensive commitments. Also, probably the recognition thing I've always highlighted several numbers of times and that's just knowing, knowing that I need to work on both how I, how I present myself and how I truly am able to suspend judgments and really focus on what's being said, no matter what else is going on. I guess that old maxim or wise saying, you know, about always show up fully no matter how many are in the audience kind of thing And so, you know, I'd like to try and do that

Another participant said that when people stop "playing games," dialogue has an opportunity to take place. He said:

Most important thing is the idea that dialogue is what happens when we stop the game playing Game playing in Eric Burns' terms, you know the games people play. When we quit trying to impress each other, quit trying to win over each other, or quit trying to, or get ego out of the way would be another way to put it, that what is left naturally may be dialogue.

Another participant identified the need for trust, respect, love, and understanding to occur if dialogue were to take place. She said.

Before you can engage in dialogue, before you can engage in written material, there has to be a certain level of trust that exists ...The question in my mind was "Do I want to trust him or do I want to trust changing my knowledge to take on, you know, what he's saying?" So I feel trust is very important, not only in the verbal engagement, but the written words as well.

When I asked her what she meant by trust, she responded

Well, when we think about dialogue and we say that X is out in the middle, well also in the middle is everything that makes up my being And so, if I'm going to, if I'm going to feel free enough to expose myself, then I need people to embrace who I am without being judgmental I need people to respect me I need people to love me in spite of whatever happens or whatever is said I need people to understand and, in return, I need to be able to do that for others so they can trust me too.. it goes beyond just the words.

This theme was summed up by another participant when she discussed all the things needed to occur in dialogue

You know, I think, for dialogue to occur, you have to have certain things or certain conditions And we can all go down the litany of, you know, suspending assumptions and all that But treating each other as colleagues, respecting other folks, I had always brushed over that part in all these definitions of how important the respect part is. And I think part of that respect is attending to other folks culture and how it impacts them in the group culture. And so, I think that's, I think that's something that I'll take with me in any group

Question eleven: "Were your expectations met in the course?" Nine group members responded that their expectations had been met, and five responded that their expectations were not met in the course. The difference between those participants who felt their expectations had been met and who did not had to do with the specificity of the expectation.

Yes Those who responded in the affirmative described their expectation in general or nonspecific terms. One participant described how his expectations were met because he came into the class with few preconceived ideas. He said

I'd have to say, yes, but that's because I didn't know what to expect. So it's a course that I came into probably with fewer expectations than just about any course I've taken. In isolation, that sounds bad, because it sounds like I'm saying my expectations were low. It's not that I had low expectations. It was that I was open to whatever came from the course.

Another participant described how her expectation was met because she thought that she "would better understand what dialogue is and how to facilitate it." When I asked how this expectation was met, she said.

Really through struggle. The struggle of the mess that people, when the miscommunication did occur and the upset and then working through all that pain of moving through something and learning. I think that's how it occurred and I think ----- getting upset and having to figure that out and getting explicit with us helped immensely.

No Those participants who indicated their expectations were not met cited the difficulty in attaining dialogue. In discussing why her expectations were not met in the course, one participant said.

My one expectation that was not met was that I really didn't realize how difficult it would be. That I had assumed that it would be smooth sailing and that we would just immediately fall into this, to this dialogic orgy in just, you know, just three weeks of bliss. We were going to create all this knowledge and come away with all this stuff. And so I had not anticipated that it would be so hard or difficult, be so difficult to sustain and for us to learn how to, from one night to the next, fall back into it. So in that way, that expectation proved to be unrealistic. It was the process that gave us a little trouble. So that's what, there's where my expectations weren't met in that we really, that the process was not something you could readily learn and then just do. It was something that required a little more nurturing than I had expected.

Another participant described his expectations not being met because he "had a higher expectation of that group doing more." When asked what inhibited him from meeting his expectations, he said, "I expected that group having already been together as a cohort that we would have entered into dialogue a whole lot more easier, more often." Another participant described his expectation not being met because

It was entirely different than what I thought it would be. I'm not going to say I'm disappointed. It was just different. I think I probably expected from day one that we would just be in dialogue, and it was like we kept running into obstacles.

When asked what other obstacles inhibited him from meeting or satisfying his expectations, he replied with “I think it was being inattentive to the mechanics of things ”

Semistructured Theme Summary

The themes from the semistructured questions were (a) special conversation, (b) exchange, (c) additional emphasis/element, (d) relationship/connection, (e) listening, (f) lack of time, (g) friendly, (h) not forming, (i) traditional facilitator, (j) participant, (k) forced traditionalist, (l) listener, (m) function, (n) positive beginnings, (o) frustrated/incompetent middle, (p) mixed endings, (q) heightened awareness, (r) yes, and (s) no.

The 19 themes identified from the semistructured questions were analyzed and combined into three general themes I did this by coding the themes and then assigning a general theme to each category The three general themes are *(a) learning*, *(b) interpersonal relationship*, and *(c) roles*

The general theme of learning, included themes that discussed the knowledge, skills, or expectations that group members may or may not have increased or satisfied as a result of their experience The interpersonal relationship theme describes the type of interaction group members had with the group and other group members. The general theme of roles included themes that described the actions of both the participant and facilitator

Additional Ethnographic Observations

In providing data for the first research question, I have, in many cases, augmented the themes identified from the participants' responses with data from my field notes. However, the data in the field notes support three themes not identified in the personal interviews: *attendance*, *verbal participation*, and *time*.

Attendance Throughout the course, most group members, including the facilitator, discussed the importance of all participants being on time and in class. The importance was agreed by all that any fluctuation in the group size or makeup could affect the dialogue process. The attendance and tardiness data in Table 4.1 reveal the fluctuation in the group over the course of the nine class sessions. The data indicated the following: (a) the number of group members didn't stabilize until session four, (b) six class sessions were affected by at least one absence, (c) group members arrived late or left early in eight of nine class sessions, and (d) early departures/late arrivals for group members ranged from 5 to 130 minutes.

Verbal participation. Throughout the nine class sessions, I kept track of the number of verbalizations by each group member. Verbalizations ranged from single statements to story telling. In examining verbalizations by group members throughout the nine class sessions, I grouped them into three

Table 4 1 Group Attendance Summary

Session 1

- 16 group members
- 5 left early
 - 3 ninety minutes
 - 2 sixty minutes

Session 6

- 14 group members
- 1 absent
- 7 late - 5/5/12/17/22/45/130 minutes

Session 2

- 16 group members
- 1 member dropped
- 1 member added

Session 7

- 14 group members
- 7 late - 5/10/15/16/30/37/55 minutes

Session 3

- 16 group members
- 3 absent
- 2 late - 5/20 minutes

Session 8

- 14 group members
- 2 absent
- 5 late - 15/25/30/35/50 minutes

Sessions 4

- 14 group members
- 2 dropped
- 1 absent
- 3 late - 9/21/30 minutes
- 2 left early - 120 minutes

Session 9

- 14 group members
- 2 absent
- 2 late - 12/14 minutes
- 1 left early - 120 minutes

Session 5

- 14 group members
- 3 absent
- 2 late - 10/12 minutes

* Group count does not include
course facilitator.

categories in terms of the number of verbalizations. Seven participants averaged between 10 and 18 verbalizations per class, five averaged between 27 and 39, and two group members average more than 54 verbalizations during each class session.

Time. A common topic for discussion and comment throughout the mini-term by group members was the issue of the limited amount of time. The attitude by those commenting was that three weeks and nine class sessions wasn't an appropriate length of time or number of meetings to attempt to dialogue. Most participants recommended a few months to one year as an appropriate length of time, and each meeting should not last longer than three hours. The important component to these comments was that there needed to be plenty of time between meetings for reflection.

Results of Observer Ratings

In addition to phenomenological interviews, semistructured interviews, and field notes from the ethnographic observations, two teams of observers were used to rate the group in the dialogue process.

Observers rated the audiotapes containing the last hour of each class session to determine what dialogue phases, key practices, teaching and learning types, and question types the group used throughout the course. In creating the audio tapes for the two teams, I was careful to not include the

debriefing that took place at the end of each class. The debriefing was a period of time at the end of each class specifically set aside so group members could share their experience, needs, concerns, or anything that they felt important. Most often the debriefing discussion covered what occurred in that particular session, but it was also open to discussion of other class sessions.

Dialogue phases. While listening to the audiotapes, observers identified the dialogic phases the group was experiencing. They were

1. instability of the container,
2. instability in the container,
3. inquiry in the container,
4. creativity in the container

Frequency counts were used to determine which dialogue phase the group experienced for each of the 108 five-minute episodes. Using the Interobserver Agreement Form (Appendix E), each observer, while listening to each episode, entered a hash mark next to a particular characteristic of each phase when it occurred. The dialogue phase with the highest frequency count (hash marks) was selected as the dialogue phase group members utilized within that particular episode.

Table 4.2 illustrates that observers rated the majority of the episodes as phase one "instability of the container." Observer # 1 recorded 96 (88.8%)

Table 4.2 Interobserver Agreement Dialogue Phase

Session Phase Type	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Phase I	11/12	10/11	11/12	11/10	11/12	12/12	10/10	11/12	9/9	96/100
Phase II	1/0	2/1	1/0	1/2	1/0	0/0	2/2	1/0	3/3	12/8
Phase III	0/12	1/12	0/12	1/12	0/12	0/12	2/12	0/12	3/12	
Phase IV										
Total episode	12/12	12/12	12/12	12/12	12/12	12/12	12/12	12/12	12/12	108/108
Total agreement	11/12	11/12	11/12	11/12	11/12	12/12	12/12	11/12	12/12	102/108
Percent agreement	91.6	91.6	91.6	91.6	91.6	100	100	91.6	100	94.4

Observer #1/Observer #2/Total agreement over # of session episodes

episodes, and observer #2 recorded 100 (92.5%) episodes as predominately phase one. Phase two was recorded by observer #1 in 12 (11.1%) episodes, and observer #2 recorded 8 (7.4%) episodes as phase two. Observers recorded no instances of phases three and four.

Key practices. Frequency counts were used to determine which key practices the group utilized for each of the 108 five-minute episodes. Observers listened for evidence of *listening*, *suspending*, *respecting*, and *voicing*. Using the Interobserver Agreement Form (Appendix E), each observer entered a hash mark next to a particular key practice when it occurred.

Table 4.3 shows that the observers agreed that only the key practices of *listening* and *voicing* occurred among the 108 episodes. Observer #1 rated *listening* as occurring in 83 (76.8%) of the 108 episodes, *suspending* occurring in 1 (9.2%) episode and *voicing* occurring in 67 (62%) of the episodes. Observer #2 rated *listening* in 79 (73.1%) and *voicing* in 63 (58.3%) of the episodes.

Research Question Two

The second research question was, "What type of questions do students use while engaged in dialogue?" Data collected to answer this question came from observer ratings.

Table 4.3. Interobserver Agreement Key Practices

Session	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Key practice type										
Listening	10/10 100	9/8 88.8	8/10 80	8/12 66.6	8/9 88.8	10/11 90.9	9/9 100	11/5 45.4	10/5 50	83/79
Suspending								1/0 0		1/0
Respecting										
Voicing	6/6 100	6/9 66.6	5/1 20	8/7 87.5	8/8 100	5/5 100	8/7 87.5	11/12 91.6	10/8 80	67/63
Total agreement	16/16	15/17	13/11	16/19	16/17	15/16	17/16	23/17	20/13	151/142
Total % agreement	100	88.2	84.6	84.2	94.1	93.7	94.1	73.9	65	94

Observer #1/Observer #2/Percent agreement

Results of Observer Ratings

Frequency counts were used to determine which question types the group utilized for each of the 108 five-minute episodes. Using the Interobserver Agreement Form for Question Types (Appendix H), each observer used a hash mark to identify when a particular question type was used by a member of the dialogue group

Table 4.4 illustrates that observers identified the dominant question types practiced by the group as (a) closed-ended, (b) factual, and (c) open-ended. Observer #1 identified 235 (53.89%) closed-ended questions, 108 (24.77%) factual questions, and 77 (17.66%) open-ended questions among the total questions observed. Observer #2 identified 231 (54.48%) closed-ended questions, 115 (27.12%) factual questions and 66 (15.56%) open-ended questions among the total questions observed. The categories of complex, leading, and rhetorical questions were not used often by the group and accounted for only 16 (3.6%) of the observations made by observer #1 and 12 (2.8%) of the observations made by observer #2.

Ethnographic field notes indicated that throughout each class session group members predominantly used closed-ended questions. The responses to these questions were brief, and open-ended follow-up questions rarely occurred.

Table 4.4. Interobserver Agreement Question Types

Session	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Question type										
Closed-ended	14/13 92.8	13/11 84.6	16/15 93.7	32/30 93.7	23/23 100	35/34 97.1	39/36 92.3	21/22 95.4	42/47 89.3	235/231 98.2
Complex	1/0		1/1	1/1	2/1			1/1	1/1	7/5
	0		100	100	50			100	100	71.4
Factual	5/4	5/7	15/13	14/14	6/8	10/8	22/24	20/21	11/16	108/115
	80	71.4	86.6	100	75	80	100	95.2	68.7	93.9
Leading	1/0	2/1	1/2		3/2		1/1			8/6
	0	50	50		66.6		100			75
Open-ended	21/20	6/5	12/9	7/6	6/5	6/6	6/5	10/8	3/2	77/66
	95.2	83.3	75	85.7	83.3	100	83.3	80	66.6	85.7
Rhetorical	1/0		0/1							1/1
	0		0							100
Total per session	43/37	26/24	45/41	54/51	40/39	51/48	68/66	52/52	57/66	436/424
Percent agreement	86	92.3	91.1	94.4	97.5	94.1	97	100	86.3	97.2

Observer #1/Observer #2/ Percent agreement

Research Question Three

The third research question was: “What type of teaching and learning is experienced by students engaged in dialogue?” Data collected to answer this question came from both the personal interviews and observer ratings.

Semistructured Interview Question

The fifth question asked in the interview was: “In terms of Types I, II, and III teaching and learning, how would you characterize the type of teaching and learning that took place in the beginning, middle, and end of the course?”

Dynamic was the theme identified from the answers to this question. Most participants described how the type of teaching and learning varied throughout the nine class sessions. There was an ebb and flow throughout all nine sessions so that, at any given point, the group might be in Type I, then the dynamics would change so that the group would be experiencing Type III, and then they might return to Type I or Type II. One participant summed it up this way

Well, you know, I, I really don't, I don't think in terms of the beginning, the middle, and the end. I don't think there was really any difference. I don't think there was much of a difference between, you know, having more Type I, Type II, or Type III in the middle, beginning, or end I think it was all mixed in.

Another participant characterized the type of teaching and learning as follows:

I think it was Type I and Type II to begin with, kind of back and forth from that. Mainly Type II. When ----- got frustrated, it became Type I.. so it went from borderline I to mainly II, back to I Then it was Type II for awhile For a brief period it was Type III And then at the end, I'm trying to remember the last couple of classes, I think they tended to be more Type III In and out of II and III.

Another participant described that the teaching and learning taking place included all three types with Types I and III dominating. She said

I seem to recall more Type I in the middle of the course I think that there was Type III throughout it in the beginning, in the middle, and in the end. I think that there was probably some Type II in the middle and the end, and I think that the Type II didn't just transpire in the classroom but also during the breaks when we kind, of like, consoled, start out consoling each other, and then when we would have, sometimes, not often, we would go out afterwards.

My observations indicate the group never really allowed the facilitator to assume the role of group member. They would continually direct questions back to him rather than the group When the facilitator would attempt to engage other group members through open-ended questions and probing, the groups' follow-up questions or comments would also be directed at the facilitator and not the group.

Results of Observer Ratings

Frequency counts were used to determine which teaching and learning type(s) the group experienced in each of the 108 five-minute episodes. Using

the Interobserver Agreement Form (Appendix E), each observer, while listening to each episode, recorded a hash mark next to a particular teaching and learning type when it occurred. The teaching and learning type with the most hash marks was reported as being the dominant teaching and learning type within a particular episode.

Table 4.5 shows that the dominant teaching and learning type throughout the 108 episodes was Type II, "Teaching by Transmission, Learning by Sharing." Observer #1 recorded Type II as occurring in 86 (79.6%) episodes, while observer #2 recorded Type II in 87 (80.5%) of the 108 episodes. Type I, "Teaching by Transmission, Learning by Reception," was rated by observer #1 as occurring in 22 (20.3%) of the episodes, and observer #2 recorded Type I as occurring in 19 (17.5%) episodes. Observer #2 rated Type III as dominating 2 episodes (1.8%), but observer #1 did not identify Type III in any episode.

Summary

In this chapter, the findings from the phenomenological interviews, semistructured interviews, ethnographic observations, and observer ratings were described as related to each research question. The findings reported in this chapter are discussed in Chapter five.

Table 4.5. Interobserver Agreement Teaching and Learning

Session	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Teaching and learning										
Type I	3/4	4/1	3/2	5/2	1/1	0/1	5/7	1/1	22/19	
Type II	3/12	1/12	2/12	2/12	1/12	0/12	5/12	1/12	1/12	
Type III	9/8	8/11	9/10	7/8	11/11	12/11	7/5	11/11	86/87	
	8/12	8/12	9/12	7/12	11/12	11/12	5/12	11/12	0/2	
Total episode	12/12	12/12	12/12	12/12	12/12	12/12	12/12	12/12	108/108	
Total agreement	11/12	9/12	11/12	9/12	12/12	11/12	10/12	12/12	97/108	
Percent agreement	91.6	75	91.6	75	100	91.6	83.3	100	89.8	

Observer #1/observer #2/Total agreement over # of session episodes

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY and DISCUSSION

Introduction

To answer the following research questions, this study examined, described, and documented what occurred in a group as it attempted to dialogue. The research questions were

1. How do students who engage in dialogue experience the process?
2. What types of questions do students use while engaged in dialogue?
3. What types of teaching and learning is experienced by students engaged in dialogue?

Ethnographic observations and personal interviews that included both a phenomenological question and a series of semistructured questions were used to collect data. Additionally, an audiotape recording of the last 60 minutes of each class session (excluding the debriefing session) was rated to determine which dialogue phase, question type, key practice, and teaching and learning type was utilized by the group.

Summary Findings and Discussion

In this section, a summary of the findings and discussion of the themes will be presented as they relate to each research question.

Research Question One

The first research question was: *"How do students who engage in dialogue experience the process?"*

Participant Experience

Thematic analysis of the phenomenological interviews revealed seven themes. These themes were (a) personal relationship, (b) respect, (c) atmosphere, (d) involvement, (e) frustration, (f) empowerment, and, (g) facilitation. Additional themes that emerged from the field notes were (a) attendance, (b) verbal participation, and (c) time. Thematic analysis of the answers to each of the 11 semistructured questions revealed a total of 19 themes. A thematic analysis was performed on the 19 themes, resulting in three categories of themes. Those thematic categories were (a) learning, (b) interpersonal relationship, and (c) roles. The following is a discussion of the themes that characterized participants' accounts of experiences in the dialogue course.

Personal relationship and respect. All participants stated that the group dialogued within the nine class sessions. During those periods when the group experienced dialogue, participants described it as a special atmosphere in which there was a connection, feeling, an energy, and a sense of being in balance with others in the group.

Participants experienced dialogue as a dynamic process. Dialogue was personal and not something they had experienced in other courses. Participants said this experience was about developing personal and interpersonal relationships and respecting one another. Participants reported personal relationships between group members should be formed so that an opportunity for learning occurs. Participants also stated that group members need to respect each other in dialogue and that it is important to hear what others are saying, even if the topic of discussion is contrary to their own beliefs.

Frustration and involvement. Participants cited experiences that hindered their involvement in the process. Among these were periods of frustration, their perceived inability to dialogue, a lack of experience with the process, and their experiences prior to each meeting affected their level of involvement in the discourse. Several participants cited a level of excitement in the first class session that soon turned to frustration, a feeling of incompetence, and concern that their expectations would not be realized.

Cayer (1996), in her study of participants in a David Bohm seminar, documented 18 difficulties participants encountered while involved in a dialogue. Cayer reported that some difficulties that hindered dialogue occurred when group members had a limited knowledge of dialogue, had difficulty in balancing content and process analysis, and did not suspend assumptions while

interacting with others. Armstrong (1999), in his study of two collaborative learning groups, identified three themes that initially hindered the collaborative learning process. Armstrong reported that both groups initially experienced frustration, confusion, and conflict; and, as each group worked through these feelings, a sense of cohesion developed.

Empowerment and heightened awareness This group also experienced an inability to empower itself. While group members created goals and discussed what they wanted to learn from this course, they had difficulty in creating a learning environment in which they could realize their goals. Additionally, while participants were polite to one another, they did not explore assumptions or inquire into the statements made by group members.

However, participants said, as a result of this experience, they had a heightened awareness that certain conditions must be met for dialogue to occur. They learned that a group needs to develop a dialogical space and its members must develop the prerequisite skills and attitudes, such as the willingness to suspend judgements, listen, respect the others, and work in an environment of trust.

Attendance and time. The attendance theme indicated group membership was constantly in a state of flux due to absences and participants arriving late and leaving early. In examining the attendance and tardiness of

participants, an issue could be whether the group ever formed a relationship necessary for the creation of common meanings (McNamee & Gergen, 1999) or shared mental models (Senge, 1990). Because each class session varied in number and composition of participants and participants in the group had various levels of exposure to one another, relationship building within the group may have been limited

Time was another theme in participants' experiences. Time is instrumental in building relationships, a community, and getting to know and understand other group members (Armstrong, 1999; Crosse, 2000; Tisue, 1999). McNamee and Gergen (1999) said relationship(s) between and among individuals is of primary importance because the relationship creates common meanings. Crosse (2000), in his study of meaning making in two graduate-level reflective practice classes, found that interpersonal relationships that developed over time positively influenced group cohesion and community building.

Group members said the time frame needed for a group to engage in dialogue needs to last from a few months to a year in length, although each meeting should not last beyond three hours. This is in contrast to the time limitations placed upon them in a three week spring mini-term. Within the

three weeks the group met nine times with each meeting lasting 4 hours and 45 minutes.

Verbal participation The verbal participation theme refers to differences in the average number of verbalizations between group members. Participants varied in terms of the number of times they spoke in class. Participants who spoke more frequently and asked fewer questions were those with the least amount of preparation in terms of the course prerequisite, suggesting they were the least prepared to engage in dialogue.

Roles and responsibilities Many participants identified their role within the group as that of a listener. It was their responsibility to hear what others were saying, even if what was said countered their own beliefs. Participants also cited the importance and influence of the course facilitator. They discussed how they reacted to messages they received from the facilitator and how his power in the group affected their interaction. They said that while the facilitator attempted to assume the role of a group member, his presence as a facilitator was felt throughout the course. My field notes also indicated that the group continually forced the course facilitator to maintain the role of a traditional facilitator. Participants did this by focusing their questions on the facilitator instead of directing questions to other group members.

Rater Observation

A pair of external observers rated 108 episodes of participant behavior and rated the episodes in terms of the incidence of Isaacs' phases of dialogue. The results of their rating indicated that the group primarily stayed in phase one with a few exceptions in which movement into phase two occurred. The raters observed that the group did not attain Isaacs' third or fourth dialogic phase in any of the 108 episodes. Additionally, the raters observed that the key practices of listening and voicing occurred, while suspending and respecting were not practiced by the group.

Comparing Rater and Participant Observations

Participants said they engage in dialogue, but raters observed that participants did not dialogue, at least in terms of Isaacs' model. The difference in these findings may be attributed to how raters and participants understood the dialogue process. Participants entered the class with their various definitions of dialogue that were general in nature, reflected and proposed in the literature, and discussed in courses many of these participants had completed.

The definitions cited in participant interviews are definitions used by authors such as Bohm (1996a), who said dialogue shouldn't have an agenda, or from Shotter (1993), Anderson (1997), and Gergen (1994), who said that

dialogue is a communication process in which individuals are open, involved, and responsive to others. Additionally, during the mini-term course, participants never attempted to create a single definition of dialogue because participants never discussed various definitions in the course. They were, therefore, free to choose their own definitions and express the dialogue process as they understood it. This stands in contrast to the perspective of the raters. The raters evaluated participants' behaviors in terms of a specific, operational definition of Isaacs' four phases of dialogue. Raters and participants appear to have employed different criteria in their assessment of dialogue behaviors.

The way participants and raters were asked to account for dialogue behaviors may have contributed to the difference in observations between participants and raters. Participants were asked in an open phenomenological question to describe their overall experiences in the dialogue course and then asked a series of semistructured questions. Participants were not asked to analyze specific segments of the course or class sessions. However, raters observed the last hour of a sample of class sessions, or approximately 21% of the course and each class session. Additionally, the last hour of each session was divided into 12 five-minute episodes for raters to identify which characteristics of Isaacs' phases of dialogue were occurring in each episode. It

is possible that participants' overall view of their course experience, coupled with their more general understanding of the dialogue process, helped account for the difference in results. The way in which raters decided which dialogue phase was dominant may have affected the qualitative aspects of their results.

In each episode, characteristics from multiple phases could have been observed, however, the phase with the most observed characteristics was determined by the raters to be the dominant phase in a particular episode. Raters informally reported that some episodes included evidence of more than one phase—including phases two and three, but their formal task was to select the phase with the highest number of descriptors. Thus, while raters chose only the dominant dialogue phase in a particular episode, other phases may have occurred but were not reported as such. This observation is consistent with Isaacs' claim that more than one dialogue phase can occur in the same moment in time and that the phases tend to enfold onto one another. It is also possible that participants' own accounts of dialogue were influenced by their sense of these additional phases of dialogue, one participant referred to experiencing "pockets of dialogue" over the nine class sessions.

While participants and raters appear to have based their assessments on different criteria, their accounts are similar in terms of several important features of the dialogue process. Raters identified phase one as the dominant

dialogue phase engaged in by participants, followed by lesser engagement in phase two. When the observer ratings are compared to the themes of participant interview results, internal consistencies are apparent. For example, participants' expressions of frustration, the need to develop strong interpersonal relationships, dependency on the facilitator, and failure to suspend assumptions are consistent with features of Isaacs' phase one "Instability of the Container" and aspects of phase two "Instability in the Container" (Isaacs, 1993)

The themes are also consistent with themes of participant experiences reported in studies by Armstrong (1999), Tissue (1999), and Cayer (1996). These studies showed that early stages of participants' experiences with dialogue are characterized by frustration, conflict, tentative attempts to form strong interpersonal relationships, and over dependency on the group facilitator

Lack of time appeared to play an important part in the group's experience. In her research concerning dialogue and decision making in a family business, Tissue (1999) found that setting a specific amount of time aside to meet and learn the process was a critical element. She found the decision makers in her study needed additional time to engage in the process, to learn about the process, to change behaviors, and to practice the process.

Tisue (1999), Armstrong (1999), and Crosse (2000) showed that groups took a minimum of eight weeks to form and begin to engage in dialogue. By contrast, the participants in this study had only three weeks in which to form a group and engage in dialogue.

Consequently, what the raters observed in terms of Isaacs' phase one and phase two of dialogue may have been the group's attempt to form and establish the interpersonal relationships necessary for dialogue to occur. The group may not have formed, thus the dialogue process did not fully develop, at least in terms of Isaacs' criteria.

Research Question Two

The second research question was "*What type of questions do students use while engaged in dialogue?*"

Participant Experience

Participants were not asked to describe the question types utilized by the group, but my field notes indicated that closed-ended questions were predominantly used throughout the course.

Rater Observation

Observers rated the group in the use of six question types and found that closed-ended and factual questions were the dominate questions asked throughout the course. While open-ended questions were asked by group

members, this question type accounted for less than 17% of the total questions asked. Closed-ended questions were asked twice as frequently as factual questions and three times more often than open-ended questions

Throughout the dialogue course, participants asked questions of other group members and the facilitator but did not discuss different question types or the role of question types in the dialogue process. The types of questions used are important in the dialogue process because open-ended questions and frequent probing lead to reflection, exposure to assumptions, and generation of shared meaning (Isaacs, 1999). Peters (1995) suggested that use of what and why questions are useful for understanding the actions and reasons of another. Additionally, Armstrong (1999) found questions that were open-ended and nondirective allowed participants to examine ideas and assumptions necessary for successful participation in the collaborative learning process

The dominant use of closed-ended and factual questions is consistent with Isaacs' (1993) dialogue phases one and two. However, since group members stated that dialogue occurred in small pockets throughout the course, this may support the raters' observations of the small percentage of open-ended questions. Depending on the definition of dialogue each participant was using, the groups use of open-ended questions may have coincided with the

pockets of dialogue reported by participants but not rated as dominant in any of the 108 episodes

Research Question Three

The third research question was. *“What type of teaching and learning is experienced by students engaged in dialogue?”*

Participant Experience

The data collected from the personal interviews showed group members felt a mixture of teaching and learning types occurred throughout the nine class sessions. Participants said all three teaching and learning types were present and that the group flowed in and out of each type over the course of the three week term. Movement among the teaching and learning types was dynamic and changed with the needs of the group. Participants stated that Type III teaching and learning occasionally occurred throughout the course, which is consistent with their experience that dialogue was also present in small pockets throughout the nine sessions.

Rater Observation

Raters observed Type II teaching and learning was dominant in 80% of the episodes, and Type I was dominant in 18% of all episodes. They observed that Type III was not dominant in any of the episodes, although it was observed in minor occurrences.

Comparing Rater and Participant Observations

The raters' observations of types of teaching and learning are consistent with their observations of the dominant phases of dialogue. Raters identified dialogue phase one occurring in 91% of the episodes and phase two in 9% of the episodes. Dialogue is assumed to be central to the teaching-learning process involved in Type III (Peters & Armstrong, 1998). While participants can dialogue without engaging in the fullest features of Type III, they would not be able to engage in Type III without also engaging in dialogue. It is arguable that participants would need to be operating in dialogue phases three and four of Isaacs' (1993) model if they were also engaged in Type III teaching and learning. Although these two models are not synonymous, they do share some of the same features of discourse and participant involvement (e.g., participants should suspend assumptions, ask open-ended questions, build relationships through trust and respect, and involve themselves in the process through active verbal engagement). Armstrong's (1999) study showed that, while participants in a similar course environment engaged in Isaacs' dialogue phases three and four, they also experienced Type III teaching and learning. This would also suggest a correlation between the last two phases of Isaacs' model and Type III teaching and learning.

In this study, participants and raters differed in their observation of the occurrence of Type III teaching and learning. This may be accounted for in part by their attention or inattention to precise definitions of types of teaching and learning. Participants were working from a general understanding of the types, based on previous experiences. On the other hand, raters were using operational definitions. It is also possible that participants experienced aspects of Type III, although Type III did not dominate their class sessions.

Type III teaching and learning places emphasis on the role of the group as well as individual learning. However, raters based their observations on verbalizations made by individuals during selected episodes. It is possible that participants had a better sense of the group by being present in it and therefore based their recall of Type III experiences on their sense of the group as a whole.

Conclusions and Implications

This study has shown that the experience of participants in a course on dialogue can be described in terms of elements that capture individual and group behaviors, thoughts, and feelings. In general, the themes of participants' self-reports are consistent with themes identified in related research. However, the study revealed that participants hold to a variety of views regarding the

nature of dialogue, and their views are not fully consistent with at least one published model of the dialogue process, (i.e., Isaacs, 1999).

If participants' self-reports of their experiences in the course are accepted, they experienced dialogue. If outside observers' ratings are accepted, the participants did not experience dialogue. However, if a choice of viewpoints must be made, the choice must also be qualified by choosing a definition of dialogue. In this study, participants freely chose their own definition of dialogue, and, by their definition, they were engaged in the process. Raters, however, followed a particular definition of dialogue that participants may or may not have followed; and, on that definition, raters concluded that dialogue did not happen.

In search of a possible third choice, it is possible that participants were at the beginning stages of the Isaacs model of dialogue. This possibility is reinforced by several of the themes in the participants' responses to interview questions (e.g., their experience of frustration) and by the results of related studies. These studies (e.g., Armstrong, 1999) characterized early stages of the dialogue process along the lines of participant experiences in this study.

Whether or not participants were in the early stages of dialogue according to Isaacs' model or they dialogued in terms of other views of dialogue, they did express the need for more time to fully develop their

dialogical skills. This finding is also consistent with the results of other related studies (e.g., Tisue, 1999), and it suggests that persons who would facilitate dialogue in groups ought to be heedful of the role of time in participants' skill development. Put simply, learning the process takes time; how much time is a relative matter, but the results of this study strongly suggest that a three-week time frame is not long enough. Other factors surely interact with the time factor (e.g., the prior experience of participants with the process), but it is not to be neglected as a vital element in the process.

Another theme that stood out among the 13 identified in this study is the role of relationships in the dialogue process. Groups need to form and members of groups that seek to practice dialogue need to identify with one another in a trusting, respectful, and open manner. This is a theme that runs through nearly all of the literature as background for this study.

Among research cited in support of this study were investigations of collaborative learning processes (e.g., Portwood, 1999; Crosse, 2000). It was assumed that much of what these researchers and others call collaborative learning also involves dialogue as a principal mode of discourse. Indeed, the themes identified in this study are similar in most aspects to themes identified in the collaborative learning research. However, the few emerging theories of collaborative learning describe a process that is more than dialogue. These

theories include some form of social construction of knowledge (e.g , Peters & Armstrong, 1998) Various definitions of dialogue refer to meaning making and sharing meaning perspectives, but these expressions may not be the same as construction of “new” knowledge, which is the aim of some concepts of collaborative learning In this study, there were interesting parallels in how raters and participants assessed the incidence of Type III teaching and learning. Participants not only claimed that they engaged in dialogue, they also claimed they experienced Type III learning. Raters who observed that participants did not engage in dialogue also observed that participants did not engage in Type III learning. This could be a coincident set of reports, but the relationship between Type III learning and dialogue is further supported by the theories of Isaacs (1993) and Peters and Armstrong (1998). There are similarities in terms Isaacs used to describe his fourth phase of dialogue and the terms that Peters and Armstrong used to describe their Type III teaching and learning However, there are differences in the two models as well, and these differences remain unexplored

In a related matter, this study examined the role that questions play in dialogue. The findings suggest that certain types of questions (open-ended questions and probes) are functional in developing and sustaining dialogue and that closed-ended and factual questions are more closely associated with the

beginning stages of dialogue. These results are consistent with related studies, and they suggest to facilitators of groups engaged in dialogue that careful attention be paid to the types of questions asked. Based on this study and the related literature, it seems clear that participants who are inexperienced in dialogue will need to learn how to ask dialogue-enhancing questions and practice asking them if dialogue is to be sustained over long periods of time.

This study undertook to examine participants' experiences with dialogue, questions, and types of teaching and learning by employing both quantitative and qualitative methods. This combination of research approaches lent richness to the study, as the methods promised to represent different views of the realities of participant experiences. While not exactly a matter of triangulating the observations reported in the study, each view provided a unique perspective on the same phenomenon. From most accounts, the two viewpoints described the same participant experience, notwithstanding the interesting differences in the terms in which dialogue was understood. Among the lessons learned from this study is the need to establish common definitions and terms on which observers (insiders and outsiders) are asked to report their observations. In this study, if participants had been asked to assess their own experience with dialogue in terms of Isaacs' model, the differences in

participants' and outside raters' observations might disappear. This approach would be an interesting follow-up to the present study.

The researcher also asked raters to assess participant experiences with question types but did not ask participants to assess their own experience with questions. This was an oversight that ought to be corrected in future studies that might follow this line of inquiry. In general, such studies that employ multiple perspectives on the same phenomenon ought to establish the same benchmark criteria for the purpose of comparing research results.

The study described in this dissertation was undertaken in order to contribute to our understanding of dialogue, especially as it might be a principal form of discourse in formal teaching and learning situations. Whether or not the study met this challenge is now a matter of the reader's judgment.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, H (1997) Conversation, language, and possibilities. A postmodern approach to therapy New York: Basic Books
- Armstrong, J L (1999) Collaborative learning: A study of two classrooms
Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Tennessee,
Knoxville.
- Armstrong, J L , & Peters, J M (2000, January). The transformative process of collaborative learning. Paper presented at the Conference on
Interdisciplinary Qualitative Studies, Athens, GA.
- Bohm, D. (1996a) On dialogue London: Routledge.
- Bohm, D (1996b). Unfolding meaning A weekend of dialogue London.
Routledge.
- Bowman, C J (1997). An exploration of group dialogue in an organizational change environment Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University
of New Mexico, Albuquerque.
- Brookfield, S D (1990) The skillful teacher San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Brookfield, S D (1995) Becoming a critical reflective teacher San
Francisco Jossey-Bass
- Cayer, M (1996) An inquiry into the experience of Bohm's dialogue.
Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Saybrook Institute, San Francisco

- Clark, C., Moss, P. A., Goering, S., Herter, R. J., Lamar, B., Leonard, D., Robbins, S., Russell, M., Templin, M., & Wascha, K. (1996). Collaboration as dialogue: Teachers and researchers in conversation and professional development. American Educational Research Journal, 33, 193-231
- Clark, G. (1991). Dialogue, dialectic, and conversation A social perspective on the function of writing. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Crosse, D. M. (2000). Reflective practice in education and psychology A case study. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- Dillon, J. T. (1982). The effect of questions in education and other enterprises. Journal of Curriculum Studies 14, 127-152.
- Dixon, N. R. (1996). Perspectives on dialogue: Making talk developmental for individuals and organizations. Greensboro, NC: Center for Creative Leadership.
- Ellinor, L., & Gerard, G. (1998). Dialogue: Rediscovering the transforming power of conversation. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Gay, L. R. (1996). Educational research Competencies for analysis and application. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall

- Gergen, K. J. (1994). Realities and relationships: Soundings in social construction. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press
- Glesne, C., & Peshkin, A. (1992). Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction. White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Greenleaf, G. W. (1996). Dialogue as a prelude to decision making. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Seattle University, Seattle, WA.
- Heekin, K. C. (1994). The role of narrative, image, and dialogue in multicultural psychotherapy. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Chicago School of Professional Psychology, Chicago.
- Howe, R. L. (1963). The miracle of dialogue. New York: The Seabury Press
- Isaacs, W. N. (1993). Taking flight: Dialogue, collective thinking, and organizational learning. Organizational Dynamics, 22(2), 24–39.
- Isaacs, W. N. (1999). Dialogue and the art of thinking together. New York: Currency
- Kazdin, A. E. (1994). Behavior modification in applied settings (5th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Kvale, S. (1983). The qualitative research interview: A phenomenological and a hermeneutical mode of understanding. Journal of Phenomenological Psychology, 14, 171–196

- Kvale, S. (1996) Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage.
- LeCompte, M. D., & Schensul, J. J. (1999) Analyzing & interpreting ethnographic data. Walnut Creek, CA. AltaMira Press.
- Martin, K. J. (1997) Interpersonal dialogue, narrative, and cultural representations in Lakota (Sioux) classrooms. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara.
- McNamee, S., & Gergen, K. J. (1999) Relational responsibility: Resources for sustainable dialogue. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage.
- Merriam, S. B., & Brockett, R. G. (1997). The profession and practice of adult education: An introduction. San Francisco. Jossey-Bass.
- Mezirow, J. (1991) Transformative dimensions of adult learning. San Francisco. Jossey-Bass.
- Parrott, W. G. (1992). Moral philosophy and social science: A critique of constructionist reason. In D. N. Robinson (Ed.), Social discourse and moral judgement (pp. 207–219). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Peters, J. M. (1995). Good question! Collaborative learning and the intentional stance. In Michael Collins (Ed.), International Conference on Educating the Adult Educator: Role of the University (pp. 269–274). Canmore, Alberta, Canada.

- Peters, J. M , & Armstrong, J L (1998) Collaborative learning: People laboring together to construct knowledge. In I. S. Saltiel, A. Sgroi, & R. G Brockett (Eds), The power and potential of collaborative learning partnerships: New directions for adult and continuing education. No 79 (pp. 75–85) San Francisco Jossey-Bass.
- Pollio, H. (1989) Any questions, please? Teaching/learning issues, No. 66. Knoxville Learning Research Center, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- Portwood, M. M. (1999). The experience of students in a collaborative learning classroom. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- Senge, P. M (1990) The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization New York: Doubleday/Currency.
- Senge, P M , Kleiner, A., Roberts, C , Ross, R B., Roth, G., & Smith, B. J. (1999) The dance of change: The challenges of sustaining momentum in learning organizations New York: Doubleday/Currency
- Senge, P M , Roberts, C , Ross, R B., Smith, B. J., & Kleiner, A (1994). The fifth discipline fieldbook: Strategies and tools for building a learning organization New York. Doubleday/Currency.

- Shotter, J. (1992) Social constructionism: Relativism, moral sources, and judgements of adequacy. In D. N Robinson (Ed), Social discourse and moral judgement (pp. 181–205). San Diego, CA. Academic Press.
- Shotter, J. (1993). Conversational realities. Constructing life through language London: Sage.
- Sidorkin A M (1999). Beyond discourse: Education, the self, and dialogue. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Taylor, S. J , & Bogdan, R (1998). Introduction to qualitative research methods A guidebook and resource New York: John Wiley & Sons
- Teaching and Learning Center University of Nebraska-Lincoln. (2000).
Teaching tips [on-line] Available
[http //www unl edu/teaching/teachquestions.html](http://www.unl.edu/teaching/teachquestions.html)
- Tisue, L (1999) Facilitating dialogue and decision making in a family business Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
- Van Manen, M. (1990) Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy. London: Althouse Press.
- Vasquez-Levy, D. (1994). The nature of dialogue, dialogical relations, and the role of an other A theoretical and practical conception of dialogue and

its role in advancing teacher understanding and practice Unpublished

doctoral dissertation, The University of Arizona, Tucson

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Participant Consent Form

Dialogue A Case Study

I understand the purpose of this study is to examine, describe, and clarify what transpires in the dialogue process. I also understand that by participating in this study I will be observed and classes will be audio taped from Wednesday, May 12, 1999, through Tuesday, June 1, 1999. Additionally, once the class has ended, each participant will be interviewed by the principal investigator regarding the participant's perception of the dialogue process.

I understand the information and data I provide the principal investigator through my involvement in class and through any interviews will be held in the strictest confidence. I have also been informed that all data collected in this study will be kept in the co-principal investigator's office in a locked filing cabinet and upon completion of this study all transcriptions, audio tapes, and observational notes will be shredded and destroyed. Additionally, the only individuals having access to the data besides the principal and co-principal investigator will be the transcriber and two raters. These individuals will be required to sign a confidentiality form, and, once the audio tapes have been transcribed and rated, all tapes and transcriptions will be turned over to the principal investigator.

I understand that participation in this study is completely voluntary and I may terminate my participation at any time without penalty. I know there are no risks involved by participating in this study, and I may benefit by reflecting on the findings of this study.

I have also been informed that I may contact the investigator(s) of this study at any time if I have further questions about the study or my participation. **MY SIGNATURE ALSO INDICATES THAT I HAVE READ THE INFORMATION OUTLINED ABOVE AND AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY**

Signature _____

Date _____

Name (Print) _____

Primary Investigator

Steve Alderton

Psychoeducational Studies Unit

University of Tennessee-Knoxville

Unit # - (423) 974-8145

e-mail - alderton@utkux.utec.utk.edu

Appendix B

Personal Interview Questions

I Phenomenological question

- 1 Please describe your experience in the dialogue course

II Directed questions

- 1 What is your definition of dialogue?
- 2 Did your definition of dialogue change from the beginning to the end of the course? If yes, describe the change
- 3 Did group members dialogue within the nine sessions?
 - a If yes, describe the experience as you witnessed it
 - b If no, what accounted for the lack of dialogue?
 - c If no, describe the type of discourse that occurred
- 4 Did you develop or further develop skills of dialogue?
 - a If yes, what skills were developed?
 - b If no, what inhibited you from developing those skills?

In the next few questions, I will be asking you to characterize or describe your experience as it relates to the beginning, middle, and end of the course

- 5 In terms of Type I, II, and III learning, how would you characterize the type of learning that took place in the beginning, middle, and end of the course?
- 6 How would you describe the group dynamics in the beginning, middle, and end of the course?
- 7 How would you characterize the facilitator's role in the beginning, middle, and end of the course?
- 8 How would you characterize your role in the beginning, middle, and end of the course?
- 9 How would you describe the attitude of the group in the beginning, middle, and end of the course?
- 10 What is the most important thing you learned from this course?
- 11 Were your expectations met in the course?
 - a If yes, describe how they were met
 - b If no, describe what inhibited you from satisfying those expectations

Appendix C

Transcription Confidentiality Form

Dialogue A Case Study

I understand this research involves working with participants whose confidentiality must be respected
My signature below indicates that I pledge to not discuss data from these transcripts and I will in every way
possible protect the confidentiality of participants associated with this study

Signature _____

Date _____

Name (print) _____

Appendix D

Rater's Confidentiality Form

Dialogue A Case Study

I understand this research involves working with participants whose confidentiality must be respected
My signature below indicates that I pledge to not discuss information or data collected from these audiotapes and
to protect the confidentiality of participants associated with this study

Signature _____

Date _____

Name (print) _____

Appendix E

Interobserver Agreement Form Phases, Key Practices, and Teaching and Learning Types

Session # _____

Episode	1	2	3	4	5	6
Phase I						
1. Advice giving						
2. Agenda setting						
3. Closed-ended questions/statements						
4. Defensiveness						
5. Fragmentation						
6. Leader dependency						
Total						
Phase II						
1. Reflection of group process						
2. Frustration/confusion						
3. Open-ended inquiry						
4. Role differentiation						
5. Suspension of assumptions						
Total						
Phase III						
1. Collective awareness						
2. Conversational flow						
3. Connected inquiry						
4. Learner interdependency						
Total						
Phase IV						
1. Immediate/constructive awareness						
2. Silent conversation						
3. Simultaneous inquiry						
Total						
Key Practices						
1. Listening						
2. Suspending						
3. Respecting						
4. Voicing						
Teaching and Learning						
1. Type I						
2. Type II						
3. Type III						

Interobserver Agreement Form
Phases, Key Practices, and Teaching and Learning Types

Session # _____

Episode	7	8	9	10	11	12
Phase I						
1. Advice giving						
2. Agenda setting						
3. Closed-ended questions/statements						
4. Defensiveness						
5. Fragmentation						
6. Leader dependency						
Total						
Phase II						
1. Reflection of group process						
2. Frustration/confusion						
3. Open-ended inquiry						
4. Role differentiation						
5. Suspension of assumptions						
Total						
Phase III						
1. Collective awareness						
2. Conversational flow						
3. Connected inquiry						
4. Learner interdependency						
Total						
Phase IV						
1. Immediate/constructive awareness						
2. Silent conversation						
3. Simultaneous inquiry						
Total						
Key Practices						
1. Listening						
2. Suspending						
3. Respecting						
4. Voicing						
Teaching and Learning						
1. Type I						
2. Type II						
3. Type III						

Appendix F

Dialogue Phases

Definitions

Phase I

1 Advice giving

- a Giving own viewpoint or perspective through statements, questions, or stories

Example "I think you " "You should " "When I was "

- b Advice subtly embedded in directed questions

Example "What do you think would happen if you ?"

2 Agenda setting

- a It is very procedural

Example "What are we going to do tonight?" "What are we doing?"

- b It is reporting on previous group meetings

- c It is monopolizing — a limited number of individuals control the direction of the conversation

3 Closed-ended questions/statements

- a Leading or directed questions

- b Responding only to the parts of what is being said

- c Making imperative statements that defend/state a point of view

4 Defense of personal viewpoints

- a No awareness of the values, beliefs, and perceptions of others

Example Ignoring statements or making stereotypical statements

- b Talking as if there is only one objective truth (T) Example "Everyone knows that "

- c Statements that could lead to defensiveness and conflict

Example "I don't want to talk about this anymore" or back and forth contradictory statements

- d Use of experts in support of position

5 Fragmentation

- a Responding to only the parts of what someone is saying

- b Repeatedly moving off topic

- c Popcorning - back and forth conversation (group members are competing to be heard)

6 Leader dependency

- a Group forces traditional teacher and group-member roles

Example Teacher is addressed as the expert

- b Teacher is primary facilitator

- c Traditional teacher and student role as being the expert and receiver of knowledge

Example Lecturing

Example Group members directing questions to the teacher

Phase II1 Reflection of group process

- a Group decides to analyze what has been going on
Example "Stop the music "
- b Bring forth observations that things have changed
- c Perception that the climate or atmosphere of the room is changing

2 Frustration or confusion

- a Asking questions trying to know or understand where the group is heading because of persistent confusion
- b Beginning to acknowledge multiple points of view
- c Members grappling with old behaviors and new ways of interacting

3 Open-ended inquiry

- a Asking open-ended, probing, and affective questions
- b Gives invitation to hear other views
Example "What do you mean by that?" "Tell me what you're thinking "
- c Expresses individual doubts and asking if others doubt
Example "What do you think?"

4 Role differentiation

- a Teacher begins to assume group-member roles
- b Group members begin to assume facilitator role
- c Interaction is more like a conversation

5 Suspension of assumptions

- a Statements or questions that acknowledge others' viewpoints
Example "Now that I hear you talk about "
- b Asking questions that indicate interest in other viewpoints
- c Statements that question one's long-held beliefs
- d Inviting inquiry into one's own assumptions

Phase III1 Collective awareness

- a Statements and questions that vocalize beliefs, values, and perspectives as products of individual and group experiences (making assumptions explicit)
- b Group members make verbal statements in which they are analyzing their impact on the group and the group's impact on them
Example "I have been thinking about how we are all affecting one another and "
- c Probing, open-ended, and affective questions are used extensively
- d Members are willing to share and discuss intimate thoughts and feelings and developing thoughts and feelings
Example Individual is emotional, but group members do not take it personally and attempt to probe into issue if relevant to the theme
- e Group members become sensitive to how the conversation is affecting all participants

2 Conversational flow

- a Conversation slows down
- b Responses are not as automatic
- c Pauses between statements and conversation becomes more apparent
- d Silence becomes more frequent and is not interrupted

3 Connected inquiry

- a The group explores the same theme together
- b A more thoughtful process where probing, affective, and open-ended questions are the norm

4 Learner interdependency

- a The role of facilitator is accepted by all members
- b The initial group facilitator assumes the role of group member most of the time
- c All members assume role of expert, and no one looks to any one person as the expert

Phase IV

- 1 Immediate or constructive awareness
 - a Members express frustration that words are now inadequate
 - b Members construct new experiences, thoughts, and themes within the group
 - c Members are talking in the "here and now "
 - d There are no roles
- 2 Silent conversation
 - a Many periods of silence
- 3 Simultaneous inquiry
 - a Questions are associated to the "here and now" that includes the new experiences, thoughts, and themes within the group

Key Practices Definitions

- 1 Listening
 - a Asking questions for further clarification
 - b Including what was previously said within a response or statement
 - c Seeing or making a connection between statements
- 2 Suspending
 - a When there is a change in perspective through conversation, going from A to B
Example "When you were talking about I now see it "
- 3 Respecting
 - a There is no arguing or defense of personal views but an acceptance of different views
 - b Further questioning or inquiry into what is being said
- 4 Voicing
 - a A statement that reflects personal beliefs and values concerning the topic at hand

Appendix G

Teaching and Learning Definitions

- 1 Type I
 - a There are traditional teacher and group-member roles
 - b Teacher is primary source of knowledge
 - c Student is receiver of teacher's knowledge
- 2 Type II
 - a Teacher is primary source of knowledge
 - b Student is receiver of knowledge
 - c Student can be source of knowledge
- 3 Type III
 - a The focus is on knowledge construction
 - b Knowledge is not predetermined
 - c All members are sources of knowledge

Appendix H

Interobserver Agreement Form Question Types

Session # _____

Episode	1	2	3	4	5	6
Question types						
Closed-ended						
Complex						
Factual						
Leading						
Open-ended						
Rhetorical						
Total per episode						

Interobserver Agreement Form
Question Types

Session # _____

Episode	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Question types							
Closed-ended							
Complex							
Factual							
Leading							
Open-ended							
Rhetorical							
Total per episode							

Appendix I

Question Type Categories

Definitions

Question

An attempt to elicit a response through inquiry

Closed-ended

Elicits a yes/no or limited response

Example "Do you like grapes?" "Isn't it a beautiful day?"

Complex

Not easy to understand or requires more than one answer

Example "Does illumination of this building need to occur before occupancy can take place?" instead of "Do the lights need to be turned on when entering the building?" or "Where is the car parked and how much did the new tires cost?" instead of asking the two questions, "Where is the car parked?" and "How much did the new tires cost?"

Factual

Using who, what, where, when, why and how to gain specific information

Example "What did you say?" "Who said ?" "Where is the ?" "When did ?" "Why are those children ?" "How did they respond to ?"

Leading

Suggests the desired answer

Example "Did you see ?" "Wasn't he ?" "Didn't you say ?"

Open-ended

Encourages discussion

Example, "Tell me more about ?" "Please say more about ?" "Do you have examples of ?" "What did that feel like when ?" "Can you describe a little more about what happened when ?"

Rhetorical

Makes a point but expects no answer

Example "What's wrong with the world today?" "Are we so blind we can't see the obvious?" "Do two wrongs make a right?"

VITA

Stephen L Alderton was born in Middletown, Ohio, on May 25, 1956. He graduated from Bishop Fenwick High School in June of 1974. He entered the University of Dayton and later transferred to Eastern Kentucky University where he received his Bachelor of Arts in 1981. In 1988 he graduated from Miami University (Ohio) with a Master of Science and in 2000 earned a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Tennessee.