

# **The Emotional Responses of Children with Learning Difficulties Regarding Their Social Interaction Experiences**

**Theresa Meisch**

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# **The Emotional Responses of Children with Learning Difficulties Regarding their Social Interaction Experiences**

by

**Theresa Meisch**

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**SUPERVISOR:**

**Dr. Mokgadi Moletsane**

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## Declaration

Theresa Meisch (student number 28182627), declares that:

“The emotional responses of children with learning difficulties regarding their social interaction experiences”

is my original work and that all the sources that were consulted and quoted have been acknowledged in the reference list.

THERESA MEISCH

2009

## Summary

The study is a qualitative explanation of the emotional responses of children with learning difficulties regarding their social interaction experiences. The primary research question that guided the study is: What are the emotional responses of children with learning difficulties regarding their social interaction experiences? Two learners were selected to participate in the study. Activity sessions, observations and interviews were conducted to determine the participants' emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences. Theme analysis was used to analyze the data collected. Seven main themes with sub-themes pertaining to the main themes, emerged from the data.

The findings of the study are understood in terms of a Vygotskian social development framework. The study revealed that the participants, identified as having learning challenges, experienced difficulties in their social interaction experiences. Their emotional responses to their social interaction experiences indicated that the participants found peer learning to be emotionally challenging. They further indicated that they were not included in the majority of their peers' social activities in the playground setting. Both participants have developed methods of resilience to help them cope with the challenges they face in their social interaction experiences with their peers. These methods help to alleviate stress caused due to the challenges they face with social interaction but these forms of resilience do not help the participants to experience learning taking place in Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development as the coping mechanisms employed by the participants remove the participants from the majority of their peers' interactions, rather than include them. Learning in Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development relies on social interaction, supported by more able peers or adults, resulting in learning taking place at a higher level than the individual would be able to achieve on their own.



## Keywords

Emotions

Emotional responses

Emotional intelligence

Learning difficulties

Social interaction

Peers

Peer-learning

Group-learning

Self-image

Resilience

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# Chapter 1

## Identifying the Study

### 1.1 Introduction

According to Lerner (2003) many students with learning disabilities<sup>1</sup> are likely to demonstrate poor social skills. It has been indicated that up to one third of students with learning disabilities have problems with social skills (Bryan, 1997; Voeller, 1994, as cited in Lerner, 2006). Friend and Bursuck (1996) as cited in Lerner (2006) state that in order for children to make a success of daily living and to be able to interact successfully with peers, educators and others, they need to have competencies in social skills. They need to recognize and sensitively respond to emotions expressed by others and to be able to communicate their emotions in socially acceptable ways. These social competencies will enable them to identify and solve social problems in a socially acceptable manner.

Vygotsky (1978) states that a child's potential for cognitive development is related to the Zone of Proximal Development, which is attained when children engage in social behaviour. Full cognitive development only occurs when the children experience full social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978). The skills that children learn will develop with adult guidance and peer collaboration (Vygotsky, 1978). In the Zone of Proximal Development, through social interaction, we learn to use the psychological tools available to us (Vygotsky, 1978). Such tools, according to Vygotsky (1978) include the use of language and counting systems. These psychological tools help us to bridge the gap between higher and lower mental functions and will help to mediate our thoughts, feelings and behaviours (Vygotsky, 1978). Language, as indicated by Vygotsky (1978) is seen as the most important of these tools. With the development of language comes the emergence of self-awareness and voluntary control of our actions (Vygotsky, 1978). It is through language that we construct reality, the framework through which we perceive experience and act (Vygotsky, 1978). As stated by Lerner (2003), children with learning disabilities are likely to demonstrate poor social skills. This would indicate that these children might not have the same opportunity to achieve full cognitive development resultant from social interaction. I am interested in exploring whether

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<sup>1</sup> In this research study, the terms *learning disability*, *learning difficulty* and *learning challenges* will be used interchangeably.

there could be a possible gap in the development of social skills, resultant from possible ineffective social interaction with children with learning difficulties. I wish to explore their emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences as a way to gain an understanding their social interaction experiences.

## 1.2 Rationale

I have taught as a Primary School educator for seven years. I began my career as a Supply Educator in England, where I taught in a wide range of schools and was exposed to diverse teaching experiences.

I took a permanent placement at a school on the outskirts of London. The school had a Special Needs Unit that provided children in the Borough of Slough the opportunity of specialist teaching. The children in the Unit were diagnosed with moderate learning and physical difficulties. The children participated in all mainstream lessons and activities except for Literacy and Numeracy, where they received small-group specialist teaching within the <sup>2</sup>Special Needs Unit. It was whilst working with these children in my mainstream class that my interest in Special Needs teaching and Learning Support developed.

In all of the schools where I have taught in the United Kingdom and in South Africa, at The Sunshine Center for children with learning and physical difficulties, where I am currently working as a volunteer, I have worked with children with learning difficulties. These children have been an integral part of my teaching experience. During my teaching career, I became interested in the ways in which children with learning difficulties communicated with their peers. I found that they were not always able to communicate effectively with their peers, and were often excluded from peer social interactions. I became interested in exploring why these children were excluded from peer social interactions and what conditions might be preventing them from achieving successful interaction.

According to my experience whilst working as a Class Educator, I noticed that many children with learning difficulties were isolated from their peers during class and break times. I often found these children sitting alone, playing by themselves or interacting mainly with other children identified as having learning difficulties. These children would often approach me to discuss their lack of effective peer social interaction. They would often ask me to join in their

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<sup>2</sup> In this research study, the terms *special needs and learning support* will be used interchangeably.

activities with them. These children appeared to have little faith in their ability to integrate into peer activities. During my permanent placements as a Class Educator, I taught Years Three and Four in the United Kingdom. The children in those classes were aged between seven and eight years old. Due to the fact that I have had the most experience in working with learners of this age, I would like to conduct my study using participants of a similar age. By exploring the emotional responses of children with learning difficulties regarding their social interactions, I hope to gain a deeper understanding of their communication experiences and observe what social emotional skills and competencies they display. This would hopefully lead to me gaining a clearer understanding of why children with learning difficulties are not always able to communicate effectively with others.

The Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001) regarding Special Needs Education states that education and training systems should promote education for all and foster the development of inclusive and supportive centers for learning. This would enable all learners to participate actively in the education process, so that they could develop and extend their potential and participate as equal members of society (Department of Education, 2001). It promotes human rights and social justices for all learners, focusing on participation and social integration, providing access to a single, inclusive education system. It wishes to uncover and minimize barriers to learning (Department of Education, 2001).

Due to the fact that children with learning difficulties will be participating in mainstream schooling, I believe that it is vital to find ways to support the learners and educators so that each child is being supported in a manner that allows for them to reach their potential. My study will hopefully contribute to the existing body of knowledge relating to Learning Support and will therefore help in the attainment of the aims of the Education White Paper 6, whereby all learners are able to actively participate in education in South Africa, with a focus on participation and social integration (Department of Education, 2001). The findings of the study will hopefully lead to finding ways in which to assist learners with special educational needs with social interaction and social integration, as stipulated by the Department of Education (Department of Education, 2001).

A study conducted by Kotze (2004) completed a meta-analysis of recent social skills outcomes studies, which indicated that the amount of change affected by social skills programs for those with learning disabilities was minimal and that rarely does it reach the level of effecting clinically significant change. In this light, I wish to establish the emotional responses of children with learning difficulties, so as to gain a deeper understanding of the way in which they communicate with their peers. The results of the study will hopefully contribute to the body of knowledge on learning support and may allow for the development

of new ways in design and implementation of social emotional programs for those with learning difficulties.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore the emotional responses of children with learning difficulties regarding their social interaction experiences in their school setting. The results of the study will help to deepen our understanding of the social emotional interactions of these children and the ways in which they communicate with others.

Much of the literature on learning difficulties indicates that children with learning difficulties are likely to experience challenges with social interaction (Lerner, 2006). Learning taking place in Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development would allow learning to take place at a higher level than the individual learner would be able to achieve on their own, the less able learner being supported by a more able peer or adult. This type of learning requires social interaction. This may be challenging for those with learning difficulties as the literature states that these learners may experience problems with social interaction (Lerner, 2006). The results of the study will allow for a deeper understanding of these learners' social interaction experiences, thus allowing for educators to be able to support these learners more effectively in the development of social and emotional skills and competencies.

### **1.4 Problem Statement**

Odrom, McConne and McEvoy (1992) claim that the effectiveness of peer social behaviour can be seen in the responses that individuals receive from their peers, their use of social skills, the social goals they possess and the strategies they engage in so as to achieve these goals. They state that many children with disabilities may experience difficulties in acquiring the skills necessary for interacting with their peers in a competent and positive way (Odrom et al., 1992).

According to Lerner (2003) many students with learning disabilities, whose poor social skills can be seen by their lack of sensitivity to others and having a poor perception of social situations, as a result of this, often suffer rejection. Inappropriate behaviours and remarks are often made by children with learning difficulties (Lerner, 2003). They may also find it challenging to disagree with others in socially acceptable ways (Lerner, 2003). They do not seem to anticipate the social processes of others and are not able to judge whether the social behaviour of the person matches anticipated behaviour. They seem to find it hard to

adjust their behaviour in relation to such comparisons that often results in them appearing to lack sensitivity (Lerner, 2003). Often the inappropriate use of language highlights their lack of social competence (Lerner, 2003). These are skills and abilities described by Bar-On (1997) Goleman (1998) and Salovey-Mayer (1990) as cited in Bar-On (2002) in their models of emotional intelligence. Lerner (2003) believes that many people with learning disabilities lack the traits that Goleman (1995) as cited in Bar-On (2002) states are indicative of emotional intelligence, including social deftness, persistence, empathy, social awareness, impulse control, zeal and self-motivation.

Those with learning disabilities often appear to have a negative view of themselves (Lerner, 2003). This might be resultant from the lack of satisfaction gained from recognition, achievement or affection (Lerner, 2003). Their failures in social interactions and academic achievements may lead to disappointment, frustration, feelings of incompetence and a lack of self worth (Lerner, 2003). This may lead to a poor self-concept (Lerner, 2003). Along this background, I would like to explore the emotional responses of the children with learning difficulties regarding their social interactions with their peers.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

### **1.5.1 Primary research question**

The following primary research question will be explored in this study:

- What are the emotional responses of the children with learning difficulties regarding their social interaction experiences?

### **1.5.2 Sub-questions**

In an attempt to answer the above-mentioned question, the following sub-questions will be explored:

- How are the children identified as having learning difficulties emotional responses related to their understanding of the social interactions they engage in?
- How do the children identified as having learning difficulties view themselves in their social interactions?
- How do the children identified as having learning difficulties social interactions influence their future social interactions?

In order to answer the above-mentioned questions, the core-participants will be asked to participate in one-on-one activity sessions with me. Here they will have the opportunity to share their emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences. In these sessions, I will provide the core-participants with a range of resources to assist them in their sharing of their emotional responses. I will provide flash card depicting a range of emotions, finger puppets and materials to create collage depicting their social interaction experiences. The participants will be free to make use of any of the resources during the sessions, although they will not be obliged to make use of them if they do not see fit. As a result of the information and material gathered in these sessions, I hope to be able to answer my primary and sub-questions.

The parents and educator of the core-participants in their educational setting will be asked to participate in semi-structured interviews. They will be asked to share their understanding of the core-participant's social interaction experiences and what they believe the core-participant's emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences to be.

## **1.6 Assumptions**

The assumptions for this study emerged initially as a result of my teaching experience and then as a result of evidence found in literature.

I assume that children with learning difficulties will have difficulty in their social interaction experiences (Lerner, 2003).

Vygotsky's (1978) states that learning in the Zone of Proximal Development would result in learning taking place at a higher level than the learners would be able to achieve on their own. This would be as a result of social interaction between the learner and their more able peer or adult. I assume that learners with learning difficulties will experience challenges in learning in the Zone of Proximal Development as a result of their potential difficulties with social interaction (Lerner, 2006).

I assume that as a result of not achieving full socialization, children with learning difficulties will not develop self-awareness and voluntary control of their behaviour (Vygotsky, 1978) as adequately as children without learning difficulties.

I assume that children with learning difficulties will need support and guidance in the development of social and emotional skills and competencies as they are less likely to develop these skills that result from social interaction on their own accord, due to their likely

difficulties in social interactions (Lerner, 2003).

## 1.7 Role of the Researcher

During the research process, I will make my role as researcher clear to those involved in the study. My role will remain that of researcher, neither educator nor counselor. If any participant becomes distressed as a result of participation in the research study, I will refer them to the person allocated to take on that role in my research study. The participants will be made aware of this arrangement prior to commencement of the study.

## 1.8 Theoretical Framework

According to Vygotsky's (1978) social development theory, social interaction plays an important role in the development of cognition. Without learning that occurs as a result of social interactions, without self-awareness of the use of signs and symbols that allow us to think in more complex ways, we would simply continue to respond to the environment (Vygotsky, 1978).

A child's potential for cognitive development is related to the Zone of Proximal Development, as indicated in figure 1 (p20) which is attained when children engage in social behaviour (Vygotsky, 1978). Full cognitive development of the child occurs when they experience full social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978). The skills learned by children will develop with adult guidance and peer collaboration (Vygotsky, 1978). This interaction will allow the child to exceed what progress he or she would make on his or her own (Vygotsky, 1978). In this Zone of Proximal Development, through social interaction, we learn to use the psychological tools available to us (Vygotsky, 1978). Psychological tools help to bridge the gap between the higher and lower mental functions (Vygotsky, 1978). These tools, for example, include systems for counting, art and writing, which mediate our thoughts, feelings and behaviours (Vygotsky, 1978). Of these, language is seen as the most important tool (Vygotsky, 1978).

In this research study, I wish to explore the emotional responses of children with learning difficulties regarding their social interactions. Vygotsky (1978) states that learning occurs through social interaction and literature states that many children with learning difficulties are likely to experience challenges in their social interactions. This highlights a potential concern for children with learning difficulties in terms of their social learning. I wish to gain a deeper understanding of their social interaction experiences, so as to identify areas of difficulty in terms of their social emotional development and therefore, to be able to find ways in which to



address these concerns.

## 1.9 Research Design

In this research study, a qualitative, case study research design will be employed.

**Table 1.1**

Approach	Paradigm	Selection	Data Collection	Data Analysis
Qualitative	Interpretivist	2 children with learning difficulties using purposive sampling	Activity sessions with children	Theme analysis
Case study	Constructivist	Parents of Children identified as having a learning difficulty	Semi-structured interviews with parents	
		Educator of children identified as having a learning difficulty	Semi-structured interview with educator	
			Non-participant Observation in class	
			Participant observation in the playground	
			Field notes	
			Reflective journal	

## **1.9.1 Qualitative Research Design**

This study will be qualitative in nature. Qualitative research is a broad approach to the study of social phenomena. It is naturalistic and interpretivist in nature (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). It draws on multiple methods of inquiry (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). The methods of data collection are usually interactive and humanistic (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). As stated by Rossman and Rallis (2003) qualitative researchers seek answers to questions in the real world by actively gathering their material from the world around them.

## **1.9.2 Case Study**

According to Hayes (2000) a case study allows researchers to investigate a topic in great detail. Case studies focus on single cases and explore them (Hayes, 2000). Often, more than one research method may be employed (Hayes, 2000). Case studies are usually used to open up and explore aspects of human experience (Hayes, 2000). I will conduct a case study relating to each participant, where each participant's emotional responses will be explored regarding their social interaction experiences.

## **1.10 Paradigm**

A paradigm can be understood as a means by which to understand the world; a particular way of examining reality (Burton & Bartlett, 1988)

### **1.10.1 Interpretative Paradigm**

The interpretivist paradigm attempts to understand the social world as it is from the perspective of individual experience (Burton & Bartlett, 1988). I will therefore attempt to describe and understand the research situation from the perspective of the participants. Burton and Bartlett (1988) state that interpretivism does not see society as being fixed in structure because the social world is created by interactions of individuals. Action is seen as deliberate and meaningful to those involved (Burton & Bartlett, 1988).

### **1.10.2 Constructivist Paradigm**

Constructivism is concerned with how knowledge arises, what concept of knowledge is

appropriate and what criteria can be involved in the evaluation of knowledge (Flick, von Kardorff & Steinke, 2004). This is relevant in terms of qualitative research because as a research method, it engenders knowledge and therefore looks empirically at specific forms of knowledge (Flick et al., 2004). Perception is seen as an active, constructive process (Flick et al., 2004). The original is only accessible through different constructions (Flick et al., 2004). Schutz (1962) as cited in Flick et al. (2004) assumes that knowledge in the social sciences starts from everyday understanding of the world. Knowledge and the objective meanings that it produces are social constructs in the everyday world (Flick et al., 2004).

## **1.11 Selection of Participants**

In my research study, I will use purposeful sampling to select my participants. By means of purposive sampling, I will choose elements judged to be typical, or representative, from the population.

I wish to select two research participants, identified as having a learning difficulty, aged between seven and eleven. I have worked predominantly within this age group during my teaching career and most frequently observed the difficulties in social interactions that the children with learning difficulties experienced. In this regard, wish to work with participants within this age bracket.

In relation to the selection of the participants, I will also engage with the parents and educator involved with the core-participants to explore their understanding of the core-participant's social interaction experiences. This will lead to rich, detailed data with data, gathered from multiple points of reference.

## **1.12 Data Collection Strategies**

### **1.12.1 Activity Sessions and Interviews**

A case study will be conducted where the core-participants will share their emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences through discussion and activity. I will record these discussions and collect any research material that is produced by the core-participants. This will later be transcribed, explored and analyzed.

I will conduct semi-structured interviews with the parents and educator involved with the core-participants in my research study. I wish to capture the adult's responses so as to add

to my understanding of the core-participant's emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences.

### **1.12.2 Observation**

According to Creswell (2000) observation is the process of gathering first-hand information by observing people and places at a research site. This method of data collection will allow me, as researcher, to enter into the social setting and to be able to capture the complexity of the situation (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

Through the process of observation, the researcher is able to learn what meaning certain actions have for participants (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). It assumes that actions are purposeful and have deeper values and beliefs (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Observations can be rigid or free, depending on the purpose of the observation (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). I will be able to observe patterns of events and relationships through this process of data collection (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

Observation is a powerful qualitative research instrument. Body language, facial expression and affect are captured in addition to the participant's words (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

### **1.12.3 Field Notes**

According to Burton and Bartlett (2003) it is the task of the qualitative researcher to turn what is seen and heard into data. One method this will be accomplished by is through writing field notes, a record of my perceptions in the field. The descriptive data of what I observe and comment on are referred to as the running record. Using this method of data collection, rich detail is captured about the research setting, the research process and the participants. This information will then be added to the interview transcript to enhance understanding of what was said during the interview.

Neuman (2006) says that the researcher should reflect on, reexamine and analyze personal points of view and feelings as a part of the process of studying others. I will adopt the position of relativism with regard to the values of others (Neuman, 2006). Values should be recognized and made explicit (Neuman, 2006). This will be achieved by me sharing and discussing experiences and feelings with the participants during the research process. I will also keep a reflective journal where I will record my thoughts. This will be shared with my supervisor. This record will be analyzed and incorporated into the study

## **1.13 Data Analysis Strategies**

Analyzing and interpreting qualitative data will involve my immersion in the data, with the systematic organization of the materials that I have gathered. This will bring out themes and patterns in the data, as a result of theme analysis (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

According to Cohen et al. (2007) qualitative data analysis involves organizing, accounting for and explaining data. This data will be understood in terms of the participant's definitions of the situation being described, with the recognition of themes, categories and regularities (Cohen et al., 2007).

There is no one way to analyze and present the data, but according to Cohen et. al. (2007) I should abide by the fitness of purpose, when I am sure what I want the data analysis to do. This will determine what kind of analysis will be undertaken. Qualitative analysis relies on interpretation where there stands the possibility of multiple interpretations (Cohen et. al.). To make my analysis explicit, I will write up my findings for others to read (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

## **1.14 Data Interpretation**

Interpretation of the findings will involve attaching significance to what was found, making sense of the findings, offering explanations, drawing conclusions, making inferences and considering meanings (Patton, 2002, as cited in Rossman & Rallis, 2003). This will be a complex and reflexive process (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Interpretation will tell a story that will include the participants' understanding, commonsense understanding and theoretical understanding of the data undertaken through theme analysis (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

## **1.15 Quality Criteria**

### **1.15.1 Credibility**

Rossman and Rallis (2003) state that for a study to be useful, people need to believe in its integrity, it needs to be credible to its users. The quality and credibility of qualitative research can be determined by its wholeness and coherence and its adherence to ethical standards. To ensure credibility in my study, I will adhere to ethical practice at all times and I will represent the meanings expressed by the participants as accurately as possible.

### **1.15.2 Trustworthiness**

Rossman and Rallis (2003) state that in order to judge the trustworthiness of a qualitative research project, the study needs to adhere to standards for acceptable and competent practice and comply with the standards for ethical practice. Information should be gathered over time and shared with the participants. To ensure trustworthiness in my study, I will comply with ethical standards of practice, gather data over an extended period of time, and share my findings with the participants, in the context in which the data was gathered. I will check my findings by sharing them with others.

### **1.15.3 Dependability**

Rossman and Rallis (2003) suggest that a study's dependability can be deduced by examining whether it has been rigorously and thoughtfully conducted, with clear decisions being made and enough evidence collected to make sense of the findings. There will be inquiries into the possibility of multiple solutions or outcomes (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). One wishes to establish if other researchers would obtain the same results if they were examining the research findings (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Another researcher should understand the logic and assumptions indicated (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). The interpretations should be sound and grounded in data (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). The process of analysis should be clear and coherent (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). To ensure dependability in my study, I will make clear decisions about how the study is designed and conducted, with enough clear evidence to allow for logical deductions to be made.

### **1.15.4 Usefulness**

For my research study to be useful, I will make my position as researcher clear, use a range of methods to gather data, clearly document the gathering, analyzing and interpreting of data and keep a journal to reflect upon the research process (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). I will provide descriptions of the theoretical and methodological orientation that I have used and explain the context of the research (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

## **1.16 Ethical Considerations**

### **1.16.1 Confidentiality**

Rossmann and Rallis (2003) state that qualitative research takes place in the real world and involves real people, who may live and work in that particular research setting. I will ensure that the participants' confidentiality will be maintained. The identity of all of the participants in the study remained disclosed.

### **1.16.2 Informed Consent**

Rossmann and Rallis (2003) state that for ethical qualitative research to take place, informed consent from participants needs to be obtained. The participants in this study will be made aware of the purpose of the study and its audience, understand what their agreement to participate entails, give their consent willingly and understand that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any point.

## **1.17 Definition of Terms**

### **1.17.1 Social Interaction**

According to Burton and Dimbleby (1995) social interaction can be described as everyday encounters with other people. It will consist of events, or a sequence of happenings between two or more people when they meet face to face (Burton & Dimbleby, 1995). It will consist of physical behaviour, including sounds and visual signs to express our meaning to other people (Burton & Dimbleby, 1995). These signs may or may not have been intended (Burton & Dimbleby, 1995).

According to Vygotsky (1978) when children engage with others, through social interaction, learning takes place in the Zone of Proximal Development. As a result, children will engage with psychological tools, such as language, which will help mediate our thoughts, feelings and behaviours (Vygotsky, 1978). With the development of language comes the emergence of self-awareness and voluntary control of our actions (Vygotsky, 1978).

## 1.17.2 Emotions

According to Kagan (1994) as cited in Landy (2002) emotions can be described as the acute changes in physiology, cognition, and action that occur in response to novelty, challenge, loss, attack, or frustration and longer lasting affect states, created by experiences over months or years. Kagan (1994) as cited in Landy (2002) defines emotion regulation as the process by which people control or self-regulate internal reactions to emotions, as well as their outward expression.

Children learn to express, understand, and regulate their emotions in interactions with their parents, siblings and peers (Scharfe, 2002 as cited in Bar-On 2002). Some children learn to skillfully master emotions of themselves and others, whereas for others, their skills in interpreting emotions are insufficient to achieve success in the social world (Scharfe, 2002 as cited in Bar-On 2002). Research states that humans have an innate capacity to express emotions of joy, fear, anger, sadness, surprise and disgust (Izard, Fine, Schultz, Mostow, Ackerman, Youngstom, 2001).

## 1.17.3 Emotional Responses

Social conversations are the primary vehicle in which children learn emotion-descriptive language and how to use such language with others to achieve social-emotional goals (Saarni, 1999). Unique and personal values, concerns and expectancies are embedded in scripts and narratives (Saarni 1999). One would try to comprehend these emotional responses as a way to understand the child's emotional experience (Saarni, 1999).

## 1.17.4 Learning Difficulty

The term learning disability refers to a neurobiological disorder that affects how one's brain works (Lerner, 2003). This brain variance may affect one's ability to speak, listen, read, write, spell, reason, organize information, or do mathematics (Lerner, 2003). If provided with the right support and intervention, children with learning disabilities can succeed in school and in later life (Lerner, 2003).

According to Heward (2006) the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities definition, learning difficulties is a general term that refers to the heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual



and presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction, and may appear across a lifespan (Heward, 2006). Problems in self-regulatory behaviours, social perception, and social interaction may exist with learning disabilities but do not themselves constitute a learning disability (Heward, 2006).

The disorders included in this definition include such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia (Heward, 2006).

## **1.18 Conclusion**

Chapter 1 describes the purpose of the study, which is to explore the emotional responses of children with learning difficulties regarding their social interaction experiences. The results of the study will help to deepen our understanding of these learners' social interaction experiences and the ways in which they communicate with others. The study will provide insight into the participants' social and emotional skills and competencies.

## **1.19 Outline of Chapters**

### **1.19.1 Chapter 1 - Introduction and Rationale**

In chapter 1, an outline of the study is provided, with an explanation of my rationale and purpose for undertaking the study. I explain the contextualization of the study and the questions that arose from this. I briefly describe the research design, methodology and the data analysis methods to be employed. I explore how quality criteria and ethical considerations will be employed. I describe the theoretical framework in which the study will be embedded. I provide a brief definition of the terms used and conclude with a summary of what this chapter entails.

### **1.19.2 Chapter 2 - Literature Review**

This chapter covers a review of selected literature to examine the past and current documentation in my field of study. The review explores literature from a range of sources of information.

### **1.19.3 Chapter 3 - Research Design and Methodology**

This chapter provides a detailed description of the research design and the methodology employed in my study. It will clarify how the participants are selected and how the data will be gathered.

### **1.19.4 Chapter 4 – Analysis of Results**

This chapter presents a detailed discussion and interpretation of the findings as they relate to the research questions, the literature review and the theoretical framework.

### **1.19.5 Chapter 5 - Conclusions and Recommendations**

This chapter involves the interrogation of the data. This will result in conclusions about the data being drawn and recommendations being made regarding the research findings.

# Chapter 2

## A Literature Review on Social Interaction, Emotions and Learning Difficulties

### 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, by means of literature review, I will explore social interaction, emotion regulation and learning difficulty. This literature review will be linked to the emotional responses of children with learning difficulties regarding their social interaction experiences. The literature review will provide background information of the study, describe and evaluate the context of my research, consider and comment on what has already been written within the general area of investigation and discuss the relevance of existing research focus and methodology (Burton & Bartlett, 1988). The literature review will identify areas of controversy and formulate questions for further research by presenting a balanced view of competing perspectives (Burton & Bartlett, 1988). The aim of the review is to identify the most relevant studies in relation my current study and to identify the methodologies, underlying concepts, arguments and theories presented (Burton & Bartlett, 1988). I will consider the implications of and the relationships between the findings and suggestions in the context of my own research focus (Burton & Bartlett, 1988). I will refer back to the literature in the discussion of my findings so as to highlight and relationships between the new and the existing research (Burton & Bartlett, 1988).

Whilst literature on the challenges that children with learning difficulties experience in social interaction and emotional understanding of their own and other's' emotions exists, specific literature on what these children's' emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences are, appears limited.

I will begin with sharing the theoretical framework that shaped and guided this study.

### 2.2 Theoretical Framework

It is stated that in order for a study to be considered credible, it is important that the data be collected, considered and understood within a particular theoretical framework. A theoretical framework can be understood as a collection of interrelated concepts (Afana & Mertz, 2006). Afana and Mertz (2006) define theory as a set of interrelated constructs, definitions and

propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations amongst variables with the purpose of explaining and predicting phenomena. I will explore the data that I gather from Vygotsky's (1978) social development theory, working from a constructivist, interpretivist perspective.

## 2.2.1 Vygotsky – Social Development Theory

According to Vygotsky's social development theory, social interaction plays an important role in the development of cognition (Vygotsky, 1978). Our lower mental abilities, our genetically inherited functions, are seen as internalized. Our higher mental functions, such as language, are seen to develop through social interaction, being culturally or socially mediated (Vygotsky, 1978). Without learning that occurs as a result of social interactions, without self-awareness of the use of signs and symbols that allow us to think in more complex ways, we would simply continue to respond to the environment (Vygotsky, 1978). Our higher mental functions allow us to move from impulsive behaviour to instrumental action (Vygotsky, 1978).

I concur with Vygotsky (1978) that a child's potential for cognitive development is related to the Zone of Proximal Development, as indicated in figure 1, which is attained when children engage in social behaviour. Full cognitive development of the child occurs when they experience full social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978). The skills learned by children will develop with adult guidance and peer collaboration (Vygotsky, 1978). This interaction will allow the child to exceed what progress he or she would make on his or her own (Vygotsky, 1978). In this Zone of Proximal Development, through social interaction, we learn to use the psychological tools available to us (Vygotsky, 1978). Psychological tools help to bridge the gap between the higher and lower mental functions (Vygotsky, 1978). These tools, for example, include language, systems for counting, art and writing, which mediate our thoughts, feelings and behaviours (Vygotsky, 1978). Of these tools, language is seen as the most important (Vygotsky, 1978).

I further concur with Vygotsky (1978) that the culture that the child finds itself in will influence the behaviour of the self. Differences in the self, and the ability to reflect on one-self and the perspectives of others, allow us to make sense of the environment in which we live and orientate ourselves (Vygotsky, 1978). Motivation is the reason we act (Vygotsky, 1978). What we see as desirable or threatening depends upon the social environment we inhabit, so we will therefore act in relation to the environment (Vygotsky, 1978).

Through interaction, the child will learn the habits of mind of their culture, including speech patterns, written language and symbolic knowledge through which the individual finds

meaning, all of which that will affect their knowledge (Vygotsky, 1978). This is known as cultural mediation, created through internal and shared knowledge, known as internalization (Vygotsky, 1978).

In this research study, I wish to explore the emotional response of children with learning difficulties regarding their social interaction experiences. Vygotsky (1978) states that learning occurs through social interaction and literature states that many children with learning difficulties are likely to experience difficulty in their social interactions (Lerner, 2006) This indicates a potential concern for children with learning difficulties in terms of their social learning.

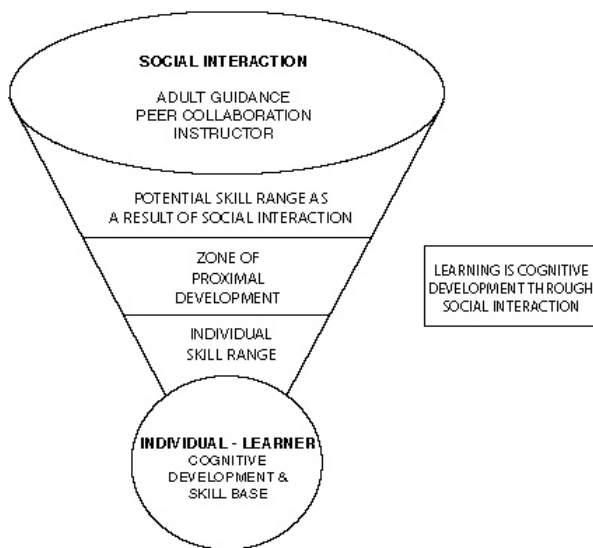


Figure 1 – Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development

This figure illustrates how an individual learner will have the opportunity to develop skills that result from social interaction with others. This will take place in the Zone of Proximal Development, in the environment that they find themselves in (Vygotsky, 1978). The Zone of Proximal Development allows the individual to acquire skills learned as a result of interaction with others that would not have been acquired as quickly or successfully without social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978).

## 2.2.2 Cognitive Development and Language

Vygotsky (1978) states that full cognitive development results from social interaction with children being able to access the higher order mental functions, such as language (Vygotsky, 1978). Language, originally a means of communication, eventually becomes internalized into

a means of the child's own thinking and control of activity (Vygotsky, 1978). This development of language will allow the emergence of self-awareness and voluntary control of our actions (Vygotsky, 1978). If many children with learning difficulties experience problems with social interaction, they may not have the opportunity to access the higher mental functions, such as the development of language, potentially affecting their ability for the development of self-awareness and voluntary control of their actions. I concur with Lerner (2006) those children who have learning difficulties may therefore need to be taught social skills so as to help them overcome this potential difficulty.

## **2.3 Social Interaction**

Learning in Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development requires social interaction. As indicated by the literature, children with learning difficulties may experience challenges with social interaction (Lerner, 2006). I wish to explore through the literature, how social interaction may affect those identified with learning challenges.

According to Burton and Dimbleby (1995) social interaction can be described as everyday encounters with other people. It will consist of events, or a sequence of happenings between two or more people when they meet face to face (Burton & Dimbleby, 1995). It will consist of physical behaviour, including sounds and visual signs to express our meaning to other people (Burton & Dimbleby, 1995). These signs may or may not have been intended (Burton & Dimbleby, 1995). As indicated by McKenzie, Matheson, Hamilton and Murray (2000) many children with learning difficulties experience difficulties with communication and this challenge has implications for making and maintaining social relations.

### **2.3.1 Social Competence**

Social competence can be defined as the possession and use of the ability to integrate thinking, feeling and behaviour to achieve social tasks and outcomes valued in the host context and culture (Bremner, Holmes & Topping, 2002, as cited in Bar-On, 2002). Socially competent people can be seen to be able to select and control which behaviours to emit and which to suppress in any given context (Bremner et al., 2002, as cited in Bar-On, 2002). Social competence can be understood as having knowledge and information processing capability and a set of component skills or procedures applied conditionally (Bremner et al., 2002, as cited in Bar-On, 2002).

Many children with learning difficulties experience challenges with communication (Remington, 1998, as cited in McKenzie et al., 2000). This may result from difficulty in being able to interpret their own emotions and the emotions of others (Remington, 1998, as cited in McKenzie et al., 2000). This may result in implications for making and maintaining social relationships (Remington, 1998, as cited in McKenzie et al., 2000).

### **2.3.2 Social Information Processing**

There exists a correlation between learning difficulty and social information processing, where according to Karvale and Fornesse (1996) seventy-five percent of children with learning difficulty demonstrate social skills deficits. Dodge (Crick and Dodge, 1994; Dodge, 1986 as cited in Bauminger & Kimhi-Kind, 2008) proposed a Social Information Processing model to conceptualize the cognitive processes underlying the social interaction in children. Tur-Kaspa and Bryan (1994) as cited in Bauminger and Kimhi-Kind. (2008) found that children with learning difficulties performed less well on each of the steps of the model than their average-achieving peers. The stages of the model include encoding social cues, mentally representing and interpreting the cues, clarifying goals, searching for possible social responses, making a response decision after evaluating the consequences of the various responses and estimating the possibility of favourable outcomes and acting on the environment and regulating behaviour accordingly (Tur-Kaspa & Bryan, 1994 as cited in Bauminger et al., 2008).

Social cognition is the domain that most closely links cognitive and social-emotional capabilities (Bauminger, Schorr, Edelsztein and Morash, 2005). Social cognition involves the ability to spontaneously read and correctly interpret verbal and non verbal social and emotional cues; the ability to recognize central and peripheral social and emotional information; the knowledge of different social behaviours and their consequences in diverse social tasks and the ability to make an adequate attribution about another person's mental state (Bauminger et al., 2005). This is considered one of the most challenging areas for children with learning difficulties, linking their cognitive, attention, memory, reasoning, focusing, processing information and social emotional difficulties together (Bauminger et al., 2005).

### **2.3.3 Interpersonal Relations**

There is a large amount of evidence to suggest that children with learning difficulties are at risk for poor interpersonal relations (Carlson, 2001). They have been found to be less

popular and more rejected by peers that do not have a learning difficulty (Carlson, 2001). One factor found to impact their poor interpersonal relations is that they display significant deficits in social accuracy and comprehension (Pearl & Cosden, 1982; Saloner & Gettinger, 1985 as cited in Carlson, 2001) and mis-attributions for social stimuli (Weiss, 1984 as cited in Carlson, 2001). Other studies found no significant differences between the two populations (Stone & La Greca, 1984). It has been stated by La Greca (1981) as cited in Carlson (2001) that children with learning difficulties both emit and receive higher states of negative statements in peer interaction. It was further found that this group of children engaged in more visually distracting behaviours and more direct, intrusive and demanding social entry (Stone & La Greca, 1984). Peer acceptance was found to be almost totally predicted by social behaviour, suggesting that social skills deficits are at least one major factor underlying the low social acceptance of children with learning difficulties (Hartup, 1983, as cited in Carlson, 2001). It has been stated that children with learning difficulties differ in their selection of social strategies and in their goals for social interaction (Asher & Renshaw, 1981).

As indicated, children with learning difficulties are at risk for poor interpersonal relationships, partially due to their difficulties with the cognitive processes underlying social interaction (Carlson, 2001). As a result of these difficulties, these children may display poor Emotional Intelligence. I will now explore how social interaction may be affected by emotional intelligence, emotion regulation, emotional competence and emotional expression, as presented in current literature.

## **2.4 Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional Intelligence can be understood as the ability to comprehend and use emotion to guide thinking and behaviour (Bar-On, 2002). The literature states that emotional competence may be an area of difficulty for children with learning difficulties (McKenzie et al., 2000).

According to Salovey and Mayer (1990) as cited in Bar-On (2002) emotional intelligence can be defined as the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. The central components to the construct of emotional intelligence can be understood as the perception, appraisal and expression of emotion; emotional facilitation of thinking; understanding and analyzing emotions; employing emotional knowledge and reflective regulation of emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Bar-On, 2002).



According to Lerner (2006) these above mentioned skills are skills that might be lacking in children with learning difficulties. I concur with Lerner (2006) in the belief that these above mentioned skills are skills that can be taught and further concur with Schutte, Malouff, Bobik, Coston, Greeson, Jedlicka, Rhodes and Wendorf (2001) that there is a link between emotional intelligence and interpersonal relations.

Goleman's (1998) as cited in Bar-On (2002) framework for understanding emotional intelligence includes emotional awareness, accurate self-assessment, self-confidence, self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability, innovation, achievement drive, commitment, initiative, optimism, understanding others, influence, communication, and cooperation.

Goleman (1995) as cited in Bar-On (2002) states that there are two types of intelligence, rational intelligence and emotional intelligence. He believes that success in life is determined by both elements of intelligence (Goleman, 1995, as cited in Bar-On, 2002). He indicates that the characteristics of emotional intelligence is being able to motivate yourself and to persist in the face of frustrations, to control impulse and delay gratification, to regulate one's moods and keep distress from overwhelming the ability to act (Goleman, 1995, as cited in Bar-On, 2002). Gardner's (1993) theory of multiple intelligences, as cited in Bar-On (2002) states that intrapersonal intelligence, the ability to be able to understand other people, is another way of defining emotional intelligence.

According to Bar-On (1997) as cited in Bar-On (2002) emotional intelligence incorporates a broad array of factors. He proposed a model of emotional intelligence that includes five broad areas of skills or competencies, and within each of these, more specific skills that appear to contribute to success (Bar-On, 1997, as cited in Bar-On, 2002). According to Bar-On (1997) as cited in Bar-On (2002) these factors include intrapersonal skills, (emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, self-regard, self-actualisation, independence), interpersonal skills (interpersonal relationships, social responsibility, empathy) adaptability (problem solving, reality testing, flexibility), stress management (stress tolerance, impulse, control) and general mood (happiness, optimism). Lerner (2003) defines emotional intelligence as the notion that the ability to deal with one's emotions can be understood as an aspect of intelligence.

I concur with Goleman (1995) as cited in Bar-On (2002) in his hypothesis that emotional intelligence plays a role in establishing and maintaining relationships and with Saarni (1999) in that emotional competence is a critical aspect of social development and impacts the quality of interpersonal relationships. According to Schutte et al. (2001) the four building blocks of relationships may be empathy, the ability to self-monitor in social situations, good

social skills and cooperation. Indicators of good relationships may be affiliation, close affective ties and a satisfactory close partnership (Schutte et al., 2001).

In the analysis of the data, I will explore the impact of emotional competence as an aspect of social development, which may impact on the quality of interpersonal relationships of the core-participants in my study.

### **2.4.1 Emotional Expressions**

In light of the theories of emotional intelligence, I wish to explore how emotional expressions may affect social interaction. Optimal social adaptation requires the ability to appreciate the differentiated feelings of the self and others and integrate this information into a plan of action that permits attainment of personal goals in a manner that fits with the social context (Lane, 2002 as cited in Bar-On, 2002).

One of the ways in which emotional awareness can influence social interaction is through the modulation of emotional expressions (Lane, 2002 as cited in Bar-On, 2002). Such expressions are influenced both by learned display rules and by the demands of the situation. These can be executed with differential accuracy and efficiency (Lane, 2002, as cited in Bar-On, 2002). It is predicted that with higher levels of emotional awareness, the greater the appropriateness of emotional expression in social contexts (Lane, 2002 as cited in Bar-On, 2002).

According to Lerner (2003) the early years of life are crucial for establishing a lifelong foundation for learning. Learning to accurately express, recognize and understand emotional expression is an important task for infants and children (Scharfe, 2002, as cited in Bar-On, 2002). Children use emotional knowledge to guide their social world (Scharfe, 2002, as cited in Bar-On, 2002). Emotionally intelligent individuals are able to regulate as well as accurately perceive and generate emotional expressions and this ability develops across the life span (Scharfe 2002, as cited in Bar-On, 2002).

### **2.4.2 Emotion Regulation**

Kagan (1994) as cited in Landy (2002) defines emotion regulation as the process by which people control or self-regulate internal reactions to emotions, including their outward expression. Burton and Dimbleby (1995) indicate that in order for people to function, it is important to have emotional regulation, and they believe that it is crucial the individual learns

a number of coping strategies to deal with the emotional experiences. It is important that individuals develop a strong sense of self to act as a foundation for dealing with frustrations and intense-emotions (Burton & Dimbleby, 1995).

During the period between three and six years of age, children, in the context of play with other children and using language, peer interaction provides a powerful context for emotion regulation (Landy, 2002). Language and cognitive processing skills are used by the children to understand situations, which will help the child to develop tools for self-regulation (Landy, 2002). Due to their cognitive development, children develop an understanding of themselves, their families, peers, social events and social expectations (Landy, 2002). These expectations help with emotional regulation, perspective taking and empathy (Landy, 2002). Alternative strategies for emotion regulation will normally be experimented with, resulting in selection of the most appropriate ones (Landy, 2002). Children begin to understand that they can experience more than one emotion about a situation at one time (Landy, 2002). Emotions become more socialized and children can 'fake' emotions when appropriate (Landy, 2002). I wish to observe the core-participants in my study engaging in peer social interaction, capturing their emotional expressions as a way for me to understand their emotional regulation and social interaction experiences, identifying their areas of strength and weakness.

Emotional understanding, according to Bauminger et al. (2005) involves labeling emotional expressions, identifying emotional clues and emotion-eliciting situations, recognizing emotions in diverse social situations, using emotional language to describe one's own and others' emotional experiences. This will lead to the development of knowledge of emotion-display rules, understanding the gap between observed and felt emotion, developing knowledge that multiple emotions can be felt at one time even if the emotions conflict and the understanding of complex emotions.

According to Landy (2002) children who have good emotional regulation get along better with and are more accepted by their peers. They can deal with conflicts without becoming overwhelmed and are more able to accept the perspectives of others. Those with good emotional regulation are less likely to use aggression and venting in social situations and can focus their attention away from an emotionally arousing stimulus. According to Landy (2002) children with learning challenges often experience difficulties in the social arena.

Children with adequate emotional regulation have good perspective-taking skills and can differentiate their own emotions from those of others (Landy, 2002). They can use their energy to problem-solve and to show caring behaviour towards others (Landy, 2002).

### **2.4.3 Emotional Communication**

Deutch-Smith (1992) indicates that in order to join in play with peers, a child has to be able to say the right words in the right way, as it is this ability relates to their popularity and acceptability with other children. If the child is able to get their message across to others, they are less likely to feel frustrated and more likely to feel more understood (Deutch-Smith, 1992). I concur with Deutch-Smith (1992) that this ability to talk about their feelings and emotions can significantly enhance the child's capacity for self control and reduce the incidence of acting-out behaviour.

Intrapersonal communication skills are closely linked with interpersonal skills. I concur with Burton and Dimbleby (1995) that being able to express ourselves in words and in non-verbal behaviour to other people, being able to recognize the effect we have on them and being able to compare ourselves to others, are skills we can learn and practice.

### **2.4.4 Emotional Competence**

We are born with innate emotional responses but it is through relationships with others that the richness and diversity of our emotional experiences develops (Saarni, 1999). As many children with learning difficulties experience problems with social interactions and social relationships they may not develop that rich diversity of emotional experience as their non learning difficulty peers (Lerner, 2006).

According to Izard, C, Fine, S., Schultz, D., Mostow, A., Ackerman, B., Youngstrom, E. (2001) consistent mis-perception or mis-interpretation of emotional cues or often not recognizing them at all, could seriously hinder the development of socio-emotional competence. I concur with Izard et al. (2001) that a lack of emotion knowledge could result in poor peer relations at school and this may affect the child's morale, concentration and motivation to perform well academically. The beneficial effect of emotion knowledge on social communication and peer relations helps explain the positive relation to social skills, appropriate self-assertion and cooperative behaviour (Izard et al., 2001).

### **2.4.5 Awareness of Emotions**

Emotional competence stems from an awareness of one's own emotions and this awareness leads to problem solving (Saarni, 1999). As the child's awareness of being able to experience multiple emotions helps them to take into account the pros and cons of the situation and

make a decision that weighs up the advantages and disadvantages of an outcome (Saarni, 1999). This may be an area of challenge for those with learning difficulties,

I concur that our cultures define the details of our emotional meaningfulness in our daily experience (Saarni, 1999). Individuals who are lacking in their emotional awareness would also have difficulty in knowing how to respond adaptively to their environment and therefore their self-efficacy in emotion-eliciting social transactions would be negatively affected (Saarni, 1999).

## **2.4.6 Understanding Others' Emotions**

As children develop, they will develop an awareness of their own emotions as well as the emotions of others (Saarni, 1999). This awareness will develop through their interaction and relationships with others (Saarni, 1999). This interaction and the development of relationships will be influenced by the culture in which they find themselves (Saarni, 1999).

As indicated in the literature, children identified as having a learning difficulty are likely to experience challenges with regulating their own emotional state as well as being able to recognize and understand the emotions of others. I will now explore the effect of learning difficulties on social interaction and emotions.

## **2.5 Learning Difficulty**

### **2.5.1 Definition**

The term learning disability refers to a neurobiological disorder that affects how one's brain works. This brain variance may affect one's ability to speak, listen, read, write, spell, reason, organize information, or do mathematics (Heward, 2006). If provided with the right support and intervention, children with learning disabilities can succeed in school and in later life (Lerner, 2006). The disorders included in this definition include such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia (Heward, 2006).

Flack (2005) reviews different definitions of, or attempts to describe learning disability internationally and as the term is understood in the South African context. Flack (2005) highlights some of the difficulties in the definition of learning disability, from the lack of consensus of what constitutes a learning disability, lack of consistency in terminology and in

the identification of a learning disability through the use of Intelligence Quotient tests (Siegel, 1999, as cited in Flack, 2005).

Flack (2005) further explores the issue that the medical and reductionist paradigms are no longer sufficient in ways of providing effective understanding and support in terms of learning disability. I concur with Flack (2005) that new ways of understanding learning disability are called for, where a holistic view of learning disability is achieved by examining the life experiences of the child with a focus on their strengths, rather than their weaknesses, in terms of intervention (Cole & Knowles, 2001) as cited in Flack (2005). It is with this approach in mind that I wish to understand the difficulties in social interactions, which many children with learning difficulties may experience.

## **2.5.2 Identification**

Due to the fact that learning difficulties are highly individual and that solutions to the problems resulting from having a learning difficulty need to be adaptive and reflexive, it is difficult to find a single definition (Lerner, 2006). I therefore concur with Lerner (2006) that several definitions of learning difficulty are therefore required. These definitions serve different purposes from identification, assessment, instruction, advocacy and research (Lerner, 2006). The central elements that will link the various definitions together will be central nervous system dysfunction, uneven growth patterns and psychological processing deficits, difficulty in academic and learning tasks, discrepancy between achievement and potential and exclusion of other causes (Lerner, 2006). I agree with Lerner (2006) that there are many characteristics associated with learning difficulty but each individual is unique and will present an individual array of characteristics that constitute their specific difficulty. Research relating to learning difficulties is focused largely on identification, causes and intervention for learning difficulties.

## **2.5.3 Learning Difficulties – Academic, Social, Emotional**

The primary school years, for many children, are the period when learning difficulties manifest (Lerner, 2006). This can often result from academic difficulties or in the social context where the children may find it difficult to make and keep friends (Lerner, 2006). Approximately forty-one percent of children with learning difficulties in the age group six to eleven fall into this category (Lerner, 2006). It is with this approach to understanding learning difficulties that I wish to explore the emotional responses of children with learning difficulties regarding their social interaction and peer-learning experiences.

I agree with Lerner (2006) that a comprehensive understanding of the problems of students with learning disabilities requires consideration of the effects of social, behavioural and emotional facets of the student. Students with learning difficulties often have emotional problems (Lerner, 2006). These may be the consequence of continual failure (Lerner, 2006). Emotional problems may include having little self-confidence, a poor self-concept and few opportunities to develop feelings of self-worth (Lerner, 2006). Assessment for social-emotional factors include interviews, inventories, checklists, rating scales, and sociometric techniques (Lerner, 2006).

There is evidence from studies that people with learning difficulties experience problems recognizing the emotions of others from facial expressions and have an inability to cope with high intensity emotions which are confusing, poorly recognized, badly handled and rejected (Grey, Frazer & Leudar, 1983, as cited in Arthur, 2003). Research suggests that the social-emotional development of children with learning difficulties differs significantly from those without learning difficulty and these differences contribute to the development of adult emotional problems and challenging behaviours (Arthur, 2003).

As many children with learning difficulties experience difficulty with communication, this can result in problems with the expression and comprehension of language (Remington, 1998, as cited in McKenzie et al., 2000). This is understood to have implications for these children in the ability to accurately pick up, label and interpret emotional states in others and the ability to express their own emotions (McKenzie et al., 2000). This has implications for making and maintaining social relationships (Hext and Lunsky 1997, as cited in McKenzie et al., 2000). Due to communication difficulties, these children rely on non-verbal communicators of other's emotion but still perform more poorly than non-learning difficulty peers when asked to identify emotions on the basis of non-speech noises (Hobson et al., 1989, as cited in McKenzie et al., 2000).

It is stated (Arthur, 2003) that people with learning disabilities have a significantly higher level of emotional developmental problems and disturbances. Considerable attention has been paid to describing and measuring cognitive functioning of, assessing and modifying adaptive behaviour, service planning and evaluation, treating challenging behaviour and normalization but there is concern of how to apply knowledge, theories, approaches and research methodologies to emotions (Arthur, 2003). According to Arthur (2003) there is a lack of knowledge about emotions in regard to learning disability.

I concur with Arthur (2003) that as many people with learning difficulties would benefit from group training in emotion regulation as they often experience difficulty with developing



friendships, that they had little social impact as a group and merely develop acquaintances. In order to effectively support those with learning difficulties in the development of skills that have been identified as relevant to successful social interactions, I concur with McKenzie et al. (2000) that this must be done in the context of shaping the environment to support social inclusion for people with learning difficulty.

## 2.6 Conclusion

According to Vygotsky (1978) social interaction plays an important role in the development of cognition. He states that learning that takes place in the Zone of Proximal Development allows the individual to acquire skills learned as a result of social interaction with others that would not have been acquired as quickly or successfully without social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978). Social interaction should allow for the development of self-awareness and voluntary control of actions as a result of the development of higher order mental functions (Vygotsky, 1978).

The literature states that a large proportion of children identified as having a learning difficulty demonstrate deficits in social skills (Kavale & Fornesse, 1996). Social cognition links cognitive and social-emotional capabilities (Bauminger et al., 2005). Emotional competence has been stated as an area of potential difficulty for this population, where emotional intelligence can be defined as the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions (McKenzie et al., 2000). Emotional intelligence is seen to play a role in establishing and maintaining relationships (Goleman, 1995, as cited in Bar-On, 2002). It is stated that Emotional Quotient can be increased through training in social and emotional skills and competencies (Schutte et al., 2001). This may impact self-esteem, which in turn impacts social relationships (Lerner, 2006). Those who have good emotional regulation are seen to get on better and are more accepted by their peers (Izard et al., 2001).

The literature states that in the primary years at school are often when academic and social difficulties become apparent (Lerner, 2006). This may include difficulty in making and keeping friends (Lerner, 2006).

Chapter Three deals with the research design and methodology. I will explain qualitative research design, case study and the interpretivist, constructivist paradigm. Data collection, methods for quality control and ethical considerations will be explored.



# Chapter Three

## Research Design and Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research design and methodology will be explored. The data collection methods, as well as the quality criteria and ethical considerations in this study will be discussed.

### 3.2 Research Design

In this study, a qualitative case study research design will be employed where the interpretivist, constructivist paradigms will be used as a means from which to view the data.

#### 3.2.1 Qualitative Research Design

This research study is qualitative in nature. Qualitative research is a broad approach to the study of social phenomena (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). It is naturalistic and interpretivist in nature (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). It draws on multiple methods of inquiry (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). The methods of data collection are usually interactive and humanistic (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). As stated by Rossman and Rallis (2003) qualitative researchers seek answers to questions in the real world by actively gathering their material from the world around them (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Researchers aim to gather data to be analyzed so that new understandings of reality can be created (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Techniques frequently used include interviewing, observing and gathering of documents and human culture.

In this study, the emotional responses of the participants will be gathered in the participants' school setting, in an environment where they engage in social interactions. The analyzed findings will lead to a deeper understanding of the participants' emotional responses regarding their social interactions.

The result of this process will be the acquisition of new information that can ultimately, if used to improve the human condition, become knowledge (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Qualitative research begins with questions and ends with learning (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

A qualitative research design will suite the purpose of my study, where the emotional responses of the participants will be explored in detail to gain a deeper understanding of the participant's social, emotional experiences with their peers. Meaning will be constructed from the perspective of the participants, where social events will be described and explored.

Rossman and Rallis (2003) state that qualitative researchers will always attempt to be objective during the research process but they must hold an awareness that they are actively involved in the research process. I will therefore reflect on my impact upon the study, whilst acknowledging that my perspective will be a source of understanding of the emerging findings. Rossman and Rallis (2003) state that as well as being aware of his or her involvement in the research process, the qualitative researcher will also need to be aware of his or her separateness from those he or she is researching. I will therefore need to be aware of whom I was and what I will be trying to achieve in this particular setting. I will be reflexive, making my purposes about the research that I will be conducting explicit. The issues of reliability and validity will therefore be served.

Although qualitative research is interpretivist, holistic and contextual, it is systematic research (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). A deliberate, conscious process of making decisions about gathering the data and their meaning will be followed (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Others need to be made aware of how my study will be conducted to be able to assess the adequacy and trustworthiness of the study (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

By conducting activity sessions with the core-participants, conducting semi-structured interviews with the parents and educator of the core-participants, by observing the core-participants in their educational setting and by recording my observations in the field, I will gather rich, detailed data detailing the core-participant's emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences.

### **3.2.2 Case Study**

According to Hayes (2000) a case study allows researchers to investigate a topic in great detail. Case studies focus on single cases and explore them (Hayes, 2000). Often more than one research method may be employed (Hayes, 2000). Case studies are usually used to open up and explore aspects of human experience (Hayes, 2000). They may give us insight into how psychological processes may be operating (Hayes, 2000). We can use case studies to identify interactions and influences in ways that would not be possible with larger samples (Hayes, 2000). In this research study, I will conduct a case study relating to each core-participant, where each core-participant's emotional responses regarding their social

interaction experiences will be explored.

Case studies, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) can provide unique examples of real people in real situations, which may help readers to understand the situation more clearly than simply by providing theories or principles. It allows readers the opportunity of understanding how ideas and abstract principles fit together (Cohen et al., 2007). Case studies can penetrate situations that cannot always be understood through the use of statistical analysis (Cohen et al., 2007). Case studies are seen to be analytic rather than statistical generation; they tend to develop theory, which can help researchers to understand other similar cases, phenomenon or situations (Cohen et al., 2007).

According to Cohen et al. (2007: 253) case studies are seen to be concerned with:

- Rich and valid descriptions of events relevant to the case
- Provide chronological narrative of events relevant to the case
- Blend a description of the events with analysis of themselves
- Focus on individual actors or groups of actors and seeks to understand their perception of events
- Highlights specific events that are relevant to the case
- Researcher integrally involved in the case
- Attempt is made to portray the richness of the case in writing up the report

In this case study, I will work alongside two core-participants where I will engage with them in activity sessions so as to elicit their emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences. The data gathered will be a rich description of the core-participants' social interaction experiences and their emotional responses to these interactions. The data will be understood from the perspective of the participants and will allow me the opportunity of understanding how different aspects of their experience fit together.

### **3.3 Selection of Participants**

In this research study, I will use purposeful sampling to select my participants. By means of purposive sampling, I will chose elements judged to be typical, or representative from the population (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 2002). The critical question in purposive sampling is the extent to which judgment can be relied on to arrive at typical sample and will continue to be typical over a period of time (Ary et al., 2002). Due to the limitations of this method of sampling, where the sample may not be typical over an extended period of time, the results could be misleading; it is therefore to be used with caution (Ary et al., 2002).

I will select two research participants for my study. The children had been identified as having a learning difficulty by the Principal and Deputy Head at the School from which the sample of participants was drawn. The participants are aged ten although my sample boundaries ranged between seven and eleven years of age. I chose this age group because I have worked predominantly within this age bracket during my teaching career. It is with learners of this age group that I most frequently observed the difficulties in social interactions that the children with learning difficulties experienced.

In relation to the selection of the core-participants, I will engage with the parents and the educator involved with the core-participants in their school setting, so as to also explore their understanding of the core-participant's social interaction experiences and their emotional responses to this.

## **3.4 Paradigms**

### **3.4.1 Interpretative Paradigm**

The interpretivist paradigm attempts to understand the social world as it is from the perspective of individual experience (Burton & Bartlett, 1998). I will therefore attempt to describe and understand the research situation from the perspective of the participants. Burton and Bartlett (1998) state that interpretivism does not see society as being fixed in structure because the social world is created by interactions of individuals. Action is seen as deliberate and meaningful to those involved (Burton & Bartlett, 1998).

I will be able to describe and understand the research situation from the perspective of the participants when I have understood the situation from the point of view of those in it. I will share my thoughts and feelings about the particular situation with those in it to ensure that my understanding matches participant understanding (Neuman 2006).

Neuman (2006) states that the interpretive approach is ideographic; a symbolic representation or 'thick' description of something. The features of specific contexts and meanings are essential to understand the social meanings (Neuman, 2006). Evidence about social action cannot be isolated from the context in which it occurs or the meanings assigned to it by the social actors involved in it (Neuman, 2006). Social scientists often apply a transcendent perspective, which means going beyond ordinary material experiences and perceptions (Neuman, 2006).

Neuman (2006) states that interpretivist social science is concerned with how people interact with one another. It can be described as the systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through direct observation of people in natural settings to understand and interpret how people create and maintain their social worlds (Neuman, 2006). Neuman (2006) further states that interpretive social researchers study meaningful social action, not just external or observable behaviour, where people attach meaning to action, it is activity with intent. Human action acquires meaning when there are people who share a meaning system that permits them to interpret the action as a socially relevant sign or action (Neuman, 2006). The interpretive approach believes that social life is based on social interactions and socially constructed meanings, an internally experienced sense of reality (Neuman, 2006). Social life exists as people experience it and give it meaning (Neuman, 2006). It is both fluid and fragile (Neuman, 2006). In this research study, the meaning the participants attach to their social interactions and their emotional experience of their interactions will be explored.

Neuman (2006) indicates that a constructionist sees language as filled with built-in social constructions, so that as people learn language, they learn to think and see the world in certain ways. Interpretive social science sees people as being able to make conscious choices. Social settings and subjective points of view help to shape the choices a person makes (Neuman, 2006).

The aim of the researcher using an interpretivist paradigm, is to understand how people construct meaning in their natural settings, what is meaningful or relevant to them, how they experience their daily lives (Neuman, 2006).

I will gather data from the participants in my study and from my reflections in the field. I will present my findings in a manner that corresponds with participant meaning. I will explore how the core-participants construct meaning in their social interactions by using language as a means to achieve this. I will check my findings with the participants to ensure that my understanding corresponds with their intended meaning.

### **3.4.2 Constructivist Paradigm**

Constructivism is concerned with how knowledge arises, what concept of knowledge is appropriate and what criteria can be involved in the evaluation of knowledge (Flick et al., 2004). This is relevant in terms of qualitative research because as a research method, it engenders knowledge and therefore looks empirically at specific forms of knowledge (Flick et al., 2004). Perception is seen as an active, constructive process (Flick et al., 2004). The original is only accessible through different constructions (Flick et al., 2004). Schutz (1962)

as cited in Flick et al. (2004) assumes that knowledge in the social sciences starts from an everyday understanding of the world. Knowledge and the objective meanings that it produces are social constructs in the everyday world (Flick et al., 2004).

The terms and forms by which we achieve understanding of the world and ourselves are social artifacts; influenced by the culture we find ourselves in and the historical and political climate of the time (Flick et al., 2004). Knowledge is constructed in a process of social interchange; it is based on the role of language in such relationships (Flick, et al., 2004).

In this research study, a case study methodology will be employed, where the emotional responses of the participants regarding their social interactions will be captured. These emotional responses will be analyzed to expose themes in the data, which will be used as a means to gain a deeper understanding of the emotional responses of the participants regarding their social interactions with their peers. Processing the experiences of the social world into concepts, knowledge or everyday stories to others, can be seen as a process of construction (Flick, et al., 2004).

From a constructivist viewpoint, knowledge involves constructs, constructed by selection and structuring (Schutz, 1962, as cited in Flick et al., 2004). Experiences are structured and understood through concepts and contexts that are constructed by the subject (Schutz, 1962, as cited in Flick et al., 2004). Whether this perception is accurate or not cannot be determined but quality can be assessed by viability, the extent to which the picture allows the subject to find its way to act in the world (Schutz, 1962, as cited in Flick et al., 2004).

## **3.5 Data Collection Strategies**

### **3.5.1 Data Collection – Core-Participants**

A case study will be conducted where the participants will share their emotional responses regarding their social interaction and peer-learning experiences. How they respond will be essential for understanding how the participants view their world, a principle of qualitative research (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). This will led me to gain access into their understanding of their experiences. The data will be captured using a variety of data collection methods.

I will conduct an introductory session with all participants and will then conduct three individual activity sessions with each core-participant. These sessions with the core-participants will take approximately forty-five minutes each.

In activity session one, I will use finger puppets to help elicit responses from the core-participants. In session two I will use a poster of children's faces depicting a range of emotions. The images will be used as a stimulus to initiate discussion with the core-participants regarding their emotional responses to their social interaction experiences. The purpose of the images will not be to identify whether the core-participant will be able to label the emotion depicted but to stimulate discussion regarding their own social interactions and their emotional responses to this. In session three, the core-participants will create a collage representing their social interaction experiences. Once complete, the core-participants will discuss their collage with me. I will prepare discussion points and questions that will be presented to the core-participants as a way to assess their understanding of their social interaction experiences.

I will video-record these discussions for one participant and tape-record the other, as the parent of the one participant's was not comfortable with the sessions being video-recorded. I will collect the research material that will be produced by the participants. This data will later be transcribed, explored and analyzed.

The activity sessions will rely mostly on verbal communication between the core-participants and I. I will take note of the atmosphere in the setting, their body language and the facial expressions displayed by the core-participants. These effects will be noted and added to the data for later analysis. A limitation of this method of data collection is that I will rely on what will be said, the quality of the participants' responses, the participants' understanding of my questions and my understanding of their responses. The activity sessions will rely on my skill to conduct the activities and the ability of the participants to respond to the tasks.

### **3.5.2 Observation**

According to Creswell (2000) observation is the process of gathering first-hand information by observing people and places at a research site. Observation is a powerful qualitative research instrument (Creswell, 2000). Body language, facial expression, affect and the participant's words are captured (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). This method of data collection will allow me, as researcher, to enter into the social setting and to be able to capture the complexity of the situation (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

Through the process of observation, the researcher is able to learn what meaning certain actions have for participants (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). It assumes that actions are purposeful and have deeper values and beliefs (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Observations can be rigid or free, depending on the purpose of the observation (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). I will



be able to observe patterns of events and relationships through this process of data collection. I will observe the core-participants in the classroom setting where I will be a non-participant observer. I will observe each participant in three different lessons each. Here I will observe the participants' social interaction experiences. I will observe each core-participant twice in the playground as a participant observer. Here I will be able to interact with the learners and discuss with them their understanding of their social interaction experiences. The challenge according to Rossman and Rallis (2003) is to capture the overall picture of the situation whilst having to deal with a large amount of data and complex actions.

By gathering data from a variety of sources, I will add to the richness of the study and this will help me to achieve triangulation in my data. This will help me to achieve trustworthiness in my study.

### **3.5.3 Data Collection – Parents and Educator**

I will conduct semi-structured interviews with the parents and class educator involved with the core-participants in this research study. According to Rossman and Rallis (2003) the skills that will be employed in interviewing can be described as skills used in everyday life and include questioning, looking and listening. I will use these skills diligently and systematically to capture actions, words and artifacts to understand the adult's understanding of the children's social interaction experiences. I will capture their responses so as to add to my understanding of the core-participant's emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences.

Burton and Bartlett (1988: p111) state that there are five issues to consider when conducting an interview:

- The quality and nature of questioning
- Listening skills
- Body language
- Setting and atmosphere
- Overall conduct of the interview

I will pose open-ended questions allowing the interviewee to elaborate during our interviews. It will be important for me to remember that it will be the perspectives of the participants being interviewed that I wish to capture.



### **3.5.4 Field Notes**

According to Burton and Bartlett (1988) it is the task of the qualitative researcher to turn what is seen and heard into data. This will be achieved by writing field notes, a record of my perceptions in the field. The descriptive data of what I will observe and comment on will be referred to as the running record. Using this method of data collection, rich detail will be captured about the research setting, the research process and the participants (Burton & Bartlett, 1988). This information will be added to the interview transcript to enhance understanding of what will be said during the activity sessions and semi-structured interviews.

I will draw up the field notes as soon as possible after they have initially been recorded so as to capture as much detail about the situation as possible. Thick descriptions included details, emotions and textures of the social relationships of the core-participants (Burton & Bartlett 1988).

Neuman (2006) states that the researcher should reflect on, re-examine and analyze personal points of view and feelings as a part of the process of studying others. I will adopt the position of relativism with regard to the values of others. Values must be recognized and made explicit (Neuman, 2006). This will be achieved through sharing and discussing experiences and feelings with the participants during the research process.

I will keep a reflective journal where I will record my thoughts. This will be shared with my supervisor. This record will be analyzed and incorporated into the study.

## **3.6 Quality Criteria**

### **3.6.1 Credibility**

Rossmann and Rallis (2003) state that for a study to be useful, people need to believe in its integrity, it needs to be credible to its users. The quality and credibility of qualitative research can be determined by its wholeness and coherence and its adherence to ethical standards.

Burton and Bartlett (1988) indicate that qualitative researchers examine multiple angles on the subject they are working alongside, they actively search for multiple truths. They assume that reality is an interpretive phenomenon and that meaning is constructed by participants as they engage in their everyday lives (Burton & Bartlett, 1988). I will attempt to explain the

core-participants' world-views and beliefs as accurately as possible in terms of their emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences. The information presented in the research study will be my interpretation of the participant's responses.

In my study, I will adhere to ethical practice at all times to ensure the credibility of my study and will represent the meanings expressed by the participants as accurately as possible.

### **3.6.2 Trustworthiness**

Rossmann and Rallis (2003) state that in order to judge the trustworthiness of a qualitative research project, the study needs to adhere to standards for acceptable and competent practice and comply with the standards for ethical practice. Information should be gathered over time and shared with the participants (Rossmann & Rallis, 2003).

The overarching standard of trustworthiness of qualitative research is that the research should be conducted in an ethical manner, with sensitivity to the complex interpersonal situations and politics that being in the field encompasses (Rossmann & Rallis, 2003).

Triangulation, according to Burton and Bartlett (1988) increases the trustworthiness of research through the checking of one's findings using several points of reference. It is important to involve others in the reading of your work. Contextualization of the findings to the specific settings and participants informs readers that your findings are nested in a specific time and space (Burton and Bartlett, 1988).

In my study, I will comply with ethical standards of practice, gather data over an extended period of time, share my findings with the participants, in the context in which the data will be gathered and check my findings by sharing them with others.

### **3.6.3 Dependability**

Rossmann and Rallis (2003) suggest that another way in which to judge research is to ask if it has been rigorously conducted by examining if the study has been thoughtfully conducted. A study should be well conceived and well conducted, with clear decisions made and enough collected evidence (Rossmann and Rallis, 2003). There will be inquiries into the possibility of multiple solutions or outcomes. One wishes to establish if other researchers would obtain the same results if they were examining the research findings. Another researcher should understand the logic and assumptions indicated. The interpretations should be sound and grounded in data. The process of analysis should be clear and coherent.

In my study, I will make clear decisions about how the study will be designed and conducted with enough clear evidence that will allow for logical deductions to be made.

### **3.6.4 Usefulness**

For my research study to be useful, according to Rossman and Rallis (2003) I will make my position clear, use a range of methods to gather data, clearly document the gathering, analyzing and interpreting of data and keep a journal to reflect upon the research process. I will provide descriptions of the theoretical and methodological orientation that I will use and a description the context of the research (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

## **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

According to Rossman and Rallis (2003) the ethics of rights and responsibilities considers the rights of an individual and the corresponding obligations that individuals have to protect those rights (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). The ethic of care examines the effect an action may have on human relationships in the context of a problem (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). The qualitative researcher must never take advantage of any person in any circumstances regardless of differences in status, race, gender, language and other social identity considerations (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). They indicate that ethical dilemmas are not solvable but are reasoned through moral principles (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). I will therefore reason through dilemmas with thoughtfulness and sensitivity to the research setting.

### **3.7.1 Confidentiality**

Rossman and Rallis (2003) state that qualitative research takes place in the real world and involves real people, who may live and work in that particular research setting. I will ensure that the participant's confidentiality will be maintained. The name of the school where the research will be conducted will not be disclosed, nor the names of any of the participants who will participate in the study. Anonymity will therefore be maintained.

### **3.7.2 Informed Consent**

Rossman and Rallis (2003) state that for ethical qualitative research to take place, informed consent from participants needs to be obtained. The participants in this study will made aware of the purpose of the study and its audience and will understood what their agreement

to participate entails. They will give their consent willingly and understand that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any point.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I discussed the design of the study. I explored some of the qualities of qualitative research and of case studies in particular. The data collection methods, the activity sessions where participant's responses were recorded and artifacts collected, observation, semi-structured interview and field notes and reflective journal were discussed.

Chapter Four will provide me with the opportunity to describe the data analysis process in detail, where I will share the themes that emerged during analysis. I will link the data that I have gathered to the literature review in Chapter Two, linking these findings to the overall theoretical framework.

# Chapter 4

## Data Analysis and Interpretation

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on the analysis and interpretation of the raw data. According to Cohen et al. (2007) qualitative data analysis involves organizing, accounting for and explaining data. This data will be understood in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation being described, with the researcher's recognition of themes and regularities in the data (Cohen et al., 2007).

According to Cohen et al. (2007) the manner in which qualitative analysis is conducted needs to respect the quality of the data under analysis. It is understood that there are multiple methods for analysis and presentation of data but as researcher, you should proceed with the method that best matches the fitness for purpose of the study (Cohen et al., 2007). As researcher, I proceeded with a clear idea of what I wanted the data analysis to do (Cohen et al., 2007).

The analysis will also be influenced by the number of data sets and people from who data has been collected (Cohen et al., 2007). Qualitative data usually focuses on small data sets, yielding rich, detailed data (Cohen et al., 2007). Researchers would need to decide whether they wish to focus on individuals and amalgamate key issues or focus on issues that cross individual cases (Cohen et al., 2007). I followed theme analysis as a means to understand and make sense of the data. I explored the data from the perspective of both participants and then drew general conclusions.

### 4.2 Data Analysis Strategies -Theme Analysis

According to Partlett and Hamilton (1976) as cited in Cohen et al. (2007) I began data analysis with a wide lens to gather data and then through a process of sifting, sorting, reviewing and reflecting, the important features of the data emerged. When I began the analysis of my data, I recorded hunches and ideas that provided insight for analysis (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Analyzing and interpreting qualitative data involved my immersion in the data, with the systematic organization of the materials that I had gathered.

The next phase of the analysis involved the creation of themes and sub-themes. A theme can be understood as a phrase or sentence describing subtle and tacit processes (Cohen et al., 2007). Themes and sub-themes must reflect the purpose of the research, be exhaustive and be mutually exclusive (Cohen et al., 2007). As I immersed myself in the data, during the process of theme development, images, words and emotions were explored. I identified recurring ideas, language and patterns of beliefs, as indicated in Table 4.1 (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

Coding can be described as the formal representation of thematic analysis (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). This involved the thinking through of what had been taken as evidence of a theme. When I was clear about which words or phrases illustrated, I then elaborated on each concept. This process linked my data to a conceptual issue (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).



**Table 4.1:**

Factors that influence the participants' emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences:

Theme: Personal Influences :P.I.	Theme: Emotions: EM	Theme: Family : FA	Theme: School: SC	Theme: Learning: LR	Theme: Peers: PR	Theme: Social Interaction: S.I.
<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>
4.1 Self-reflection - s.r.	4.4.1 Awareness - aw.	4.5.1 Relationships - rl	4.6.1 Environmental factors - e.f.	4.7.2 Group Learning - g.l.	4.8.1 Friends Home - f.h.	4.9.1 Social Group Entry - s.g.e.
4.2 Characteristics - ch.	4.4.2 Identifying Emotions - id.e	4.5.2 Family Support - f.s.	4.6.2 Experiences - p.e.	4.7.3 Learning Style - l.s.	4.8.2 Friends School - f.s.	4.9.2 Ability to Make and Keep Friends - ab.
4.2.1 Qualities - qu.	4.4.3 Emotional Support - e.s.	4.5.3 Home Environment - h. e.	4.6.3 Classroom Activities - c.a.	4.7.4 Learning Challenges - l.ch.	4.8.3 Peer Responses - pr.r.	4.9.3 Interaction - int.
4.2.2 Physical characteristics - ph.			4.7.1 Individual Support - i.s.		4.8.4 Exclusion from Peers - ex.pr.	4.9.4 Communication - comm.
4.3 Assets - ass.					4.8.5 Expectations of Friends - exp.fr.	4.9.5 Exclusion - ex.
4.3.1 Resilience - res.						

### 4.3 Data Interpretation Process

Interpretation of the findings involves attaching significance to what was found, making sense of the findings, offering explanations, drawing conclusions, making inferences and considering meanings (Patton, 2002, as cited in Rossman & Rallis, 2003). This is a complex and reflexive process. Interpretation tells a story that includes the participant's understanding, commonsense understanding and theoretical understanding of the data (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

During data analysis, I challenged my findings by seeking alternative ways to interpret the data. The participants were consulted on their agreement of the results. I examined relevant literature to see if any relevant theories correspond to, extend, or deepened my interpretations. The data was assessed for credibility, usefulness and centrality to my research questions (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

The analysis of qualitative data is usually interpretive. This can be understood, according to Cohen et al. (2007) as a reflexive interaction between the researcher and the data. I therefore proceeded with reflexivity in my analysis, as all researchers bring their own preconceptions, interests, biases, preferences, biography, background and agenda to the process of analysis (Cohen et al., 2007).

In order to make sense of my findings, I referred to my theoretical framework and my literature review. I reviewed my data from Vygotsky's (1978) social development theory, which explores the role of social interaction in the role of cognitive development.

I explored the data collected from the activity sessions, observations, interviews, notes and my reflective journal in relation to my framework. I ascribed data into the themes and sub-themes that I had created. I explored this data in relation to my literature review to see whether any relevant theories corresponded to, extended, or deepened my interpretations (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).



## 4.4 Data Interpretation

The themes highlighted above in Table 4.1, will be interpreted below.

### 4.4.1 Themes and sub-themes

Seven main themes influencing the participants' emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences emerged, as indicated in Table 4.1. Sub-themes emerged under the main themes. I have linked the data analysis and interpretation to the literature review in Chapter 2 and to the primary and sub-questions presented in Chapter 1.

#### 4.1 Personal Influences

Both participants' emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences were impacted on by personal influences. The sub-themes regarding personal influences are discussed below.

##### 4.1.1 Self Reflection

According to Vygotsky (1978) self-awareness develops through social interaction, being culturally and socially mediated. *Differences in the self, as well as the ability to reflect on one's self, allow individuals to make sense of their environment (Vygotsky, 1978). Individuals are then believed to act in accordance with their understanding of their environment (Vygotsky, 1978).* Due to how the participants viewed themselves, Participant 1 removed herself from her peers as she felt she was not able to engage with her peers and Participant 2 felt unwanted as she was often left out of her peers' activities. *Burton and Dimbleby (1995) indicate that in order for people to function, it is important to have emotional regulation, and they believe that it is crucial the individual learns a number of coping strategies to deal with the emotional experiences. It is important that individuals develop a strong sense of self to act as a foundation for dealing with frustrations and intense-emotions (Burton & Dimbleby, 1995).*

In my discussions with Participant 1, she found it difficult to describe herself to me. *It is stated in the literature that children with learning difficulties may display little self-confidence, a poor self-concept and few opportunities to develop feelings of self-worth (Lerner, 2006). This may be linked to Goleman's (1995) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as self-assessment and self-regard where Participant 1 displays little self-confidence. This statement is also supported by McKay and Fanning (1992) who state*

*that, self-esteem can be defined by internal representations, self-representations or working models of the self. This refers to the beliefs, memories and views that a person holds inside, consciously and unconsciously (Mckay & Fanning, 1992).* Participant 1 was aware of her learning challenges and was able to describe why some learning tasks were difficult for her and how this made her feel unhappy at school, at times. She discussed how her peers' negative comments regarding her academic ability made her want, at times, to leave the school.

Participant 1 was able to discuss her aptitude in both information computing technology and creative activities. She showed work to me that she had produced in both subjects. She confidently explained how her educator had asked her to share the research that she had produced on the computer at home, with her peers in class. This experience made her feel proud. This emotional response helped to boost her self-confidence.

Participant 1's educator explained that she was trying to build up Participant 1's self-esteem in class. Participant 1's educator indicated that Participant 1's peers did not appreciate her academic ability nor her contribution in class as she was often being told off for not completing work, not completing homework and for forgetting things at home. Participant 1's educator believed that if Participant 1 were recognized by her peers when utilizing her skills and competencies, such as her ability to use information computing technology effectively, her peers' opinions of her would be raised and her self-esteem would therefore be boosted. This may then affect her future social interactions and the way she views herself in these social interactions.

Participant 1's educator and parents believed that Participant 1 used her learning challenges as a crutch and as an attention seeking mechanism. Participant 1's parents indicated that she was jealous of the attention that her sister received as a result of her illness and therefore, Participant 1 seemed to rely on her learning challenges as a way of gaining attention. Her self-image of needing support due to her learning challenges had been developed through interaction with her family, educators and peers.

Participant 1's father wished that Participant 1 could just get through school and enjoy it, without having her self-confidence diminished as a result of her learning challenges. He believes that Participant 1 would be a happy child as a result of this or, ultimately, she would, at least, turn into a happy adult.

*Vygotsky (1978) indicates that the ability to recognize differences in the self and to be able to reflect on oneself, allow us to make sense of the environment in which we find ourselves.*

Participant 2 suggested that one should not judge people on their outward appearance but rather on their personality, although, she believed that the girls in her school judged her on her appearance and this made her feel uncomfortable. She explained that her friends in the township did not judge her at all and that made her happy. Participant 2's mother indicated that Participant 2 was concerned about her weight and this concern made her daughter unhappy. Her mother believed that Participant 2 was prepared to do anything to address this problem of being over-weight.

## 4.2 Characteristics

The characteristics of the participants, their individual qualities, as well as their physical attributes, influenced the emotional responses of the participants regarding their social interaction experiences.

### 4.2.1 Qualities

Participant 1 was described by her parents and educator as only being interested in things that she liked. *This could be linked to Goleman's (1995) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as the ability to motivate your self and persist in the face of frustration where Participant 1 did not seem motivated to achieve this goal, as she only made the effort when she liked the task.* In my observations, Participant 1 was engaged with the lesson when the interactive white board was used and distracted and uninvolved when not.

Participant 1's educator believed that Participant 1 should promote herself more, both socially and academically. Her educator explained that she did not give of herself, that she held herself back in both socially and academically. *This can be linked to Bar-On's (1997) emotional intelligence trait of assertiveness, an aspect of emotional intelligence that participant 1 appears to find challenging.* This could be linked to Participant 1's self-esteem where she did not feel comfortable to engage actively with her peers in a large group setting. In my observations, Participant 1 removed herself from the majority of her peers' activities at playtime and chose instead to interact with a small, select group of friends.

Participant 1's educator believed that Participant 1's peers had a low opinion of her because she was forgetful and was often being criticised by her various educators. *This can be linked to Goleman's (1995) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as influence and Bar-On (1997) as cited in Bar-On (2002) emotional intelligence trait of self-regard.* This self-image of being having a low-opinion of herself, can be linked to how Participant 1 viewed herself in her social interactions.

Participant 2 explained that she would try to make her peers feel better if they were feeling sad. *This can be linked to Bar-On's (1997) as cited in Bar-On (2002) emotional intelligence trait of empathy, where Participant 2 is aware of the feelings of others and is able to describe how she would act upon this awareness of their feelings.*

Participant 2's educator describes Participant 2 as 'over the top', needy of love and attention but was someone who wanted to please. In my observations, participant often made individual comments to her educator and Principal when the opportunity arose and approached her educator to be hugged whenever she saw her.

Participant 2's was described as not engaging with her peers by her educator. Participant 2 explained during our activity sessions that she liked interacting with people; her family, younger learners in her school and her friends at home but that she felt uncomfortable interacting with her peers in her class. Participant 2's mother explained that Participant 2 gave people space and let them dictate to her. She described her as a 'softy', someone who was humble and did not want to hurt others. *This can be linked to Bar-On's (1997) emotional intelligence trait of assertiveness where Participant 2 finds it difficult to assert herself in social situations.* Participant 2's mother tried to teach Participant 2 to stand up for herself but at the same time, she did not want Participant 2 to lose the 'essence' of her being, with her being a gentle and considerate person.

#### **4.2.2 Physical Characteristics**

Participant 1 previously suffered from seizures. Her doctors were not sure if this was related to her concentration problem. She was previously on two types of drugs which made her depressed, one of them being Ritalin. Participant 1's father explained that the medication changed her and made her an unhappy child. She was no longer taking any medication and her father felt that this was an improvement. Participant 1's educator described her as being smaller than the majority of the learners in her class and as someone who was not noticeable in the class. Participant 1 did not mention the impact of being smaller than her peers.

Participant 2 was concerned about her weight. She believed that she was being judged on her appearance by her peers in her class. This judgment made her unhappy. *Vygotsky (1978) states that self-awareness is socially mediated and that people act in relation to their understanding of their environment* therefore, Participant 2's self-esteem would be impacted on by this judgment.

Participant 2's mother believed that Participant 2 was experiencing a shift in her emotions

due to hormonal changes. She believed that Participant 2 was very young to have experienced this development already. Her mother believed that at times Participant 2 was aware of what her emotions were and how she was reacting to them; and at other times, she did not have an understanding of them, largely due to her age and level of development.

### 4.3 Resilience

The participants' emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences were influenced by their resilience to their social interaction experiences. This resilience developed out of their understanding of their environments and through their understanding of themselves and the environment they are in. *This is achieved by an awareness of the differences in the self and an ability to reflect on this (Vygotsky, 1978).*

*Resilience refers to the process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation, despite challenging or threatening circumstances (Masten, Best & Garmezy, 1990).*

Participant 1 was described as creative by her parents. She said that she enjoys making things such as plasticine creatures. Participant 1's father described her as 'having a good mind for creating things'. Participant 1 was aware of her aptitude in this domain and confidently offered to show me some of the things that she had made.

Participant 1 was aware of her ability with information computing technology. She enjoyed emailing the daily homework to her peers in her class. She was able to rectify a technical problem with the interactive white board in class. She did this quietly and confidently. When she was asked by her educator to explain to her peers how she had resolved the problem, one of her peers shouted out the answer before her. Participant 1 did not react to this; she simply sat quietly. In my observation, this was an example of how Participant 1 held herself back from her peers. *This links to her self-image and self-confidence, which according to Vygotsky (1978) is socially mediated.* Participant 1 produced a piece of extra research for homework on the computer. She was very proud of the work that she later showed me. Her educator asked her to share the work with her peers. Participant 1 loved the experience of sharing her work with her peers as she was able to successfully talk about the information that she had collected without the text in front of her. This opportunity to demonstrate her skill boosted her self-esteem.

Participant 1's mother described Participant 1 as always having friends and as someone who had always been well liked. Her mother believed that she was happy to invite any of her peers over to her house. This contradicts much of her behaviour at school where, from my observations, she does not interact readily with her peers. This withdrawal from her peers

appears to be Participant 1's choice. This indicates a lack of understanding of the social situations in which she found herself as Participant 1 was described by her educator as being well liked by her peers.

Participant 1 received support from her family. She was in regular contact with grandparents. She had a good relationship with both her parents. She had a close and nurturing relationship with her brother. She appeared to have a 'love-hate' relationship with her younger sister but this relationship, according to Participant 1's father, was improving as the girls mature. Her parents have organized for a remedial teacher to support Participant 1 with her homework in the week.

From my observations, Participant 1 is not included in the games that the majority of her class is involved in at play time but rather chooses to sit with a small, select group of friends instead, visibly removed from the rest of her peers. This withdrawal makes her happy even although she is not included with everyone. In my observations, she appeared relaxed and happy when interacting with this small group. *This can be linked to Bar-On's (1997) as cited in Bar-On (2002) emotional intelligence trait of problem solving where Participant 1 has found a way to manage a situation with which she was not comfortable.*

Participant 2 was described by her mother as a caring person, a nurturer. She believed that her daughter was able to interact well with people of any age, from adults to babies. Participant 2 received love and support from her mother. Her relationship with her older sister was being nurtured by Participant 1's mother. She had allowed an opportunity for them to interact by setting up a lift-scheme where Participant 1's sister fetched her from school. This arrangement provided an opportunity for the girls to talk and get to know one another.

In terms of academic resilience, Participant 2 was described by her educator as being verbally strong. In my observations, I found Participant 2 to be able to engage effectively in our conversations. She spoke confidently with her educators in class. She delivered her practice speech for the public speaking festival at school confidently.

Participant 2 indicated that she would ignore people that were being mean to her and this approach to solving the problem would make her happy. *This can be linked to Bar-On's (1997) as cited in Bar-On (2002) emotional intelligence trait of problem solving where Participant 2 is not able to eliminate the problem she is experiencing but has found a way to help her deal with the consequences.*

Participant 2 was happy in that every day was a new day. *This can be linked to Bar-On's (1997) as cited in Bar-On (2002) emotional intelligence trait of optimism, where, even*

*although for Participant 2, school was not always a positive experience, she was still optimistic about her future experiences*

#### **4.4 Emotions**

The emotions that the participants' experienced affected their emotional responses to their social interaction experiences.

##### **4.4.1 Awareness of Emotions**

Participant 1 was happy and surprised when she made a new friend at school as she and her new friend had not been a friend before. She was happy to have been chosen as a friend by her new companion. She believed that her peers did not like her very much and in that regard, was surprised to have made a new friend. Participant 1 liked to have companionship at home and at school.

Participant 1 felt sad when her peers were mean to her when she got answers wrong in class. *This can be linked to Goleman's (1989) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as an awareness of emotions. Participant 1's peers say things about her academic challenges and these comments make her feel unhappy and according to Vygotsky (1978) we develop self-awareness through social interaction with others. These comments affect Participant 1's self-awareness as a result of her awareness of her emotions.*

Participant 1 had feelings that the work at school was too hard for her and that everyone was against her and these feelings made her want to leave the school. *This indicates a lack of persistence in the face of frustration where Participant 1 does not appear to have effective strategies to help her cope with her experiences and her feelings (Goleman, 1989, as cited in Bar-On, 2002).*

Participant 1 sometimes got the feeling of really loving being at school, such as when she was recognized for achieving at school and when people were nice to her. Participant 1 would be happy if someone asked her to work on a task with them. Participant 1 got excited and surprised when peers asked her for help in academic tasks. *This indicates a link to Goleman's (1989) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as self-confidence, where Participant 1 is surprised when her peers value her opinion, as it is stated in the literature that often those with learning challenges often display little self confidence, a poor self-concept often as a result of few opportunities to develop feelings of self worth (Lerner, 2006). Participant 1 was angry when a peer told her it is because her desk was always so messy that that is the reason why she is failing at school.*



Participant 2 was excited about working in groups or with a partner, as she believed one learns new things from others but she felt unwanted when her peers did not want to work with her in their group. She explained that she would feel happy working with others and would like her peers to support her learning when she needed in academic tasks. *According to Vygotsky (1978) self-awareness develops from social interaction. We act in accordance with our understanding of the environment (Vygotsky, 1978).* Participant 2 experiences feelings of being isolated from her peers in a group-learning context due to the actions and comments of her peers. Participant 2 explained that her peers made comments such as, 'They hate me when they have to work with me'. This made her aware of her learning challenges and of not being accepted by her peers, and this affected her self-image.

#### 4.4.2 Identifying Emotions

Participant 1 was not able to identify the name of the emotion she had experienced, she had described the emotion as 'in the middle of happy and sad', which she experienced when her friend R has to go and do something at break and she had to sit on her own. Participant 1 could not identify the emotion 'between happy and sad' when she was bullied last year. *As many children with learning difficulties experience challenges with communication, this can result in problems with the expression and comprehension of language (Remington, 1998, as cited in McKenzie et al., 2000). This is understood to have implications for these children in the ability to accurately pick up, label and interpret emotional states in others and the ability to express their own emotions (McKenzie et al., 2000). This has implications for making and maintaining social relationships (Hext and Lunsky 1997, as cited in McKenzie et al., 2000) as might be the case with participant 1. Many children with learning difficulties experience challenges with communication (Remington, 1998, as cited in McKenzie et al., 2000). This may result from difficulty in being able to interpret their own emotions and the emotions of others (Remington, 1998, as cited in McKenzie et al., 2000). This may result in implications for making and maintaining social relationships (Remington, 1998, as cited in McKenzie et al., 2000).*

Participant 1 was not able to identify the name of the emotion she described as being between 'happy and sad' when working with others and when someone called her work 'spasticated'. She knew that 'spasticated' was not a word but that they had meant that her vase was spastic. Participant 1 was not able to name the emotion but was aware of how the comments made about her work had made her feel.

Participant 2's mother thought that she was not always aware of her emotions. She quoted in reference to her daughter, 'No, no, sometimes I think she is but sometimes I think she is not,



it happens spontaneous.' I believe that Participant 2 was able to identify emotions such as those emotions expressed on the faces of the children in the pictures used in our activity sessions, but that she appeared to still have some difficulty in explaining the emotional reaction she had to situations, such as saying that she is bored with her peers, rather than feeling sad as a result of being rejected by her peers.

*The above mentioned challenges for both Participant 1 and Participant 2 in labeling emotions can be linked to McKenzie et al. (2000) that those with learning challenges may have difficulty in recognizing emotions and may need to be taught emotional skills and competencies.*

#### **4.4.3 Emotional Support**

Participant 1 received emotional support from her class educator. She was in email correspondence with her educator to discuss how she was feeling at school. Her educator responded to these concerns. Her educator supported her emotional and academic needs in class. Participant 1 was allowed to sit on a ball instead of a chair to help her restlessness. Participant 1 sat in a nurturing group of friends and peers. Participant 1 emailed the daily homework home to her peers, to help boost her self-confidence. Participant 1's educator was trying to build up her self-esteem by making use of Participant 1's skills and competencies, such as her ability to use information-computing technology effectively.

Participant 1 was loved and supported by her family who provided a safe and happy home environment for her, even though her parents no longer live together.

Participant 1's parents provided extra remedial tuition at home to support her academic challenges at school. With this support, her parents hoped that participant 1's self-image was not being damaged as a result of her learning challenges, and her inability to cope with the learning tasks presented to her at school. Her father believed that if she could get through school with her self-confidence intact, her future should be positive. He believed that success in life was not necessarily determined by academic success. *This can be linked to Bar-On's (2002) emotional intelligence trait of self-regard and Goleman's (1998) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as self-confidence, where those with learning challenges often have little self confidence, a poor self concept and few opportunities to develop feelings of self worth (Lerner, 2006).* Participant 1 was aware that her academic challenges made it hard for her to interact with her peers in group-learning tasks. Her understanding of this affected her future interactions as she often removed herself from her peers in their activities and she held herself back.

Participant 2 was loved, supported and appreciated by her mother. Her mother valued Participant 2's caring nature and her ability to interact with others. Her mother did not wish to change this characteristic about her daughter, even though she believed that her daughter should be more assertive when interacting with others, and not to let her peers bully her.

Participant 2 and her mother had an honest and open relationship where they were able to communicate with each other on any topic. Participant 2's mother believed that she understood her daughter well and was able to recognize when her daughter had a problem. This understanding of her daughter allowed them to address concerns that her daughter had, as they arose.

#### **4.5 Family**

Both participants' family circumstances affect their emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences.

##### **4.5.1 Relationships**

Participant 1's father obtained much information from his girlfriend regarding Participant 1 and her social experiences at school. He was often shocked by what he heard. He did not know how to obtain that information from his daughter. Participant 1 and her father's girlfriend had a good relationship. Participant 1 and her father did not have problems in their relationship but they did experience some challenges with communication. Participant 1 frustrated her father with her fears, such as her fear of driving in cars. He thought that it was attention-seeking behaviour and did not want to 'pander' to it.

Participant 2's parents are divorced and her father is not involved in Participant 2's day-to-day lifestyle. This absence of her father in her day-to-day life was difficult for Participant 2 to understand this absence caused Participant 2 to become emotionally withdrawn. Participant 2's mother was aware of when Participant 2 withdraws as a result of the absence of her father in her daily life, as Participant 2 was described as normally being happy and interactive with her mother, so the change in her daughter was apparent. Due to their open relationship, Participant 2 and her mother were able to communicate and share the concerns that they had.

##### **4.5.2 Family Support**

Participant 1's father believed that Participant 1 needed to learn how to deal with the problems that life handed out, such as her parent's divorce, her sister's illness and to 'just get

on with it'. Participant 1's father believed that Participant 1 was loved and had support in many ways and had no reason to feel that she needed to seek her parents' attention. Participant 1's parents and educator believed that she used her learning challenges as an attention-seeking mechanism that she had found to work for her in terms of receiving attention. *Vygotsky (1978) states that self-awareness and the ability to reflect on one's self, develops from social interaction with others.* Participant 1 portrayed herself as needing attention due to her learning challenges and the difficulties this presented to her.

Participant 2's mother believed that one should give your children support and love them the way that they are. Participant 2 was aware of this support that she received from her mother.

#### **4.5.3 Home Environment**

Participant 1's parents both described their children's home life as 'different', as they are divorced and the children therefore had two homes. When Participant 1's father had the children on the weekend, he spent one night with them and spent one night with his girlfriend but he described the time they spent together as 'quality' time. He believed that this time together was an improvement from the time they spent together in the past when he was around more frequently but did not engage with the children to the same extent as he did now.

When Participant 1's younger sister got sick, Participant 1 had to spend a lot of time with her grandparents. Participant 1's parents were not around as much as she would have liked them to have been. This was disturbing for Participant 1. *This can be linked to Goleman's (1989) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as interpersonal skills. Interpersonal skills would include interpersonal relationship, social responsibility and empathy (Goleman, 1998 as cited in Bar-On, 1996).* Participant 1 found it difficult to understand her parent's involvement with her sister and was jealous of the interaction between them. *According to Becks (1976) as stated in Salkovskis (1996) emotions are experienced as a result of the way in which events are interpreted or appraised. It is the meaning of events that causes the emotional reaction rather than the event itself, with the reaction being influenced by the context in which the event occurs, the mood that the person is in and their prior experiences (Salkovskis, 1996).* Participant 1's reliance on her learning challenges as a way to gain attention may be as a result of prior feelings of anxiety, loss and isolation from her parents due to the attention that was given to her sister and not to her.

Participant 2 had a secure home environment with her mother and sister. Her father was not part of her daily life and this absence of her father was upsetting for Participant 2. Her mother

was aware of the challenges it created for her daughter and they had engaged in conversation regarding this situation. Their ability to discuss the situation helped Participant 2 understand why her father was not a part of her life and that it was not her fault. These feelings experienced as a result of the father's absence, caused Participant 2 to feel sad and insecure, in this regard.

Participant 2's mother has created an environment where there were clear rules for behaviour and a structure to their time at home in regards to work and play. There was an atmosphere of mutual love and respect in the household. Participant 2 explained during our activity sessions that she 'felt free at home, and not stressed like at school.'

#### **4.6 School**

Both participants' emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences were affected by their experiences at school.

##### **4.6.1 Environmental Factors**

Participant 1 described school as both 'hard and easy', academically and socially, depended upon the specific situation. Overall, she liked school and wanted to go back during the holidays, even though she did not do well at school. *This can be linked to Goleman's (1995) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence of being able to persist in the face of frustration where even although school is challenging for her on many levels, Participant 1 looks forward to going back when she has been away from school.* This emotional response links to the participant's future social interactions as she explained that she wanted to go back at school as she feels happy being with her friends, even although school can be challenging for her emotionally, socially and academically. In my observations, Participant 1 appeared to be happy at school.

Participant 2 believed that her peers hated her when they had to work with her. This made her feel unwanted and unhappy. *According to Vygotsky (1978) self-image and self-awareness are developed from social interaction and Participant 2 felt rejected due to the actions and comments of her peers.*

##### **4.6.2 Playtime Experiences**

Participant 1 socialized with specific friends at school and her small, select group of friends did not engage with the majority of the peers in their class, nor join in their games and activities, as Participant 1 did not believe that she was able to join in with them. She choose

instead to opt out and engage in a social situation with which she was comfortable.

Participant 1 explained that her special friend had no other friends beside herself. *It is stated in the literature that children with learning difficulties are at risk for poor interpersonal relations, are more rejected by their peers and less popular (Carson, 2001).* This experience, where Participant 1 feels she is not able to engage with the rest of her peers at, indicates that she is aware of how she views herself in her social interaction experiences in this context; that she is not included and does not have the social skills and competencies to enable her to engage with her peers.

Participant 2 explained that she loved playtime at school but that she was only happy when she was involved with learners younger than herself. She did not mix readily with her peers from her class. She said that she found with her peers 'boring' because they just sat around and talked and ate. *It is stated in the literature that children with learning difficulties are at risk for poor interpersonal relations, are more rejected by their peers and less popular (Carson, 2001).* These feelings of rejection that Participant 2 experienced had resulted in her associating with younger learners in the school with whom she felt more welcomed and accepted. This had become a form of resilience for her in her learning environment.

#### **4.6.3 Classroom Activities**

In my observations in class, Participant 1 was very quiet and reserved in the classroom context. Her attention span appeared short. She fidgeted and fiddled whilst at her desk and on the carpet. She found it easier to concentrate when she was looking at the interactive white board rather than following written texts from a book. She often slouched over her work whilst seated at her desk. She was able to participate in question and answer sessions and was able to perform her allocated monitor duties for her table.

Participant 2 was very vocal and attention seeking during the group-work activity in her Numeracy lesson. She made inappropriate remarks about the images in magazines and raised inappropriate topics for discussion, as a result of the images that she had seen. Her comments included, 'Can I measure the person in the bath?' and 'I have drunk alcohol before'. Her peers ignored her remarks. *Dodge (1994) as cited in Bauminger et al. (2005) indicate that social information processing may be an area of difficulty for children with learning difficulties, including searching for social responses and evaluating the possibility of outcomes.* Participant 2's remarks were not found favourable by either staff or her peers. She was not able to anticipate that her peers would not be impressed by her comments. Her peers ignored her and some eventually told her off. Her Principal reprimanded her gently for discussing such topics, such as the consumption of alcohol, during class. *Participant 2's*

*lively discussions and her visible behaviour of loudly discussing alcohol consumption in a loud and attention-seeking manner could also be linked to Stone and La Greca (1984) who indicate that children with learning difficulties often engage in more visually distracting behaviours than their peers. Social competence can be defined as the possession and use of the ability to integrate thinking, feeling and behaviour to achieve social tasks and outcomes valued in the host context and culture (Bremner et al., , 2002, as cited in Bar-On, 2002). Socially competent people can be seen to be able to select and control which behaviors to emit and which to suppress in any given context (Bremner et al., 2002, as cited in Bar-On, 2002).*

## **4.7 Learning**

### **4.7.1 Individual Support**

Participant 1 was in charge of emailing the daily homework to her peers in her class. This initiative was instigated by Participant 1's class educator to encourage Participant 1 to find a suitable method to enable Participant 1 to gain access to her homework at home, as she experienced difficulty in writing it down at school. This was also an example of her educator's attempts to build Participant 1's self-confidence, by making effective use of Participant 1's skills and abilities, such as her computer skills and allowing an opportunity for her peers to see her applying her skills *This can be linked to Goleman's (1998) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as self-confidence, which is often lacking in those with learning difficulties, as, according to Lerner (2006) children with learning difficulties may have few opportunities to develop feelings of self worth.* Participant 1's educator's support could also have helped to boost Participant 1's feelings of self-worth. This could be linked to how Participant 1 viewed herself in her social interaction experiences with her peer in the classroom settings.

Participant 2 had a good relationship with her educator. Participant 2's educator was aware that school could be emotionally, academically and socially challenging for Participant 2. She therefore made sure that Participant 2 felt welcome and special in class. From my observations, Participant 2's educator regularly checked that Participant 2 was comfortable with the learning tasks that the class were working on, and offered her support if she was not feeling secure. Participant 2 explained that she enjoyed school if she was included by her peers and supported in her academic learning; otherwise, she found school to be difficult.

#### 4.7.2 Group Learning

Participant 1 liked working with others but this depended on who they were. If she was working with friends or peers with whom she felt comfortable, she is able to engage effectively with them. Her friends with whom she was comfortable could support her learning in Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development, where she would be able to complete more complex tasks than she would be able to do alone or with others with whom she did not feel comfortable. Participant 1 had been placed in a new group of learners this half term who were supportive of her learning and emotional needs. This was an indication of the support that she received from her educator. This had made Participant 1 feels happier about her learning experiences.

Participant 2 was allocated to a group of her peers to research information for a Science task in the library. Organization of the task was conducted by the learners. Participant 2 did not participate in the activity. Her peers in her group were actively involved in the task. Participant 2 eventually found a reference book, paged casually through it and eventually allowed her peers to take the book from her and find the necessary information. One of the learners in her group helped her write some information down at the very end of the session. This could indicate how the participant's emotional responses were linked to her understanding of the social interactions she engages in, where the participant indicated that her peers 'hated her' when they had to work with her. *Social competence can be defined as the possession and use of the ability to integrate thinking, feeling and behaviour to achieve social tasks and outcomes valued in the host context and culture (Brenner et al., 2002, as cited in Bar-On, 2002 where Participant 2 removed herself from the task due to prior experiences of rejection. Social competence may be a skill that needs to be taught to those with learning difficulties (Lerner, 2006)*

It was explained by Participant 2's educator, that if Participant 2 were working in a group, it would end up with problems. *This can be linked to Zirkiel (2002) as cited in Bar-On (2002) where social intelligence is explained to be a model of personality, where people, presumed to be knowledgeable about themselves and others, use this knowledge to manage their emotions and direct behaviour to desired outcomes. Participant 2 did not seem to engage effectively with her peers. This may affect Participant 2's future social interactions in a group-learning context as she believed that others 'hated her' when they had to work with her. This can be linked to Bar-On's (1997) emotional intelligence trait of self-regard, where her self-image and self-confidence may be affected by the comments and behaviours of others. This can be linked to how she views herself in her social interaction experiences. According to Vygotsky (1978) it is through social interaction that we develop self-awareness.*



### 4.7.3 Learning Style

Participant 1 indicated that she preferred working alone. She liked working on tasks at home where she could work at her own pace and focus on the tasks that she liked. She likes working on the computer and making things. She explained during our activity sessions that she 'forgot' information if she did not like the lesson or task. Participant 1 liked working with her friends in preference to her peers because her friends were 'nice' to her and did not made her feel uncomfortable about her learning challenges, as her peers did. *This could be linked to Goleman's (1989) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as an awareness of emotions. Participant 1 was aware of how her peers make her feel in relation to her learning challenges. Children use emotional knowledge to guide their social world (Scharfe, 2002, as cited in Bar-On, 2002).*

Participant 2 indicated that she preferred working alone. She previously indicated that she liked working with others but the way her peers behaved and the things they said to her about her academic ability made her feel unhappy. *This can be linked to Goleman's (1989) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as an awareness of emotions where Participant 2 was able to understand how her peers made her feel about her learning challenges.*

### 4.7.4 Learning Challenges

If Participant 1 did not see the benefit of working hard for herself, she would not make the effort. She explained during our activity sessions that she forgets information that she has learned if she did not like the lesson or the task. She further explained that she would also forget the things she needs at home if she was not interested in the task. This made her anxious and she had in the past been untruthful about forgetting her things at home to avoid being told off by her educator. *This can be linked to Goleman's (1998) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as being able to persist in the face of frustration where Participant 1 made the effort only when she saw fit to do so and would not persist if she did not see the benefit of perseverance for herself.* Participant 1 experienced challenges with concentration. She found written work difficult. Participant 1 was aware of her academic challenges and the emotional implications there of. She did not like involving herself with her peers in learning tasks because of her learning challenges.

Participant 2 was described as being academically weak. Participant 2 tried to hide her work during class. *This may linked to Goleman's (1998) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as self-esteem where it is stated that those with learning challenges do not have*



*many opportunities to develop feelings of self-worth (Lerner, 2006).* This may be linked to how Participant 2 viewed herself in the classroom context. Participant 2's mother explained in our interview that Dyslexia was one aspect of Participant 2's learning challenge.

## **4.8 Friends**

Vygotsky (1978) states that learning as well as self-awareness takes place through social interaction. These are areas that both participants experienced challenges with in a peer context but both participants expressed resilience in regards to their challenges with their friends.

### **4.8.1 Friends from Home**

Participant 1 was described as being socially competent by her parents. She invited a range of her school peers home to play with her. She was happy for anyone to visit rather than be alone. Her mother explained that Participant 1 was often unsure of what to do with her friends when they were at her house and often asked her mother what they could do to entertain themselves. Participant 1 appeared to be confident when interacting with small groups of friends and peers but was uncomfortable with larger groups of peers in her home environment. This confidence and enjoyment of social interaction may be as a result of not having to cope with the pressures of her academic challenges in her school environment.

Participant 2 did not invite friends from school and from home to her house at the same time, as she did not think that they would feel comfortable. Participant 2's mother saw this as an ability to 'weigh situations up'. *This can be linked to Goleman's (1998) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as understanding others where Participant 2 was able to understand that her two groups of peers and friends would not feel comfortable together.*

### **4.8.2 Friends from School**

Participant 1's friend R was described by her educator as being 'scatty' and as not being popular by her educator. She had also been identified as having learning challenges. Participant 1's educator thought that Participant 1 and R enjoy interacting with each other due to their shared experiences of having to deal with their learning challenges. R had also recently experienced emotional difficulties in her home environment and her educator believes that Participant 1 may have found comfort in this, as she had experienced emotional challenges in her home environment in the past, such as having dealt with her sister's illness and her parent's focus on this. *Participant 1 and R are not included in the majority of their*

*peer's activities and this can be linked to Carlson's (2001) statement that those with learning difficulties are less popular and more rejected by their peers. They may therefore have found solace in each other's company and in their shared understanding of each other's situations.*

Participant 2 did not have close friends at school. She enjoyed engaging with the younger learners in the school at rather than her peers from her class, as the younger children did not reject her as did her peers. *This can be linked to Carlson's (2001) statement that those with learning difficulties are less popular and more rejected by their peers.*

#### **4.8.3 Peer Responses**

Participant 1 explained that her peers were mean to her if she got answers wrong in class. These feelings made her want to leave the school at times. Participant 1 liked some of the children in her class but some children she was not sure about because of the way in which they talked to her and about the things they said to others about her. She did not elaborate on the details of what her peers said to her or about her, just that they made her feel upset due to their comments. *This may be linked to Goleman's (1998) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as self-esteem. Self-awareness, according to Vygotsky (1978) is culturally and socially mediated, therefore Participant 1 develops a sense of self-awareness from the responses from her peers about her in her school context.* This may be linked to how Participant 1 viewed herself in the classroom context.

Participant 1 felt 'surprised' if her peers said 'nice things' about her to others and she felt 'bad' if they said 'not nice' things about her. *This can be linked to Salovey and Mayor's (1989) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence which involves understanding and analyzing emotions, where Participant 1 was aware of how their responses about her made her feel. In my observations, Participant 1 received positive comments from her friends at school, such as 'Do you want to work with me in Science?'*

Participant 2 explained that her peers made her unhappy because of the way they made her feel about her learning challenges when they had to work with her. An example of how her peers made her feel was: 'They hate me when they have to work with me'. Her peers' comments about her weight made her feel uncomfortable. *This can be linked to Salovey and Mayor's (1989) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence which involves understanding and analyzing emotions where Participant 2 was aware of how her peers' responses about herself made her feel.*

In my observations, Participant 2 was not included in her peers' conversations in the playground. She sat with her peers at but did not actively engage with them. This may be

seen as a form of resilience where Participant 2 found it easier to be removed from her peers rather than to be rejected by them.

#### **4.8.4 Exclusion from Peers**

Neither Participant 1, nor her friends, joined in with the games with which their peers were involved in, as Participant 1 did not feel that she was able to join in with the others. She believed this because her peers were playing these games before she joined in and shouted out as to which positions they would play as break started. She did not feel comfortable doing this. *Social intelligence, indicated by Zirkiel (2002) as cited in Bar-On, (2002) states that we use cues from the environment to judge what kinds of goals and opportunities we wish to pursue.* Participant 1 took the cue that she was not able to negotiate the social group entry, as the games had already begun, positions had been booked and she was left out. Her class educator indicated that Participant 1 was liked by her peers and it was she who held back from them, that they would have included her in the games. This could be a mis-interpretation of a cue, indicating a possible challenge with social intelligence. *This could also link to Asher and Renshaw's (1983) statement as cited in Carlson (2001) that children with learning difficulties differ in their selection of social strategies and goals for social interaction and in Bauminger et al.'s (2005) explanation that children with learning difficulties may not be able to make adequate attribution about another person's mental state.* This behaviour was likely to influence Participant 1's future social interactions, as she was hesitant to join her peers' activities. *According to Izard et al. (2001) consistent mis-perception or mis-interpretation of emotional cues or often not recognizing them at all, could seriously hinder the development of socio-emotional competence.*

Participant 2 felt that she did not have close friends at school. In my observations, at the cake sale and in the playground at playtime, Participant 2 was often alone. She engaged with learners from different classes and educators and other members of staff but not with her peers from her class. It would seem that Participant 2 was not comfortable engaging with her peers as the result of past experiences. She had found educators and learners from other classes to be more accepting of her in her social interaction opportunities at school. This can be seen as a form of resilience.

#### **4.8.5 Expectations of Friends**

Participant 1 stated that best friends 'should be nice to you and play with you and make you feel wanted'. *According to Vygotsky (1978) self-awareness and the ability to reflect on the self, is socially mediated. Participant 1 had close relationships with her best friends at school.*

Participant 2 felt that no one at school was her best friend. *This may be linked to Goleman's (1998) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as self-esteem. It is stated that those with learning challenges do not have many opportunities to develop feelings of self-worth (Lerner, 2006).* It may be that due to the fact that Participant 2 had few friends in her school environment, that she may have experienced low self-esteem in this context.

#### **4.9 Social Interaction**

Both participants' experiences of social interaction, where challenges were faced in the school context, influenced their emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences.

##### **4.9.1 Social Group Entry**

Participant 1 experienced challenges with social group entry with her peers. She believed that she was not able to join them in their activities, as their activities have previously been initiated and she had not been included. In my observations, she appeared to be more comfortable with her small, select group of friends. She was also happy to socialize with friends at home where she was not faced with interacting with a large group of her peers.

Participant 2 was described as 'bolshy'. She is described as annoying the other children, where she would force her way into a social situation. *This can be linked to Stone and La Grecia (1984) who state that those with learning difficulties engage in more visually distracting behaviours, with more direct, intrusive and demanding social entry. Peer acceptance was found to be almost totally predicted by social behaviour (Hartup, 1983, as cited in Carlson, 2001).*

According to her educator, Participant 2 could begin to play effectively with others but the game that they had been playing would end up with problems, such as arguments erupting, and the task or game would deteriorate. *This can be linked to Bauminger et al.'s (2005) statement that those with learning difficulties may not be able to correctly read and interpret verbal and non-verbal social and emotional cues or information or possess knowledge of different social behaviours and their consequences.* This behaviour may affect Participant 2's future social interactions. *The literature indicates that peer acceptance was found to be almost totally predicted by social behaviour, suggesting that social skills deficits are at least one major factor underlying the low social acceptance of children with learning difficulties (Hartup, 1983, as cited in Carlson, 2001) which can be linked to the behaviour displayed by Participant 2.*

#### 4.9.2 Ability to Make and Keep Friends

Participant 1's parents felt that Participant 1 was able to make and keep friends easily. Participant 1's mother explained that Participant 1 had some friends from her first nursery school. Participant 1's father explained how Participant 1 found it easy to make friends with other children she met on holiday. This ability to make friends easily contradicts the social experiences that participant 1 described to me in her school context, where she felt that she did not have many friends and was not treated well by her peers. Participant 1 may have found it easier to make friends on holiday, as her learning challenges were not likely to become a factor in her social interactions. This may have resulted in her self-confidence being boosted, rather than in her school context where self-confidence was often negatively affected.

Participant 2's educator thought that she was not able to make and keep friends easily. *This can be linked to Carlson (2001) that those with learning difficulties are less popular and more rejected by their peers.* This may affect Participant 2's future social interactions as she had difficulty in establishing relationships in her school context. Participant 2 talked readily of her friends from the township where she lives and how she found social interaction in that context to be easy and positive, whilst in her school context; social interaction was a challenge for her. Participant 2's mother believed that she interacts easily with her friends from home. Participant 2 explained that her friends from home did not judge her, neither on her appearance, nor her learning challenges and she therefore did not have her self-confidence diminished and was more self-assured and happy to interact with others.

#### 4.9.3 Interaction

Participant 1 liked spending time with people one-on-one, especially in an adult and family context. She liked the attention that she received from this.

*Participant 1's mother thought that Participant 1 was well liked by her friends and peers. This contradicts much of the literature on learning difficulties that often states that children with learning difficulties experience challenges with making and keeping friends (Lerner, 2006).* In my observations, Participant 1 was approached by a range of her peers to interact with them in class and in the playground. She appeared to distance herself from her peers at playtime. Participant 1 may have distanced herself from her peers due to a lack of self-confidence as a result of her learning challenges, where she felt unsure of herself and of her abilities when she was with her peers.

Participant 2's mother thinks Participant 2 lets her peers bully her. *This can be linked to Goleman's (1998) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as self-confidence and influence, where Participant 2 allows others to dominate her.* This may affected how Participant 2 viewed herself in her social interactions and may affect her future social interactions as a result. *Karvale and Fornesse (1996) state that seventy-five percent of children with learning difficulty demonstrate social skills deficits*

#### **4.9.4 Communication**

Participant 1 explained that it was easier for her to distance herself from social settings rather than attempt to enter social situations at school, as she was not sure how to negotiate this type of interaction. This affected her social interactions as she visibly distanced herself from situations where she could engage socially.

Participant 1 communicated via email with her class educator to discuss as to how she was feeling at school. This communication could be seen as a form of resilience. *I concur with Deutch-Smith (1992) that this ability to talk about their feelings and emotions can significantly enhance the child's capacity for self control and reduce the incidence of acting-out behaviour.*

Participant 2 explained that if people were 'being mean', one should just ignore them and leave them alone. This method of dealing with her challenge made Participant 2 feel happy. *This can be linked to Goleman's (1995) as cited in Bar-On (2002) aspect of emotional intelligence expressed as being able to motivate yourself and persist in the face of frustration and keep distress from overwhelming you, where Participant 2 has found a solution to help her cope with the challenges she faced in a social context at school.*

### **4.5 Findings of the Study**

Overall, Participant 1 was described as a happy child and was someone who enjoyed school. She was said to make and keep friends easily. She enjoyed being with her friends, at home and at school. *This contradicts much of the literature on learning difficulties which states that children identified with learning difficulties often find it difficult to make and keep friends (Lerner, 2003).*

Participant 1 enjoyed working with her friends on learning tasks but not with her peers, due to the way her peers made her feel about her learning challenges. She found that the negative responses she received from her peers in regards to her learning challenges and the way that some educators pushed her academically, made her want to leave the school at times.



Participant 1 enjoyed group learning but only if those that she is working with were supportive of her learning and emotional needs.

Participant 1 seemed to remove herself from situations that made her unhappy or stressed. She did not feel she had the ability to negotiate all social situations at school and distanced herself from them, rather than attempting to join her peers. An example of this kind of behaviour would be when Participant 1 and her friends sat together, visibly removed from the majority of their peers and the activities in which they were involved.

According to her educator and parents, Participant 1 seemed to use her learning challenges as an attention seeking mechanism. She was described as having many skills and competencies, such as being creative and being able to use information computing technology effectively. The school context, in which she was in, was described as not working very well for her in terms of her academic challenges, as it relies heavily on written and academic tasks but Participant 1's educator believed that Participant 1 could have achieved more if she applied herself more effectively than she had done previously. She was well liked by her peers, according to her educator, but was described as holding back from them in terms of interaction.

Participant 1 enjoyed being around her family and received love and support from them. Her emotional responses to her social interaction experiences appeared to have been positive with her family and friends and often negative with those with whom she had a peer relationship with. This appeared to be in both social and learning tasks.

Participant 2 described being happy at home and enjoyed mixing with her family and friends from the township. She did not seem to enjoy mixing with her peers at school. She did not like the way her peers made her feel when they worked together on academic tasks. She enjoyed the concept of group learning, as she was a sociable person but would have liked her peers to support her academically and explain things when she did not understand them. The comments made by her peers in terms of her academic challenges such as, 'they hate me when they have to work with me', about her appearance of being over-weight and comments about her family, like not having her dad involved in her life, made her feel unhappy. She felt that the best way to deal with this kind of situation was to ignore what people had said.

Participant 2 described how she enjoyed being with the younger children at school. She explained that she found her peers in her class boring. She was often not included in their activities. She appears to behave in some ways which her peers did not find acceptable,

such as her forcing her way into social settings and offering financial rewards to her peers to include her in their activities. She had also been caught taking things from her peers. This was described as an attention seeking mechanism by her educators and mother. She described how she felt sad and unwanted due to the behaviour of her peers when they are put into groups and she knew that they did not want to work with her. Participant 2 described some of her behaviour, the behaviour of others in her class and friends at home. This description appeared to be an elaboration of the truth. I believed that she may have been fantasizing about what she would have liked to have been doing and was not describing actual events. An example was climbing into the classroom through the windows before school started and hiding under the desks with her peers. She described how she and her peers climbed on their desks and screamed and shouted when the educator was not in the classroom. She further described rolling in mud on riverbanks at home and getting dirty all over. In conclusion, her emotional responses to her social interaction experiences were positive with her friends and family in the township and largely negative in regards to those in her school environment.

## **4.6. Conclusion**

This chapter presented the findings of the study as they related to the existing literature. The findings explored some of the emotional and social interaction challenges that the participants experienced as a result of their learning challenges. The findings corresponded with much of the literature on learning difficulties which states that many learners identified as having learning challenges experience problems in social interaction (Lerner, 2006). The literature further stated that these social and emotional skills and competencies could be taught (Lerner, 2006). Both Participant 1 and Participant 2 were described as having close friends. This was so for Participant 1 in the school context and Participant 2 in her home context. This contradicts much of the literature on learning difficulties where it was stated that children identified as having learning difficulties often find it hard to make friends (Lerner, 2006).

Chapter Five will deal with the final conclusions for the study, exploring an overview of the findings of the study. The research questions will be reviewed. Recommendations for further study will be made. The strengths and limitations of the study will be explored and the assumptions revisited.



# Chapter 5

## Conclusions and Recommendations

### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the final conclusions resulting from the data that was collected. The data will be explored in relation to the theoretical framework and the literature review from Chapter 2. The primary and sub-research questions will be answered and I will discuss how the data enabled me to achieve this. The limitations, the strengths and the contributions of the study will be highlighted. Finally, I will revisit the assumptions made in Chapter 1.

### 5.2 Overview of Findings in Relation to the Theoretical Framework

As indicated by the findings, both participants experienced challenges with learning taking place within Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development in a peer-learning context, as they both described learning that took place in a social context to be academically, socially and emotionally challenging. These challenges resulted from the participants' learning challenges, as well as the way that their peers made them feel as a result of their academic challenges. *Vygotsky states that full cognitive development takes place when full social interaction is achieved (Vygotsky, 1978)*. Both participants in the study were removed from the majority of learners in their class, in academic and social activities, indicating that full social interaction was not achieved.

### 5.3 Primary Research Question

The primary research question was: 'What are the participants' emotional responses to their social interaction experiences?'. According to the findings, both participants' emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences were that they would both like to engage with learning in a peer-learning context but both participants found this type of learning challenging and often upsetting. This was largely due to the way their peers made them feel, due to the comments made about their individual learning challenges, as well as their personal attributes. Both participants articulated that they were not included in the majority of their peers' activities at playtime. The participants appeared to not be able to negotiate social group entry effectively at school when faced with large peer groups.

Participant 1 removed herself from this social setting and interacted with her friends with whom she felt comfortable. Participant 2 expressed how she liked to spend time with the younger learners at school rather than with her peers. The participants' emotional responses indicated that they had both developed forms of resilience to assist themselves with the individual social challenges that they faced. Although helpful in dealing with the participant's immediate social challenges, these methods of resilience were not providing effective opportunities for learning to take place in Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development, as the methods often removed the participants from effective social interaction with their peers. The findings of the study indicated that both participants felt happy when interacting with their friends with whom they felt comfortable and accepted, Participant 1 in her home and school context, Participant 2 in her home context.

## **5.4 Sub-Questions**

### **5.4.1 Sub-Question 1**

The first sub-question was: 'How are the participants' emotional responses related to their understanding of the social interactions they engage in?' The findings of the study indicated that both participants had expressed negative emotional responses towards their social interaction experiences in terms of group learning, due to the manner in which their peers made them feel in relation to their learning challenges. The participants' emotional responses appeared to match their understanding of this situation.

Participant 1 was isolated from her peers in the playground. Her emotional responses to her isolation, where she believed that she was not able to join in the activities of her peers, did not match her peers' understanding of the situation. Her educator explained that Participant 1's peers wished to include her in their activities but that it was she who held back from them and distanced herself from these situations. Her emotional responses to her group-learning social interactions experiences appeared to match her understanding of the situation as her peers. Her peers responded in a manner that made her feel upset due to her learning challenges. This occurred in a peer, not in a friendship, context.

Participant 2 received negative statements from her peers regarding her learning challenges, her appearance, for example, of being over-weight and her family situation. She was aware of how these comments had made her feel. As a form of resilience, she had developed a strategy of ignoring her peers when they upset her.

## 5.4.2 Sub-Question 2

The second sub-question was: “How do the participants' view themselves in their social interactions?”. The findings of the study indicate that both participants viewed themselves as removed from the majority of learners in their class. Participant 1 viewed herself as someone who experienced learning challenges in her school context, and someone who found the academic aspect of school challenging. She viewed herself as finding the comments made by her peers in regards to her learning challenges difficult to accept. Sometimes, the responses that she received from her peers and the pressure that she received from certain educators, made her want to leave the school. She viewed herself as removed from the majority of learners in her class but viewed herself as being accepted by her few, select friends and was able to talk positively about her interactions with them. She was able to talk positively about her achievements in certain learning tasks and was aware of these specific skills and competencies. She understood that she had skills and competencies in creative tasks but she did not view herself as someone who was revered for these skills by her peers, in her school context. According to her parents and class educator, Participant 1 used her learning challenge as an attention seeking mechanism. I found that Participant 1 experienced low-self esteem in many social and group-learning tasks and as a result of this, distanced herself from these situations when ever possible.

Participant 2 felt that she was not well liked by her peers and describes them as ‘hating her when they had to work with her’. She viewed herself as someone who was removed from the majority of learners in her school, as she spent much of her time at school alone and did not talk about positive social interaction experiences involving her peers at school. The positive social interaction experiences of which she spoke, were social scenarios that she had appeared to have made up fictitiously.

Participant 2 viewed herself as having a different style of learning compared to the majority of her peers in class and therefore found peer-learning or group-learning challenging. She felt this was challenging because her peers did not wait for her to complete the task they were all working on, nor did they support her with her learning, as she liked to work slowly, step by step. Participant 2 experienced low self-esteem in her school environment, in social activities and group-learning situations, as she was not readily included with her peers. She viewed herself as isolated from her peers. She was aware of her academic challenges and felt that as a result of these challenges, her peers made her feel unwanted in learning tasks. She saw herself as rejected by her peers in a learning context.

### 5.4.3 Sub-Question 3

The third sub-question was: 'How do the participants' social interactions influence their future social interactions?'. Participant 1 expressed that, at times, she was emotionally overwhelmed by the comments made by her peers about her academic achievements. These comments and social interaction experiences, negatively affect her future social interaction and peer-learning experiences. Many comments had been made regarding her work, such as the vase that she made which was described as 'spasticated' and the comment that 'your desk is so messy and that's why you are failing at school'. These comments made by her peers, made her feel upset and angry and hesitant of participating in learning tasks in a social context. On the other hand, being in a more nurturing group of learners in class this half-term, where her social interactions and group-learning tasks were positive, Participant 1 felt happier and more secure about her social and learning experiences. It appeared to depend upon whether the social interaction experience had a positive or a negative outcome as to how it would influence the participant in her future social interactions, for example, being supported in her learning tasks in a nurturing group made her feel more confident about peer-supported learning in the future. Negative comments about her learning, such as her vase as being 'spasticated', make her hesitant about peer supported learning in the future.

According to the findings, Participant 2 had an understanding of what she would like her social interaction experiences at school to be like. In our discussions, she described social interaction experiences that were unlikely, such as climbing into the classroom through the windows to hide under the desks with her friends before lessons began. This event would not have been possible but her response gave an indication that she would like to be mixing socially with her peers at school.

The data indicated that Participant 2 attempted to negotiate social group entry and when she was involved and accepted in a group, such as the group to which she had been allocated to perform Zulu plays; she appeared to be happy and confident. These positive social interaction experiences, such as working successfully in a group to present a Zulu play, boosted her self-confidence. Her body language and emotional expressions were positive and she appeared self-assured. These types of positive social interaction influenced her future social interactions where she was able to view working with others, in certain circumstances, as positive. She enjoyed the experience and expressed that she liked working with her peers in that context.

## 5.5 Overview of the Data in Relation to the Literature Review

The review of the literature covered current findings on social interaction, emotions and learning challenges. In the following section, I will explore how the findings of the study were understood in relation to social interaction, emotions and learning challenges presented in the literature review.

### 5.5.1 Social Interaction

*The literature stated that social intelligence can be described as knowledge about the social world in which you find yourself (Zirkiel, 2002, as cited in Bar-On, 2002). This knowledge is used to manage emotions and direct behaviour towards goals by using cues from the environment (Zirkiel, 2002, as cited in Bar-On, 2002).* Participant 1 appeared to hold herself back from her peers in the classroom, as well as the playground, although she received many comments from other learners to be included in their learning and social tasks, such as being asked if she would have liked to have worked with another learner on their science experiments. She appeared to behave in a way that did not match her peers' understanding of the social situation in which they found themselves. This behaviour indicated that social interaction and social intelligence might have been an aspect of social behaviour that presented challenges to the participant.

Social interaction was an area in which Participant 2 experienced challenges in her school environment. She displayed behaviour, such as trying to offer financial rewards to her peers in-order for them to befriend her and made comments such as 'they hate me when they have to work with me', that indicated her lack of acceptance from her peers in her class. She was often walking to and from classes alone and was isolated in the classroom whilst other learners were engaging socially.

In terms of social competence, both participants seemed to be removed from the majority of the class, in most settings. Participant 1 was described as holding herself back, not engaging with others and selecting goals of keeping herself at a distance from her peers. *This linked to Bauminger et al. (2005) who state that those with learning difficulties may experience challenges with knowledge of social behaviours and their consequences.* Participant 2 initially stated that she had many friends in the school setting but as time progressed, she indicated that this was not accurate; she only had friends in her home context. Her behaviour was described as 'bolshy' by her educator. She described the participant as barging her way into social situations. This type of behaviour resulted in her peers getting annoyed with her.

*This can be linked to what Stone and La Greca (1984) describe as direct, intrusive and demanding social entry often displayed by those with learning difficulties. Social competence appeared to be an area that both participants found challenging.*

In terms of social skills, Participant 1 was described as a caring person by her parents. She explained during our activity sessions, that she enjoyed interacting with friends and family at home and this interaction made her feel happy.

Participant 1 experienced difficulties with personal relations as a result of her learning challenges. At school, she found it difficult to interact effectively with the peers in her class during peer-learning tasks, as a result of the way in which her peers treated her. The ways in which she was treated made her feel unhappy. Her peers did not support her learning. This resulted in her being left behind in the task and resulted in her feeling self-conscious. *This links with Carlson (2001) who stated that those with learning difficulties are at risk for poor personal relations.*

Participant 1 had a small group of friends at school and appeared to engage easily and successfully with them, both at school and at home. She enjoyed working with her friends on learning tasks but not with her peers, as they make her feel unhappy about her academic challenges. She seemed to remove herself from the majority of the class at playtimes as she felt that she did not know how to enter their social activities, displaying difficulties with peer group entry, self-confidence and the ability to correctly read the social situation. *This could be linked to the beneficial effect of emotion knowledge on social communication in peer relations, linking social skills, appropriate self-assertion and co-operative behaviour (Izard et al., 2001).*

Participant 2 appeared to have poor interpersonal relations and less popular and more rejected than her peers, which links with the literature on children with learning difficulties (Carlson, 2001). She received negative statements from peers in peer interaction, engaged in visually distracting behaviour and displayed more direct, intrusive, demanding social entry (Carlson, 2001). Participant 2 described her social interactions as 'free' and her friends as non-judgmental in the township where she lives, indicating that it may be social interactions in her school environment that she found challenging and being unsure of how to negotiate such.

## **5.5.2 Emotions**

In terms of emotional intelligence, both participants displayed low self-confidence at school.

*The literature states that many children with learning difficulties experience low self-concept (Lerner, 2006). Both participants displayed little influence in both learning and social activities (Goleman, 1998, as cited in Bar-On, 2002) as they were both removed from the majority of their peers' activities.*

*Both participants seemed to be able to regulate their moods and to be able to keep distress from overwhelming their ability to act (Goleman, 1998, as cited in Bar-On, 2001). Participant 1 removed herself from social settings that caused her distress and surrounded herself with her small group of friends. She sat away from the majority of her peers at and interacted with her two friends with whom she was comfortable. She communicated via electronic mail with her educator as to how she was feeling at school, to which her educator responded. Participant 1 expressed her thoughts in her personal diary at home. As a form of resilience, Participant 2 indicated that she ignored people when they were mean to her. She also communicated openly with her mother.*

*Participant 1 did not push herself academically or socially when it was difficult for her to do so. This indicated that she did not seem to persist well in the face of frustration (Goleman, 1998, as cited in Bar-On, 2002).*

Both participants described themselves as being happy. Participant 1 described herself as being happy at school but both participants described their social learning and social interaction experiences with their peers, as unhappy.

The participants seemed to be aware of some but not all of their emotions. Neither participant spoke confidently about recognizing the emotions of others. Participant 1 had difficulty labeling some of the emotions that she experienced, although she could describe the feeling to me, and when this feeling had occurred. Participant 2's mother thought that Participant 2 was developing an awareness of her emotions and an understanding of them but this awareness and understanding of her emotions, was not constant.

*Mis-interpretation of social emotional cues may result in poor peer relations (Izard et al., 2001). This may be demonstrated by Participant 1's behaviour as she believed that she is not able to participate with her peers in social activities at s although her class educator explained that Participant 1 was well liked by her peers and it was through her own choice that she distanced herself from her peers. She seemed to lack appropriate self-assertion and co-operative behaviour in these settings. If Participant 1 was misinterpreting emotional cues as indicated by Saarni (1999) this may affect her social communication, which may threaten rapport with her peers, resulting in greater distance being created in their social relations.*



### 5.5.3 Learning Difficulties

*As stated by Lerner (2006) primary school for many children with learning difficulties, was a period when social difficulties manifest, as these learners often find it difficult to make and keep friends. This seemed apparent for Participant 2 in her school context. Emotional difficulties may arise due to having little self-confidence, a poor self-concept and few opportunities to develop feelings of self-worth (Lerner, 2006).* The findings of the study indicated that both participants displayed low self-confidence and had few opportunities to develop feelings of self-worth in their school environment. Both participants were aware of their academic challenges and found the comments made by their peers in this regard, difficult to accept.

## 5.6 Recommendations

The findings of the study have revealed that specific challenges presented themselves to both participants in their home and school contexts. As a result of the findings of the study, recommendations will be made in both contexts.

### 5.6.1 Recommendations for School Settings

In my experience, emotion communication, emotional knowledge and social relationships are areas of difficulty for children with learning difficulties and I believe that it may be these skills that hinder these learners' social interaction experiences. I concur with Schutte et al. (2001) that it may be possible to increase Emotional Quotient (E.Q.) through intensive teaching of coping skills, of how to acquire and use information, of how to work with others and to manage personal growth. I further concur with Lerner (2006) that these are skills that may need to be taught to those with learning difficulties, to allow for emotional competence to positively impact social development, which may in turn, may help to improve the quality of the learners' interpersonal relations.

I concur with Arthur (2003) that children with learning difficulties may have higher levels of emotional development problems and with McKenzie et al. (2000) that they may have more difficulty than non-learning challenged peers at recognizing emotions. I believe that these children may need to be taught social and emotional skills to assist in their social and emotional development.



Vygotsky, a psychologist and Halliday, a social linguist, as stated by Wells (2007) argue for the central role of language in human development. Language is seen as the principal mode of meaning making (Wells, 2007). It mediates the communication through which thinking with others is made possible as well as inner speech through which individual thinking is brought under conscious control (Wells, 2007). I concur with Wells (2007) for the importance of encouraging dialogue in all educational settings in order to enable learners to construct knowledge together, thereby enhancing their individual understanding of the world and their potential for action in it.

Conversations are seen to make explicit children's implicit knowledge (Tenenbaum, Alfieri, Brooks and Dunne, 2008). I concur with Dunne (2006) as cited in Tenenbaum et al. (2008) that the collaborative nature of conversations can support children in their Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978) to enable them to engage at a higher level of reasoning and problem solving than when alone, therefore, children need to develop perspective taking skills, emotional understanding and emotional regulation to allow for peer conversations to result.

The participants in the study often felt emotionally challenged as a result of the comments and behaviours of their peers and their learning challenges. It was evident from this study that there was a need to develop the social and emotional skills and competencies of all learners in the research setting to assist all learners in understanding each other more effectively, which should allow for them to communicate in a more effective manner.

The participants displayed challenges in their ability to recognize emotions in social situations. They displayed challenges in their ability to negotiate entry into social settings. This highlighted the need to develop their social and emotions skills and competencies. I believe that the participants' self-confidence needs to be developed in both social and academic settings. I believe that all learners in the research setting need to be taught ways in which to support the learning of others and to be made more aware of the impact they have on each others' learning. There should be more opportunity for all learners to be able to discuss their peer-learning experiences to enable peers and educators to become more aware as to how they may more effectively support other learner's social interaction experiences.

Due the large class sizes in many South African schools, peer supported learning may be a way to accommodate some of the needs of the learners. As stated by Topping (2005) co-operative peer learning can yield significant academic achievement in targeted curriculum areas. Topping (2005) further states that co-operative learning and peer tutoring can

simultaneously yield gains in transferable social and communication skills and in effective functioning, leading to improvements in self-esteem. The tasks need to be within the Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978) for both partners and the process relies on communication skills (Topping, 2005) again highlighting the need to nurture the development of social and emotional skills and competencies for those with whom this may present challenges.

### **5.6.2 Recommendations for Family**

It is evident from this study that both participants receive love and support from their families but I would recommend more open dialogue regarding the participants' emotional experiences at school, as parents and participants appeared to have differing understanding on some aspects of the participants' school experiences. The parents of the participants were not aware of the extent to which their children's learning challenges affected their school experience. They were also not aware that playtime was a challenging time for them nor the extent to which self-esteem affected their social interaction experiences. The more aware parents could be, the more they may be able to support in the development of their self-esteem. Emotional vocabulary should be engaged in to support these learners in the acquisition of emotional language.

### **5.6.3 Recommendations for Further Research**

In the light of the findings for this study, I would like to suggest further studies be carried out in school environments in the field of learning support, social interaction and emotions. Studies could be conducted to explore the impact of social and emotional skills training. Further research could explore the effectiveness of social interaction and peer learning with those with learning challenges, as well as those in the mainstream context. Studies could be conducted to explore the impact of Emotional Quotient training, which should facilitate the development of self-esteem of those with learning challenges and the effect that this may have on their peer social interactions and peer-learning experiences.

## **5.7 Limitations of Study**

The study comprised of only two participants, therefore the results cannot be generalized to the wider population. It is a focused case study that needs to be understood in the context in which the data was collected.

The data captured relied heavily on the verbal responses of the participants. Meanings may have been misinterpreted or misconstrued due to language or comprehension constraints.

Due to cultural differences between one of the participants and myself, my understanding of the participants' meaning may have been misinterpreted or misconstrued.

Data collection took place over a relatively short time period, so we cannot assume that participant responses would remain constant over time.

Researcher effects may have come into play during data collection, where participants may have responded in a manner in which they thought would be appropriate in the eyes of the researcher.

## **5.8 Strengths of the Study**

Data was collected from multiple collection points, therefore helping triangulation in my data to be achieved.

A case study was conducted which allowed for rich, detailed data to be captured. Multiple participants, from different cultural backgrounds participated in the study, allowing more complex data to emerge.

## **5.9 Contributions of the Study**

The study will hopefully have contributed to enriching the existing literature on learning support, social interaction and emotions by exploring some of the difficulties that those learners with learning challenges experience in social interaction. The study will hopefully enrich the existing literature by having explored the participants' emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences.

The study is intended to have contributed to families being made more aware that learners might be experiencing emotional difficulties at school as a result of their learning challenges, especially in relation to their self-esteem. Learners may not be communicating the nature of their challenges effectively in their home environment. Family members may now be more aware of the need to communicate more openly and effectively with their children to be able to assist them with their challenges and to help build their self-esteem.

The study will hopefully have contributed to educators being made aware that peer supported learning, where more able learners are placed with less able learners to assist them in their learning tasks, would require that the more able learners to be equipped with more effective skills to help them achieve this aim. These skills may include social and emotional skills, where the learners are more aware of the manner in which they communicate and share their knowledge and skills with others, has an impact on the less able learners. The less able learners may need to be equipped with social and emotional skills development in terms of self-esteem and social interaction techniques, so that they are more competent to benefit from the social interaction and peer-learning setting. The study highlighted the importance of open and honest communication between educator and learner regarding their learning experiences.

## 5.10 Assumptions

In light of the results of the study, in relation to the initial assumptions the study began with, I concur that learners with learning challenges have difficulty in their social interactions (Lerner, 2006). Peer learning and social interaction outside of the learning context, was described as challenging and often upsetting for both participants.

I assume that children with learning difficulties, as a result of ineffective social interaction, will not achieve full social interaction. Therefore, they will not access the higher mental functions and may not achieve learning within their Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978). I concur with the assumption that this type of learning did not take place. Both participants found social interaction in a peer-learning context to be challenging and emotionally upsetting, as their academic learning was not supported by their peers nor were their emotional needs met. Participant 1 found group learning to be a positive experience when her learning was supported by her friends. Participant 2, when working in a social learning task, such as when she was performing her Zulu play in a group of her peers, to be a positive experience. Here she felt confident in her learning and was included by her peers,

In light of the findings of the study, as a result of not achieving full social interaction, the learners with learning challenges did develop a sense of self-awareness but did not develop voluntary control of their behaviours (Vygotsky, 1978). Both participants were aware of their learning challenges and as a result of these challenges, the social challenges that arise for them. Both participants were aware of their skills and assets but felt emotionally challenged by behaviours and comments made by their peers as a result of their learning challenges. This experience lead them to distance themselves from the majority of their peers in both

learning and social contexts. I therefore feel that they have not developed voluntary control of their behaviours.

In light of the findings of the study, I concur with the assumption that learners with learning challenges will need support and guidance in the development of social and emotional skills and competencies as a result of the challenges they face with social interaction (Lerner, 2006). Participant 1 often experienced challenges with self-esteem in academic tasks due to the comments made by her peers. She was aware of her challenges, both academically and socially and had developed methods to avoid stressful encounters in her social setting but was unable to avoid this in the classroom setting. Participant 2's behaviour in learning and social tasks often resulted in negative responses from her peers and it would therefore be helpful to provide assistance in the development of her social skills and competencies and for all learners in their learning environment.

The findings of the study therefore support the initial assumptions made.

## **5.11 Closing Reflections**

This study explored and explained the emotional responses of learners with learning difficulties regarding their social interaction experiences. The findings of the study indicated that the participants experienced emotional challenges as a result of their social interaction experiences when they were involved with peer learning in the classroom setting. Both participants experienced emotional challenges in the playground as a result of their peer social interaction experiences. Participant 1 removed herself from many of her peers, choosing to opt out of activities, as she did not feel comfortable in negotiating social group entry. Participant 2 experienced difficulty in building close relationships with her peers in the school context. Her peers had in the past rejected her as a result of her behaviours. She felt unwanted and unhappy as a result. Hence the conclusion that learners who experience emotional and social interaction challenges as a result of their learning challenges, need to be supported in the development of social and emotional skills and competencies to assist them in their social interaction experiences. This may assist their academic achievement through more effective peer supported learning. This can be achieved through educator, family and peer support.

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# 1. Addendum 1 – Questions to be Asked in Activity Sessions and Semi-Structured Interviews

## 1.1 Core- Participants Activity Session 1

The answers to these questions will help me to answer my primary and secondary research questions.

### 1.1.1 Introduction

I will recap with the core-participant that we are going to discuss their emotional responses regarding their social interaction experiences. I will explain that I want to know how they feel about their social interaction experiences; what their emotions are before, during and after their social interactions, whether they understand what emotions they are actually experiencing and how these experiences affect their future social interactions.

I will remind the core-participants that we will meet for three sessions where it will be just the two of us working together. These sessions will be about forty-five minutes long. I will discuss with the participant the pseudonym that they wish to use during these sessions. I will remind them that we will be video recording or verbally recording the sessions.

I will show the core-participant the resources that we will be using in session 1. I will explain that these resources are only to be used if the core-participant wishes. In session 1, there will be finger puppets available for the core-participants and I to use. I will explain that there are no right or wrong answers; I just want to know how they feel about mixing with other children in their class.

I will remind participants that their input may lead to helping other children with learning challenges develop more effective skills in social interaction, which may lead to them developing more effective peer interaction and peer supported learning.

### 1.1.2 Warm-up activity for rapport building as a build-up to the main activity.

Can you describe what you think is a perfect school?

Can you describe your best experience at school? It could be a trip, a play, a swimming gala etc.

Can you describe what you think is a perfect classroom?

Can you describe a happy memory with your friends at school?

What do you like best about yourself?

### 1.1.3 Questions

1. Can you describe what school is like for you?

2. Can you describe your friends and the children in your class?

3. Can you describe what it is like working with the other children in your class?

4. Can you describe what it is like for you at s?

5. Can you describe the kinds of feelings you get at school?

6. Do you look forward to working and playing with other children in your school?

After the questions have been answered, I will ask the participant if they would like to use the finger puppets as a way to further comment on any of the points discussed. I will initiate a discussion with the puppets as a result of what the participant has said.

At the end of the session I will recap with the participants what was discussed. I will introduce the emotion cards that will be used in the next activity session. I will discuss briefly with the

participants the collage activity for session 3. I will let them know that they are allowed to bring in their own materials for this activity if they wish e.g. Magazines and images relating to social interaction. It is not compulsory to do so as I will have material available for them to use. I will thank them for their input.

## **1.2 Core- Participants Activity Session 2**

### **1.2.1 Introduction**

I will recap with participants that we are going to be discussing their emotional responses to their social interaction experiences. I will explain that there are no right or wrong answers, I just want to know how they feel. I will remind the core-participants of the pseudonym they are using during our sessions together and that we will be video-recording our discussions.

### **1.2.2 Warm-up activity for rapport building as a build-up to the main activity.**

Can you describe your favourite game to play with your friends?

What do you think would make someone be a best friend?

What is special about this kind of a friend?

Can you tell me what kind of things you might talk about with your special friends?

Can you describe some of your favourite things to do?

We are all different from each other and all of us are special. What qualities or things about you do you think make you special?

### **1.2.3 Questions**

I will recap what was discussed in the last session in regard to the participant's emotional responses to their social interaction experiences. I will introduce the emotion cards to be used in this activity session.

1. Can you tell me what emotions you think these children are expressing on these cards?

2. Can you think of a time at school when you have felt these emotions?

3. If you work with other children in class, what kinds of emotions do you feel?

4. If you are playing in the playground, what kinds of emotions do you feel?

5. If your teacher asked you to get into partners or groups for an activity, what kinds of emotions would you get?

6. What kinds of emotions do you have about learning?

7. What kinds of emotions do you have about the children in your class?

8. How do these emotions that you feel influence how you will act in the future?

(capture emotions experienced before, during and after social interactions)

I will recap with the participant what had been said in activity session 2. I will introduce the collage activity that will be conducted in the next session. I will ask participants to bring in their own material to use in the collage activity if they wish. I will thank them for their input.

## **1.3 Core- Participants Activity Session 3**

### **1.3.1 Introduction**

I will recap with participants that we are going to be discussing their emotional responses to their social interaction experiences. I will explain that there is no right or wrong answer, I just want to know how they feel. I will remind the participants of the pseudonym they are using during our sessions together and that we will be video-recording our discussions.

### **1.3.2 Warm-up activity for rapport building as a build-up to the main activity.**

Can you describe what kind of things do you like to do?  
What is your favourite way of learning e.g. reading, computers, group work etc.  
Can you describe something exciting that you have done recently at school?  
If you could make up some rules for friends to follow about how to be a good friend, what would you say?  
What is your favourite hobby?

### 1.3.3 Questions

We are going to be discussing your feelings about your social interaction experiences at school. I am going to ask you to think about how you feel when you mix with other children. Recap what was said in the two previous sessions.

1. Can you describe yourself to me?
2. Can you describe what it is like when you are with your friends at school?
3. Can you describe what being in your class is like for you?
4. How do you think the other children in your class see you?

I will introduce the collage activity. I will explain that the participant is going to make a collage about how they feel about their social interaction experiences at school. The collage can be of the classroom or other learning environments and/or the playground environment. We will discuss the collage in detail once complete. I will ask for their emotional responses to the scenes depicted.

I will recap with the participant what has been said in activity session 3 as well as their overall input from sessions 1, 2, and 3. I will thank the participants for their input and let them know how much I enjoyed working with them.

I will explain that once the data has been analyzed, I will discuss my findings with the participants to ensure that my understanding of the data matches participant meaning.

## 1.4 Questions to be Asked During Semi-Structured Interviews with Parents' of the Core-Participants.

The answers to these questions will help me to answer my primary and secondary research questions.

I will remind participants that I am interested in exploring their understanding of the core-participant's emotional responses to their social interaction experiences. I will explain that there is no right or wrong answer, I simply want to explore their understanding of the situation. I will remind participants that their input may lead to helping other children with learning difficulties develop more effective skills in social interaction which may lead to more effective peer interaction and peer supported learning. I will remind participants that I will video-record the interviews but that confidentiality and anonymity will be respected.

I will explain that I wish to gain background information about the participant so as to aid my understanding of the core-participants and their emotional responses to their social interaction experiences. I will explain that these questions may be of a personal nature but I am not collecting the information so as to judge any of the participants but simply to gain a deeper understanding of them.

### 1.4.1. Background Information

Could you describe your daughter to me?  
Could you describe her home environment to me?  
Is she a first-born child?  
Does she have any siblings? What is their relationship like? Is she dominant or submissive in these relationships?  
How would you describe your relationship with your daughter?  
Can you describe the kind of activities do you do together?  
How does she respond to these activities?

Are you and your daughter's mother/father married?  
Have you ever been married?  
Have you been at home with your daughter since she was born or have you been employed?  
What is your availability to be able to spend time with her?  
How would you describe your socio-economic status?  
Does your daughter invite friends to your home?  
How do they interact?  
Would you describe her as a leader or a follower in these situations?

#### **1.4.2 Questions**

How would you describe your daughter's social interactions?  
How would you describe her emotional responses to this situation?  
Does she make and keep friends easily?  
Is she a leader or a follower with her friends?  
How would you describe your daughter's overall school experiences?  
How do you think she feels about working with other children in her class?  
How do you think she feels about being in the playground at school?  
What would you describe as the influences in how she feels about school, her peers and her learning experiences?  
Thank you so much for your input during our interviews. I would not have been able to conduct my research study as successfully without your help. I appreciate your time, honesty and co-operation.  
Before I write up my final copy of my research report, I would like to check my findings with you if possible, so as to ensure that what I have written matches your understanding.

#### **1.5 Questions to be Asked During Semi-Structured Interviews with the Educator Involved with the Core-Participant in their Educational Setting.**

The answers to these questions will help me to answer my primary and secondary research questions.  
I will remind participants that I am interested in exploring their understanding of the core-participant's emotional responses to their social interaction experiences. I will explain that there are no right or wrong answers, I simply want to explore their understanding of the situation. I will remind participants that their input may lead to helping other children with learning difficulties develop more effective skills in social interaction which may lead to more effective peer interaction and peer supported learning. I will remind participants that I will video-record the interviews.  
I wish to gain some information about the participant's behaviour in the classroom setting. I will not use this information to judge the participant or to make recommendations about learning or behavior.  
Can you describe the participant's behaviour in the classroom?  
Can you describe the participant's behaviour to me in the playground?  
Is the participant a leader or a follower at school?  
Does she work effectively with other children on tasks in the classroom?  
Does she play effectively with other children?  
Does she make and keep friends?  
Thank you so much for your input during our interviews. I would not have been able to conduct my research study as successfully without your help. I appreciate your time, honesty and co-operation.  
Before I write up my final copy of my research report, I would like to check my findings with you if possible, so as to ensure that what I have written matches your understanding.

## 2. Addendum 2 – Activity Sessions with Participant 1, her Parents and Educator

### 2.1 Participant 1

#### 2.1.1 Activity Session 1

2009-03-24

08:55

T. OK, OK what we are going to talk about today is how you feel about school. There are no right or wrong answers, you can tell me whatever you want and we are going to video record it so there is going to be a video of us two and we are going to tape record it but the only two people that are going to see it are you, me and my supervisor who helps me at university. And now when we are meeting, do you want to use your own name for the meetings, do you want to use your own name for the interviews, I can call you Participant 1 and when I write it up, I won't use your name?

Participant 1. (nod)

T. OK. And we are going to meet together three times if that is alright with you? And today are going to do some talking about school and use the finger puppets if you want, and then in the other two activities, we are going to be looking at some pictures of children's faces and some of them are doing cross faces, some of them are doing happy faces and we are going to talk about those, and in the last session we are going to be building a collage and you can choose how you want the picture to turn out, and if you want to bring stuff in from home to help you make that picture, you are allowed to do that. I'll bring magazines and cutting and gluing stuff but if you want to bring some of your own stuff, you are allowed to and I sent your mommy a message to explain that as well.

Participant 1. OK.

T. Um, if I said to you, can you describe your perfect school to me, what would it be like? And it can be anything, absolutely anything, anything you would like. What do you think a perfect school would be?

Participant 1. Um, a school where you can wear roller-blades the whole time.

T. Fabulous.

Participant 1. Civvies.

T. Uhm.

Participant 1. Um, I'm not sure.

T. What kind of things do you think you would like to do in your perfect school?

Participant 1. Roller-blade.

T. Roller-blade? OK. And would you like to roller blade in your classroom?

Participant 1. Yes.

T. And would your educators have to be on roller-blades to?

Participant 1. Yes!

T. Even if they don't know how to?

Participant 1. Yes!

T. You want to be in your own clothes not your school uniform?

Participant 1. Yes.

T. Ah ha. OK and what kind of things would you like to be doing in the classroom other than roller balding, what kind of lessons would you like to be doing?

Participant 1. Art.

T. Art? OK. Drawing, painting? Making stuff?

Participant 1. Drawing.

T. Hm, what's your favourite.

Participant 1. I like making things out of play-dough and stuff like that, plasterscine, I've got



some in my desk.

T. At school?

Participant 1. Yes.

T. I'd like to see some. And do you like making things like, if you making, things like box building and that kind of stuff? I saw lots of models around the school I think children had made some models of their area or round their with streets and building?

Participant 1. Oh those, those were by the Grade Threes.

T. Do you like doing that kind if thing?

Participant 1. Sort of, I like making things like I made a Brian Mae 'cause I really want to meet him.

T. Why do you want to meet him?

Participant 1. I don't know, I just want to.

T. OK.

Participant 1. I make things for mum and things for Nana and things for lots of people.

T. Wow, so that's something you good at? I also like art. Can you tell me what, thinking about school, what is your best thing about school? What is the best thing you have done at school?

(PI – sr) Participant 1. When I got ninety something percent for Afrikaans.

T. Wow, that's amazing! And was that long ago or was that quite recently.

Participant 1. Last year.

T. Wow, good girl. Did you enjoy Afrikaans?

Participant 1. Not really.

T. And do you enjoy doing things like school galas?

Participant 1. Sometimes but sometimes it's too cold.

T. OK. And have you been in nay school plays at all? And do you enjoy that.

Participant 1. Yes.

T. What was the last school ply you did?

Participant 1. Peter Pan, no Fame.

T. Fame, wow. And did your whole class do a scene together.

Participant 1. Ya. We did a song.

T. OK. And are you looking forward to Grade Seven when you can be the main parts in the play?

Participant 1. (nod).

T. Now, a happy memory you have about your friends at school, something that you've done with your friends, something nice. Could be a school trip, a school outing you went on, could be a game you played outside.

Participant 1. I'm not sure.

T. Hm. Can you think of something you have enjoyed doing with children in class?

Participant 1. Um, does it have to be in this school or last school?

T. It could be in your last school.

(FR - f.s) Participant 1. When I met my best friend at a school that wasn't here cause my um my other best friend went to go and play with someone else and I went to got and play with them and they played with me and we're best friends now.

T. Wow. And was that when you were in nursery school? And they are still your friends now?

Participant 1. (nod).

T. Wow.

Participant 1. And then my sister is best friends with my best friend's sister.

T. That's really nice. So do you play together?

Participant 1. Ya, yes, well, not me Issy, Julia and Ann but me and Ann play together and Issy and Julia play together.

T. OK, OK. And if you could say, what's your best thing bout being you, what is your favourite thing about being you? What's your favourite thing about yourself? What do you think is really nice about you? I can think of something already.

Participant 1. My freckles.

(res - res) T. Lovely, good! And what about things you think you are good at?

Participant 1. Making things.

T. Uhmm.

Participant 1. And um, I'm very good at the computer, I love the computer.

T. Really? Why do you like working on the computer?

Participant 1. I'm I don't know, it's just easier but I also wrote something about Queen and Brian Mae and Freddy Mercury and it's on the wall in the classroom.

T. Will you show me when we go in next time? And what kind of things can you do on the computer?

Participant 1. Um, lots.

T. Really, cause I'm not very good at computers. So do you like doing research on the computer?

Participant 1. Yes.

T. And can you do emails?

Participant 1. Yes.

T. And have they got drawing programs on the computer that you can use, do you like those.

Participant 1. Yes.

T. I like those to. And do you like it when your educator uses the white board to teach in the classroom.

Participant 1. Yes.

T. When I was at school we didn't have those white boards, we had chalkboards, so you are really lucky, I think it makes learning a lot more exciting doesn't it?

Participant 1. Yes.

T. And are you allowed to use the white board in the classroom?

Participant 1. No. Although a whole lot of people do use it and then say we are not allowed to.

T. Oh dear. Could you tell me what you think school is like for you?

Participant 1. Some parts hard and some parts very easy.

T. Hm. What parts are very easy?

Participant 1. I sometimes find different lessons easy.

T. OK. And which ones do you enjoy?

Participant 1. Science, English, sometimes, sometimes Maths, except when we have to do long division, I hate long division and art.

T. Who teaches you for art?

Participant 1. Mrs T.

T. And is she just the art educator?

Participant 1. No, she is also the Grade Six educator and when we were in Grade Three she was my educator.

T. OK, OK. What would you say the children in your class are like?

(FR – pr) Participant 1. Sometimes mean to me.

T. Really?

Participant 1. When I say something wrong but then when someone else answers something and they are wrong, they say it's OK, don't worry, it's just a mistake.

T. And they don't do that for you?

Participant 1. No.

T. How does that make you feel?

(PR – p.r, EM – aw) Participant 1. Sad.

(SC – s.i) T. And have you spoken to your educator about that?

(As, p

(res - res) Participant 1. No, but I emailed her.....when my grandfather passed away last month.

T. Shame, I'm sorry to hear that.

Participant 1. But my granny luckily lives five houses away, which is really nice.

T. Lucky.

(EM - e.s) Participant 1. Also mom told me the other day that I mustn't tell anyone but I'm Nanna's favourite.



T. Wow, you a lucky girl then. And is that the Nan that you stayed with when your sister was sick? And can you tell me what some of your friend at school are like? Some of your close friends, what are they like?

Participant 1. Um, well, C likes animals, and likes to watch discovery and stuff like me

T. OK.

(FA – re) Participant 1. And is not very fond of her sister like me.

T. OK.

Participant 1. And G is very quiet except when she wants to be loud then she can be very, very, very loud.

T. OK.

(SI- ab) Participant 1. And S has, has no other friends except for me, I'm the only one she sits with at break, and she's the only one who sits with me at break. So we are together at break all the time.

T. OK.

Participant 1. And she's invited me to her party and her birthday is today.

T. Wow, when is her party?

Participant 1. On the 28th.

T. OK.

Participant 1. And also on the 28th is you go onto the Internet and go [www.earthhour.com](http://www.earthhour.com) then I think from eight o'clock to half past eight and you turn off your electricity to help the earth.

T. Really? Are you going to do it?

Participant 1. Yes.

T. And is that eight o'clock in the morning or eight o'clock at night?

Participant 1. Night I think, on a Saturday but I'm not sure what real time is so I have to still go to web site to find out.

T. Exactly what time it is? OK. Wow, that sound like a wonderful thing to do.

Participant 1. We'll be at the party while it's happening.

T. Do you think they will all want to do it at the party?

Participant 1. They are going to.

(PR – f.s) T. That's fantastic, wow, gosh. So why do you think you are friends with those girls, why do you like being friends with them?

(EM – e.s) Participant 1. Cause they nice to me.

T. And what do you mean by being nice to me? What kind of things do they do?

Participant 1. They invite me over to their houses, they parents are very good friends with mine, and they do things, they, they, they very good friends, I've known them for a long time. So for C and S, I only got friends with G last year and C in Grade Four.

T. And so what's like?

(PR– f.s) Participant 1. Hm, we don't have much break, so me and S usually just sit together and talk.

T. And do you eat your lunch at first break?

Participant 1. Ya, and also at second break sometimes, second breaks seems to come much faster than first break.

T. It's a bit shorter. And so you sit and do you chat while you eating? And is that what most people do?

(SI - exc) Participant 1. Ya, but some people play with the ball.

T. OK.

Participant 1. Play foursquare and dodge ball and those kinds of things.

T. And do you like joining in with those kinds of things?

(SI – s.g.e) Participant 1. There's never really room for us to play, everyone comes out screaming for break, books being in the middle and books being inside, so we can't really join in 'cause everyone's been playing already.

T. OK. And if you tried to shout those kinds of things out, or would you not want to do that?

(SI – int) Participant 1. No, I don't want to.

(res – res) T. And so do you enjoy sitting talking to your friends.

Participant 1. Yes.  
T. And do you play or do you sit in a certain place all the time?  
Participant 1. Yes.  
T. Is there a Grade Five area or are you allowed to choose?  
(res – res) Participant 1. There is a Grade Five area but you are allowed to choose. Me and G sit behind the Grade Six area.  
T. OK.  
Participant 1. Which is still in Grade Five area to.  
T. OK.  
Participant 1. And there's stumps that we sit on.  
(SI - exc) T. And do you not play with your friends at playtime.  
(SI – ex) Participant 1. No, they sit with me, everyone does, but we are still best friends.  
T. OK, OK, so do they join in the foursquare games?  
(PR – ex) Participant 1. No, they just sit and watch.  
T. OK, and do you...  
Participant 1. Other people.  
(SI - exc) T. OK, and do they not want to play either?  
Participant 1. No, they don't like playing those kinds of games either.  
T. OK.  
Participant 1. Ann, Ann was the girl I was sitting with while I was doing the magazines.  
T. Who was in your group, it was you, and A and M?  
Participant 1. Me, A and M.  
T. OK.  
Participant 1. And A.  
(LR – g.l) T. OK. And do you like working with the other children in your class?  
(Lr – ls) Participant 1. It depends which ones.  
T. OK  
(PR – p.r) Participant 1. Some of them are mean to me....weird, sometimes nice and sometimes mean  
T. And why do you think that is?  
Participant 1. Don't know.  
T. So if you allowed to choose who you want to work with?  
(LR – g.l) Participant 1. Then I would probably choose A, G or C or R maybe um, M and I've just become (SI - exc) friends with M, cause we used to not exactly like each other because she's she used to play with all the popular kids and then when she came to E's house with me to play then we became friends a few weeks ago.  
T. OK and are you enjoying that?  
Participant 1. (nod).  
T. And do you often get to choose who you want to work with in class?  
Participant 1. No, sometimes.  
T. And you seem to be doing quite a lot of group work. And is that in all subjects?  
Participant 1. Not really.  
T. What kinds of subjects do you do group work in?  
Participant 1. English, Science, and Maths.  
T. OK. And do you like that kind of learning?  
(LR – g.l) Participant 1. Ya.  
T. Why do you like it?  
(LR, gl) Participant 1. Cause its more easier and more fun?  
T. OK. And would you prefer to always choose the groups you work with or do you think it is a good idea to work with other children.  
(LR – l.s) Participant 1. Um, sometimes I get put together with people I really can't work with.  
T. OK  
T. And would you be able to tell your principal?  
Participant 1. I've never thought of it actually.  
T. OK. And if you did say something to her, do you think she would be understanding?

Participant 1. Hm, hmmm.

T. And does your head educator write back to you if you email her?

(SC – i.s) Participant 1. I don't email to her, I email to my class educator, yes, she does email back.

T. OK. And if you had to tell me what feelings you get at school?

(EM – aw) Participant 1. Um, sometimes I get a feeling of when the work is too hard for me, everyone's against me and I want to go to Bellavista or somewhere like that.

T. OK.

Participant 1. Or Japari or something like that, and then sometimes I really really love...

T. OK, so good feelings and bad feelings.

Participant 1. Um.

T. And most of the time, what would you say your feelings are?

(res – res) Participant 1. Um, I really like it at school.

T. OK. OK, well, if I was going to one of these puppets and it was me outside and I was going to be one of the children in your class, would you want to be a finger puppet with me?

Participant 1. OK.

T. Choose one. OK, so now, I'm going to pretend to be one of the children in your class (LR - gl) and I'm going to say to you, um, 'We've been asked to do this task by your class educator, do you want to come and do it with me Participant 1? What do you think you would say?

Participant 1. I would be happy and I would say yes.

T. Excellent. And if I was pretending to be you, and I go up to one of your friends and I say, the bell had just rung for pay time what should we do?

Participant 1. Then, I don't really go ask them because I know they like to sit with people all the time.

T. OK.

Participant 1. But S and I just leave the classroom; we don't talk to each other about when we are going.

T. OK. Lets pretend I'm you and you're S what would you say to me at playtime?

Participant 1. She would probably be sitting already or getting her hat and one of us would be sitting there already and then one of us would walk there, then I'd say hi to her and she'd say hello then we'd just start talking about things.

T. What kind of things do you think you would talk about?

Participant 1. Educators and school and stuff like that and other people and sometimes people are (SI - exc) very, very mean to R and she goes to sit in her quiet place and C comes to sit with me.

T. And do you go up to R and find out what's wrong with her?

Participant 1. I do but then she just says, don't worry, I'll go and sit in my quiet place.

T. And does that happen quite often?

Participant 1. Sometimes.

T. And why do you think people are mean to her?

(PR – p.r) Participant 1. Because she forgets her books and stuff and then we were going to get class points or something and then we don't or she or she ends up in a fight with someone because they say books not keeping the envelope and then she doesn't hear them say that and then she gets into a fight because she didn't hear and she has to keep it.

T. And does that sort of thing ever happen to you?

Participant 1. Not really.

T. And how would you cheer her up, what sort of things would you say? Or does she just manage to cheer up by herself?

Participant 1. She manages to cheer up by herself although then a whole lot of other girls seem to invade her but try to be nice but she likes to be alone, she.

T. And you understand that? And, lets pretend we are doing an activity together and we are working in a group and I say, Participant 1 what are you doing? Can you tell me what task you are doing? Say your educator has given you something to do.

(PR – pr) Participant 1. Sometimes when I'm trying, when I'm when I'm trying to send an email to me and and my educator came up with an idea that we would send an email to

some people and we so I send it to the whole class, and I have to wait and we get group points if we are all sitting together, my educator knows I have to send the homework and then everyone in my group says come Participant 1, come, get ...but then my educator tells me so then.

T. And how did that make you feel?

Participant 1. Cross. And that sometimes if that happens too much I feel like leaving the school.

T. OK, we will carry on our discussion. We are going to meet, tomorrow's Wednesday; we are going to meet again on Thursday, OK? You happy to do that?

Participant 1. Yip.

T. Thank you so much Participant 1, it's been absolutely lovely. It's your break time now?

Participant 1. I'm not sure?

T. I'll tell you.

Participant 1. Yes.

T. No, you've got Maths now, so I think that's now going to be swapped to English isn't it? You already did your Maths.

Participant 1. Thank you.

T. It's a pleasure. I'll walk you.

## 2.1.2 Activity Session Two

2009-03-26

09:25

T. What is special about a best friend? What would make them different?

(FR - exp) Participant 1. Umm, they're the most, they're the best.

T. OK. And what do you think is the most important thing about a special friend or a best friend? What do you think the most important thing would be? What do you think of your special friends or if you were somebody's best friend, what do you think the most important thing would be?

(FR - exp) Participant 1. Um to make them happy.

T. Hum. And what kind of things do you think you would do with your special friend?

Participant 1. Play with them, do stuff with them, help them, and share with them.

T. Um hum.

Participant 1. ....

T. If we are all different from each other, what kind of qualities or things about you do you think are special?

(EM - aw) Participant 1. Umm, sometimes people ask me for for for um science or something and I get very excited when that happens.

T. Good. What other things do you think you are good at?

(res - res) Participant 1. Humm, the computer, sculpting things, um.

T. What do you think your friends like about you?

(PI - sr.) Participant 1. Sometimes well S thinks I'm very funny. Um, G thinks I'm weird, um, E is the same as me, C also has a hamster, um and A's been, I've told you about her, she's been my best friend for years.

T. OK, ja. OK. We are going to look at these pictures here, they are children's faces, the children are showing different emotions, now they're no right or wrong answers for this, it's what you think. What emotions do you think they are showing?

(EM - id) Participant 1. That one's happy, that one's happy, that one's happy, that one's crying, that one's in the middleish, that one's angry, that one's cross or something. That one looks guilty, that's also in the middle, and that one's serious.

T. That's a good word. And if you're looking at them, if we are going to go through all of them, could you tell me a time when you've had that emotion at school?

Participant 1. Um OK. Um all of them?

T. Yes. You can choose which ever one's you want to talk about.

(Em - aw) Participant 1. OK. Surprised when ever people ask me the question for geography

or something.

T. What do mean by the question? Do they ask you for the answer or the question?

Participant 1. They ask what it means.

T. OK. I'm just going to put a mark on this one so that I remember.

Participant 1. And (thinking time) that looks confused?

T. OK. Can you think of a time at school that you've been confused? It could be about work, could be about friends, the way that somebody behaved.

Participant 1. When, when I became friends with R 'cause she kept coming to see me at break.

T. OK.

Participant 1. And I'm.....

T. And you were confused when you became friends with S?

Participant 1. R yes.

T. Why were you confused?

(SI – ab) Participant 1. Because we never really liked each other so much.

T. OK.

Participant 1. Then we became friends.

T. OK. And so after you were confused and then you became friends, how did that make you feel now?

(EM – e.s) Participant 1. Happy.

T. Happy (Participant 1's looking at the emotion cards)

T. OK. Any of the others?

Participant 1. Um umm that's in the middle, like today my mom by mistake closed my fingers in the door of the car.

T. Oww, dear me. Did you put some ice on it?

Participant 1. No I got some arnica on it,

(EM – aw) T. OK, poor thing, shame. So in the middle do you mean in the middle of what?

(EM - aw) Participant 1. Happy and sad.

T. And does that feeling ever come up when you are at school?

Participant 1. Umm ja,

T. OK, like when?

(SI - exc) Participant 1. Like when S has to go do something and then I have to sit alone at break.

T. OK.

Participant 1. And then um Caitlin comes over and sits with me.

T. So do you only normally sit with C if you are not with S?

Participant 1. Ja.

T. OK. So are you and C friends?

Participant 1. (nod)

T. OK. Any of the other ones?

H Um, (pause) those are also (in the middle).....

T. Five and six are also happy. OK, can you think of another time at school when you were happy?

Participant 1. Umm, (pause).

T. Can you think of a lesson that you were happy in, something that was happening at school?

(PI- sr) Participant 1. Umm, I was happy when that, that thing that I did on the computer.

T. OK.

Participant 1. my educator said I must put it on the wall and then also when when I have to she held a piece of paper and I couldn't see it and I had to say a bit about it.

T. Wow, in front of the class?

Participant 1. Yes and she said I remembered it all.

T. Fantastic, it was a really good piece of work.

Participant 1. Thank you.

T. Have you done that kind of thing before?



Participant 1. Umm, um, no.

T. Do you think you will do it again?

Participant 1. (nod).

T. That's really good, that looked like really a, it was a lot of information and pictures as well, it was nice to look at and it was interesting to read.

Participant 1. Nana sad said if, if Brian May, Freddy Mercury and Queen were a subject I would do very well.

T. You would. How did you know about them?

Participant 1. Um, I've always heard the songs, "We are the Champions" always known the song "We will Rock You" and that's it, then but then I one day at my grandpa's house he was listening to it on the radio and then I just wanted to learn more about it and then mom got the CD, well she's got the record and when I got home she played the record for me and I heard most of the, lots of the other songs and then I, she got a CD to play in the car and then I saw pictures of, I go onto the Internet and find pictures of them and I sometimes go onto YouTube to get a song and, and I don't know why I, I really, really, really, like Queen and Elton John.

T. Well that's fantastic. Sounds like you are really good on the computer too. Seems like that's quite a good way for you to do some of your learning because you are researching, reading, looking for art work, that's good. OK, shall we have a look which ones we haven't done. We haven't spoken about him, we haven't spoken about him, her. What do you think, what emotion do you think she's experiencing?

Participant 1. Angry.

T. Angry. Is there a time at school that you've been angry.

Participant 1. Yes.

T. When were you angry?

(P.I. – si) Participant 1. When, when my, when one of my friends said to me, when I had an untidy desk, this is why you are failing in school.

T. What did you say back to them?

Participant 1. I didn't say anything.

T. Do you think that's true?

Participant 1. No.

T. Did you tell the class educator about that?

Participant 1. Uh uh.

T. Did she say sorry?

Participant 1. No.

T. I'm sure that made you feel angry? What do you think he's experiencing?

(EM - id) Participant 1. Umm, not sure.

T. Which of these emotions do you think you get most of the time at school? Which one comes up the most?

Participant 1. That one.

T. And what was that.

Participant 1. That was angry and happy.

T. Angry and happy. Why is that?

(PI - qu) Participant 1. Um 'cause a lot of people are mean to me like last year I got bullied by a person the whole term, year and that wasn't nice.

T. Has that stopped this year? And did you speak to your mom and educator about that?

Participant 1. Yes.

T. And did they help?

Participant 1. Um, only my mom.

T. And do you think that if something like that happened this year would your educator be able to help?

Participant 1. Yes.

T. And that explains why you were angry. And if you were talking about being in the middle, what would make you happy? What makes you happy most of the time at school?

(EM – es) Participant 1. When um when one of my friends tries to stand up for me.



T. And do they do that in the classroom?

Participant 1. Sometimes

T. And in the playground?

Participant 1. Umm I mostly only sit with S so we don't we don't really get into any fights at break anymore.

T. OK. And do you think, is that better?

Participant 1. Kind of better.

T. If you are working with other children in your class, which of these emotions do you think you'd feel? What's that? So, in between angry and happy.

Participant 1. Yip.

T. What makes you angry when you work with them?

(PR - pr) Participant 1. Last year I was working with someone who was, who was really nice sometimes and really, really mean sometimes, cause there's a little group of well this J, A and J and umm, umm, and R and they all stand up for each other and so if they start getting into a fight with me, bullying me or something like that then everyone else was, then those other girls stand up for them and also, so R when I'm doing D&T my vase isn't coming along so nicely cause someone on the first day went in and ripped it apart so we all had to try and fix it and then we did but it still has lumps and bumps, skew and everything, she says it's 'spasticated', there's no word, I know she means spastic.

T. That made you feel angry? And did your educators ask your group to work together to help you fix it?

Participant 1. Um no my educator and the other educator helped me put it together again.

T. That's not very nice.

Participant 1. Nope.

T. Do you enjoy D&T?

Participant 1. Not really.

T. Not really? Even though you like making things? Why don't you like D&T.

H I like making my own things.

T. OK.

(CH -qu) Participant 1. And also D&T it's, it's, it's, I don't know, its just I forget things and if I'm doing something at home and I really, really like it, I never forget anything or something but then I don't like doing something then I'll always forget.

T. OK. What do you mean, forget what they told you, how to do it or?

Participant 1. Forget stuff at home.

T Oh and that you need for the lessons?

Participant 1. (nods) And if you are playing in the playground, say with R what emotions do you feel?

(EM - es) Participant 1. Happy.

T. Happy. Why does she make you feel happy?

(SI - exc) Participant 1. Emm, 'cause were playing together and just me and her and it's nice.

T. OK. And if you look at what is happening in the rest of the playground, if you are not joining in with some of those games, how does that make you feel?

(SI - exc) Participant 1. Doesn't really matter,

T. OK.

Participant 1. Cause S's my friend and we can just play together.

T. OK. And if your educator said to you, you can get into a group and start doing some work in class what one of those do you think you would feel. You can feel more than one.

Participant 1. That.

T. OK. The one in between angry and happy?

Participant 1. Yip.

T. And if your educator says to you, you can chose a friend to work with any one you wanted what emotion do you think you would feel?

(LR - gl) Participant 1. Happy.

T. Who would you choose to work with?

Participant 1. K, definitely.

T. And why would you choose to work with K?  
Participant 1. Because she usually chooses to work with me.  
T. OK. Is she nice to you when you work with her?  
Participant 1. (nod).  
T. And are you nice to her?  
Participant 1. Yes.  
T. What emotion do you feel when you think about learning? Why?  
(LR – Is) Participant 1. Umm, 'cause sometimes its fun to learn about things that I really, really like, like science and sometimes geography, it's fun to learn about those things and sometimes I (LR - I.s.) don't like to learn.....text book  
T. OK. What kind of things?  
Participant 1. I don't like choir and don't like Afrikaans, I quite like History but Mrs J can be quite mean to me and Zulu, no I don't do Zulu. I like Art sometimes I like D&T like when I think I was the first one finished with my teddy.  
T. Oh wow. And were you pleased with it?  
(Ch - qu) Participant 1. Yes. 'Cause I had lied to Mrs B that I had left it at my dad's house and I just forgot my stuff and then I was way behind and then did most of it at home and then I finished it first.  
T. Wow, that's lovely, good girl. And if you are looking of these emotions what one do you get when you think about the children in your class?  
Participant 1. It depends.  
T. OK.  
(PR - ex) Participant 1. Some of them are, I like them, some of them I'm not too sure about.  
T. OK. Why are you not sure about them, because of the way they behave towards you?  
(PI - sr) Participant 1. Cause they sometimes they way they talk to me and talk about me to other children and other children tell me.  
T. OK. And what emotion would that feel if you heard about people speaking about you.  
(PI - sr) Participant 1. If it's nice, surprised, if it's not nice I just feel sad.  
T. OK. Well that's all we are going to do for today. Is there anything you want to tell me? Anything you wanted to add to that?  
Participant 1. No not really.  
T. OK. Then when we meet the next time which is next Tuesday when we are going to be doing our last session together we are going to be making that collage, that's the day you are allowed to bring stuff in. If you want to bring it in before, I'm sure your educator will keep it for you or you can give it to me, I'll be back in, I'll be watching you in class and outside in the playground as well. So if you want to give it to me, that's fine, otherwise next Tuesday. But I have got so if you don't bring anything, that's fine.

### 2.1.3 - Activity Session 3

31.03.2009

08:55

And if I said to you if you could make up some rules of how to be a good friend, what rules would you make up?  
(FR, ex) Never fight with your friends.  
T. OK. Would that be your number one rule? Have you got a number two rule?  
(FR - ex) Participant 1. If you do fight, you will always become friends again.  
T. Hm, that's really nice. How would you become friends again? What would you need to do?  
Participant 1. It just works.  
T. It just works? OK. What's rule number three?  
Participant 1. Hmmm.  
T. What's your favourite hobby? What do you like to do in your spare time?  
(PR - fh) Participant 1. I collect stickers, I check the post because he sends stuff to me (pen-pal) and I call Nana all the time to come.



T. And does she?

Participant 1. Sometimes, and sometimes we go up there, and I play on the trampoline, I play on the computer, I roller-blade, I do all that kind of stuff I told you just now.

(S.I - com) T. And does your pen pal email you or write you letters?

Participant 1. Write.

T. Wow, and do you write letters back or do you email?

Participant 1. Write.

(PI - sr) T. And if you described yourself to me what would you say?

Participant 1. Funny sometimes, um.

T. Is it hard for you?

Participant 1. Yes.

T. Well tell me how old you are.

Participant 1. Ten.

T. Ten. Tell me what four favourite subject at school is?

Participant 1. Science.

T. Tell me what you like to do best in your school holidays?

(SI – int) Participant 1. Go and play at friends.

T. There you go, it wasn't so hard! And what we are going to look at now is we are going to make a collage and this collage is going to be about you and your family and your friends and school and anything that tells me about what school is like and what your friends are like for you. If you want to use the pictures that brought and, I've brought a whole pile of magazines for you to look through as well and I've cut out some pictures, pages that have pictures of children on them which you are welcome to use, so if you want to start having a look through. And we can use one piece of paper or we can stick two pieces of paper together. We can use that, of course we can, cause that reminds you of your hamster doesn't it? You can cut, you can tear, you can stick.

Participant 1. Can I start off with these.

T. Of course, it's your collage.

T. Do you want me to stick two pieces of paper together?

Participant 1. Ya, these are big pictures.

T. Mmm. So you are starting with the picture of you and your Gran?

Participant 1. Yes.

T. Why have you chosen that one to start with?

Participant 1. Um, um, it's a nice picture and it's the first one I chose when mum said you must chose a few pictures to take to Theresa.

(FA. - fs) T. OK. So Gran is someone that is quite important in your life?

Participant 1. Yes, very.

T. Why is she important to you? What does she do for you?

Participant 1. She does lots of stuff.

T. Do you enjoy being with her?

Participant 1. Yes.

T. What kind of emotions do you get when you think of your Gran?

(EM – aw) Participant 1. Happy.

T. OK. Why does she make you happy?

Participant 1. She is really nice to me and.

T. Which one are you cutting out now?

Participant 1. The one of my brother.

(FA - re) T. You and my brother get on well, don't you?

T. Do you like being with my brother?

Participant 1. Um, I like it when he's really grumpy with me in the morning, and he says I'm not your friend Participant 1, and then I say what can I do for you to make you my friend? And he says I'm going to hide and going to pretend I'm in the air-conditioning and then I have to press the button for the air-conditioning, then it come out and my brother comes out of the air conditioning.

T. That's really sweet. Then is he in a good mood again?

(FA - re) Participant 1. Ya, then he likes me.

T. Which one, that one's your pen pal?

Participant 1. Ja.

T. And that one's his brother?

Participant 1. Ja.

T. What are your pen pals' ages?

Participant 1. He's eight and he's five I think.

T. OK. What is your pen-pals name?

Participant 1. D.

T. And where is he from?

Participant 1. England.

T. Wow. And was that something the school helped you set up or something that you did by yourself?

Participant 1. Something that my Aunty helped me set up. I only have one aunt.

T. OK.

Participant 1. Do they live in Johannesburg? Where do they live?

Participant 1. Madrid.

T. Wow. Have you met them before?

Participant 1. Yes.

T. OK.

Participant 1. Not really lots, I've seen them I've seen them about five times.

T. OK. And are they the same age as you?

Participant 1. No, I'm the oldest of all the kids in my family.

T. Wow.

T. Do you like being the oldest?

Participant 1. Sometimes.

T. Why only sometimes?

(FA - re) Participant 1. Um, sometimes they always want to be like me and it is really annoying, also if I want to do my own thing, once when they came I had a huge tummy bug and every time I was asleep one of them would come through and say Participant 1 Participant 1....my Aunty even said before they came that I must be careful because N likes to be like me.

T. OK.

Participant 1. They also stayed up all night.

T. Oh dear.

Participant 1. Because she would say your mom goes down and my mom goes down, then let's eat the sweets I brought back and she gave us 'vrot' grapes.

T. Oh no, that doesn't sound very nice.

T. OK, so here we have got you and daddy and my sister and my brother. Do you want to start sticking them down or do you want to get all of your pictures first?

Participant 1. I'll get all of them.

T. OK. You can just look through and if there is anything that reminds you of you at school or friends that you like or things that you like, things that you don't like or things that you might have experienced at school, so you could do a section with your family and you friends and then you could do another section about stuff that happens at school, like how people are learning or if you like doing work by yourself like that girl, if you prefer being with lots of children and doing group activities like that, so you can choose which ever pictures and then you can tell me a little bit about why you chose those. Here you can put them on the chair if you are finished.

Participant 1. OK, thanks.

T. Don't worry about the mess, it's just so that you know which ones you have looked through. Any words that remind you of school the things that you have felt at school. Is it your mom's mom or your dad's mom?

Participant 1. My mom's mom.

T. They are quite slippery theses pages. Are you looking forward to Grade Six and Grade

Seven at this school?

Participant 1. Hm.

T. And Grade Seven when you are in the top of the school?

Participant 1. (nod).

T. Tell me why you have chosen these ones so far, what does that remind you of?

Participant 1. Um, I write and not letting anyone else see.

T. OK. What kind of things do you write for yourself?

(res - res) Participant 1. Um, what I feel like, or and I write.

T. That's your own, just for you to read and not for anyone else? And do you get a chance to do that at school.

Participant 1. No.

T. So that's something you do at home?

(EM - aw) Participant 1. I get too scared to do it at school.

T. OK, but you do that at home?

Participant 1. Yes.

T. And do you show your mommy at all or is that just for you?

(res - res.) Participant 1. Just for me, she doesn't really know about it.

T. Is it good to write it down?

Participant 1. Hm.

T. So you actually use the computer but you don't send the email but you write it down.

Participant 1. Ja, and also my educator...and then there is always an extra page to it on the computer to so I write down, I type it on the extra page.

T. OK. And does your educator see that?

Participant 1. No, it's just at home.

T. OK. It sounds like a good idea. And this picture?

Participant 1. I'm usually in the tree and then my friends are busy looking up at me and talking to me.

T. Is that at school or at home?

Participant 1. It's at one of my parties at Chuckleberry's and then no-one knew where I was and I was joking around and everyone thought there was something up in the tree.

T. And it was you?

Participant 1. Yes.

(SI - int)T. And do you enjoy your own parties?

Participant 1. Yes.

(PR - fs)T. And do you have children from the class come over?

Participant 1. Yes.

T. And do you invite everyone or do you just invite a few people?

Participant 1. Just a few people.

T. Twenty. On Saturday I ate breakfast on a rope.

T. Wow. Sound like fun.

Participant 1. And I stayed up on the monkey rope for an hour.

T. Wow.

Participant 1. It was so much fun.

T. Fun to be on the rope?

Participant 1. It was a lot of fun.

T. Good.

Participant 1. Have you watched 'Mars Attack'?

T. Yes. Have you?

Participant 1. Yes.

T. Did you like it?

Participant 1. Sometimes.

T. It's quite silly isn't it? And why did you put those there?

(SI - ex) Participant 1. Sometimes at second break I go to the library.

T. To the library.

Participant 1. It's nice and quiet.

T. What do you do there?  
Participant 1. I find books, I read sometimes.  
T. Do other children from your class go to the library?  
Participant 1. Um, not at second break.  
T. OK. And you like to be in there? Is it nice?  
Participant 1. (nod).  
T. Why did you put the word play there?  
(SI - inc) Participant 1. I like people to come and play with me at my house and I like it when I go to other peoples' houses.  
T. Is it more fun at theirs?  
Participant 1. Yes. Especially....  
T. And what's that?  
Participant 1. Well, it looks a bit like chicken strips and I like chicken strips.  
T. Hm, good. All right well should we look for a few more pictures and then we will stick them down.  
Participant 1. OK.  
T. I'll give you maybe another two minutes and we can stick.  
Participant 1. Hammies!  
T. Good. I think they are little hamsters.  
Participant 1...  
T. You like learning about ...well do try want to stick them down so we don't run out of time.  
Participant 1. Ja.  
T. And then I'll make a colour photocopy for you and I'll give you the colour photocopy and when my project is totally finished then I can give you your picture back.  
Participant 1. OK.  
T. Thanks.

## **2.2.1 Break Observation**

**2009-03-30**

**10:25**

Grade Fives eat their lunch in the area directly outside their classroom. They collect their packed lunches from outside their classroom and eat outside. They are not supervised by adults.

There was a clam, chatty, friendly atmosphere in their area. They seem to interact well and easily as a class.

(SI- exc) Participant 1 was sitting on a ledge with two other girls. They were chatting and eating. They appeared relaxed and at ease. They were visibly distanced from the rest of the group.

One of the learners told me that they sit in this area and eat and chat but not play as they are now too old to play.

After a while, once they had eaten most of their lunch, I went to chat to Participant 1 and the girls that she was sitting with. I asked them about. We discussed where the different classes eat and play and where their classrooms are. I asked them to tell me about the display of work that was visible to us. They chatted with me in a relaxed and friendly and confident manner.

Other learners began to approach us during our discussion. The learners were all friendly and chatty. I was asked if I was 'doing this' for university. I was also asked where I was studying.

I asked the girls where they thought they would like to go for high school and why. They were all able to engage easily with me.

Some learners called me by my first name but in a polite manner.

Participant 2 asked when I would be meeting her next. I reminded her that we would meet again tomorrow and that we would be making the collage. She seemed excited and happy.

## 2.2.2 Second Break Observation

2009-03-31

12:45

I sat waiting for the girls to come to the Grade Five area outside their classroom. The girls immediately came up to me when they saw me. Most of the girls in the class greeted me in a friendly manner. They asked me lots of questions – we chatted in a friendly relaxed manner. (SI - inc) Participant 1 came and sat near me on the ledge above where I was sitting. She joined in the discussions that I was having with the rest of her class but not in a domineering way.

One of the girls, one of Participant 1's friends, asked me why I had given teddy bears to some of the children. I explained that they had helped me with my project. The girls then asked me lots of personal questions; my age, where I had lived in the United Kingdom, whether I liked living away from South Africa.

(SE - exc) Participant 1 spoke to me about her trip to Cape Town. She was not happy to discuss this openly with the girls in her class, even the girls whom she had told me she was friends with. She is going away in the last week of term.

The girls in the class asked me if I would like to come and watch them say their speeches at the public speaking festival this coming Monday. They appeared confident and relaxed around me.

## 2.2.3 Science Observation

2009-03-16

08:30

(SC - ef) Participant 1 has been selected to be a 'material' monitor for her table. At the start of the lesson the material monitors were asked to hand out the materials for the first activity. Participant 1 completed this task easily and efficiently. She appeared confident and organized. She sits in a group of 5 children in the front of the class.

The lesson began with the use of the interactive white board. Participant 1 looked and listened in an interested and focused manner.

The children were asked to complete a quiz. During this independent task, Participant 1 began to (LR - lc) slouch over her desk and her head was just about on the desk by the end of the task. She was quiet during this activity.

(LR – ls) The children marked their own work and Participant 1 was keen to raise her hand to answer questions when she thought she knew the answer. She appeared confident and engaged in the task.

(SI- exc) She appeared relaxed by the end of the task but sat quietly whilst other children were chatting and engaging with each other.

When asked to come and work on the carpet whilst the educator was using the interactive white board, Participant 1 chose to sit near the front of the class. She had brought a counting square (LR - lc) with her to the carpet and was fiddling with this. She was finding it hard to sit still and focus. When the revision activity on the board began, she became focused and involved on the task. She was keen to participate in the activity and raised her hand on her own accord to answer questions posed by the educator.

When the children were asked to stick their sheet into their books, Participant 1 again organized the (LR - gl) materials efficiently and calmly and her group were the first table to get ready. They were calm, organized and worked as a team without any fussing.

When the children began walking to the Science lab from their classroom, Participant 1's friend put her arm over Participant 1's shoulder and they left the room in such a manner. Two children asked Participant 1 if she would like to work with them on their given experiment.

Participant 1 didn't make any comment but smiled at the learners.

The children were put into groups by the educator. Participant 1 appeared calm and relaxed with the other two learners in her group. They listened attentively to their instructions and were able to carry these out without difficulty. She was smiling and appeared to be content in this situation.

The children in Participant 1's group were chatting easily to each other about the task.

Participant 1 initiated a short discussion about the experiment with her educator. She appeared relaxed and interested in the task. Her group was always ready, focused, relaxed and appeared to be enjoying their work.

Towards the end of the task, Participant 1 was fiddling with the equipment and was chatting to her peers, not focusing on experiment.

The children were asked to tidy up after the experiment. They were all given different tasks.

Participant 1 was able to follow her instructions and did so calmly and efficiently. She interacted with the other children in her class in a relaxed, confident and friendly manner. She waited for other children to wash their equipment before she went and was calm and patient.

All the children in the class were confident, well behaved, calm, able to follow instruction and complete their activity. There was a mutual respect between learners and educator. It was a healthy and happy working environment in which Participant 1 seemed to be happy to be. There was opportunity for learners to engage with each other and the educator as well as opportunity for them to work alone.

## **2.2.4 Drama Observation**

**2009.03.23**

**08:05**

The Drama educator was late due to traffic so the Science lesson began. The children did not seem unsettled by this change in timetable.

The Drama lesson continued when the Drama educator arrived. (SC - ef) The class as a whole managed to adjust to the change in class easily, quickly and calmly. The educator engaged with them and explained why she was late and apologized for this.

The children were practicing their speeches for the public speaking festival taking place in two weeks time. The learners took turns to say their speech to the educator. The rest of the class was asked to get on with an activity of their choice in a quiet manner. The class managed to follow their instructions well. They had to be reminded once or twice about chatting but on the whole their behaviour was great!

(QU - ch) Participant 1 was supposed to be practicing her speech today. She had had the date given to her a while ago. She was reminded on Friday but she did not have her speech ready to practice. She was told off for this. She sat quietly during this telling off and did not seem very upset by it but it was apparent that she was not enjoying being singled out in front of the class for forgetting to get herself organized.

Participant 1's parents had both spoken of their frustration with Participant 1 for not being able to get herself organized.

Participant 1 continued with the task that she was working on in the lesson. She was sitting on a large gym ball that had been given to her by her educator. She moved around a great deal on the ball. At one point she was sitting on the floor rolling with the ball.

Participant 1 was very quiet during this lesson which they had been requested to be by the educator. Although she was told off during the lesson, she did not seem unhappy at any point.

(SC - is) At the end of the lesson, her class educator spoke to her to remind her about getting her speech organized. Her class educator educator, Participant 1's class educator also explained to Participant 1 that she had told the drama educator that Participant 1 was going to be away for the festival but that she still had to prepare the speech. Her class educator also asked Participant 1 if she would like her to organize her special audience, possibly the Grade 4 Class, to watch her say her speech at an organized date. Participant 1 seemed



quite pleased about this. Her class educator asked Participant 1 if she would like to think about it and let her know a bit later on her own. Participant 1 agreed to this. She seemed much happier after this.

## 2.2.5 Numeracy Observation

2009-03-24

08:05

Before the lesson began, two girls were practicing their Afrikaans dialog together outside the classroom close to where I was sitting. They were not shy around me and got on with what they planned to do.

8:05am. Maths lesson. Class educator in class. Change in timetable due to meeting involving Head educator and Class educator. Class did not seem to be disturbed by the change.

The morning began by the class singing happy birthday, individually to the two children celebrating their birthdays today! The song was enthusiastic and this was initiated by the (SC - ts) class educator. She also noticed one learner's who seemed upset. She approached the child quietly at her first opportunity to ask if she was all right and if there was anything that she could do to help. She seems very concerned and nurturing. The class relates very well to her and are comfortable around her whilst at the same time remaining respectful. There is always a relaxed, happy, work-conducive environment in the class.

The children discussed a word 'space' and decided where to place it in their numeracy charts that they are currently working on. Participant 1 discussed this with her group but when she was asked to answer, she did not know the answer. When their educator showed them (LR, lc) object that might be used in reference to the term 'space', Participant 1 was not looking and not taking in what was being said. When the groups got ready to move to their group activity, Participant 1 was quite slow.

(group work rules up on the wall for the learners to see).

(LR - gl) They then divided into their groups to continue working on their posters. The groups were decided by the Principal who educators the lower ability Maths group in that class. The groups comprised of two stronger and one weaker learner.

The groups were able to organize themselves independently and remained focused on their task throughout the lesson. The learners engaged with each other and there was no fighting or arguing at all. There was discussion about the work and periods where the learners were working independently. They used their materials sensibly and effectively.

Participant 1 went straight into her task and began searching through magazines. She was quiet at (LR - gl) this point. She then gave instructions to the other learners in her group: 'You cut, you stick'. This was done in a firm but friendly tone and the learners agreed with her.

(SI.- int) When walking to get a new magazine, Participant 1 was play fighting with another child, trying to take their magazine from her. This was friendly and only continued for a few moments. Participant 1 got up to change her magazine often during the task.

The images that the children chose, as a class, on the whole, were appropriate. They did not stick any adult type pictures onto their collages.

During the lesson, Participant 1 sang and hummed quietly to herself.

(CH - qu) Participant 2 was quite vocal during this lesson. She shouted out and was quite attention seeking. She sat on a chair, not the floor, like the rest of the class and had visibly removed herself from the group that she was meant to be working with.

(QH - qu) Participant 2 commented on the pictures of alcohol when she saw them and asked the Principal whether she liked alcohol. The Principal gave Participant 2 a look and said 'Excuse me?'. Participant 2 then apologized. the Principal said 'Not appropriate'. Participant 2 then told the Head educator that she used to drink alcohol when she was five.

(QH - qu) Participant 2 later mentioned someone sitting in a bath and asked if she could measure them. Someone told her that was not appropriate. She then shouted out quite loudly that you can measure cloths and showers.

Participant 2 kept calling the Principal a nick-name.

## 2.2.6 Drama Observation

2009-03-30

08:05

Class practicing Drama speeches.

Participant 1 was sitting quietly at the front of the class, swinging on the computer chair. Listening to the learners say their speeches. Most of the class was in choir practice, only a few in class.

(SI - inc) Participant 1 offered to help one of the learners take her props down from the board once she had completed her speech. They did this silently as someone else was already saying their speech. She was calm, helpful. (Ch - qu).

(LR - lc) Participant 1 moved to the carpet where she sat on her knees, rocking. She was not looking at the learners saying her speech.

(LR - lc) Participant 1 said her speech. She was not confident, stumbled over much of her speech, used her cue cards often but was not sure what some of them said. Learners from the class offered vocabulary for her to use. She seemed to enjoy saying the speech.

(LR - lc) After she had completed her speech, she sat and played with her hamster's ball on the floor, not focusing on the others' speeches.

## 2.3 Interview with Participant 1's Mother

2009-03-19

17:00

T. Well basically today I would like to speak to you about your understanding of Participant 1's social interaction experiences.

P. OK.

T. And her emotional reactions to that, her emotional responses and the way she feels. So there are no right or wrong answers.

P. OK.

T. I'm not here to judge you, and I am going to tape record this, and my Supervisor and I will discuss what was said.

P. Sure.

T. When I write up my findings I won't be using anybody's name, and I won't be using the school's name, it will all be kept completely confidential.

P. Lovely.

T. First of all I'm going to be asking you some background questions.

P. Humm.

T. If any of them are too personal, or you feel you don't want to answer any of them, then please just feel free to pass on those.

P. Got it.

T. Right. To start off could you describe your daughter to me?

(CH - qu) P. The first thing that comes to mind, complicated, um, a little bit very sensitive, um, not sure of the English word is, quite "los-kop", you know just not, not always very grounded. In fact not grounded at all! She sort of floats around most of the time. Um, very loving and very sweet and very caring, um, definitely will take things very personally, if something mean is said, she gets quite upset about it, um, probably more than most of the children would. Ja, I'm not sure, there are probably a million things that I haven't said, those are the things that I can think of off the top of my head.

T. And could you describe her home environment to me?

P. Well it's quite an interesting one, I suppose, and it has been for some time because, it sort of was quite normal until about three years ago and then her sister got Leukemia and then



things sort of went a bit hay-wire and she was, because we were in and out of hospital the whole time, she was, she spent lot of time at her grandparents, with my mom (FA -re) and dad. So I think that was quite disturbing for her that we weren't there for as much as she would want us to have been. Um and but I think she is not unhappy, I think (FA -he) she has got quite a happy home. As you know her dad and I are divorced but we've both still got on pretty well, so, there has never been any ugliness at home, even before we got divorced we lived together, decided to separate months before and we still hadn't, he hadn't left for ages, and you know home life just continued, so it's not an unpleasant, uncomfortable home to be in, but I think, you know, I have moments when my patience is quite short and I shout at her. I had a moment with her just now because (FA – re) she was in detention, so I was cross about that, but mostly we get on pretty well, and I think I am quite a relaxed and understanding mom, I think, she may say something completely different (laughter) but generally I think quite a happy (FA - re) environment, so ja, not bad. Her and her sister have moments where they looked like they may kill each other, she absolutely adores her brother, she loves her brother but ja, I think she's quite happy.

T. Is she the first-born child?

P. She is ja, which might explain quite a bit I think, knowing other first-borns, I think that ja, there's quite a lot there for first born children.

T. Sure. So she has an elder sister and a younger brother?

P. That's it. No she's got a younger sister and a younger, younger brother. She's the eldest.

T Oh, OK.

P. So she's got her sister who's the next one, she's seven, then her brother, who is three.

T. OK,

P. Ja,

T. So their relationships, could you explore a little bit about them?

P. Ja, could tell you heaps about them, I'll make it concise. Um.

T. Really how she interacts with her siblings.

(FA - re) P. Her sister and Participant 1 have got a real love/hate relationship and if her sister's not around I think she misses her, but when she is around, I think there is quite a lot of resentment because her sister got loads of attention when she was sick, so I think that is what, that is a bit of an issue for her, but it continues, her sister did get better, still going (EM - fa) for check-ups and people still ask how she is, lots of attention shown to her sister and I think that is quite upsetting for Participant 1. I think she finds that quite hard. her brother on the other hand is three and 'gianormously' cute and so she has got nothing but time for him. Absolutely adores him, he can't do anything wrong, so good as two relationships, her brother she absolutely adores and her sister it's definitely a love/hate thing.

T. OK. Would you say that she is quite dominant in these relationships?

P. It's quite a tricky one, I'm not entirely, ja I think definitely in the her sister relationship, definitely, um but her brother's quite bossy and he gets his way with her so not so much so, I think they sort of take it in turns (laughter).

T. It sounds quite normal.

P. OK (laughter). Well there you go.

T. And your relationship with your daughter, you say you are quite close, you get on quite well?

(FA -re) P. We are pretty close, I adore her to bits but I find her quite challenging because you know for example, having the attention and just forgetting things and not completing work and I said to her today, I'm tired of being moaned at by her educators, it's exhausting, so, I, we, have at times quite a strained relationship but generally, ninety percent of the time, I think we get on pretty well.

T. OK.

P. Ja.

(CH - qu) T. So she's quite forgetful in.....

P. Completely (laughter) I did exaggerate that a bit but she really is.

T. OK. Head in the clouds?

P. Ja completely.

T. And do you think that stresses her out at all or?

P. Ja, I think it does.

T. OK.

(PI - sr) P. I think, I think the consequences stress her out 'cause she'll get into trouble and then she doesn't want to be in trouble.

T. OK.

P. But it doesn't help her remember stuff, she still, it's an ongoing thing.

(FA - he) T. OK. Could you describe the kinds of activities that you and Participant 1 do together?

P. Um, we don't do an awful lot together actually because I work in the mornings and most of the afternoon she's at school and comes back fairly late and then we have got a tutor that comes in to work with her in the afternoons, so we mostly you know the time that we have is over dinner time and the time we all sit at the table and eat dinner together.

T. OK.

(FA -he) P. We watch a bit of telly before bed together and that's quite a special time and they go, I do it just with the girls, her brother's already asleep by that stage and that's quite important to them because they always ask if we have time to for watching, so we do that together um, ja, otherwise really being around the house together but not necessarily doing stuff together.

T. Sure.

(CH - qu) P. And does she communicate during those sort of activities. Does she engage with you?

P. Not really, she's quite a shy child, she's quite happy to go and sit on the computer, as long as people are around her, they don't need to be interacting with her. Bus she does like people around she doesn't like to be alone. If there's, there people doing things around her then she's a happy girl. Hm.

T. So you and your husband were previously married when Participant 1 was little?

P. Oh ja, oh ja. I mean we were married before she was born, and we got divorced last year, it's quite recent. Another word, I was thinking about just now is anxious, very (PI - sr) anxious child.

T. And has that always been?

P. Ja, pretty much, ja, I think I'm understanding and identifying it easier now than I used to.

T. OK.

P. So I'm not sure how much anxiety there was when she was very little but yeh, I think pretty much it's been an ongoing thing for ever.

T. And do you think that relates to school or school work?

P. I think it is, I think pretty much just to just life.

T. Just life.

P. Ja.

T. Does Participant 1 enjoy inviting her friends home?

(SI - int) P. Loves it. She's not very discerning, it doesn't matter who it is either, you know she got through the class list, someone she has never ever played with will be invited round. She does love to have somebody come round you know.

T. That's lovely. What sort of stuff do they do?

P. Loves computer stuff hey, Participant 1 is completely a computer kid, so anything involved in the computer she will do, she'll they'll listen to music, um, if its summer they'll swim, hang out in her bedroom, nothing particular, no sort of games, she's kind of got passed the age where they play sort of interactive games, its more like chatting and hanging out now. Ja

T. Hm With her friends in these sort of contexts, if she's at home, do you think she is (CH - qu) quite dominant in those relationships?

P. No, I don't, I think it depends on the fiend, but no I would say the opposite.

T. OK.

P. Hm.

T. And looking a bit more broadly, if you could describe her social interactions, I know it is a very broad statement

P. Um.

T. How would you describe what Participant 1 gets up to with other people?

P. But with children and grown-ups? Or mostly children?

T. We could start with children and if you feel she behaves any differently with adults we could explore that.

P. It is quite broad, I'm not assure how to start, um, ya.

T. So if Participant 1 brought a friend home, what would her emotional state be?

(SI - int) P. She'd be, she's be happy to have somebody round, she would be bored, she is cons, even with a friend she will be saying to me, what can we do, she is constantly asking me what they should do to entertain themselves, not like she thinks of things to do, apart from the computer, that's a given, but once that's all sort of, once they've had enough of that, she finds it quite tricky to keep the momentum going.

T. OK.

P. So she will come to me and say we're bored, what can we do? Can we do this or how about take us to the shops or you know something like that. But um, a little bit lost I suppose actually, that sounds terrible, but I think that there is a little bit of well, now she's here what are we going to do sort of thing.

T. So she wants the situation to happen?

P. Ja.

(SI - int) T. Confident and happy with it happening?

P. Yeh, yeh.

T. But not quite sure what to do with it.

(SI - int) P. She always loved play dates, she loves sleeping out, absolutely loves sleep-overs, um, desperate to go on school camp, you know she's not worried about those sort of situations. I was terrified; I didn't want to, I didn't want to go away. She loves all that.

T. OK.

P. Ja, which is quite different for me to try to comprehend, she loves to be out sleeping at other friend's houses or doing stuff like that.

T. And she got, she's got quite a broad circle of friends?

(SI - ab) P. She has, ja I mean she seems to me to be a really popular little girl, she always has been, I remember even tiny sort of Grade 0 and Grade 1, as we were leaving school, people would always shout, bye Participant 1, bye Participant 1 and I would say, who's that, and she would say, I don't know, she has no clue who these people were, but they all seemed to like her well enough to say good bye. But um, ja, she has a broad, a broad group of friends.

T. OK.

P. Different kinds of friends.

T. And those friends just seem to happen quiet comfortably and easily?

P. Ja, I mean she has, she has one especially good friend, one particularly good friend who she's been at, she was at nursery with her and they were at school together, with each other now, they are very close and then and she's quite a, she's a very easy going sweet gentle child. She's got another friend who's domineering and quite sort of grown up and Participant 1 finds that quite tricky. She'll go and play at her house and then I said to her this morning, just don't go and play there anymore because she moans constantly when she comes back that this girl makes her do this, and this girl has told her that she has to do this, she doesn't like being told what to do.

T. OK. So often she might take on the submissive role but she doesn't like to be bossed around.

P. She'll take it on then she'll come and complain to me this has been happening, ja. She doesn't say anything at the time, shell never say, I don't want to do that, she'll just carry on and let it happen.

T. OK. Gosh, and then I suppose then, the anxiety builds up possibly with that.

P. Ja, ja.

(SI - ab) T. But overall you'd say she makes and keeps friends quite easily?

P. Ja, I think so, I think, I mean she's got a few friends that she's had since nursery school

who are still her friends.

T. Gosh.

P. So she has, she does keep them she's quite a loyal friend, I think.

T. And at school, I know it's hard for you to get a complete picture, would you say that she is a leader or follower.

(CH - qu) P. Definitely a follower.

T. If you were looking at her overall school experience, how would you describe that?

P. Oh I think it has been, it's had it's ups and downs, nursery school for a start she absolutely hated, and it was always an issue dropping her in the morning, but there was a whole routine that we had to do to make her feel comfortable and at ease there. So nursery school wasn't a great start then Grade O was pretty good, in fact, there was a whole change as the school was lovely and right away she felt comfortable and happy there. She had one year at school that was a disaster, that was Grade 3, she had particularly tricky educator who just didn't accept that Participant 1 was struggling and she really beat her down, she lost all her confidence. Grade 3 was just the most horrible year and then, um, Grade 4 luckily she had a fantastic educator who built up her confidence again and since then she (SC - ef) has been absolutely fine and I think she's quite happy at school. She enjoys going to school and in the holidays she constantly says I want to go back to school, when do we go back, I'm so bored, so she loves school, she doesn't do well at school but she loves it.

T. When I saw her in class the other day, she looked happy and relaxed.

P. I think she is. I think she really does love it, I don't think that she's just saying it, I do think that she really does love being at school.

T. OK.

P. It is a nice school you know. She is very lucky to have gone there.

T. Ja. And does she speak about the Grade 3 experience or?

P. She, she does say that she, you know, because her sister is going to have the same educator so she sort of says, poor her sister's got the educator and you know but she never really, no, um, but occasionally it will come up, if we are talking about something related, she'll bring it up, it's not something that I think that has particularly scarred her, I think she has been well healed after.

T. OK.

P. Ja I think she's OK from it.

T. And what do you think her dominant emotions would be about school?

P. Happy.

T. OK.

P. Definitely happy.

T. And her experiences in the playground?

P. I don't really know much about them, really to be honest but I think pretty good, I mean, her sister comes home and complains that so and so wouldn't sit with her, she didn't get a chance to do this, Participant 1 just never really brings those things up, so I'm assuming that things are happy in the playground.

T. And working with other children in class?

(LR - lc) P. I think she finds that quite hard because she struggles. I think they not terribly patient with her and because actually, this year, they are doing a lot of group work which I think is a first, I don't think they've really done a lot of group work up until this point. But she said to me the other day that she was finding it quite hard because they were (LR - gl) treating her quite badly in the group. And I think it is because she battles and she relies on other people to give her answers a lot, and people don't like doing that, and the other kids get fed-up. So I think she's finding that quite tricky.

T. And do you think that the class educator is aware of how that situation is planning out for the individual children?

P. I'm not sure, I mean I know that she, I think that she's a really intuitive educator, I think she's great, she's sensitive to what's going on around her so she probably is. Ja, she (LR - gl) probably is. 'Cause in fact the groups have changed at half term, they changed and she's now in a much more probably, nurturing group than she was beforehand.

- T. OK.
- P. So I think that might have something to do with her educator saying.
- T. OK. And do you think that that group had a different effect Participant 1?
- P. Yes, but, sorry carry on.
- T. Well, ja, I just ja, do you think it would have an effect on how she feels about school and working with those children?
- (LR - ls) P. Ja, I do, think it would make it a more happy experience for her. Definitely.
- T. OK. And how do you think Participant 1 would describe her learning experiences.
- (SC - ef) P. I think she would try and say as little as possible actually. I think she just she knows that she battles, she's very aware that she's not keeping up like the rest of the class and I think it's quite hard for her, I think she would just love to be cruising along like the rest. I'm not sure what she would really say about it, think she just, I think she would say I wish I could, you know, be as so and so.
- T. OK. And do you think that peer learning would help her, or do you think that's an effective way forward?
- P. What do you mean by peer learning?
- T. If they are working in a group, or with another child do you think that would make a difference to her teaching and learning?
- (LR - gl) P. I have to say I'm not entirely convinced that it would help Participant 1 because I think she would rely on the other kids to do most of the work, I know she does.
- T. OK.
- P. So I'm not sure it's going to help her, I think she would just let them do it.
- T. I see. OK.
- P. Umm, I know this because I did the same thing you know, I just I see a real pattern which takes me right back to school, it makes me you know quite anxious to get Participant 1 on a better track.
- T. OK and do you feel positive with her learning and.
- (LR - lc) P. No, no I really don't, you know it's an ongoing battle and it has been her whole school life. I think I don't see it coming to an end anytime soon. I think it is going to be an ongoing battle for who knows, probably until she finishes.
- (CH - ph) T. OK. And if you don't mind me asking, what are her difficulties that she has?
- P. Concentration is a big, a big issue. She was diagnosed with Epilepsy four years ago and in fact she has now subsequently grown out of it, but they did think at the time, that she was having Petimals in class that were stopping her from concentrating. I'm not entirely sure we didn't, you know, she went for all the scans and they didn't pick anything (LR - lc) up, so, she just battles to concentrate, really and um, and just her absent mindedness you know, she will walk out of the classroom and forget her books behind and um leaving in the morning for school shell lave her tog bag, she's just not really concentrating.
- T. Hm, hm. Good luck!
- P. Ja, I need lots, luck and patients, ja but.
- (CH - qu) T. Overall she seems happy and engaging.
- P. She is, she is a very happy little girl, thank God. Grade 3 she was a very unhappy little girl just, it was the only time in her life that I think she was particularly unhappy. Luckily she's out of that, she back to being happy Participant 1.
- T. That's fantastic. Well is there anything else you feel you'd like or you feel I need to know?
- P. I don't think so, um, no I don't really think so, I think. I'd love to have the outcome of all this, you know I'm really intrigued to see how it all pans out, but I don't really have anything else to tell you I don't think, important that you'd need to know about.
- T. Sure.



## 2.4 Interview with Participant 1's Father

2009-03-20

10:00

T. Thank you so much for meeting me.

L. No prob.

T. Really today what I was hoping to discuss with you, your thoughts on Participant 1's social interaction experiences

L. OK.

T. And how you think she might feel in this regard. There are no right or wrong answers.

L. No, sure, ya.

T. And I'm also going to ask you some background information.

L. OK.

T. Some of them are quite personal questions.

L. OK.

T. If there is anything you don't want to answer that is absolutely no problem at all. To start, could you describe your daughter to me.

L. Hm. That's OK, so where do we start with Participant 1? You see, Participant 1's always been a bit of a (CH - qu) special child.

T. OK.

L. So since I can remember Participant 1, um, Participant 1's always had this I'd go as far as saying this this (CH- qu) self preservation that was very different, especially to the other kids that I've got (CH - qu) and you know she's always um she's always really looked after herself and since I can remember she has always made sure she is never in danger's way, never in harms way and I didn't really take too much notice of this until number two and three were born eh because they are forever, I would say, like a more normal children, either you know cuts, bruises, scrapes, bumps.

T. OK.

G And knocks, eh.

T. OK.

L. Where as Participant 1 since I can remember, shew, she had this self preservation that I've never seen in any other child, ya, so she has always looked after herself, made sure she is never ever in danger, in harms way. So that's one thing that really kind of sticks out in my mind about Participant 1, that she doesn't like to put herself in harms way and maybe in some ways it's kind of detrimental cause she kind of doesn't push the boundaries as far as she should, doesn't experience as much as she should because of that and doesn't like to take chances that I think maybe she should take.

T. OK.

L. So, so she has been a bit of a special child and you know right from the word go she, I mean, I even remember when she was very young, she, she learned to speak very early.

T. OK.

L. And um, she was always very articulate about the way in which, she always had a good vocabulary, right from the early days, something that as always, you were walking along the street and people would see her at a young age talking and they would say shew that child speaks well for that age. So she's always been quite good at that so, um, and (CH - qu) um, but I think the thing about Participant 1, shew sometimes doesn't push herself as hard as she needs to push herself, she doesn't put herself out there, you know and I said to her, (CH - qu) try this out, no I don't want to try it out, um, you know, doesn't like to experiment too much you know, she likes to be in her little comfort zone she knows and doesn't like to get out that, you know, likes to stay within inside her comfort zone but then she always has you know she has had a tricky time um because you know I think when she was four or five, not

sure I can give you the exact age, but four, five, six years (CH- ph) old, somewhere around there, she had one or two seizures which you probably heard about and you know as a result of that she went on one or two types of drugs, Lemictin was one of them, she went, I can't remember the other one, her mom will probably remember what it was but it made her very depressed and not the same child um, so she had a tough time of that, um and then obviously you know her sister had her run nun with Leukemia, obviously put a lot of pressure on Participant 1 because in fact I often say that I think that it affected Participant 1 more than it affected her. She just had to live through it.

T. OK.

L. Um and she was getting all the attention, all mind you it wouldn't have been fantastic attention but it was attention all the same.

T. Ja.

(FA - re) L. So she got all the attention and Participant 1 really felt a bit isolated, I mean certainly, I spent enough nights in the hospital with her sister, you know in the hospital room with her and I think that probably had a huge effect on Participant 1, you know feelings of lack of attention and you know she stayed a number of evenings with her grandparents who are, you know, everyone loves her but it's just that, that probably had a big hit on her. But to be fair, even before then, even before her sister's bout of leukemia, she was 'till a very (CH - qu) sensitive child, very sensitive, um, and very much, pretty single minded about what she wanted, you know, this is what she wanted and that's what it's going to be and if I said look that's what it's going to be then she'd fight it tooth and nail where you know if Participant 1 and her sister and her brother where you know this is what we going to do, it's kind of OK, fit in with the program, let's go, but if it didn't suit Participant 1 she would fight it tooth and nail, so she is very, very strong minded, very strong willed.

T. OK.

L. Ya.

T. How old was she when her sister was born?

L. So, what is she, seven and Participant 1's ten, so she must be now three and a half I think, three and a half, somewhere round there.

T. And what was their relationship like from the beginning?

L. Well, you know I mean, Participant 1 always felt like she had, her sister had come in and disturbed her peaceful existence ha, ha, suddenly someone's come in and give her a bit of a hard time uh, I do know that I remember with Participant 1 we had words before her sister was born, I think we were on the beach and Participant 1 saw two siblings playing and said you know it would be nice to have a brother or a sister, so I do know that she wanted somebody else inside the house.

T. OK.

L. And I always thought it was important to have you know two rather than just one otherwise they grow up slightly lonely but certainly Participant 1 and her sister have had their (FA - re) fights and I'm never sure if it's just sibling rivalry or her sister has come to destroy her life, em, its certainly true because Participant 1's very much, has the opportunity to spend time with people on an individual basis, she likes to, if my father, my father and her have quite a close relationship.

T. OK.

L. She really likes the time my father says Participant 1. Let's go and do something together.

T. OK.

L. She really enjoys that.

T. OK.

L. Where as her sister, well if she's with people or alone, to her she just fits into the program.

T. OK.

L. Ja.

T. So she's quite comfortable with the one-on-one.

(SI - int) L. She loves. Exactly huh, exactly huh. She really enjoys it when it's just her and somebody else huh, whether it's someone close to her and it's also specially true you know, her mom and I are somewhat different in that you know I like to when the kids

(SI - int) come over to stay at me. I'm very happy for them to bring as many friends as they have because 'A' it they seems to be happier like that, there is less fighting between them.  
T. OK.

L. You know, so Participant 1 has got a friend and her sister's got a friend and they all inter-mingle and it just seems to work better for me than rather having them just all three by themselves the whole time because they tend to fight s bit more.  
T. OK.

L. But I must admit Participant 1 just lately has been much better in you know, Participant 1 and her sister, they seem to be getting along a lot better, they seem to be enjoying each other's company a lot more to.  
T. OK.

L. More eye to eye, so. I think it might be the result of them growing up, just getting older and you know starting to understand their relationship and actually maybe enjoying each other's company and seeing that they can help each other. I know Participant 1's a bit of a tom-boy at the moment.  
T. OK.

L. Um, likes to, you know, I always tell her to kind of pretty up and you know she always wants to wear a tatty pear of, what are they, tracksuit pants, and um, so but I think in time that will change, you know.

T. Ja.

L. But you know, that's what I think, ya.

T. OK.

L. So I think that kind of sums her up.

T. OK.

L. And I'm not sure what else to say about her, um,

T. Well then moving on from that, could you, when she's with you, could you describe the home environment?

(FA - he) L. Hm, so, em, it's quite different because, um, I always grew up in a house, my parents were never divorced and they were always together and I do remember, you know, you know feeling very comfortable in the house where my father came home every night and you know my mother was always there. My mother was never the, never terribly interactive with us, she certainly wasn't a, she didn't come build puzzles, do homework or partake in any of my sporting events however, saying that, she certainly was a very big supporter of us as children.

T. OK.

L. She always was at the sporting events, she might not have known what a run was, but she certainly was there, you know, more so than my father was, you know, if he was the sportsman though, she was very much there and you know, she was very much there for our emotional needs but you know didn't really get involved in you know certainly in our academic careers or necessarily your sporting careers but she certainly was there to pick us up every afternoon after school and so my father, my father, certainly in high school was much more involved in our lives but in junior school I hardly, I don't remember much of my father being active in our schooling life. It was quite different even to today's fathers, I see fathers far more involved hey but um, but certainly when I lived with her mom in that home um it was somewhat different, because you know on the weekends we did used to have we had a maid come in, so at least I could have a you know the mornings to myself, to go and either get my shopping or get my stuff sorted out and then play my golf and do my activities, so now as soon as you move out of that environment its quite different, so on the weekend when I do have the kids I'm very much more, I spend a lot more time with them.

T. OK.

L. But it has been tricky, it's been almost two years, and in that two year period I have moved from one home to the other to a new home. We moved from Hyde Park, from a, I had a three bedroom um, it was like a flat but it had no garden, it had a pool but no garden.

T. OK.

L. So it was quite small and actually just claustrophobic with three kids and myself, it was just



no good hey.

T. Ja.

L. I thought it would be fine for the odd weekend hey but that was just not the case, so in November last year we moved into a house in Parktown North which is nice and big, it's got a pool, it's got a garden, it's got three bedrooms, it's got space and there's less noise and they've got a playroom which I've given them and they've got their little Nintendo Wii in there and they've got a TV in there, you know so they destroy that part of the house um and you out of sight out of mind, you know it doesn't bother me that much um, but I spend a lot of time with them when they are with me on the weekends. I would probably think that time from November to um, I would say sort of even sort of early January you know, I was still very busy just trying to get the house into shape you know, it takes ages to get, putting like bathroom fittings, getting this sorted out, waiting for couches to arrive. I mean, we moved in with a couple of beds, you know and no place to, even no study was built, so, I took a bit of time to get it set up but I said to my girlfriend, I said look the last three weeks I think, I really felt you know, probably four weeks, especially with the kids, it's just nice because we've just settled, you know we've got nice routine where we wake up in the morning on Saturday, have some breakfast together, go and do our shopping, get the stuff for the house, have lunch together, you know, go for a swim in the afternoon, and then on Sundays we will either go and hit some golf balls around the golf course, we spend a lot more together and I'm not busy although I'm there, I'm not busy doing anything to the house. It's just kind of getting on with stuff.

T. OK.

(FA.- he) L. So, um, what I've tried to do on the weekends when the kids are with me, I always spend an evening with them but generally I'll spend one of those evenings out with my girlfriend and you know they will stay at home. That's generally how it works, how it all fits together. But I see them on every opposite Monday evening, so if I had them for the weekend I won't see them on the Monday but if I haven't had them for the weekend I will have them on the Monday because I like to see them, I really miss them and on the Wednesday I have them, every Wednesday. And I take them to school on Wednesday morning.

T. OK.

L. So I still see a fair amount of them and you know often if my brother comes up from Cape Town and it's the opps end and it's not my week, I'll go and take them from her mom.

T. OK.

L. I'll have them on the Sunday so that the family is together, my brother likes to see them, so I do see a lot of them and I speak to them a lot on the phone and you know when we go on holiday, we are going down to Cape Town, me and the three kids down to Cape Town, it's been quite interesting because I've done two or three holidays with them now on my own as a single father. I had a very clean life before hand, you know, there was a mother and a couple of maids in the house and it was me on my own, so it was real shocker to suddenly you know be thrust into this world where I had to start looking after myself and yes, I could have had a maid and but the reality is you know to look after them for every second weekend, to have somebody live in to do that just made no sense at all.

T. Ja

(FA - re) L. But I must say I do feel that I spend a lot of time with them when the times that I have them, you know I don't have as much time as I used to have with them so I try to make quality time.

T. Maximize. Ja.

L. Ja.

T. Good.

L. So when Participant 1's with us she knows can do her own thing, there is lots to do but I certainly am around huh.

T. OK.

L. Ja.

T. And her relationship with her siblings?

L. Participant 1 and her sister and her seem to be getting on a bit better but they have always had a tense relationship between the two of them huh. I don't know if they are any different to what my brother and I had to be honest? Her brother, he just gets all the love and (FA - re) (FA - re) attention in the world, especially Participant 1 kind of looks after him like as a baby brother and they certainly don't fight, although I must say, when they are in the pool together, Participant 1 and her sister were fighting and her brother was saying stop, stop doing that to your sister Participant 1.

T. OK.

L. So, you know Participant 1's kind of like the 'looker-afterer' of her brother so if he needs something and her sister seems to play with him a lot more, they seem to have a more playful relationship just with the two of them but Participant 1 sort of fills that role of looking after her little brother.

T. OK.

L. That's how I would see it huh?

T. Um, um.

L. And would you describe her as dominant in any of these relationships?

L. Well, I think she likes to control her sister a bit um, in that um, you know that she'll say her sister, but that's not right and this is what's right, they tend to have a bit of argy-bargy about that. Dominant, I wouldn't necessarily. I would refer to her relationship with her brother, I would describe more as motherly, mothering rather than dominant huh? That would be my explanation of it. But um, her sister, they certainly fight each other those two but I'm not sure the dominance necessarily? I mean she likes to get her way Participant 1 does but I'm not sure dominance necessarily the right word for it.

T. OK.

L. And your relationship with your daughter? How would you describe that?

L. With Participant 1?

T. Ja.

L. Shew, Participant 1 and I certainly have our moments once in a while 'cause Participant 1 frustrates me that I'll say to her we are going to go and get something from the shop and and she'll say no I'm not going, it's too far to drive, and I'm saying I'm not really asking you know huh, that's not really a request that, I'm telling you what we going to do, so we do butt heads I think um, so, so it can be somewhat frustrating you know and I also think it's important for her to you know, she says I don't want to go there because she's got this attitude, she's (CH - qu) got this fear of the roads for some reason you know she's got this fear about em, fires. She once when she was very young, there was a fire, we went to a show in Pretoria with my father, Participant 1 and myself and there was a car on fire and ever since then she had this fear of traveling on the roads.

T. Oh gosh.

(Ch - qu) L. Don't know what it is and I said to her it's ridiculous, you just can't lock yourself in a room somewhere just because you fear you know traveling in a car, so I said to her, so I said, no, no that's no good, so I force her to get in the car and come with us. I don't like to pander to her needs but there are times but that's ridiculous. I've got no time for anybody who can't get in a car and drive somewhere or the other? That I understand if you don't want to go to Builders Warehouse fair enough, you know but at the end of the day it's not because you know it shouldn't be because you're concerned about driving in the car, that shouldn't be the issue.

T. Ja.

L. So but I think sometimes, I think sometimes she plays up to it too, you know I think it's (CH - qu) an attention, I feel it's an attention seeking, that's what it is, huh. Just wants you know the attention. Cough. She's maybe worked out that works well for her.

T. Ja.

L. Ja.

T. And does she communicate quite freely with you?

L. I think she does, you know, it's hard, I suppose, I mean, I try, I certainly try you know, when we are in the car in the morning to turn off the radio, you know cause otherwise to me

it's just another drive.

T. Ja.

L. I mean I could be up, they could be sitting with anybody.

T. Ja.

L. And you know and at the same side there I also do feel that it's important that they do (FA - sp) see me, you know, if we don't have a huge conversation talk about stuff, at least they know that I'm there and I want to take them to school.

T. Definitely.

L. Just from that point of view I think it's a worthwhile exercise.

T. Definitely.

L. But, um, um, certainly I try and turn the radio off to ask how their day is going but it's hard to really to get a lot of information out of kids you know. And I'll say how's school going?

They say fine.

T. Fine.

L. Jam and what does fine mean? And I said how's the hockey going? Yes we are doing well starting with it. Quite hard to get information.

T. Aah.

L. You know it's quite interesting because my girlfriend and Participant 1 have an interesting relationship and I get a lot more feedback from her than I do from Participant 1.

T. Oh really, her? Gosh, OK.

(SI - com) L. So, so Participant 1 definitely tells my girlfriend all the gossip that's going, so I hear stuff that I didn't know was happening huh, but er, I wasn't sure how to ask half these questions but you know, I get it out of my girlfriend er, er ja, on how their friends and how their friends are.

T. OK.

L. And um how school's going from a social point of view specifically.

T. OK.

L. Um so I don't I don't I get by the back door eh.

T. So Participant 1 and my girlfriend get on quite well?

L. They really do, ja.

T. That's interesting.

L. That's where all the information comes from, so that I was shocked at half the stuff I heard, she never tells me that.

T. Oh. Have you always worked since Participant 1 was born?

L. Always, hey. Ja.

T. Um, when Participant 1 has friends round to her house how would you describe how they interact?

L. Hum err, (pause in reply). Ja, I'm almost sure, I don't notice too much of it. They kind of do their own thing, they seem to be fine. Um, you know, certain friends that Participant 1 liked having round gets frustrated with them, emm, emm, but I understand that because I know those friends and you know I've chatted to them to, they are, I would get frustrated too gel? Umm, I I think Participant 1 does like to get her way likes to do things her way, likes to do what she wants to do.

T. OK.

L. So I think she will associate with friends that will you know be happier to do her things.

T. OK.

L. Ja I would think that's how she likes to.

T. OK.

L. That's what she would prefer rather than somebody else deciding how it's going to be.

T. OK.

(Ch - qu) L. I think she likes to decide on what's going to happen, how it's going to happen, when it's going to happen.

T. OK. And do they keep to themselves pretty much and do their own thing?

L. Absolutely, and there's lots of activities around.

T. It sounds like kid Heaven.

L. In fact, I find that actually that's why I like having the kids around because they are less demanding on me, eh.

T. Sure.

L. Um, it does make a big difference you know, there is certainly a lot less demands on me, err, you know, come and do this, and come and do that, you know, I certainly don't want to play the Nintendo Wii, it's not really my thing. I mean I like to get away from my computers when I get home rather than back into them. So you know, emm, but I do like it and I'm very happy to take them to go and play a bit of golf and they enjoy doing that.

T. OK.

L. But I enjoy having their friend around, then they can swim together, then it's certainly less time consuming.

T. OK.

L. Participant 1 is very demanding in that respect. She likes to have people doing things with her the whole time you know, either sibling, or a or me, you know so it's just us just the three of us um, when I say the three of us, the three of them and me. Participant 1's very much, can I invite a friend around, can we go to her grandparents, or can we do this or can we do that, you know?

T. OK. She likes to be involved constantly having something.

L. She needs to do this to hold.... she's such a busy bee eh? Whereas at least Participant 1, her brother and her sister are much quieter in that respect, err, they are happy to just hang around at home. her brother's got his little lawn mower that he's been mowing the lawn with just makes life just easier and if I say you guys, we are going to the shops quickly and they are ready to pile in and Participant 1's saying I don't want to go to the shops and you know, (Ch - qu) ja, she's is frustrating she is tricky to be honest.

T. OK.

L. She very tricky in that respect.

T. And if she's involved in a task is she focused on that?

(Ch - qu) L. Well she enjoys it if it's a task where, when she's into it, she's into it, eh. She's not, you know, it's like pulling teeth. It really is, uh. Look, you know specifically at my (FA - he) house you know, I don't do any homework with them I don't do any of that kind of stuff so I'm not involved with getting her to do hard tasks. My house it's very much the easy stuff, it's swimming in the afternoon or morning or its helping me cook some food, emm, you know, either going to the golf course to play golf, or what ever we need to do, it's that sort of stuff. It's all the kind of stuff she has no problem with.

T. Lovely.

(SI - inc) L. Over and the fact that she feels a bit out of place when she is not doing anything and she wants somebody else to do something with her.

T. Um looking now specifically at her social interactions now. How would you describe her social interaction experiences?

L. Umm.

T. We could look at this in a peer context or in an adult context. I don't mind how you

L. Well for me it's easier from an adult context because that's where I see her more, umm, (CH - qu) I mean, she is certainly not a shy girl I was painfully shy when I was growing up, uh, painfully I might have seen .....the thought of even going into a shop was terrifying. So, er, so, Participant 1 is certainly not shy in any way, shape or form, I mean if she (CH -qu) wants something and she's only too happy to phone somebody or get you know then she'll phone my bother and say listen you owe me some money for that present, she's got no problem with that. She'll phone up my parents and say what we doing this week-end and certainly there's no flies on Participant 1.

T. Shu.

L. She's got no issues with asking. Certainly shy she's not and you know I think she does (SI - ab) get on pretty well with people she's around eh? I think they enjoy her company um

T. OK.

(CH - qu) L. She's very polite um and very well mannered, so I think people enjoy being (SI - ab) around her, so she interacts very well you know, you certainly wouldn't say oh she's shy,

she's shy and timid in the background she's certainly by no means that.

T. OK.

L. As she's got older she's you know you can see her turning into a little girl, a little lady I suppose but I know certainly when we go to my parents for dinner, they, they certainly entertain themselves a lot more.

T. OK.

G, And you know, fitting all they have a conversation with us so which is quite nice, they are starting to grow up a bit because it's quite hard with young children because they are very demanding on your time and your conversation and it's not necessarily always what you want to be talking about. Eh?

(SI - ab) L. So, but no, she, she's socially very well adjusted. I think to its very keen that she's not a shy timid child eh? She's certainly happy to go up to a shop and find stuff, ask for stuff, you know.

T. It's fantastic.

L. No, it is, ja. Ja.

T. And how do you think she feels emotionally about these sorts of situations?

L. Which situations?

T. When she is interacting with other people, what would her emotional state be, how would she describe herself in those situations?

L. I don't know, I mean, she, certainly when she is around with my parents she seems (SI - inc) very happy hey, she enjoys that, um, she enjoys that time, she certainly enjoys the the one-one-one time.

T. OK.

L. That is what she really enjoys, she really enjoys the one-on-one time.

T. And with her friends, what sort of emotions do you think she experiences, what sort of emotions would she use to describe her friend situation?

L. Well I know she's got you know she's got C, her one friends, who she gets on very well with, and you know I was talking about C, they have very much, I would say, a normal type feeling in relationship where they enjoy each other's company and C and her get on very well, there is no fighting, there's no there's no, they seem to get on very well um, she has another friends S. S is a bit of a tricky child.

T. OK.

(PR - ex) L. Uh, and I think she gets quite frustrated by S because S's, um, is also quite single minded and stubborn and got some interesting views on life, Participant 1 gets quite frustrated by that I think.

T. OK. But she still peruses the friendship?

L. They still seem to, they sort of go up there, up and down you know, sometimes S comes around, sometimes she, she sleeps at S's house but you know, they sort of, I think eventually gets very frustrated by S.

T. OK.

L. Ja. I know she said to me on a number of occasions, she's driving me nuts you know and I said you know Participant 1 you don't have to, if you feel that that, just use me as the excuse, just say your dad wants to be with you, if you don't want to spend time with her, just say that your dad does. So I always give it out eh, you know, I never ever force them into doing things they don't want to do eh.

T. OK.

L. Ja, the rest is you are parents, you have to go close up yeh? Luckily I've never done that and her mom has certainly never done that, if they don't want to go, they don't like somebody, who, they don't like it, then it's no problem, ja.

T. And with her class as a whole? Has she been quite positive?

L. I think so, you know, you know, Participant 1 to me is an amazing child in the fact that as much as she struggles at, at school, out of all the children I that know she is first one, even if she has a cold, to say I want to go back to school.

T. OK.

(SC - ef) L. She enjoys her time at school because I think she has all her friends around her,



right, how she interacts with them, I can't tell you but she is certainly much happier there than spending time on her own at home, eh?

T. OK.

L. So when her sister was only to happy to you know, roll up on the couch, watch some TV and feel sick for a day, Participant 1, the thought of it just makes her go cold, she'd rather be full of flue and at school than sitting at home by herself.

T. Wow.

L. No, it's amazing to see.

T. Ja.

(SC - eff) L. I know that last long weekend she said, she is just desperate to go back to school, you know, which is unusual for somebody who struggles eh, you know.

T. That's quite amazing really.

L. It is. I mean there is no question about it, she is only too happy to get back to school, huh.

(SC - ef) T. Then her overall school experience?

L. Oh, it's a positive one, no question about it, eh, no question about it. As much as she struggles, she would much rather be there than by herself.

T. And do you think she gets support from her educators in that regard.

L. You know she's had good educators and bad educators in her time, um, on the whole, out of, what she, grade five now, em, two have been bad, the rest have been fantastic. Ja. I think that's really important for Participant 1.

T. And in terms of her academic support?

L. Well, now I don't do any of that, and I never have, to be honest, I mean, but even since Participant 1 started school, even when I was living there, I mean I used to only get home at six o'clock in the evening, so you know, to you know, to school work has been done. I'd (FA - sp) read the odd book with her but it used to frustrate the hell out of me because it was you know shew was very slow and the worst is you've just come home at six o'clock and you've had a bad day, now you've got to sit down you know, I just feel, I need, I need twenty minutes just to actually you know, so we used to fight about that, you know what I (FA - sp) mean eh? Then um, I've never done any of her homework but certainly Participant 1 has got now a tutor that comes I think every Thursday or Wednesday and it's going to be Monday and I think Thursday, I don't know if they have changed the time-table slightly. Now um, we actually have an educator from Bellavista, a remedial educator that comes and does an hour with Participant 1 twice a week.

T. OK.

(LR - lc) L. She used to try support her through school, you know for me, you know, I've be clear on the fact that I don't think Participant 1's ever going to be academically very strong. I hope she, but I just don't see it in the cards for her and it's not necessarily that I don't have a problem with it because I don't think necessarily you have to be academically strong to (res - res) be a success in life, so, definitely not clever, you know. Participant 1 got, Participant 1's Participant 1's very creative, she's very, she's got a very good mind for, I remember even since she was a tiny child she would make little things out of clay putty which I thought were really quite something for her age, um, really quite something, she certainly has skills and she definitely has skills and talents eh? And be it just the way she conducts herself around people um, which I think is very important, you can have all the talent in the world, if you can't work your way around an office, you ain't going nowhere right. I think she will learn pretty much how to use people to make sure she ups herself in life.

T. Ja.

L. Definitely. I certainly wasn't academically endowed in any way that but I've certainly done OK as a result.

T. Ja.

L. Ja.

T. And in terms of her academic difficulties, how would you describe her academic difficulties?

We, its just you know, its appears to be a concentration, I think, you know, Participant 1 is, the way (LR - lc) I see Participant 1 is, if she doesn't like something, she has no interest and

you know, just that's the end of that eh? I think if she if she felt um, I think she could do a lot better but I think she has no reason to um, she sees no benefit for her in that and I think that's a fault from her point of view, it well you know, I'm not going to try that hard.

T. Um, would you say she makes and keeps friends easily?

L. Ja, I think so, I would think that a fair way of looking at it, I know that certainly we have sort of done a trip to Mauritius every year and on the last trip, which was just myself, I didn't, I went with the kids and myself, and my parents.

T. OK.

L. They certainly very used to other friends, then you know she, she met some other people of a similar age and they did things together. She is certainly capable of doing that eh. It's quite different because I certainly would like to have changed since I was a child because I, in various places where you would find other friends with in holiday periods. Life just doesn't seem to be quite like that anymore or certainly not the places I go to. That would even be with the Cape Town trip, you know we certainly will go to Cape Town, we not going with any other friends, so in fact Participant 1, her mom and I have this settlement, we said well I will take them a week in each holiday but I said to her, five days is about as much as I can take by myself, so it's after that I'm drained, you know 'cause its constant, the three kids and me eh, so I've said I'll do five days this time as seven days is.

...tape blurry.

T. How would you describe what you think it is like for her working with other children in her class?

(LR - gl) L. Well, she probably finds it quite tricky for her because academically she is not strong, so I don't think that can be easy for her um, but um, she's well liked, I think she is well liked, I really do ja, so that's what I think her strong points are, um, so it would be tricky for her to ...because she is academically not strong eh but I think.

T. And maybe if it's a task where her skills are more dominant?

L. That's right, that's right.

(FA - re) T. And how do you think the playground experience is like for her?

(SC - ef) L. You know, I have absolutely no idea. My brief conversations about it, her, I mean, um, I'm just trying to think, I know sometimes she doesn't eat her food because she is too busy doing something else and to be honest I'm not really sure I know much about her playground experience. I know that she plays on a certain step with her friends, that's her step, that's where the Grade Fives hang out.

T. OK.

L. Other than that I really don't, I can't tell you to be honest.

T. OK. So she doesn't speak much about it?

L. No, no, no.

T. Positively or negatively?

L. There is no conversation about it at all.

T. OK.

L. And if you had to ask her how she feels about school over all, what do you think she would say?

(SC - ef) L. Well, I think she likes school, I think she enjoys school, in terms of her friends, she always wants to go to school, ja, I do know that um, she has certain educators which push her harder than she feels she needs to be pushed and that problematic for us, um, but as I said, she will always go to school, you know the amazing thing even when she knows she hasn't done her homework, and she knows she still gets in that car, rearing to go which amazes me, most people, they are terrified, gets in the car, I don't know, ready to go, so...really suit her. That's how I kind of read the situation, so, it's is tricky, it has been tricky for her mom and I because em, what you really want is, you want a child that is in my terms, I didn't ever need Participant 1 to be the top of the class and then you know academically you know, superior and I don't need her to necessarily um, you know be the (PI - sr) best sportsman, winning records, I just want her to be just happy, just make life, for me if she could just be the middle of the road, that would be just fine, eh.

T. OK.



L. Not too have too much, just to enjoy school.

T. Ja.

(PI - sr) L. You know if she can just get through school enjoying it and not have her self confidence knocked, she will be a happy child or she will turn into a happy adult.

T. Definitely.

L. So you know I am trying to, trying to find why she is struggling and I often have this (LR – lc, PI – sr) debate with her mom, you know in one breath, I try to get her to a point where she doesn't struggle academically but the problem with doing that, you can knock her self confidence and give her to think that there is something wrong with her.

T. Sure.

L. So it's a double edged sword. You know it's very frustrating that, eh. So I mean it will be a like we sent her for an assessment at a child therapist who is at School eh which is her name is C and I said to her mom, you know C said that she wanted to do an assessment and I said we can do the assessment, to be honest, I really kind of just felt you know, I am just sick and tired of these bloody assessments, the whole time what are they going to tell us you know, and to be honest, and we went to go and see C, C you know said well, you know, Participant 1's difficulties with her sister's sickness and the divorce I can say to (res - res) her but, you know what hey, I can say she has a fantastic environment, her parents love her, we don't fight, we divorced, we don't fight. I go to her mom's house we will wander around the house, I can look at her stuff. This child has nothing really to (res - res) complain about in life, there is not much she doesn't get you know, you know, there's nothing really obstructive, you know to me life is tough but I've been there, it's not easy, but to be honest, Participant 1 has a very good life and I look at her report, and yes, it does quote yes the divorce and her sister's sickness but these are all things we all have to all deal with, you know, I don't necessarily know that she has to go to child therapy to sort those issues out, um, I think at the end of the day, you know we have to learn to deal with these things and the more you pander to it em, you know the divorce she takes advantage of this situation, and I so that's why I I to be honest, kind of got to the point where I said to the educators you must do this and this you guys sort it out, you know, you are the educators not me, I don't, I can't, I'm not a educator I don't know how to, I'm very happy to help her down load books onto her i-Pod so she can listen to stuff, I'm very happy to do that sort of stuff, be a tutoror. So hence, she's got a tutor and that's you know. It is quite frustrating cause.

T. Sure.

L. In one breath, you know. I want Participant 1 to be a, you know, to not have these difficulties throughout the day you know if you go if you dig too deep into them it becomes (CH - qu) problematic too for her. All I just want is her to be herself confident young person and she'll be just fine from there on.

T. And have you spoken to her at all about how she feels about tutoring?

L. I had a meeting with her mom and the tutor because I said you know the line to. I said I'd like to have a meeting with the tutor just to see, 'A" I want to meet her to understand who she is, and she can tell me a bit more about herself, um,, so I got an understanding of when Participant 1 talks about her, who we are talking about and also to just what she thinks and what she because I think was. Her mom did well to find a remedial educator to come and do the work with Participant 1 'cause I think she will understand Participant 1 a lot better than anybody else, ja, so you know not just necessarily another tutoror.

T. Ja.

L. So we had that meeting and for the first time we actually decided that Participant 1 must be involved in that conversation so she doesn't feel like you like you know it's closed doors, conversations about Participant 1, you know.

T. Ja.

L. She must be involved in this and see what it's all about.

T. OK.

L. So.

T. And do you think she feels quite positively about that?

L. I think she does, ja, she puts little hands and says I think we should do this and you know

so, that's quite sweet hu?

T. Ja, I think it's nice to have her on board

L. No absolutely, to be involved in what's happening, why we doing it.

T. Ja.

G Rather than thinking what's happening behind closed doors.

T Ja.

L. But interestingly enough, everything I've said in the initial meeting you know I'm always quite nervous about overdoing this stuff with Participant 1' it will make her feel like she is different' you know' can't do it on her own.

T. Completely.

L. Now that's why I edgy to do too much with her, ja.

T. Ja do you think she is aware to quite a large extent that she has learning difficulties?

(PI – sr, LR – lc) L. I think she is, eh?

T. OK.

L. I don't think she is, I think she is aware of it and I mean it's, I think it is born out by the fact that she has to leave class to go to a special Maths class she has to you know, but you know to me it's a double edged sword because in one breath you want to get them through it and at the same time you know if she doesn't do that she's not going to make it, so I know it's a hard place to be.

T. Definitely.

(CH - qu) L. So but to be honest I think she's very well adjusted and I think she's a very sweet child, she's a happy child, I don't think she's depressive, you know hating life, I think she enjoys life, I think she uses these little things like traveling in the car as attention seeking behaviours and um I think she is a very happy you know person.

T. I've just seen her in one lesson at school and she seemed relaxed and happy and interacting with other children, enjoying what she's was doing.

L. No, absolutely, hey, ja, ja. So I think she will go on to be a successful young lady, she's (AS - res) got lots of support, she's got lots of backing, lots of love from everywhere, so you know there's very little that her mom and I aren't together the divorce was a bit of a strange one but um, you know, we never fought and never really it was quite a shocker for the kids because you know her mom and I never had our fighting matches and that stuff, so it was probably a strange thing for them to see us you know splitting up, I don't think they really understood it because there was nothing wrong, why would you, huh, but they didn't really understand that relationship.

T. OK.

L. So I remember the mediator saying it's going to be tough for the kids because they you know tough in the more traditional type of divorce where the parents hate each other and they shout at each other all the time and all the kids want is the parents out of the house so this fighting stops. For her mom and I that was never really an issue.

T. OK.

L. So her sister every once in a while says I wish you would come home again, you know, but ja.

T. Overall they seem fine?

L. Very happy huh.

T. Is there anything else that you would like to share or that you think I need to know?

L. Don't think so, I think that's you know' pretty much, the very extent of it. I know certainly that her mom and I certainly struggled at school, I was certainly lucky in that I was sport was always, I was not bad at.

T. OK.

L. So that helped.

T. Sure.

L. And I just you know rode on the back of my sporting career rather than my academic career at school, um, but socially, I was always fine at school. I was never, I always had a good set of friends, couple of guys that were very academically proficient and guys that weren't. So you know, I was academically, it was always tough, it wasn't an easy experience

to be honest, academically speaking. Socially speaking, socially I was never bullied or you know any of those sorts of issues.

T. OK. So you have quite a good understanding of where Participant 1's coming from?

L. Ja, from an academic point of view, eh, and her mom does too.

T. OK.

G You know um so that's why I think we feel you know much more um much more in tune, these educators must get on and sort it out. So you know, but this who is who she is, you know that I spoke to her educator the other day because I made a mistake with Cape Town, I took them out a week early. They've got a public speaking thing and I said to her educator, look I've tried to change it, I in the U.K. for two weeks, I said I can't change the flight, and I want to spend the week with them on holiday because otherwise I'll miss the opportunity so I'm taking them. She was a bit disappointed because there's this public speaking thing that they are doing. I said I know it's full..... she said I said I know its just one of those unfortunate incidences but I did speak to Participant 1 before I had spoken to the educators and said look how would you feel, would it bother you, huh? You know she said, no, it's fine, she's happy to go to Cape Town. And I think she's only too happy to think, oh flip, I don't have to do that huh. To be honest, I think she's only too excited so anyway, so, I said to her educator, how's it going, and she said fine, but to find that thing to just break through what's wrong, it's fantastic you know I think you're, you're looking for (LR - lc) too much, just enjoy having her around 'cause I don't see that magic button that's going to suddenly turn her and say, OK, now I am..... we've hit the nail on the head, suddenly excel academically.

T. OK.

L. I mean she has been through Ritalin, Stratera or you know every single you know wonder drug that's supposedly out there made absolutely no difference whatsoever.

T. Participant 1 could just be Participant 1.

L. I think Participant 1 is just Participant 1 you know.

T. Well thank you so much for that.

L. OK.

## **2.5 Interview with Participant 1's Class Educator**

**2009-04-02**

**09:25**

(SC - is) The class educator told me how Participant 1 emails her to let her know how she is doing in class; what she is feeling. Participant 1 attaches images of children's faces depicting various emotions. She sent one sad one yesterday as a result of something someone had said that had upset her.

Q. Could you describe Participant 1 to me?

(CH - qu) A. Small, removed from class, isolates herself, attention seeking.

Q. What is her behaviour like in class?

(Ch - qu) A. She is quiet, interested in what interests her. She does not disturb others. She participates in activities with her class educator although other members of staff say that she does not participate in their lessons (CH -qu) and they are desperate with knowing what to do with her as she forgets everything and does not do her homework etc.

Q. How does she work with other children in her class?

(LR, - gl) In groups, she is able work with others but she holds herself back from them and the activities. The school system that she is in at the moment doesn't necessarily suit her but she also doesn't make it work for herself.

Q. Does she make and keep friends easily?

(CH -qu) No, as she doesn't give much of herself. She is more concerned with herself, self centered, 'Am I OK, is someone noticing me?'

Do you think group work supports her learning?

A. It would help her if she promoted herself. She is not often listened to or her opinion valued as she is always being told off by other educators, forgetting her homework etc (SI -sr) therefore the other learners don't see her opinion as being a valued opinion. She needs to

learn to sell herself more to them.

(PR - fs) Participant 1's friend R is also very scatty, she is always forgetting stuff. The whole class gets stickers if she remembers to take her books to music. Participant 1 may be relating to R in that regard. R also had learning difficulties. She has also recently lost her dad. They have both experienced emotional issues.

(SC - is) Participant 1 has ball to sit on instead of a chair. The class educator suggested it but Participant 1's family got it immediately after it was suggested. She works well sitting on it and it helps her to fidget less.

(PI - sr) The class educator feels that Participant 1 does not give and produce as much as she could or should. She feels that she needs to build up her self esteem slowly. The class educator (SC - is) is prepared to think 'out the box' with Participant 1 and try new ideas such as emailing the class their homework. She feels that this is not the approach used by all members of staff (AS – res). She feels that Participant 1 will be OK in high school as they will use Information Computing Technology more readily than they do in Primary school.

(LR - lc) The class educator feels that Participant 1 does a lot of attention seeking and has created this image (QH- qu) of 'learning problems' which she relies on for attention. She feels that Participant 1 has difficulty with the traditional way that the school system operates on but she has many talents and should make the system work more for herself.

(SI - exc) She feels that Participant 1 isolates herself at play times and in class and in learning tasks. She thinks the girls like Participant 1 but it is Participant 1 who holds back and removes herself.

(CH – qu) The class educator thinks that Participant 1 is very jealous of the attention that Participant 1's sister got over her illness and uses her learning difficulty as a crutch.

### **3. Addendum 3 – Activity Sessions with Participant 2, Her Mother and Educator**

#### **3.1 Participant 2**

##### **3.1.1 Activity 1 – Participant 2**

**2009-03-24**

**10:45**

T. Today, we are going to talk what school is like for you. Now, there are no right or wrong answers, I just want to know what you think and what you feel.

Participant 2. OK.

T. And you can be completely honest with me.

Participant 2. OK.

T. I want to know what your emotions are, what your feelings are about school. OK. We are going to meet together three times if that's OK with you.

Participant 2. OK.

T. Today's one and then we are going to meet again two times.

Participant 2. OK.

T. And during each of these sessions we are going to be looking at different things, only if you want and today we have got finger puppets to use if you want, we don't have to use them. I coloured them in, they are not very good! Right, if said to you, could you describe your perfect school what would it be?

Participant 2. Um.

T. It could be anything.

Participant 2. We would eat chocolate in class.

T. Right.

Participant 2. Um, well while we were working we would listen to music.

T. OK.

Participant 2. And you would be able to bring phones to school.

T. OK.

Participant 2. Ja. And um, our educators weren't that strict.

T. OK.

Participant 2. And what we would always have a free swim and no galas.

T. OK. OK.

Participant 2. And well, um, we'd always have four breaks.....

T. That sounds fun.

Participant 2. And ja, that's it.

T. Hm. And what kind of lessons do you think you would like to have?

Participant 2. Art, Maths. Well, I hate Maths but the most fun lesson in my life is art and English.

T. OK.

Participant 2. And what kind of things would you like to do in those lessons in your perfect.

Participant 2. Um, we would be able to draw in art and have fun and during English we would be able to read.

T. So you enjoy reading?

Participant 2. (nod).

T. OK. And what kind of things would you do in your free time in your perfect school?

Participant 2. Um, I sometimes I like to spend my time reading.

T. OK.

Participant 2. Or I'll just sit with my friends, play games. If we allowed phones at school, I'll just get mine and listen to mine while reading

T. Hm. And you've got your own phone?

Participant 2. Yes.

T. Wow. And you not allowed to bring that to school?

Participant 2. No. No.

T. OK, so in Participant 2's perfect school, phones will be allowed?

Participant 2. Yes.

T. OK. And if you're thinking about school now, while you've been in Auckland Park, what would you say has been your best experience? What has been your favourite thing that you have done?

(SI - inc) Participant 2. Tour, going on tour, I love it.

T. OK.

Participant 2. I love tour.

T. Why?

(SI – inc) Participant 2. Because you can make noise on the bus, because we never make noise in class um you never get black marks um and um you allowed to well, sometimes you are allowed to (SI, inc) bring your phone along and they say tour is a lot of fun but O and I and W and the rest of the kids we were sitting right at the back and busy making a hell of noise, we busy singing, we changed clothes, we walked up and down, well it was fun.

T. Wow.

Participant 2. It was absolutely fun.

T. Wow, that's amazing. And you stayed overnight?

Participant 2. Yes, ja. And we swam when we got there because the bus was absolutely hot and it was also stinking, ja driving for five hours.

T. And will you get to go again this year?

Participant 2. Yes. We are going to Bush-pigs.

T. That sounds like something to look forward to.

Participant 2. Ja.

T. And do the children all get on those school tours?

Participant 2. Ja, only from Grade Four to Seven go on tour.

T. OK.

Participant 2. From Grade Four to Seven go on tour um sometimes when schools closed we go to drama camp.

T. OK.

(SI - inc) Participant 2. Ya, drama camp is really you enjoy it, you sleep there maybe for like



a month

T. OK.

Participant 2. Sleep there, not seeing your parents, and nobody telling you what to do, wake up now, make your bed, do all this, its fun, you just get there, you don't even make your bed, you don't even say hi, just get there and go play.

T. Wow.

Participant 2. You have fun there. And you play plenty of games.

T. OK.

Participant 2. Like catchers, even in the house, you have pancakes for breakfast every single time and sometimes when you sick they bring you breakfast in bed. And ja.

T. And is that just children from your school?

Participant 2. No, no, also ...St Mary's, St Stithian's, The Ridge, and ja.

T. OK, so there are boys there to?

Participant 2. Yes. Last year we were a bit naughty, actually the boys were naughty.

T. Were they?

Participant 2. Ja.

T. What were they doing that was naughty?

Participant 2. Writing these letters and they thought that I wrote them.

T. But it was them?

Participant 2. Ja and they like, we love you, and all that and its just, ahhhh.

T. And those camps are in the holidays?

Participant 2. Yes.

T. And you going to go this year?

Participant 2. Yes.

T. And do you like being there with the other children?

(SI - com) Participant 2. Yes because you get to explore and get to know other people.

T. OK.

Participant 2. So.

T. It sounds lovely.

Participant 2. Ja.

T. And do you like acting?

Participant 2. Uh, on no, um, well um my best thing, I love acting actually.

T. OK, wow. And do you get to do that at your school?

Participant 2. Ja, you can go for singing lessons, or you can just sing.

T. You have music lessons?

Participant 2. Yes.

T. And drama lessons?

Participant 2. Yes.

T. And are you in the choir?

Participant 2. Yes. From Grade five to Seven are in the choir.

T. And if you could describe to me, what would be your perfect classroom, what would you have in it, what would you be allowed to do?

Participant 2. Woaw, our classroom would be very, very big, from here all the way to the end of Grade Three, the class would be that big. It's would have a Jacuzzi inside um, there would be because like what you saw in the other room (occupational therapy room). Jag, um, there would be what else; there would be um a balcony where you can just go outside for a while. We would come to school in our PJ's and our classroom, instead of being white would be purple.

T. Wow.

Participant 2. And our desks would be round and then our chairs would be, our chairs are quite odd, um, they like a ball but then it's got legs at the bottom so as you bouncing you don't move around so, ya.

T. That sounds great! And can you think of a happy memory about friends at school?

Participant 2. Um, my friends at school, when we actually because every time when we leave school and go to another grade and we get them to the thing I remember, the thing I like

about (SI -com) them, before I even leave, I ask please can I have something to remember you.

T. Oh, do you mean if they leave the school?

Participant 2. Ja.

T. And they not coming up to the next class with you?

Participant 2. ....

T. That's really sweet.

Participant 2. Ja.

T. And what do you like best about yourself? Something that you good at, something that like doing that you like.

Participant 2. I like singing in the shower, just like my uncle, um, I love swimming.

T. OK.

Participant 2. I like, I love staying in the bath for about an hour or two hours, I love going on the computer, watching movies, playing games. Um, like jumping up and down on the couch and I love tearing things up.

T. Really?

Participant 2. Uhu.

T. Like what?

Participant 2. By mistake, I actually tore my mom's pants.

T. Right.

Participant 2. Does mom know?

Participant 2. No. I hid them under the bed so she has no idea but she keeps saying, where my pants, where my pants? I don't know mother.

T. And if she finds out?

Participant 2. I get grounded for a whole year. Ja so ja I, like that.

T. OK. And what is school like for you?

Participant 2. Boring.

T. Boring?

Participant 2. Some work can be fun, especially on the fun days.

T. OK.

Z Um, fun-day is on the 5th March, April.

T. OK.

Participant 2. April, um, it's, it's, it's, sort of interesting because it keeps so that you don't get bored you have things to do, and if you sitting there on your own, looking around, you've got things to do.

T. Uhum.

Participant 2. You've got a book to read, you've got your work and all of those, that's what I like to do. (SC - ef) School's sometimes boring.

T. What part would be boring?

Participant 2. Gosh, Maths, always Maths because two girls fell asleep during Maths. It was quite nice, had a nice little sleep and when it was break, they didn't want to wake up, so we got a detention for sleeping but it was fun.

T. OK. And do you like being at school?

(SC - ef) Participant 2. Ja, like if it finishes early.

T. OK.

Participant 2. If it finishes at twelve or eleven, I'll be way happy.

T. So you feel it's too long.

Participant 2. Yes.

T. Is that 'cause you feel it's tiring?

(SC - ef) Participant 2. Yes, very tiring 'cause you forever walking around and writing, ja, so ja.

T. And do you enjoy your lessons?

Participant 2. But not Maths but other lessons yes and not Zulu.

T. OK. Why?

Participant 2. The thing about Zulu she gives you something to do and after that, the next



thing she changes, you have a test, you guys have five, two days to prepare, like OK Mama A, um and then after that she does OK, the next day she changes like, no the speech is today but five days hasn't passed

T. OK, wow. And what would you say the other children in your class are like?

Participant 2. Crazy.

T. What makes them crazy?

(SI - int) Participant 2. Um, we love jumping around, love making noise, we ja, we love to do a lot of things. We love talking, wow, and we love sitting and being the educator.

T. OK.

Participant 2. Uh, standing on desks.

T. Is that in class?

Participant 2. Yes, in class.

T. Does the educator know you doing that?

Participant 2. No.

T. Is that at play time when you go into the classroom?

Participant 2. And then this morning, we were a bit naughty.

T. What did you do?

Participant 2. Um, I got to school at seven o'clock and the classroom was locked and then the window was open so we sneaked in the window and then our class educator arrived and we quickly hid under the table and she never found out that we sneaked in and said there's nothing here and then she left and we got out.

T. Wow. Would she be cross you were in there?

Participant 2. Yes. Very, very cross.

T. And can you tell me little bit about what your friends are like?

(SI - com) Participant 2. Woaw, I have five, five friends, who are absolutely mad. Well, um my friends love to chat, love to send letters to each other.

T. Umum.

Participant 2. Love to scream.

T. Are you allowed to scream at school?

(SI - inc) Participant 2. No because one day we were screaming and we got into trouble um, so, well my friends and I we love banging doors, ja, also sneaking through the windows and

T. And what sort of things do you chat to your friends about?

Participant 2. Bicycles, I'm a fan of bicycles.

T. You doing your speech on your bicycle.

Participant 2. Yes, I during my spare time at home I just ride my bicycle for four to five to ten hours every week.

T. Wow.

Participant 2. Ja.

(SC - pe) T. And what is play time like at school?

Participant 2. Boring, 'cause you just sit there, eat your lunch and the bell rings.

T. OK.

Z Ja. Break must be lot longer, like two lessons at least.

T. OK. And what sort of things would you like to do at ?

Participant 2. We should ride bicycles at school, we could swim, we could play hockey, play netball, bother the Grade Naughts' 'cause they like bothering us, we could hide away from our educators and skip their lessons and ja.

T. And do you play with your friends, what sort of things do you do?

Participant 2. We play tag, we play soccer.

T. OK.

Participant 2. Um.

T. And do you like ?

(SC - pe) Participant 2. Yes. I like play time.

T. And what sort of feelings do you get at play time?

(SC - pe) Participant 2. Get very, very happy, it's just at play time we all just go make a run

for it to the door and just push, move, it's my turn, no, I got here first, no I got here because we were having a huge fight so I said OK you guys let's just be friends again or just get out even if its hard.

T. OK.

Participant 2. Ja.

T. Hm, and if you are working in class with some of the children in your class what is that like.

(LR - gl) Participant 2. Well, it's fun, you get to talk, I love talking, I got it from my dad, um and I just learn new things.

(SI - exc) T. OK. And if you, do you prefer working by yourself or do you prefer working with other children?

(LR - ls) Participant 2. By myself.

T. Why?

(LR - ls) Participant 2. Because then I I like talking to myself.

T. OK

(LR - ls) Participant 2. Um, I like pretending I'm on the phone. I just have my own space to do things and learn things alone.

T. OK. And what sort of feelings do you get if you are by yourself.

(EM -aw) Participant 2. I get happy.

T. And what sort of feelings would you get if you are working with other children?

(LR- gl, LR - ls) Participant 2. I feel a bit boring because they go a lot faster and I just do step by step.

T. OK. And how does that make you feel?

(LR - ls) Participant 2. It doesn't make me feel happy at all, they go so fast and I get way behind cause I want to do step by step.

T. And do they wait for you while you doing that or do they go on?

Participant 2. They just go on.

(LR - gl) T. OK. And if you don't understand something are they helpful in trying to explain it?

Participant 2. (Shake head).

T. And would you like them to do that?

(LR - ls) Participant 2. Yes.

(LR - ls) T. OK, so if you were working in a group and they went a bit slower and explained stuff to you, do you think you would like working in the group.

Participant 2. Yes.

T. If gave you one of those finger puppets and I said Hey Participant 2, its play time, what do you want to do? Do you want to use one of the finger puppets?

Participant 2. Yes.

T. Tell me what kind of things you would say back to me? It's .

Participant 2. Um we would go for a swim.

T. OK.

Participant 2. Go on the jungle gym, we'd go on the swings, we'd go in the library, we'd go reading in the library and just on our desks.

T. Wow. And if I said to you, um, say we are working on a task and I said, Participant 2 what are doing on the task, what would you say to me?

Participant 2. ....

T. Why are you doing that?

Participant 2. Because bicycles take up loads of energy and I just love riding bicycles.

T. And are you writing this stuff down Participant 2?

Participant 2. Yes.

T. And are you enjoying that?

Participant 2. Yes.

T. Would you like me to help you with that?

Participant 2. Yes.

T. OK. And what kind of things would you like me to help you with?

Participant 2. Um, how to pronounce the words and how to spell.



T. Now imagine I'm one of the children sitting outside, and I'm sitting by myself and looking sad, what would you say to me?  
Participant 2. Hi, can I sit with you.  
T. OK.  
Z. And then I ask what's wrong?  
T. I'm feeling really sad today.  
Participant 2. Why?  
T. People weren't talking nicely to me in class.  
Participant 2. Just ignore them, they baby, baby, babies.  
T. Do you think so, because I don't know what to do. What would you do?  
(AS – res) Participant 2. I'd just ignore them.  
T. Would you tell the educator?  
(AS – res) Participant 2. No, I'd just leave them alone.  
T. And how would that make you feel Participant 2?  
(EM – aw) T. It would make me feel happy.  
T. To leave them alone?  
Participant 2. Yes.  
(AS – res) T. And would you talk about this to your mom.  
Participant 2. Yes.  
T. What advise do you think your mom would give you?  
Participant 2. She would tell me to .....(no answer)  
T. Would you like to sit with me today?  
Participant 2. Sure.  
(CH – qu) T. Thanks. So do you think that you, if some of the children in your class are feeling sad, you would go and try and make them feel better?  
Participant 2. Yes.  
T. And does that happen often?  
Participant 2. Yes.  
T. And what kind of things do you think make them sad?  
Participant 2. People hitting them, .....she's forever hitting.  
T. Really?  
Participant 2. Yes.  
T. Have you told your class educator about that?  
Participant 2. No.  
T. Do you think you should?  
Participant 2. No.  
T. No? Why not?  
Participant 2. She's cheeky and she's got all these girls in the class .....  
T. OK.  
Z. And do your friends also feel the same way?  
Participant 2. Yes.  
T. And do you feel your friends help you at school? And they look after you?  
Participant 2. Ja.  
T. OK. Was there anything else you wanted to tell me.  
Participant 2. Um, my sister's mad and she loves going shopping and she loves .....She loves pushing me into the pool, and she loves to pretend like she's drowning and I always have to save her.  
T. So your sister loves acting to?  
Participant 2. Yes and my sister loves singing and .....  
T. Wow, when are you going to America?  
Participant 2. I'm May, for my brother's graduation?  
T. Wow, that's amazing. Are you excited?  
Participant 2. Ja.  
T. That sounds lovely. OK.

### 3.1.2 Participant 2- Activity 2

2009-03-26

08:05

T. OK, today we are going to talk again about how you feel about school and how you feel about working with other children in your school.

Participant 2. OK.

T. And we are going to be looking at these picture cards. You can have a look through them for a moment if you want. OK. Can you tell me or could you describe a favourite game you play with your friends.

(PR - fh) Participant 2. Well, I don't think they know it around here at school but it's a game called, I learned it in the township, in town and you know where Soweto is?

T. Ja.

Participant 2. I learned this in Soweto, it's called um ....

T. OK.

Z Ja, I learned that and we, we P and I, the girl that you saw yesterday, we play we play it all the time, you use stockings.

T. OK.

Z Ja.

T. And what do you do with the stockings?

Participant 2. You, three people have to hold it, then you have to, if you touch the the stocking then um you out and the next person goes, jumps in, humps out, jumps on.

T. I know that game. What do you call it?

Participant 2. ....

(FR, exp) T. And what do you think makes somebody a best friend?

Participant 2. Caring and helping you with things.

T. OK. And what else would you do with a best friend?

Participant 2. You go to parties together.

T. OK.

Participant 2. And you go for play dates and ja.

T. And what's special about this kind of friend? Why are they different to your other friends? What makes them a best friend?

(SI - exc) Participant 2. Um basically no one here is like sort of my best, best friend.

T. OK.

Participant 2. Ja, I have about thirty best friends which are not in this school.

T. Wow.

Participant 2. And not in this country, some are in Zimbabwe, some are in Nelspruit,

T. OK.

Participant 2. Ja. My best friend's in Nelspruit, her name's L.

T. Uhum.

Participant 2. And she's in Grade, she's going to Grade Ten, ja.

T. So she is a bit older than you?

Participant 2. Yes.

T. OK.

Participant 2. Um, we love, we sleep at each other's houses, and its fun.

(T. Hi M, how you? Well thanks and you? )

T. OK sorry, you were telling me about your best friend.

Participant 2. Ja we sleep at each other's houses, we love to eat food, um, we sleep at different times, she sleeps late.

T. OK.

Participant 2. And I sleep way late, sometimes I can sleep at four in the morning reading a

book or probably just watching TV or just sitting with my mom.

T. OK. And can you tell me what kind of things you would talk about with your special friends.

Participant 2. Boys.

T. OK!

Participant 2. Ja, basically we talk about boys, she has a boyfriend which is not nice at all, and they are forever fighting so ja, they broke up the other time before I left.

T. OK.

Participant 2. Ja.

T. And do you talk about school with her?

Participant 2. Yes, she wants to know because she has never been here to Jo'burg.

T. OK.

Participant 2. So she's been wanting to know how Jo'burg's like.

T. OK.

Participant 2. I'm like no, the school I go to is a Private school, there's its huge, probably a thousand people could fit in that school maybe a million maybe and it's, it's big but you get to well (SI - com) you get used to the school, you get to know people, communicate with others.

T. OK.

Participant 2. Ja.

T. All of us are different, what kinds of things, what kind of qualities do you think make you special?

(SI - int) Participant 2. Well, I was in Grade Four with Mrs F she said that one day a girl was crying and took her to the office, I had to carry her all the way to the office cause she rolled down the stairs, like from the top all the way to the bottom, so I had to carry her all the way to the office and carry her back up.

T. Oh my goodness.

(PI - sr) Participant 2. Then I overheard Mrs F say 'I wish I had a friend like just like Participant 2'.

(SI - ab) T. So would you say that you are a caring friend? And you worried when people are upset or sad.

Participant 2. Yes.

T. OK, well what we are going to look at now is look at some of these emotion cards. Now there are no right or wrong answers, this is just what you think, so there's is no yes or no, or right or wrong. If you look at them, what kind of emotions what emotions would you say these children are expressing? What emotions are their faces showing?

(EM - aw) Participant 2. This one is angry.

T. OK.

Participant 2. Um, this one's afraid.

T. Uhum.

Participant 2. This one's um shocked.

T. This one?

Participant 2. Ja. This one's sad.

T. Uhum.

Participant 2. This one's unhappy. This one's bored. This one is um, excited.

T. Uhu.

Participant 2. Um, this one is loved, and this one is no, no, no.

T. There could be two of the same.

Participant 2. This one is sorry.

T. OK.

Participant 2. This one is embarrassed no well, happy, ja, I want to think of another word.

T. Um, you can spend a moment thinking.

T. Those two. Do you think there are looking at different emotions.

Participant 2. Yes, no.

T. And what emotion do you think she is feeling?

Participant 2. She's feeling happy or excited and I've done her.

T. Oh ja, you have. What did you say she was?

Participant 2. Happy.

T. Happy.

Participant 2. I mean loved.

T. Loved.

Participant 2. Yes, this one was loved, this one was sorry.

T. Excellent. Can you think of a time at school when you have felt some of those emotions?

(EM – aw) Participant 2. I felt afraid going to Grade Five, or Grade Four.

T. Why do you think you felt that?

Participant 2. Because people saying Mrs Henley was a dragon.

T. Wow.

Participant 2. She was freaky.

T. And so were you afraid when you went to the class?

Participant 2. Uhum.

T. And did you stay afraid.

Participant 2. Yes.

T. So was she quite scary?

(SC – ef) Participant 2. Um, she used to shout a lot if you used to blow your whistle.

T. OK. In class?

Participant 2. Uhum. Um.

T. Which one do you want to do next?

(EM – aw) Participant 2. This one, um I felt angry um, because I was being bullied in Grade Four.

(PR – pr) T. Who was bullying you?

Participant 2. A girl called Z.

(PR – pr) T. And what kind of things was she doing to bully you?

(PI - sr) Participant 2. She was calling, she was insulting my family, insulting my weight.

T. Was angry the only feeling you felt when you, when she was being rude?

Participant 2. Yes.

T. Did you speak to your mom about that?

(AS – res) Participant 2. She spoke to the head educators and the head educators spoke to her.

T. OK, and is that a bit better now?

(SE – ef) Participant 2. No, she still does it.

T. Does your mom know that? Do you want to tell your mom?

Participant 2. No.

T. Do you want to tell the head educators that?

(AS – res) Participant 2. Yes.

T. Would you like me to come with you to tell the principal that or do you think you would like to do it alone?

Participant 2. I'd like to do it alone.

T. OK, if you wanted me to come with, I'd be very happy to.

(CH – qu) Participant 2. OK. And sometimes I feel sad because sometimes I feel sorry for people that hurt each other and they can't .....

T. Shame.

(FA – re, EM –aw) Participant 2. And then sometimes I feel sad because I never knew my dad, my step-dad and my sister's dad, her dad and my sister hates me.

T. Hates you? Do you think so?

Participant 2. She told me actually straight in my face. So she does.

T. Do you think she means it?

(FA – re) Participant 2. She says that I wish I wish you weren't my sister.

T. Do you not think that sisters just say that to each other?

Participant 2. I'm not sure about it.

T. I know I said it to my sister before and didn't mean it.

(EM – aw) Participant 2. Um, sometimes I feel shocked cause I never knew that I have I have I have an American brother.



T. Wow. You've got an American brother?

Participant 2. Uhum. His names S.

T. S. And he lives in America?

Participant 2. Yes and he's coming um, well, I'm going to America for his graduation so I have to go to the American embassy.

T. To get a visa, and your passport has to be sorted out, wow, and you said you going in these holidays.

Participant 2. Yes, I'm going in May and then I'm I know we close school on the 19 April I'm going to go to Zimbabwe with my dad for my grandpa tombstone.

T. Wow, oh, your grandfather who passed away?

Participant 2. Yes.

Participant 2. Gosh, so you lucky, you've got lost of cousins.

Participant 2. Ja, I've got about six cousins....

T. And some of them live in South Africa?

Participant 2. Yes and some live in Nelspruit, some live in America some live in Zimbabwe and some live in Durban.

T. OK. Right next one.

(AS - res) Participant 2. I feel happy. I feel happy because every day is a new day.

T. Hm.

Participant 2. And people mustn't judge you by the way you look, they must judge by the way, by what's inside you, that's they came out with no, no, she's all this, but they only seeing what's on the outside but not what's on the inside.

T. Is that how you judge people by looking on the inside?

(CH - qu) Participant 2. No, by looking on the outside but then my Nan told me that you have to judge what's on the inside.

(PI - si) T. That's a really nice idea I think. And do you think the children in this school judge you from the inside or the outside?

(PI - sr) Participant 2. Outside.

T. How does that make you feel?

(PI - sr) Participant 2. Uncomfortable.

T. And your friends in the township? How do you think they judge you?

(PI sr) Participant 2. They don't judge me at all.

T. Really. And how does that make you feel?

(PR - fh, EM -aw) Participant 2. Its makes me feel just happy.

T. They sound like lovely friends.

Participant 2. Ja.

T. Lucky girl.

(EM - aw) Participant 2. And I feel excited.

T. Uhum.

(AS - res) Participant 2. And every day I feel excited because I play with my friends and, and I will say to them, Ill come home, I always have to .....I come home dirty, fell of mud, make sure that I'm dirty, I'll roll in mud and go all the way.

T. Why do you like doing that?

Participant 2. It's because my mom sees that I'm enjoying myself and so, they don't judge me, I have I can be free and no-one tell me no you can't do it no you can't do it, no nothing like that ever happens, we just enjoy ourselves.

T. That sounds lovely.

Participant 2. Just swim in rivers with our clothes and .....

T. Good.

Participant 2. And lastly, have I done this?

T. We've done, we haven't done her.

(SC- ef) Participant 2. And. I feel bored during Maths, I feel bored during Maths because well, the thing I don't like about Maths is that we revise the same thing that we did in Grade Four and I don't remember a single thing that we did.

T. OK. So you feel you are doing the same work but you remember it. OK.



Participant 2. And I feel, what did I say that one was?

T. I think you said that one was happy and that one was loved.

Participant 2. Yes, yes, that one was loved. Um, ya, I love a lot of people like I even love wall (FA - re) because I love painting, I love my whole family, I'll do anything to make my family happy, I'll spend so much money, especially for my grandfather's tombstone, I've already saved two thousand for the tombstone.

T. That very kind. Let's count them, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine. We've got one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine. Good girl. OK, if you are thinking about working with the children in your class, which do you think would be the emotions that you'd feel? If you working in a group, or with a partner.

(EM -aw) Participant 2. I would feel excited.

T. OK. Why would you feel excited.

Participant 2. I wouldn't mind to know these people and learning things from them.

T. What kind of emotions do you think they feel working in groups?

(SI - exc) Participant 2. Nobody likes me in my class basically.....especially a girl named R, she absolutely hates me.

T. But what about your friends?

(PR - pr) Participant 2. They actually don't they don't like me at all.

T. Even your special friends like P.

Participant 2. No.

T. Why do you think that is?

(PI - sr) Participant 2. I don't know.

T. And if they don't want to work with you, how does that make you feel?

(PR - pr, EM - aw) Participant 2. Really unwanted.

(AS - res) T. Hm. Hm, hm I can understand that. Now if you are playing in the playground, what kind of emotions do you think you'd feel?

(SC - ef, EM -aw) Participant 2. I'd absolutely feel happy.

T. What about being on the playground makes you happy?

(CH -qu, SC - ef) Participant 2. The kids.

T. OK.

Participant 2. The kids, I love playing with kids.

T. OK.

Participant 2. I just love them, I just love them so cause my cousin .....the other. Of my sister I don't know if you know what sangoma is?

T. Yes.

Participant 2. Ja, I know. My sister's a sangoma so people come to her house so I see these babies and they are so gorgeous, and they can cry and then I'll put them on my shoulder and hold them. I love that so much.

T. Wow.

Participant 2. I'm addicted to babies.

T. That's amazing cause when I was your age I was scared of babies.

Participant 2. Ever since five I've loved babies.

T. So if your educators said to you, what feelings do you have about learning, which one of these do you think you'd feel if you were thinking about learning?

Participant 2. What do you mean by learning?

T. When you come to school and you know that you are going to be learning today and you are going to be doing some work and you are going to be doing different subjects in the day, what kind of feelings do you think you'd get? You can have more than one.

Participant 2. I, just to learn a new thing all the time, I feel excited 'cause I'm leaning a new thing and people that don't know what I'm learning I tell them what I'm leaning at school.

T. Wow. And are there any other that you think you might feel?

(EM - aw) Participant 2. Sometimes I feel afraid of people.

T. Uhum.

(PI - sr) Participant 2. Because they judge me and they just they make me feel uncomfortable so I'd rather work on my own. Sometimes I feel shocked because I get a lot of surprises at

home, sometimes I get a chocolate cake waiting for me, or on my birthday I get pancakes in bed and all of that, yum, um, I get to play with my friends for the whole day.....

T. That sounds fun.

Participant 2. Uh, and sometimes I feel sorry for people that are on the streets, no friends, no mothers it makes me feel .....one day I saw a man with only one leg, I gave him thirty rand and I walked with him all the way to the shops and got him some food.

T. That's very kind. How did that make you feel when you being kind.

Z I felt absolutely happy.

T. Good. That's lovely, it's lovely to help somebody else.

Participant 2. Yes. I bought him a double cheese burger, with chips and then I bought him a drink.

T. That's very kind of you Participant 2.

Participant 2. And he bought like like...

T. OK. You are a very sweet girl. What emotions do you have about the children in your class?

Participant 2. Some of them, I feel angry, some of them I feel sorry, some of them feel bad, or shy, some of them feel bored and some of them just feel normal.

T. OK. And what emotions do you have about your friends in the township?

Participant 2. Township, I love them, um, I feel excited.

T. Good.

### **3.1.3 Participant 2 - Activity 3**

**2009-03.31**

**10:45**

T. OK, well this is our last session together.

Participant 2. Ahhhhhh.

T. I'm going to see you in class I think and a little bit more maybe, I might be coming back, I might need to ask you one or two things, but I think this will probably be our last session together.

Participant 2. OK.

T. So, before we start the collage, there are one or two things we are going to do as a warm up, so, describe some of the things you like to do. What do you like to do? It can be in school, out of school.

(CH –qu) Participant 2. I like to get dirty.

T. Uhum, what do you like to do to get dirty?

Participant 2. Roll in the mud.

T. OK.

Participant 2. Um, play in the sand, um.

T. At School?

Participant 2. No.

T. No.

(CH –qu) Participant 2. Um, a thing I like to do, I used to take um ice-cream and spread it all over me.

T. OK.

Participant 2. And now, what kind of things do you like to do?

Participant 2. I like to still become dirty.

T. OK, sounds fun.

Participant 2. Very!

T. And what would you say is your favourite way of learning? How do you think you learn best? Doing what kinds of things?

(LR – Is) Participant 2. Breaking up, like if there's like a long word, I break it up.

T. And can you tell me about something exciting that you have done at school recently?

Participant 2. Um, swam eighty-four lengths for a swimathon.

T. Was that in school? And the whole school did it?

Participant 2. Uhum.

T. That's fantastic. Was that to raise money for charity?

Participant 2. (Nods). Wow.

(FR, exp) T. If you had to make up some rules for being a good friend, what do you think your rules would be?

Participant 2. No bullying. No shouting. No screaming. No pushing. And no talking rude to each other.

T. They sound like good rules. What's your favourite hobby?

Participant 2. My bike.

T. Is your speech ready for Monday?

Participant 2. Uhum, but I'm not going to be here, maybe on Thursday or Friday.

T. You are not going to be here this Thursday or Friday and then the speeches are the next Monday?

Participant 2. Yes because I'm going to Zimbabwe on Thursday.

T. Do you think you will be back to do your speech?

Participant 2. Uhum.

T. Are you looking forward to doing your speech?

Participant 2. Yes.

T. And you are bringing your bike into school?

Participant 2. Uhum.

T. Does it fit in the car?

Participant 2. Uhum.

(SI, si)T. And describe yourself to me? What are you like?

Participant 2. Well, I like, I look like my dad, every time my dad.

T. Uhum.

(FA – re) Participant 2. Every time my dad eats, I get fat. Every time I eat, me dad gets fat. My dad and I like to eat.

T. OK.

(CH –qu) Participant 2. I love watching movies. I hate homework.

T. Uhum.

(CH –qu) Participant 2. I hate waking up early in the morning.

T. What kind of person would you say you are.

(CH - qu) Participant 2. A caring person. People always laugh at my jokes. Ja. Being around kids.

T. That's so nice.

(CH –qu) Participant 2. I love babies, it just reminds me of when I was a child.

T. Lovely. And how would you say the other children in the class see you? How would they describe you? What would your friends say about you?

(PI – sr) Participant 2. They would say I'm cool.

T. Uum.

Participant 2. Um.

(SI, sr) T. And also thinking about your friends at home, how would they describe you?

(PI – sr) Participant 2. They would say I'm way funnier than at school.

T. OK. So your friends at home and at school would say different things?

(PR – fs) Participant 2. OK. My friends at school are boring cause they like forever just sitting there and talking and its boring and sometimes they can be fun and sometimes they can be boring sometime s they like and my friends are absolutely naughty kids, we are fun to play with, and the only thing we are forever talking about is boys.

T. Wow.

Participant 2. Ya.

T. So your friends are mostly girls.

Participant 2. Yes.

T. And you talk about boys.

Participant 2. Yes. I have a friend who is a boy but we not boyfriends.

T. He's just your friend?

Participant 2. Yes.

T. OK. OK, well what we are going to do today is, we are going to make a collage, you can use this size of paper or we can stick two together. I've got lots of paper so you can make it as big as you want and what you are going to do is you are going to look through, I've cut some pictures out of magazines, some of them are pictures of children, some of them are pictures of children learning, pictures of children doing things.

Participant 2. I like this one.

T. So you can put any picture on that you want but its really you thinking about school, your friends, your friends at home, thinking about learning, so you can put anything, there is no right or wrong. You can put words, you can put colours and then we will talk about why you have decided to put things into your collage, why they are important to you.

Participant 2. OK.

T. There are also magazines here that I haven't cut things out of if you want to choose your own.

Participant 2. OK.

T. Up to you, well, start looking through and then we will take it from there. If you want to spread it all around it doesn't matter.

Participant 2. You kind of don't want me to mess this place up.

T. I don't mind if you mess it up.

Participant 2. I want to ask you a question. If they said you would vote which, who would you vote for for President?

T. Off South Africa? I don't know. I don't know if there is anyone I think I would choose at this moment. Who do you think you would choose?

Participant 2. Nobody.

T. Also nobody? Why not?

Participant 2. Because I trust Jacob Zuma but.

T. Not so much? I think who ever gets chosen will have some good things and do some good things for the country but I don't think there is anybody brilliant at the moment.

Participant 2. Nobody, ya.

T. Maybe we will have to send you into politics?

Participant 2. Because my uncle is works for Cope, so ja, he wants me to vote but I just don't want to vote.

T. You have to be eighteen to vote so you've got a few years to think about it.

Participant 2. Uhum.

T. OK, so we are looking for pictures to do with friends, school, friends at home, ways of learning.

Participant 2. This is learning how to cook.

T. Which maybe you would do at high school.

Participant 2. Ya. This is my room.

T. Alright, well do you, well you can stick that on as you do do some learning at home. Do you have to tidy your room if you make it a mess?

Participant 2. Yes.

T. If you see any words that you see that remind you of any of those topics, you are allowed to use those as well.

Participant 2. I asked my mom a question, they said if you can't vote for Cope, or the ANC, which one would you vote for?

T. Did your mom have an answer for that?

Participant 2. She said she would vote for the DA.

T. Hum, I think that's a good choice. So you talk a lot to your mom?

Participant 2. Yes. I'm going to miss her?

T. Why? Where are you going?

Participant 2. To Zimbabwe.

T. Is she not going with you?

Participant 2. No. I'm going alone. Or I'm going with my.

T. Is your sister going with you?

Participant 2. No, she doesn't know my family.  
T. So you are going by yourself. And how is that making you feel?  
(EM – aw) Participant 2. I feel happy sometimes. You know for two days I'm not going to be able to go to school.  
T. We won't tell your class educators or your principal that!  
Participant 2. I actually told the principal.  
T. Did you?  
Participant 2.....?  
Participant 2. You've got our timetable?  
T. Hm.  
Participant 2. Oh, cool.  
T. Then I know when I can meet with you and what lessons you will be doing.  
Participant 2. Oh. I'm left handed.  
T. Oh, are you? Have you got left handed scissors in the classroom that you want to use? Do you want me to go and get them for you?  
Participant 2. Yes please.  
T. Or do you want to go and get them?  
Participant 2. I'll go.  
T. OK. Thanks for doing that.  
T. Shame, sorry Participant 2, were you running?  
Participant 2. Yes!  
T. Are your friends at home the same sort of age as you?  
Participant 2. Ya.  
T. Oh, OK. And do they go to school close to home?  
Participant 2. Yes.  
T. Do you want to have a look through some of these that are already cut out so we can try and see if it goes a little bit faster. You have a look through and see if there is anything you want. Even if it's not a picture of you, but if it reminds you of something in school, something you've done,  
Participant 2. That one.  
T. OK. What's happening in that picture? Why have you chosen that one?  
Participant 2. Because it reminds me of, I've got a friend, she's left this school already and it's her birthday party.  
T. OK. What feelings did you get at that party?  
(SI - inc) Participant 2. Um, um, it was fun, and happy.  
T. Good.  
Participant 2. Ya.  
T. And do you like sleeping over at friends houses?  
Participant 2. Yes. I can not stand their house.  
T. Do you mean the house where you live with your mom?  
Participant 2. Two more....  
T. And why did you choose that picture? The mom and the baby.  
(FA – re) Participant 2. It reminds me of my mom and.  
T. Ja.  
Participant 2. Of when I was still little.  
T. Why have you chosen that picture?  
Participant 2. It reminds me of my birthday party.  
T. Your last birthday party?  
Participant 2. Yes.  
T. What happened at your last birthday party?  
(CH –qu) Participant 2. I was basically dancing on the tables.  
T. At home?  
Participant 2. No at ...  
T. OK.  
(FR, fh) Participant 2. So, were these friends from school or friends from home?

(PR –fh) Participant 2. Home.

T. And where was your party?

Participant 2. At Mac Donald's. But I invited quite a lot of people.

T. Wow.

Participant 2. And then I was busy taking the food, oh my God. So ja.

T. So do you feel comfortable in front of those friends?

(CH –qu) Participant 2. Ya, I did because I was so young. And I enjoyed life. So ja. You always have to enjoy yourself if you are somewhere. This one.

T. OK.

(LR, lc) Participant 2. And this one where I go to extra Maths.

T. Do you enjoy going?

Participant 2. Yes, it's fun, absolutely fun.

T. Why is it so much fun?

(LR – lc) Participant 2. Because they help you a lot.

T. OK. And is it groups of children or is it.

Participant 2. No we just sit alone.

T. And the educators are there to help you?

Participant 2. Yes, you just raise your hand and then they come.

T. OK...do you like it more than Maths at school?

Participant 2. Ya.

T. So what are the children like that go to Master Maths?

Participant 2. They nice sometimes.

T. OK.

Participant 2. They fun.

T. Are they friendly?

Participant 2. Some of them are.

T. And are they the same age as you?

Participant 2. No, it goes from Grade Three to all the way to Grade Ten.

T. OK.

Participant 2. ....

T. OK. So they have all the children working together it doesn't matter what age you are, they help you with what you need.

Participant 2. Ya.

T. OK. Any pictures you see? Oh, you didn't want it?

T. And that picture.

(CH –qu) Participant 2. I feel I feel free here.

T. At school?

(FA – he) Participant 2. No, at home.

T. At home?

Participant 2. Ya.

T. OK. Why do you feel free at home?

(FA - he) Participant 2. Because you can get out of your uniform.....and it just relaxes me 'cause I'm forever stressing about school.

T. Why are you stressing about school?

(Sc – ef) Participant 2. I don't know, it just stresses me a lot school, school.

T. When you at school?

Participant 2. Yes, and at home.

T. OK. And what sort of things make you feel stressed?

(FA- re) Participant 2. Family things.

T. OK. What sort of things would stress you out?

(SC – ef) Participant 2. When we have homework and then it's due for a day and then they change the day and then after that you get confused. And all stressed and just feel.

T. Then you can relax a bit?

Participant 2. Uhum. Did Hannah finish her collage?

T. Almost, almost.



Participant 2. Do you have it?

T. I've got it, ja.

Participant 2. OK.

T. I said to her I would take it and go and make a colour photocopy and then give her the colour photocopy, which I'll do for you as well if you want, then I'll keep your original picture, and then I have to check with my supervisor but I think once my project is finished I'll be able to give you your picture back.

Participant 2. OK.

T. But I'll need it for now if that's alright.

Participant 2. OK.

T. Why have you chosen her?

(EM - aw) Participant 2. Because she's happy and I love being happy.

T. OK.

Participant 2. Ya.

T. How often do you feel happy?

(Em - aw) Participant 2. Um, every weekend.

T. Why on the weekend?

(SC - ef) Participant 2. 'Cause school days are a bit boring and stressing and tiring, ja, weekends are way better.

T. What sort of things do you do on the weekend?

(PR - fh) Participant 2. I play with my friends. I come home at like six or seven.

T. OK. Do you ever do homework with your friends? Do you ever do homework with your friends when they come to your home?

Participant 2. Uhum.

T. Do you enjoy doing your homework together?

(LR - ls) Participant 2. Lots more fun than doing it um, alone.

T. What's that about?

(FA - re) Participant 2. Every time my dad arrives, I just I feel, I just feel happy, it's a long time since I've seen my dad. Haven't seen him ever since last year.

T. Wow.

Participant 2. So he came on Sunday to my house.

T. OK.

Participant 2. ....

T. Well should we stick these ones on, then we can see. I think we've got enough to use one page.

Participant 2. Ja.

T. You can choose which way you want it.

Participant 2. This one I feel like putting right here.

T. Its very sticky glue.

Participant 2. Do you want that one in the middle?

Participant 2. It tells about my life, this is how my life is when I work.

T. And what would that be?

Participant 2. Um, oh, a mom with a baby, a family?

Participant 2. Ya.

T. Should I help you with the gluing?

Participant 2. Yes please.

T. And that reminded you of your party?

Participant 2. Yes. That one.

T. Oh that one.

Participant 2. That's the one that reminded me of my friend's party.

T. So that was your friend's party and this one was your party.

Participant 2. Ja.

T. Put it behind if you want? There you go. She reminded you of being happy?

Participant 2. Uhum.

T. This is the one of relaxing at home?





Participant 2. Yes.  
T. That was reminding you of your Maths lessons.  
Participant 2. Yes.  
T. And your emotions, what emotions would that make you feel?  
Participant 2. Happy.  
T. .... and your friend's party?  
Participant 2. makes me ...  
T. And your party?  
Participant 2. Fun.  
T. And family?  
Participant 2. I feel, um?  
T. And your Maths lessons?  
Participant 2. My Maths lessons I feel bored.  
T. And relaxing at home?  
Participant 2. I feel free.  
T. Wow.  
Participant 2. ...this is Hitch, no I've watched Hancock, it was fun and funny.  
T. We've got one last picture to put here and then I think you are done huh?  
Participant 2. Uhum.  
Participant 2. Oh, that's, oh, I'll just put it over here.  
T. You could put it that way.  
Participant 2. Are these your scissors?  
Participant 2. Ja.  
T. Why have you chosen her?  
Participant 2. Because sometimes I feel special.  
T. Hmm. When do you feel special?  
(PI - si) Participant 2. Every weekend.  
T. Good.  
Participant 2. And when we kids, and sometimes when school is closed.  
T. OK.  
Participant 2. Ja, it's very neatly.  
Participant 2. Watched Mama Mia?  
T. Yes.  
Participant 2. I've got the DVD at home and I watch it every day, I even know all the songs.  
T. I think I do to! My sister, my sister bought the CD and she taped, she recorded it so we've got it, I love it. Are you pleased?  
Participant 2. (Nods).  
T. Me to, thank you so much.

### **3.2.1 First Break Observation**

**2009-03-30**

**10:25**

The Grade Fives came back from hockey to collect their packed lunch to eat. They all left the Grade Five area outside their classroom to go to where the Grade Sixes were having a cake sale.

The children were running a cake sale to collect money for charity. There was an excited, happy atmosphere in the area. The children were mixing together, chatting in groups and busy buying the sweets and cakes for sale. The children ran the activity independently of educators and handled it well. The Grade Sixes were dressed in civvies. Some educators came to the cake sale, some bought the produce, some stood around chatting to the children and other members of staff. The Year Five educator was there (SC – ef).

Participant 2 walked with me from her classroom to the cake sale. We chatted easily. She went to buy cakes whilst I watched from a distance. Participant 2 was able to participate in the activity and bought quite a large amount of food. She came to show me what she had

bought. (SI - ex) She went to decorate her own biscuit and chatted with the Year Six learner in charge of the activity. (SI – ex) She later chatted with the school secretary. She did not mix with the other children from her class. She did not look happy or sad, just engaging with the activity and not expressing much emotion (SI – ex). She walked back to class quietly, alone. Many of the members of staff came and spoke with me, asking me how I was, how my project was coming along and expressing interest in reading the results. (Si - in) Participant 1 came up to greet me and showed me what she had bought at the sale. She was standing alone and then joined a group of her peers from her class. (CH – qu) She said she had not yet gotten her lunch box as she was busy.

### **3.2.2 Second Break Observation**

**2009-03-31**

**12:45**

The Grade Fives were again in the area outside their classroom. They are not supervised by adults at play times. The class seemed to manage their behaviour well. They put their books and equipment away and proceed outside.

(SS - int) Participant 1 came and sat down next to me. She chatted about her trip to Cape Town. She (FA - re) told me how she has to look after her baby brother when mom is not there. Other children came up to us and joined in our conversation.

The children asked me whether I had ever lived overseas, for how long, where, whether I liked it, if I like being back in S.A and why. They were engaging, polite, curious and easy to chat to. Some of the learners had been practicing speeches on places that they had visited. The discussion lead onto their speech topics. They spoke clearly, confidently and easily.

(PI - sr) Participant 2 was inside during this conversation getting changed for their Zulu plays that they were going to be performing after . She was very excited, showing off, being quite loud but looking very happy and confident. She came out to show me her outfit and her fancy high heeled shoes that she was wearing.

I asked her if he was ready for her performance, she said she was. We discussed the languages she is able to speak. She said that she speaks five languages. We discussed who her Zulu educator was and she told me that she likes Zulu.

She told me that she was not going to be in school on Thursday as she was going to Zimbabwe for a funeral. I was supposed to be observing her in class. She told me this confidently but politely.

Participant 2 told me that she had to go and practice her play with her group. There were four (LR - gl) learners in their group. They interacted well and Participant 2 seemed to be enjoying the activity and mixing easily with the other children in her group (SI – inc).

### **3.2.3 Science Observation**

**2009-03-23**

**08:30**

The Drama educator was late due to traffic so the science lesson began. The children seemed unconcerned by this change in timetable. The children were completing their task from the previous week. (LR – lc) Participant 2 was not organized and had to be reminded to begin her task. Her desk was filled with her belongings and she had to be reminded to clear it up so that she had space to work. She did not seem stressed out by the reminders or the fact that she was not organized.

The lesson continued with an activity on the interactive white board. The children followed their instructions well and moved to the carpet quickly and quietly. (LR – lc) Participant 2 brought a pen, paper and pre-stick to the carpet and fiddled with these throughout the activity. She ended up moving so that she was facing the wrong way and could not see the board. She seemed quite content but not focused in the learning task. Nobody in class said anything to remind her to focus on what she was supposed to be doing.

The educators used class numbers pulled from a hat as a method to choose children to

answer questions. At this point Participant 2 became more focused and put her hand up to answer a question. She also completed her task on the board correctly.

The class was then given instruction about their next task which was to work in groups of three, determined by the educators, to go to the library to research information about diseases caused by the lack of certain foods.

Participant 2 seemed calm, not particularly focused or excited but not visibly unhappy about the task. The class moved to the library in a calm, relaxed manner.

The children began their task immediately. Their behaviour was fantastic! They worked quietly and in a focused manner. They were allowed to choose to use the Internet, reference books or encyclopedias. They all seemed to be able to cope with the complexity of the task. Some groups split the tasks up to answer a section each and share the last task, others chose to work together on all activities. This was organized by the learners not the educators.

(SE - exc) Participant 2 seemed distant from the learners in her group. She sat quietly at her desk doing nothing whilst the other two learners got books for themselves and began researching. They were communicating amongst themselves and Participant 2 sat in silence. She eventually got up and got a reference book from the shelf. She took it to the table where her group was working. She paged through it in a disinterested manner and then one of the other girls took the book and used it to research.

(SC - is) At the end of the session, Participant 2 was helped by one of the girls in her group to write some information down and the teaching assistant stood next to Participant 2 to try and encourage her to get her work done but she was not very involved in helping Participant 2.

(SE - exc) When the class were lining up to leave the library, Participant 2 stood alone at the back of the class and was visibly detached from the rest of the class. She did not seem upset. She was humming to herself. She seemed calm but uninvolved and quite disinterested in either the given tasks or the other learners in her class.

Participant 2 walked back to class alone and did not engage with anyone else. She seemed relaxed and was kicking the acorns gently with her shoe as she walked along the path.

### **3.2.4 English Observation**

**2009-03-31**

**08:05**

(CH - qu) Before lessons began, the class educators sorted lost property out. Participant 1's hat was returned to her.

(AS - res) There was a problem with the computer screen, the colour was broken, Participant 2 helped to fix the problem as best she could by choosing a more suitable colour for the background so the children could see more clearly. Participant 1 completed this task in a calm, confident, quiet manner.

(Ch - qu) The class educators asked her to explain to the class how she had done this and someone else shouted out above her. Participant 1 did not react to this.

(SC - is) Participant 1 then helped to set up the class email activity. She was then asked to email the class their homework. She appeared to be confident but reserved and quiet. She does not seem to like to draw attention to herself but likes to be helped and recognized by the educators.

During this time the class appeared to be relaxed, focused on their own activities and were able to organize themselves quickly and efficiently when it was time to start lessons.

(SI - com) As English began, Participant 2 was chatting quietly to the girl sitting next to her about her reading book.

The class began their lesson with a mental warm up using left and right hemispheres of their brain.

The class participated in memory game where the class educators held up a board with number sequences on it. The class look, the numbers are taken away and they have to remember and write it on their chart. They check their own work. This activity proceeded to a

number colour chart.

Participant 2 sits in-front of the class in a group of five. The children were allowed to vote privately for whom they wished to sit with and the class educators placed them. The children whom I asked about this method said it was fair.

Participant 2 was involved in this activity and focused on her task. She was keen to make eye contact with me when she got the answer right. The class as a whole were calm, involved in their task and engaged with their learning.

Participant 2 was working quietly on her task, but watching the other girls in her group.

Participant 2 called out an answer, got it right, was pleased, smiled.

(CH - qu) Participant 2 was told off by group for being messy. She said that she was sorry.

During the reading comprehension task she read quietly to self. Participant 2 looking around, worried look on her face. He class marked their own work.

Whole class worked on same task, there was no academic differentiation. (LR – Is)The two girls in my study have often looked worried during tasks. At other times, they have seemed to enjoy the tasks and put up their hand to give answers.

After the activity, Participant 2 was wandering around the class whilst the other learners were interacting with each other.

Whilst the class educator was reading to the class, the girls were working on their own (Ch - qu) activities. They were all able to organize themselves quickly and quietly but Participant 2 was the last to get organized and settled.

### **3.2.5 Numeracy Observation**

**2009.03.31**

**09:25**

White board activity – the class was quite noisy whilst trying to get themselves sorted out. Participant 2 got herself organized and was ready. She was engaged in task. Add up two numbers to equal thirty-three using numbers between eleven and nineteen. Participant 2 needed the class educators to explain to her personally. Participant 2 was then fiddling with the white board and pen. Learners asked to find multiples of three in the numbers twenty-one to thirty. Participant 2 called out answer when asked. Class engaged and on task – quite, raise hands to let educators know they want to share their answer. Class divided their boards into six blocks. They had to place an answer in the middle block of how to make the number on the left become the number on the right. Participant 2 (Ch - qu) was pretending to talk to herself in a very dramatic manner and staring out into the room. Participant 2 answered a question correctly when asked.

(SC - is) Participant 2 went up to the class educators and hugged her.

Group working on a capacity assignment in the science lab. (SC – is)The class educators gave specific instructions to Participant 2. The girls were told to estimate the capacity of an empty container and then to measure it using measuring equipment, such as beakers with scales on them. (SI - exc) The girls were allowed to work in groups, partners, independently. Participant 2 chose to work by herself.

After filling her beaker up at the outside tap, she came in with another learner and they (LR - gl) worked together for the rest of the activity. She was very happy when she had estimated correctly. She was telling everyone that she got it right. She was smiling. She was engaged and enthusiastic during this task. She seemed to enjoy the active learning environment. She seemed engaged by herself and later with other learners in more group-style learning.

### **3.3 Interview with Participant 2's Mother**

**2009-03-18**

**18:00**

T. So what we are going to begin with is your understanding of Participant 2's social interaction experiences. There are no right or wrong answers.

V. I know.

T. We are going to start with some background information. If you are not comfortable answering any of the questions, please feel free to say no. The first question I'd like to ask is, could you describe your daughter to me?

V. Eerrr, um, currently?

T. Currently.

(PI - sr) V Very conscience of her weight and um, err, one it's a weight problem, and two she can do, she is willing to do anything to lose weight, and three she's received her period by the way at the age of ten.

T. Oh my goodness.

(Ch - ph) V It's shocking, it's shocking and now officially indicated to Jan saying that she's going through a phase of emotions now, is the hormones, so they need to observe (Ch - qu) her, also the school because I had to indicate those things, um but she's fairly a free child listens, uuh, she's ready to take orders you know, no is a no. Uh, she's in that process of you know routine, you know you have to remind her, you have to do this, you have to do that. Now the interesting part that I like is that when she's done good she, she goes proud about it and what I'm trying to do uh, is that you know, that if you've got two girls sometimes it happens naturally, you try and compare but one thing that I have learned is that I've got a the age gap between the two, is nine years, a solid of nine years.

T. Gosh.

V And the dynamics eh what they experience when her sister was ten and Participant 2 was ten so different. Her sister was so doff, OK a very quiet child, reserved, didn't know where she (CH - qu) was coming or going, Participant 2 on the other side, she talks about boys, she talks about uh, you know, the 'skinner-becks' at the school. She talks about this one is bullying me, this one is doing that, this one is doing that, you know, she's free, to me, she's a carefree child. Uh, coming to what I indicated to you earlier she's uh she's easy. Participant 2 can nurture a child, a small child, say Participant 2 stay with this small child and that child will enjoy and then she knows how to classify, this is the interesting part that I actually find intriguing with (CH - qu) her, she can take care of a baby she can take care of a five year old she can adjust to a group, she can actually have a decent conversation with a grade seven learner.

T. Fantastic.

V So I find it, I don't know whether does it come from her sister because she she's spent quite a lot of time with the sister and the sister is older, I don't know. But I actually find those phases and her reasoning you know sometimes, she even corrects my maid at home and she says, no mum does things this way, you know, I get feedback you know. Mom does things this way she doesn't like it that way and my maid will always confirm with me is that the case. Where did you get that from? Participant 2 told me. So those are the things that she's that kind of a that and she's a happy child. And I told you, I've worked so hard to (FA - re) actually put her and for me to have that relationship you know for her to open up and be able to talk about boys, talk about menstruation, what are period pains, you know sex, the whole shebang, you know we talk about it cause you know I told her now you getting your period it's trouble! Why? Told her and she understands you know, that engagement. Other parents are really bad luck, I've got I've got a cousins that have got kids that are older than Participant 2 but they ask me all the time, how do you get it right. So she's that kind of a child, she's very open, she's very, very, very, you'll see.

T. So she seems to communicate easily with people of all ages?

(SI - com) V Let me tell you, you'll see. She'll express herself she'll talk, the minute she's comfortable with you, you'll see her that she will be able to trust you. She will be able to trust you and actually maybe sometimes will be so shocked with the things that she tells you. Why because she gets some comfort of trusting you, do you get me? It's where the causes she's got so much caring, she's got so much loving you know, I even say you know what, I don't know they normally say when you are at this age, the age that tells us about your future, what kind of a person you will be when you grow older and I find that she's very nurturing, I mean, I got sick last year, I was hospitalized in such a way that right now, this chronic medication that I have to take, tablets she reminds me every night. So (Ch - qu) it's things



like this, she's got that nurturing ehm, she's a caretaker, put it that way, ehh, person. You know, I've even said that if Participant 2 doesn't go through the side of the clinical (Ch - qu) psychologist or of a psychologist or whatever but has to do with nurturing of people, she doesn't want to somebody else cry suffers eh, hurt and it, it, it, kills her, she'll talk about it when she gets home, so she's that kind of a person and but when she's upset or something, she's reserved and I can pick it up, and it's good to have a child that is (FA - re) always happy because when a child is always happy, when they start withdrawing something is not right, and you can pick it up like that, and I say Participant 2 what's wrong? Eyy, Mom this, that. What's wrong? Then she will actually talk, in fact she tells me Mom I miss my dad, you know so those little things and I make sure, you know what hey you, you pick up your socks the child misses you, the kid is growing up and can see what kind of a person you are. So you know it's very interesting, ja.

T. Could you describe her home environment to me?

V Err, she's got a big swimming pool where she swims every day at five o'clock, eh she's got a bike we've got a big yard she plays er, quite a lot but when it's studying time, it's (CH - qu) studying time, um, she, she's very easy, she's easy, at home, she's open, like now she's grounded for a month because I said to her you can go play but you must be at home at five o'clock, she came back home at half past five and I said no ways girl, if you are not home you are not going to play, you must have seen her face.

T. So there's routine and structure and rules.

V. Oh yes, oh yes, you have to with the kids of today, it's not like us where you go and galavant on the street and you come back and your parents are not bothered but nowadays you have to be observant each and every little thing, because of the environment we live in, so she's like that, very structured, she comes home from school she eats, she takes a shower, wears her pajamas and into your books. You get exhausted you die and you finish, it's, it's a fifteen minutes .....because I like the method her class educators gave us, fifteen minutes of every subject that you do er, every single day, why if it's a paragraph if its a home thing say full page you read this paragraph, understand it, you know for fifteen minutes, what is it talking about, then the next day you come to the next one, the next day you come to the next one and by the end of the week you know this hole page, I like that method and it works like a charm. So, so it's things like that but what I said I said let them give us extra for Maths and extra for English because those, those to me they are very (FA - he key, more than any other subjects. So at home, free molecule. At school it's actually not for me to judge. I can not give that information of what kind of child she is at school.

T. No.

(FA - fs) V You know, I drop her off, interact with her, always it's that one thing that I picked up. When I'm at school is that um she wants to show her friends that her mom is around and I'm this kind of a mom that like they had a gala, oh I had fun, like a kid. I was screaming yaaa yaaa yaa and she becomes excited that's my mom, she becomes excited so she takes pride of this, that is why I even now, I decided to be a class mom so that I actually pas..... if that enhances her school work, if that enhances the environment, mom, get involved, I've got nothing to loose, that's where I'm coming from, you know other (FA - sp) people think ah she's got it, no no no, to me my child' well-being and my child's happiness comes first, more that me I'd lead my life on that (laughter) I make you feel..... like you're doing your MBA.

T. Is Participant 2 a first born child?

V She's the last one I've got my elder daughter she's in her second year at Wits.

T. Wow.

V They get along very well umm, I told you the age gap, so ja ja

T. And their relationship?

(FA - re) V Their relationship fluctuates, fluctuates. It will never be the same with a gap of nine years, don't forget, you brats just leave me alone, you know and I have got things to do and tomorrow they are buddy, buddies again, you know, this and that and you know the relationship fluctuates, but what I've done, her sister can drive, so to improve that relationship uhh, she always pick her up from school and I drop her off on Tuesdays and Wednesdays in the morning for school err, and on Thursdays because Mondays and Friday

I've got weekly meeting starting at eight in Sandton, so to enhance that relationship, I mean I can easily say to Participant 2 go to aftercare but I want them to talk in the car getting to know each other and to build that relationship and it's working, you see it work, small little things that actually count and at the same time what I do with the sister is I remunerate her and said you know, this is your part-time job. That's what I say, OK you don't have a part-time job, instead of going to work in a restaurant and all that you are going to pick up Participant 2 for me.

T. Fabulous.

V With that, she knows that at last I pick up my sister at the same time I am achieving what I am achieving and she's getting what she wants. (laughter) Ja.

T. Would you describe Participant 2 as dominant or submissive in these relationships?

(CH - qu) V Naa naa she gives other people space. Sometimes I actually find her that she actually allows ur other people to even to bossy her sometimes. I, ,I I, can actually she's (CH - qu) she's a softy, ja ja, she's a softy, she's very humble and she doesn't want to hurt and in such a way as you know other kids say there's an opportunity esp, exactly do you (CH - qu) get me? So she's a softy and I don't want to take that away from her, it,s, it's, it's even though I say sometimes no, no, no you have to stand up for yourself, you have to stand up for yourself but at the same time I I'm saying it so that she learns to be strong but at the same time I don't want to take that element of her, because it's, it's her and it builds her and that's how she is in nature.

T. The essence of her being.

V. Exactly. Exactly because she now, she'll start becoming something else and in such a way that I ask her Participant 2, who is it you sit with during lunch time? No I was playing today with so and so and tomorrow so and so and then ah the following week, no I was just (SI - ex) sitting on my own. You know, then I say, why Participant 2? No, so and so is bullying me, (PR -pr) so and so is what ever, what ever, and I said, why don't you stand up for yourself? I will never be there and your sister will never be there, you must learn to stand up for yourself, if they say X you must say Y and then they will actually, they wont tamper with you because they will know that they can expect the unexpected. You know said coming she said, ja you Participant 2, you big tall and fat, I said you must say you skinny thin and short (laughter). Take the opposite you know and let her feel, then tomorrow she won't say things like that because whatever negative she's saying about you take the opposite of that and say it to her and then give it back and then tomorrow you still play with her and then you've moved on, never hold grudges, never hold grudges in a school environment, that's what I say so she's like that.

T. How would describe your relationship with your daughter?

V. That's my buddy, my eldest daughter is staying in my townhouse now its the two of us you know like yesterday she chased me out of her bed, she chased me out (laughter) she said mom this is my bed, this is my bedroom, so please go to ..... I said Participant 2 I'm trying to negotiate here. Participant 2 said no mom, this is my bedroom, I want to sleep alone. OK fine, then I said eaa, Participant 2 can you make me tea? No mom, did you look at the time, mom did you look at the time? I said jaar, it's going for five to nine. In five minutes I need to be in bed and making your tea it's going to take about ten minutes, so please, you know, you know I respect her because now she starting to be you know stand up for herself and I just said oh, OK, OK, OK, no strings attached, no chill and then she said, yes, yes, take a chill pill ma, take it and go and make it yourself. You know, and you learn these things (FA, re) and you know and that's another thing that kids they like be a mom but also come to their level and, and be in the environment you know like now we've started hockey, we play hockey now, I even bought myself a stick because I know you know I was born, raised school in Soweto and I know bugger all about hockey but I bought her those orange things.

T. Cones.

V Ja, ja, aj, those. So I go around them, .....what do we do now, who does it fast. So its those, that kind of a relationship, I try to actually be a kid, I try to be a kid as much as I can, go to Gold Reef City and be a kid, a typical kid, my sneakers, my shorts, my cap and get wet and let me take them out and we that the element, that we become too much parents and we



don't become kids and come to the environment and that's the part that I actually picked up, they love and they enjoy you know.

T. Sounds good.

V. Ja.

T. So you and the father are not married anymore?

V Hallelujah (laughter).

T. So you've have been employed while Participant 2 was growing up?

V. Throughout. What I did, this is it err um I I was mom I was a wife, a student, I was a worker, point one. Right what I did I slowed down a bit on the academics err I lie, on my working environment, you know inside and all and I concentrated on my kids err being a wife and err my school work you know, even though I was dragging it, instead of doing four modules a year I was doing one in the first part and the other one in the other part, why son that I actually make sure that I must lie, I make sure that I be the what you call enough time for the kids and the husband and all of that, these buggars they never appreciate, the sooner I was out the better, one decision I never regretted that I made and with that it, it, it helped what I did I divorced, it was hard but I coped and I you know you go through these processes and then eventually it was work of which I still slowed down like ..... not a career woman as I am now, not a career woman focused this that and slowed down and what I did I picked, instead of doing two modules as I put in another additional one OK, so while I'm studying remember with my eldest daughter we studied together, you know so that helped quite a lot, so eh that I used to spread my wings around and fly.

T. My gosh, I take my hat off to you.

V. It's an easy life, it's not an easy life, ja.

T. Does Participant 2 invite friends over to her home?

V Actually the other day I actually, she does cousins, you name them, she was supposed (FA, re) to invite friends to come and swim but er, this the type of child Participant 2 is, family comes first, I don't know where she gets that from and my mom, but my mom phoned she had a tooth ache and she was having visitors and the whole shebang. Now Participant 2 was supposed to have friends, we went to buy rolls, it was going to be hot, swimming, you this whole bunch of kids making noise, I had to cancel everything because she said mom its OK even if my friends don't come, let's go and see Mukuhlu and Gogo, grand dad and granny, we went to my parents house the whole afternoon and I canceled it out you know its things like that that you know that shows me that passionate part of things, so if friends can actually come and all that and all that so she does she does in December she had her cousin was with us throughout and the good thing I like of my kids both of them that is something that I taught them I'm not well off I'm an average parent right but my kids educational life is extremely key, so I will sacrifice anything for my kids education right however, I've managed to build them a home and you know people find it hard to (CH - qu) believe that Participant 2 is in a private school, why, the way she carries herself, no down to earth. You just wouldn't believe it down to earth, you know until they ask where do you go to school, is that a private school? Yes and so do you get me, so that's another thing that I actually admire with both my girls that I actually taught her, her cousins they all attend the majority of them attend school in Soweto, right not even government school, mixed government school in Soweto but you be so shocked she will never boast she will never show off or do whatever to actually discredit me, she'll always humble herself and all that. You know now and then maybe when they compete about whatever it comes out, you know kids are kids but eighty percent of the time actually humbles herself and I really and with that element, that small little thing to me that counts in such a way (CH - qu) that you can leave your child with anybody, anybody, yo know I can leave Participant 2 with my aunt, my uncle with any let you tell you she will eat the food they eat, even though at home she eat Kellogg's but if those people they eat porridge shell eat porridge, if those people they sleep with pap she will sleep with pap and egg, even though she knows at home we eat curry and rice but that's how I actually, when you are in Rome, you do as the Romans do and its as simple as that.

T. Lovely.

V That's the child she is.

T. So in terms of social interaction how would you describe them?

V I mean Participant 2 is easy you know of course em, I'd say eighty percent of her day that the little that I can observe especially at home, you know sometimes you leave the kids play there, just park there, I've got these nice sofas that I sit outside and I you know you watch (CH - qu) them you know and she's easy, she's easy. She always make everybody feel at home, always, always, sometimes she takes my bike shell come back with her friends and say mommy can we have your bike please because we are, and then I'll say as long as you don't break it, take my bike So because she feels with other kids because they don't have (Ch - qu) one she will rather give extra so that everybody can actually have fun. That's the kind of child she is, so, it's very easy with her, with the kids. Would you believe that last year, on her birthday, instead of inviting school friends she said no mom, I want to invite my friends at home. Participant 2 why not invite Se and all them, no, they'll feel other kids not to feel, they'll make other kids not to feel comfortable.

T. Gosh, so she puts her, other people's feelings above hers quite often?

V That's it, that's it, so I was like, heh, I went oh, OK, that's fine, to me it said a lot, to me (CH - qu) it said a lot, because she now weigh situations, she weights situations that if I can take my colleagues or my friends at school and put them in that environment, they will be friction, can you see, then she just turning ten, to me it tells me a lot, a lot, a lot, and now being a class mom I'm going to observe a lot of things, to learn a lot as well eh, you know about how these kids are what these parents and what makes the kids behave the way they behave.

T. So would you say she is different with her friends from the township to how she is with her friends in her school.

V. Mm, mm, mm, mm, mm, definitely, definitely.

T. And which would you feel are better for her?

(PR - fh) V. She is more comfortable at home, she is more comfortable at home, she's very much comfortable at home.

T. And why do you think she is so comfortable at home?

V. Um, I think it is the bitchiness.

T. OK.

(PR - fh) V. It's the bitchiness of the girls here you know, K said this and S she thinks she is a little madame and its but with me I understand it, it's a girl's school you know, it's (SC - ef) going to build her character and she can handle anything even if she can go to a mixed school afterwards, she would have got a very strong backbone where she will be able to stand for anything, if you can stand girls only oh, let me tell you its like in my environment right now, if I can stand men only...laugh and you know when you talking you make them shut up and listen to you and ja.

T. So how would you describe Participant 2's emotional reactions to her friends in this school environment?

V. Again, um, hm, let me tell you what I picked up. At the gala it was typical example at the gala, you know Participant 2's mum having a good time, give me a, a, give me, I'm pushing the (SC - ef) parents you know, would you believe that Monday, all the kids paid attention to Participant 2 but that to me is a worry OK, it's a worry for me big time that all of a sudden she gets this attention um, its attention that I've created, not intentionally, I was having a jol, having fun, but she came back to me and said, mom, the kids at school think you are cool, to me that tells me a lot about parents and what makes the kids to be the way they are to other kids. The thing now, they chuck me on the board, they are dead, then you'll have to learn to listen up, then you'll have to learn to listen, too rigid, not in the environment we live in, those days during my days it was OK but not in the environment, if you want to know what your child is up to , you become a child and you get to know, whether you chat on Mix it or whether your child is on Face book, what Participant 2 will be doing, just ask Participant 2 what Face book is she will tell you, hey, I was shocked when her sister, they were having a conversation with her sister and the sister said and, and Participant 2, I dare see you on Face book, Participant 2 responding, I'll never be on Face book or I,I,I, never be on Mix it because of a, ...? shocked but it's what, where does she get that information? Exactly, so it's those things, those small little things I will just give you an example in a bit eh what I observe

the little things that we do and they've got a huge impact not only on your child but on other kids. They had a swimathon here on Friday, kids, came back, came to me and said to me are you Participant 2's mum? I mean that to me, I didn't welcome it is a positive again, I said, Mom, something is definitely not right, again, the comments Participant 2 was saying was 'you cool, you cool', you know, come on guys give me five, you know and you make the kids welcome here, you know, so they feel comfortable around you anyway.

T. Would you say that Participant 2 makes and keeps friends easily?

(SI - ab) V She makes friends easy, she keep them, she's too giving, she's a giving child and eh as I told you she doesn't like to see somebody, if she sees somebody hurt or crying or whatever she, let me tell you, when I get to school, when I get home, mom, none of the parents knew that eh, B was sick, there was a problem with her neck, I was the only parent that knew why because of Participant 2 got home and said I was not at the gala because she had a problem with her neck and when I wrote the reminder of the activities that were coming up, I said um, well done to the girls, you know sent the email through to all the class to all the parents in the class, well done to the kids and thank you so much to the parents who made an effort to come through and um eh, B and K were not at the gala because the were off sick, wish them speedy, speedy recovery and then remind them these are the activities, you know, certain parents they came back, was she sick? What was wrong. I said no, K had a flu and she was booked off and ehm, B, she had a problem with her neck and that's why she couldn't come to school. Oh...of course she arrives at home she talks, mum it was so sad, its was you know, things like she cares.

T. So she seems quite aware of her emotions and her reactions to situations?

(Em - aw) V. No, no, sometimes I think she is but sometimes I think she is not, it happens spontaneous.

T. OK.

V. I don't know, I don't know whether observe or whatever because sometimes eh, eh, she will say things that are huuuh? I can pick it up that she is not actually aware of what she is saying and um, like OK, about other kids she can actually tell me but sometimes. I don't know whether it is the awkwardness of the relationship, that awkward relationship that we've got that she say anything to me you know, we talk anything, anything, she asked me mom, why am I not supposed to watch soapies? I said well Participant 2, well tell me now, what is the benefit of soapies? There are some soapies that I want you to watch because eh, because I know what the implications are and whether you are going to benefit form them, OK. I said that is why I don't want you to watch certain comedies but I want you other comedies because like eh, family orientated what's happening it builds you know, but there are those that are fairly rough you know and actually, you don't actually allow her do that, as i explained, I tell her what its got a negative element or wild cause of that and that and that and why I want you to watch that soapie because of that and that and that, there is a positive out of that do you get me.... missing...

(discussion about stealing sweets, not recorded).

V. Got to my kitchen, I've got two fridges and I've got a cupboard full of food, because I know my kids eat. Why is the child doing this? (PI - sr) What jealous of it, attention, they seek attention because she is ignored do you get what I mean and also, I told J, I said, also the educators....there are certain things which you say in-front of the kids and then there are certain things you don't say in-front of the kids, and that negativity it start having implications, in-front of the kids, and when I leave my child here I leave my child with you hugs and whatever you say and whatever you do with her, I respect but the minute I get a negative, that is why when you told me there is a problem with Participant 2 I never, no way, I said let's work together on this, what is going on, I'll observe her at home, you guys observe her here and let's work together, you know I don't take sides, kids are kids but if there's a problem, lets sort it out.

T. And you feel the situation has improved?

V. Significantly.

T. OK.

V Significantly because you ask Participant 2 why did you steal sweets, I don't know,

Participant 2 you've got your own big packets in the cupboard, I don't know you see, so its attention, you know J just picked it up like that, she said its attention, it's attention that's it, but what I didn't like that when something ehm, get lost, and all eyes are on her, then, I really, because there was something a very big item that got lost last year and I don't like nasty looks, eh, I don't like nasty looks because somebody else can do it because they know that everything they'll say its Participant 2 or everything they'll say it's so and so, one its somebody else I said that its irritating.

T. How does that make Participant 2 feel?

V No, she felt so bad, she said mommy I know I did wrong but honestly I didn't do anything, I honestly didn't do it, I didn't do it and, and I get questioned and I get questioned and I said you know what, I'm not against you being questioned but you shouldn't be tortured.

T. Definitely.

V And I told the head educators, I said its unacceptable, I really don't like it, you questioned her once, twice, that's enough, anything more than that it's like you are torturing the child and it's as simple as that, why is she able to go and play at so and so's house and nothing get lost, you know, so its just one of those.

T. Last two questions, how do you think she feels about working with other children in her class?

V. Ehm, she accept the challenge.

T. OK.

V Because sometimes I ask her, I say Participant 2, you got , you guys are busy with alone what, what do they call it, er, D&T, you working as a team as girls and that is that, how do other kids work with you and all that? Naw, so and so is bossy so you know like even in a way that she learns people's characters, you know, and in fact, in a such a way that it is a, I know this kid, K, and I made it my duty that I want to observe her, just for my own interest because Participant 2 is always talking about this child but now the interesting question is why? Participant 2 always talk about this child and how cocky she is, like whenever I have appeared, hi Participant 2's mum, oh, grinning and to me it say, is she comfortable, she is comfortable with me because I'm friendly to all the kids and does she wish that she was her mother? Do you get me and then she's getting cocky with Participant 2 because Participant 2 gets all the privileges, you know, it's a very interesting eh, environment hey, hey it is, let me tell you in a very short period of time, especially last year, say from last year August to date I've learned these kids, honestly I learned because you find the child is like this and the child is like this and you ask yourself why? But it's because the parents are (hits desk) be strict but be flexible, open up, we all want our kids to achieve but kids are not the same types.

Participant 2 might not be academically inclined but you find that she, she might be very good at sport so other kids are very fortunate, I was fortunate in all areas but I certainly believe I'm not saying that because I'm I was a genius in Maths and I was genius in, in, in, in, in Science then....(?) the only thing that I can give is support and it's as simple as that and accept them the way they are, and I actually love Participant 2's cause when she said they are so (LR - lc) much extreme and she's got the most intelligent one and she and one that was dyslexic.

T. Gosh.

V So, you know I said, my daughter is with that educators, I just when wow, you know its a person that understands that can put herself in you know, my shoes, not expect so much but know that this child can do it herself that much but at the same time all of Participant 2 she had the interest of wanting to participate, wanting to be involved in the child, communicate with her and be you know, be involved that's the thing that we parents don't do, you know, just like the kids when they get the 'A's' and the minute the child gets an 'H', of which now days is a pass, hell, it pisses me off, I'm sorry, forty percent is a flipping' pass, seriously, I'm serious, Jussy, no, honestly it's, it's.

### **3.4 Interview with Participant 2's Class Educator**

**2009.04.02**

**09:25**

Q. Could you describe Participant 2 to me?

(CH - qu) A. Participant 2 is over the top, needy of love and attention, wants to please.

(SI -ex) She does not engage readily with people, you have to engage with her.

(SC - ef) She tries to hide her work during class.

(res - res) Participant 2 is academically weak but verbally strong.

How does she interact with the other children in her class?

(Ch - qu) She annoys the other children. She is 'bolshy'. She takes their things from them, like equipment. She will hide their things and think it's funny. She will force her way into a situation.

Q. How do the other children interact with her?

(SI - exc) A. They are quite distant. She has stolen from them in the past, so they don't trust her. She tries to bribe them, give them money as a way to try and make friends. They tolerate her and are quite patient with her.

Q. Does she work efficiently with other children in the class?

(SI - exc) A. The groups where the learners sit change every half term. The learners are allowed to vote on whom they would like to sit next to. Participant 2 has never had a single vote and is the only child to do so. I have had many notes from the other children in the class asking for them to not sit next to her.

Q. Does she make or keep friends easily?

(SI - ab) A. No.

Q. Does she play effectively with other learners?

(LR -gl) A. They will start off OK and end up with a problem. It will deteriorate.

Q. Does she work effectively with other learners?

(LR - gl) A. The group with Participant 2 in it will end up with problems.

(SC -ef) Last year during class, Participant 2 would often walk out of class and wander around for hours outside until someone notices she was missing. She has only done that once this year.

## 4. Addendum 4 – Reflective Journal

2009-03-16

Today was my first day of data gathering. I was excited to begin this phase of my research project.

I arrived at the school at 8:15am. I had arranged to observe Participant 1 in an interactive science lesson at 8:30am.

The school is placed in beautiful, well-maintained grounds. There is learner work on display around the school. The school has a lovely, relaxed and happy atmosphere.

The staff have been warm and welcoming and completely supportive of my needs. I feel so grateful to them and am excited to work alongside the school.

The lesson I observed was fantastic! The learners were polite to me, their educator and each other. There was a busy, interested atmosphere in the room and the learners were clearly relaxed and happy to be there.

There was a range of teaching aids being used and this helped the children to remain focused and engaged in their learning tasks. The learners had clear routines that they were able to follow easily and they tried hard to achieve these.

The learners were praised for their success and reminded gently when they digressed from the expected standard of behaviour. They responded immediately.

I feel that the working environment that Participant 1 was in was a warm, friendly learning environment where both staff and learners appeared to be supportive of each other. I feel that there is opportunity for learners to readily engage with each other and they appear to use these opportunities. There appears to be peer engagement in both learning and social tasks.

I am looking forward to the next task.



### **2009-03-18**

I have completed my first interview with Participant 2's mother. I was not sure as what to expect as Participant 2's mother had reservations about her and her daughter's participation. We met at the school and she explained her reservations to me and gave me a background to Participant 1's situation. This was an honest and open account and helped me to understand the situation more clearly. Participant 2's mother agreed to both participants participation as long as I respected her concerns.

We had a wonderful interview. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Participant 2's mother was interesting, engaging, honest and very aware of her daughter's needs, personality, difficulties and strengths. I greatly appreciated her input.

### **2009.03.19**

I have completed my interview with Participant 1's mother. She was welcoming and easy to talk to. She readily answered my questions and was honest in her approach. She spoke thoughtfully and gave consideration to what she said. Although she was easy to talk to, I felt that there was a reserve in her approach. She answered my questions but I felt that there was so much more to be said, in terms of Participant 1's education, social interaction experiences and family life. Participant 1's mother kept to the topic of our interview but I would loved to have had the opportunity of hearing a more detailed account of Participant 1's life.

I enjoyed the interview and felt relaxed discussing the topic with Participant 1's mother. I felt that she appreciated my interest in the field of special needs education and I thought that she was happy to have someone to discuss this with. I was pleased that she expressed a keen interest in my findings and wished to read a copy of my completed dissertation.

### **2009-03.20**

I have completed my interview with Participant 1's father today. It was a relaxed interview. Participant 1's father was open and honest and keen to engage with me. I enjoyed the chat we had. It really did feel like a conversation with a purpose!

I have used the dicta-phone for the three interviews that I have completed. This has worked successfully and I think made the participants feel more relaxed than the video-recorder. I was comfortable using this method and I am sure this played a role in my interviewing skills. I enjoyed speaking with both of Participant 1's's parents as it gives me as a researcher, a broader understanding of the participant. Overall, both parents seemed to say the same sort of things about their daughter, but there were areas that they contradicted themselves on. I am interested to explore the data that their daughter gives me in this regard!

I am looking forward to working with the children in school next week and to their interviews with their class educator.

### **2009-03-23**

I have completed an observation with Participant 1 and with Participant 2 today. The observations were relaxed and fruitful. The educators, both drama and science were welcoming to me and were quite relaxed with my presence in the class. The children, as a class, were not disturbed by my presence. They continued with activities and appeared relaxed, on task, engaged with their learning and happy to be around one another.

It was interesting to watch Participant 1 in class demonstrating behaviour that her parents had spoken about such as not being organized, as she had not brought her speech in to

practice even although she had been reminded that today was her day to practice. I feel that I would like the opportunity to be able to spend more time in their field even although I am aware that I am intruding on academic classes. I have been a class educator and understand what it is like to have another adult in the classroom that is not involved in the teaching!

I am looking forward to the individual tasks with the children tomorrow, although I am

#### **2009-03-24**

I have completed an observation with Participant 1 in her Numeracy lesson this morning and then my first activity session with both Participant 1 and 2. I really enjoyed them both much more than I expected!

The numeracy lesson was fantastic, the children were working in groups making Maths posters so I got to watch Participant 1 interact with the learners in her class in a learning task.

My activity session with Participant 1 was great! She was easy to work with, articulate, polite and eager to answer my questions and use the finger puppets. It is great to get to speak with her and hear her thoughts! There is much to follow up on in our next session together. I am looking forward to this!

The session with Participant 2 went well to. She was quite different to Participant 1 and I felt that she was making up quite a lot of what she was saying to me! She opened up in some questions. I felt that I did not want to push her too much without going back, listening to the tape of our conversation and then proceeding carefully from there onwards. I feel that there is quite a lot going and I wish to tread carefully with her. Her mother had also asked that I be cautious with Participant 2 and make sure that I do not upset her by bringing up certain topics that may rock the boat. It is quite challenging to keep focused only on the research questions that I am trying to answer when there is so much that makes up a child and their life experiences.

#### **2009-03.26**

Completed activity 2 with both participants. They were great! Participant 1 was very honest and answered my questions easily. Participant 2 seemed to enjoy the activity and answered most questions sensibly but not all. I felt that here was an element of fabrication again. Both participants were very honest even when the questions were difficult for them to answer. I respect their honesty and was touched by the way they responded. The cards showing emotions were a much more effective resource than the finger puppets. The girls seemed to be able to recognize the different emotions but they didn't have a vast range of emotion words to use, they were quite basic. They were able to recognize when they had experienced the emotions that they labeled and spoke confidently about this. I am quite surprised that the two participant seem more socially aware than I expected and it is the behaviour of the other children that is upsetting them more than their to mix effectively.

#### **2009-03-27**

Playground observation for Participant 2 at first play. There was cake sale on. The whole school seemed to be involved. There was a fun but relaxed atmosphere in the playground. The children handled the activity. The staff were present but the Year Sixes were in charge of the activity and handled it well. The children buying the cakes were calm and well behaved. Some of the staff approached me and chatted in a friendly tone. Some of the children in Year five did the same. I felt very comfortable in the surroundings but felt that the



interruptions from the staff distracted me from my observation although they made me feel welcome and they expressed an interest in my findings. I observed Participant 2 and she seemed to spend most of the time at break alone. She chatted to the secretary and one of the year sixes but not with the children in her class. She seemed content and happy to participate in the cake sale and bought plenty of food which she came to show me. Both she and Participant 1 approached me independently to make conversation which was great!

### **2009-03-30**

Observation in Drama for Participant 1 as Participant 2 was in choir practice. This was a bit frustrating as I had set the timetable up before and I was not notified of the change. I did get to hear Participant 1 practice her speech which was helpful. She was not confident but persevered and the class supported her in vocabulary to use in her speech. She was not focused on the other children's speeches, she seemed to fidget in her chair and later on the carpet, fiddling with a little ball.

I was quite nervous about the break observations but they were fine. The children engaged with me, asked me questions, answered mine and seemed to be relaxed and happy.

They told me that they do not play anymore as they are too old. They chat, play ball games, practice work e.g. plays for lessons etc.

The two participants both approached me and started discussions with me. I was pleased about this as they are more relaxed around me now.

The both said that they are looking forward to our next session together.

### **2009-03-31**

I observed Participant 1 in class in the morning.

It was my last individual session with both Participant 1 and Participant 2. Both participants expressed that they wished that it was not our last session together. Both participant's activities went well and they both produced collages depicting their school and family social interactions. They discussed these collages with me to explain why they had chosen specific images. I recorded their emotional responses to their social interaction experiences. I presented the participants with thank you gifts.

I observed Participant 1 at second break. Learners from the class asked me if I would like to watch them say their speeches at the public speaking festival on the following Monday. I was pleased that they had invited me. I felt very welcome in the research setting.

### **2009-04-02**

I spoke with the participant's class educator about the two participants. I found this interview particularly helpful as it gave insight into the behaviour of the participants. It helped me to make sense of some of the information that the participants and their parents had told me. It helped me to make sense of the claims that Participant 2 made over her friend/peer situation in school and of the claims that Participant 1's parents had made about some of her attention seeking behaviours.

### **2009-04-03**

I dropped 'thank you' cards and flowers off for the head educator, class educator, class and

parents involved in my research study.

## **5. Addendum 5 – Resources from activity sessions**



Figure 2 – finger puppets



Figure 3 – collage



Figure 4 – collage



Figure 5 – emotion flash card – Trend (1996) 'Look and Learn Charts'



Figure 6 – emotion flash card – Trend (1996) 'Look and Learn Charts'



Figure 7 – emotion flash card Trend (1996) 'Look and Learn Charts'



Figure 8 – emotion flash card - Trend (1996) 'Look and Learn Charts'



Figure 9 – emotion flash card - Trend (1996) 'Look and Learn Charts'



Figure 10 – emotion flash card- Trend (1996) 'Look and Learn Charts'



Figure 11 – emotion flash card Trend (1996) 'Look and Learn Charts'



Figure 12 – emotion flash card - Trend (1996) 'Look and Learn Charts'



Figure 13 – emotion flash card - Trend (1996) 'Look and Learn Charts'



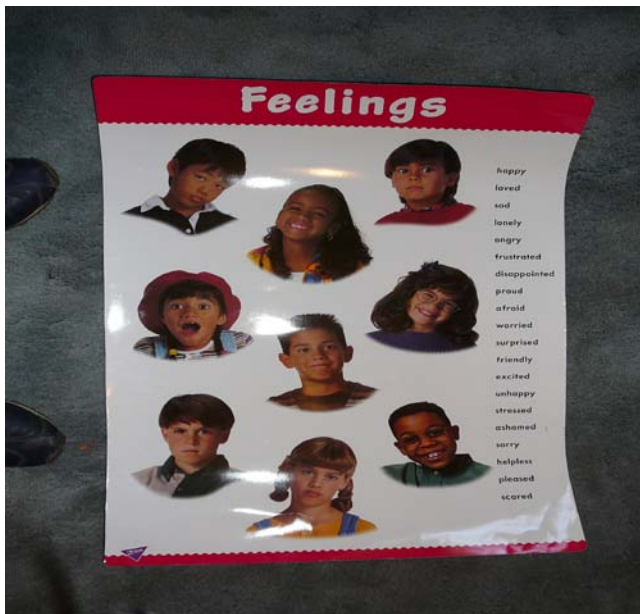


Figure 14 – emotion flash card - Trend (1996) 'Look and Learn Charts'

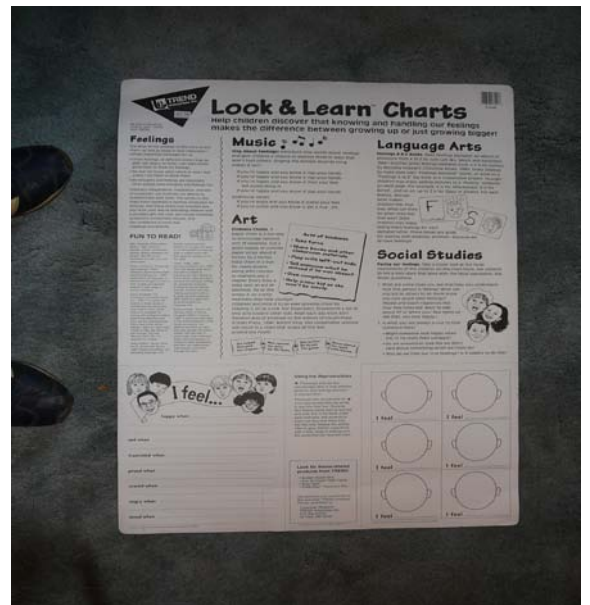


Figure 15 – emotion flash card - Trend (1996) 'Look and Learn Charts'

## 6. Addendum 6 – Letter from Language Editor

This letter states that Dr Donald Sim (Phd in Education) completed the language editing for my Masters in Education dissertation titled: 'The emotional responses of children with learning difficulties regarding their social interaction experiences.'

Dr Donald Sim

Apartment 14

Westminister Bridge House

6 Lambeth Road

SE1 6HT

United Kingdom

Email address: [alicesim@msn.com](mailto:alicesim@msn.com)



## 7. Addendum 7 – Ethical Clearance Certificate



UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

**CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

**DEGREE AND PROJECT**

**INVESTIGATOR(S)**

**DEPARTMENT**

**DATE CONSIDERED**

**DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE**

**CLEARANCE NUMBER :**

EP08/08/03

M.Ed Educational Psychology

The emotional responses of children with learning difficulties regarding their social interaction experiences.

Theresa Meisch

Educational Psychology

20 October 2009

APPROVED

Please note:

*For Masters applications, ethical clearance is valid for 2 years*

*For PhD applications, ethical clearance is valid for 3 years.*

**CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE**

Dr S Bester

DATE

20 October 2009

CC

Dr M Moletsane  
Ms Jeannie Beukes

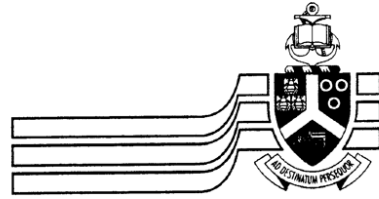
This ethical clearance certificate is issued subject to the following conditions:

1. A signed personal declaration of responsibility
2. If the research question changes significantly so as to alter the nature of the study, a new application for ethical clearance must be submitted
3. It remains the students' responsibility to ensure that all the necessary forms for informed consent are kept for future queries.

Please quote the clearance number in all enquiries.



## 8. Addendum 8 – Consent Letters



University of Pretoria


Pretoria 0002 Republic of South Africa Tel 012-420-4111  
Fax 012-362-5168 / 012-362-5190 <http://www.up.ac.za>

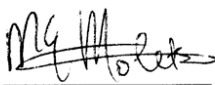
Faculty of Education

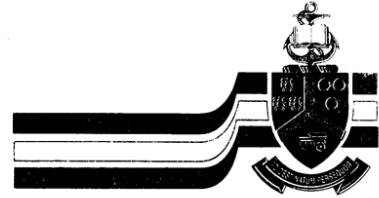
Due to the nature of the activity sessions with the core-participants and the semi-structured interviews with parents, where participants will be asked to share information of a personal nature, the participants may experience an overwhelming emotional reaction and may wish to discuss their thoughts and feelings in a therapeutic sense. As I am the researcher in this context, I am unable to offer this service. There will be an allocated member of staff at Auckland Park Preparatory School, whom will be available during all sessions with participants to provide this service if the need arises. At all times during the research process, I will adhere to ethical principles of practice. I will assure all participants of anonymity and confidentiality. Participation is voluntary and any participant is free to withdraw from the study at any time. The data collected during the research process will be stored at the University of Pretoria for a period of fifteen years. Auckland Park Preparatory School is free to decide whether the School's identity is made apparent or not.

The results of the study will contribute to the existing literature on learning support and social interaction. The results will be published in the form of a dissertation available to those at the University of Pretoria to read. The findings may be used by myself as a starting point for future research and may also be used by those in the field of Learning Support. The material will be made available to any participant to read once the research project is complete.

If you, or the members of Staff that are to be involved in my research study, feel they wish to discuss any matter relating to the study, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor at any time. My contact telephone number is 072 802 8199. My supervisor, Dr. Moletsane's, contact telephone number is (012) 420 2767. I look forward to working with the the School in the future. Thank you in advance,

  
10 03 2009  
Miss Theresa Meisch  
Masters in Education Student.

  
10. 03 2009  
Dr. M. Moletsane  
Student Supervisor



**APPENDIC B: - DECLARATION – PRINCIPAL**

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**DECLARATION:**

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT AUCKLAND PARK PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

I hereby give permission for the above mentioned research to take place at Auckland Park Preparatory School.

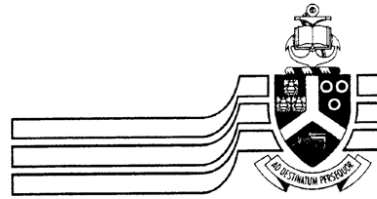
MRS KAREN SYMONS

Principal of Auckland park Preparatory School (name printed)

10-03-09

Date

Principal of Auckland Park Preparatory School (signature)



University of Pretoria

Pretoria 0002 Republic of South Africa Tel 012-420-4111  
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It is not compulsory for any parent, carer, educator or other profession to participate in the study and the core-participant can take part without the adult participation.

Due to the nature of the inquiry, where core-participants and their parents/carers will be asked to share information of a personal nature, the participants may emotionally overwhelmed and may wish to discuss their thoughts and feelings in a therapeutic sense. As I am the researcher in this context, I am unable to offer this service. There will be an allocated member of staff at the Auckland Park Preparatory School, who will be available during all sessions with participants to provide this service, if the need arises.


All activities that you and your child participate in will remain confidential, with your identity remaining anonymous. No human rights will be violated as a result of participation in the study.

At the end of the study, I undertake to discuss the initial findings with all participants, if they so wish. I would appreciate each person's input before the findings are finalized. This will help to ensure that my findings correlate with participant meaning. A copy of the research report will be made available to all participants if they wish, once the study is complete.

The results of the study will be published in the form of a dissertation and will be made available to those at the University of Pretoria to read. The results will contribute to the body of knowledge in the field of Learning Support and social interaction. The data collected during the research process will be stored at the University of Pretoria for a period of fifteen years. If you, or the core-participants, have any queries about the study, please feel free to contact Dr. Moletsane on (012) 4202767 or myself on 0728028199 at any time. I look forward to working with you. Thank you in advance.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Theresa Meisch  
Researcher

10 03. 2009  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Moletsane  
Supervisor

10 03. 2009  
Date



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**APPENDIX D: DECLARATION – PARENTS/CARER**

**DECLARATION:**

I have read the above and understand what the purpose of the study is. I understand what activities my child and I will be involved in. I understand that our participation is voluntary and that we may withdraw at any time. I understand that all information will be handled confidentially and that our identity will remain anonymous.

I hereby confirm that I TRACY VAN DER MERWE (Name) will participate in the study.

I hereby give permission for my child HANNAH VAN DER MERWE (Name) to participate in the study.

I undertake to direct any queries that I have to the researcher or supervisor.

TRACY VAN DER MERWE  
Name of Parent (Printed)

17 03 09  
Date

[Signature]  
Signature of Parent

17-03-2009  
Date

[Signature]  
Signature of Researcher

16-03-09  
Date



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APPENDIX E: ASSENT

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### LETTER OF ASSENT FOR CORE-PARTICIPANTS

You are invited to take part in a study. You can join if you want to. You can also drop out of the study at any time. My name is Theresa Meisch. I will be running the study. I am doing a Masters Degree in Education at the University of Pretoria.

I am going to be asking you about what kinds of feelings you have when you talk to and play with the children in your school. We will talk about this together. I will also spend some time with you in classroom watching your lessons. I will also spend time with you outside in the playground. I will be able to talk to you here and to join in your activities.

You can chose a make-up name to use when you work with me. This way, nobody will know who you are when I write about your feelings. I will chat to you about our work before I write up my final copy of my research project to make sure that you agree with what I have said about your thoughts and feelings.

Thanks, Theresa Meisch

 10.03.2009

Signature of researcher





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**APPENDIX F: DECLARATION – CORE-PARTICIPANT**

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**DECLARATION**

I understand what the study is about and what joining in with the study means. I understand what I will have to do. I know that it is my choice to join in and that I can drop-out of the study at any time. I know that my own name will not be used and that I can choose my own make up name for the study.

I agree to join in the study.

Heannah

Name of participant

24.03.2009

Date

Theresa Meisch

Signature of Researcher

Theresa Meisch

10.03.2009

Date





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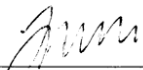
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All activities that you participate in will remain confidential, with your identity remaining anonymous. No human rights will be violated as a result of participation in the study.

At the end of the study, I undertake to discuss the initial findings with all participants, if they so wish. I would appreciate each person's input before the findings are finalized. This will help to ensure that findings correlate with participant meaning. A copy of the findings will be made available to all participants if they wish.

The results of the study will be published in the form of a dissertation and will be made available to those at the University of Pretoria. The findings may be used as a point of departure for future studies for myself. The findings may be used by those in the field of Learning Support. The data gathered in during the research process will be stored at the University of Pretoria for a period of fifteen years.

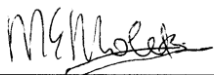
If you have any queries, before, during or after the study, please contact Dr. Moletsane or myself at any time. My contact telephone number is 07280281991. Dr Moletsane's telephone number is (012) 4202767. I look forward to working with you. Thank you in advance.

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Theresa Meisch  
Researcher

10.03.2009

Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dr Moletsane  
Supervisor

10.03.2009

Date



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**APPENDIX H: DECLARATION – EDUCATORS AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS**

**DECLARATION:**

I have read the above and understand what the purpose of the study is. I understand what activities I will be involved in. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time. I understand that all information will be handled confidentially and that my identity will remain anonymous.

I hereby confirm that I will participate in the study. I undertake to direct any queries that I have to the researcher or supervisor.

K. G. COTTRELL  
Name of educator or professional (Printed)

11 March 2009  
Date

K. Cottrell  
Signature of educator or professional

11 March 2009  
Date

Theresa Meisch  
Signature of Researcher  
Theresa Meisch

10-03 2009  
Date